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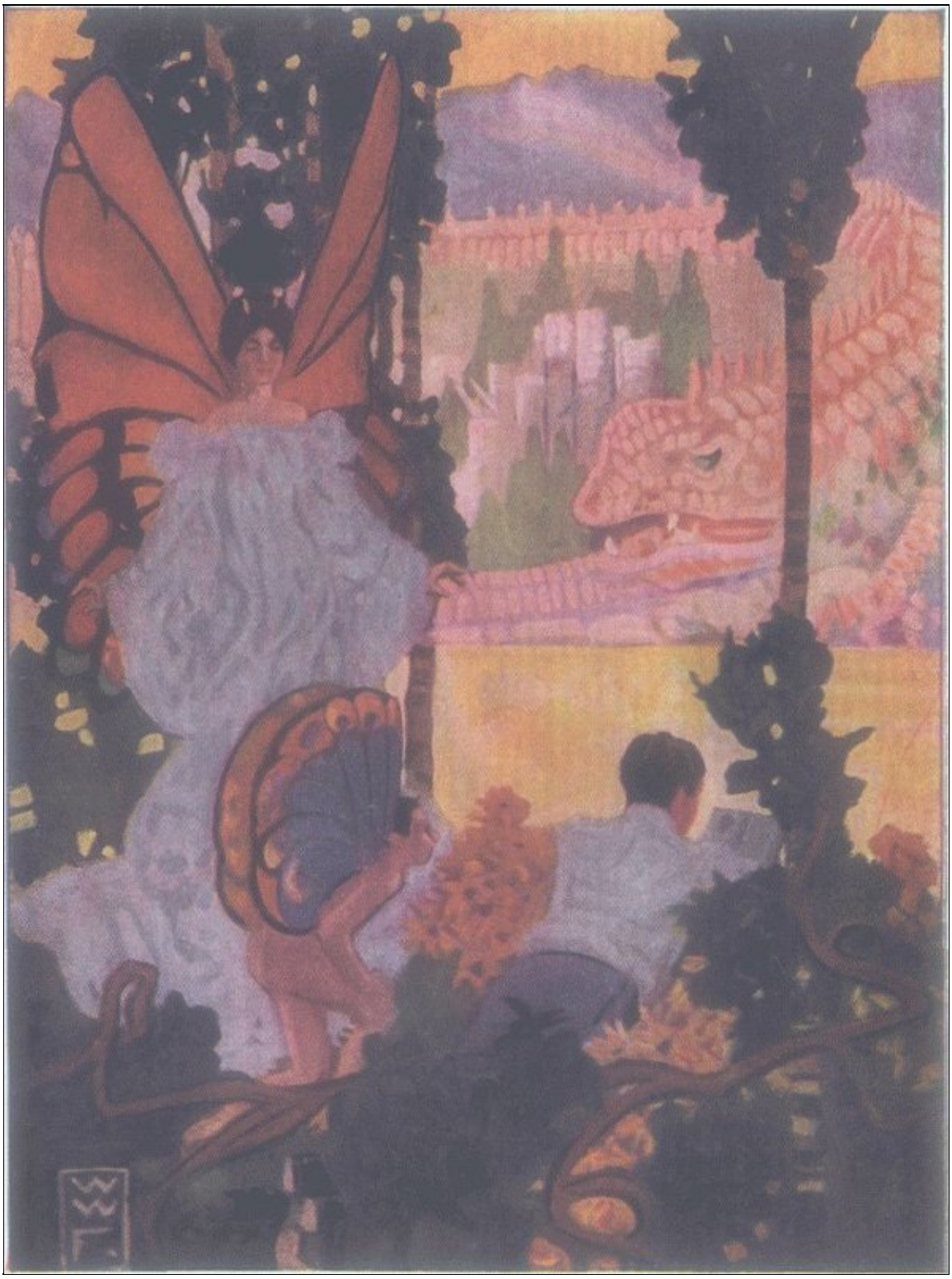

“A thousand fantasies begin to throng”

FAIRY TALES

Every Child Should Know

EDITED BY

Hamilton Wright Mabie

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FAIRY TALES

EDITED BY

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Title Page of Book

INTRODUCTION

TO

“FAIRIES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW”

The fairy tale is a poetic recording of the facts of life, an interpretation by the imagination of its hard conditions, an effort to reconcile the spirit which loves freedom and goodness and beauty with its harsh, bare and disappointing conditions. It is, in its earliest form, a spontaneous and instinctive endeavor to shape the facts of the world to meet the needs of the imagination, the cravings of the heart. It involves a free, poetic dealing with realities in accordance with the law of mental growth; it is the naïve activity of the young imagination of the race, untrammelled by the necessity of rigid adherence to the fact.

The myths record the earliest attempt at an explanation of the world and its life; the fairy tale records the free and joyful play of the imagination, opening doors through hard conditions to the spirit, which craves power, freedom, happiness; righting wrongs and redressing injuries; defeating base designs; rewarding patience and virtue; crowning true love with happiness; placing the powers of darkness under control of man and making their ministers his servants. In the fairy story, men are not set entirely free from their limitations, but, by the aid of fairies, genii, giants and demons, they are put in command of unusual powers and make themselves masters of the forces of nature.

The oldest fairy stories constitute a fascinating introduction to the book of modern science, curiously predicting its discoveries, its uncovering of the resources of the earth and air, its growing control of the tremendous forces which work in earth and air. And it is significant that the recent progress of science is steadily toward what our ancestors would have considered fairy land; for in all the imaginings of the childhood of the race there was nothing more marvellous or more audaciously improbable than the transmission of the accents and modulations of familiar voices through long distances, and the power of communication across leagues of sea without mechanical connections of any kind.

The faculty which created the fairy tale is the same faculty which, supplemented by a broader observation and based on more accurate knowledge, has broadened the range and activities of modern man, made the world accessible to him, enabled him to live in one place but to speak and act in places thousands of miles distant, given him command of colossal forces, and is fast making him rich on a scale which would have seemed incredible to men of a half-century ago. There is nothing in any fairy tale more marvellous and inherently improbable than many of the achievements of scientific observation and invention, and we are only at the beginning of the wonders that lie within the reach of the human spirit!

No one can understand the modern world without the aid of the imagination, and as the frontiers of knowledge are pushed still further away from the obvious and familiar, there will be an increasing tax on the imagination. The world of dead matter which our fathers thought they understood has become a world of subtle forces moving with inconceivable

velocity; nothing is inert, all things are transformed into other and more elusive shapes precisely as the makers of the fairy tales foresaw and predicted; the world lives in every atom just as their world lived; forces lie just outside the range of physical sight, but entirely within the range of spiritual vision, precisely as the tellers of these old stories divined; mystery and wonder enfold all things, and not only evoke the full play of the mind, but flood it with intimations and suggestions of the presence of more elusive and subtle forces, of finer and more obedient powers, as the world of fairies, magi and demons enfolded the ancient earth of daily toil and danger.

In a word, the fairy stories have come true; they are historical in the sense that they faithfully report a stage of spiritual growth and predict a higher order of realities through a deeper knowledge of actualities. They were poetic renderings of facts which science is fast verifying, chiefly by the use of the same faculty which enriched early literature with the myth and the fairy tale. The scientist has turned poet in these later days, and the imagination which once expressed itself in a free handling of facts so as to make them answer the needs and demands of the human spirit, now expresses itself in that breadth of vision which reconstructs an extinct animal from a bone and analyzes the light of a sun flaming on the outermost boundaries of space.

This collection of tales, gathered from the rich literature of the childhood of the world, or from the books of the few modern men who have found the key of that wonderful world, is put forth not only without apology, but with the hope that it may widen the demand for these charming reports of a world in which the truths of our working world are loyally upheld, while its hard facts are quietly but authoritatively dismissed from attention. The widest interpretation has been given to the fairy tale, so as to include many of those classic romances of childhood in which no fairy appears, but which are invested with the air and are permeated with the glorious freedom of fairy land.

No sane man or woman undervalues the immense gains of the modern world in the knowledge of facts and the application of ideas to things in order to secure comfort, health, access to the treasure in the earth and on its surface, the means of education and greater freedom from the tyranny of toil by the accumulation of the fruits of toil; but no sane man or woman believes that a mechanical age is other than a transitional age, that the possession of things is the final achievement of society, and that in multiplication of conveniences civilization will reach its point of culmination.

We are so engrossed in getting rich that we forget that by and by, when we have become rich, we shall have to learn how to live; for work can never be an end in itself; it is a “means of grace” when it is not drudgery; and it must, in the long run, be a preparation for play. For play is not organized idleness, frivolity set in a fanciful order; it is the normal, spontaneous exercise of physical activity, the wholesome gayety of the mind, the natural expression of the spirit, without self-consciousness, constraint, or the tyranny of hours and tasks. It is the highest form of energy, because it is free and creative; a joy in itself, and therefore a joy in the world. This is the explanation of the sense of freedom and elation which come from a great work of art; it is the instinctive perception of the fact that while immense toil lies behind the artist’s skill, the soul of the creation came from beyond the world of work and the making of it was a bit of play. The man of creative spirit is often a tireless worker, but in his happiest hours he is at play; for all work, when it rises into

freedom and power, is play. “We work,” wrote a Greek thinker of the most creative people who have yet appeared, “in order that we may have leisure.” The note of that life was freedom; its activity was not “evoked by external needs, but was free, spontaneous and delightful; an ordered energy which stimulates all the vital and mental powers.“

Robert Louis Stevenson, who knew well how to touch work with the spirit and charm of play, reports of certain evenings spent at a clubhouse near Brussels, that the men who gathered there “were employed over the frivolous mercantile concerns of Belgium during the day; but in the evening they found some hours for the serious concerns of life.” They gave their days to commerce, but their evenings were devoted to more important interests!

These words are written for those older people who have made the mistake of straying away from childhood; children do not read introductions, because they know that the valuable part of the book is to be found in the later pages. They read the stories; their elders read the introduction as well. They both need the stuff of imagination, of which myths, legends, and fairy tales are made. So much may be said of these old stories that it is a serious question where to begin, and a still more difficult question where to end. For these tales are the first outpourings of that spring of imagination whence flow the most illuminating, inspiring, refreshing and captivating thoughts and ideas about life. No philosophy is deeper than that which underlies these stories; no psychology is more important than that which finds its choicest illustration in them; no chapter in the history of thought is more suggestive and engrossing than that which records their growth and divines their meaning. Fairy tales and myths are so much akin that they are easily transformed and exchange costumes without changing character; while the legend, which belongs to a later period, often reflects the large meaning of the myth and the free fancy of the fairy tale.

As a class, children not only possess the faculty of imagination, but are very largely occupied with it during the most sensitive and formative years, and those who lack it are brought under its spell by their fellows. They do not accurately distinguish between the actual and the imaginary, and they live at ease in a world out of which paths run in every direction into wonderland. They begin their education when they begin to play; for play not only affords an outlet for their energy, and so supplies one great means of growth and training, but places them in social relations with their mates and in conscious contact with the world about them. The old games that have been played by generations of children not only precede the training of the school and supplement it, but accomplish some results in the nature of the child which are beyond the reach of the school. When a crowd of boys are rushing across country in “hounds and deer,” they are giving lungs, heart and muscles the best possible exercise; they are sharing certain rules of honor with one another, expressed in that significant phrase, “fair play”; and they are giving rein to their imaginations in the very name of their occupation. Body, spirit and imagination have their part in every good game; for the interest of a game lies in its appeal to the imagination, as in “hounds and deer,” or in its stimulus to activity, as in “tag” and “hide-and-seek.“

There are few chapters in the biography of the childhood of men of genius more significant than those which describe imaginary worlds which were, for a time, as real as the actual world in which the boy lived. Goethe entertained and mystified his playmates with accounts of a certain garden in which he wandered at will, but which they could not

find; and De Quincey created a kingdom, with all its complex relations and varied activities, which he ruled with beneficence and affection until, in an unlucky hour, he revealed his secret to his brother, who straightway usurped his authority, and governed his subjects with such tyranny and cruelty that De Quincey was compelled to save his people by destroying them.

These elaborate and highly organized efforts of the young imagination, of which boys and girls of unusual inventiveness are capable, are imitated on a smaller scale by all normal children. They endow inanimate things with life, and play and suffer with them as with their real playmates. The little girl not only talks with her dolls, but weeps with and for them when disaster overtakes them. The boy faces foes of his own making in the woods, or at lonely places in the road, who are quite as real to him as the people with whom he lives. By common agreement a locality often becomes a historic spot to a whole group of boys; enemies are met and overcome there; grave perils are bravely faced; and the magic sometimes lingers long after the dream has been dissolved in the dawning light of definite knowledge, Childhood is one long day of discovery; first, to the unfolding spirit, there is revealed a wonderland partly actual and partly created by the action of the mind; then follows the slow awakening, when the growing boy or girl learns to distinguish between tact and fancy, and to separate the real from the imaginary.

This process of learning to “see things as they are” is often regarded as the substance of education, and to be able to distinguish sharply and accurately between reality and vision, actual and imaginary image is accepted as the test of thorough training of the intelligence. What really takes place is the readjustment of the work of the faculties so as to secure harmonious action; and in the happy and sound development of the nature the imagination does not give place to observation, but deals with principles, forces and laws instead of with things. The loss of vision is never compensated for by the gain of sight; to see a thing one must use his mind quite as much as his eye. It too often happens, as the result of our educational methods, that in training the observer we blight the poet; and the poet is, after all, the most important person in society. He keeps the soul of his fellows alive. Without him the modern world would become one vast, dreary, soul-destroying Coketown, and man would sink to the level of Gradgrind. The practical man develops the resources of the country, the man of vision discerns, formulates and directs its spiritual policy and growth; the mechanic builds the house, but the architect creates it; the artisan makes the tools, but the artist uses them; the observer sees and records the fact, but the scientist discovers the law; the man of affairs manages the practical concerns of the world from day to day, but the poet makes it spiritual, significant, interesting, worth living in.

The modern child passes through the same stages as did the children of four thousand years ago. He, too, is a poet. He believes that the world about him throbs with life and is peopled with all manner of strange, beautiful, powerful folk, who live just outside the range of his sight; he, too, personifies light and heat and storm and wind and cold as his remote ancestors did. He, too, lives in and through his imagination; and if, in later life, he grows in power and becomes a creative man, his achievements are the fruits of the free and vigorous life of his imagination. The higher kinds of power, the higher opportunities of mind, the richer resources, the springs of the deeper happiness, are open to him in the exact degree in which he is able to use his imagination with individual freedom and intelligence. Formal education makes small provision for this great need of his nature; it

trains his eye, his hand, his faculty of observation, his ability to reason, his capacity for resolute action; but it takes little account of that higher faculty which, cooperating with the other faculties, makes him an architect instead of a builder, an artist instead of an artisan, a poet instead of a drudge.

The fairy tale belongs to the child and ought always to be within his reach, not only because it is his special literary form and his nature craves it, but because it is one of the most vital of the textbooks offered to him in the school of life. In ultimate importance it outranks the arithmetic, the grammar, the geography, the manuals of science; for without the aid of the imagination none of these books is really comprehensible.

HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE,

March, 1905.

FAIRY TALES

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FAIRY TALES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

CHAPTER I

ONE EYE, TWO EYES, THREE EYES

There was once a woman who had three daughters, of whom the eldest was named “One Eye,” because she had only one eye in the middle of her forehead. The second had two eyes, like other people, and she was called “Two Eyes.” The youngest had three eyes, two like her second sister, and one in the middle of her forehead, like the eldest, and she bore the name of “Three Eyes.”

Now because little Two Eyes looked just like other people, her mother and sisters could not endure her. They said to her, “You are not better than common folks, with your two eyes; you don’t belong to us.”

So they pushed her about, and threw all their old clothes to her for her to wear, and gave her only the pieces that were left to eat, and did everything that they could to make her miserable. It so happened that little Two Eyes was sent into the fields to take care of the goats, and she was often very hungry, although her sisters had as much as they liked to eat. So one day she seated herself on a mound in the field, and began to weep and cry so bitterly that two little rivulets flowed from her eyes. Once, in the midst of her sorrow she looked up, and saw a woman standing near her who said, “What are you weeping for, little Two Eyes?“

“I cannot help weeping,” she replied; “for because I have two eyes, like other people, my mother and sisters cannot bear me; they push me about from one corner to another and make we wear their old clothes, and give me nothing to eat but what is left, so that I am always hungry. To-day they gave me so little that I am nearly starved.”

“Dry up your tears, little Two Eyes,” said the wise woman; “I will tell you something to do which will prevent you from ever being hungry again. You have only to say to your own goat:

> “‘Little goat, if you’re able,
> Pray deck out my table,’

“and immediately there will be a pretty little table before you full of all sorts of good things for you to eat, as much as you like. And when you have had enough, and you do not want the table any more, you need only say:

> “‘Little goat, when you’re able,
> Remove my nice table,’

“and it will vanish from your eyes.”

Then the wise woman went away. “Now,” thought little Two Eyes, “I will try if what she says is true, for I am very hungry,” so she said:

> “Little goat, if you’re able,
> Pray deck out my table.”

The words were scarcely spoken, when a beautiful little table stood really before her; it had a white cloth and plates, and knives and forks, and silver spoons, and such a delicious dinner, smoking hot as if it had just come from the kitchen. Then little Two Eyes sat down and said the shortest grace she knew—"Pray God be our guest for all time. Amen"—before she allowed herself to taste anything. But oh, how she did enjoy her dinner! and when she had finished, she said, as the wise woman had taught her:

"Little goat, when you're able,
Remove my nice table."

In a moment, the table and everything upon it had disappeared. "That is a pleasant way to keep house," said little Two Eyes, and felt quite contented and happy. In the evening, when she went home with the goat, she found an earthenware dish with some scraps which her sisters had left for her, but she did not touch them. The next morning she went away with the goat, leaving them behind where they had been placed for her. The first and second times that she did so, the sisters did not notice it; but when they found it happened every day, they said one to the other, "There is something strange about little Two Eyes, she leaves her supper every day, and all that has been put for her has been wasted; she must get food somewhere else."

So they determined to find out the truth, and they arranged that when Two Eyes took her goat to the field, One Eye should go with her to take particular notice of what she did, and discover if anything was brought for her to eat and drink.

So when Two Eyes started with her goat, One Eye said to her, "I am going with you to-day to see if the goat gets her food properly while you are watching the rest."

But Two Eyes knew what she had in her mind. So she drove the goat into the long grass, and said, "Come, One Eye, let us sit down here and rest, and I will sing to you."

One Eye seated herself, and, not being accustomed to walk so far, or to be out in the heat of the sun, she began to feel tired, and as little Two Eyes kept on singing, she closed her one eye and fell fast asleep.

When Two Eyes saw this, she knew that One Eye could not betray her, so she said:

"Little goat, if you are able,
Come and deck my pretty table."

She seated herself when it appeared, and ate and drank very quickly, and when she had finished she said:

"Little goat, when you are able,
Come and clear away my table."

It vanished in the twinkling of an eye; and then Two Eyes woke up One Eye, and said, "Little One Eye, you are a clever one to watch goats; for, while you are asleep, they might be running all over the world. Come, let us go home!"

So they went to the house, and little Two Eyes again left the scraps on the dish untouched, and One Eye could not tell her mother whether little Two Eyes had eaten anything in the field; for she said to excuse herself, "I was asleep."

The next day the mother said to Three Eyes, “You must go to the field this time, and find out whether there is anyone who brings food to little Two Eyes; for she must eat and drink secretly.“

So when little Two Eyes started with her goat, Three Eyes followed, and said, “I am going with you to-day, to see if the goats are properly fed and watched.”

But Two Eyes knew her thoughts; so she led the goat through the long grass to tire Three Eyes, and at last she said, “Let us sit down here and rest, and I will sing to you, Three Eyes.”

She was glad to sit down, for the walk and the heat of the sun had really tired her; and, as her sister continued her song, she was obliged to close two of her eyes, and they slept, but not the third. In fact, Three Eyes was wide awake with one eye, and heard and saw all that Two Eyes did; for poor little Two Eyes, thinking she was asleep, said her speech to the goat, and the table came with all the good things on it, and was carried away when Two Eyes had eaten enough; and the cunning Three Eyes saw it all with her one eye. But she pretended to be asleep when her sister came to wake her and told her she was going home.

That evening, when little Two Eyes again left the supper they placed aside for her, Three Eyes said to her mother, “I know where the proud thing gets her good eating and drinking;” and then she described all she had seen in the field. “I saw it all with one eye,” she said; “for she had made my other two eyes close with her fine singing, but luckily the one in my forehead remained open.”

Then the envious mother cried out to poor little Two Eyes, “You wish to have better food than we, do you? You shall lose your wish!” She took up a butcher’s knife, went out, and stuck the good little goat in the heart, and it fell dead.

When little Two Eyes saw this, she went out into the field, seated herself on a mound, and wept most bitter tears.

Presently the wise woman stood again before her, and said, “Little Two Eyes, why do you weep?”

“Ah!” she replied, “I must weep. The goat, who every day spread my table so beautifully, has been killed by my mother, and I shall have again to suffer from hunger and sorrow.”

“Little Two Eyes,” said the wise woman, “I will give you some good advice. Go home, and ask your sister to give you the inside of the slaughtered goat, and then go and bury it in the ground in front of the house-door.”

On saying this the wise woman vanished.

Little Two Eyes went home quickly, and said to her sister, “Dear sister, give me some part of my poor goat. I don’t want anything valuable; only give me the inside.”

Her sister laughed, and said, “Of course you can have that, if you don’t want anything else.”

So little Two Eyes took the inside; and in the evening, when all was quiet, buried it in the ground outside the house-door, as the wise woman had told her to do.

The next morning, when they all rose and looked out of the window, there stood a most

wonderful tree, with leaves of silver and apples of gold hanging between them. Nothing in the wide world could be more beautiful or more costly. They none of them knew how the tree could come there in one night, excepting little Two Eyes. She supposed it had grown up from the inside of the goat; for it stood over where she had buried it in the earth.

Then said the mother to little One Eye, “Climb up, my child, and break off some of the fruit from the tree.”

One Eye climbed up, but when she tried to catch a branch and pluck one of the apples, it escaped from her hand, and so it happened every time she made the attempt, and, do what she would, she could not reach one.

“Three Eyes,” said the mother, “climb up, and try what you can do; perhaps you will be able to see better with your three eyes than One Eye can.”

One Eye slid down from the tree, and Three Eyes climbed up. But Three Eyes was not more skilful; with all her efforts she could not draw the branches, nor the fruit, near enough to pluck even a leaf, for they sprang back as she put out her hand.

At last the mother was impatient, and climbed up herself, but with no more success, for, as she appeared to grasp a branch, or fruit, her hand closed upon thin air.

“May I try?” said little Two Eyes; “perhaps I may succeed.”

“You, indeed!” cried her sisters; “you, with your two eyes, what can you do?”

But Two Eyes climbed up, and the golden apples did not fly back from her when she touched them, but almost laid themselves on her hand, and she plucked them one after another, till she carried down her own little apron full.

The mother took them from her, and gave them to her sisters, as she said little Two Eyes did not handle them properly; but this was only from jealousy, because little Two Eyes was the only one who could reach the fruit, and she went into the house feeling more spiteful to her than ever.

It happened that while all three sisters were standing under the tree together a young knight rode by. “Run away, quick, and hide yourself, little Two Eyes; hide yourself somewhere, for we shall be quite ashamed for you to be seen.” Then they pushed the poor girl, in great haste, under an empty cask, which stood near the tree, and several of the golden apples that she had plucked along with her.

As the knight came nearer they saw he was a handsome man; and presently he halted, and looked with wonder and pleasure at the beautiful tree with its silver leaves and golden fruit.

At last he spoke to the sisters, and asked: “To whom does this beautiful tree belong? If a man possessed only one branch he might obtain all he wished for in the world.”

“This tree belongs to us,” said the two sisters, “and we will break off a branch for you if you like.” They gave themselves a great deal of trouble in trying to do as they offered; but all to no purpose, for the branches and the fruit evaded their efforts, and sprung back at every touch.

“This is wonderful,” exclaimed the knight, “that the tree should belong to you, and yet you

are not able to gather even a branch.“

They persisted, however, in declaring that the tree was their own property. At this moment little Two Eyes, who was angry because her sisters had not told the truth, caused two of the golden apples to slip out from under the cask, and they rolled on till they reached the feet of the knight’s horse. When he saw them, he asked in astonishment where they came from.

The two ugly maidens replied that they had another sister, but they dared not let him see her, for she had only two eyes, like common people, and was named little Two Eyes.

But the knight felt very anxious to see her, and called out, “Little Two Eyes, come here.” Then came Two Eyes, quite comforted, from the empty cask, and the knight was astonished to find her so beautiful.

Then he said, “Little Two Eyes, can you break off a branch of the tree for me?”

“Oh yes,” she replied, “I can, very easily, for the tree belongs to me.” And she climbed up, and, without any trouble, broke off a branch with its silver leaves and golden fruit and gave it to the knight.

He looked down at her as she stood by his horse, and said: “Little Two Eyes, what shall I give you for this?”

“Ah!” she answered, “I suffer from hunger and thirst, and sorrow, and trouble, from early morning till late at night; if you would only take me with you, and release me, I should be so happy.”

Then the knight lifted the little maiden on his horse, and rode home with her to his father’s castle. There she was given beautiful clothes to wear, and as much to eat and drink as she wished, and as she grew up the young knight loved her so dearly that they were married with great rejoicings.

Now, when the two sisters saw little Two Eyes carried away by the handsome young knight, they were overjoyed at their good fortune. “The wonderful tree belongs to us now,” they said; “even if we cannot break off a branch, yet everybody who passes will stop to admire it, and make acquaintance with us, and, who knows? we may get husbands after all.”

But when they rose the next morning, lo! the tree had vanished, and with it all their hopes. And on this very morning, when little Two Eyes looked out of her chamber window of the castle, she saw, to her great joy, that the tree had followed her.

Little Two Eyes lived for a long time in great happiness; but she heard nothing of her sisters, till one day two poor women came to the castle, to beg for alms. Little Two Eyes saw them, and, looking earnestly in their faces, she recognised her two sisters, who had become so poor that they were obliged to beg their bread from door to door.

But the good sister received them most kindly, and promised to take care of them and give them all they wanted. And then they did indeed repent and feel sorry for having treated her so badly in their youthful days.

CHAPTER II

THE MAGIC MIRROR

One day in the middle of winter, when the snowflakes fell from the sky like feathers, a queen sat at a window netting. Her netting-needle was of black ebony, and as she worked, and the snow glittered, she pricked her finger, and three drops of blood fell into the snow. The red spots looked so beautiful in the white snow that the queen thought to herself: “Oh, if I only had a little child, I should like it to be as fair as snow, as rosy as the red blood, and with hair and eyes as black as ebony.”

Very soon after this the queen had a little daughter who was very fair, had rosy cheeks, and hair as black as ebony; and they gave her the name of Snow-white. But at the birth of the little child the queen died.

When Snow-white was a year old, the king took another wife. She was very handsome, but so proud and vain that she could not endure that anyone should surpass her in beauty. She possessed a wonderful mirror, and when she stood before it to look at herself she would say:

> “Mirror, mirror on the wall,
> Am I most beautiful of all?”

Then the mirror would reply:

> “Young queen, thou are so wondrous fair,
> None can with thee at all compare.”

Then she would go away quite contented, for she knew the magic mirror could speak only the truth.

Years went by, and as Snow-white grew up, she became day after day more beautiful, till she reached the age of seven years, and then people began to talk about her, and say that she would be more lovely even than the queen herself. So the proud woman went to her magic looking-glass, and asked:

> “Mirror, mirror on the wall,
> Am I most beautiful of all?”

But the mirror answered:

> “Queen, thou are lovely still to see,
> But Snow-white will be
> A thousand times more beautiful than thee.”

Then the queen was terrified, and turned green and yellow with jealousy. If she had caught sight of Snow-white at that moment, she would have been ready to tear her heart out of her body, she hated the maiden so fiercely.

And this jealousy and envy grew every day stronger and stronger in her heart, like a disease, till she had no rest day or night.

At last she sent for a hunter, who lived near a forest, and said to him, “Hunter, I want to get rid of that child. Take her out into the wood, and if you bring me some proofs that she is dead, I will reward you handsomely. Never let her appear before my eyes again.“

So the hunter enticed the child into the wood; but when he took out his hunting-knife to thrust into Snow-white’s innocent heart, she fell on her knees and wept, and said, “Ah, dear hunter, leave me my life; I will run away into the wild wood, and never, never come home any more.”

She looked so innocent and beautiful as she knelt, that the hunter’s heart was moved with compassion: “Run away, then, thou poor child,” he cried; “I cannot harm thee.”

Snow-white thanked him so sweetly, and was out of sight in a few moments.

“She will be devoured by wild beasts,” he said to himself. But the thought that he had not killed her was as if a stone-weight had been lifted from his heart.

To satisfy the queen, he took part of the inside of a young fawn, which the wicked woman thought was poor little Snow-white, and was overjoyed to think she was dead.

But the poor little motherless child, when she found herself alone in the wood, and saw nothing but trees and leaves, was dreadfully frightened, and knew not what to do. At last she began to run over the sharp stones and through the thorns, and though the wild beasts sprang out before her, they did her no harm. She ran on as long as she could till her little feet became quite sore; and towards evening she saw, to her great joy, a pretty little house. So she went up to it, and found the door open and no one at home.

It was a tiny little house, but everything in it was so clean and neat and elegant that it is beyond description. In the middle of the room stood a small table, covered with a snow-white table-cloth, ready for supper. On it were arranged seven little plates, seven little spoons, seven little knives and forks, and seven mugs. By the wall stood seven little beds, near each other, covered with white quilts.

Poor Snow-white, who was hungry and thirsty, ate a few vegetables and a little bread from each plate, and drank a little drop of wine from each cup, for she did not like to take all she wanted from one alone. After this, feeling very tired, she thought she would lie down and rest on one of the beds, but she found it difficult to choose one to suit her. One was too long, another too short; so she tried them all till she came to the seventh, and that was so comfortable that she laid herself down, and was soon fast asleep.

When it was quite dark the masters of the house came home. They were seven little dwarfs, who dug and searched in the mountains for minerals. First they lighted seven little lamps, and as soon as the room was full of light they saw that some one had been there, for everything did not stand in the order in which they had left it.

Then said the first, “Who has been sitting in my little chair?”

The second exclaimed, “Who has been eating from my little plate?”

The third cried, “Some one has taken part of my bread.”

“Who has been eating my vegetables?” said the fourth.

Then said the fifth, “Some one has used my fork.”

The sixth cried, “And who has been cutting with my knife?”

“And some one has been drinking out of my cup,” said the seventh.

Then the eldest looked at his bed, and, seeing that it looked tumbled, cried out that some one had been upon it. The others came running forward, and found all their beds in the same condition. But when the seventh approached his bed, and saw Snow-white lying there fast asleep, he called the others, who came quickly, and holding their lights over their heads, cried out in wonder as they beheld the sleeping child. “Oh, what a beautiful little child!” they said to each other, and were so delighted that they would not awaken her, but left her to sleep as long as she liked in the little bed, while its owner slept with one of his companions, and so the night passed away.

In the morning, when Snow-white awoke, and saw all the dwarfs, she was terribly frightened. But they spoke kindly to her, till she lost all fear, and they asked her name.

“I am called Snow-white,” she replied.

“But how came you to our house?” asked one.

Then she related to them all that had happened; how her stepmother had sent her into the wood with the hunter, who had spared her life, and that, after wandering about for a whole day, she had found their house.

The dwarfs talked a little while together, and then one said, “Do you think you could be our little housekeeper, to make the beds, cook the dinner, and wash and sew and knit for us, and keep everything neat and clean and orderly? If you can, then you shall stay here with us, and nobody shall hurt you.“

“Oh yes, I will try,” said Snow-white. So they let her stay, and she was a clever little thing. She managed very well, and kept the house quite clean and in order. And while they were gone to the mountains to find gold, she got their supper ready, and they were very happy together.

But every morning when they left her, the kind little dwarfs warned Snow-white to be careful. While the maiden was alone they knew she was in danger, and told her not to show herself, for her stepmother would soon find out where she was, and said, “Whatever you do, let nobody into the house while we are gone.”

After the wicked queen had proved, as she thought, that Snow-white was dead, she felt quite satisfied there was no one in the world now likely to become so beautiful as herself, so she stepped up to her mirror and asked:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is most beautiful of all?"

To her vexation the mirror replied:

"Fair queen, at home there is none like thee,
But over the mountains is Snow-white free,
With seven little dwarfs, who are strange to see;
A thousand times fairer than thou is she."

The queen was furious when she heard this, for she knew the mirror was truthful, and that the hunter must have deceived her, and that Snow-white still lived. So she sat and pondered over these facts, thinking what would be best to do, for as long as she was not the most beautiful woman in the land, her jealousy gave her no peace. After a time, she decided what to do. First, she painted her face, and whitened her hair; then she dressed herself in old woman's clothes, and was so disguised that no one could have recognised her.

Watching an opportunity, she left the castle, and took her way to the wood near the mountains, where the seven little dwarfs lived. When she reached the door, she knocked, and cried, "Beautiful goods to sell; beautiful goods to sell."

Snow-white, when she heard it, peeped through the window, and said, "Good-day, old lady. What have you in your basket for me to buy?"

"Everything that is pretty," she replied; "laces, and pearls, and earrings, and bracelets of every colour;" and she held up her basket, which was lined with glittering silk.

"I can let in this respectable old woman," thought Snow-white; "she will not harm me." So she unbolted the door, and told her to come in. Oh, how delighted Snow-white was with the pretty things; she bought several trinkets, and a beautiful silk lace for her stays, but she did not see the evil eye of the old woman who was watching her. Presently she said, "Child, come here; I will show you how to lace your stays properly." Snow-white had no suspicion, so she placed herself before the old woman that she might lace her stays. But no sooner was the lace in the holes than she began to lace so fast and pull so tight that Snow-white could not breathe, and presently fell down at her feet as if dead.

"Now you are beautiful indeed," said the woman, and, fancying she heard footsteps, she rushed away as quickly as she could.

Not long after, the seven dwarfs came home, and they were terribly frightened to see dear little Snow-white lying on the ground without motion, as if she were dead. They lifted her up, and saw in a moment that her stays had been laced too tight Quickly they cut the stay-lace in two, till Snow-white began to breathe a little, and after a time was restored to life. But when the dwarfs heard what had happened, they said: "That old market-woman was no other than your wicked stepmother. Snow-white, you must never again let anyone in while we are not with you."

The wicked queen when she returned home, after, as she thought, killing Snow-white, went to her looking-glass and asked:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,

Am I most beautiful of all?”

Then answered the mirror:

“Queen, thou art not the fairest now;
Snow-white over the mountain’s brow
A thousand times fairer is than thou.”

When she heard this she was so terrified that the blood rushed to her heart, for she knew that after all she had done Snow-white was still alive. “I must think of something else,” she said to herself, “to get rid of that odious child.”

Now this wicked queen had some knowledge of witchcraft, and she knew how to poison a comb, so that whoever used it would fall dead. This the wicked stepmother soon got ready, and dressing herself again like an old woman, but quite different from the last, she started off to travel over the mountains to the dwarfs’ cottage.

When Snow-white heard the old cry, “Goods to sell, fine goods to sell,” she looked out of the window and said:

“Go away, go away; I must not let you in.”

“Look at this, then,” said the woman; “you shall have it for your own if you like,” and she held up before the child’s eyes the bright tortoise-shell comb which she had poisoned.

Poor Snow-white could not refuse such a present, so she opened the door and let the woman in, quite forgetting the advice of the dwarfs. After she had bought a few things, the old woman said, “Let me try this comb in your hair; it is so fine it will make it beautifully smooth and glossy.”

So Snow-white, thinking no wrong, stood before the woman to have her hair dressed; but no sooner had the comb touched the roots of her hair than the poison took effect, and the maiden fell to the ground lifeless.

“You paragon of beauty,” said the wicked woman, “all has just happened as I expected,” and then she went away quickly.

Fortunately evening soon arrived, and the seven dwarfs returned home. When they saw Snow-white lying dead on the ground, they knew at once that the stepmother had been there again; but on seeing the poisoned comb in her hair they pulled it out quickly, and Snow-white very soon came to herself, and related all that had passed.

Again they warned her not to let anyone enter the house during their absence, and on no account to open the door; but Snow-white was not clever enough to resist her clever wicked stepmother, and she forgot to obey.

The wicked queen felt sure now that she had really killed Snow-white; so as soon as she returned home she went to her looking-glass, and inquired:

“Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is most beautiful of all?”

But the mirror replied:

“Queen, thou art the fairest here,

But not when Snow-white is near;
Over the mountains still is she,
Fairer a thousand times than thee.”

As the looking-glass thus replied, the queen trembled and quaked with rage. “Snow-white shall die,” cried she, “if it costs me my own life!”

Then she went into a lonely forbidden chamber where no one was allowed to come, and poisoned a beautiful apple. Outwardly it looked ripe and tempting, of a pale green with rosy cheeks, so that it made everyone’s mouth water to look at it, but whoever ate even a small piece must die.

As soon as this apple was ready, the wicked queen painted her face, disguised her hair, dressed herself as a farmer’s wife, and went again over the mountains to the dwarfs’ cottage.

When she knocked at the door, Snow-white stretched her head out of the window, and said, “I dare not let you in; the seven dwarfs have forbidden me.”

“But I am all right,” said the farmer’s wife. “Stay, I will show you my apples. Are they not beautiful? let me make you a present of one.”

“No, thank you,” cried Snow-white; “I dare not take it.”

“What!” cried the woman, “are you afraid it is poisoned? Look here now, I will cut the apple in halves; you shall have the rosy-cheek side, and I will eat the other.”

The apple was so cleverly made that the red side alone was poisonous. Snow-white longed so much for the beautiful fruit as she saw the farmer’s wife eat one half that she could not any longer resist, but stretched out her hand from the window and took the poisoned half. But no sooner had she taken one mouthful than she fell on the ground dead.

Then the wicked queen glanced in at the window with a horrible look in her eye, and laughed aloud as she exclaimed:

“White as snow, red as blood, and black as ebony; this time the dwarfs will not be able to awake thee.”

And as soon as she arrived at home, and asked her mirror who was the most beautiful in the land, it replied:

“Fair queen, there is none in all the land
So beautiful as thou.”

Then had her envious heart rest, at least such rest as a heart full of envy and malice ever can have.

The little dwarfs, when they came home in the evening, found poor Snow-white on the ground; but though they lifted her up, there were no signs of breath from her mouth, and they found she was really dead. Yet they tried in every way to restore her; they tried to extract the poison from her lips, they combed her hair, and washed it with wine and water, but all to no purpose: the dear child gave no signs of life, and at last they knew she was dead. Then they laid her on a bier, and the seven dwarfs seated themselves round her, and wept and mourned for three days. They would have buried her then, but there was no

change in her appearance; her face was as fresh, and her cheeks and lips had their usual colour. Then said one, “We cannot lay this beautiful child in the dark, cold earth.”

So they agreed to have a coffin made entirely of glass, transparent all over, that they might watch for any signs of decay, and they wrote in letters of gold her name on the lid, and that she was the daughter of a king. The coffin was placed on the side of the mountain, and each of them watched it by turns, so that it was never left alone. And the birds of the air came near and mourned for Snow-white; first the owl, then the raven, and at last the dove. Snow-white lay for a long, long time in the glass coffin, but showed not the least signs of decay. It seemed as if she slept; for her skin was snow white, her cheeks rosy red, and her hair black as ebony.

It happened one day that the son of a king, while riding in the forest, came by chance upon the dwarfs’ house and asked for a night’s lodging. As he left the next morning he saw the coffin on the mountain-side, with beautiful Snow-white lying in it, and read what was written upon the lid in letters of gold.

Then he said to the dwarfs, “Let me have this coffin, and I will give you for it whatever you ask.”

But the elder dwarf answered, “We would not give it thee for all the gold in the world.”

But the prince answered, “Let me have it as a gift, then. I know not why, but my heart is drawn towards this beautiful child, and I feel I cannot live without her. If you will let me have her, she shall be treated with the greatest honour and respect as one dearly beloved.”

As he thus spoke the good little dwarfs were full of sympathy for him, and gave him the coffin. Then the prince called his servants, and the coffin was placed on their shoulders, and they carried it away, followed by the king’s son, who watched it carefully. Now it happened that one of them made a false step and stumbled. This shook the coffin, and caused the poisoned piece of apple which Snow-white had bitten to roll out of her mouth. A little while after she suddenly opened her eyes, lifted up the coffin-lid, raised herself and was again alive.

“Oh! where am I?” she cried.

Full of joy, the king’s son approached her, and said, “Dear Snow-white, you are safe; you are with me.“

Then he related to her all that had happened, and what the little dwarfs had told him about her, and said at last, “I love you better than all in the world besides, dear little Snow-white, and you must come with me to my father’s castle and be my wife.”

Then was Snow-white taken out of the coffin and placed in a carriage to travel with the prince, and the king was so pleased with his son’s choice that the marriage was soon after celebrated with great pomp and magnificence.

Now it happened that the stepmother of Snow-white was invited, among other guests, to the wedding-feast. Before she left her house she stood in all her rich dress before the magic mirror to admire her own appearance, but she could not help saying;

> “Mirror, mirror on the wall,
> Am I most beautiful of all?”

Then to her surprise the mirror replied:

“Fair queen, thou art the fairest here,
But at the palace, now,
The bride will prove a thousand times
More beautiful than thou.”

Then the wicked woman uttered a curse, and was so dreadfully alarmed that she knew not what to do. At first she declared she would not go to this wedding at all, but she felt it impossible to rest until she had seen the bride, so she determined to go. But what was her astonishment and vexation when she recognised in the young bride Snow-white herself, now grown a charming young woman, and richly dressed in royal robes! Her rage and terror were so great that she stood still and could not move for some minutes. At last she went into the ballroom, but the slippers she wore were to her as iron bands full of coals of fire, in which she was obliged to dance. And so in the red, glowing shoes she continued to dance till she fell dead on the floor, a sad example of envy and jealousy.

CHAPTER III

THE ENCHANTED STAG

There were once a brother and sister who loved each other dearly; their mother was dead, and their father had married again a woman who was most unkind and cruel to them. One day the boy took his sister's hand, and said to her, "Dear little sister, since our mother died we have not had one happy hour. Our stepmother gives us dry hard crusts for dinner and supper; she often knocks us about, and threatens to kick us out of the house. Even the little dogs under the table fare better than we do, for she often throws them nice pieces to eat. Heaven pity us! Oh, if our dear mother knew! Come, let us go out into the wide world!"

So they went out, and wandered over fields and meadows the whole day till evening. At last they found themselves in a large forest; it began to rain, and the little sister said, "See, brother, heaven and our hearts weep together." At last, tired out with hunger and sorrow, and the long journey, they crept into a hollow tree, laid themselves down, and slept till morning.

When they awoke the sun was high in the heavens, and shone brightly into the hollow tree, so they left their place of shelter and wandered away in search of water.

"Oh, I am so thirsty!" said the boy. "If we could only find a brook or a stream." He stopped to listen, and said, "Stay, I think I hear a running stream." So he took his sister by the hand, and they ran together to find it.

Now, the stepmother of these poor children was a wicked witch. She had seen the children go away, and, following them cautiously like a snake, had bewitched all the springs and streams in the forest. The pleasant trickling of a brook over the pebbles was heard by the children as they reached it, and the boy was just stooping to drink, when the sister heard in the babbling of the brook:

> "Whoever drinks of me, a tiger soon will be."

Then she cried quickly, "Stay, brother, stay! do not drink, or you will become a wild beast, and tear me to pieces."

Thirsty as he was, the brother conquered his desire to drink at her words, and said, "Dear sister, I will wait till we come to a spring." So they wandered farther, but as they approached, she heard in the bubbling spring the words—

> "Who drinks of me, a wolf will be."

"Brother, I pray you, do not drink of this brook; you will be changed into a wolf, and devour me."

Again the brother denied himself and promised to wait; but he said, "At the next stream I must drink, say what you will, my thirst is so great."

Not far off ran a pretty streamlet, looking clear and bright; but here also in its murmuring waters, the sister heard the words—

“Who dares to drink of me,
Turned to a stag will be.”

“Dear brother, do not drink,” she began; but she was too late, for her brother had already knelt by the stream to drink, and as the first drop of water touched his lips he became a fawn. How the little sister wept over the enchanted brother, and the fawn wept also.

He did not run away, but stayed close to her; and at last she said, “Stand still, dear fawn; don’t fear, I must take care of you, but I will never leave you.” So she untied her little golden garter and fastened it round the neck of the fawn; then she gathered some soft green rushes, and braided them into a soft string, which she fastened to the fawn’s golden collar, and then led him away into the depths of the forest.

After wandering about for some time, they at last found a little deserted hut, and the sister was overjoyed, for she thought it would form a nice shelter for them both. So she led the fawn in, and then went out alone, to gather moss and dried leaves, to make him a soft bed.

Every morning she went out to gather dried roots, nuts, and berries, for her own food, and sweet fresh grass for the fawn, which he ate out of her hand, and the poor little animal went out with her, and played about as happy as the day was long.

When evening came, and the poor sister felt tired, she would kneel down and say her prayers, and then lay her delicate head on the fawn’s back, which was a soft warm pillow, on which she could sleep peacefully. Had this dear brother only kept his own proper form, how happy they would have been together! After they had been alone in the forest for some time, and the little sister had grown a lovely maiden, and the fawn a large stag, a numerous hunting party came to the forest, and amongst them the king of the country.

The sounding horn, the barking of the dogs, the holloa of the huntsmen, resounded through the forest, and were heard by the stag, who became eager to join his companions.

“Oh dear,” he said, “do let me go and see the hunt; I cannot restrain myself.” And he begged so hard that at last she reluctantly consented.

“But remember,” she said, “I must lock the cottage door against those huntsmen, so when you come back in the evening, and knock, I shall not admit you, unless you say, ‘Dear little sister let me in.’”

He bounded off as she spoke, scarcely stopping to listen, for it was so delightful for him to breathe the fresh air and be free again.

He had not run far when the king’s chief hunter caught sight of the beautiful animal, and started off in chase of him; but it was no easy matter to overtake such rapid footsteps. Once, when he thought he had him safe, the fawn sprang over the bushes and disappeared.

As it was now nearly dark, he ran up to the little cottage, knocked at the door, and cried, “Dear little sister, let me in.” The door was instantly opened, and oh, how glad his sister was to see him safely resting on his soft pleasant bed!

A few days after this, the huntsmen were again in the forest; and when the fawn heard the holloa, he could not rest in peace, but begged his sister again to let him go.

She opened the door, and said, “I will let you go this time; but pray do not forget to say

what I told you, when you return this evening."

The chief hunter very soon espied the beautiful fawn with the golden collar, pointed it out to the king, and they determined to hunt it.

They chased him with all their skill till the evening; but he was too light and nimble for them to catch, till a shot wounded him slightly in the foot, so that he was obliged to hide himself in the bushes, and, after the huntsmen were gone, limp slowly home.

One of them, however, determined to follow him at a distance, and discover where he went. What was his surprise at seeing him go up to a door and knock, and to hear him say, "Dear little sister, let me in." The door was only opened a little way, and quickly shut; but the huntsman had seen enough to make him full of wonder, when he returned and described to the king what he had seen.

"We will have one more chase to-morrow," said the king, "and discover this mystery."

In the meantime the loving sister was terribly alarmed at finding the stag's foot wounded and bleeding. She quickly washed off the blood, and, after bathing the wound, placed healing herbs on it, and said, "Lie down on your bed, dear fawn, and the wound will soon heal, if you rest your foot."

In the morning the wound was so much better that the fawn felt the foot almost as strong as ever, and so, when he again heard the holloa of the hunters, he could not rest. "Oh, dear sister, I must go once more; it will be easy for me to avoid the hunters now, and my foot feels quite well; they will not hunt me unless they see me running, and I don't mean to do that."

But his sister wept, and begged him not to go: "If they kill you, dear fawn, I shall be here alone in the forest, forsaken by the whole world."

"And I shall die of grief," he said, "if I remain here listening to the hunter's horn."

So at length his sister, with a heavy heart, set him free, and he bounded away joyfully into the forest.

As soon as the king caught sight of him, he said to the huntsmen, "Follow that stag about, but don't hurt him." So they hunted him all day, but at the approach of sunset the king said to the hunter who had followed the fawn the day before, "Come and show me the little cottage."

So they went together, and when the king saw it he sent his companion home, and went on alone so quickly that he arrived there before the fawn; and, going up to the little door, knocked and said softly, "Dear little sister, let me in."

As the door opened, the king stepped in, and in great astonishment saw a maiden more beautiful than he had ever seen in his life standing before him. But how frightened she felt to see instead of her dear little fawn a noble gentleman walk in with a gold crown on his head.

However, he appeared very friendly, and after a little talk he held out his hand to her, and said, "Wilt thou go with me to my castle and be my dear wife?"

"Ah yes," replied the maiden, "I would willingly; but I cannot leave my dear fawn: he

must go with me wherever I am."

"He shall remain with you as long as you live," replied the king, "and I will never ask you to forsake him."

While they were talking, the fawn came bounding in, looking quite well and happy. Then his sister fastened the string of rushes to his collar, took it in her hand, and led him away from the cottage in the wood to where the king's beautiful horse waited for him.

The king placed the maiden before him on his horse and rode away to his castle, the fawn following by their side. Soon after, their marriage was celebrated with great splendour, and the fawn was taken the greatest care of, and played where he pleased, or roamed about the castle grounds in happiness and safety.

In the meantime the wicked stepmother, who had caused these two young people such misery, supposed that the sister had been devoured by wild beasts, and that the fawn had been hunted to death. Therefore when she heard of their happiness, such envy and malice arose in her heart that she could find no rest till she had tried to destroy it.

She and her ugly daughter came to the castle when the queen had a little baby, and one of them pretended to be a nurse, and at last got the mother and child into their power.

They shut the queen up in the bath, and tried to suffocate her, and the old woman put her own ugly daughter in the queen's bed that the king might not know she was away.

She would not, however, let him speak to her, but pretended that she must be kept quite quiet.

The queen escaped from the bath-room, where the wicked old woman had locked her up, but she did not go far, as she wanted to watch over her child and the little fawn.

For two nights the baby's nurse saw a figure of the queen come into the room and take up her baby and nurse it. Then she told the king, and he determined to watch himself. The old stepmother, who acted as nurse to her ugly daughter, whom she tried to make the king believe was his wife, had said that the queen was too weak to see him, and never left her room. "There cannot be two queens," said the king to himself, "so to-night I will watch in the nursery." As soon as the figure came in and took up her baby, he saw it was his real wife, and caught her in his arms, saying, "You are my own beloved wife, as beautiful as ever."

The wicked witch had thrown her into a trance, hoping she would die, and that the king would then marry her daughter; but on the king speaking to her, the spell was broken. The queen told the king how cruelly she had been treated by her stepmother, and on hearing this he became very angry, and had the witch and her daughter brought to justice. They were both sentenced to die—the daughter to be devoured by wild beasts, and the mother to be burnt alive.

No sooner, however, was she reduced to ashes than the charm which held the queen's brother in the form of a stag was broken; he recovered his own natural shape, and appeared before them a tall, handsome young man.

After this, the brother and sister lived happily and peacefully for the rest of their lives.

CHAPTER IV

HANSEL AND GRETHEL

Near the borders of a large forest dwelt in olden times a poor wood-cutter, who had two children—a boy named Hansel, and his sister, Grethel. They had very little to live upon, and once when there was a dreadful season of scarcity in the land, the poor wood-cutter could not earn sufficient to supply their daily food.

One evening, after the children were gone to bed, the parents sat talking together over their sorrow, and the poor husband sighed, and said to his wife, who was not the mother of his children, but their stepmother, “What will become of us, for I cannot earn enough to support myself and you, much less the children? what shall we do with them, for they must not starve?”

“I know what to do, husband,” she replied; “early to-morrow morning we will take the children for a walk across the forest and leave them in the thickest part; they will never find the way home again, you may depend, and then we shall only have to work for ourselves.”

“No, wife,” said the man, “that I will never do. How could I have the heart to leave my children all alone in the wood, where the wild beasts would come quickly and devour them?”

“Oh, you fool,” replied the stepmother, “if you refuse to do this, you know we must all four perish with hunger; you may as well go and cut the wood for our coffins.” And after this she let him have no peace till he became quite worn out, and could not sleep for hours, but lay thinking in sorrow about his children.

The two children, who also were too hungry to sleep, heard all that their stepmother had said to their father. Poor little Grethel wept bitter tears as she listened, and said to her brother, “What is going to happen to us, Hansel?”

“Hush, Grethel,” he whispered, “don’t be so unhappy; I know what to do.”

Then they lay quite still till their parents were asleep.

As soon as it was quiet, Hansel got up, put on his little coat, unfastened the door, and slipped out The moon shone brightly, and the white pebble stones which lay before the cottage door glistened like new silver money. Hansel stooped and picked up as many of the pebbles as he could stuff in his little coat pockets. He then went back to Grethel and said, “Be comforted, dear little sister, and sleep in peace; heaven will take care of us.” Then he laid himself down again in bed, and slept till the day broke.

As soon as the sun was risen, the stepmother came and woke the two children, and said, “Get up, you lazy bones, and come into the wood with me to gather wood for the fire.” Then she gave each of them a piece of bread, and said, “You must keep that to eat for your dinner, and don’t quarrel over it, for you will get nothing more.”

Grethel took the bread under her charge, for Hansel’s pockets were full of pebbles. Then

the stepmother led them a long way into the forest. They had gone but a very short distance when Hansel looked back at the house, and this he did again and again.

At last his stepmother said, “Why do you keep staying behind and looking back so?”

“Oh, mother,” said the boy, “I can see my little white cat sitting on the roof of the house, and I am sure she is crying for me.”

“Nonsense,” she replied; “that is not your cat; it is the morning sun shining on the chimney-pot.”

Hansel had seen no cat, but he stayed behind every time to drop a white pebble from his pocket on the ground as they walked.

As soon as they reached a thick part of the wood, their stepmother said:

“Come, children, gather some wood, and I will make a fire, for it is very cold here.”

Then Hansel and Grethel raised quite a high heap of brushwood and faggots, which soon blazed up into a bright fire, and the woman said to them:

“Sit down here, children, and rest, while I go and find your father, who is cutting wood in the forest; when we have finished our work, we will come again and fetch you.”

Hansel and Grethel seated themselves by the fire, and when noon arrived they each ate the piece of bread which their stepmother had given them for their dinner; and as long as they heard the strokes of the axe they felt safe, for they believed that their father was working near them. But it was not an axe they heard—only a branch which still hung on a withered tree, and was moved up and down by the wind. At last, when they had been sitting there a long time, the children’s eyes became heavy with fatigue, and they fell fast asleep. When they awoke it was dark night, and poor Grethel began to cry, and said, “Oh, how shall we get out of the wood?”

But Hansel comforted her. “Don’t fear,” he said; “let us wait a little while till the moon rises, and then we shall easily find our way home.”

Very soon the full moon rose, and then Hansel took his little sister by the hand, and the white pebble stones, which glittered like newly-coined money in the moonlight, and which Hansel had dropped as he walked, pointed out the way. They walked all the night through, and did not reach their father’s house till break of day.

They knocked at the door, and when their stepmother opened it, she exclaimed: “You naughty children, why have you been staying so long in the forest? we thought you were never coming back,” But their father was overjoyed to see them, for it grieved him to the heart to think that they had been left alone in the wood.

Not long after this there came another time of scarcity and want in every house, and the children heard their stepmother talking after they were in bed. “The times are as bad as ever,” she said; “we have just half a loaf left, and when that is gone all love will be at an end. The children must go away; we will take them deeper into the forest this time, and they will not be able to find their way home as they did before; it is the only plan to save ourselves from starvation.” But the husband felt heavy at heart, for he thought it was better to share the last morsel with his children.

His wife would listen to nothing he said, but continued to reproach him, and as he had given way to her the first time, he could not refuse to do so now. The children were awake, and heard all the conversation; so, as soon as their parents slept, Hansel got up, intending to go out and gather some more of the bright pebbles to let fall as he walked, that they might point out the way home; but his stepmother had locked the door, and he could not open it. When he went back to his bed he told his little sister not to fret, but to go to sleep in peace, for he was sure they would be taken care of.

Early the next morning the stepmother came and pulled the children out of bed, and, when they were dressed, gave them each a piece of bread for their dinners, smaller than they had had before, and then they started on their way to the wood.

As they walked, Hansel, who had the bread in his pocket, broke off little crumbs, and stopped every now and then to drop one, turning round as if he was looking back at his home.

“Hansel,” said the woman, “what are you stopping for in that way? Come along directly.”

“I saw my pigeon sitting on the roof, and he wants to say good-bye to me,” replied the boy.

“Nonsense,” she said; “that is not your pigeon; it is only the morning sun shining on the chimney-top.”

But Hansel did not look back any more; he only dropped pieces of bread behind him, as they walked through the wood. This time they went on till they reached the thickest and densest part of the forest, where they had never been before in all their lives. Again they gathered faggots and brushwood, of which the stepmother made up a large fire. Then she said, “Remain here, children, and rest, while I go to help your father, who is cutting wood in the forest; when you feel tired, you can lie down and sleep for a little while, and we will come and fetch you in the evening, when your father has finished his work.“

So the children remained alone till mid-day, and then Grethel shared her piece of bread with Hansel, for he had scattered his own all along the road as they walked. After this they slept for awhile, and the evening drew on; but no one came to fetch the poor children. When they awoke it was quite dark, and poor little Grethel was afraid; but Hansel comforted her, as he had done before, by telling her they need only wait till the moon rose. “You know, little sister,” he said, “that I have thrown breadcrumbs all along the road we came, and they will easily point out the way home.”

But when they went out of the thicket into the moonlight they found no breadcrumbs, for the numerous birds which inhabited the trees of the forest had picked them all up.

Hansel tried to hide his fear when he made this sad discovery, and said to his sister, “Cheer up, Grethel; I dare say we shall find our way home without the crumbs. Let us try.” But this they found impossible. They wandered about the whole night, and the next day from morning till evening; but they could not get out of the wood, and were so hungry that had it not been for a few berries which they picked they must have starved.

At last they were so tired that their poor little legs could carry them no farther; so they laid themselves down under a tree and went to sleep. When they awoke it was the third morning since they had left their father’s house, and they determined to try once more to

find their way home; but it was no use, they only went still deeper into the wood, and knew that if no help came they must starve.

About noon, they saw a beautiful snow-white bird sitting on the branch of a tree, and singing so beautifully that they stood still to listen. When he had finished his song, he spread out his wings and flew on before them. The children followed him, till at last they saw at a distance a small house; and the bird flew and perched on the roof.

But how surprised were the boy and girl, when they came nearer, to find that the house was built of gingerbread, and ornamented with sweet cakes and tarts, while the window was formed of barley-sugar. “Oh!” exclaimed Hansel, “let us stop here and have a splendid feast. I will have a piece from the roof first, Grethel; and you can eat some of the barley-sugar window, it tastes so nice.” Hansel reached up on tiptoe, and breaking off a piece of the gingerbread, he began to eat with all his might, for he was very hungry. Grethel seated herself on the doorstep, and began munching away at the cakes of which it was made. Presently a voice came out of the cottage:

> “Munching, crunching, munching,
> Who’s eating up my house?”

Then answered the children:

> “The wind, the wind,
> Only the wind,”

and went on eating as if they never meant to leave off, without a suspicion of wrong. Hansel, who found the cake on the roof taste very good, broke off another large piece, and Grethel had just taken out a whole pane of barley-sugar from the window, and seated herself to eat it, when the door opened, and a strange-looking old woman came out leaning on a stick.

Hansel and Grethel were so frightened that they let fall what they held in their hands. The old woman shook her head at them, and said, “Ah, you dear children, who has brought you here? Come in, and stay with me for a little while, and there shall no harm happen to you.” She seized them both by the hands as she spoke, and led them into the house. She gave them for supper plenty to eat and drink—milk and pancakes and sugar, apples and nuts; and when evening came, Hansel and Grethel were shown two beautiful little beds with white curtains, and they lay down in them and thought they were in heaven.

But although the old woman pretended to be friendly, she was a wicked witch, who had her house built of gingerbread on purpose to entrap children. When once they were in her power, she would feed them well till they got fat, and then kill them and cook them for her dinner; and this she called her feast-day. Fortunately the witch had weak eyes, and could not see very well; but she had a very keen scent, as wild animals have, and could easily discover when human beings were near. As Hansel and Grethel had approached her cottage, she laughed to herself maliciously, and said, with a sneer: “I have them now; they shall not escape from me again!”

Early in the morning, before the children were awake, she was up, standing by their beds; and when she saw how beautiful they looked in their sleep, with their round rosy cheeks, she muttered to herself, “What nice tit-bits they will be!” Then she laid hold of Hansel

with her rough hand, dragged him out of bed, and led him to a little cage which had a lattice-door, and shut him in; he might scream as much as he would, but it was all useless.

After this she went back to Grethel, and, shaking her roughly till she woke, cried: “Get up, you lazy hussy, and draw some water, that I may boil something good for your brother, who is shut up in a cage outside till he gets fat; and then I shall cook him and eat him!” When Grethel heard this she began to cry bitterly; but it was all useless, she was obliged to do as the wicked witch told her.

For poor Hansel’s breakfast the best of everything was cooked; but Grethel had nothing for herself but a crab’s claw. Every morning the old woman would go out to the little cage, and say: “Hansel, stick out your finger, that I may feel if you are fat enough for eating.” But Hansel, who knew how dim her old eyes were, always stuck a bone through the bars of his cage, which she thought was his finger, for she could not see; and when she felt how thin it was, she wondered very much why he did not get fat.

However, as the weeks went on, and Hansel seemed not to get any fatter, she became impatient, and said she could not wait any longer. “Go, Grethel,” she cried to the maiden, “be quick and draw water; Hansel may be fat or lean, I don’t care, to-morrow morning I mean to kill him, and cook him!”

Oh! how the poor little sister grieved when she was forced to draw the water; and, as the tears rolled down her cheeks, she exclaimed: “It would have been better to be eaten by wild beasts, or to have been starved to death in the woods; then we should have died together!”

“Stop your crying!” cried the old woman; “it is not of the least use, no one will come to help you.”

Early in the morning Grethel was obliged to go out and fill the great pot with water, and hang it over the fire to boil. As soon as this was done, the old woman said, “We will bake some bread first; I have made the oven hot, and the dough is already kneaded.” Then she dragged poor little Grethel up to the oven door, under which the flames were burning fiercely, and said: “Creep in there, and see if it is hot enough yet to bake the bread.” But if Grethel had obeyed her, she would have shut the poor child in and baked her for dinner, instead of boiling Hansel.

Grethel, however, guessed what she wanted to do, and said, “I don’t know how to get in through that narrow door.“

“Stupid goose,” said the old woman, “why, the oven door is quite large enough for me; just look, I could get in myself.” As she spoke she stepped forward and pretended to put her head in the oven.

A sudden thought gave Grethel unusual strength; she started forward, gave the old woman a push which sent her right into the oven, then she shut the iron door and fastened the bolt.

Oh! how the old witch did howl, it was quite horrible to hear her. But Grethel ran away, and therefore she was left to burn, just as she had left many poor little children to burn. And how quickly Grethel ran to Hansel, opened the door of his cage, and cried, “Hansel, Hansel, we are free; the old witch is dead.” He flew like a bird out of his cage at these words as soon as the door was opened, and the children were so overjoyed that they ran

into each other’s arms, and kissed each other with the greatest love.

And now that there was nothing to be afraid of, they went back into the house, and while looking round the old witch’s room, they saw an old oak chest, which they opened, and found it full of pearls and precious stones. “These are better than pebbles,” said Hansel; and he filled his pockets as full as they would hold.

“I will carry some home too,” said Grethel, and she held out her apron, which held quite as much as Hansel’s pockets.

“We will go now,” he said, “and get away as soon as we can from this enchanted forest.“

They had been walking for nearly two hours when they came to a large sheet of water.

“What shall we do now?” said the boy. “We cannot get across, and there is no bridge of any sort.”

“Oh! here comes a boat,” cried Grethel, but she was mistaken; it was only a white duck which came swimming towards the children. “Perhaps she will help us across if we ask her,” said the child; and she sung, “Little duck, do help poor Hansel and Grethel; there is not a bridge, nor a boat—will you let us sail across on your white back?”

The good-natured duck came near the bank as Grethel spoke, so close indeed that Hansel could seat himself and wanted to take his little sister on his lap, but she said, “No, we shall be too heavy for the kind duck; let her take us over one at a time.”

The good creature did as the children wished; she carried Grethel over first, and then came back for Hansel. And then how happy the children were to find themselves in a part of the wood which they remembered quite well, and as they walked on, the more familiar it became, till at last they caught sight of their father’s house. Then they began to run, and, bursting into the room, threw themselves into their father’s arms.

Poor man, he had not had a moment’s peace since the children had been left alone in the forest; he was full of joy at finding them safe and well again, and now they had nothing to fear, for their wicked stepmother was dead.

But how surprised the poor wood-cutter was when Grethel opened and shook her little apron to see the glittering pearls and precious stones scattered about the room, while Hansel drew handful after handful from his pockets. From this moment all his care and sorrow was at an end, and the father lived in happiness with his children till his death.

CHAPTER V

THE STORY OF ALADDIN; OR, THE WONDERFUL LAMP

In one of the large and rich cities of China, there once lived a tailor named Mustapha. He was very poor. He could hardly, by his daily labour, maintain himself and his family, which consisted only of his wife and a son.

His son, who was called Aladdin, was a very careless and idle fellow. He was disobedient to his father and mother, and would go out early in the morning and stay out all day, playing in the streets and public places with idle children of his own age.

When he was old enough to learn a trade, his father took him into his own shop, and taught him how to use his needle; but all his father's endeavours to keep him to his work were vain, for no sooner was his back turned, than he was gone for that day, Mustapha chastised him, but Aladdin was incorrigible, and his father, to his great grief, was forced to abandon him to his idleness; and was so much troubled about him, that he fell sick and died in a few months.

Aladdin, who was now no longer restrained by the fear of a father, gave himself entirely over to his idle habits, and was never out of the streets from his companions. This course he followed till he was fifteen years old, without giving his mind to any useful pursuit, or the least reflection on what would become of him. As he was one day playing, according to custom, in the street, with his evil associates, a stranger passing by stood to observe him.

This stranger was a sorcerer, known as the African magician, as he had been but two days arrived from Africa, his native country.

The African magician, observing in Aladdin's countenance something which assured him that he was a fit boy for his purpose, inquired his name and history of some of his companions, and when he had learnt all he desired to know, went up to him, and taking him aside from his comrades, said, "Child, was not your father called Mustapha the tailor?" "Yes, sir," answered the boy, "but he has been dead a long time."

At these words the African magician threw his arms about Aladdin's neck, and kissed him several times, with tears in his eyes, and said, "I am your uncle. Your worthy father was my own brother. I knew you at first sight, you are so like him." Then he gave Aladdin a handful of small money, saying, "Go, my son, to your mother, give my love to her, and tell her that I will visit her to-morrow, that I may see where my good brother lived so long, and ended his days."

Aladdin ran to his mother, overjoyed at the money his uncle had given him. "Mother," said he, "have I an uncle?" "No, child," replied his mother, "you have no uncle by your father's side or mine." "I am just now come," said Aladdin, "from a man who says he is my uncle and my father's brother. He cried and kissed me when I told him my father was dead, and gave me money, sending his love to you, and promising to come and pay you a visit, that he may see the house my father lived and died in." "Indeed, child," replied the mother,

“your father had no brother, nor have you an uncle.“

The next day the magician found Aladdin playing in another part of the town, and embracing him as before, put two pieces of gold into his hand, and said to him, “Carry this, child, to your mother; tell her that I will come and see her to-night, and bid her get us something for supper; but first show ms the house where you live.”

Aladdin showed the African magician the house, and carried the two pieces of gold to his mother, who went out and bought provisions; and considering she wanted various utensils, borrowed them of her neighbours. She spent the whole day in preparing the supper; and at night, when it was ready, said to her son, “Perhaps the stranger knows not how to find our house; go and bring him, if you meet with him.”

Aladdin was just ready to go, when the magician knocked at the door, and came in loaded with wine and all sorts of fruits, which he brought for a dessert. After he had given what he brought into Aladdin’s hands, he saluted his mother, and desired her to show him the place where his brother Mustapha used to sit on the sofa; and when she had so done, he fell down and kissed it several times, crying out, with tears in his eyes, “My poor brother! how unhappy am I, not to have come soon enough to give you one last embrace.” Aladdin’s mother desired him to sit down in the same place, but he declined. “No,” said he, “I shall not do that; but give me leave to sit opposite to it, that although I see not the master of a family so dear to me, I may at least behold the place where he used to sit.“

When the magician had made choice of a place, and sat down, he began to enter into discourse with Aladdin’s mother. “My good sister,” said he, “do not be surprised at your never having seen me all the time you have been married to my brother Mustapha of happy memory. I have been forty years absent from this country, which is my native place, as well as my late brother’s; and during that time have travelled into the Indies, Persia, Arabia, Syria, and Egypt, and afterward crossed over into Africa, where I took up my abode. At last, as it is natural for a man, I was desirous to see my native country again, and to embrace my dear brother; and finding I had strength enough to undertake so long a journey, I made the necessary preparations, and set out. Nothing ever afflicted me so much as hearing of my brother’s death. But God be praised for all things! It is a comfort for me to find, as it were, my brother in a son, who has his most remarkable features.”

The African magician perceiving that the widow wept at the remembrance of her husband, changed the conversation, and turning toward her son, asked him, “What business do you follow? Are you of any trade?”

At this question the youth hung down his head, and was not a little abashed when his mother answered “Aladdin is an idle fellow. His father, when alive, strove all he could to teach him his trade, but could not succeed; and since his death, notwithstanding all I can say to him, he does nothing but idle away his time in the streets, as you saw him, without considering he is no longer a child; and if you do not make him ashamed of it, I despair of his ever coming to any good. For my part, I am resolved, one of these days, to turn him out of doors, and let him provide for himself.“

After these words, Aladdin’s mother burst into tears; and the magician said, “This is not well, nephew; you must think of helping yourself, and getting your livelihood. There are many sorts of trades; perhaps you do not like your father’s, and would prefer another; I

will endeavour to help you. If you have no mind to learn any handicraft, I will take a shop for you, furnish it with all sorts of fine stuffs and linens; and then with the money you make of them you can lay in fresh goods, and live in an honourable way. Tell me freely what you think of my proposal; you shall always find me ready to keep my word."

This plan just suited Aladdin, who hated work. He told the magician he had a greater inclination to that business than to any other, and that he should be much obliged to him for his kindness. "Well then," said the African magician, "I will carry you with me to-morrow, clothe you as handsomely as the best merchants in the city, and afterward we will open a shop as I mentioned."

The widow, after his promises of kindness to her son, no longer doubted that the magician was her husband's brother. She thanked him for his good intentions; and after having exhorted Aladdin to render himself worthy of his uncle's favour, served up supper, at which they talked of several indifferent matters; and then the magician took his leave and retired.

He came again the next day, as he had promised, and took Aladdin with him to a merchant, who sold all sorts of clothes for different ages and ranks, ready made, and a variety of fine stuffs, and bade Aladdin choose those he preferred, which he paid for.

When Aladdin found himself so handsomely equipped, he returned his uncle thanks, who thus addressed him: "As you are soon to be a merchant, it is proper you should frequent these shops, and be acquainted with them." He then showed him the largest and finest mosques, carried him to the khans or inns where the merchants and travellers lodged, and afterward to the sultan's palace, where he had free access; and at last brought him to his own khan, where, meeting with some merchants he had become acquainted with since his arrival, he gave them a treat, to bring them and his pretended nephew acquainted.

This entertainment lasted till night, when Aladdin would have taken leave of his uncle to go home; the magician would not let him go by himself, but conducted him to his mother, who, as soon as she saw him so well dressed, was transported with joy, and bestowed a thousand blessings upon the magician.

Early the next morning the magician called again for Aladdin, and said he would take him to spend that day in the country, and on the next he would purchase the shop. He then led him out at one of the gates of the city, to some magnificent palaces, to each of which belonged beautiful gardens, into which anybody might enter. At every building he came to, he asked Aladdin if he did not think it fine; and the youth was ready to answer when any one presented itself, crying out, "Here is a finer house, uncle, than any we have yet seen," By this artifice, the cunning magician led Aladdin some way into the country; and as he meant to carry him farther, to execute his design, he took an opportunity to sit down in one of the gardens, on the brink of a fountain of clear water, which discharged itself by a lion's mouth of bronze into a basin, pretending to be tired: "Come, nephew," said he, "you must be weary as well as I; let us rest ourselves, and we shall be better able to pursue our walk."

The magician next pulled from his girdle a handkerchief with cakes and fruit, and during this short repast he exhorted his nephew to leave off bad company, and to seek that of wise and prudent men, to improve by their conversation; "for," said he, "you will soon be at

man’s estate, and you cannot too early begin to imitate their example.” When they had eaten as much as they liked, they got up, and pursued their walk through gardens separated from one another only by small ditches, which marked out the limits without interrupting the communication; so great was the confidence the inhabitants reposed in each other. By this means the African magician drew Aladdin insensibly beyond the gardens, and crossed the country, till they nearly reached the mountains.

At last they arrived between two mountains of moderate height and equal size, divided by a narrow valley, which was the place where the magician intended to execute the design that had brought him from Africa to China. “We will go no farther now,” said he to Aladdin; “I will show you here some extraordinary things, which, when you have seen, you will thank me for: but while I strike a light, gather up all the loose dry sticks you can see, to kindle a fire with.”

Aladdin found so many dried sticks, that he soon collected a great heap. The magician presently set them on fire; and when they were in a blaze, threw in some incense, pronouncing several magical words, which Aladdin did not understand.

He had scarcely done so when the earth opened just before the magician, and discovered a stone with a brass ring fixed in it. Aladdin was so frightened that he would have run away, but the magician caught hold of him, and gave him such a box on the ear that he knocked him down. Aladdin got up trembling, and with tears in his eyes said to the magician, “What have I done, uncle, to be treated in this severe manner?” “I am your uncle,” answered the magician; “I supply the place of your father, and you ought to make no reply. But child,” added he, softening, “do not be afraid; for I shall not ask anything of you, but that you obey me punctually, if you would reap the advantages which I intend you. Know, then, that under this stone there is hidden a treasure, destined to be yours, and which will make you richer than the greatest monarch in the world. No person but yourself is permitted to lift this stone, or enter the cave; so you must punctually execute what I may command, for it is a matter of great consequence both to you and me.“

Aladdin, amazed at all he saw and heard, forgot what was past, and rising said, “Well, uncle, what is to be done? Command me, I am ready to obey.” “I am overjoyed, child,” said the African magician, embracing him, “Take hold of the ring, and lift up that stone.” “Indeed, uncle,” replied Aladdin, “I am not strong enough; you must help me.” “You have no occasion for my assistance,” answered the magician; “if I help you, we shall be able to do nothing. Take hold of the ring, and lift it up; you will find it will come easily.” Aladdin did as the magician bade him, raised the stone with ease, and laid it on one side.

When the stone was pulled up, there appeared a staircase about three or four feet deep, leading to a door. “Descend, my son,” said the African magician, “those steps, and open that door. It will lead you into a palace, divided into three great halls. In each of these you will see four large brass cisterns placed on each side, full of gold and silver; but take care you do not meddle with them. Before you enter the first hall, be sure to tuck up your robe, wrap it about you, and then pass through the second into the third without stopping. Above all things, have a care that you do not touch the walls so much as with your clothes; for if you do, you will die instantly. At the end of the third hall, you will find a door which opens into a garden, planted with fine trees loaded with fruit. Walk directly across the garden to a terrace, where you will see a niche before you, and in that niche a lighted

lamp. Take the lamp down and put it out. When you have thrown away the wick and poured out the liquor, put it in your waistband and bring it to me. Do not be afraid that the liquor will spoil your clothes, for it is not oil, and the lamp will be dry as soon as it is thrown out.“

After these words the magician drew a ring off his finger, and put it on one of Aladdin’s, saying, “It is a talisman against all evil, so long as you obey me. Go, therefore, boldly, and we shall both be rich all our lives.”

Aladdin descended the steps, and, opening the door, found the three halls just as the African magician had described. He went through them with all the precaution the fear of death could inspire, crossed the garden without stopping, took down the lamp from the niche, threw out the wick and the liquor, and, as the magician had desired, put it in his waistband. But as he came down from the terrace, seeing it was perfectly dry, he stopped in the garden to observe the trees, which were loaded with extraordinary fruit of different colours on each tree. Some bore fruit entirely white, and some clear and transparent as crystal; some pale red, and others deeper; some green, blue, and purple, and others yellow; in short, there was fruit of all colours. The white were pearls; the clear and transparent, diamonds; the deep red, rubies; the paler, balas rubies; the green, emeralds; the blue, turquoises; the purple, amethysts; and the yellow, sapphires. Aladdin, ignorant of their value, would have preferred figs, or grapes, or pomegranates; but as he had his uncle’s permission, he resolved to gather some of every sort. Having filled the two new purses his uncle had bought for him with his clothes, he wrapped some up in the skirts of his vest, and crammed his bosom as full as it could hold.

Aladdin, having thus loaded himself with riches of which he knew not the value, returned through the three halls with the utmost precaution, and soon arrived at the mouth of the cave, where the African magician awaited him with the utmost impatience. As soon as Aladdin saw him, he cried out, “Pray, uncle, lend me your hand, to help me out.” “Give me the lamp first,” replied the magician; “it will be troublesome to you,” “Indeed, uncle,” answered Aladdin, “I cannot now, but I will as soon as I am up.” The African magician was determined that he would have the lamp before he would help him up; and Aladdin, who had encumbered himself so much with his fruit that he could not well get at it, refused to give it to him till he was out of the cave. The African magician, provoked at this obstinate refusal, flew into a passion, threw a little of his incense into the fire, and pronounced two magical words, when the stone which had closed the mouth of the staircase moved into its place, with the earth over it in the same manner as it lay at the arrival of the magician and Aladdin.

This action of the magician plainly revealed to Aladdin that he was no uncle of his, but one who designed him evil. The truth was that he had learnt from his magic books the secret and the value of this wonderful lamp, the owner of which would be made richer than any earthly ruler, and hence his journey to China. His art had also told him that he was not permitted to take it himself, but must receive it as a voluntary gift from the hands of another person. Hence he employed young Aladdin, and hoped by a mixture of kindness and authority to make him obedient to his word and will. When he found that his attempt had failed, he set out to return to Africa, but avoided the town, lest any person who had seen him leave in company with Aladdin should make inquiries after the youth.

Aladdin being suddenly enveloped in darkness, cried, and called out to his uncle to tell him he was ready to give him the lamp; but in vain, since his cries could not be heard. He descended to the bottom of the steps, with a design to get into the palace, but the door, which was opened before by enchantment, was now shut by the same means. He then redoubled his cries and tears, sat down on the steps without any hopes of ever seeing light again, and in an expectation of passing from the present darkness to a speedy death. In this great emergency he said, “There is no strength or power but in the great and high God”; and in joining his hands to pray he rubbed the ring which the magician had put on his finger. Immediately a genie of frightful aspect appeared, and said, “What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee. I serve him who possesses the ring on thy finger; I, and the other slaves of that ring.“

At another time Aladdin would have been frightened at the sight of so extraordinary a figure, but the danger he was in made him answer without hesitation, “Whoever thou art, deliver me from this place.” He had no sooner spoken these words, than he found himself on the very spot where the magician had last left him, and no sign of cave or opening, nor disturbance of the earth. Returning God thanks to find himself once more in the world, he made the best of his way home. When he got within his mother’s door, the joy to see her and his weakness for want of sustenance made him so faint that he remained for a long time as dead. As soon as he recovered, he related to his mother all that had happened to him, and they were both very vehement in their complaints of the cruel magician. Aladdin slept very soundly till late the next morning, when the first thing he said to his mother was, that he wanted something to eat, and wished she would give him his breakfast. “Alas! child,” said she, “I have not a bit of bread to give you; you ate up all the provisions I had in the house yesterday; but I have a little cotton which I have spun; I will go and sell it, and buy bread and something for our dinner.” “Mother,” replied Aladdin, “keep your cotton for another time, and give me the lamp I brought home with me yesterday; I will go and sell it, and the money I shall get for it will serve both for breakfast and dinner, and perhaps supper too.“

Aladdin’s mother took the lamp and said to her son, “Here it is, but it is very dirty; if it were a little cleaner I believe it would bring something more.” She took some fine sand and water to clean it; but had no sooner begun to rub it, than in an instant a hideous genie of gigantic size appeared before her, and said to her in a voice of thunder, “What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands; I and the other slaves of the lamp.“

Aladdin’s mother, terrified at the sight of the genie, fainted; when Aladdin, who had seen such a phantom in the cavern, snatched the lamp out of his mother’s hand, and said to the genie boldly, “I am hungry, bring me something to eat.” The genie disappeared immediately, and in an instant returned with a large silver tray, holding twelve covered dishes of the same metal, which contained the most delicious viands; six large white bread cakes on two plates, two flagons of wine, and two silver cups. All these he placed upon a carpet and disappeared; this was done before Aladdin’s mother recovered from her swoon.

Aladdin had fetched some water, and sprinkled it in her face to recover her. Whether that or the smell of the meat effected her cure, it was not long before she came to herself. “Mother,” said Aladdin, “be not afraid: get up and eat; here is what will put you in heart,

and at the same time satisfy my extreme hunger."

His mother was much surprised to see the great tray, twelve dishes, six loaves, the two flagons and cups, and to smell the savoury odour which exhaled from the dishes. "Child," said she, "to whom are we obliged for this great plenty and liberality? Has the sultan been made acquainted with our poverty, and had compassion on us?" "It is no matter, mother," said Aladdin, "let us sit down and eat; for you have almost as much need of a good breakfast as myself; when we have done, I will tell you." Accordingly, both mother and son sat down and ate with the better relish as the table was so well furnished. But all the time Aladdin's mother could not forbear looking at and admiring the tray and dishes, though she could not judge whether they were silver or any other metal, and the novelty more than the value attracted her attention.

The mother and son sat at breakfast till it was dinner-time, and then they thought it would be best to put the two meals together; yet, after this they found they should have enough left for supper, and two meals for the next day.

When Aladdin's mother had taken away and set by what was left, she went and sat down by her son on the sofa, saying, "I expect now that you should satisfy my impatience, and tell me exactly what passed between the genie and you while I was in a swoon"; which he readily complied with.

She was in as great amazement at what her son told her, as at the appearance of the genie; and said to him, "But, son, what have we to do with genies? I never heard that any of my acquaintance had ever seen one. How came that vile genie to address himself to me, and not to you, to whom he had appeared before in the cave?" "Mother," answered Aladdin, "the genie you saw is not the one who appeared to me. If you remember, he that I first saw called himself the slave of the ring on my finger; and this you saw, called himself the slave of the lamp you had in your hand; but I believe you did not hear him, for I think you fainted as soon as he began to speak."

"What!" cried the mother, "was your lamp then the occasion of that cursed genie's addressing himself rather to me than to you? Ah! my son, take it out of my sight, and put it where you please. I had rather you would sell it than run the hazard of being frightened to death again by touching it; and if you would take my advice, you would part also with the ring, and not have anything to do with genies, who, as our prophet has told us, are only devils."

"With your leave, mother," replied Aladdin, "I shall now take care how I sell a lamp which may be so serviceable both to you and me. That false and wicked magician would not have undertaken so long a journey to secure this wonderful lamp if he had not known its value to exceed that of gold and silver. And since we have honestly come by it, let us make a profitable use of it, without making any great show, and exciting the envy and jealousy of our neighbours. However, since the genies frighten you so much, I will take it out of your sight, and put it where I may find it when I want it. The ring I cannot resolve to part with; for without that you had never seen me again; and though I am alive now, perhaps, if it were gone, I might not be so some moments hence; therefore, I hope you will give me leave to keep it, and to wear it always on my finger." Aladdin's mother replied that he might do what he pleased; for her part, she would have nothing to do with genies,

and never say anything more about them.

By the next night they had eaten all the provisions the genie had brought; and the next day Aladdin, who could not bear the thoughts of hunger, putting one of the silver dishes tinder his vest, went out early to sell it, and addressing himself to a Jew whom he met in the streets, took him aside, and pulling out the plate, asked him if he would buy it. The cunning Jew took the dish, examined it, and as soon as he found that it was good silver, asked Aladdin at how much he valued it. Aladdin, who had never been used to such traffic, told him he would trust to his judgment and honour. The Jew was somewhat confounded at this plain dealing; and doubting whether Aladdin understood the material or the full value of what he offered to sell, took a piece of gold out of his purse and gave it him, though it was but the sixtieth part of the worth of the plate. Aladdin, taking the money very eagerly, retired with so much haste, that the Jew, not content with the exorbitancy of his profit, was vexed he had not penetrated into his ignorance, and was going to run after him, to endeavour to get some change out of the piece of gold; but he ran so fast, and had got so far, that it would have been impossible for him to overtake him.

Before Aladdin went home, he called at a baker’s, bought some cakes of bread, changed his money, and on his return gave the rest to his mother, who went and purchased provisions enough to last them some time. After this manner they lived, till Aladdin had sold the twelve dishes singly, as necessity pressed, to the Jew, for the same money; who, after the first time, durst not offer him less, for fear of losing so good a bargain. When he had sold the last dish, he had recourse to the tray, which weighed ten times as much as the dishes, and would have carried it to his old purchaser, but that it was too large and cumbersome; therefore he was obliged to bring him home with him to his mother’s, where, after the Jew had examined the weight of the tray, he laid down ten pieces of gold, with which Aladdin was very well satisfied.

When all the money was spent, Aladdin had recourse again to the lamp. He took it in his hands, looked for the part where his mother had rubbed it with the sand, rubbed it also, when the genie immediately appeared, and said, “What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands; I, and the other slaves of the lamp.” “I am hungry,” said Aladdin, “bring me something to eat.” The genie disappeared, and presently returned with a tray, the same number of covered dishes as before, set them down, and vanished.

As soon as Aladdin found that their provisions were again expended, he took one of the dishes, and went to look for his Jew chapman; but passing by a goldsmith’s shop, the goldsmith perceiving him, called to him, and said, “My lad, I imagine that you have something to sell to the Jew, whom I often see you visit; but perhaps you do not know that he is the greatest rogue even among the Jews. I will give you the full worth of what you have to sell, or I will direct you to other merchants who will not cheat you.”

This offer induced Aladdin to pull his plate from tinder his vest and show it to the goldsmith; who at first sight saw that it was made of the finest silver, and asked him if he had sold such as that to the Jew; when Aladdin told him that he had sold him twelve such, for a piece of gold each. “What a villain!” cried the goldsmith. “But,” added he, “my son, what is past cannot be recalled. By showing you the value of this plate, which is of the finest silver we use in our shops, I will let you see how much the Jew has cheated you.“

The goldsmith took a pair of scales, weighed the dish, and assured him that his plate would fetch by weight sixty pieces of gold, which he offered to pay down immediately.

Aladdin thanked him for his fair dealing, and never after went to any other person.

Though Aladdin and his mother had an inexhaustible treasure in their lamp, and might have had whatever they wished for, yet they lived with the same frugality as before, and it may easily be supposed that the money for which Aladdin had sold the dishes and tray was sufficient to maintain them some time.

During this interval, Aladdin frequented the shops of the principal merchants, where they sold cloth of gold and silver, linens, silk stuffs, and jewellery, and, oftentimes joining in their conversation, acquired a knowledge of the world, and a desire to improve himself. By his acquaintance among the jewellers, he came to know that the fruits which he had gathered when he took the lamp were, instead of coloured glass, stones of inestimable value; but he had the prudence not to mention this to any one, not even to his mother.

One day as Aladdin was walking about the town, he heard an order proclaimed, commanding the people to shut up their shops and houses, and keep within doors while the Princess Buddir al Buddoor, the sultan’s daughter, went to the bath and returned.

This proclamation inspired Aladdin with eager desire to see the princess’s face, which he determined to gratify, by placing himself behind the door of the bath, so that he could not fail to see her face.

Aladdin had not long concealed himself before the princess came. She was attended by a great crowd of ladies, slaves, and mutes, who walked on each side and behind her. When she came within three or four paces of the door of the bath, she took off her veil, and gave Aladdin an opportunity of a full view of her face.

The princess was a noted beauty: her eyes were large, lively, and sparkling; her smile bewitching; her nose faultless; her mouth small; her lips vermilion. It is not therefore surprising that Aladdin, who had never before seen such a blaze of charms, was dazzled and enchanted.

After the princess had passed by, and entered the bath, Aladdin quitted his hiding-place, and went home. His mother perceived him to be more thoughtful and melancholy than usual; and asked what had happened to make him so, or if he was ill. He then told his mother all his adventure, and concluded by declaring, “I love the princess more than I can express, and am resolved that I will ask her in marriage of the sultan.”

Aladdin’s mother listened with surprise to what her son told her; but when he talked of asking the princess in marriage, she laughed aloud. “Alas! child,” said she, “what are you thinking of? You must be mad to talk thus.“

“I assure you, mother,” replied Aladdin, “that I am not mad, but in my right senses. I foresaw that you would reproach me with folly and extravagance; but I must tell you once more, that I am resolved to demand the princess of the sultan in marriage; nor do I despair of success. I have the slaves of the lamp and of the ring to help me, and you know how powerful their aid is. And I have another secret to tell you: those pieces of glass, which I got from the trees in the garden of the subterranean palace, are jewels of inestimable value, and fit fit for the greatest monarchs. All the precious stones the jewellers have in Bagdad are not to be compared to mine for size or beauty; and I am sure that the offer of them will secure the favour of the sultan. You have a large porcelain dish fit to hold them; fetch it, and let us see how they will look, when we have arranged them according to their different colours.”

Aladdin’s mother brought the china dish, when he took the jewels out of the two purses in which he had kept them, and placed them in order, according to his fancy. But the brightness and lustre they emitted in the daytime, and the variety of the colours, so dazzled the eyes both of mother and son, that they were astonished beyond measure. Aladdin’s mother, emboldened by the sight of these rich jewels, and fearful lest her son should be guilty of greater extravagance, complied with his request, and promised to go early in the next morning to the palace of the sultan. Aladdin rose before daybreak, awakened his mother, pressing her to go to the sultan’s palace, and to get admittance, if possible, before the grand vizier, the other viziers, and the great officers of state went in to take their seats in the divan, where the sultan always attended in person.

Aladdin’s mother took the china dish, in which they had put the jewels the day before, wrapped it in two fine napkins, and set forward for the sultan’s palace. When she came to the gates, the grand vizier, the other viziers, and most distinguished lords of the court were just gone in; but notwithstanding the crowd of people was great, she got into the divan, a spacious hall, the entrance into which was very magnificent. She placed herself just before the sultan, grand vizier, and the great lords, who sat in council, on his right and left hand. Several causes were called, according to their order, pleaded and adjudged, until the time the divan generally broke up, when the sultan, rising, returned to his apartment, attended by the grand vizier; the other viziers and ministers of state then retired, as also did all those whose business had called them thither.

Aladdin’s mother, seeing the sultan retire, and all the people depart, judged rightly that he would not sit again that day, and resolved to go home; and on her arrival said, with much simplicity, “Son, I have seen the sultan, and am very well persuaded he has seen me, too, for I placed myself just before him; but he was so much taken up with those who attended on all sides of him that I pitied him, and wondered at his patience. At last I believe he was heartily tired, for he rose up suddenly, and would not hear a great many who were ready prepared to speak to him, but went away, at which I was well pleased, for indeed I began to lose all patience, and was extremely fatigued with staying so long. But there is no harm done; I will go again to-morrow; perhaps the sultan may not be so busy.“

The next morning she repaired to the sultan’s palace with the present, as early as the day before; but when she came there, she found the gates of the divan shut. She went six times afterward on the days appointed, placed herself always directly before the sultan, but with as little success as the first morning.

On the sixth day, however, after the divan was broken up, when the sultan returned to his own apartment, he said to his grand vizier; “I have for some time observed a certain woman, who attends constantly every day that I give audience, with something wrapped up in a napkin; she always stands up from the beginning to the breaking up of the audience, and affects to place herself just before me. If this woman comes to our next audience, do not fail to call her, that I may hear what she has to say.” The grand vizier made answer by lowering his hand, and then lifting it up above his head, signifying his willingness to lose it if he failed.

On the next audience day, when Aladdin’s mother went to the divan, and placed herself in front of the sultan as usual, the grand vizier immediately called the chief of the mace-bearers, and pointing to her bade him bring her before the sultan. The old woman at once followed the mace-bearer, and when she reached the sultan bowed her head down to the carpet which covered the platform of the throne, and remained in that posture until he bade her rise, which she had no sooner done, than he said to her, “Good woman, I have observed you to stand many days from the beginning to the rising of the divan; what business brings you here?“

After these words, Aladdin’s mother prostrated herself a second time; and when she arose, said, “Monarch of monarchs, I beg of you to pardon the boldness of my petition, and to assure me of your pardon and forgiveness.” “Well,” replied the sultan, “I will forgive you, be it what it may, and no hurt shall come to you; speak boldly.”

When Aladdin’s mother had taken all these precautions, for fear of the sultan’s anger, she told him faithfully the errand on which her son had sent her, and the event which led to his making so bold a request in spite of all her remonstrances.

The sultan hearkened to this discourse without showing the least anger; but before he gave her any answer, asked her what she had brought tied up in the napkin. She took the china dish which she had set down at the foot of the throne, untied it, and presented it to the sultan.

The sultan’s amazement and surprise were inexpressible, when he saw so many large, beautiful and valuable jewels collected in the dish. He remained for some time lost in admiration. At last, when he had recovered himself, he received the present from

Aladdin's mother's hand; saying, "How rich, how beautiful!" After he had admired and handled all the jewels one after another, he turned to his grand vizier, and showing him the dish, said, "Behold, admire, wonder! and confess that your eyes never beheld jewels so rich and beautiful before." The vizier was charmed. "Well," continued the sultan, "what sayest thou to such a present? Is it not worthy of the princess my daughter? And ought I not to bestow her on one who values her at so great a price?" "I cannot but own," replied the grand vizier, "that the present is worthy of the princess; but I beg of your majesty to grant me three months before you come to a final resolution. I hope, before that time, my son, whom you have regarded with your favour, will be able to make a nobler present than this Aladdin, who is an entire stranger to your majesty."

The sultan granted his request, and he said to the old woman, "Good woman, go home, and tell your son that I agree to the proposal you have made me; but I cannot marry the princess my daughter for three months; at the expiration of that time come again."

Aladdin's mother returned home much more gratified than she had expected, and told her son with much joy the condescending answer she had received from the sultan's own mouth; and that she was to come to the divan again that day three months.

Aladdin thought himself the most happy of all men at hearing this news, and thanked his mother for the pains she had taken in the affair, the good success of which was of so great importance to his peace, that he counted every day, week, and even hour as it passed. When two of the three months were passed, his mother one evening, having no oil in the house, went out to buy some, and found a general rejoicing—the houses dressed with foliage, silks, and carpeting, and every one striving to show their joy according to their ability. The streets were crowded with officers in habits of ceremony, mounted on horses richly caparisoned, each attended by a great many footmen. Aladdin's mother asked the oil merchant what was the meaning of all this preparation of public festivity. "Whence came you, good woman," said he, "that you don't know that the grand vizier's son is to marry the Princess Buddir al Buddoor, the sultan's daughter, to-night? She will presently return from the bath; and these officers whom you see are to assist at the cavalcade to the palace, where the ceremony is to be solemnised."

Aladdin's mother, on hearing these news, ran home very quickly. "Child," cried she, "you are undone! the sultan's fine promises will come to nought. This night the grand vizier's son is to marry the Princess Buddir al Buddoor."

At this account, Aladdin was thunderstruck, and he bethought himself of the lamp, and of the genie who had promised to obey him; and without indulging in idle words against the sultan, the vizier, or his son, he determined, if possible, to prevent the marriage.

When Aladdin had got into his chamber, he took the lamp, rubbed it in the same place as before, when immediately the genie appeared, and said to him, "What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave; I, and the other slaves of the lamp." "Hear me," said Aladdin; "thou hast hitherto obeyed me, but now I am about to impose on thee a harder task. The sultan's daughter, who was promised me as my bride, is this night married to the son of the grand vizier. Bring them both hither to me immediately they retire to their bedchamber."

"Master," replied the genie, "I obey you."

Aladdin supped with his mother as was their wont, and then went to his own apartment, and sat up to await the return of the genie, according to his commands.

In the mean time the festivities in honour of the princess's marriage were conducted in the sultan's palace with great magnificence. The ceremonies were at last brought to a conclusion, and the princess and the son of the vizier retired to the bedchamber prepared for them. No sooner had they entered it, and dismissed their attendants, than the genie, the faithful slave of the lamp, to the great amazement and alarm of the bride and bridegroom, took up the bed, and by an agency invisible to them, transported it in an instant into Aladdin's chamber, where he set it down. "Remove the bridegroom," said Aladdin to the genie, "and keep him a prisoner till to-morrow dawn, and then return with him here." On Aladdin being left alone with the princess, he endeavoured to assuage her fears, and explained to her the treachery practiced upon him by the sultan her father. He then laid himself down beside her, putting a drawn scimitar between them, to show that he was determined to secure her safety, and to treat her with the utmost possible respect. At break of day, the genie appeared at the appointed hour, bringing back the bridegroom, whom by breathing upon he had left motionless and entranced at the door of Aladdin's chamber during the night, and at Aladdin's command transported the couch with the bride and bridegroom on it, by the same invisible agency, into the palace of the sultan.

At the instant that the genie had set down the couch with the bride and bridegroom in their own chamber, the sultan came to the door to offer his good wishes to his daughter. The grand vizier's son, who was almost perished with cold, by standing in his thin under-garment all night, no sooner heard the knocking at the door than he got out of bed, and ran into the robing-chamber, where he had undressed himself the night before.

The sultan having opened the door, went to the bedside, kissed the princess on the forehead, but was extremely surprised to see her look so melancholy. She only cast at him a sorrowful look, expressive of great affliction. He suspected there was something extraordinary in this silence, and thereupon went immediately to the sultaness's apartment, told her in what a state he found the princess, and how she had received him. "Sire," said the sultaness, "I will go and see her; she will not receive me in the same manner."

The princess received her mother with sighs and tears, and signs of deep dejection. At last, upon her pressing on her the duty of telling her all her thoughts, she gave to the sultaness a precise description of all that happened to her during the night; on which the sultaness enjoined on her the necessity of silence and discretion, as no one would give credence to so strange a tale. The grand vizier's son, elated with the honour of being the sultan's son-in-law, kept silence on his part, and the events of the night were not allowed to cast the least gloom on the festivities on the following day, in continued celebration of the royal marriage.

When night came, the bride and bridegroom were again attended to their chamber with the same ceremonies as on the preceding evening. Aladdin, knowing that this would be so, had already given his commands to the genie of the lamp; and no sooner were they alone than their bed was removed in the same mysterious manner as on the preceding evening; and having passed the night in the same unpleasant way, they were in the morning conveyed to the palace of the sultan. Scarcely had they been replaced in their apartment, when the sultan came to make his compliments to his daughter, when the princess could

no longer conceal from him the unhappy treatment she had been subject to, and told him all that had happened as she had already related it to her mother. The sultan, on hearing these strange tidings, consulted with the grand vizier; and finding from him that his son had been subjected to even worse treatment by an invisible agency, he determined to declare the marriage to be cancelled, and all the festivities, which were yet to last for several days, to be countermanded and terminated.

This sudden change in the mind of the sultan gave rise to various speculations and reports. Nobody but Aladdin knew the secret, and he kept it with the most scrupulous silence; and neither the sultan nor the grand vizier, who had forgotten Aladdin and his request, had the least thought that he had any hand in the strange adventures that befell the bride and bridegroom.

On the very day that the three months contained in the sultan's promise expired, the mother of Aladdin again went to the palace, and stood in the same place in the divan. The sultan knew her again, and directed his vizier to have her brought before him.

After having prostrated herself, she made answer, in reply to the sultan: "Sire, I come at the end of three months to ask of you the fulfillment of the promise you made to my son." The sultan little thought the request of Aladdin's mother was made to him in earnest, or that he would hear any more of the matter. He therefore took counsel with his vizier, who suggested that the sultan should attach such conditions to the marriage that no one of the humble condition of Aladdin could possibly fulfill. In accordance with this suggestion of the vizier, the sultan replied to the mother of Aladdin: "Good woman, it is true sultans ought to abide by their word, and I am ready to keep mine, by making your son happy in marriage with the princess my daughter. But as I cannot marry her without some further proof of your son being able to support her in royal state, you may tell him I will fulfill my promise as soon as he shall send me forty trays of massy gold, full of the same sort of jewels you have already made me a present of, and carried by the like number of black slaves, who shall be led by as many young and handsome white slaves, all dressed magnificently. On these conditions I am ready to bestow the princess my daughter upon him; therefore, good woman, go and tell him so, and I will wait till you bring me his answer."

Aladdin's mother prostrated herself a second time before the sultan's throne, and retired. On her way home, she laughed within herself at her son's foolish imagination. "Where," said she, "can he get so many large gold trays, and such precious stones to fill them? It is altogether out of his power, and I believe he will not be much pleased with my embassy this time." When she came home, full of these thoughts, she told Aladdin all the circumstances of her interview with the sultan, and the conditions on which he consented to the marriage. "The sultan expects your answer immediately," said she; and then added, laughing, "I believe he may wait long enough!"

"Not so long, mother, as you imagine," replied Aladdin, "This demand is a mere trifle, and will prove no bar to my marriage with the princess. I will prepare at once to satisfy his request."

Aladdin retired to his own apartment and summoned the genie of the lamp, and required him to prepare and present the gift immediately, before the sultan closed his morning

audience, according to the terms in which it had been prescribed. The genie professed his obedience to the owner of the lamp, and disappeared. Within a very short time, a train of forty black slaves, led by the same number of white slaves, appeared opposite the house in which Aladdin lived. Each black slave carried on his head a basin of massy gold, full of pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. Aladdin then addressed his mother: “Madam, pray lose no time; before the sultan and the divan rise, I would have you return to the palace with this present as the dowry demanded for the princess, that he may judge by my diligence and exactness of the ardent and sincere desire I have to procure myself the honour of this alliance.”

As soon as this magnificent procession, with Aladdin’s mother at its head, had begun to march from Aladdin’s house, the whole city was filled with the crowds of people desirous to see so grand a sight. The graceful bearing, elegant form, and wonderful likeness of each slave; their grave walk at an equal distance from each other, the lustre of their jewelled girdles, and the brilliancy of the aigrettes of precious stones in their turbans, excited the greatest admiration in the spectators. As they had to pass through several streets to the palace, the whole length of the way was lined with files of spectators. Nothing, indeed, was ever seen so beautiful and brilliant in the sultan’s palace, and the richest robes of the emirs of his court were not to be compared to the costly dresses of these slaves, whom they supposed to be kings.

As the sultan, who had been informed of their approach, had given orders for them to be admitted, they met with no obstacle, but went into the divan in regular order, one part turning to the right and the other to the left. After they were all entered, and had formed a semicircle before the sultan’s throne, the black slaves laid the golden trays on the carpet, prostrated themselves, touching the carpet with their foreheads, and at the same time the white slaves did the same. When they rose, the black slaves uncovered the trays, and then all stood with their arms crossed over their breasts.

In the mean time, Aladdin’s mother advanced to the foot of the throne, and having prostrated herself, said to the sultan, “Sire, my son knows this present is much below the notice of Princess Buddir al Buddoor; but hopes, nevertheless, that your majesty will accept of it, and make it agreeable to the princess, and with the greater confidence since he has endeavoured to conform to the conditions you were pleased to impose.”

The sultan, overpowered at the sight of such more than royal magnificence, replied without hesitation to the words of Aladdin’s mother: “Go and tell your son that I wait with open arms to embrace him; and the more haste he makes to come and receive the princess my daughter from my hands, the greater pleasure he will do me.” As soon as Aladdin’s mother had retired, the sultan put an end to the audience; and rising from his throne ordered that the princess’s attendants should come and carry the trays into their mistress’s apartment, whither he went himself to examine them with her at his leisure. The fourscore slaves were conducted into the palace; and the sultan, telling the princess of their magnificent apparel, ordered them to be brought before her apartment, that she might see through the lattices he had not exaggerated in his account of them.

In the meantime Aladdin’s mother reached home, and showed in her air and countenance the good news she brought to her son. “My son,” said she, “you may rejoice you are arrived at the height of your desires. The sultan has declared that you shall marry the

Princess Buddir al Buddoor. He waits for you with impatience."

Aladdin, enraptured with this news, made his mother very little reply, but retired to his chamber. There he rubbed his lamp, and the obedient genie appeared. "Genie," said Aladdin, "convey me at once to a bath, and supply me with the richest and most magnificent robe ever worn by a monarch." No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the genie rendered him, as well as himself, invisible, and transported him into a bath of the finest marble of all sorts of colours; where he was undressed, without seeing by whom, in a magnificent and spacious hall. He was then well rubbed and washed with various scented waters. After he had passed through several degrees of heat, he came out quite a different man from what he was before. His skin was clear as that of a child, his body lightsome and free; and when he returned into the hall, he found, instead of his own poor raiment, a robe, the magnificence of which astonished him. The genie helped him to dress, and when he had done, transported him back to his own chamber, where he asked him if he had any other commands. "Yes," answered Aladdin, "bring me a charger that surpasses in beauty and goodness the best in the sultan's stables; with a saddle, bridle, and other caparisons to correspond with his value. Furnish also twenty slaves, as richly clothed as those who carried the present to the sultan, to walk by my side and follow me, and twenty more to go before me in two ranks. Besides these, bring my mother six women slaves to attend her, as richly dressed at least as any of the Princess Buddir al Buddoor's, each carrying a complete dress fit for any sultaness. I want also ten thousand pieces of gold in ten purses; go, and make haste."

As soon as Aladdin had given these orders, the genie disappeared, but presently returned with the horse, the forty slaves, ten of whom carried each a purse containing ten thousand pieces of gold, and six women slaves, each carrying on her head a different dress for Aladdin's mother, wrapt up in a piece of silver tissue, and presented them all to Aladdin.

He presented the six women slaves to his mother, telling her they were her slaves, and that the dresses they had brought were for her use. Of the ten purses Aladdin took four, which he gave to his mother, telling her, those were to supply her with necessaries; the other six he left in the hands of the slaves who brought them, with an order to throw them by handfuls among the people as they went to the sultan's palace. The six slaves who carried the purses he ordered likewise to march before him, three on the right hand and three on the left.

When Aladdin had thus prepared himself for his first interview with the sultan, he dismissed the genie, and immediately mounting his charger, began his march, and though he never was on horseback before, appeared with a grace the most experienced horseman might envy. The innumerable concourse of people through whom he passed made the air echo with their acclamations, especially every time the six slaves who carried the purses threw handfuls of gold among the populace.

On Aladdin's arrival at the palace, the sultan was surprised to find him more richly and magnificently robed than he had ever been himself, and was impressed with his good looks and dignity of manner, which were so different from what he expected in the son of one so humble as Aladdin's mother. He embraced him with all the demonstrations of joy, and when he would have fallen at his feet, held him by the hand, and made him sit near his throne. He shortly after led him amidst the sounds of trumpets, hautboys, and all kinds of

music, to a magnificent entertainment, at which the sultan and Aladdin ate by themselves, and the great lords of the court, according to their rank and dignity, sat at different tables. After the feast, the sultan sent for the chief cadi, and commanded him to draw up a contract of marriage between the Princess Buddir al Buddoor and Aladdin. When the contract had been drawn, the sultan asked Aladdin if he would stay in the palace and complete the ceremonies of the marriage that day. “Sire,” said Aladdin, “though great is my impatience to enter on the honour granted me by your majesty, yet I beg you to permit me first to build a palace worthy to receive the princess your daughter. I pray you to grant me sufficient ground near your palace, and I will have it completed with the utmost expedition.” The sultan granted Aladdin his request, and again embraced him. After which he took his leave with as much politeness as if he had been bred up and had always lived at court.

Aladdin returned home in the order he had come, amidst the acclamations of the people, who wished him all happiness and prosperity. As soon as he dismounted, he retired to his own chamber, took the lamp, and summoned the genie as usual, who professed his allegiance. “Genie,” said Aladdin, “build me a palace fit to receive the Princess Buddir al Buddoor. Let its materials be made of nothing less than porphyry, jasper, agate, lapis lazuli, and the finest marble. Let its walls be massive gold and silver bricks laid alternately. Let each front contain six windows, and let the lattices of these (except one, which must be left unfinished) be enriched with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, so that they shall exceed everything of the kind ever seen in the world. Let there be an inner and outer court in front of the palace, and a spacious garden; but above all things, provide a safe treasure-house, and fill it with gold and silver. Let there be also kitchens and storehouses, stables full of the finest horses, with their equerries and grooms, and hunting equipage, officers, attendants, and slaves, both men and women, to form a retinue for the princess and myself. Go and execute my wishes.“

When Aladdin gave these commands to the genie, the sun was set. The next morning at daybreak the genie presented himself, and, having obtained Aladdin’s consent, transported him in a moment to the palace he had made. The genie led him through all the apartments, where he found officers and slaves, habited according to their rank and the services to which they were appointed. The genie then showed him the treasury, which was opened by a treasurer, where Aladdin saw large vases of different sizes, piled up to the top with money, ranged all round the chamber. The genie thence led him to the stables, where were some of the finest horses in the world, and the grooms busy in dressing them; from thence they went to the storehouses, which were filled with all things necessary, both for food and ornament.

When Aladdin had examined every portion of the palace, and particularly the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, and found it far to exceed his fondest expectations, he said, “Genie, there is one thing wanting, a fine carpet for the princess to walk upon from the sultan’s palace to mine. Lay one down immediately.” The genie disappeared, and Aladdin saw what he desired executed in an instant. The genie then returned, and carried him to his own home.

When the sultan’s porters came to open the gates, they were amazed to find what had been an unoccupied garden filled up with a magnificent palace, and a splendid carpet extending

to it all the way from the sultan's palace. They told the strange tidings to the grand vizier, who informed the sultan, who exclaimed, "It must be Aladdin's palace, which I gave him leave to build for my daughter. He has wished to surprise us, and let us see what wonders can be done in only one night."

Aladdin, on his being conveyed by the genie to his own home, requested his mother to go to the Princess Buddir al Buddoor, and tell her that the palace would be ready for her reception in the evening. She went, attended by her women slaves, in the same order as on the preceding day. Shortly after her arrival at the princess's apartment, the sultan himself came in, and was surprised to find her, whom he knew as his suppliant at his divan in such humble guise, to be now more richly and sumptuously attired than his own daughter. This gave him a higher opinion of Aladdin, who took such care of his mother, and made her share his wealth and honours. Shortly after her departure, Aladdin, mounting his horse, and attended by his retinue of magnificent attendants, left his paternal home forever, and went to the palace in the same pomp as on the day before. Nor did he forget to take with him the Wonderful Lamp, to which he owed all his good fortune, nor to wear the Ring which was given him as a talisman. The sultan entertained Aladdin with the utmost magnificence, and at night, on the conclusion of the marriage ceremonies, the princess took leave of the sultan her father. Bands of music led the procession, followed by a hundred state ushers, and the like number of black mutes, in two files, with their officers at their head. Four hundred of the sultan's young pages carried flambeaux on each side, which, together with the illuminations of the sultan's and Aladdin's palaces, made it as light as day. In this order the princess, conveyed in her litter, and accompanied also by Aladdin's mother, carried in a superb litter and attended by her women slaves, proceeded on the carpet which was spread from the sultan's palace to that of Aladdin. On her arrival Aladdin was ready to receive her at the entrance, and led her into a large hall, illuminated with an infinite number of wax candles, where a noble feast was served up. The dishes were of massy gold, and contained the most delicate viands. The vases, basins, and goblets were gold also, and of exquisite workmanship, and all the other ornaments and embellishments of the hall were answerable to this display. The princess, dazzled to see so much riches collected in one place, said to Aladdin, "I thought, prince, that nothing in the world was so beautiful as the sultan my father's palace, but the sight of this hall alone is sufficient to show I was deceived."

When the supper was ended, there entered a company of female dancers, who performed, according to the custom of the country, singing at the same time verses in praise of the bride and bridegroom. About midnight Aladdin's mother conducted the bride to the nuptial apartment, and he soon after retired.

The next morning the attendants of Aladdin presented themselves to dress him, and brought him another habit, as rich and magnificent as that worn the day before. He then ordered one of the horses to be got ready, mounted him, and went in the midst of a large troop of slaves to the sultan's palace to entreat him to take a repast in the princess's palace, attended by his grand vizier and all the lords of his court. The sultan consented with pleasure, rose up immediately, and, preceded by the principal officers of his palace, and followed by all the great lords of his court, accompanied Aladdin.

The nearer the sultan approached Aladdin's palace, the more he was struck with its beauty;

but when he entered it, came into the hall, and saw the windows, enriched with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, all large perfect stones, he was completely surprised, and said to his son-in-law, “This palace is one of the wonders of the world; for where in all the world besides shall we find walls built of massy gold and silver, and diamonds, rubies, and emeralds composing the windows? But what most surprises me is, that a hall of this magnificence should be left with one of its windows incomplete and unfinished.” “Sire,” answered Aladdin, “the omission was by design, since I wished that you should have the glory of finishing this hall.” “I take your intention kindly,” said the sultan, “and will give orders about it immediately.“

After the sultan had finished this magnificent entertainment, provided for him and for his court by Aladdin, he was informed that the jewellers and goldsmiths attended; upon which he returned to the hall, and showed them the window which was unfinished. “I sent for you,” said he, “to fit up this window in as great perfection as the rest. Examine them well, and make all the dispatch you can.”

The jewellers and goldsmiths examined the three-and-twenty windows with great attention, and after they had consulted together, to know what each could furnish, they returned, and presented themselves before the sultan, whose principal jeweller undertaking to speak for the rest, said, “Sire, we are all willing to exert our utmost care and industry to obey you; but among us all we cannot furnish jewels enough for so great a work.” “I have more than are necessary,” said the sultan; “come to my palace, and you shall choose what may answer your purpose.”

When the sultan returned to his palace, he ordered his jewels to be brought out, and the jewellers took a great quantity, particularly those Aladdin had made him a present of, which they soon used, without making any great advance in their work. They came again several times for more, and in a month’s time had not finished half their work. In short, they used all the jewels the sultan had, and borrowed of the vizier, but yet the work was not half done.

Aladdin, who knew that all the sultan’s endeavours to make this window like the rest were in vain, sent for the jewellers and goldsmiths, and not only commanded them to desist from their work, but ordered them to undo what they had begun, and to carry all their jewels back to the sultan and to the vizier. They undid in a few hours what they had been six weeks about, and retired, leaving Aladdin alone in the hall. He took the lamp, which he carried about him, rubbed it, and presently the genie appeared. “Genie,” said Aladdin, “I ordered thee to leave one of the four-and-twenty windows of this hall imperfect, and thou hast executed my commands punctually; now I would have thee make it like the rest.” The genie immediately disappeared. Aladdin went out of the hall, and returning soon after, found the window, as he wished it to be, like the others.

In the mean time, the jewellers and goldsmiths repaired to the palace, and were introduced into the sultan’s presence; where the chief jeweller presented the precious stones which he had brought back. The sultan asked them if Aladdin had given them any reason for so doing, and they answering that he had given them none, he ordered a horse to be brought, which he mounted, and rode to his son-in-law’s palace, with some few attendants on foot, to inquire why he had ordered the completion of the window to be stopped. Aladdin met him at the gate, and without giving any reply to his inquiries conducted him to the grand

saloon, where the sultan, to his great surprise, found the window, which was left imperfect, to correspond exactly with the others. He fancied at first that he was mistaken, and examined the two windows on each side, and afterward all the four-and-twenty; but when he was convinced that the window which several workmen had been so long about was finished in so short a time, he embraced Aladdin and kissed him between his eyes. “My son,” said he, “what a man you are to do such surprising things always in the twinkling of an eye! there is not your fellow in the world; the more I know, the more I admire you.“

The sultan returned to the palace, and after this went frequently to the window to contemplate and admire the wonderful palace of his son-in-law.

Aladdin did not confine himself in his palace, but went with much state, sometimes to one mosque, and sometimes to another, to prayers, or to visit the grand vizier or the principal lords of the court. Every time he went out, he caused two slaves, who walked by the side of his horse, to throw handfuls of money among the people as he passed through the streets and squares. This generosity gained him the love and blessings of the people, and it was common for them to swear by his head. Thus Aladdin, while he paid all respect to the sultan, won by his affable behaviour and liberality the affections of the people.

Aladdin had conducted himself in this manner several years, when the African magician, who had for some years dismissed him from his recollection, determined to inform himself with certainty whether he perished, as he supposed, in the subterranean cave or not. After he had resorted to a long course of magic ceremonies, and had formed a horoscope by which to ascertain Aladdin’s fate, what was his surprise to find the appearances to declare that Aladdin, instead of dying in the cave, had made his escape, and was living in royal splendour, by the aid of the genie of the wonderful lamp!

On the very next day, the magician set out and travelled with the utmost haste to the capital of China, where, on his arrival, he took up his lodgings in a khan.

He then quickly learnt about the wealth, charities, happiness, and splendid palace of Prince Aladdin. Directly he saw the wonderful fabric, he knew that none but the genies, the slaves of the lamp, could have performed such wonders, and, piqued to the quick at Aladdin’s high estate, he returned to the khan.

On his return he had recourse to an operation of geomancy to find out where the lamp was —whether Aladdin carried it about with him, or where he left it. The result of his consultation informed him, to his great joy, that the lamp was in the palace. “Well,” said he, rubbing his hands in glee, “I shall have the lamp, and I shall make Aladdin return to his original mean condition.”

The next day the magician learnt, from the chief superintendent of the khan where he lodged, that Aladdin had gone on a hunting expedition, which was to last for eight days, of which only three had expired. The magician wanted to know no more, He resolved at once on his plans. He went to a coppersmith, and asked for a dozen copper lamps: the master of the shop told him he had not so many by him, but if he would have patience till the next day, he would have them ready. The magician appointed his time, and desired him to take care that they should be handsome and well polished.

The next day the magician called for the twelve lamps, paid the man his full price, put

them into a basket hanging on his arm, and went directly to Aladdin's palace. As he approached, he began crying, "Who will exchange old lamps for new ones?" As he went along, a crowd of children collected, who hooted, and thought him, as did all who chanced to be passing by, a madman or a fool, to offer to change new lamps for old ones.

The African magician regarded not their scoffs, hootings, or all they could say to him, but still continued crying, "Who will change old lamps for new ones?" He repeated this so often, walking backward and forward in front of the palace, that the princess, who was then in the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, hearing a man cry something, and seeing a great mob crowding about him, sent one of her women slaves to know what he cried.

The slave returned, laughing so heartily that the princess rebuked her. "Madam," answered the slave, laughing still, "who can forbear laughing, to see an old man with a basket on his arm, full of fine new lamps, asking to change them for old ones? the children and mob crowding about him, so that he can hardly stir, make all the noise they can in derision of him."

Another female slave hearing this, said, "Now you speak of lamps, I know not whether the princess may have observed it, but there is an old one upon a shelf of the Prince Aladdin's robing room, and whoever owns it will not be sorry to find a new one in its stead. If the princess chooses, she may have the pleasure of trying if this old man is so silly as to give a new lamp for an old one, without taking anything for the exchange."

The princess, who knew not the value of this lamp, and the interest that Aladdin had to keep it safe, entered into the pleasantry, and commanded a slave to take it and make the exchange. The slave obeyed, went out of the hall, and no sooner got to the palace gates than he saw the African magician, called to him, and showing him the old lamp, said, "Give me a new lamp for this."

The magician never doubted but this was the lamp he wanted. There could be no other such in this palace, where every utensil was gold or silver. He snatched it eagerly out of the slave's hand, and thrusting it as far as he could into his breast, offered him his basket, and bade him choose which he liked best. The slave picked out one and carried it to the princess; but the change was no sooner made than the place rung with the shouts of the children, deriding the magician's folly.

The African magician stayed no longer near the palace, nor cried any more, "New lamps for old ones," but made the best of his way to his khan. His end was answered, and by his silence he got rid of the children and the mob.

As soon as he was out of sight of the two palaces, he hastened down the least-frequented streets; and having no more occasion for his lamps or basket, set all down in a spot where nobody saw him; then going down another street or two, he walked till he came to one of the city gates, and pursuing his way through the suburbs, which were very extensive, at length reached a lonely spot, where he stopped till the darkness of the night, as the most suitable time for the design he had in contemplation. When it became quite dark, he pulled the lamp out of his breast and rubbed it. At that summons the genie appeared, and said, "What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands, both I and the other slaves of the lamp." "I command

thee," replied the magician, "to transport me immediately, and the palace which thou and the other slaves of the lamp have built in this city, with all the people in it, to Africa." The genie made no reply, but with the assistance of the other genies, the slaves of the lamp, immediately transported him and the palace, entire, to the spot whither he had been desired to convey it.

Early the next morning, when the sultan, according to custom, went to contemplate and admire Aladdin's place, his amazement was unbounded to find that it could nowhere be seen. He could not comprehend how so large a palace which he had seen plainly every day for some years, should vanish so soon, and not leave the least remains behind. In his perplexity he ordered the grand vizier to be sent for with expedition.

The grand vizier, who, in secret, bore no good will to Aladdin, intimated his suspicion that the palace was built by magic, and that Aladdin had made his hunting excursion an excuse for the removal of his palace with the same suddenness with which it had been erected. He induced the sultan to send a detachment of his guard, and to have Aladdin seized as a prisoner of state. On his son-in-law being brought before him, he would not hear a word from him, but ordered him to be put to death. The decree caused so much discontent among the people, whose affection Aladdin had secured by his largesses and charities, that the sultan, fearful of an insurrection, was obliged to grant him his life. When Aladdin found himself at liberty, he again addressed the sultan: "Sire, I pray you to let me know the crime by which I have thus lost the favour of thy countenance." "Your crime!" answered the sultan, "wretched man! do you not know it? Follow me, and I will show you." The sultan then took Aladdin into the apartment from whence he was wont to look at and admire his palace, and said, "You ought to know where your palace stood; look, mind, and tell me what has become of it." Aladdin did so, and being utterly amazed at the loss of his palace, was speechless. At last recovering himself, he said, "It is true, I do not see the palace. It is vanished; but I had no concern in its removal. I beg you to give me forty days, and if in that time I cannot restore it, I will offer my head to be disposed of at your pleasure." "I give you the time you ask, but at the end of the forty days, forget not to present yourself before me."

Aladdin went out of the sultan's palace in a condition of exceeding humiliation. The lords who had courted him in the days of his splendour, now declined to have any communication with him. For three days he wandered about the city, exciting the wonder and compassion of the multitude by asking everybody he met if they had seen his palace, or could tell him anything of it. On the third day he wandered into the country, and as he was approaching a river, he fell down the bank with so much violence that he rubbed the ring which the magician had given him so hard by holding on the rock to save himself, that immediately the same genie appeared whom he had seen in the cave where the magician had left him. "What wouldst thou have?" said the genie, "I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those that have that ring on their finger; both I and the other slaves of the ring."

Aladdin, agreeably surprised at an offer of help so little expected, replied, "Genie, show me where the palace I caused to be built now stands, or transport it back where it first stood." "Your command," answered the genie, "is not wholly in my power; I am only the slave of the ring, and not of the lamp." "I command thee, then," replied Aladdin, "by the

power of the ring, to transport me to the spot where my palace stands, in what part of the world soever it may be." These words were no sooner out of his mouth, than the genie transported him into Africa, to the midst of a large plain, where his palace stood, at no great distance from a city, and placing him exactly under the window of the princess's apartment, left him.

Now it so happened that shortly after Aladdin had been transported by the slave of the ring to the neighbourhood of his palace, that one of the attendants of the Princess Buddir al Buddoor, looking through the window, perceived him and instantly told her mistress. The princess, who could not believe the joyful tidings, hastened herself to the window, and seeing Aladdin, immediately opened it. The noise of opening the window made Aladdin turn his head that way, and perceiving the princess, he saluted her with an air that expressed his joy. "To lose no time," said she to him, "I have sent to have the private door opened for you; enter and come up."

The private door, which was just under the princess's apartment, was soon opened, and Aladdin conducted up into the chamber. It is impossible to express the joy of both at seeing each other, after so cruel a separation. After embracing and shedding tears of joy, they sat down, and Aladdin said, "I beg of you, princess, to tell me what is become of an old lamp which stood upon a shelf in my robing-chamber."

"Alas!" answered the princess, "I was afraid our misfortune might be owing to that lamp; and what grieves me most is, that I have been the cause of it. I was foolish enough to change the old lamp for a new one, and the next morning I found myself in this unknown country, which I am told is Africa."

"Princess," said Aladdin, interrupting her, "you have explained all by telling me we are in Africa I desire you only to tell me if you know where the old lamp now is." "The African magician carries it carefully wrapt up in his bosom," said the princess; "and this I can assure you, because he pulled it out before me, and showed it to me in triumph."

"Princess," said Aladdin, "I think I have found the means to deliver you and to regain possession of the lamp, on which all my prosperity depends; to execute this design it is necessary for me to go to the town. I shall return by noon, and will then tell you what must be done by you to insure success. In the mean time, I shall disguise myself, and beg that the private door may be opened at the first knock."

When Aladdin was out of the palace, he looked round him on all sides, and perceiving a peasant going into the country, hastened after him; and when he had overtaken him, made a proposal to him to change clothes, which the man agreed to. When they had made the exchange, the countryman went about his business, and Aladdin entered the neighbouring city. After traversing several streets, he came to that part of the town where the merchants and artisans had their particular streets according to their trades. He went into that of the druggists; and entering one of the largest and best furnished shops, asked the druggist if he had a certain powder, which he named.

The druggist, judging Aladdin by his habit to be very poor, told him he had it, but that it was very dear; upon which Aladdin, penetrating his thoughts, pulled out his purse, and showing him some gold, asked for half a dram of the powder; which the druggist weighed and gave him, telling him the price was a piece of gold. Aladdin put the money into his

hand, and hastened to the palace, which he entered at once by the private door. When he came into the princess's apartments, he said to her, "Princess, you must take your part in the scheme which I propose for our deliverance. You must overcome your aversion to the magician, and assume a most friendly manner toward him, and ask him to oblige you by partaking of an entertainment in your apartments. Before he leaves, ask him to exchange cups with you, which he, gratified at the honour you do him, will gladly do, when you must give him the cup containing this powder. On drinking it he will instantly fall asleep, and we will obtain the lamp, whose slaves will do all our bidding, and restore us and the palace to the capital of China."

The princess obeyed to the utmost her husband's instructions. She assumed a look of pleasure on the next visit of the magician, and asked him to an entertainment, which he most willingly accepted. At the close of the evening, during which the princess had tried all she could to please him, she asked him to exchange cups with her, and giving the signal, had the drugged cup brought to her, which she gave to the magician. He drank it out of compliment to the princess to the very last drop, when he fell backward lifeless on the sofa.

The princess, in anticipation of the success of her scheme, had so placed her women from the great hall to the foot of the staircase, that the word was no sooner given that the African magician was fallen backward, than the door was opened, and Aladdin admitted to the hall. The princess rose from her seat, and ran, overjoyed, to embrace him; but he stopped her, and said, "Princess, retire to your apartment; and let me be left alone, while I endeavour to transport you back to China as speedily as you were brought from thence."

When the princess, her women, and slaves were gone out of the hall, Aladdin shut the door, and going directly to the dead body of the magician, opened his vest, took out the lamp which was carefully wrapped up, and rubbing it, the genie immediately appeared. "Genie," said Aladdin, "I command thee to transport this palace instantly to the place from whence it was brought hither." The genie bowed his head in token of obedience, and disappeared. Immediately the palace was transported into China, and its removal was only felt by two little shocks, the one when it was lifted up, the other when it was set down, and both in a very short interval of time.

On the morning after the restoration of Aladdin's palace, the sultan was looking out of his window, and mourning over the fate of his daughter, when he thought that he saw the vacancy created by the disappearance of the palace to be again filled up.

On looking more attentively, he was convinced beyond the power of doubt that it was his son-in-law's palace. Joy and gladness succeeded to sorrow and grief. He at once ordered a horse to be saddled, which he mounted that instant, thinking he could not make haste enough to the place.

Aladdin rose that morning by daybreak, put on one of the most magnificent habits his wardrobe afforded, and went up into the hall of twenty-four windows, from whence he perceived the sultan approaching, and received him at the foot of the great staircase, helping him to dismount.

He led the sultan into the princess's apartment. The happy father embraced her with tears of joy; and the princess, on her side, afforded similar testimonies of her extreme pleasure.

After a short interval, devoted to mutual explanations of all that had happened, the sultan restored Aladdin to his favour, and expressed his regret for the apparent harshness with which he had treated him. “My son,” said he, “be not displeased at my proceedings against you; they arose from my paternal love, and therefore you ought to forgive the excesses to which it hurried me.” “Sire,” replied Aladdin, “I have not the least reason to complain of your conduct, since you did nothing but what your duty required. This infamous magician, the basest of men, was the sole cause of my misfortune.”

The African magician, who was thus twice foiled in his endeavour to ruin Aladdin, had a younger brother, who was as skilful a magician as himself, and exceeded him in wickedness and hatred of mankind. By mutual agreement they communicated with each other once a year, however widely separate might be their place of residence from each other. The younger brother not having received as usual his annual communication, prepared to take a horoscope and ascertain his brother’s proceedings. He, as well as his brother, always carried a geomantic square instrument about him; he prepared the sand, cast the points, and drew the figures. On examining the planetary crystal, he found that his brother was no longer living, but had been poisoned; and by another observation, that he was in the capital of the kingdom of China; also, that the person who had poisoned him was of mean birth, though married to a princess, a sultan’s daughter.

When the magician had informed himself of his brother’s fate, he resolved immediately to revenge his death, and at once departed for China; where, after crossing plains, rivers, mountains, deserts, and a long tract of country without delay, he arrived after incredible fatigues. When he came to the capital of China, he took a lodging at a khan. His magic art soon revealed to him that Aladdin was the person who had been the cause of the death of his brother. He had heard, too, all the persons of repute in the city talking of a woman called Fatima, who was retired from the world, and of the miracles she wrought. As he fancied that this woman might be serviceable to him in the project he had conceived, he made more minute inquiries, and requested to be informed more particularly who that holy woman was, and what sort of miracles she performed.

“What!” said the person whom he addressed, “have you never seen or heard of her? She is the admiration of the whole town, for her fasting, her austerities, and her exemplary life. Except Mondays and Fridays, she never stirs out of her little cell; and on those days on which she comes into the town she does an infinite deal of good; for there is not a person who is diseased but she puts her hand on them and cures them.”

Having ascertained the place where the hermitage of this holy woman was, the magician went at night, and, plunging a poniard into her heart, killed this good woman. In the morning he dyed his face of the same hue as hers, and arraying himself in her garb, taking her veil, the large necklace she wore round her waist, and her stick, went straight to the palace of Aladdin.

As soon as the people saw the holy woman, as they imagined him to be, they presently gathered about him in a great crowd. Some begged his blessing, others kissed his hand, and others, more reserved, only the hem of his garment; while others, suffering from disease, stooped for him to lay his hands upon them; which he did, muttering some words in form of prayer, and, in short, counterfeiting so well, that everybody took him for the holy woman. He came at last to the square before Aladdin’s palace. The crowd and the

noise were so great that the princess, who was in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, heard it, and asked what was the matter. One of her women told her it was a great crowd of people collected about the holy woman to be cured of diseases by the imposition of her hands.

The princess, who had long heard of this holy woman, but had never seen her, was very desirous to have some conversation with her; which the chief officer perceiving, told her it was an easy matter to bring her to her, if she desired and commanded it; and the princess expressing her wishes, he immediately sent four slaves for the pretended holy woman.

As soon as the crowd saw the attendants from the palace, they made way; and the magician, perceiving also that they were coming for him, advanced to meet them, overjoyed to find his plot succeed so well. “Holy woman,” said one of the slaves, “the princess wants to see you, and has sent us for you.” “The princess does me too great an honour,” replied the false Fatima; “I am ready to obey her command,” and at the same time followed the slaves to the palace.

When the pretended Fatima had made her obeisance, the princess said, “My good mother, I have one thing to request, which you must not refuse me; it is, to stay with me, that you may edify me with your way of living, and that I may learn from your good example.” “Princess,” said the counterfeit Fatima, “I beg of you not to ask what I cannot consent to without neglecting my prayers and devotion.” “That shall be no hindrance to you,” answered the princess; “I have a great many apartments unoccupied; you shall choose which you like best, and have as much liberty to perform your devotions as if you were in your own cell.”

The magician, who really desired nothing more than to introduce himself into the palace, where it would be a much easier matter for him to execute his designs, did not long excuse himself from accepting the obliging offer which the princess made him. “Princess,” said he, “whatever resolution a poor wretched woman as I am may have made to renounce the pomp and grandeur of this world, I dare not presume to oppose the will and commands of so pious and charitable a princess.”

Upon this the princess, rising up, said, “Come with me, I will show you what vacant apartments I have, that you may make choice of that you like best.” The magician followed the princess, and of all the apartments she showed him, made choice of that which was the worst, saying that it was too good for him, and that he only accepted it to please her.

Afterward the princess would have brought him back into the great hall to make him dine with her; but he, considering that he should then be obliged to show his face, which he had always taken care to conceal with Fatima’s veil, and fearing that the princess should find out that he was not Fatima, begged of her earnestly to excuse him, telling her that he never ate anything but bread and dried fruits, and desiring to eat that slight repast in his own apartment. The princess granted his request, saying, “You may be as free here, good mother, as if you were in your own cell: I will order you a dinner, but remember I expect you as soon as you have finished your repast.”

After the princess had dined, and the false Fatima had been sent for by one of the attendants, he again waited upon her. “My good mother,” said the princess, “I am

overjoyed to see so holy a woman as yourself, who will confer a blessing upon this palace. But now I am speaking of the palace, pray how do you like it? And before I show it all to you, tell me first what you think of this hall."

Upon this question, the counterfeit Fatima surveyed the hall from one end to the other. When he had examined it well, he said to the princess, "As far as such a solitary being as I am, who am unacquainted with what the world calls beautiful, can judge, this hall is truly admirable; there wants but one thing." "What is that, good mother?" demanded the princess; "tell me, I conjure you. For my part, I always believed, and have heard say, it wanted nothing; but if it does, it shall be supplied."

"Princess," said the false Fatima, with great dissimulation, "forgive me the liberty I have taken; but my opinion is, if it can be of any importance, that if a roc's egg were hung up in the middle of the dome, this hall would have no parallel in the four quarters of the world, and your palace would be the wonder of the universe."

"My good mother," said the princess, "what is a roc, and where may one get an egg?" "Princess," replied the pretended Fatima, "it is a bird of prodigious size, which inhabits the summit of Mount Caucasus; the architect who built your palace can get you one."

After the princess had thanked the false Fatima for what she believed her good advice, she conversed with her upon other matters; but could not forget the roc's egg, which she resolved to request of Aladdin when next he should visit his apartments. He did so in the course of that evening, and shortly after he entered, the princess thus addressed him: "I always believed that our palace was the most superb, magnificent, and complete in the world: but I will tell you now what it wants, and that is a roc's egg hung up in the midst of the dome." "Princess," replied Aladdin, "it is enough that you think it wants such an ornament; you shall see by the diligence which I use in obtaining it, that there is nothing which I would not do for your sake."

Aladdin left the Princess Buddir al Buddoor that moment, and went up into the hall of four-and-twenty windows, where, pulling out of his bosom the lamp, which after the danger he had been exposed to be always carried about him, he rubbed it; upon which the genie immediately appeared. "Genie," said Aladdin, "I command thee, in the name of this lamp, bring a roc's egg to be hung up in the middle of the dome of the hall of the palace." Aladdin had no sooner pronounced these words, than the hall shook as if ready to fall; and the genie said in a loud and terrible voice, "Is it not enough that I and the other slaves of the lamp have done everything for you, but you, by an unheard-of ingratitude, must command me to bring my master, and hang him up in the midst of this dome? This attempt deserves that you, the princess, and the palace, should be immediately reduced to ashes; but you are spared because this request does not come from yourself. Its true author is the brother of the African magician, your enemy whom you have destroyed. He is now in your palace, disguised in the habit of the holy woman Fatima, whom he has murdered; at his suggestion your wife makes this pernicious demand. His design is to kill you, therefore take care of yourself." After these words the genie disappeared.

Aladdin resolved at once what to do. He returned to the princess's apartment, and without mentioning a word of what had happened, sat down, and complained of a great pain which had suddenly seized his head. On hearing this, the princess told him how she had invited

the holy Fatima to stay with her, and that she was now in the palace; and at the request of the prince, ordered her to be summoned to her at once.

When the pretended Fatima came, Aladdin said, “Come hither, good mother; I am glad to see you here at so fortunate a time. I am tormented with a violent pain in my head, and request your assistance, and hope you will not refuse me that cure which you impart to afflicted persons.” So saying, he arose, but held down his head. The counterfeit Fatima advanced toward him, with his hand all the time on a dagger concealed in his girdle under his gown; which Aladdin, observing, he snatched the weapon from his hand, pierced him to the heart with his own dagger, and then pushed him down on the floor.

“My dear prince, what have you done?” cried the princess, in surprise. “You have killed the holy woman!” “No, my princess,” answered Aladdin with emotion, “I have not killed Fatima, but a villain, who would have assassinated me, if I had not prevented him. This wicked man,” added he, uncovering his face, “is the brother of the magician who attempted our ruin. He has strangled the true Fatima, and disguised himself in her clothes with intent to murder me.” Aladdin then informed her how the genie had told him these facts, and how narrowly she and the palace had escaped destruction through his treacherous suggestion which had led to her request.

Thus was Aladdin delivered from the persecution of the two brothers, who were magicians. Within a few years afterward, the sultan died in a good old age, and as he left no male children, the Princess Buddir al Buddoor succeeded him, and she and Aladdin reigned together many years, and left a numerous and illustrious posterity.

CHAPTER VI

THE HISTORY OF ALI BABA, AND OF THE FORTY ROBBERS KILLED BY ONE SLAVE

There once lived in a town of Persia two brothers, one named Cassim and the other Ali Baba. Their father divided a small inheritance equally between them. Cassim married a very rich wife, and became a wealthy merchant. Ali Baba married a woman as poor as himself, and lived by cutting wood, and bringing it upon three asses into the town, to sell.

One day, when Ali Baba was in the forest, and had just cut wood enough to load his asses, he saw at a distance a great cloud of dust, which seemed to approach him. He observed it with attention, and distinguished soon after a body of horsemen, who he suspected might be robbers. He determined to leave his asses to save himself. He climbed up a large tree, planted on a high rock, whose branches were thick enough to conceal him, and yet enabled him to see all that passed without being discovered.

The troop, who were to the number of forty, all well mounted and armed, came to the foot of the rock on which the tree stood, and there dismounted Every man unbridled his horse, tied him to some shrub, and hung about his neck a bag of corn which they brought behind them. Then each of them took off his saddle-bag, which seemed to Ali Baba to be full of gold and silver from its weight. One, whom he took to be their captain, came under the tree in which Ali Baba was concealed; and making his way through some shrubs, pronounced these words: “Open, Sesame!” [1] As soon as the captain of the robbers had thus spoken, a door opened in the rock; and after he had made all his troop enter before him, he followed them, when the door shut again of itself.

The robbers stayed some time within the rock, during which Ali Baba, fearful of being caught, remained in the tree.

At last the door opened again, and as the captain went in last, so he came out first, and stood to see them all pass by him; when Ali Baba heard him make the door close by pronouncing these words, “Shut, Sesame!” Every man at once went and bridled his horse, fastened his wallet, and mounted again. When the captain saw them all ready, he put himself at their head, and they returned the way they had come.

Ali Baba followed them with his eyes as far as he could see them; and afterward stayed a considerable time before he descended. Remembering the words the captain of the robbers used to cause the door to open and shut, he had the curiosity to try if his pronouncing them would have the same effect. Accordingly, he went among the shrubs, and perceiving the door concealed behind them, stood before it, and said, “Open, Sesame!” The door instantly flew wide open.

Ali Baba, who expected a dark, dismal cavern, was surprised to see a well-lighted and spacious chamber, which received the light from an opening at the top of the rock, and in which were all sorts of provisions, rich bales of silk, stuff, brocade, and valuable

carpeting, piled upon one another; gold and silver ingots in great heaps, and money in bags. The sight of all these riches made him suppose that this cave must have been occupied for ages by robbers, who had succeeded one another.

Ali Baba went boldly into the cave, and collected as much of the gold coin, which was in bags, as he thought his three asses could carry. When he had loaded them with the bags, he laid wood over them in such a manner that they could not be seen. When he had passed in and out as often as he wished, he stood before the door, and pronouncing the words, “Shut, Sesame!” the door closed of itself. He then made the best of his way to town.

When Ali Baba got home, he drove his asses into a little yard, shut the gates very carefully, threw off the wood that covered the panniers, carried the bags into his house, and ranged them in order before his wife. He then emptied the bags, which raised such a great heap of gold as dazzled his wife’s eyes, and then he told her the whole adventure from beginning to end, and, above all, recommended her to keep it secret.

The wife rejoiced greatly in their good fortune, and would count all the gold piece by piece. “Wife,” replied Ali Baba, “you do not know what you undertake, when you pretend to count the money; you will never have done. I will dig a hole, and bury it. There is no time to be lost.” “You are in the right, husband,” replied she, “but let us know, as nigh as possible, how much we have. I will borrow a small measure, and measure it, while you dig the hole.“

Away the wife ran to her brother-in-law Cassim, who lived just by, and addressing herself to his wife, desired her to lend her a measure for a little while. Her sister-in-law asked her whether she would have a great or a small one. The other asked for a small one. She bade her stay a little, and she would readily fetch one,

The sister-in-law did so, but as she knew Ali Baba’s poverty, she was curious to know what sort of grain his wife wanted to measure, and artfully putting some suet at the bottom of the measure, brought it to her, with an excuse that she was sorry that she had made her stay so long, but that she could not find it sooner.

Ali Baba’s wife went home, set the measure upon the heap of gold, filled it, and emptied it often upon the sofa, till she had done, when she was very well satisfied to find the number of measures amounted to so many as they did, and went to tell her husband, who had almost finished digging the hole. While Ali Baba was burying the gold, his wife, to show her exactness and diligence to her sister-in-law, carried the measure back again, but without taking notice that a piece of gold had stuck to the bottom. “Sister,” said she, giving it to her again, “you see that I have not kept your measure long. I am obliged to you for it, and return it with thanks.”

As soon as Ali Baba’s wife was gone, Cassim’s looked at the bottom of the measure, and was in inexpressible surprise to find a piece of gold sticking to it. Envy immediately possessed her breast. “What!” said she, “has Ali Baba gold so plentiful as to measure it? Whence has he all this wealth?”

Cassim, her husband, was at his counting-house. When he came home, his wife said to him, “Cassim, I know you think yourself rich, but Ali Baba is infinitely richer than you. He does not count his money, but measures it.” Cassim desired her to explain the riddle, which she did, by telling him the stratagem she had used to make the discovery, and

showed him the piece of money, which was so old that they could not tell in what prince's reign it was coined.

Cassim, after he had married the rich widow, had never treated Ali Baba as a brother, but neglected him; and now, instead of being pleased, he conceived a base envy at his brother's prosperity. He could not sleep all that night, and went to him in the morning before sunrise. "Ali Baba," said he, "I am surprised at you; you pretend to be miserably poor, and yet you measure gold. My wife found this at the bottom of the measure you borrowed yesterday."

By this discourse, Ali Baba perceived that Cassim and his wife, through his own wife's folly, knew what they had so much reason to conceal; but what was done, could not be undone. Therefore, without showing the least surprise or trouble, he confessed all, and offered his brother part of his treasure to keep the secret.

"I expect as much," replied Cassim haughtily; "but I must know exactly where this treasure is, and how I may visit it myself when I choose; otherwise, I will go and inform against you, and then you will not only get no more, but will lose all you have, and I shall have a share for my information."

Ali Baba told him all he desired, even to the very words he was to use to gain admission into the cave.

Cassim rose the next morning long before the sun, and set out for the forest with ten mules bearing great chests, which he designed to fill, and followed the road which Ali Baba had pointed out to him. He was not long before he reached the rock, and found out the place, by the tree and other marks which his brother had given him. When he reached the entrance of the cavern, he pronounced the words, "Open, Sesame!" The door immediately opened, and, when he was in, closed upon him. In examining the cave, he was in great admiration to find much more riches than he had expected from Ali Baba's relation. He quickly laid as many bags of gold as he could carry at the door of the cavern; but his thoughts were so full of the great riches he should possess, that he could not think of the necessary word to make it open, but instead of "Sesame," said, "Open, Barley!" and was much amazed to find that the door remained fast shut. He named several sorts of grain, but still the door would not open.

Cassim had never expected such an incident, and was so alarmed at the danger he was in, that the more he endeavoured to remember the word "Sesame," the more his memory was confounded, and he had as much forgotten it as if he had never heard it mentioned. He threw down the bags he had loaded himself with, and walked distractedly up and down the cave, without having the least regard to the riches that were around him.

About noon the robbers visited their cave. At some distance they saw Cassim's mules straggling about the rock, with great chests on their backs. Alarmed at this, they galloped full speed to the cave. They drove away the mules, which strayed through the forest so far, that they were soon out of sight, and went directly, with their naked sabres in their hands, to the door, which, on their captain pronouncing the proper words, immediately opened.

Cassim, who heard the noise of the horses' feet, at once guessed the arrival of the robbers, and resolved to make one effort for his life. He rushed to the door, and no sooner saw the door open, than he ran out and threw the leader down, but could not escape the other

robbers, who with their scimitars soon deprived him of life.

The first care of the robbers after this was to examine the cave. They found all the bags which Cassim had brought to the door, to be ready to load his mules, and carried them again to their places, but they did not miss what Ali Baba had taken away before. Then holding a council, and deliberating upon this occurrence, they guessed that Cassim, when he was in, could no get out again, but could not imagine how he had learned the secret words by which alone he could enter. They could not deny the fact of his being there; and to terrify any person or accomplice who should attempt the same thing, they agreed to cut Cassim's body into four quarters—to hang two on one side, and two on the other, within the door of the cave. They had no sooner taken this resolution than they put it in execution; and when they had nothing more to detain them, left the place of their hoards well closed. They mounted their horses, went to beat the roads again, and to attack the caravans they might meet.

In the mean time, Cassim's wife was very uneasy when night came, and her husband was not returned. She ran to Ali Baba in great alarm, and said, "I believe, brother-in-law, that you know Cassim is gone to the forest, and upon what account; it is now night, and he has not returned; I am afraid some misfortune has happened to him." Ali Baba told her that she need not frighten herself, for that certainly Cassim would not think it proper to come into the town till the night should be pretty far advanced.

Cassim's wife, considering how much it concerned her husband to keep the business secret, was the more easily persuaded to believe her brother-in-law. She went home again, and waited patiently till midnight. Then her fear redoubled, and her grief was the more sensible because she was forced to keep it to herself. She repented of her foolish curiosity, and cursed her desire of prying into the affairs of her brother and sister-in-law. She spent all the night in weeping; and as soon as it was day went to them, telling them, by her tears, the cause of her coming.

Ali Baba did not wait for his sister-in-law to desire him to go to see what was become of Cassim, but departed immediately with his three asses, begging of her first to moderate her affliction. He went to the forest, and when he came near the rock, having seen neither his brother nor the mules in his way, was seriously alarmed at finding some blood spilt near the door, which he took for an ill omen; but when he had pronounced the word, and the door had opened, he was struck with horror at the dismal sight of his brother's body. He was not long in determining how he should pay the last dues to his brother; but without adverting to the little fraternal affection he had shown for him, went into the cave, to find something to enshroud his remains; and having loaded one of his asses with them, covered them over with wood. The other two asses he loaded with bags of gold, covering them with wood also as before; and then bidding the door shut, came away; but was so cautious as to stop some time at the end of the forest, that he might not go into the town before night. When he came home, he drove the two asses loaded with gold into his little yard, and left the care of unloading them to his wife, while he led the other to his sister-in-law's house.

Ali Baba knocked at the door, which was opened by Morgiana, a clever, intelligent slave, who was fruitful in inventions to meet the most difficult circumstances. When he came into the court, he unloaded the ass, and taking Morgiana aside, said to her, "You must

observe an inviolable secrecy. Your master's body is contained in these two panniers. We must bury him as if he had died a natural death. Go now and tell your mistress. I leave the matter to your wit and skilful devices."

Ali Baba helped to place the body in Cassim's house, again recommended to Morgiana to act her part well, and then returned with his ass.

Morgiana went out early the next morning to a druggist, and asked for a sort of lozenge which was considered efficacious in the most dangerous disorders. The apothecary inquired who was ill? She replied, with a sigh, "Her good master Cassim himself: and that he could neither eat nor speak." In the evening Morgiana went to the same druggist's again, and with tears in her eyes, asked for an essence which they used to give to sick people only when at the last extremity. "Alas!" said she, taking it from the apothecary, "I am afraid that this remedy will have no better effect than the lozenges; and that I shall lose my good master."

On the other hand, as Ali Baba and his wife were often seen to go between Cassim's and their own house all that day, and to seem melancholy, nobody was surprised in the evening to hear the lamentable shrieks and cries of Cassim's wife and Morgiana, who gave out everywhere that her master was dead. The next morning at daybreak Morgiana went to an old cobbler whom she knew to be always early at his stall, and bidding him good-morrow, put a piece of gold into his hand, saying, "Baba Mustapha, you must bring with you your sewing tackle, and come with me; but I must tell you, I shall blindfold you when you come to such a place."

Baba Mustapha seemed to hesitate a little at these words. "Oh! oh!" replied he, "you would have me do something against my conscience, or against my honour?" "God forbid," said Morgiana, putting another piece of gold into his hand, "that I should ask anything that is contrary to your honour! only come along with me and fear nothing."

Baba Mustapha went with Morgiana, who, after she had bound his eyes with a handkerchief at the place she had mentioned, conveyed him to her deceased master's house, and never unloosed his eyes till he had entered the room where she had put the corpse together. "Baba Mustapha," said she, "you must make haste and sew the parts of this body together; and when you have done, I will give you another piece of gold."

After Baba Mustapha had finished his task, she blindfolded him again, gave him the third piece of gold as she had promised, and recommending secrecy to him carried him back to the place where she first bound his eyes, pulled off the bandage, and let him go home, but watched him that he returned toward his stall, till he was quite out of sight, for fear he should have the curiosity to return and dodge her; she then went home. Morgiana, on her return, warmed some water to wash the body, and at the same time Ali Baba perfumed it with incense, and wrapped it in the burying clothes with the accustomed ceremonies. Not long after the proper officer brought the bier, and when the attendants of the mosque, whose business it was to wash the dead, offered to perform their duty, she told them that it was done already. Shortly after this the imaun and the other ministers of the mosque arrived. Four neighbours carried the corpse to the burying-ground, following the imaun, who recited some prayers. Ali Baba came after with some neighbours, who often relieved the others in carrying the bier to the burying-ground. Morgiana, a slave to the deceased,

followed in the procession, weeping, beating her breast, and tearing her hair. Cassim's wife stayed at home mourning, uttering lamentable cries with the women of the neighbourhood, who came, according to custom, during the funeral, and joining their lamentations with hers filled the quarter far and near with sounds of sorrow.

In this manner Cassim's melancholy death was concealed and hushed up between Ali Baba, his widow, and Morgiana, his slave, with so much contrivance that nobody in the city had the least knowledge or suspicion of the cause of it. Three or four days after the funeral, Ali Baba removed his few goods openly to his sister-in-law's house, in which it was agreed that he should in future live; but the money he had taken from the robbers he conveyed thither by night. As for Cassim's warehouse, he entrusted it entirely to the management of his eldest son.

While these things were being done, the forty robbers again visited their retreat in the forest. Great, then, was their surprise to find Cassim's body taken away, with some of their bags of gold. "We are certainly discovered," said the captain. "The removal of the body, and the loss of some of our money, plainly shows that the man whom we killed had an accomplice: and for our own lives' sake we must try and find him. What say you, my lads?"

All the robbers unanimously approved of the captain's proposal.

"Well," said the captain, "one of you, the boldest and most skilful among you, must go into the town, disguised as a traveller and a stranger, to try if he can hear any talk of the man whom we have killed, and endeavour to find out who he was, and where he lived. This is a matter of the first importance, and for fear of any treachery, I propose that whoever undertakes this business without success, even though the failure arises only from an error of judgment, shall suffer death."

Without waiting for the sentiments of his companions, one of the robbers started up, and said, "I submit to this condition, and think it an honour to expose my life to serve the troop."

After this robber had received great commendations from the captain and his comrades, he disguised himself so that nobody would take him for what he was; and taking his leave of the troop that night, went into the town just at daybreak; and walked up and down, till accidentally he came to Baba Mustapha's stall, which was always open before any of the shops.

Baba Mustapha was seated with an awl in his hand, just going to work. The robber saluted him, bidding him good-morrow; and perceiving that he was old, said, "Honest man, you begin to work very early: is it possible that one of your age can see so well? I question, even if it were somewhat lighter, whether you could see to stitch."

"You do not know me," replied Baba Mustapha; "for old as I am, I have extraordinary good eyes; and you will not doubt it when I tell you that I sewed the body of a dead man together in a place where I had not so much light as I have now."

"A dead body!" exclaimed the robber, with affected amazement. "Yes, yes," answered Baba Mustapha, "I see you want to have me speak out, but you shall know no more."

The robber felt sure that he had discovered what he sought. He pulled out a piece of gold,

and putting it into Baba Mustapha's hand, said to him, "I do not want to learn your secret, though I can assure you you might safely trust me with it. The only thing I desire of you is to show me the house where you stitched up the dead body."

"If I were disposed to do you that favour," replied Baba Mustapha, "I assure you I cannot. I was taken to a certain place, whence I was led blindfold to the house, and afterward brought back again in the same manner; you see, therefore, the impossibility of my doing what you desire."

"Well," replied the robber, "you may, however, remember a little of the way that you were led blindfold. Come, let me blind your eyes at the same place. We will walk together; perhaps you may recognise some part; and as everybody ought to be paid for their trouble, there is another piece of gold for you; gratify me in what I ask you." So saying, he put another piece of gold into his hand.

The two pieces of gold were great temptations to Baba Mustapha. He looked at them a long time in his hand, without saying a word, but at last he pulled out his purse and put them in. "I cannot promise," said he to the robber, "that I can remember the way exactly; but since you desire, I will try what I can do." At these words Baba Mustapha rose up, to the great joy of the robber, and led him to the place where Morgiana had bound his eyes. "It was here," said Baba Mustapha, "I was blindfolded; and I turned this way." The robber tied his handkerchief over his eyes, and walked by him till he stopped directly at Cassim's house, where Ali Baba then lived. The thief, before he pulled off the band, marked the door with a piece of chalk, which he had ready in his hand, and then asked him if he knew whose house that was; to which Baba Mustapha replied that as he did not live in that neighbourhood, he could not tell.

The robber, finding he could discover no more from Baba Mustapha, thanked him for the trouble he had taken, and left him to go back to his stall, while he returned to the forest, persuaded that he should be very well received.

A little after the robber and Baba Mustapha had parted, Morgiana went out of Ali Baba's house upon some errand, and upon her return, seeing the mark the robber had made, stopped to observe it. "What can be the meaning of this mark?" said she to herself; "somebody intends my master no good: however, with whatever intention it was done, it is advisable to guard against the worst." Accordingly, she fetched a piece of chalk, and marked two or three doors on each side, in the same manner, without saying a word to her master or mistress.

In the mean time, the robber rejoined his troop in the forest, and recounted to them his success; expatiating upon his good fortune, in meeting so soon with the only person who could inform him of what he wanted to know. All the robbers listened to him with the utmost satisfaction; when the captain, after commending his diligence, addressing himself to them all, said, "Comrades, we have no time to lose: let us set off well armed, without its appearing who we are; but that we may not excite any suspicion, let only one or two go into the town together, and join at our rendezvous, which shall be the great square. In the mean time, our comrade who brought us the good news and I will go and find out the house, that we may consult what had best be done."

This speech and plan was approved of by all, and they were soon ready. They filed off in

parties of two each, after some interval of time, and got into the town without being in the least suspected. The captain, and he who had visited the town in the morning as spy, came in the last. He led the captain into the street where he had marked Ali Baba's residence; and when they came to the first of the houses which Morgiana had marked, he pointed it out. But the captain observed that the next door was chalked in the same manner and in the same place; and showing it to his guide, asked him which house it was, that, or the first. The guide was so confounded, that he knew not what answer to make; but still more puzzled, when he and the captain saw five or six houses similarly marked. He assured the captain, with an oath, that he had marked but one, and could not tell who had chalked the rest, so that he could not distinguish the house which the cobbler had stopped at.

The captain, finding that their design had proved abortive, went directly to the place of meeting, and told his troop that they had lost their labour, and must return to their cave. He himself set them the example, and they all returned as they had come.

When the troop was all got together, the captain told them the reason of their returning; and presently the conductor was declared by all worthy of death. He condemned himself, acknowledging that he ought to have taken better precaution, and prepared to receive the stroke from him who was appointed to cut off his head.

But as the safety of the troop required the discovery of the second intruder into the cave, another of the gang, who promised himself that he should succeed better, presented himself, and his offer being accepted, he went and corrupted Baba Mustapha, as the other had done; and being shown the house, marked it in a place more remote from sight, with red chalk.

Not long after, Morgiana, whose eyes nothing could escape, went out, and seeing the red chalk, and arguing with herself as she had done before, marked the other neighbours' houses in the same place and manner.

The robber, at his return to his company, valued himself much on the precaution he had taken, which he looked upon as an infallible way of distinguishing Ali Baba's house from the others; and the captain and all of them thought it must succeed. They conveyed themselves into the town with the same precaution as before; but when the robber and his captain came to the street, they found the same difficulty; at which the captain was enraged, and the robber in as great confusion as his predecessor.

Thus the captain and his troop were forced to retire a second time, and much more dissatisfied; while the robber who had been the author of the mistake underwent the same punishment, to which he willingly submitted.

The captain, having lost two brave fellows of his troop, was afraid of diminishing it too much by pursuing this plan to get information of the residence of their plunderer. He found by their example that their heads were not so good as their hands on such occasions; and therefore resolved to take upon himself the important commission.

Accordingly, he went and addressed himself to Baba Mustapha, who did him the same service he had done to the other robbers. He did not set any particular mark on the house, but examined and observed it so carefully, by passing often by it, that it was impossible for him to mistake it.

The captain, well satisfied with his attempt, and informed of what he wanted to know, returned to the forest; and when he came into the cave, where the troop waited for him, said, “Now, comrades, nothing can prevent our full revenge, as I am certain of the house; and in my way hither I have thought how to put it into execution, but if any one can form a better expedient, let him communicate it.” He then told them his contrivance; and as they approved of it, ordered them to go into the villages about, and buy nineteen mules, with thirty-eight large leather jars, one full of oil, and the others empty.

In two or three days’ time the robbers had purchased the mules and jars, and as the mouths of the jars were rather too narrow for his purpose, the captain caused them to be widened, and after having put one of his men into each, with the weapons which he thought fit, leaving open the seam which had been undone to leave them room to breathe, he rubbed the jars on the outside with oil from the full vessel.

Things being thus prepared, when the nineteen mules were loaded with thirty-seven robbers in jars, and the jar of oil, the captain, as their driver, set out with them, and reached the town by the dusk of the evening, as he had intended. He led them through the streets, till he came to Ali Baba’s, at whose door he designed to have knocked; but was prevented by his sitting there after supper to take a little fresh air. He stopped his mules, addressed himself to him, and said, “I have brought some oil a great way, to sell at tomorrow’s market; and it is now so late that I do not know where to lodge. If I should not be troublesome to you, do me the favour to let me pass the night with you, and I shall be very much obliged by your hospitality.”

Though Ali Baba had seen the captain of the robbers in the forest, and had heard him speak, it was impossible to know him in the disguise of an oil merchant. He told him he should be welcome, and immediately opened his gates for the mules to go into the yard. At the same time he called to a slave, and ordered him, when the mules were unloaded, to put them into the stable, and to feed them; and then went to Morgiana, to bid her get a good supper for his guest. After they had finished supper, Ali Baba, charging Morgiana afresh to take care of his guest, said to her, “To-morrow morning I design to go to the bath before day; take care my bathing linen be ready, give them to Abdalla (which was the slave’s name), and make me some good broth against my return.” After this he went to bed.

In the mean time the captain of the robbers went into the yard, and took off the lid of each jar, and gave his people orders what to do. Beginning at the first jar, and so on to the last, he said to each man: “As soon as I throw some stones out of the chamber window where I lie, do not fail to come out, and I will immediately join you.” After this he returned into the house, when Morgiana, taking up a light, conducted him to his chamber, where she left him; and he, to avoid any suspicion, put the light out soon after, and laid himself down in his clothes, that he might be the more ready to rise.

Morgiana, remembering Ali Baba’s orders, got his bathing linen ready, and ordered Abdalla to set on the pot for the broth; but while she was preparing it the lamp went out, and there was no more oil in the house, nor any candles. What to do she did not know, for the broth must be made. Abdalla, seeing her very uneasy, said, “Do not fret and tease yourself, but go into the yard, and take some oil out of one of the jars.”

Morgiana thanked Abdalla for his advice, took the oil-pot, and went into the yard; when, as she came nigh the first jar, the robber within said softly, “Is it time?”

Though naturally much surprised at finding a man in the jar instead of the oil she wanted, she immediately felt the importance of keeping silence, as Ali Baba, his family, and herself were in great danger; and collecting herself, without showing the least emotion, she answered, “Not yet, but presently.” She went quietly in this manner to all the jars, giving the same answer, till she came to the jar of oil.

By this means Morgiana found that her master Ali Baba had admitted thirty-eight robbers into his house, and that this pretended oil merchant was their captain. She made what haste she could to fill her oil-pot, and returned into her kitchen, where, as soon as she had lighted her lamp, she took a great kettle, went again to the oil-jar, filled the kettle, set it on a large wood fire, and as soon as it boiled went and poured enough into every jar to stifle and destroy the robber within.

When this action, worthy of the courage of Morgiana, was executed without any noise, as she had projected, she returned into the kitchen with the empty kettle; and having put out the great fire she had made to boil the oil, and leaving just enough to make the broth, put out the lamp also, and remained silent, resolving not to go to rest till she had observed what might follow through a window of the kitchen, which opened into the yard.

She had not waited long before the captain of the robbers got up, opened the window, and finding no light, and hearing no noise, or any one stirring in the house, gave the appointed signal, by throwing little stones, several of which hit the jars, as he doubted not by the sound they gave. He then listened, but not hearing or perceiving anything whereby he could judge that his companions stirred, he began to grow very uneasy, threw stones again a second and also a third time, and could not comprehend the reason that none of them should answer his signal. Much alarmed, he went softly down into the yard, and going to the first jar, while asking the robber, whom he thought alive, if he was in readiness, smelt the hot boiled oil, which sent forth a steam out of the jar. Hence he suspected that his plot to murder Ali Baba, and plunder his house, was discovered. Examining all the jars, one after another, he found that all his gang were dead; and, enraged to despair at having failed in his design, he forced the lock of a door that led from the yard to the garden, and climbing over the walls made his escape.

When Morgiana saw him depart, she went to bed, satisfied and pleased to have succeeded so well in saving her master and family.

Ali Baba rose before day, and, followed by his slave, went to the baths, entirely ignorant of the important event which had happened at home.

When he returned from the baths, he was very much surprised to see the oil-jars, and that the merchant was not gone with the mules. He asked Morgiana, who opened the door, the reason of it. “My good master,” answered she, “God preserve you and all your family. You will be better informed of what you wish to know when you have seen what I have to show you, if you will follow me.”

As soon as Morgiana had shut the door, Ali Baba followed her, when she requested him to look into the first jar, and see if there was any oil. Ali Baba did so, and seeing a man, started back in alarm, and cried out. “Do not be afraid,” said Morgiana “the man you see

there can neither do you nor anybody else any harm. He is dead." "Ah, Morgiana," said Ali Baba, "what is it you show me? Explain yourself." "I will," replied Morgiana. "Moderate your astonishment, and do not excite the curiosity of your neighbours; for it is of great importance to keep this affair secret. Look into all the other jars."

Ali Baba examined all the other jars, one after another; and when he came to that which had the oil in it, found it prodigiously sunk, and stood for some time motionless, sometimes looking at the jars, and sometimes at Morgiana, without saying a word, so great was his surprise. At last, when he had recovered himself, he said, "And what is become of the merchant?"

"Merchant!" answered she; "he is as much one as I am. I will tell you who he is, and what is become of him; but you had better hear the story in your own chamber; for it is time for your health that you had your broth after your bathing."

Morgiana then told him all she had done, from the first observing the mark upon the house, to the destruction of the robbers, and the flight of their captain.

On hearing of these brave deeds from the lips of Morgiana, Ali Baba said to her—"God, by your means, has delivered me from the snares these robbers laid for my destruction. I owe, therefore, my life to you; and, for the first token of my acknowledgment, give you your liberty from this moment, till I can complete your recompense as I intend."

Ali Baba's garden was very long, and shaded at the further end by a great number of large trees. Near these he and the slave Abdalla dug a trench, long and wide enough to hold the bodies of the robbers; and as the earth was light, they were not long in doing it. When this was done, Ali Baba hid the jars and weapons; and as he had no occasion for the mules, he sent them at different times to be sold in the market by his slave.

While Ali Baba took these measures, the captain of the forty robbers returned to the forest with inconceivable mortification. He did not stay long; the loneliness of the gloomy cavern became frightful to him. He determined, however, to avenge the fate of his companions, and to accomplish the death of Ali Baba. For this purpose he returned to the town, and took a lodging in a khan, and disguised himself as a merchant in silks. Under this assumed character, he gradually conveyed a great many sorts of rich stuffs and fine linen to his lodging from the cavern, but with all the necessary precautions to conceal the place whence he brought them. In order to dispose of the merchandise, when he had thus amassed them together, he took a warehouse, which happened to be opposite to Cassim's, which Ali Baba's son had occupied since the death of his uncle.

He took the name of Cogia Houssain, and, as a new-comer, was, according to custom, extremely civil and complaisant to all the merchants his neighbours. Ali Baba's son was, from his vicinity, one of the first to converse with Cogia Houssain, who strove to cultivate his friendship more particularly. Two or three days after he was settled, Ali Baba came to see his son, and the captain of the robbers recognised him at once, and soon learned from his son who he was. After this he increased his assiduities, caressed him in the most engaging manner, made him some small presents, and often asked him to dine and sup with him, when he treated him very handsomely.

Ali Baba's son did not choose to lie under such obligation to Cogia Houssain; but was so much straitened for want of room in his house, that he could not entertain him. He

therefore acquainted his father, Ali Baba, with his wish to invite him in return.

Ali Baba with great pleasure took the treat upon himself. “Son,” said he, “to-morrow being Friday, which is a day that the shops of such great merchants as Cogia Houssain and yourself are shut, get him to accompany you, and as you pass by my door, call in. I will go and order Morgiana to provide a supper.”

The next day Ali Baba’s son and Cogia Houssain met by appointment, took their walk, and as they returned, Ali Baba’s son led Cogia Houssain through the street where his father lived, and when they came to the house, stopped and knocked at the door. “This, sir,” said he, “is my father’s house, who, from the account I have given him of your friendship, charged me to procure him the honour of your acquaintance; and I desire you to add this pleasure to those for which I am already indebted to you.”

Though it was the sole aim of Cogia Houssain to introduce himself into Ali Baba’s house, that he might kill him, without hazarding his own life or making any noise, yet he excused himself, and offered to take his leave; but a slave having opened the door, Ali Baba’s son took him obligingly by the hand, and, in a manner, forced him in.

Ali Baba received Cogia Houssain with a smiling countenance, and in the most obliging manner he could wish. He thanked him for all the favours he had done his son; adding withal, the obligation was the greater, as he was a young man, not much acquainted with the world, and that he might contribute to his information.

Cogia Houssain returned the compliment by assuring Ali Baba that though his son might not have acquired the experience of older men, he had good sense equal to the experience of many others. After a little more conversation on different subjects, he offered again to take his leave, when Ali Baba, stopping him, said, “Where are you going, sir, in so much haste? I beg you would do me the honour to sup with me, though my entertainment may not be worthy your acceptance; such as it is, I heartily offer it.” “Sir,” replied Cogia Houssain, “I am thoroughly persuaded of your good-will; but the truth is, I can eat no victuals that have any salt in them; therefore judge how I should feel at your table.” “If that is the only reason,” said Ali Baba, “it ought not to deprive me of the honour of your company; for, in the first place, there is no salt ever put into my bread, and as to the meat we shall have to-night, I promise you there shall be none in that. Therefore you must do me the favour to stay. I will return immediately.“

Ali Baba went into the kitchen, and ordered Morgiana to put no salt to the meat that was to be dressed that night; and to make quickly two or three ragouts besides what he had ordered, but be sure to put no salt in them.

Morgiana, who was always ready to obey her master, could not help being surprised at his strange order. “Who is this strange man,” said she, “who eats no salt with his meat? Your supper will be spoiled, if I keep it back so long.” “Do not be angry, Morgiana,” replied Ali Baba; “he is an honest man, therefore do as I bid you.”

Morgiana obeyed, though with no little reluctance, and had a curiosity to see this man who ate no salt. To this end, when she had finished what she had to do in the kitchen, she helped Abdalla to carry up the dishes; and looking at Cogia Houssain, knew him at first sight, notwithstanding his disguise, to be the captain of the robbers, and examining him very carefully, perceived that he had a dagger under his garment. “I am not in the least

amazed," said she to herself, "that this wicked man, who is my master's greatest enemy, would eat no salt with him, since he intends to assassinate him; but I will prevent him."

Morgiana, while they were at supper, determined in her own mind to execute one of the boldest acts ever meditated. When Abdalla came for the dessert of fruit, and had put it with the wine and glasses before Ali Baba, Morgiana retired, dressed herself neatly, with a suitable head-dress like a dancer, girded her waist with a silver-gilt girdle, to which there hung a poniard with a hilt and guard of the same metal, and put a handsome mask on her face. When she had thus disguised herself, she said to Abdalla, "Take your tabour, and let us go and divert our master and his son's friend, as we do sometimes when he is alone."

Abdalla took his tabour and played all the way into the hall before Morgiana, who, when she came to the door, made a low obeisance by way of asking leave to exhibit her skill, while Abdalla left off playing. "Come in, Morgiana," said Ali Baba, "and let Cogia Houssain see what you can do, that he may tell us what he thinks of your performance."

Cogia Houssain, who did not expect this diversion after supper, began to fear he should not be able to take advantage of the opportunity he thought he had found; but hoped, if he now missed his aim, to secure it another time, by keeping up a friendly correspondence with the father and son; therefore, though he could have wished Ali Baba would have declined the dance, he pretended to be obliged to him for it, and had the complaisance to express his satisfaction at what he said, which pleased his host.

As soon as Abdalla saw that Ali Baba and Cogia Houssain had done talking, he began to play on the tabour, and accompanied it with an air, to which Morgiana, who was an excellent performer, danced in such a manner as would have created admiration in any company.

After she had danced several dances with much grace, she drew the poniard, and holding it in her hand, began a dance, in which she outdid herself by the many different figures, light movements, and the surprising leaps and wonderful exertions with which she accompanied it. Sometimes she presented the poniard to one breast, sometimes to another, and oftentimes seemed to strike her own. At last, she snatched the tabour from Abdalla with her left hand, and holding the dagger in her right presented the other side of the tabour, after the manner of those who get a livelihood by dancing, and solicit the liberality of the spectators.

Ali Baba put a piece of gold into the tabour, as did also his son; and Cogia Houssain seeing that she was coming to him, had pulled his purse out of his bosom to make her a present; but while he was putting his hand into it, Morgiana, with a courage and resolution worthy of herself, plunged the poniard into his heart.

Ali Baba and his son, shocked at this action, cried out aloud. "Unhappy woman!" exclaimed Ali Baba, "what have you done to ruin me and my family?" "It was to preserve, not to ruin you," answered Morgiana; "for see here," continued she, opening the pretended Cogia Houssain's garment, and showing the dagger, "what an enemy you had entertained? Look well at him, and you will find him to be both the fictitious oil merchant, and the captain of the gang of forty robbers. Remember, too, that he would eat no salt with you; and what would you have more to persuade you of his wicked design? Before I saw him, I suspected him as soon as you told me you had such a guest. I knew him, and you now find

that my suspicion was not groundless.”

Ali Baba, who immediately felt the new obligation he had to Morgiana for saving his life a second time, embraced her: “Morgiana,” said he, “I gave you your liberty, and then promised you that my gratitude should not stop there, but that I would soon give you higher proofs of its sincerity, which I now do by making you my daughter-in-law.” Then addressing himself to his son, he said, “I believe you, son, to be so dutiful a child, that you will not refuse Morgiana for your wife. You see that Cogia Houssain sought your friendship with a treacherous design to take away my life; and if he had succeeded, there is no doubt but he would have sacrificed you also to his revenge. Consider, that by marrying Morgiana you marry the preserver of my family and your own,“

The son, far from showing any dislike, readily consented to the marriage; not only because he would not disobey his father, but also because it was agreeable to his inclination. After this they thought of burying the captain of the robbers with his comrades, and did it so privately that nobody discovered their bones till many years after, when no one had any concern in the publication of this remarkable history. A few days afterward, Ali Baba celebrated the nuptials of his son and Morgiana with great solemnity, a sumptuous feast, and the usual dancing and spectacles; and had the satisfaction to see that his friends and neighbours, whom he invited, had no knowledge of the true motives of the marriage; but that those who were not unacquainted with Morgiana’s good qualities commended his generosity and goodness of heart Ali Baba did not visit the robbers’ cave for a whole year, as he supposed the other two, whom he could get no account of, might be alive.

At the year’s end, when he found they had not made any attempt to disturb him, he had the curiosity to make another journey. He mounted his horse, and when he came to the cave he alighted, tied his horse to a tree, then approaching the entrance, and pronouncing the words, “Open, Sesame!” the door opened. He entered the cavern, and by the condition he found things in, judged that nobody had been there since the captain had fetched the goods for his shop. From this time he believed he was the only person in the world who had the secret of opening the cave, and that all the treasure was at his sole disposal. He put as much gold into his saddle-bag as his horse would carry, and returned to town. Some years later he carried his son to the cave and taught him the secret, which he handed down to his posterity, who, using their good fortune with moderation, lived in great honour and splendour.

[1] “Sesame” is a small grain

CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

I designed, after my first voyage, to spend the rest of my days at Bagdad, but it was not long ere I grew weary of an indolent life, and I put to sea a second time, with merchants of known probity. We embarked on board a good ship, and, after recommending ourselves to God, set sail. We traded from island to island, and exchanged commodities with great profit. One day we landed on an island covered with several sorts of fruit trees, but we could see neither man nor animal. We walked in the meadows, along the streams that watered them. While some diverted themselves with gathering flowers, and others fruits, I took my wine and provisions, and sat down near a stream betwixt two high trees, which formed a thick shade. I made a good meal, and afterward fell asleep. I cannot tell how long I slept, but when I awoke the ship was gone.

In this sad condition, I was ready to die with grief. I cried out in agony, beat my head and breast, and threw myself upon the ground, where I lay some time in despair. I upbraided myself a hundred times for not being content with the produce of my first voyage, that might have sufficed me all my life. But all this was in vain, and my repentance came too late. At last I resigned myself to the will of God. Not knowing what to do, I climbed up to the top of a lofty tree, from whence I looked about on all sides, to see if I could discover anything that could give me hopes. When I gazed toward the sea I could see nothing but sky and water; but looking over the land, I beheld something white; and coming down, I took what provision I had left and went toward it, the distance being so great, that I could not distinguish what it was.

As I approached, I thought it to be a white dome, of a prodigious height and extent; and when I came up to it, I touched it, and found it to be very smooth. I went round to see if it was open on any side, but saw it was not, and that there was no climbing up to the top, as it was so smooth. It was at least fifty paces round.

By this time the sun was about to set, and all of a sudden the sky became as dark as if it had been covered with a thick cloud. I was much astonished at this sudden darkness, but much more when I found it occasioned by a bird of a monstrous size, that came flying toward me. I remembered that I had often heard mariners speak of a miraculous bird called the Roc, and conceived that the great dome which I so much admired must be its egg. In short, the bird alighted, and sat over the egg. As I perceived her coming, I crept close to the egg, so that I had before me one of the legs of the bird, which was as big as the trunk of a tree. I tied myself strongly to it with my turban, in hopes that the roc next morning would carry me with her out of this desert island. After having passed the night in this condition, the bird flew away as soon as it was daylight, and carried me so high, that I could not discern the earth; she afterward descended with so much rapidity that I lost my senses. But when I found myself on the ground, I speedily untied the knot, and had scarcely done so, when the roc, having taken up a serpent of a monstrous length in her bill, flew away.

The spot where it left me was encompassed on all sides by mountains, that seemed to reach above the clouds, and so steep that there was no possibility of getting out of the valley. This was a new perplexity; so that when I compared this place with the desert island from which the roc had brought me, I found that I had gained nothing by the change.

As I walked through this valley, I perceived it was strewed with diamonds, some of which were of surprising bigness. I took pleasure in looking upon them; but shortly saw at a distance such objects as greatly diminished my satisfaction, and which I could not view without terror, namely, a great number of serpents, so monstrous that the least of them was capable of swallowing an elephant. They retired in the day-time to their dens, where they hid themselves from the roc, their enemy, and came out only in the night.

I spent the day in walking about in the valley, resting myself at times in such places as I thought most convenient. When night came on I went into I cave, where I thought I might repose in safety. I secured the entrance, which was low and narrow, with a great stone, to preserve me from the serpents; but not so far as to exclude the light. I supped on part of my provisions, but the serpents, which began hissing round me, put me into such extreme fear that I did not sleep. When day appeared the serpents retired, and I came out of the cave trembling. I can justly say that I walked upon diamonds without feeling any inclination to touch them. At last I sat down, and notwithstanding my apprehensions, not having closed my eyes during the night, fell asleep, after having eaten a little more of my provisions. But I had scarcely shut my eyes when something that fell by me with a great noise awaked me. This was a large piece of raw meat; and at the same time I saw several others fall down from the rocks in different places.

I had always regarded as fabulous what I had heard sailors and others relate of the valley of diamonds, and of the stratagems employed by merchants to obtain jewels from thence; but now I found that they had stated nothing but the truth. For the fact is, that the merchants come to the neighbourhood of this valley, when the eagles have young ones, and throwing great joints of meat into the valley, the diamonds, upon whose points they fall, stick to them; the eagles, which are stronger in this country than anywhere else, pounce with great force upon those pieces of meat, and carry them to their nests on the precipices of the rocks to feed their young: the merchants at this time run to their nests, disturb and drive off the eagles by their shouts, and take away the diamonds that stick to the meat.

I perceived in this device the means of my deliverance.

Having collected together the largest diamonds I could find, I put them into the leather bag in which I used to carry my provisions, I took the largest of the pieces of meat, tied it close round me with the cloth of my turban, and then laid myself upon the ground, with my face downward, the bag of diamonds being made fast to my girdle.

I had scarcely placed myself in this posture when one of the eagles, having taken me up with the piece of meat to which I was fastened, carried me to his nest on the top of the mountain. The merchants immediately began their shouting to frighten the eagles; and when they had obliged them to quit their prey, one of them came to the nest where I was. He was much alarmed when he saw me; but recovering himself, instead of inquiring how I

came thither, began to quarrel with me, and asked why I stole his goods? “You will treat me,” replied I, “with more civility, when you know me better. Do not be uneasy; I have diamonds enough for you and myself, more than all the other merchants together. Whatever they have they owe to chance; but I selected for myself, in the bottom of the valley, those which you see in this bag, “I had scarcely done speaking, when the other merchants came crowding about us, much astonished to see me; but they were much more surprised when I told them my story.

They conducted me to their encampment; and there having opened my bag, they were surprised at the largeness of my diamonds, and confessed that they had never seen any of such size and perfection. I prayed the merchant who owned the nest to which I had been carried (for every merchant had his own) to take as many for his share as he pleased. He contented himself with one, and that, too, the least of them; and when I pressed him to take more, without fear of doing me any injury, “No,” said he, “I am very well satisfied with this, which is valuable enough to save me the trouble of making any more voyages, and will raise as great a fortune as I desire.”

I spent the night with the merchants, to whom I related my story a second time, for the satisfaction of those who had not heard it, I could not moderate my joy when I found myself delivered from the danger I have mentioned. I thought myself in a dream, and could scarcely believe myself out of danger.

The merchants had thrown their pieces of meat into the valley for several days; and each of them being satisfied with the diamonds that had fallen to his lot, we left the place the next morning, and travelled near high mountains, where there were serpents of a prodigious length, which we had the good fortune to escape. We took shipping at the first port we reached, and touched at the isle of Roha, where the trees grow that yield camphire. This tree is so large, and its branches so thick, that one hundred men may easily sit under its shade. The juice, of which the camphire is made, exudes from a hole bored in the upper part of the tree, and is received in a vessel, where it thickens to a consistency, and becomes what we call camphire. After the juice is thus drawn out, the tree withers and dies.

In this island is also found the rhinoceros, an animal less than the elephant, but larger than the buffalo. It has a horn upon its nose, about a cubit in length; this horn is solid, and cleft through the middle. The rhinoceros fights with the elephant, runs his horn into his belly, and carries him off upon his head; but the blood and the fat of the elephant running into his eyes and making him blind, he falls to the ground; and then, strange to relate, the roc comes and carries them both away in her claws, for food for her young ones.

I pass over many other things peculiar to this island, lest I should weary you. Here I exchanged some of my diamonds for merchandise. From hence we went to other islands, and at last, having touched at several trading towns of the continent, we landed at Bussorah, from whence I proceeded to Bagdad. There I immediately gave large presents to the poor, and lived honourably upon the vast riches I had brought, and gained with so much fatigue.

Thus Sindbad ended the relation of the second voyage, gave Hindbad another hundred sequins, and invited him to come the next day to hear the account of the third.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WHITE CAT

There was once a king who had three sons, all remarkably handsome in their persons, and in their tempers brave and noble. Some wicked courtiers made the king believe that the princes were impatient to wear the crown, and that they were contriving a plot to deprive him of his sceptre and his kingdom. The king felt he was growing old; but as he found himself as capable of governing as he had ever been, he had no inclination to resign his power; and therefore, that he might pass the rest of his days peaceably, he determined to employ the princes in such a manner, as at once to give each of them the hope of succeeding to the crown, and fill up the time they might otherwise spend in so undutiful a manner. He sent for them to his cabinet, and after conversing with them kindly, he added: "You must be sensible, my dear children, that my great age prevents me from attending so closely as I have hitherto done to state affairs. I fear this may be injurious to my subjects; I therefore desire to place my crown on the head of one of you, but it is no more than just, that in return for such a present, you should procure me some amusement in my retirement, before I leave the Capital for ever. I cannot help thinking, that a little dog, that is handsome, faithful, and engaging, would be the very thing to make me happy; so that without bestowing a preference on either of you, I declare that he who brings me the most perfect little dog shall be my successor." The princes were much surprised at the fancy of their father to have a little dog, yet they accepted the proposition with pleasure: and accordingly, after taking leave of the king, who presented them with abundance of money and jewels, and appointed that day twelvemonth for their return, they set off on their travels.

Before taking leave of each other, however, they took some refreshment together, in an old palace about three miles out of town where they agreed to meet in the same place on that day twelvemonth, and go all together with their presents to court. They also agreed to change their names, that they might be unknown to every one in their travels.

Each took a different road; but it is intended to relate the adventures of only the youngest, who was the handsomest, most amiable, and accomplished prince that had ever been seen. No day passed, as he travelled from town to town, that he did not buy all the handsome dogs that fell in his way; and as soon as he saw one that was handsomer than those he had before, he made a present of the last; for twenty servants would have been scarcely sufficient to take care of all the dogs he was continually buying.

At length, wandering he knew not whither, he found himself in a forest; night suddenly came on, and with it a violent storm of thunder, lightning, and rain. To add to his perplexity, he lost his path, and could find no way out of the forest. After he had groped about for a long time, he perceived a light, which made him suppose that he was not far from some house: he accordingly pursued his way towards it, and in a short time found himself at the gates of the most magnificent palace he ever beheld. The door that opened into it was made of gold, covered with sapphire stones, which cast so resplendent a brightness over everything around, that scarcely could the strongest eyesight bear to look

at it. This was the light the prince had seen from the forest. The walls of the building were of transparent porcelain, variously coloured, and represented the history of all the fairies that had existed from the beginning of the world. The prince coming back to the golden door, observed a deer’s foot fastened to a chain of diamonds; he could not help wondering at the magnificence he beheld, and the security in which the inhabitants seemed to live; “for,” said he to himself, “nothing can be easier than for thieves to steal this chain, and as many of the sapphire stones as would make their fortunes.” He pulled the chain, and heard a bell the sound of which was exquisite. In a few moments the door was opened; but he perceived nothing but twelve hands in the air, each holding a torch. The prince was so astonished that he durst not move a step; when he felt himself gently pushed on by some other hands from behind him. He walked on, in great perplexity, till he entered a vestibule inlaid with porphyry and lapis-stone. There the most melodious voice he had ever heard chanted the following words:

“Welcome, prince, no danger fear,
Mirth and love attend you here;
You shall break the magic spell,
That on a beauteous lady fell.

“Welcome, prince, no danger fear,
Mirth and love attend you here,”

The prince now advanced with confidence, wondering what these words could mean; the hands moved him forward towards a large door of coral, which opened of itself to give him admittance into a splendid apartment built of mother-of-pearl, through which he passed into others so richly adorned with paintings and jewels, and so resplendently lighted with thousands of lamps, girandoles and lustres, that the prince imagined he must be in an enchanted palace. When he had passed through sixty apartments, all equally splendid, he was stopped by the hands, and a large easy-chair advanced of itself towards the chimney; and the hands, which he observed were extremely white and delicate, took off his wet clothes, and supplied their place with the finest linen imaginable, and then added a commodious wrapping-gown, embroidered with the brightest gold, and all over enriched with pearls. The hands next brought him an elegant dressing-table, and combed his hair so very gently that he scarcely felt their touch. They held before him a beautiful basin, filled with perfumes, for him to wash his face and hands, and afterwards took off the wrapping-gown and dressed him in a suit of clothes of still greater splendour. When his dress was complete, they conducted him to an apartment he had not yet seen, and which also was magnificently furnished. There was in it a table spread for a repast, and everything upon it was of the purest gold adorned with jewels. The prince observed there were two covers set, and was wondering who was to be his companion, when his attention was suddenly caught by a small figure not a foot high, which just then entered the room, and advanced towards him. It had on a long black veil, and was supported by two cats dressed in mourning, and with swords by their sides: they were followed by a numerous retinue of cats, some carrying cages full of rats and others mousetraps full of mice.

The prince was at a loss what to think. The little figure now approached, and throwing aside her veil, he beheld a most beautiful white cat. She seemed young and melancholy, and addressing herself to the prince, she said, “Young prince, you are welcome; your presence affords me the greatest pleasure.” “Madam,” replied the prince, “I would fain thank you for your generosity, nor can I help observing that you must be an extraordinary creature to possess with your present form the gift of speech and the magnificent palace I have seen.” “All this is very true,” answered the beautiful cat, “but, prince, I am not fond of talking, and least of all do I like compliments; let us therefore sit down to supper.” The trunkless hands then placed the dishes on the table, and the prince and white cat seated themselves. The first dish was a pie made of young pigeons, and the next was a fricassee of the fattest mice. The view of the one made the prince almost afraid to taste the other till the white cat, who guessed his thoughts, assured him that there were certain dishes at table in which there was not a morsel of either rat or mouse, which had been dressed on purpose for him. Accordingly he ate heartily of such as she recommended. When supper was over, the prince perceived that the white cat had a portrait set in gold hanging to one of her feet. He begged her permission to look at it; when, to his astonishment, he saw the portrait of a

handsome young man, that exactly resembled himself! He thought there was something very extraordinary in all this: yet, as the white cat sighed and looked very sorrowful, he did not venture to ask any questions. He conversed with her on different subjects, and found her extremely well versed in every thing that was passing in the world. When night was far advanced, the white cat wished him a good night, and he was conducted by the hands to his bedchamber, which was different still from any thing he had seen in the palace, being hung with the wings of butterflies, mixed with the most curious feathers. His bed was of gauze, festooned with bunches of the gayest ribands, and the looking-glasses reached from the floor to the ceiling. The prince was undressed and put into bed by the hands, without speaking a word. He however slept little, and in the morning was awaked by a confused noise. The hands took him out of bed, and put on him a handsome hunting-jacket. He looked into the court-yard, and perceived more than five hundred cats, busily employed in preparing for the field, for this was a day of festival. Presently the white cat came to his apartment; and having politely inquired after his health, she invited him to partake of their amusement. The prince willingly accepted, mounted a wooden horse, richly caparisoned, which had been prepared for him, and which he was assured would gallop to admiration. The beautiful white cat mounted a monkey, dressed in a dragoon's bonnet, which made her look so fierce that all the rats and mice ran away in the utmost terror.

Every thing being ready, the horns sounded, and away they went; no hunting was ever more agreeable; the cats ran faster than the hares and rabbits; and when they caught any they were hunted in the presence of the white cat, and a thousand cunning tricks were played. Nor were the birds in safety; for the monkey made nothing of climbing up the trees, with the white cat on his back, to the nest of the young eagles. When the hunting was over, the whole retinue returned to the palace; and the white cat immediately exchanged her dragoon's cap for the veil, and sat down to supper with the prince, who, being very hungry, ate heartily, and afterwards partook with her of the most delicious liqueurs, which being often repeated made him forget that he was to procure a little dog for the old king. He thought no longer of any thing but of pleasing the sweet little creature who received him so courteously; accordingly every day was spent in new amusements. The prince had almost forgotten his country and relations, and sometimes even regretted that he was not a cat, so great was his affection for his mewing companions. "Alas!" said he to the white cat, "how will it afflict me to leave you whom I love so much! Either make yourself a lady, or make me a cat." She smiled at the prince's wish, but made him scarcely any reply. At length the twelvemonth was nearly expired; the white cat, who knew the very day when the prince was to reach his father's palace, reminded him that he had but three days longer to look for a perfect little dog. The prince, astonished at his own forgetfulness, began to afflict himself; when the cat told him not to be so sorrowful, since she would not only provide him with a little dog, but also with a wooden horse which should convey him safely in less than twelve hours. "Look here," said she, showing him an acorn, "this contains what you desire." The prince put the acorn to his ear, and heard the barking of a little dog. Transported with joy, he thanked the cat a thousand times, and the next day, bidding her tenderly adieu, he set out on his return.

The prince arrived first at the place of rendezvous, and was soon joined by his brothers; they mutually embraced, and began to give an account of their success; when the youngest

showed them only a little mongrel cur, telling them he thought it could not fail to please the king from its extraordinary beauty, the brothers trod on each other's toes under the table; as much as to say, we have not much to fear from this sorry looking animal. The next day they went together to the palace. The dogs of the two elder princes were lying on cushions, and so curiously wrapped around with embroidered quilts, that one would scarcely venture to touch them. The youngest produced his cur, dirty all over, and all wondered how the prince could hope to receive a crown for such a present. The king examined the two little dogs of the elder princes, and declared he thought them so equally beautiful that he knew not to which, with justice, he could give the preference. They accordingly began to dispute; when the youngest prince, taking his acorn from his pocket, soon ended their contention; for a little dog appeared which could with ease go through the smallest ring, and was besides a miracle of beauty. The king could not possibly hesitate in declaring his satisfaction; yet, as he was not more inclined than the year before to part with his crown, he could think of nothing more to his purpose than telling his sons that he was extremely obliged to them for the pains they had taken; and that since they had succeeded so well, he could not but wish they would make a second attempt; he therefore begged they would take another year for procuring him a piece of cambric, so fine as to be drawn through the eye of a small needle.

The three princes thought this very hard; yet they set out in obedience to the king's command. The two eldest took different roads, and the youngest remounted his wooden horse, and in a short time arrived at the palace of his beloved white cat, who received him with the greatest joy, while the trunkless hands helped him to dismount, and provided him with immediate refreshments; after which the prince gave the white cat an account of the admiration which had been bestowed on the beautiful little dog, and informed her of his father's farther injunction. "Make yourself perfectly easy, dear prince," said she, "I have in my palace some cats that are perfectly clever in making such cambric as the king requires; so you have nothing to do but to give me the pleasure of your company while it is making; and I will procure you all the amusement possible." She accordingly ordered the most curious fireworks to be played off in sight of the window of the apartment in which they were sitting; and nothing but festivity and rejoicing was heard throughout the palace for the prince's return. As the white cat continually gave proofs of an excellent understanding, the prince was by no means tired of her company; she talked with him of state affairs, of theatres, of fashions; in short, she was at a loss on no subject whatever; so that when the prince was alone, he had plenty of amusement in thinking how it could possibly be that a small white cat could be endowed with all the powers of human creatures.

The twelvemonth in this manner again passed insensibly away; but the cat took care to remind the prince of his duty in proper time. "For once, my prince," said she, "I will have the pleasure of equipping you as suits your high rank;" when looking into the courtyard, he saw a superb car, ornamented all over with gold, silver, pearls and diamonds, drawn by twelve horses as white as snow, and harnessed in the most sumptuous trappings; and behind the car a thousand guards richly apparelled were in waiting to attend on the prince's person. She then presented him with a nut: "You will find in it," said she, "the piece of cambric I promised you. Do not break the shell till you are in the presence of the king your father." Then, to prevent the acknowledgments which the prince was about to offer, she hastily bade him adieu. Nothing could exceed the speed with which the snow-

white horses conveyed this fortunate prince to his father's palace, where his brothers had just arrived before him. They embraced each other, and demanded an immediate audience of the king, who received them with the greatest kindness. The princes hastened to place at the feet of his majesty the curious present he had required them to procure. The eldest produced a piece of cambric that was so extremely fine, that his friends had no doubt of its passing the eye of the needle, which was now delivered to the king, having been kept locked up in the custody of his majesty's treasurer all the time, Every one supposed he would certainly obtain the crown. But when the king tried to draw it through the eye of the needle, it would not pass, though it failed but very little. Then came the second prince, who made as sure of obtaining the crown as his brother had done; but, alas! with no better success: for though his piece of cambric was exquisitely fine, yet it could not be drawn through the eye of the needle. It was now the youngest prince's turn, who accordingly advanced, and opening an elegant little box inlaid with jewels, he took out a walnut, and cracked the shell, imagining he should immediately perceive his piece of cambric; but what was his astonishment to see nothing but a filbert! He did not however lose his hopes; he cracked the filbert, and it presented him with a cherry-stone. The lords of the court, who had assembled to witness this extraordinary trial, could not, any more than the princes his brothers, refrain from laughing, to think he should be so silly as to claim with them the crown on no better pretensions. The prince however cracked the cherry-stone, which was filled with a kernel: he divided it, and found in the middle a grain of wheat, and in that grain a millet seed. He was now absolutely confounded, and could not help muttering between his teeth: "O white cat, white cat, thou hast deceived me!" At this instant he felt his hand scratched by the claw of a cat: upon which he again took courage, and opening the grain of millet seed, to the astonishment of all present, he drew forth a piece of cambric four hundred yards long, and fine enough to be drawn with perfect ease through the eye of the needle. When the king found he had no pretext left for refusing the crown to his youngest son, he sighed deeply, and it was easy to be seen that he was sorry for the prince's success. "My sons," said he, "it is so gratifying to the heart of a father to receive proofs of his children's love and obedience, that I cannot refuse myself the satisfaction of requiring of you one thing more. You must undertake another expedition; and whichever, by the end of a year, brings me the most beautiful lady, shall marry her, and obtain my crown."

So they again took leave of the king and of each other, and set out without delay, and in less than twelve hours our young prince arrived in his splendid car at the palace of his dear white cat. Every thing went on as before, till the end of another year. At length only one day remained of the year, when the white cat thus addressed him: "To-morrow, my prince, you must present yourself at the palace of your father, and give him a proof of your obedience. It depends only on yourself to conduct thither the most beautiful princess ever yet beheld, for the time is come when the enchantment by which I am bound may be ended. You must cut off my head and tail," continued she, "and throw them into the fire." "I!" said the prince hastily, "I cut off your head and tail! You surely mean to try my affection, which, believe me, beautiful cat, is truly yours." "You mistake me, generous prince," said she, "I do not doubt your regard; but if you wish to see me in any other form than that of a cat, you must consent to do as I desire. Then you will have done me a service I shall never be able sufficiently to repay." The prince's eyes filled with tears as she spoke, yet he considered himself obliged to undertake the dreadful task, and the cat

continuing to press him with greater eagerness, with a trembling hand he drew his sword, cut off her head and tail, and threw them into the fire. No sooner was this done, than the most beautiful lady his eyes had ever seen stood before him: and before he had sufficiently recovered from his surprise to speak to her, a long train of attendants, who, at the same moment as their mistress, were changed to their natural shapes, came to offer their congratulations to the queen, and inquire her commands. She received them with the greatest kindness; and ordering them to withdraw, she thus addressed the astonished prince. “Do not imagine, dear prince, that I have always been a cat, or that I am of obscure birth. My father was the monarch of six kingdoms; he tenderly loved my mother, leaving her always at liberty to follow her own inclinations. Her prevailing passion was to travel; and a short time before my birth, having heard of some fairies who were in possession of the largest gardens filled with the most delicious fruits, she had so strong a desire to eat some of them, that she set out for the country in which they lived. She arrived at their abode which she found to be a magnificent palace, on all sides glittering with gold and precious stones. She knocked a long time at the gates; but no one came, nor could she perceive the least sign that it had any inhabitant. The difficulty, however, did but increase the violence of my mother’s longing; for she saw the tops of the trees above the garden walls loaded with the most luscious fruits. The queen, in despair, ordered her attendants to place tents close to the door of the palace; but having waited six weeks, without seeing any one pass the gates, she fell sick of vexation, and her life was despaired of.

“One night, as she lay half asleep, she turned herself about, and opening her eyes, perceived a little old woman, very ugly and deformed, seated in the easy chair by her bedside. ‘I, and my sister fairies,’ said she, ‘take it very ill that your majesty should so obstinately persist in getting some of our fruit; but since so precious a life is at stake, we consent to give you as much as you can carry away, provided you will give us in return what we shall ask.’ ‘Ah! kind fairy,’ cried the queen, ‘I will give you anything I possess, even my very kingdoms, on condition that I eat of your fruit.’ The old fairy then informed the queen that what they required was, that she would give them the child she was going to have, as soon as she should be born; adding, that every possible care should be taken of her, and that she should become the most accomplished princess. The queen replied, that however cruel the condition, she must accept it, since nothing but the fruit could save her life. In short, dear prince,” continued the lady, “my mother instantly got out of bed, was dressed by her attendants, entered the palace, and satisfied her longing. When the queen had eaten her fill, she ordered four thousand mules to be procured, and loaded with the fruit, which had the virtue of continuing all the year round in a state of perfection. Thus provided, she returned to the king, my father, who with the whole court, received her with rejoicings, as it was before imagined she would die of disappointment. All this time the queen said nothing to my father of the promise she had made, to give her daughter to the fairies; so that, when the time was come that she expected my birth, she grew very melancholy; till at length, being pressed by the king, she declared to him the truth. Nothing could exceed his affliction, when he heard that his only child, when born, was to be given to the fairies. He bore it, however, as well as he could, for fear of adding to my mother’s grief; and also believing he should find some means of keeping me in a place of safety, which the fairies would not be able to approach. As soon therefore as I was born, he had me conveyed to a tower in the palace, to which there were twenty flights of stairs, and a door to each, of which my father kept the key, so that none came near me without

his consent. When the fairies heard of what had been done, they sent first to demand me; and on my father's refusal, they let loose a monstrous dragon, who devoured men, women and children, and the breath of whose nostrils destroyed every thing it came near, so that the trees and plants began to die in great abundance. The grief of the king, at seeing this, could scarcely be equalled; and finding that his whole kingdom would in a short time be reduced to famine, he consented to give me into their hands. I was accordingly laid in a cradle of mother-of-pearl, ornamented with gold and jewels, and carried to their palace, when the dragon immediately disappeared. The fairies placed me in a tower of their palace, elegantly furnished, but to which there was no door, so that whoever approached was obliged to come by the windows, which were a great height from the ground: from these I had the liberty of getting out into a delightful garden, in which were baths, and every sort of cooling fruit. In this place was I educated by the fairies, who behaved to me with the greatest kindness; my clothes were splendid, and I was instructed in every kind of accomplishment. In short, prince, if I had never seen any one but themselves, I should have remained very happy. One of the windows of my tower overlooked a long avenue shaded with trees, so that I had never seen in it a human creature. One day, however, as I was talking at this window with my parrot, I perceived a young gentleman who was listening to our conversation. As I had never seen a man, but in pictures, I was not sorry for the opportunity of gratifying my curiosity. I thought him a very pleasing object, and he at length bowed in the most respectful manner, without daring to speak, for he knew that I was in the palace of the fairies. When it began to grow dark he went away, and I vainly endeavoured to see which road he took. The next morning, as soon as it was light, I again placed myself at the window, and had the pleasure of seeing that the gentleman had returned to the same place. He now spoke to me through a speaking-trumpet, and informed me he thought me a most charming lady, and that he should be very unhappy if he did not pass his life in my company.

"I resolved to find some means of escaping from my tower with the engaging prince I had seen. I was not long in devising a means for the execution of my project. I begged the fairies to bring me a netting-needle, a mesh and some cord, saying I wished to make some nets to amuse myself with catching birds at my window. This they readily complied with, and in a short time I completed a ladder long enough to reach the ground. I now sent my parrot to the prince, to beg he would come to his usual place, as I wished to speak with him. He did not fail, and finding the ladder, mounted it, and quickly entered my tower. This at first alarmed me; but the charms of his conversation had restored me to tranquillity, when all at once the window opened, and the fairy Violent, mounted on the dragon's back, rushed into the tower. My beloved prince thought of nothing but how to defend me from their fury; for I had had time to relate to him my story, previous to this cruel interruption; but their numbers overpowered him, and the fairy Violent had the barbarity to command the dragon to devour my prince before my eyes. In my despair, I would have thrown myself also into the mouth of the horrible monster, but this they took care to prevent, saying my life should be preserved for greater punishment. The fairy then touched me with her wand, and I instantly became a white cat. She next conducted me to this palace, which belonged to my father, and gave me a train of cats for my attendants, together with the twelve hands which waited on your highness. She then informed me of my birth, and the death of my parents, and pronounced upon me what she imagined the greatest of maledictions: That I should not be restored to my natural figure till a young

prince, the perfect resemblance of him I had lost, should cut off my head and tail. You are that perfect resemblance; and, accordingly, you have ended the enchantment. I need not add, that I already love you more than my life. Let us therefore hasten to the palace of the king your father, and obtain his approbation to our marriage.“

The prince and princess accordingly set out side by side, in a car of still greater splendour than before, and reached the palace just as the two brothers had arrived with two beautiful princesses. The king, hearing that each of his sons had succeeded in finding what he had required, again began to think of some new expedient to delay the time of his resigning his crown; but when the whole court were with the king assembled to pass judgment, the princess who accompanied the youngest, perceiving his thoughts by his countenance, stepped majestically forward, and thus addressed him: “What pity that your majesty, who is so capable of governing, should think of resigning the crown! I am fortunate enough to have six kingdoms in my possession; permit me to bestow one on each of the eldest princes, and to enjoy the remaining four in the society of the youngest. And may it please your majesty to keep your own kingdom, and make no decision concerning the beauty of three princesses, who, without such a proof of your majesty’s preference, will no doubt live happily together!” The air resounded with the applauses of the assembly. The young prince and princess embraced the king, and next their brothers and sisters; the three weddings immediately took place; and the kingdoms were divided as the princess had proposed.

CHAPTER IX

THE GOLDEN GOOSE

There was a man who had three sons, the youngest of whom was considered very silly, and everybody used to mock him and make fun of him. The eldest son wanted to go and cut wood in the forest, and before he left home his mother prepared beautiful pancakes and a bottle of wine for him to take with him, so that he might not suffer from hunger or thirst.

As he entered the forest he met a gray old man, who bade him “Good-morning,” and said: “Give me a little piece of cake out of your basket and a drop of wine out of your bottle, for I am very hungry and thirsty.”

But the clever son replied: “What, give you my cake and my wine! Why, if I did, I should have none for myself. Not I, indeed, so take yourself off!” and he left the man standing and went on.

The young man began cutting down a tree, but it was not long before he made a false stroke: the axe slipped and cut his arm so badly that he was obliged to go home and have it bound up. Now, this false stroke was caused by the little gray old man.

Next day the second son went into the forest to cut wood, and his mother gave him a cake and a bottle of wine. As he entered the wood the same little old man met him, and begged for a piece of cake and a drop of wine. But the second son answered rudely: “What I might give to you I shall want myself, so be off.“

Then he left the little old man standing in the road, and walked on. His punishment soon came; he had scarcely given two strokes on a tree with his axe, when he hit his leg such a terrible blow that he was obliged to limp home in great pain.

Then the stupid son said to his father, “Let me go for once and cut wood in the forest.”

But his father said: “No, your brothers have been hurt already, and it would be worse for you, who don’t understand wood-cutting.”

The boy, however, begged so hard to be allowed to go that his father said: “There, get along with you; you will buy your experience very dearly, I expect.”

His mother, however, gave him a cake which had been made with water and baked in the ashes, and a bottle of sour beer.

When he reached the wood the very same little old man met him, and after greeting him kindly, said: “Give me a little of your cake and a drop from your bottle, for I am very hungry and thirsty.”

“Oh,” replied the simple youth, “I have only a cake, which has been baked in the ashes, and some sour beer; but you are welcome to a share of it. Let us sit down, and eat and drink together.”

So they seated themselves, and, lo and behold, when the youth opened his basket, the cake

had been turned into a beautiful cake, and the sour beer into wine. After they had eaten and drank enough, the little old man said: “Because you have been kind-hearted, and shared your dinner with me, I will make you in future lucky in all you undertake. There stands an old tree; cut it down, and you will find something good at the root.“

Then the old man said “Farewell,” and left him.

The youth set to work, and very soon succeeded in felling the tree, when he found sitting at the roots a goose, whose feathers were of pure gold. He took it up, and, instead of going home, carried it with him to an inn at a little distance, where he intended to pass the night.

The landlord had three daughters, who looked at the goose with envious eyes. They had never seen such a wonderful bird, and longed to have at least one of its feathers. “Ah,” thought the eldest, “I shall soon have an opportunity to pluck one of them;” and so it happened, for not long after the young man left the room. She instantly went up to the bird and took hold of its wing, but as she did so, the finger and thumb remained and stuck fast. In a short time after the second sister came in with the full expectation of gaining a golden feather, but as she touched her sister to move her from the bird, her hand stuck fast to her sister’s dress, and neither of them could free herself. At last, in came the third sister with the same intention. “Keep away, keep away!” screamed the other two; “in heaven’s name keep away!”

But she could not imagine why she should keep away. If they were near the golden bird, why should not she be there? So she made a spring forward and touched her second sister, and immediately she also was made a prisoner, and in this position they were obliged to remain by the goose all night.

In the morning the young man came in, took the goose on his arm, and went away without troubling himself about the three girls, who were following close behind him. And as he walked quickly, they were obliged to run one behind the other, left or right of him, just as he was inclined to go.

In the middle of a field they were met by the parson of the parish, who looked with wonder at the procession as it came near him. “Shame on you!” he cried out. “What are you about, you bold-faced hussies, running after a young man in that way through the fields? Go home, all of you.”

He placed his hand on the youngest to pull her back, but the moment he touched her he also became fixed, and was obliged to follow and run like the rest. In a few minutes the clerk met them, and when he saw the parson runing after the girls, he wondered greatly, and cried out, “Halloa, master parson, where are you running in such haste? Have you forgotten that there is a christening to-day?” And as the procession did not stop, he ran after it, and seized the parson’s gown.

In a moment he found that his hand was fixed, and he also had to run like the rest. And now there were five trotting along, one behind the other. Presently two peasants came by with their sickles from the field. The parson called out to them, and begged them to come and release him and the clerk. Hardly had they touched the clerk when they also stuck fast as the others, and the simpleton with his golden goose travelled with the seven.

After awhile they came to a city in which reigned a king who had a daughter of such a

melancholy disposition that no one could make her laugh; therefore he issued a decree that whoever would make the princess laugh should have her in marriage.

Now, when the simple youth heard this, he ran before her, and the whole seven trotted after him. The sight was so ridiculous that the moment the princess saw it she burst into a violent fit of laughter and they thought she would never leave off.

After this, the youth went to the king, and demanded his daughter in marriage, according to the king's decree; but his majesty did not quite like to have the young man for a son-in-law, so he said that, before he could consent to the marriage, the youth must bring him a man who could drink all the wine in the king's cellar.

The simpleton went into the forest, for he thought, "If anyone can help me, it is the little gray man." When he arrived at the spot where he had cut down the tree, there stood a man with a very miserable face.

The youth asked him why he looked so sorrowful.

"Oh," he exclaimed, "I suffer such dreadful thirst that nothing seems able to quench it; and cold water I cannot endure. I have emptied a cask of wine already, but it was just like a drop of water on a hot stone."

"I can help you," cried the young man; "come with me, and you shall have your fill, I promise you."

Upon this he led the man into the king's cellar, where he opened the casks one after another, and drank and drank till his back ached; and before the day closed he had quite emptied the king's cellar.

Again the young man asked for his bride, but the king was annoyed at the thought of giving his daughter to such a common fellow, and to get rid of him he made another condition. He said that no man should have his daughter who could not find someone able to eat up a whole mountain of bread.

Away went the simpleton to the forest as before, and there in the same place sat a man binding himself round tightly with a belt, and making the most horrible faces. As the youth approached, he cried, "I have eaten a whole ovenful of rolls, but it has not satisfied me a bit; I am as hungry as ever, and my stomach feels so empty that I am obliged to bind it round tightly, or I should die of hunger."

The simpleton could hardly contain himself for joy when he heard this. "Get up," he exclaimed, "and come with me, and I will give you plenty to eat, I'll warrant."

So he led him to the king's court, where his majesty had ordered all the flour in the kingdom to be made into bread, and piled up in a huge mountain. The hungry man placed himself before the bread, and began to eat, and before evening the whole pile had disappeared.

Then the simpleton went a third time to the king, and asked for his bride, but the king made several excuses, and at last said that if he could bring him a ship that would travel as well by land as by water, then he should, without any further conditions, marry his daughter.

The youth went at once straight to the forest, and saw the same old gray man to whom he had given his cake. “Ah,” he said, as the youth approached, “it was I who sent the men to eat and drink, and I will also give you a ship that can travel by land or by sea, because when you thought I was poor you were kind-hearted, and gave me food and drink.”

The youth took the ship, and when the king saw it he was quite surprised; but he could not any longer refuse to give him his daughter in marriage. The wedding was celebrated with great pomp, and after the king’s death the simple wood-cutter inherited the whole kingdom, and lived happily with his wife.

CHAPTER X

THE TWELVE BROTHERS

There were once a king and queen who had twelve children—all boys. Now, one day the king told his wife that if a daughter should be born, all the sons must die—that their sister alone might inherit his kingdom and riches.

So the king had twelve coffins made, which were filled with shavings, and in each was the little pillow for the dead. He had them locked up in a private room, the key of which he gave to the queen, praying her not to speak of it to anyone. But the poor mother was so unhappy that she wept for a whole day, and looked so sad that her youngest son noticed it.

He had the Bible name of Benjamin, and was always with his mother.

“Dear mother,” he said, “why are you so sorrowful?”

“My child, I may not tell you,” she replied; but the boy allowed her no rest till she unlocked the door of the private room, and showed him the twelve coffins filled with shavings.

“Dearest Benjamin,” she said, “these coffins are for you and your brothers; for if you should ever have a little sister, you will all die, and be buried in them.”

She wept bitterly as she told him, but her son comforted her, and said, “Do not weep, dear mother. We will take care of ourselves, and go far away.”

Then she took courage, and said, “Yes, go away with your eleven brothers, and remain in the forest; and let one climb a tree, from whence he will be able to see the tower of the castle; If I should have a son, a white flag shall be hoisted, and then you may return home; but if you see a red flag, you will know it is a girl, and then hasten away as fast as you can, and may Heaven protect you! Every night I will pray for you, that you may not suffer from the cold in winter or the heat in summer.”

Then she blessed all her sons, and they went away into the forest, while each in turn mounted a high tree daily, to watch for the flag on the tower.

Eleven days passed, and it was Benjamin’s turn to watch. He saw the flag hoisted, and it was red—the signal that they must die. The brothers were angry, and said, “Shall we suffer death on account of a maiden? When we find one we will kill her, to avenge ourselves.”

They went still farther into the forest, and came upon a most pleasant little cottage, which was uninhabited. “We will make this our home,” they said; “and Benjamin, as you are the youngest and weakest, you shall stay at home and keep house, while we go out and procure food.”

So they wandered about the forest, shooting hares, wild rabbits, pigeons and other birds, which they brought to Benjamin to prepare for food. In this cottage they lived for ten years happily together, so that the time passed quickly.

Their little sister was growing a great girl. She had a sweet disposition, and was very

beautiful to look upon. She wore rich clothes, and a golden star on her forehead.

One day, when she was about ten years old, she discovered in her mother's wardrobe twelve shirts. "Mother," she exclaimed, "whose shirts are these? They are much too small for my father."

The queen sighed as she replied, "Dear child, these shirts belong to your twelve brothers."

"Twelve brothers!" cried the little maiden. "Where are they? I have not even heard of them."

"Heaven knows where they are," was the reply; "but they are wandering about the world somewhere." Then the queen took her little daughter to the private room in the castle, and showed her the twelve coffins which had been prepared for her brothers, and related to her, with many tears, why they had left home.

"Dear mother," said the child, "do not weep. I will go and seek my brothers." So she took the twelve shirts with her, and wandered away into the forest.

She walked for a whole day, and in the evening came to a cottage, stepped in, and found a young boy, who stared with astonishment at seeing a beautiful little girl dressed in rich clothing and wearing a golden star on her forehead.

At last he said, "Who are you, and what do you want?"

"I am a king's daughter," she said, "and I seek my twelve brothers, and I intend to search for them till I find them;" and she showed him their shirts.

Then Benjamin knew that she was his sister, and said, "I am your youngest brother, Benjamin." Then she wept for joy. They kissed each other with deep affection, and were for a time very happy.

At last Benjamin said, "Dear sister, we have made a vow that the first young maiden we meet should die, because through a maiden we have lost our kingly rights."

"I would willingly die," she said, "if by so doing I could restore my brothers to their rightful possessions."

"No, you shall not die," he replied. "Hide yourself behind this tub until our eleven brothers come home; then I will make an agreement with them."

At night the brothers returned from hunting, and the supper was ready. While they sat at table, one of them said, "Well, Benjamin, have you any news?"

"Perhaps I have," he said, "although it seems strange that I, who stay at home, should know more than you, who have been out."

"Well, tell us your news," said one. So he said:

"I will tell you if you will make one promise."

"Yes, yes!" they all cried. "What is it?"

"Well, then, promise me that the first maiden you meet with in the forest shall *not* die."

"Yes, yes!" said they all; "she shall have mercy, but tell us."

“Then,” said the youngest brother, “our sister is here;” and, rising, he lifted the tub, and the king’s daughter came forth in her royal robes and with a golden star on her forehead, and looking so fair and delicate and beautiful that the brothers were full of joy, and kissed and embraced her with the fondest affection.

She stayed with Benjamin, and helped him in keeping the house clean and cooking the game which the others brought home. Everything was so nicely managed now and with so much order, the curtains and the quilts were beautifully white, and the dinners cooked so well that the brothers were always contented, and lived in great unity with their little sister.

There was a pretty garden around the house in which they lived, and one day, when they were all at home dining together, and enjoying themselves, the maiden went out into the garden to gather them some flowers.

She had tended twelve lilies with great care, and they were now in such splendid bloom that she determined to pluck them for her brothers, to please them.

But the moment she gathered the lilies, her twelve brothers were changed into twelve ravens, and flew away over the trees of the forest, while the charming house and garden vanished from her sight. Now was the poor little maiden left all alone in the wild wood, and knew not what to do; but on turning round she saw a curious old woman standing near, who said to her, “My child, what hast thou done? Why didst thou not leave those white flowers to grow on their stems? They were thy twelve brothers, and now they will always remain ravens.”

“Is there no way to set them free?” asked the maiden, weeping.

“No way in the world,” she replied, “but one, and that is far too difficult for thee to perform; yet it would break the spell and set them free. Hast thou firmness enough to remain dumb seven years, and not speak to anyone, or even laugh? for if ever you utter a single word, or fail only once in the seven years, all you have done before will be vain, and at this one word your brothers will die.“

“Yes,” said the maiden, “I can do this to set my brothers free.”

Then the maiden climbed into a tree, and, seating herself in the branches, began to knit.

She remained here, living on the fruit that grew on the tree, and without laughing or uttering a word.

As she sat in her tree, the king, who was hunting, had a favourite hound, who very soon discovered her, ran to the tree on which the maiden sat, sprang up to it, and barked at her violently.

The king came nearer, and saw the beautiful king’s daughter with the golden star on her forehead. He was so struck with her beauty that he begged her to come down, and asked her to be his bride. She did not speak a word, but merely nodded her head. Then the king himself climbed up into the tree, and bringing her down, seated her on his own horse and galloped away with her to his home.

The marriage was soon after celebrated with great pomp, but the bride neither spoke nor laughed.

When they had lived happily together for some years, the king’s mother, a wicked woman, began to raise evil reports about the queen, and said to the king, “It is some beggar girl you have picked up. Who can tell what wicked tricks she practises. She can’t help being dumb, but why does she never laugh? unless she has a guilty conscience.” The king at first would listen to none of these suspicions, but she urged him so long, and accused the queen of such wicked conduct, that at last he condemned her to be burnt to death.

Now in the court-yard a great fire was kindled, and the king stood weeping at a window overlooking the court of the palace, for he still loved her dearly. He saw her brought forth and tied to the stake; the fire kindled, and the flames with their forked tongues were creeping towards her, when at the last moment the seven years were past, and suddenly a rustling noise of wings was heard in the air; twelve black ravens alighted on the earth and instantly assumed their own forms—they were the brothers of the queen.

They tore down the pile and extinguished the fire, set their sister free, and embraced her tenderly. The queen, who was now able to speak, told the king why she had been dumb and had never laughed.

The delight of the king was only equalled by his anger against the wicked witch, who was brought to justice and ordered to be thrown into a vat of oil full of poisonous snakes, where she died a dreadful death.

CHAPTER XI

THE FAIR ONE WITH THE GOLDEN LOCKS

There was once a most beautiful and amiable princess who was called “The Fair One with Locks of Gold,” for her hair shone brighter than gold, and flowed in curls down to her feet, her head was always encircled by a wreath of beautiful flowers, and pearls and diamonds.

A handsome, rich, young prince, whose territories joined to hers, was deeply in love with the reports he heard of her, and sent to demand her in marriage. The ambassador sent with proposals was most sumptuously attired, and surrounded by lackeys on beautiful horses, as well as charged with every kind of compliment, from the anxious prince, who hoped he would bring the princess back with him; but whether it was that she was not that day in a good humour, or that she did not like the speeches made by the ambassador, I don’t know, but she returned thanks to his master for the honour he intended her, and said she had no inclination to marry. When the ambassador arrived at the king’s chief city, where he was expected with great impatience, the people were extremely afflicted to see him return without the Fair One with the Locks of Gold; and the king wept like a child. There was a youth at court whose beauty outshone the sun, the gracefulness of whose person was not to be equalled, and for his gracefulness and wit, he was called Avenant: the king loved him, and indeed every body except the envious. Avenant being one day in company with some persons, inconsiderately said, “If the king had sent me to the Fair One with Locks of Gold, I dare say I could have prevailed on her to return with me.” These enviers of Avenant’s prosperity immediately ran open mouthed to the king, saying, “Sir sir, what does your majesty think Avenant says? He boasts that if you had sent him to the Fair One with the Golden Hair, he could have brought her with him; which shows he is so vain as to think himself handsomer than your majesty and that her love for him would have made her follow him wherever he went.” This put the king into a violent rage. “What!” said he, “does this youngster make a jest at my misfortune, and pretend to set himself above me? Go and put him immediately in my great tower, and there let him starve to death.” The king’s guards went and seized Avenant who thought no more of what he had said, dragged him to prison, and used him in the most cruel manner.

One day when he was almost quite spent, he said to himself, fetching a deep sigh, “Wherein can I have offended the king? He has not a more faithful subject than myself; nor have I ever done any thing to displease him.” The king happened at that time to pass by the tower; and stopped to hear him, notwithstanding the persuasions of those that were with him; “Hold your peace,” replied the king, “and let me hear him out.” Which having done, and being greatly moved by his sufferings, he opened the door of the tower, and called him by his name. Upon which Avenant came forth in a sad condition, and, throwing himself at the king’s feet, “What have I done, sir,” said he, “that your majesty should use me thus severely?” “Thou hast ridiculed me and my ambassador,” replied the king; “and hast said, that if I had sent thee to the Fair One with Locks of Gold, thou couldst have brought her with thee.” “It is true, sir,” replied Avenant, “for I would have so thoroughly

convinced her of your transcending qualities, that it should not have been in her power to have denied me; and this, surely, I said in the name of your majesty." The king found in reality he had done no injury; so, he took him away with him, repenting heartily of the wrong he had done him. After having given him an excellent supper, the king sent for him into his cabinet. "Avenant," said he, "I still love the Fair One with Locks of Gold; I have a mind to send thee to her, to try whether thou canst succeed," Avenant replied, he was ready to obey his majesty in all things, and would depart the very next morning. "Hold," said the king, "I will provide thee first with a most sumptuous equipage." "There is no necessity for that," answered Avenant; "I need only a good horse and your letters of credence." Upon this the king embraced him; being overjoyed to see him so soon ready.

It was upon a Monday morning that he took leave of the king and his friends. Being on his journey by break of day, and entering into a spacious meadow, a fine thought came into his head; he alighted immediately, and seated himself by the bank of a little stream that watered one side of the meadow, and wrote the sentiment down in his pocket book. After he had done writing, he looked about him every way, being charmed with the beauties of the place, and suddenly perceived a large gilded carp, which stirred a little, and that was all it could do, for having attempted to catch some little flies, it had leaped so far out of the water, as to throw itself upon the grass, where it was almost dead, not being able to recover its natural element. Avenant took pity on the poor creature, and though it was a fish-day, and he might have carried it away for his dinner, he took it up, and gently put it again into the river, where the carp, feeling the refreshing coolness of the water, began to rejoice, and sunk to the bottom; but soon rising up again, brisk and gay, to the side of the river; "Avenant," said the carp, "I thank you for the kindness you have done me; had it not been for you, I had died; but you have saved my life, and I will reward you." After this short compliment, the carp darted itself to the bottom of the water, leaving Avenant not a little surprised at its wit and great civility.

Another day, as he was pursuing his journey, he saw a crow in great distress: being pursued by a huge eagle, he took his bow, which he always carried abroad with him, and aiming at the eagle, let fly an arrow, which pierced him through the body, so that he fell down dead; which the crow seeing, came in an ecstasy of joy, and perched upon a tree. "Avenant," said the crow, "you have been extremely generous to succour me, who am but a poor wretched crow; but I am not ungrateful and will do you as good a turn." Avenant admired the wit of the crow, and continuing his journey, he entered into a wood so early one morning, that he could scarcely see his way, where he heard an owl crying out like an owl in despair. So looking about every where, he at length came to a place where certain fowlers had spread their nets in the night-time to catch little birds. "What pity 'tis," said he, "men are only made to torment one another, or else to persecute poor animals who never do them any harm!" So saying, he drew his knife, cut the cords, and set the owl at liberty; who, before he took wing, said, "Avenant, the fowlers are coming, I should have been taken, and must have died, without your assistance: I have a grateful heart, and will remember it."

These were the three most remarkable adventures that befell Avenant in his journey; and when he arrived at the end of it, he washed himself, combed and powdered his hair, and put on a suit of cloth of gold: which having done, he put a rich embroidered scarf about his neck, with a small basket, wherein was a little dog which he was very fond of. And

Avenant was so amiable, and did every thing with so good a grace, that when he presented himself at the gate of the palace, all the guards paid him great respect, and every one strove who should first give notice to the Fair One with Locks of Gold, that Avenant, the neighbouring king's ambassador, demanded audience. The princess on hearing the name of Avenant, said, "It has a pleasing sound, and I dare say he is agreeable and pleases every body; and she said to her maids of honour, go fetch me my rich embroidered gown of blue satin, dress my hair, and bring my wreaths of fresh flowers: let me have my high shoes, and my fan, and let my audience chamber and throne be clean, and richly adorned; for I would have him every where with truth say, that I am really the Fair One with Locks of Gold." Thus all her women were employed to dress her as a queen should be. At length, she went to her great gallery of looking-glasses, to see if any thing was wanting; after which she ascended her throne of gold, ivory, and ebony, the fragrant smell of which was superior to the choicest balm. She also commanded her maids of honour to take their instruments, and play to their own singing so sweetly that none should be disgusted.

Avenant was conducted into the chamber of audience, were he stood so transported with admiration, that, as he afterwards said, he had scarcely power to open his lips. At length, however, he took courage, and made his speech wonderfully well; wherein he prayed the princess not to let him be so unfortunate as to return without her. "Gentle Avenant," said she, "all the reasons you have laid before me, are very good, and I assure you, I would rather favour you than any other; but you must know, about a month since, I went to take the air by the side of a river, with my maids of honour; as I was pulling off my glove, I pulled a ring from my finger, which by accident fell into the river. This ring I valued more than my whole kingdom; whence you may judge how much I am afflicted by the loss of it. And I have made a vow never to hearken to any proposals of marriage, unless the ambassador who makes them shall also bring my ring. This is the present which you have to make me; otherwise you may talk your heart out, for months and even years shall never change my resolution." When he returned to his lodgings, he went to bed supperless; and his little dog, who was called Cabriole, made a fasting night of it too, and went and lay down by his master; who did nothing all night but sigh and lament, saying, "How can I find a ring that fell into a great river a month ago? It would be folly to attempt it. The princess enjoined me this task, merely because she knew it was impossible," he continued, greatly afflicted; which Cabriole observing, said, "My dear master, pray do not despair of your good fortune; for you are too good to be unhappy. Therefore, when it is day, let us go to the river side." Avenant made no answer, but gave his dog two little cuffs with his hand, and being overwhelmed with grief, fell asleep.

But when Cabriole perceived it was broad day, he fell a barking so loud that he waked his master. "Rise, sir," said he, "put on your clothes, and let us go and try our fortune." Avenant took his little dog's advice; got up, and dressed himself, went down into the garden, and out of the garden he walked insensibly to the river side, with his hat over his eyes, and his arms across, thinking of nothing but taking his leave; when all on a sudden he heard a voice call, "Avenant, Avenant!" upon which he looked around him, but seeing nothing, he concluded it was an illusion, and was proceeding in his walk; but he presently heard himself called again. "Who calls me?" said he; Cabriole, who was very little and looked closely into the water, cried out, "Never believe me, if it is not a gilded carp." Immediately the carp appeared, and with an audible voice said, "Avenant, you saved my

life in the poplar meadow, where I must have died without your assistance; and now I am come to requite your kindness. Here, my dear Avenant, here is the ring which the Fair One with Locks of Gold dropped into the river." Upon which he stooped and took it out of the carp's mouth; to whom he returned a thousand thanks. And now, instead of returning home, he went directly to the palace with little Cabriole, who skipped about, and wagged his tail for joy, that he had persuaded his master to walk by the side of the river. The princess being told that Avenant desired an audience: "Alas," said she, "the poor youth has come to take his leave of me! He has considered what I enjoined him as impossible, and is returning to his master." But Avenant being admitted, presented her the ring, saying, "Madam, behold I have executed your command; and now, I hope, you will receive my master for your royal consort." When she saw her ring, and that it was noways injured, she was so amazed that she could hardly believe her eyes. "Surely, courteous Avenant," said she, "you must be favoured by some fairy; for naturally this is impossible." "Madam," said he, "I am acquainted with no fairy; but I was willing to obey your command." "Well, then, seeing you have so good a will," continued she, "you must do me another piece of service, without which I will never marry. There is a certain prince who lives not far from hence, whose name is Galifron, and whom nothing would serve but that he must needs marry me. He declared his mind to me, with most terrible menaces, that if I denied him, he would enter my kingdom with fire and sword; but you shall judge whether I would accept his proposal: he is a giant, as high as a steeple; he devours men as an ape eats chestnuts; when he goes into the country, he carries cannons in his pocket, to use instead of pistols; and when he speaks aloud he deafens the ears of those that stand near him. I answered him, that I did not choose to marry, and desired him to excuse me. Nevertheless, he has not ceased to persecute me, and has put an infinite number of my subjects to the sword: therefore, before all other things you must fight him, and bring me his head."

Avenant was somewhat startled by this proposal; but, having considered it awhile, "Well, madam," said he, "I will fight this Galifron; I believe I shall be vanquished; but I will die like a man of courage." The princess was astonished at his intrepidity, and said a thousand things to dissuade him from it, but all in vain. At length he arrived at Galifron's castle, the roads all the way being strewed with the bones and carcasses of men which the giant had devoured, or cut in pieces. It was not long before Avenant saw the monster approach, and he immediately challenged him; but there was no occasion for this, for he lifted his iron mace, and had certainly beat out the gentle Avenant's brains at the first blow, had not a crow at that instant perched upon the giant's head, and with his bill pecked out both his eyes. The blood trickled down his face, whereat he grew desperate, and laid about him on every side; but Avenant took care to avoid his blows, and gave him many great wounds with his sword, which he pushed up to the very hilt; so that the giant fainted, and fell down with loss of blood. Avenant immediately cut off his head; and while he was in an ecstasy of joy, for his good success, the crow perched upon a tree, and said, "Avenant, I did not forget the kindnesses I received at your hands, when you killed the eagle that pursued me; I promised to make you amends, and now I have been as good as my word." "I acknowledge your kindness, Mr. Crow," replied Avenant; "I am still your debtor, and your servant." So saying, he mounted his courser, and rode away with the giant's horrid head. When he arrived at the city, every body crowded after him, crying out, "Long live the valiant Avenant, who has slain the cruel monster!" so that the princess, who heard the noise, and trembling for fear she should have heard of Avenant's death, durst not inquire

what was the matter. But presently after, she saw Avenant enter with the giant's head; at the sight of which she trembled, though there was nothing to fear. "Madam," said he, "behold your enemy is dead; and now, I hope, you will no longer refuse the king my master." "Alas!" replied the Fair One with Locks of Gold, "I must still refuse him, unless you can find means to bring me some of the water of the gloomy cave. Not far from hence," continued she, "there is a very deep cave, about six leagues in compass; the entrance into which is guarded by two dragons. The dragons dart fire from their mouths and eyes; and when you have got into this cave, you will meet with a very deep hole, into which you must go down, and you will find it full of toads, adders and serpents. At the bottom of this hole there is a kind of cellar, through which runs the fountain of beauty and health. This is the water I must have; its virtues are wonderful; for the fair, by washing in it, preserve their beauty; and the deformed it renders beautiful; if they are young, it preserves them always youthful; and if old it makes them young again. Now judge you, Avenant, whether I will ever leave my kingdom without carrying some of this water along with me." "Madam," said he, "you are so beautiful, that this water will be of no use to you; but I am an unfortunate ambassador, whose death you seek. However, I will go in search of what you desire, though I am certain never to return."

At length he arrived at the top of a mountain, where he sat down to rest himself; giving his horse liberty to feed, and Cabriole to run after the flies. He knew that the gloomy cave was not far off, and looked about to see whether he could discover it; and at length he perceived a horrid rock as black as ink, whence issued a thick smoke; and immediately after he spied one of the dragons casting forth fire from his jaws and eyes; his skin all over yellow and green, with prodigious claws and a long tail rolled up in an hundred folds. Avenant, with a resolution to die in the attempt, drew his sword, and with the phial which the Fair One with Locks of Gold had given him to fill with the water of beauty, went towards the cave, saying to his little dog, "Cabriole, here is an end of me; I never shall be able to get this water, it is so well guarded by the dragons; therefore when I am dead, fill this phial with my blood, and carry it to my princess, that she may see what her severity has cost me: then go to the king my master and give him an account of my misfortunes." While he was saying this, he heard a voice call "Avenant, Avenant!" "Who calls me?" said he; and presently he espied an owl in the hole of an old hollow tree, who, calling him again, said, "You rescued me from the fowler's net, where I had been assuredly taken, had you not delivered me. I promised to make you amends, and now the time is come; give me your phial; I am acquainted with all the secret inlets into the gloomy cave, and will go and fetch you the water of beauty." Avenant most gladly gave the phial, and the owl, entering without any impediment into the cave, filled it, and in less than a quarter of an hour returned with it well stopped. Avenant was overjoyed at his good fortune, gave the owl a thousand thanks, and returned with a merry heart to the city. Being arrived at the palace, he presented the phial to the Fair One with Locks of Gold, who had then nothing further to say. She returned Avenant thanks, and gave orders for every thing that was requisite for her departure: after which she set forward with him. The Fair One with Locks of Gold thought Avenant very amiable, and said to him sometimes upon the road, "If you had been willing, I could have made you a king; and then we need not have left my kingdom." But Avenant replied, "I would not have been guilty of such a piece of treachery to my master for all the kingdoms of the earth; though I must acknowledge your beauties are more resplendent than the sun."

At length they arrived at the king's chief city, who understanding that the Fair One with Locks of Gold was arrived, he went forth to meet her, and made her the richest presents in the world. The nuptials were solemnized with such demonstrations of joy, that nothing else was discoursed of. But the Fair One with Locks of Gold, who loved Avenant in her heart, was never pleased but when she was in his company, and would be always speaking in his praise: "I had never come hither," said she to the king, "had it not been for Avenant, who, to serve me, has conquered impossibilities; you are infinitely obliged to him; he procured me the water of beauty and health; by which I shall never grow old, and shall always preserve my health and beauty." The enviers of Avenant's happiness, who heard the queen's words, said to the king, "Were your majesty inclined to be jealous, you have reason enough to be so, for the queen is desperately in love with Avenant." "Indeed," said the king, "I am sensible of the truth of what you tell me; let him be put in the great tower, with fetters upon his feet and hands." Avenant was immediately seized. However, his little dog Cabriole never forsook him, but cheered him the best he could, and brought him all the news of the court. When the Fair One with Locks of Gold was informed of his misfortunes, she threw herself at the king's feet, and all in tears besought him to release Avenant out of prison. But the more she besought him the more he was incensed, believing it was her affection that made her so zealous a suppliant in his behalf. Finding she could not prevail, she said no more to him, but grew very pensive and melancholy.

The king took it into his head that she did not think him handsome enough; so he resolved to wash his face with the water of beauty, in hopes that the queen would then conceive a greater affection for him than she had. This water stood in a phial upon a table in the queen's chamber, where she had put it, that it might not be out of her sight. But one of the chambermaids going to kill a spider with her besom, by accident threw down the phial, and broke it, so that the water was lost. She dried it up with all the speed she could, and not knowing what to do, she bethought herself that she had seen a phial of clear water in the king's cabinet very like that she had broken. Without any more ado, therefore, she went and fetched that phial, and set it upon the table in place of the other. This water which was in the king's cabinet, was a certain water which he made use of to poison the great lords and princes of his court when they were convicted of any great crime; to which purpose, instead of cutting off their heads, or hanging them, he caused their faces to be rubbed with this water, which cast them into so profound a sleep that they never waked again. Now the king one evening took this phial, and rubbed his face well with the water, after which he fell asleep and died. Cabriole was one of the first that came to a knowledge of this accident, and immediately ran to inform Avenant of it who bid him go to the Fair One with Locks of Gold, and remind her of the poor prisoner. Cabriole slipped unperceived through the crowd, for there was a great noise and hurry at court upon the king's death; and getting to the queen, "Madam," said he, "remember poor Avenant." She presently called to mind the afflictions he had suffered for her sake, and his fidelity. Without speaking a word, she went directly to the great tower, and took off the fetters from Avenant's feet and hands herself; after which, putting the crown upon his head, and the royal mantle about his shoulders, "Amiable Avenant," said she, "I will make you a sovereign prince, and take you for my consort." Avenant threw himself at her feet, and in terms the most passionate and respectful returned her thanks. Every body was overjoyed to have him for their king: the nuptials were the most splendid in the world; and the Fair One. with Locks of Gold lived a long time with her beloved Avenant, both happy and

contented in the enjoyment of each other.

CHAPTER XII

TOM THUMB

In the days of King Arthur, Merlin, the most learned enchanter of his time, was on a journey; and, being very weary, stopped one day at the cottage of an honest ploughman to ask for refreshment. The ploughman's wife, with great civility, immediately brought him some milk in a wooden bowl, and some brown bread on a wooden platter. Merlin could not help observing, that, although every thing within the cottage was particularly neat and clean, and in good order, the ploughman and his wife had the most sorrowful air imaginable. So he questioned them on the cause of their melancholy, and learned that they were very miserable because they had no children. The poor woman declared, with tears in her eyes, that she should be the happiest creature in the world if she had a son, although he were no bigger than his father's thumb. Merlin was much amused with the thoughts of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb, and, as soon as he returned home, he sent for the queen of the fairies (with whom he was very intimate), and related to her the desire of the ploughman and his wife to have a son the size of his father's thumb. The queen of the fairies liked the plan exceedingly, and declared their wish should speedily be granted. Accordingly the ploughman's wife had a son, who in a few minutes grew as tall as his father's thumb. The queen of the fairies came in at the window as the mother was sitting up in bed admiring the child. The queen kissed the infant, and giving it the name of Tom Thumb, immediately summoned several fairies from Fairy Land to clothe her little new favourite:

> "An oak leaf hat he had for his crown,
> His shirt it was by spiders spun;
> With doublet wove of thistle's down,
> His trousers up with points were done.
> His stockings, of apple rind, they tie
> With eye-lash plucked from his mother's eye,
> His shoes were made of a mouse's skin,
> Nicely tanned, with the hair within."

Tom never was any bigger than his father's thumb, which was not a large thumb either; but, as he grew older, he became very cunning and sly, for which his mother did not sufficiently correct him, so that when he was able to play with the boys for cherry stones, and had lost all his own, he used to creep into the boys' bags, fill his pockets, and come out again to play. But one day as he was getting out of a bag of cherry stones, the boy to whom it belonged chanced to see him. "Ah ha, my little Tom Thumb!" said the boy, "have I caught you at your bad tricks at last? Now I will reward you for thieving." Then drawing the string tight round his neck, and shaking the bag heartily, the cherry stones bruised Tom's legs, thighs, and body sadly; which made him beg to be let out, and promise never to be guilty of such things any more. Shortly afterwards, Tom's mother was making a batter pudding, and, that he might see how she mixed it, he climbed on the edge of the

bowl; but his foot happening to slip, he fell over head and ears into the batter, and his mother not observing him, stirred him into the pudding, and popped him into the pot to boil. The hot water made Tom kick and struggle; and his mother, seeing the pudding jump up and down in such a furious manner, thought it was bewitched; and a tinker coming by just at the time, she quickly gave him the pudding, who put it into his budget and walked on.

As soon as Tom could get the batter out of his mouth, he began to cry aloud; which so frightened the poor tinker, that he flung the pudding over the hedge, and ran away from it as fast as he could run. The pudding being broken to pieces by the fall, Tom was released, and walked home to his mother, who gave him a kiss and put him to bed. Tom Thumb's mother once took him with her when she went to milk the cow; and it being a very windy day, she tied him with a needleful of thread to a thistle, that he might not be blown away. The cow liking his oak leaf hat took him and the thistle up at one mouthful. While the cow chewed the thistle, Tom, terrified at her great teeth, which seemed ready to crush him to pieces, roared, "Mother, Mother!" as loud as he could bawl. "Where are you, Tommy, my dear Tommy?" said the mother. "Here, mother, here in the red cow's mouth." The mother began to cry and wring her hands; but the cow surprised at such odd noises in her throat, opened her mouth and let him drop out. His mother clapped him into her apron, and ran home with him. Tom's father made him a whip of a barley straw to drive the cattle with, and being one day in the field, he slipped into a deep furrow. A raven flying over, picked him up with a grain of corn, and flew with him to the top of a giant's castle, by the seaside, where he left him; and old Grumbo the giant, coming soon after to walk upon his terrace, swallowed Tom like a pill, clothes and all. Tom presently made the giant very uncomfortable, and he threw him up into the sea. A great fish then swallowed him. The fish was soon after caught, and sent as a present to King Arthur. When it was cut open, every body was delighted with little Tom Thumb. The king made him his dwarf; he was the favourite of the whole court; and, by his merry pranks, often amused the queen and the knights of the Round Table. The king, when he rode on horseback, frequently took Tom in his hand; and, if a shower of rain came on, he used to creep into the king's waist-coat pocket, and sleep till the rain was over. The king also, sometimes questioned Tom concerning his parents; and when Tom informed his majesty they were very poor people, the king led him into his treasury, and told him he should pay his friends a visit, and take with him as much money as he could carry. Tom procured a little purse, and putting a threepenny piece into it, with much labour and difficulty got it upon his back; and, after travelling two days and nights, arrived at his father's house.

His mother met him at the door, almost tired to death, having in forty-eight hours travelled almost half a mile with a huge silver threepence upon his back. His parents were glad to see him, especially when he had brought such an amazing sum of money with him. They placed him in a walnut shell by the fire side, and feasted him for three days upon a hazel nut, which made him sick, for a whole nut usually served him a month. Tom got well, but could not travel because it had rained; therefore his mother took him in her hand, and with one puff blew him into King Arthur's court; where Tom entertained the king, queen, and nobility at tilts and tournaments, at which he exerted himself so much that he brought on a fit of sickness, and his life was despaired of. At this juncture the queen of the fairies came in a chariot drawn by flying mice, placed Tom by her side, and drove through the air,

without stopping till they arrived at her palace; when, after restoring him to health, and permitting him to enjoy all the gay diversions of Fairy Land, the queen commanded a fair wind, and, placing Tom before it, blew him straight to the court of King Arthur. But just as Tom should have alighted in the courtyard of the palace, the cook happened to pass along with the king's great bowl of firmity (King Arthur loved firmity), and poor Tom Thumb fell plump into the middle of it and splashed the hot firmity into the cook's eyes. Down went the bowl. "Oh dear; oh dear!" cried Tom; "Murder! murder!" bellowed the cook! and away ran the king's nice firmity into the kennel. The cook was a red-faced, cross fellow, and swore to the king, that Tom had done it out of mere mischief; so he was taken up, tried, and sentenced to be beheaded. Tom hearing this dreadful sentence, and seeing a miller stand by with his mouth wide open, he took a good spring, and jumped down the miller's throat, unperceived by all, even by the miller himself.

Tom being lost, the court broke up, and away went the miller to his mill. But Tom did not leave him long at rest, he began to roll and tumble about, so that the miller thought himself bewitched, and sent for a doctor. When the doctor came, Tom began to dance and sing; the doctor was as much frightened as the miller, and sent in great haste for five more doctors, and twenty learned men. While all these were debating upon the affair, the miller (for they were very tedious) happened to yawn, and Tom, taking the opportunity, made another jump, and alighted on his feet in the middle of the table. The miller, provoked to be thus tormented by such a little creature, fell into a great passion, caught hold of Tom, and threw him out of the window, into the river. A large salmon swimming by, snapped him up in a minute. The salmon was soon caught and sold in the market to the steward of a lord. The lord, thinking it an uncommon fine fish, made a present of it to the king, who ordered it to be dressed immediately. When the cook cut open the salmon, he found poor Tom, and ran with him directly to the king; but the king being busy with state affairs, desired that he might be brought another day. The cook resolving to keep him safely this time, as he had so lately given him the slip, clapped him into a mouse-trap, and left him to amuse himself by peeping through the wires for a whole week; when the king sent for him, he forgave him for throwing down the firmity, ordered him new clothes and knighted him.

"His shirt was made of butterflies' wings;
His boots were made of chicken skins;
His coat and breeches were made with pride;
A tailor's needle hung by his side;
A mouse for a horse he used to ride."

Thus dressed and mounted, he rode a hunting with the king and nobility, who all laughed heartily at Tom and his fine prancing steed. As they rode by a farm house one day, a cat jumped from behind the door, seized the mouse and little Tom, and began to devour the mouse. However, Tom boldly drew his sword and attacked the cat, who then let him fall. The king and his nobles seeing Tom falling, went to his assistance, and one of the lords caught him in his hat; but poor Tom was sadly scratched, and his clothes were torn by the claws of the cat. In this condition he was carried home, when a bed of down was made for him in a little ivory cabinet. The queen of the fairies came, and took him again to Fairy Land, where she kept him for some years; and then, dressing him in bright green, sent him flying once more through the air to the earth, in the days of King Thunstone. The people flocked far and near to look at him; and the king, before whom he was carried, asked him

who he was, whence he came, and where he lived? Tom answered:

> “My name is Tom Thumb,
> From the Fairies I come;
> When King Arthur shone,
> This court was my home.
> In me he delighted,
> By him I was knighted,
> Did you never hear of
> Sir Thomas Thumb?”

The king was so charmed with this address, that he ordered a little chair to be made, in order that Tom might sit on his table, and also a palace of gold a span high, with a door an inch wide, for little Tom to live in. He also gave him a coach drawn by six small mice. This made the queen angry, because she had not a new coach too. Therefore, resolving to ruin Tom, she complained to the king that he had behaved very insolently to her. The king sent for him in a rage. Tom, to escape his fury, crept into an empty snail-shell, and there lay till he was almost starved; when peeping out of the shell, he saw a fine butterfly settled on the ground. He now ventured out, and getting astride, the butterfly took wing, and mounted into the air with little Tom on his back. Away he flew from field to field, from tree to tree, till at last he flew to the king’s court. The king, queen, and nobles, all strove to catch the butterfly, but could not. At length poor Tom, having neither bridle nor saddle, slipped from his seat, and fell into a white pot, where he was found almost drowned. The queen vowed he should be guillotined: but while the guillotine was getting ready, he was secured once more in a mouse-trap; when the cat seeing something stir, and supposing it to be the mouse, patted the trap about till she broke it, and set Tom at liberty. Soon afterwards a spider, taking him for a fly, made at him. Tom drew his sword and fought valiantly, but the spider’s poisonous breath overcame him:

> “He fell dead on the ground where late he had stood,
> And the spider sucked up the last drop of his blood.”

King Thunstone and his whole court went into mourning for little Tom Thumb. They buried him under a rosebush, and raised a nice white marble monument over his grave, with the following epitaph:

> “Here lies Tom Thumb, King Arthur’s knight,
> Who died by spider’s cruel bite.
> He was well known in Arthur’s court,
> Where he afforded gallant sport;
> He rode at tilt and tournament,
> And on a mouse a hunting went;
> Alive he filled the court with mirth,
> His death to sorrow soon gave birth.
> Wipe, wipe your eyes, and shake your head
> And cry, ‘Alas! Tom Thumb is dead.’”

CHAPTER XIII

BLUE BEARD

There was, some time ago, a gentleman who was very rich. He had fine town and country houses, his dishes and plates were all of gold or silver, his rooms were hung with damask, his chairs and sofas were covered with the richest silks, and his carriages were all gilt with gold in a grand style. But it happened that this gentleman had a blue beard, which made him so very frightful and ugly, that none of the ladies, in the parts where he lived, would venture to go into his company. Now there was a certain lady of rank, who lived very near him, and had two daughters, both of them of very great beauty. Blue Beard asked her to bestow one of them upon him for a wife, and left it to herself to choose which of the two it should be. But both the young ladies again and again said they would never marry Blue Beard; yet, to be as civil as they could, each of them said, the only reason why she would not have him was, because she was loath to hinder her sister from the match, which would be such a good one for her. Still the truth of the matter was, they could neither of them bear the thoughts of having a husband with a blue beard; and besides, they had heard of his having been married to several wives before, and nobody could tell what had ever become of any of them. As Blue Beard wished very much to gain their favour, he asked the lady and her daughters, and some ladies who were on a visit at their house, to go with him to one of his country seats, where they spent a whole week, during which they passed all their time in nothing but parties for hunting and fishing, music, dancing, and feasts. No one even thought of going to bed, and the nights were passed in merry-makings of all kinds. In short, the time rolled on in so much pleasure, that the youngest of the two sisters began to think that the beard which she had been so much afraid of, was not so very blue, and that the gentleman who owned it was vastly civil and pleasing. Soon after their return home, she told her mother that she had no longer any dislike to accept of Blue Beard for her husband; and in a very short time they were married.

About a month after the marriage had taken place, Blue Beard told his wife that he should be forced to leave her for a few weeks, as he had some affairs to attend to in the country. He desired her to be sure to indulge herself in every kind of pleasure, to invite as many of her friends as she liked, and to treat them with all sorts of dainties, that her time might pass pleasantly till he came back again. “Here,” said he, “are the keys of the two large wardrobes. This is the key of the great box that contains the best plate, which we use for company, this belongs to my strong box, where I keep my money, and this belongs to the casket, in which are all my jewels. Here also is a master-key to all the rooms in the house; but this small key belongs to the closet at the end of the long gallery on the ground floor. I give you leave,” said he, “to open, or to do what you like with all the rest except this closet. This, my dear, you must not enter, nor even put the key into the lock, for all the world. If you do not obey me in this one thing, you must expect the most dreadful punishments.” She promised to obey his orders in the most faithful manner; and Blue Beard, after kissing her tenderly, stepped into his coach, and drove away.

When Blue Beard was gone, the friends of his wife did not wait to be asked, so eager were

they to see all the riches and fine things she had gained by marriage; for they had none of them gone to the wedding, on account of their dislike to the blue beard of the bridegroom. As soon as ever they came to the house, they ran about from room to room, from closet to closet, and then from wardrobe to wardrobe, looking into each with wonder and delight, and said, that every fresh one they came to, was richer and finer than what they had seen the moment before. At last they came to the drawing-rooms, where their surprise was made still greater by the costly grandeur of the hangings, the sofas, the chairs, carpets, tables, sideboards, and looking-glasses; the frames of these last were silver-gilt, most richly adorned, and in the glasses they saw themselves from head to foot. In short, nothing could exceed the richness of what they saw; and they all did not fail to admire and envy the good fortune of their friend. But all this time the bride herself was far from thinking about the fine speeches they made to her, for she was eager to see what was in the closet her husband had told her not to open. So great, indeed, was her desire to do this, that, without once thinking how rude it would be to leave her guests, she slipped away down a private staircase that led to this forbidden closet, and in such a hurry, that she was two or three times in danger of falling down stairs and breaking her neck.

When she reached the door of the closet, she stopped for a few moments to think of the order her husband had given her, and how he had told her that he would not fail to keep his word and punish her very severely, if she did not obey him. But she was so very curious to know what was inside, that she made up her mind to venture in spite of every thing. She then, with a trembling hand, put the key into the lock, and the door straight flew open. As the window shutters were closed, she at first could see nothing; but in a short time she saw that the floor was covered with clotted blood, on which the bodies of several dead women were lying.

These were all the wives whom Blue Beard had married, and killed one after another. At this sight she was ready to sink with fear, and the key of the closet door, which she held in her hand, fell on the floor. When she had a little got the better of her fright, she took it up, locked the door, and made haste back to her own room, that she might have a little time to get into a humour to amuse her company; but this she could not do, so great was her fright at what she had seen. As she found that the key of the closet had got stained with blood in falling on the floor, she wiped it two or three times over to clean it; yet still the blood kept on it the same as before. She next washed it, but the blood did not move at all. She then scoured it with brickdust, and after with sand, but in spite of all she could do, the blood was still there; for the key was a fairy who was Blue Beard’s friend; so that as fast as she got off the blood on one side, it came again on the other. Early in the same evening Blue Beard came home, saying, that before he had gone far on his journey he was met by a horseman, who was coming to tell him that his affair in the country was settled without his being present; upon which his wife said every thing she could think of, to make him believe she was in a transport of joy at his sudden return.

The next morning he asked her for the keys: she gave them to him; but as she could not help showing her fright, Blue Beard easily guessed what had been the matter. “How is it,” said he, “that the key of the closet upon the ground floor is not here?” “Is it not?” said the wife, “then I must have left it on my dressing-table.” “Be sure you give it me by and by,” replied Blue Beard. After going a good many times backwards and forwards, as if she was looking for the key, she was at last forced to give it to Blue Beard. He looked hard at it,

and then said: “How came this blood upon the key?” “I am sure I do not know,” replied the poor lady, at the same time turning as white as a sheet. “You do not know?” said Blue Beard sternly, “but I know well enough. You have been in the closet on the ground floor! Very well, madam: since you are so mighty fond of this closet, you shall be sure to take your place among the ladies you saw there.” His wife, who was almost dead with fear, now fell upon her knees, asked his pardon a thousand times for her fault, and begged him to forgive her, looking all the time so very mournful and lovely, that she would have melted any heart that was not harder than a rock. But Blue Beard only said, “No, no, madam; you shall die this very minute!” “Alas!” said the poor trembling creature, “if I must die, give me, as least, a little time to say my prayers.” “I give you,” replied the cruel Blue Beard, “half a quarter of an hour: not a moment longer.” When Blue Beard had left her to herself, she called her sister; and after telling her, as well as she could for sobbing, that she had but half a quarter of an hour to live; “Prithee,” said she, “sister Anne,” (this was her sister’s name), “run up to the top of the tower, and see if my brothers are not in sight, for they said they would visit me to-day, and if you see them, make a sign for them to gallop on as fast as ever they can.” Her sister straight did as she was desired; and the poor trembling lady every minute cried out to her: “Anne! sister Anne! do you see any one coming?” Her sister said, “I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which looks green.”

In the meanwhile, Blue Beard, with a great cimeter in his hand, bawled as loud as he could to his wife, “Come down at once, or I will fetch you.” “One moment longer, I beseech you,” replied she, and again called softly to her sister, “Sister Anne, do you see any one coming?” To which she answered, “I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which looks green.” Blue Beard now again bawled out, “Come down, I say, this very moment, or I shall come to fetch you.” “I am coming; indeed I will come in one minute,” sobbed his wretched wife. Then she once more cried out, “Anne! sister Anne! do you see any one coming?” “I see,” said her sister, “a cloud of dust a little to the left.” “Do you think it is my brothers?” said the wife. “Alas! no, dear sister,” replied she, “it is only a flock of sheep.” “Will you come down, madam?” said Blue Beard, in the greatest rage. “Only one single moment more,” said she. And then she called out for the last time, “Sister Anne! sister Anne! do you see no one coming?” “I see,” replied her sister, “two men on horseback coming; but they are still a great way off.” “Thank God,” cried she, “they are my brothers; beckon them to make haste.” Blue Beard now cried out so loud for her to come down, that his voice shook the whole house. The poor lady, with her hair loose, and all in tears, now came down, and fell on her knees, begging him to spare her life; but he stopped her, saying, “All this is of no use, for you shall die,” and then, seizing her by the hair, raised his cimeter to strike off her head. The poor woman now begged a single moment to say one prayer. “No, no,” said Blue Beard, “I will give you no more time. You have had too much already.” And again he raised his arm. Just at this instant a loud knocking was heard at the gates, which made Blue Beard wait for a moment to see who it was. The gates now flew open, and two officers, dressed in their uniform, came in, and, with their swords in their hands, ran straight to Blue Beard, who, seeing they were his wife’s brothers, tried to escape from their presence; but they pursued and seized him before he had gone twenty steps, and plunging their swords into his body he fell down dead at their feet.

The poor wife, who was almost as dead as her husband, was not able at first to rise and embrace her brothers; but she soon came to herself; and, as Blue Beard had no heirs, she found herself the owner of his great riches. She gave a part of his vast fortune as a marriage dowry to her sister Anne, who soon after became the wife of a young gentleman who had long loved her. Some of the money she laid out in buying captains' commissions for her two brothers, and the rest she gave to a worthy gentleman whom she married shortly after, and whose kind treatment soon made her forget Blue Beard's cruelty.

CHAPTER XIV

CINDERELLA; OR, THE LITTLE GLASS SLIPPER

There was once a very rich gentleman who lost his wife, and having loved her exceedingly, he was very sorry when she died. Finding himself quite unhappy for her loss, he resolved to marry a second time, thinking by this means he should be as happy as before. Unfortunately, however, the lady he chanced to fix upon was the proudest and most haughty woman ever known; she was always out of humour with every one; nobody could please her, and she returned the civilities of those about her with the most affronting disdain. She had two daughters by a former husband. These she brought up to be proud and idle. Indeed, in temper and behaviour they perfectly resembled their mother; they did not love their books, and would not learn to work; in short they were disliked by every body. The gentleman on his side too had a daughter, who in sweetness of temper and carriage was the exact likeness of her own mother, whose death he had so much lamented, and whose tender care of the little girl he was in hopes to see replaced by that of his new bride. But scarcely was the marriage ceremony over, before his wife began to show her real temper. She could not bear the pretty little girl, because her sweet obliging manners made those of her own daughters appear a thousand times the more odious and disagreeable. She therefore ordered her to live in the kitchen; and, if ever she brought any thing into the parlour, always scolded her till she was out of sight. She made her work with the servants in washing the dishes, and rubbing the tables and chairs; it was her place to clean madam’s chamber, and that of the misses her daughters, which was all inlaid, had beds of the newest fashion, and looking-glasses so long and broad, that they saw themselves from head to foot in them; while the little creature herself was forced to sleep up in a sorry garret, upon a wretched straw bed, without curtains, or any thing to make her comfortable. The poor child bore this with the greatest patience, not daring to complain to her father, who, she feared, would only reprove her, for she saw that his wife governed him entirely. When she had done all her work she used to sit in the chimney-corner among the cinders; so that in the house she went by the name of Cinderbreech. The youngest of the two sisters, however, being rather more civil than the eldest, called her Cinderella. And Cinderella, dirty and ragged as she was, as often happens in such cases, was a thousand times prettier than her sisters, drest out in all their splendour. It happened that the king’s son gave a ball, to which he invited all the persons of fashion in the country. Our two misses were of the number, for the king’s son did not know how disagreeable they were, but supposed, as they were so much indulged, that they were extremely amiable. He did not invite Cinderella, for he had never seen or heard of her.

The two sisters began immediately to be very busy in preparing for the happy day. Nothing could exceed their joy. Every moment of their time was spent in fancying such gowns, shoes, and head-dresses as would set them off to the greatest advantage. All this was new vexation to poor Cinderella, for it was she who ironed and plaited her sisters’ linen. They talked of nothing but how they should be dressed: “I,” said the eldest, “will wear my scarlet velvet with French trimming.” “And I,” said the youngest, “shall wear the same petticoat I had made for the last ball. But then, to make amends for that, I shall put

on my gold muslin train, and wear my diamonds in my hair; with these I must certainly look well." They sent several miles for the best hair dresser that was to be had, and all their ornaments were bought at the most fashionable shops. On the morning of the ball, they called up Cinderella to consult with her about their dress, for they knew she had a great deal of taste. Cinderella gave them the best advice she could, and even offered to assist in adjusting their head-dresses; which was exactly what they wanted, and they accordingly accepted her proposal. While Cinderella was busily engaged in dressing her sisters, they said to her, "Should you not like, Cinderella, to go to the ball?" "Ah!" replied Cinderella, "you are only laughing at me, it is not for such as I am to think of going to balls." "You are in the right," said they, "folks might laugh indeed, to see a Cinderbreech dancing in a ball room." Any other than Cinderella would have tried to make the haughty creatures look as ugly as she could; but the sweet tempered girl on the contrary, did every thing she could think of to make them look well. The sisters had scarcely eaten any thing for two days, so great was their joy as the happy day drew near. More than a dozen laces were broken in endeavouring to give them a fine slender shape, and they were always before the looking glass. At length the much wished for moment arrived; the proud misses stepped into a beautiful carriage, and, followed by servants in rich liveries, drove towards the palace. Cinderella followed them with her eyes as far as she could; and when they were out of sight, she sat down in a corner and began to cry. Her godmother, who saw her in tears, asked her what ailed her. "I wish——I w-i-s-h—" sobbed poor Cinderella, without being able to say another word. The godmother, who was a fairy, said to her, "You wish to go to the ball, Cinderella, is not this the truth?" "Alas! yes," replied the poor child, sobbing still more than before. "Well, well, be a good girl," said the godmother, "and you shall go." She then led Cinderella to her bedchamber, and said to her: "Run into the garden and bring me a pumpkin." Cinderella flew like lightning, and brought the finest she could lay hold of. Her godmother scooped out the inside, leaving nothing but the rind; she then struck it with her wand, and the pumpkin instantly became a fine coach gilded all over with gold. She then looked into her mouse-trap, where she found six mice all alive and brisk. She told Cinderella to lift up the door of the trap very gently; and as the mice passed out, she touched them one by one with her wand, and each immediately became a beautiful horse of a fine dapple gray mouse colour. "Here, my child," said the godmother, "is a coach and horses too, as handsome as your sisters', but what shall we do for a postillion?" "I will run," replied Cinderella, "and see if there be not a rat in the trap. If I find one, he will do very well for a postillion." "Well thought of, my child," said her godmother; "make what haste you can."

Cinderella brought the rat trap, which, to her great joy, contained three of the largest rats ever seen. The fairy chose the one which had the longest beard; and touching him with her wand, he was instantly turned into a handsome postillion, with the finest pair of whiskers imaginable. She next said to Cinderella: "Go again into the garden, and you will find six lizards behind the watering-pot; bring them hither." This was no sooner done, than with a stroke from the fairy's wand they were changed into six footmen, who all jumped up behind the coach in their laced liveries, and stood side by side as cleverly as if they had been used to nothing else the whole of their lives. The fairy then said to Cinderella: "Well, my dear, is not this such an equipage as you could wish for to take you to the ball? Are you not delighted with it?" "Y-e-s," replied Cinderella with hesitation, "but must I go thither in these filthy rags?" Her godmother touched her with the wand, and her rags

instantly became the most magnificent apparel, ornamented with the most costly jewels in the whole world. To these she added a beautiful pair of glass slippers, and bade her set out for the palace. The fairy, however, before she took leave of Cinderella, strictly charged her on no account whatever to stay at the ball after the clock had struck twelve, telling her that, should she stay but a single moment after that time, her coach would again become a pumpkin, her horses mice, her footmen lizards, and her fine clothes be changed to filthy rags. Cinderella did not fail to promise all her godmother desired of her; and almost wild with joy drove away to the palace. As soon as she arrived, the king's son, who had been informed that a great princess, whom nobody knew, was come to the ball, presented himself at the door of her carriage, helped her out, and conducted her to the ball room. Cinderella no sooner appeared than every one was silent; both the dancing and the music stopped, and every body was employed in gazing at the uncommon beauty of this unknown stranger. Nothing was heard but whispers of "How handsome she is!" The king himself, old as he was, could not keep his eyes from her, and continually repeated to the queen, that it was a long time since he had seen so lovely a creature. The ladies endeavoured to find out how her clothes were made, that they might get some of the same pattern for themselves by the next day, should they be lucky enough to meet with such handsome materials, and such good work-people to make them.

The king's son conducted her to the most honourable seat, and soon after took her out to dance with him. She both moved and danced so gracefully, that every one admired her still more than before, and she was thought the most beautiful and accomplished lady they ever beheld. After some time a delicious collation was served up; but the young prince was so busily employed in looking at her, that he did not eat a morsel. Cinderella seated herself near her sisters, paid them a thousand attentions, and offered them a part of the oranges and sweetmeats with which the prince had presented her, while they on their part were quite astonished at these civilities from a lady whom they did not know. As they were conversing together, Cinderella heard the clock strike eleven and three quarters. She rose from her seat, curtesied to the company, and hastened away as fast as she could. As soon as she got home she flew to her godmother, and, after thanking her a thousand times, told her she would give the world to be able to go again to the ball the next day, for the king's son had entreated her to be there. While she was telling her godmother every thing that had happened to her at the ball, the two sisters knocked a loud rat-tat-tat at the door; which Cinderella opened. "How late you have stayed!" said she, yawning, rubbing her eyes, and stretching herself, as if just awakened out of her sleep, though she had in truth felt no desire for sleep since they left her. "If you had been at the ball," said one of her sisters, "let me tell you, you would not have been sleepy. There came thither the handsomest, yes, the very handsomest princess ever beheld! She paid us a thousand attentions, and made us take a part of the oranges and sweetmeats the prince had given her." Cinderella could scarcely contain herself for joy: she asked her sisters the name of this princess, to which they replied, that nobody had been able to discover who she was; that the king's son was extremely grieved on that account, and had offered a large reward to any person who could find out where she came from. Cinderella smiled, and said: "How very beautiful she must be! How fortunate you are! Ah, could I but see her for a single moment! Dear Miss Charlotte, lend me only the yellow gown you wear every day, and let me go to see her." "Oh! yes, I warrant you; lend my clothes to a Cinderbreech! Do you really suppose me such a fool? No, no; pray, Miss Forward, mind your proper business, and leave dress and

balls to your betters." Cinderella expected some such answer, and was by no means sorry, for she would have been sadly at a loss what to do if her sister had lent her the clothes that she asked of her.

The next day the two sisters again appeared at the ball, and so did Cinderella, but dressed much more magnificently than the night before. The king's son was continually by her side, and said the most obliging things imaginable to her. The charming young creature was far from being tired of all the agreeable things she met with. On the contrary, she was so delighted with them that she entirely forgot the charge her godmother had given her. Cinderella at last heard the striking of a clock, and counted one, two, three, on till she came to twelve, though she thought that it could be but eleven at most. She got up and flew as nimbly as a deer out of the ball-room. The prince tried to overtake her; but poor Cinderella's fright made her run the faster. However, in her great hurry, she dropped one of her glass slippers from her foot, which the prince stooped down and picked up, and took the greatest care of it possible. Cinderella got home tired and out of breath, in her old clothes, without either coach or footmen, and having nothing left of her magnificence but the fellow of the glass slipper which she had dropped. In the mean while, the prince had inquired of all his guards at the palace gates, if they had not seen a magnificent princess pass out, and which way she went? The guards replied, that no princess had passed the gates; and that they had not seen a creature but a little ragged girl, who looked more like a beggar than a princess. When the two sisters returned from the ball, Cinderella asked them if they had been as much amused as the night before, and if the beautiful princess had been there? They told her that she had; but that as soon as the clock struck twelve, she hurried away from the ball room, and in the great haste she had made, had dropped one of her glass slippers, which was the prettiest shape that could be; that the king's son had picked it up, and had done nothing but look at it all the rest of the evening; and that every body believed he was violently in love with the handsome lady to whom it belonged.

This was very true; for a few days after, the prince had it proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that he would marry the lady whose foot should exactly fit the slipper he had found. Accordingly the prince's messengers took the slipper, and carried it first to all the princesses, then to the duchesses, in short, to all the ladies of the court. But without success. They then brought it to the two sisters, who each tried all she could to squeeze her foot into the slipper, but saw at last that this was quite impossible. Cinderella who was looking at them all the while, and knew her slipper, could not help smiling, and ventured to say, "Pray, sir, let me try to get on the slipper." The gentleman made her sit down; and putting the slipper to her foot, it instantly slipped in, and he saw that it fitted her like wax. The two sisters were amazed to see that the slipper fitted Cinderella; but how much greater was their astonishment when she drew out of her pocket the other slipper and put it on! Just at this moment the fairy entered the room, and touching Cinderella's clothes with her wand, made her all at once appear more magnificently dressed than they had ever seen her before.

The two sisters immediately perceived that she was the beautiful princess they had seen at the ball. They threw themselves at her feet, and asked her forgiveness for the ill treatment she had received from them. Cinderella helped them to rise, and, tenderly embracing them, said that she forgave them with all her heart, and begged them to bestow on her their affection. Cinderella was then conducted, dressed as she was, to the young prince, who

finding her more beautiful than ever, instantly desired her to accept of his hand. The marriage ceremony took place in a few days; and Cinderella, who was as amiable as she was handsome, gave her sisters magnificent apartments in the palace, and a short time after married them to two great lords of the court.

CHAPTER XV

PUSS IN BOOTS

There was a miller who had three sons, and when he died he divided what he possessed among them in the following manner: He gave his mill to the eldest, his ass to the second, and his cat to the youngest. Each of the brothers accordingly took what belonged to him, without the help of an attorney, who would soon have brought their little fortune to nothing, in law expenses. The poor young fellow who had nothing but the cat, complained that he was hardly used: “My brothers,” said he, “by joining their stocks together, may do well in the world, but for me, when I have eaten my cat, and made a fur cap of his skin, I may soon die of hunger!” The cat, who all this time sat listening just inside the door of a cupboard, now ventured to come out and addressed him as follows: “Do not thus afflict yourself, my good master. You have only to give me a bag, and get a pair of boots made for me, so that I may scamper through the dirt and the brambles, and you shall see that you are not so ill provided for as you imagine.” Though the cat’s master did not much depend upon these promises, yet, as he had often observed the cunning tricks puss used to catch the rats and mice, such as hanging upon his hind legs, and hiding in the meal to make believe that he was dead, he did not entirely despair of his being of some use to him in his unhappy condition.

When the cat had obtained what he asked for, he gayly began to equip himself: he drew on his boots; and putting the bag about his neck, he took hold of the strings with his fore paws, and bidding his master take courage, immediately sallied forth. The first attempt Puss made was to go into a warren in which there were a great number of rabbits. He put some bran and some parsley into his bag; and then stretching himself out at full length as if he was dead, he waited for some young rabbits, who as yet knew nothing of the cunning tricks of the world, to come and get into the bag, the better to feast upon the dainties he had put into it. Scarcely had he lain down before he succeeded as well as could be wished. A giddy young rabbit crept into the bag, and the cat immediately drew the strings, and killed him without mercy. Puss, proud of his prey, hastened directly to the palace, where he asked to speak to the king. On being shown into the apartment of his majesty, he made a low bow, and said, “I have brought you, sire, this rabbit from the warren of my lord the marquis of Carabas, who commanded me to present it to your majesty with the assurance of his respect.” (This was the title the cat thought proper to bestow upon his master.) “Tell my lord marquis of Carabas,” replied the king, “that I accept of his present with pleasure, and that I am greatly obliged to him.” Soon after, the cat laid himself down in the same manner in a field of corn, and had as much good fortune as before; for two fine partridges got into his bag, which he immediately killed and carried to the palace: the king received them as he had done the rabbit, and ordered his servants to give the messenger something to drink. In this manner he continued to carry presents of game to the king from my lord marquis of Carabas, once at least in every week.

One day, the cat having heard that the king intended to take a ride that morning by the river’s side with his daughter, who was the most beautiful princess in the world, he said to

his master: “If you will but follow my advice, your fortune is made. Take off your clothes, and bathe yourself in the river, just in the place I shall show you, and leave the rest to me,” The marquis of Carabas did exactly as he was desired, without being able to guess at what the cat intended. While he was bathing the king passed by, and puss directly called out as loud as he could bawl: “Help! help! My lord marquis of Carabas is in danger of being drowned!” The king hearing the cries, put his head out at the window of his carriage to see what was the matter: when, perceiving the very cat who had brought him so many presents, he ordered his attendants to go directly to the assistance of my lord marquis of Carabas. While they were employed in taking the marquis out of the river, the cat ran to the king’s carriage, and told his majesty, that while his master was bathing, some thieves had run off with his clothes as they lay by the river’s side; the cunning cat all the time having hid them under a large stone. The king hearing this, commanded the officers of his wardrobe to fetch one of the handsomest suits it contained, and present it to my lord marquis of Carabas, at the same time loading him with a thousand attentions. As the fine clothes they brought him made him look like a gentleman, and set off his person, which was very comely, to the greatest advantage, the king’s daughter was mightily taken with his appearance, and the marquis of Carabas had no sooner cast upon her two or three respectful glances, then she became violently in love with him.

The king insisted on his getting into the carriage and taking a ride with them. The cat, enchanted to see how well his scheme was likely to succeed, ran before to a meadow that was reaping, and said to the reapers: “Good people, if you do not tell the king, who will soon pass this way, that the meadow you are reaping belongs to my lord marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as mince meat.” The king did not fail to ask the reapers to whom the meadow belonged? “To my lord marquis of Carabas,” said they all at once; for the threats of the cat had terribly frighted them. “You have here a very fine piece of land, my lord marquis,” said the king. “Truly, sire,” replied he, “it does not fail to bring me every year a plentiful harvest.” The cat who still went on before, now came to a field where some other labourers were making sheaves of the corn they had reaped, to whom he said as before: “Good people, if you do not tell the king who will presently pass this way, that the corn you have reaped in this field belongs to my lord marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as mince meat.” The king accordingly passed a moment after, and inquired to whom the corn he saw belonged? “To my lord marquis of Carabas,” answered they very glibly; upon which the king again complimented the marquis upon his noble possessions. The cat still continued to go before, and gave the same charge to all the people he met with; so that the king was greatly astonished at the splendid fortune of my lord marquis of Carabas. Puss at length arrived at a stately castle, which belonged to an Ogre, the richest ever known; for all the lands the king had passed through and admired were his. The cat took care to learn every particular about the Ogre, and what he could do, and then asked to speak with him, saying, as he entered the room in which he was, that he could not pass so near his castle without doing himself the honour to inquire after his health. The Ogre received him as civilly as an Ogre could do, and desired him to be seated, “I have been informed,” said the cat, “that you have the gift of changing yourself to all sorts of animals; into a lion or an elephant for example.” “It is very true,” replied the Ogre somewhat sternly; “and to convince you I will directly take the form of a lion.” The cat was so much terrified at finding himself so near to a lion, that he sprang from him, and climbed to the roof of the house; but not without much difficulty, as his boots were not

very fit to walk upon the tiles.

Some minutes after, the cat perceiving that the Ogre had quitted the form of a lion, ventured to come down from the tiles, and owned that he had been a good deal frightened, “I have been further informed,” continued the cat, “but I know not how to believe it, that you have the power of taking the form of the smallest animals also; for example of changing yourself to a rat or a mouse: I confess I should think this impossible.” “Impossible! you shall see;” and at the same instant he changed himself into a mouse, and began to frisk about the room. The cat no sooner cast his eyes upon the Ogre in this form, than he sprang upon him and devoured him in an instant. In the meantime the king, admiring as he came near it, the magnificent castle of the Ogre, ordered his attendants to drive up to the gates, as he wished to take a nearer view of it. The cat, hearing the noise of the carriage on the drawbridge, immediately came out, saying: “Your majesty is welcome to the castle of my lord marquis of Carabas.” “And is this splendid castle yours also, my lord marquis of Carabas? I never saw anything more stately than the building, or more beautiful than the park and pleasure grounds around it; no doubt the castle is no less magnificent within than without: pray, my lord marquis, indulge me with a sight of it.“

The marquis gave his hand to the young princess as she alighted, and followed the king who went before; they entered a spacious hall, where they found a splendid collation which the Ogre had prepared for some friends he had that day expected to visit him; but who, hearing that the king with the princess and a great gentleman of the court were within, had not dared to enter. The king was so much charmed with the amiable qualities and noble fortune of the marquis of Carabas, and the young princess too had fallen so violently in love with him, that when the king had partaken of the collation, and drunk a few glasses of wine, he said to the marquis: “It will be you own fault, my lord marquis of Carabas, if you do not soon become my son-in-law.” The marquis received the intelligence with a thousand respectful acknowledgments, accepted the honour conferred upon him, and married the princess that very day. The cat became a great lord, and never after ran after rats and mice but for his amusement.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IN THE WOOD

Once upon a time there was a king and a queen who grieved sorely that they had no children. When at last the queen gave birth to a daughter the king was so overjoyed that he gave a great christening feast, the like of which had never before been known. He asked all the fairies in the land—there were seven all told—to stand godmothers to the little princess, hoping that each might give her a gift, and so she should have all imaginable perfections.

After the christening, all the company returned to the palace, where a great feast had been spread for the fairy godmothers. Before each was set a magnificent plate, with a gold knife and a gold fork studded with diamonds and rubies. Just as they were seating themselves, however, there entered an old fairy who had not been invited because more than fifty years ago she had shut herself up in a tower and it was supposed that she was either dead or enchanted.

The king ordered a cover to be laid for her, but it could not be a massive gold one like the others, for only seven had been ordered made. The old fairy thought herself ill-used and muttered between her teeth. One of the young fairies, overhearing her, and fancying she might work some mischief to the little baby, went and hid herself behind the hangings in the hall, so as to be able to have the last word and undo any harm the old fairy might wish to work. The fairies now began to endow the princess. The youngest, for her gift, decreed that she should be the most beautiful person in the world; the next that she should have the mind of an angel; the third that she should be perfectly graceful; the fourth that she should dance admirably well; the fifth, that she should sing like a nightingale; the sixth, that she should play charmingly upon every musical instrument. The turn of the old fairy had now come, and she declared, while her head shook with malice, that the princess should pierce her hand with a spindle and die of the wound. This dreadful fate threw all the company into tears of dismay, when the young fairy who had hidden herself came forward and said:

“Be of good cheer, king and queen; your daughter shall not so die. It is true I cannot entirely undo what my elder has done. The princess will pierce her hand with a spindle, but, instead of dying, she will only fall into a deep sleep. The sleep will last a hundred years, and at the end of that time a king’s son will come to wake her.”

The king, in hopes of preventing what the old fairy had foretold, immediately issued an edict by which he forbade all persons in his dominion from spinning or even having spindles in their houses under pain of instant death.

Now fifteen years after the princess was born she was with the king and queen at one of their castles, and as she was running about by herself she came to a little chamber at the top of a tower, and there sat an honest old woman spinning, for she had never heard of the king’s edict.

“What are you doing?” asked the princess.

“I am spinning, my fair child,” said the old woman, who did not know her.

“How pretty it is!” exclaimed the princess. “How do you do it? Give it to me that I may see if I can do it.” She had no sooner taken up the spindle, than, being hasty and careless, she pierced her hand with the point of it, and fainted away. The old woman, in great alarm, called for help. People came running in from all sides; they threw water in the princess’s face and did all they could to restore her, but nothing would bring her to. The king, who had heard the noise and confusion, came up also, and remembering what the fairy had said, he had the princess carried to the finest apartment and laid upon a richly embroidered bed. She lay there in all her loveliness, for the swoon had not made her pale; her lips were cherry-ripe and her cheeks ruddy and fair; her eyes were closed, but they could hear her breathing quietly; she could not be dead. The king looked sorrowfully upon her. He knew that she would not awake for a hundred years.

The good fairy who had saved her life and turned her death into sleep was in the kingdom of Mataquin, twelve thousand leagues away, when this happened, but she learned of it from a dwarf who had a pair of seven-league boots, and instantly set out for the castle, where she arrived in an hour, drawn by dragons in a fiery chariot. The king came forward to receive her and showed his grief. The good fairy was very wise and saw that the princess when she woke would find herself all alone in that great castle and everything about her would be strange. So this is what she did. She touched with her wand everybody that was in the castle, except the king and queen. She touched the governesses, maids of honour, women of the bed-chamber, gentlemen, officers, stewards, cooks, scullions, boys, guards, porters, pages, footmen; she touched the horses in the stable with their grooms, the great mastiffs in the court-yard, and even little Pouste, the tiny lap-dog of the princess that was on the bed beside her. As soon as she had touched them they all fell asleep, not to wake again until the time arrived for their mistress to do so, when they would be ready to wait upon her. Even the spits before the fire, laden with partridges and pheasants, went to sleep, and the fire itself went to sleep also.

It was the work of a moment. The king and queen kissed their daughter farewell and left the castle, issuing a proclamation that no person whatsoever was to approach it. That was needless, for in a quarter of an hour there had grown up about it a wood so thick and filled with thorns that nothing could get at the castle, and the castle top itself could only be seen from a great distance.

A hundred years went by, and the kingdom was in the hands of another royal family. The son of the king was hunting one day when he discovered the towers of the castle above the tops of the trees, and asked what castle that was. All manner of answers were given to him. One said it was an enchanted castle, another that witches lived there, but most believed that it was occupied by a great ogre which carried thither all the children he could catch and ate them up one at a time, for nobody could get at him through the wood. The prince did not know what to believe, when finally an old peasant said:

“Prince, it is more than fifty years since I heard my father say that there was in that castle the most beautiful princess that ever was seen; that she was to sleep for a hundred years, and to be awakened at last by the king’s son, who was to marry her.”

The young prince at these words felt himself on fire. He had not a moment’s doubt that he

was destined to this great adventure, and full of ardour he determined at once to set out for the castle. Scarcely had he come to the wood when all the trees and thorns which had made such an impenetrable thicket opened on one side and the other to offer him a path. He walked toward the castle, which appeared now at the end of a long avenue, but when he turned to, look for his followers not one was to be seen; the woods had closed instantly upon him as he had passed through. He was entirely alone, and utter silence was about him. He entered a large forecourt and stood still with amazement and awe. On every side were stretched the bodies of men and animals apparently lifeless. But the faces of the men were rosy, and the goblets by them had a few drops of wine left. The men had plainly fallen asleep. His steps resounded as he passed over the marble pavement and up the marble staircase. He entered the guard-room; there the guards stood drawn up in line with carbines at their shoulders, but they were sound asleep. He passed through one apartment after another, where were ladies and gentlemen asleep in their chairs or standing. He entered a chamber covered with gold, and saw on a bed, the curtains of which were drawn, the most lovely sight he had ever looked upon—a princess, who appeared to be about fifteen or sixteen, and so fair that she seemed to belong to another world. He drew near, trembling and wondering, and knelt beside her. Her hand lay upon her breast, and he touched his lips to it. At that moment, the enchantment being ended, the princess awoke, and, looking drowsily and tenderly at the young man, said:

“Have you come, my prince? I have waited long for you.” The prince was overjoyed at the words, and at the tender voice and look, and scarcely knew how to speak. But he managed to assure her of his love, and they soon forgot all else as they talked and talked. They talked for four hours, and had not then said half that was in their heads to say.

Meanwhile all the rest of the people in the castle had been wakened at the same moment as the princess, and they were now extremely hungry. The lady-in-waiting became very impatient, and at length announced to the princess that they all waited for her. Then the prince took the princess by the hand; she was dressed in great splendour, but he did not hint that she looked as he had seen pictures of his great-grandmother look; he thought her all the more charming for that. They passed into a hall of mirrors, where they supped, attended by the officers of the princess. The violins and haut-boys played old but excellent pieces of music, and after supper, to lose no time, the grand almoner married the royal lovers in the chapel of the castle.

When they left the castle the next day to return to the prince’s home, they were followed by all the retinue of the princess. They marched down the long avenue, and the wood opened again to let them pass. Outside they met the prince’s followers, who were overjoyed to see their master. He turned to show them the castle, but behold! there was no castle to be seen, and no wood; castle and wood had vanished, but the prince and princess went gayly away, and when the old king and queen died they reigned in their stead.

CHAPTER XVII

JACK AND THE BEAN-STALK

In the days of King Alfred, there lived a poor woman whose cottage was situated in a remote country village, a great many miles from London. She had been a widow some years, and had an only child named Jack, whom she indulged to a fault. The consequence of her blind partiality was, that Jack did not pay the least attention to any thing she said, but was indolent, careless, and extravagant. His follies were not owing to a bad disposition, but that his mother had never checked him. By degrees she disposed of all she possessed—scarcely any thing remained but a cow. The poor woman one day met Jack with tears in her eyes; her distress was great, and for the first time in her life she could not help reproaching him, saying, “Oh! you wicked child, by your ungrateful course of life you have at last brought me to beggary and ruin. Cruel, cruel boy! I have not money enough to purchase even a bit of bread for another day—nothing now remains to sell but my poor cow! I am sorry to part with her; it grieves me sadly, but we must not starve.” For a few minutes, Jack felt a degree of remorse, but it was soon over, and he began teasing his mother to let him sell the cow at the next village, so much, that she at last consented. As he was going along, he met a butcher, who inquired why he was driving the cow from home? Jack replied, he was going to sell it. The butcher held some curious beans in his hat; they were of various colours, and attracted Jack’s attention. This did not pass unnoticed by the butcher, who, knowing Jack’s easy temper, thought now was the time to take an advantage of it; and determined not to let slip so good an opportunity, asked what was the price of the cow, offering at the same time all the beans in his hat for her. The silly boy could not conceal the pleasure he felt at what he supposed so great an offer, the bargain was struck instantly, and the cow exchanged for a few paltry beans. Jack made the best of his way home, calling aloud to his mother before he reached home, thinking to surprise her.

When she saw the beans, and heard Jack’s account, her patience quite forsook her. She kicked the beans away in a passion—they flew in all directions—some were scattered in the garden. Not having any thing to eat, they both went supperless to bed. Jack woke early in the morning, and seeing something uncommon from the window of his bed-chamber, ran down stairs into the garden, where he soon discovered that some of the beans had taken root, and sprung up surprisingly: the stalks were of an immense thickness, and had so entwined, that they formed a ladder nearly like a chain in appearance. Looking upward, he could not discern the top, it appeared to be lost in the clouds: he tried it, found it firm, and not to be shaken. He quickly formed the resolution of endeavouring to climb up to the top, in order to seek his fortune, and ran to communicate his intention to his mother, not doubting but she would be equally pleased with himself. She declared he should not go; said it would break her heart if he did—entreated, and threatened—but all in vain. Jack set out, and after climbing for some hours, reached the top of the bean-stalk, fatigued and quite exhausted. Looking around, he found himself in a strange country; it appeared to be a desert, quite barren, not a tree, shrub, house, or living creature to be seen; here and there were scattered fragments of stone; and at unequal distances, small heaps of earth were

loosely thrown together.

Jack seated himself pensively upon a block of stone, and thought of his mother—he reflected with sorrow upon his disobedience in climbing the bean-stalk against her will; and concluded that he must die with hunger. However he walked on, hoping to see a house where he might beg something to eat and drink; presently a handsome young woman appeared at a distance: as she approached, Jack could not help admiring how beautiful and lively she looked; she was dressed in the most elegant manner, and had a small white wand in her hand, on the top of which was a peacock of pure gold. While Jack was looking with great surprise at this charming female, she came up to him, and with a smile of the most bewitching sweetness, inquired how he came there. Jack related the circumstance of the bean-stalk. She asked him if he recollected his father; he replied he did not; and added, there must be some mystery relating to him, because if he asked his mother who his father was, she always burst into tears, and appeared violently agitated, nor did she recover herself for some days after; one thing, however, he could not avoid observing upon these occasions, which was that she always carefully avoided answering him, and even seemed afraid of speaking, as if there was some secret connected with his father's history which she must not disclose. The young woman replied, "I will reveal the whole story; your mother must not. But, before I begin, I require a solemn promise on your part to do what I command; I am a fairy, and if you do not perform exactly what I desire, you will be destroyed," Jack was frightened at her menaces, but promised to fulfil her injunctions exactly, and the fairy thus addressed him:

"Your father was a rich man, his disposition remarkably benevolent: he was very good to the poor, and constantly relieving them. He made it a rule never to let a day pass without doing good to some person. On one particular day in the week, he kept open house, and invited only those who were reduced and had lived well. He always presided himself, and did all in his power to render his guests comfortable; the rich and the great were not invited. The servants were all happy, and greatly attached to their master and mistress. Your father, though only a private gentleman, was as rich as a prince, and he deserved all he possessed, for he only lived to do good. Such a man was soon known and talked of. A giant lived a great many miles off: this man was altogether as wicked as your father was good; he was in his heart envious, covetous, and cruel; but he had the art of concealing those vices. He was poor, and wished to enrich himself at any rate. Hearing your father spoken of, he formed the design of becoming acquainted with him, hoping to ingratiate himself into your father's favour. He removed quickly into your neighbourhood, caused to be reported that he was a gentleman who had just lost all he possessed by an earth-quake, and found it difficult to escape with his life; his wife was with him. Your father gave credit to his story, and pitied him, gave him handsome apartments in his own house, and caused him and his wife to be treated like visitors of consequence, little imagining that the giant was meditating a horrid return for all his favours.

"Things went on in this way for some time, the giant becoming daily more impatient to put his plan into execution; at last a favourable opportunity presented itself. Your father's house was at some distance from the seashore, but with a glass the coast could be seen distinctly. The giant was one day using the telescope; the wind was very high; he saw a fleet of ships in distress off the rocks; he hastened to your father, mentioned the circumstance, and eagerly requested he would send all the servants he could spare to

relieve the sufferers. Every one was instantly despatched, except the porter and your nurse; the giant then joined your father in the study, and appeared to be delighted—he really was so. Your father recommended a favourite book, and was handing it down: the giant took the opportunity, and stabbed him; he instantly fell down dead. The giant left the body, found the porter and nurse, and presently despatched them; being determined to have no living witnesses of his crimes. You were then only three months old; your mother had you in her arms in a remote part of the house, and was ignorant of what was going on; she went into the study, but how was she shocked, on discovering your father a corpse, and weltering in his blood! she was stupefied with horror and grief, and was motionless. The giant, who was seeking her, found her in that state, and hastened to serve her and you as he had done her husband, but she fell at his feet, and in a pathetic manner besought him to spare your life and hers.

“Remorse, for a moment, seemed to touch the barbarian’s heart: he granted your lives; but first he made her take a most solemn oath, never to inform you who your father was, or to answer any questions concerning him: assuring her that if she did, he would certainly discover her, and put both of you to death in the most cruel manner. Your mother took you in her arms, and fled as quickly as possible; she was scarcely gone when the giant repented that he had suffered her to escape. He would have pursued her instantly; but he had to provide for his own safety; as it was necessary he should be gone before the servants returned. Having gained your father’s confidence, he knew where to find all his treasure: he soon loaded himself and his wife, set the house on fire in several places, and when the servants returned, the house was burned quite down to the ground. Your poor mother, forlorn, abandoned, and forsaken, wandered with you a great many miles from this scene of desolation. Fear added to her haste. She settled in the cottage where you were brought up, and it was entirety owing to her fear of the giant that she never mentioned your father to you. I became your father’s guardian at his birth; but fairies have laws to which they are subject as well as mortals. A short time before the giant went to your father’s, I transgressed; my punishment was a suspension of power for a limited time—an unfortunate circumstance, as it totally prevented my succouring your father.

“The day on which you met the butcher, as you went to sell your mother’s cow, my power was restored. It was I who secretly prompted you to take the beans in exchange for the cow. By my power, the bean-stalk grew to so great a height, and formed a ladder. I need not add that I inspired you with a strong desire to ascend the ladder. The giant lives in this country: you are the person appointed to punish him for all his wickedness. You will have dangers and difficulties to encounter, but you must persevere in avenging the death of your father, or you will not prosper in any of your undertakings, but will always be miserable. As to the giant’s possessions, you may seize on all you can; for every thing he has is yours, though now you are unjustly deprived of it. One thing I desire—do not let your mother know you are acquainted with your father’s history, till you see me again. Go along the direct road, you will soon see the house where your cruel enemy lives. While you do as I order you, I will protect and guard you; but, remember, if you dare disobey my commands, a most dreadful punishment awaits you.”

When the fairy had concluded, she disappeared, leaving Jack to pursue his journey. He walked on till after sunset, when, to his great joy, he espied a large mansion. This agreeable sight revived his drooping spirits; he redoubled his speed, and soon reached it. A

plain-looking woman was at the door—he accosted her, begging she would give him a morsel of bread and a night's lodging. She expressed the greatest surprise at seeing him; and said it was quite uncommon to see a human being near their house, for it was well known that her husband was a large and very powerful giant, and that he would never eat any thing but human flesh, if he could possibly get it; that he did not think any thing of walking fifty miles to procure it, usually being out the whole day for that purpose.

This account greatly terrified Jack, but still he hoped to elude the giant, and therefore he again entreated the woman to take him in for one night only, and hide him where she thought proper. The good woman at last suffered herself to be persuaded, for she was of a compassionate and generous disposition, and took him into the house. First, they entered a fine large hall, magnificently furnished; they then passed through several spacious rooms, all in the same style of grandeur; but they appeared to be quite forsaken and desolate. A long gallery was next; it was very dark—just light enough to show that, instead of a wall on one side, there was a grating of iron, which parted off a dismal dungeon, from whence issued the groans of those poor victims whom the cruel giant reserved in confinement for his own voracious appetite. Poor Jack was half dead with fear, and would have given the world to have been with his mother again, for he now began to fear that he should never see her more, and gave himself up for lost; he even mistrusted the good woman, and thought she had let him into the house for no other purpose than to lock him up among the unfortunate people in the dungeon. At the farther end of the gallery there was a spacious kitchen, and a very excellent fire was burning in the grate. The good woman bid Jack sit down, and gave him plenty to eat and drink. Jack, not seeing any thing here to make him uncomfortable, soon forgot his fear, and was just beginning to enjoy himself, when he was aroused by a loud knocking at the street-door, which made the whole house shake: the giant's wife ran to secure him in the oven, and then went to let her husband in. Jack heard him accost her in a voice like thunder, saying: "Wife, I smell fresh meat." "Oh! my dear," replied she, "it is nothing but the people in the dungeon." The giant appeared to believe her, and walked into the very kitchen where poor Jack was concealed, who shook, trembled, and was more terrified than he had yet been. At last, the monster seated himself quietly by the fire-side, whilst his wife prepared supper. By degrees Jack recovered himself sufficiently to look at the giant through a small crevice. He was quite astonished to see what an amazing quantity he devoured, and thought he never would have done eating and drinking. When supper was ended, the giant desired his wife to bring him his hen. A very beautiful hen was then brought, and placed on the table before him. Jack's curiosity was very great to see what would happen: he observed that every time the giant said "Lay!" the hen laid an egg of solid gold. The giant amused himself a long time with his hen; meanwhile his wife went to bed. At length the giant fell asleep by the fire-side, and snored like the roaring of a cannon.

At daybreak, Jack, finding the giant still asleep, and not likely to awaken soon, crept softly out of his hiding-place, seized the hen, and ran off with her. He met with some difficulty in finding his way out of the house, but at last he reached the road with safety. He easily found the way to the bean-stalk, and descended it better and quicker than he expected. His mother was overjoyed to see him; he found her crying bitterly, and lamenting his hard fate, for she concluded he had come to some shocking end through his rashness. Jack was impatient to show his hen, and inform his mother how valuable it was. “And now, mother,” said Jack, “I have brought home that which will quickly make us rich; and I hope to make you some amends for the affliction I have caused you through my idleness, extravagance, and folly.” The hen produced as many golden eggs as they desired: they sold them, and in a little time became possessed of as much riches as they wanted. For some months Jack and his mother lived very happily together; but he being very desirous of travelling, recollecting the fairy’s commands, and fearing that if he delayed, she would put her threats into execution, longed to climb the bean-stalk, and pay the giant another visit, in order to carry away some more of his treasures; for, during the time that Jack was in the giant’s mansion, whilst he lay concealed in the oven, he learned from the conversation that took place between the giant and his wife, that he possessed some wonderful curiosities. Jack thought of his journey again and again, but still he could not summon resolution enough to break it to his mother, being well assured that she would endeavour to prevent his going. However, one day he told her boldly that he must take a journey up the bean-stalk; she begged and prayed him not to think of it, and tried all in her power to dissuade him: she told him that the giant’s wife would certainly know him again, and that the giant would desire nothing better than to get him into his power, that he might put him to a cruel death, in order to be revenged for the loss of his hen. Jack, finding that all his arguments were useless, pretended to give up the point, though resolved to go at all events. He had a dress prepared which would disguise him, and something to colour his skin. He thought it impossible for any one to recollect him in this dress.

In a few mornings after this, he arose very early, changed his complexion, and, unperceived by any one, climbed the bean-stalk a second time. He was greatly fatigued when he reached the top, and very hungry. Having rested some time on one of the stones, he pursued his journey to the giant’s mansion. He reached it late in the evening: the woman was at the door as before. Jack addressed her, at the same time telling her a pitiful tale, and requesting that she would give him some victuals and drink, and also a night’s lodging.

She told him (what he knew before very well) about her husband being a powerful and cruel giant; and also that she one night admitted a poor, hungry, friendless boy, who was half dead with travelling; that the little ungrateful fellow had stolen one of the giant’s treasures; and, ever since that, her husband had been worse than before, used her very cruelly, and continually upbraided her with being the cause of his misfortune. Jack was at no loss to discover that he was attending to the account of a story in which he was the principal actor. He did his best to persuade the good woman to admit him, but found it a very hard task. At last she consented; and as she led the way, Jack observed that every thing was just as he had found it before. She took him into the kitchen, and after he had done eating and drinking, she hid him in an old lumber-closet. The giant returned at the usual time, and walked in so heavily, that the house was shaken to its foundation. He

seated himself by the fire, and soon after exclaimed: “Wife! I smell fresh meat!” The wife replied, it was the crows, who had brought a piece of raw meat, and left it on the top of the house. Whilst supper was preparing, the giant was very ill-tempered and impatient, frequently lifting up his hand to strike his wife, for not being quick enough; she, however, was always so fortunate as to elude the blow. He was also continually up-braiding her with the loss of his wonderful hen. The giant at last having ended his voracious supper, and eaten till he was quite satisfied, said to his wife: “I must have something to amuse me; either my bags of money or my harp.” After a great deal of ill-humour, and having teased his wife some he commanded her to bring down his bags of gold and silver. Jack, as before, peeped out of his hiding-place, and presently his wife brought two bags into the room: they were of a very large size; one was filled with new guineas, and the other with new shillings. They were both placed before the giant, who began reprimanding his poor wife most severely for staying so long; she replied, trembling with fear, that they were so heavy, that she could scarcely lift them; and concluded, at last, that she would never again bring them down stairs; adding, that she had nearly fainted, owing to their weight This so exasperated the giant, that he raised his hand to strike her; she, however, escaped, and went to bed, leaving him to count over his treasure, by way of amusement. The giant took his bags, and after turning them over and over, to see that they were in the same state as he left them, began to count their contents. First, the bag which contained the silver was emptied, and the contents placed upon the table. Jack viewed the glittering heaps with delight, and most heartily wished them in his own possession. The giant (little thinking he was so narrowly watched) reckoned the silver over several times; and then, having satisfied himself that all was safe, put it into the bag again, which he made very secure. The other bag was opened next, and the guineas placed upon the table. If Jack was pleased at the sight of the silver, how much more delighted he felt when he saw such a heap of glittering gold! He even had the boldness to think of gaming both bags; but suddenly recollecting himself, he began to fear that the giant would sham sleep, the better to entrap any one who might be concealed. When the giant had counted over the gold till he was tired, he put it up, if possible, more secure than he had put up the silver before; he then fell back on his chair by the fire-side, and fell asleep. He snored so loud, that Jack compared his noise to the roaring of the sea in a high wind, when the tide is coming in. At last, Jack concluded him to be asleep, and therefore secure, stole out of his hiding-place, and approached the giant, in order to carry off the two bags of money; but just as he laid his hand upon one of the bags, a little dog, whom he had not perceived before, started from under the giant’s chair, and barked at Jack most furiously, who now gave himself up for lost. Fear riveted him to the spot. Instead of endeavouring to escape, he stood still, though expecting his enemy to awake every instant. Contrary, however, to his expectation, the giant continued in a sound sleep, and the dog grew weary of barking. Jack now began to recollect himself, and on looking round, saw a large piece of meat; this he threw to the dog, who instantly seized it, and took it into the lumber-closet, which Jack had just left. Finding himself delivered from a noisy and troublesome enemy, and seeing the giant did not awake, Jack boldly seized the bags, and throwing them over his shoulders, ran out of the kitchen. He reached the street door in safety, and found it quite daylight. In his way to the top of the bean-stalk, he found himself greatly incommoded with the weight of the money-bags; and really they were so heavy that he could scarcely carry them. Jack was overjoyed when he found himself near the bean-stalk; he soon reached the bottom, and

immediately ran to seek his mother; to his great surprise, the cottage was deserted; he ran from one room to another, without being able to find any one; he then hastened into the village, hoping to see some of the neighbours, who could inform him where he could find his mother. An old woman at last directed him to a neighbouring house, where she was ill of a fever. He was greatly shocked on finding her apparently dying, and could scarcely bear his own reflections, on knowing himself to be the cause. On being informed of our hero's safe return, his mother, by degrees, revived, and gradually recovered. Jack presented her with his two valuable bags. They lived happily and comfortably; the cottage was rebuilt, and well furnished.

For three years Jack heard no more of the bean-stalk, but he could not forget it; though he feared making his mother unhappy. She would not mention the hated bean-stalk, lest it should remind him of taking another journey. Notwithstanding the comforts Jack enjoyed at home, his mind dwelt continually upon the bean-stalk; for the fairy's menaces, in case of his disobedience, were ever present to his mind, and prevented him from being happy; he could think of nothing else. It was in vain endeavouring to amuse himself; he became thoughtful, and would arise at the first dawn of day, and view the bean-stalk for hours together. His mother saw that something preyed heavily upon his mind, and endeavoured to discover the cause; but Jack knew too well what the consequence would be, should she succeed. He did his utmost, therefore, to conquer the great desire he had for another journey up the bean-stalk. Finding, however, that his inclination grew too powerful for him, he began to make secret preparations for his journey, and on the longest day, arose as soon as it was light, ascended the bean-stalk, and reached the top with some little trouble. He found the road, journey, etc., much as it was on the two former times; he arrived at the giant's mansion in the evening, and found his wife standing, as usual, at the door. Jack had disguised himself so completely, that she did not appear to have the least recollection of him; however, when he pleaded hunger and poverty, in order to gain admittance, he found it very difficult to persuade her. At last he prevailed, and was concealed in the copper. When the giant returned, he said, "I smell fresh meat!" But Jack felt quite composed, as he had said so before, and had been soon satisfied. However, the giant started up suddenly, and, notwithstanding all his wife could say, he searched all round the room. Whilst this was going forward, Jack was exceedingly terrified, and ready to die with fear, wishing himself at home a thousand times; but when the giant approached the copper, and put his hand upon the lid, Jack thought his death was certain. The giant ended his search there, without moving the lid, and seated himself quietly by the fire-side. This fright nearly overcame poor Jack; he was afraid of moving or even breathing, lest he should be discovered. The giant at last ate a hearty supper. When he had finished, he commanded his wife to fetch down his harp. Jack peeped under the copper-lid, and soon saw the most beautiful harp that could be imagined: it was placed by the giant on the table, who said, "Play!" and it instantly played of its own accord, without being touched. The music was uncommonly fine. Jack was delighted, and felt more anxious to get the harp into his possession, than either of the former treasures. The giant's soul was not attuned to harmony, and the music soon lulled him into a sound sleep. Now, therefore, was the time to carry off the harp, as the giant appeared to be in a more profound sleep than usual Jack soon determined, got out of the copper, and seized the harp, The harp was enchanted by a fairy: it called out loudly: "Master! master!" The giant awoke, stood up, and tried to pursue Jack; but he had drank so much, that he could hardly stand. Poor Jack ran as fast as

he could. In a little time the giant recovered sufficiently to walk slowly, or rather, to reel after him. Had he been sober, he must have overtaken Jack instantly; but, as he then was, Jack contrived to be first at the top of the bean-stalk. The giant called after him in a voice like thunder, and sometimes was very near him. The moment Jack got down the bean-stalk he called out for a hatchet; one was brought him directly; just at that instant, the giant was beginning to descend; but Jack, with his hatchet, cut the bean-stalk close off at the root, which made the giant fall headlong into the garden: the fall killed him, thereby releasing the world from a barbarous enemy. Jack's mother was delighted when she saw the bean-stalk destroyed. At this instant the fairy appeared: she first addressed Jack's mother and explained every circumstance relating to the journeys up the bean-stalk. The fairy charged Jack to be dutiful to his mother, and to follow his father's good example, which was the only way to be happy. She then disappeared. Jack heartily begged his mother's pardon for all the sorrow and affliction he had caused her, promising most faithfully to be very dutiful and obedient to her for the future.

CHAPTER XVIII

JACK THE GIANT KILLER

In the reign of the famous King Arthur, there lived near the Land's End of England, in the county of Cornwall, a worthy farmer, who had an only son named Jack. Jack was a boy of a bold temper; he took pleasure in hearing or reading stories of wizards, conjurers, giants, and fairies, and used to listen eagerly while his father talked of the great deeds of the brave knights of King Arthur's Round Table. When Jack was sent to take care of the sheep and oxen in the fields, he used to amuse himself with planning battles, sieges, and the means to conquer or surprise a foe. He was above the common sports of children; but hardly any one could equal him at wrestling; or, if he met with a match for himself in strength, his skill and address always made him the victor. In those days there lived on St. Michael's Mount of Cornwall, which rises out of the sea at some distance from the main land, a huge giant. He was eighteen feet high, and three yards round; and his fierce and savage looks were the terror of all his neighbours. He dwelt in a gloomy cavern on the very top of the mountain, and used to wade over to the main land in search of his prey. When he came near, the people left their houses; and after he had glutted his appetite upon their cattle, he would throw half-a-dozen oxen upon his back, and tie three times as many sheep and hogs round his waist, and so march back to his own abode. The giant had done this for many years, and the coast of Cornwall was greatly hurt by his thefts, when Jack boldly resolved to destroy him. He therefore took a horn, a shovel, pickaxe, and a dark lantern, and early in a long winter's evening he swam to the mount. There he fell to work at once, and before morning he had dug a pit twenty-two feet deep, and almost as many broad. He covered it over with sticks and straw, and strewed some of the earth over them, to make it look just like solid ground. He then put his horn to his mouth, and blew such a loud and long tantivy, that the giant awoke and came towards Jack, roaring like thunder: "You saucy villain, you shall pay dearly for breaking my rest; I will broil you for my breakfast." He had scarcely spoken these words, when he came advancing one step farther; but then he tumbled headlong into the pit, and his fall shook the very mountain. "O ho, Mr. Giant!" said Jack, looking into the pit, "have you found your way so soon to the bottom? How is your appetite now? Will nothing serve you for breakfast this cold morning but broiling poor Jack?" The giant now tried to rise, but Jack struck him a blow on the crown of the head with his pickaxe, which killed him at once. Jack then made haste back to rejoice his friends with the news of the giant's death. When the justices of Cornwall heard of this valiant action, they sent for Jack, and declared that he should always be called Jack the Giant Killer; and they also gave him a sword and belt, upon which was written in letters of gold:

> "This is the valiant Cornishman
> Who slew the Giant Cormoran."

The news of Jack's exploits soon spread over the western parts of England; and another giant, called Old Blunderbore, vowed to have revenge on Jack, if it should ever be his fortune to get him into his power. This giant kept an enchanted castle in the midst of a

lonely wood. About four months after the death of Cormoran, as Jack was taking a journey into Wales, he passed through this wood; and as he was very weary, he sat down to rest by the side of a pleasant fountain, and there he fell into a deep sleep. The giant came to the fountain for water just at this time, and found Jack there; and as the lines on Jack's belt showed who he was, the giant lifted him up and laid him gently upon his shoulder to carry him to his castle: but as he passed through the thicket, the rustling of the leaves waked Jack; and he was sadly afraid when he found himself in the clutches of Blunderbore. Yet this was nothing to his fright soon after; for when they reached the castle, he beheld the floor covered all over with the skulls and bones of men and women. The giant took him into a large room where lay the hearts and limbs of persons who had been lately killed; and he told Jack, with a horrid grin, that men's hearts, eaten with pepper and vinegar, were his nicest food; and also, that he thought he should make a dainty meal on his heart. When he had said this, he locked Jack up in that room, while he went to fetch another giant who lived in the same wood, to enjoy a dinner off Jack's flesh with him. While he was away, Jack heard dreadful shrieks, groans, and cries, from many parts of the castle; and soon after he heard a mournful voice repeat these lines:

"Haste, valiant stranger, haste away,
Lest you become the giant's prey.
On his return he'll bring another,
Still more savage than his brother:
A horrid, cruel monster, who,
Before he kills, will torture you.
Oh valiant stranger, haste away,
Or you'll become these giants' prey."

This warning was so shocking to poor Jack, that he was ready to go mad. He ran to the window, and saw the two giants coming along arm in arm. This window was right over the gates of the castle. "Now," thought Jack, "either my death or freedom is at hand." There were two strong cords in the room: Jack made a large noose with a slip-knot at the ends of both these, and as the giants were coming through the gates, he threw the ropes over their heads. He then made the other ends fast to a beam in the ceiling, and pulled with all his might till he had almost strangled them. When he saw that they were both quite black in the face, and had not the least strength left, he drew his sword, and slid down the ropes; he then killed the giants, and thus saved himself from the cruel death they meant to put him to. Jack next took a great bunch of keys from the pocket of Blunderbore, and went into the castle again. He made a strict search through all the rooms; and in them found three ladies tied up by the hair of their heads, and almost starved to death. They told him that their husbands had been killed by the giants, who had then condemned them to be starved to death, because they would not eat the flesh of their own dead husbands. "Ladies," said Jack, "I have put an end to the monster and his wicked brother; and I give you this castle and all the riches it contains, to make you some amends for the dreadful pains you have felt." He then very politely gave them the keys of the castle, and went further on his journey to Wales. As Jack had not taken any of the giant's riches for himself, and so had very little money of his own, he thought it best to travel as fast as he could. At length he lost his way, and when night came on he was in a lonely valley between two lofty mountains, where he walked about for some hours without seeing any dwelling place, so

he thought himself very lucky at last, in finding a large and handsome house.

He went up to it boldly, and knocked loudly at the gate, when, to his great terror and surprise, there came forth a monstrous giant with two heads. He spoke to Jack very civilly, for he was a Welsh giant, and all the mischief he did was by private and secret malice, under the show of friendship and kindness. Jack told him that he was a traveller who had lost his way, on which the huge monster made him welcome, and led him into a room, where there was a good bed to pass the night in. Jack took off his clothes quickly; but though he was so weary he could not go to sleep. Soon after this he heard the giant walking backward and forward in the next room, and saying to himself:

> "Though here you lodge with me this night,
> You shall not see the morning light;
> My club shall dash your brains out quite."

"Say you so?" thought Jack; "are these your tricks upon travellers? But I hope to prove as cunning as you." Then getting out of bed, he groped about the room, and at last found a large thick billet of wood; he laid it in his own place in the bed, and then hid himself in a dark corner of the room. In the middle of the night the giant came with his great club, and struck many heavy blows on the bed, in the very place where Jack had laid the billet, and then he went back to his own room, thinking he had broken all his bones. Early in the morning, Jack put a bold face upon the matter, and walked into the giant's room to thank him for his lodgings. The giant started when he saw him, and he began to stammer out, "Oh, dear me! Is it you? Pray, how did you sleep last night? Did you hear or see any thing in the dead of the night?" "Nothing worth speaking of," said Jack carelessly; "a rat, I believe, gave me three or four slaps with his tail, and disturbed me a little; but I soon went to sleep again." The giant wondered more and more at this; yet he did not answer a word, but went to bring two great bowls of hasty-pudding for their breakfast. Jack wished to make the giant believe that he could eat as much as himself. So he contrived to button a leathern bag inside his coat, and slipped the hasty-pudding into this bag, while he seemed to put it into his mouth. When breakfast was over, he said to the giant: "Now I will show you a fine trick; I can cure all wounds with a touch; I could cut off my head one minute, and the next, put it sound again on my shoulders: you shall see an example." He then took hold of the knife, ripped up the leathern bag, and all the hasty-pudding tumbled out upon the floor. "Ods splutter hur nails," cried the Welsh giant, who was ashamed to be outdone by such a little fellow as Jack, "hur can do that hurself." So he snatched up the knife, plunged it into his stomach, and in a moment dropped down dead.

As soon as Jack had thus tricked the Welsh monster, he went farther on his journey; and a few days after he met with King Arthur's only son, who had got his father's leave to travel into Wales, to deliver a beautiful lady from the power of a wicked magician, who held her in his enchantments. When Jack found that the young prince had no servants with him, he begged leave to attend him; and the prince at once agreed to this, and gave Jack many thanks for his kindness. The prince was a handsome, polite, and brave knight, and so good-natured that he gave money to every body he met. At length he gave his last penny to an old woman, and then turned to Jack, and said: "How shall we be able to get food for ourselves the rest of our journey?" "Leave that to me sir," said Jack; "I will provide for my prince." Night now came on, and the prince began to grow uneasy at thinking where they

should lodge. “Sir,” said Jack, “be of good heart; two miles farther there lives a large giant, whom I know well. He has three heads, and will fight five hundred men, and make them fly before him.” “Alas!” replied the king’s son, “we had better never have been born than meet with such a monster.” “My lord, leave me to manage him, and wait here in quiet till I return.” The prince now staid behind, while Jack rode on full speed. And when he came to the gates of the castle, he gave a loud knock. The giant, with a voice like thunder, roared out: “Who is there?” And Jack made answer, and said: “No one but your poor cousin Jack.” “Well,” said the giant, “what news, cousin Jack?” “Dear uncle,” said Jack, “I have some heavy news.” “Pooh!” said the giant, “what heavy news can come to me? I am a giant with three heads; and can fight five hundred men, and make them fly before me.” “Alas!” said Jack, “Here is the king’s son, coming with two thousand men, to kill you, and to destroy the castle and all that you have.” “Oh, cousin Jack,” said the giant, “This is heavy news indeed! But I have a large cellar under ground, where I will hide myself, and you shall lock, and bar me in, and keep the keys till the king’s son is gone.“

Now when Jack had made the giant fast in the vault, he went back and fetched the prince to the castle; they both made themselves merry with the wine and other dainties that were in the house. So that night they rested very pleasantly, while the poor giant lay trembling and shaking with fear in the cellar under ground. Early in the morning, Jack gave the king’s son gold and silver out of the giant’s treasure, and set him three miles forward on his journey. He then went to let his uncle out of the hole, who asked Jack what he should give him as a reward for saving his castle. “Why, good uncle,” said Jack, “I desire nothing but the old coat and cap, with the old rusty sword and slippers, which are hanging at your bed’s head,” Then said the giant: “You shall have them; and pray keep them for my sake, for they are things of great use: the coat will keep you invisible, the cap will give you knowledge, the sword cut through anything, and the shoes are of vast swiftness; these may be useful to you in all times of danger, so take them with all my heart.” Jack gave many thanks to the giant, and then set off to the prince. When he had come up with the king’s son, they soon arrived at the dwelling of the beautiful lady, who was under the power of a wicked magician. She received the prince very politely, and made a noble feast for him; and when it was ended, she rose, and wiping her mouth with a fine handkerchief, said: “My lord, you must submit to the custom of my palace; to-morrow morning I command you to tell me on whom I bestow this handkerchief or lose your head.” She then went out of the room. The young prince went to bed very mournful: but Jack put on his cap of knowledge, which told him that the lady was forced, by the power of enchantment, to meet the wicked magician every night in the middle of the forest. Jack now put on his coat of darkness, and his shoes of swiftness, and was there before her. When the lady came, she gave the handkerchief to the magician. Jack with his sword of sharpness, at one blow, cut off his head; the enchantment was then ended in a moment, and the lady was restored to her former virtue and goodness.

She was married to the prince on the next day, and soon after went back with her royal husband, and a great company, to the court of King Arthur, where they were received with loud and joyful welcomes; and the valiant hero Jack, for the many great exploits he had done for the good of his country, was made one of the Knights of the Round Table. As Jack had been so lucky in all his adventures, he resolved not to be idle for the future, but still to do what services he could for the honour of the king and the nation. He therefore

humbly begged his majesty to furnish him with a horse and money, that he might travel in search of new and strange exploits. “For,” said he to the king, “there are many giants yet living in the remote parts of Wales, to the great terror and distress of your majesty’s subjects; therefore if it please you, sire, to favour me in my design, I will soon rid your kingdom of these giants and monsters in human shape.” Now when the king heard this offer, and began to think of the cruel deeds of these blood-thirsty giants and savage monsters, he gave Jack every thing proper for such a journey. After this Jack took leave of the king, the prince, and all the knights, and set off; taking with him his cap of knowledge, his sword of sharpness, his shoes of swiftness, and his invisible coat, the better to perform the great exploits that might fall in his way. He went along over high hills and lofty mountains, and on the third day he came to a large wide forest, through which his road led. He had hardly entered the forest, when on a sudden he heard very dreadful shrieks and cries. He forced his way through the trees, and saw a monstrous giant dragging along by the hair of their heads a handsome knight and his beautiful lady. Their tears and cries melted the heart of honest Jack to pity and compassion; he alighted from his horse, and tying him to an oak tree he put on his invisible coat, under which he carried his sword of sharpness.

When he came up to the giant, he made several strokes at him, but could not reach his body, on account of the enormous height of the terrible creature, but he wounded his thighs in several places; and at length, putting both hands to his sword, and aiming with all his might, he cut off both the giant’s legs just below the garter; and the trunk of his body tumbling to the ground, made not only the trees shake, but the earth itself tremble with the force of his fall. Then Jack, setting his foot upon his neck, exclaimed, “Thou barbarous and savage wretch, behold I come to execute upon thee the just reward for all thy crimes;” and instantly plunged his sword into the giant’s body. The huge monster gave a hideous groan, and yielded up his life into the hands of the victorious Jack the Giant Killer, whilst the noble knight and the virtuous lady were both joyful spectators of his sudden death and their deliverance. The courteous knight and his fair lady, not only returned Jack hearty thanks for their deliverance, but also invited him to their house, to refresh himself after his dreadful encounter, as likewise to receive a reward for his good services. “No,” said Jack, “I cannot be at ease till I find out the den that was the monster’s habitation.” The knight on hearing this grew very sorrowful, and replied, “Noble stranger, it is too much to run a second hazard; this monster lived in a den under yonder mountain, with a brother of his, more fierce and cruel than himself; therefore, if you should go thither, and perish in the attempt, it would be a heart-breaking thing to me and my lady; so let me persuade you to go with us, and desist from any farther pursuit.” “Nay,” answered Jack, “if there be another, even if there were twenty, I would shed the last drop of blood in my body before one of them should escape my fury. When I have finished this task, I will come and pay my respects to you.” So when they had told him where to find them again, he got on his horse and went after the dead giant’s brother.

Jack had not rode a mile and a half, before he came in sight of the mouth of the cavern; and nigh the entrance of it, he saw the other giant sitting on a huge block of fine timber, with a knotted iron club lying by his side, waiting for his brother. His eyes looked like flames of fire, his face was grim and ugly, and his cheeks seemed like two flitches of bacon; the bristles of his beard seemed to be thick rods of iron wire; and his long locks of

hair hung down upon his broad shoulders like curling snakes. Jack got down from his horse, and turned him into a thicket; then he put on his coat of darkness, and drew a little nearer to behold this figure, and said softly: “Oh, monster! are you there? It will not be long before I shall take you fast by the beard.” The giant all this while, could not see him, by reason of his invisible coat: so Jack came quite close to him, and struck a blow at his head with his sword of sharpness, but he missed his aim, and only cut off his nose, which made him roar like loud claps of thunder. And though he rolled his glaring eyes round on every side, he could not see who had given him the blow; yet he took up his iron club, and began to lay about him like one that was mad with pain and fury.

“Nay,” said Jack, “if this be the case I will kill you at once.” So saying, he slipped nimbly behind him, and jumping upon the block of timber, as the giant rose from it, he stabbed him in the back; when, after a few howls, he dropped down dead. Jack cut off his head, and sent it with the head of his brother, whom he had killed before in the forest, to King Arthur, by a wagon which he hired for that purpose, with an account of all his exploits. When Jack had thus killed these two monsters, he went into their cave in search of their treasure: he passed through many turnings and windings, which led him to a room paved with freestone; at the end of it was a boiling caldron, and on the right hand stood a large table where the giants used to dine. He then came to a window that was secured with iron bars, through which he saw a number of wretched captives, who cried out when they saw Jack, “Alas! alas! young man, you are come to be one among us in this horrid den.” “I hope,” said Jack, “you will not stay here long; but pray tell me what is the meaning of your being here at all?” “Alas!” said one poor old man, “I will tell you, sir. We are persons that have been taken by the giants who hold this cave, and are kept till they choose to have a feast, then one of us is to be killed, and cooked to please their taste. It is not long since they took three for the same purpose.” “Well,” said Jack, “I have given them such a dinner that it will be long enough before they have any more.” The captives were amazed at his words. “You may believe me,” said Jack; “for I have killed them both with the edge of the sword, and have sent their large heads to the court of King Arthur, as marks of my great success.“

To show them that what he said was true, he unlocked the gate, and set them all free. Then he led them to the great room, placed them round the table, and set before them two quarters of beef, with bread and wine; upon which they feasted to their fill. When supper was over, they searched the giants’ coffers, and Jack shared the store in them among the captives, who thanked him for their escape. The next morning they set off to their homes, and Jack to the knight’s house, whom he had left with his lady not long before. It was just at the time of sunrise that Jack mounted his horse to proceed on his journey.

He arrived at the knight’s house, where he was received with the greatest joy by the thankful knight and his lady, who, in honour of Jack’s exploits, gave a grand feast, to which all the nobles and gentry were invited. When the company were assembled, the knight declared to them the great actions of Jack, and gave him, as a mark of respect, a fine ring, on which was engraved the picture of the giant dragging the knight and the lady by the hair, with this motto round it:

“Behold, in dire distress were we,
Under a giant’s fierce command;

But gained our lives and liberty,
From valiant Jack’s victorious hand.”

Among the guests then present were five aged gentlemen, who were fathers to some of those captives who had been freed by Jack from the dungeon of the giants. As soon as they heard that he was the person who had done such wonders, they pressed round him with tears of joy, to return him thanks for the happiness he had caused to them. After this the bowl went round, and every one drank to the health and long life of the gallant hero. Mirth increased, and the hall was filled with peals of laughter and joyful cries. But, on a sudden, a herald, pale and breathless with haste and terror, rushed into the midst of the company, and told them that Thundel, a savage giant with two heads, had heard of the death of his two kinsmen, and was come to take his revenge on Jack; and that he was now within a mile of the house; the people flying before him like chaff before the wind. At this news the very boldest of the guests trembled; but Jack drew his sword, and said: “Let him come, I have a rod for him also. Pray, ladies and gentlemen, do me the favour to walk into the garden, and you shall soon behold the giant’s defeat and death.” To this they all agreed, and heartily wished him success in his dangerous attempt. The knight’s house stood in the middle of a moat, thirty feet deep and twenty wide, over which lay a drawbridge. Jack set men to work to cut the bridge on both sides, almost to the middle; and then dressed himself in his coat of darkness, and went against the giant with his sword of sharpness. As he came close to him, though the giant could not see him, for his invisible coat, yet he found some danger was near, which made him cry out:

“Fa, fe, fi, fo, fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman;
Let him be alive, or let him be dead,
I’ll grind his bones to make me bread.”

“Say you so my friend?” said Jack, “you are a monstrous miller indeed.” “Art thou,” cried the giant, “the villain that killed my kinsmen? Then I will tear thee with my teeth, and grind thy bones to powder.” “You must catch me first,” said Jack; and throwing off his coat of darkness, and putting on his shoes of swiftness, he began to run; the giant following him like a walking castle, making the earth shake at every step.

Jack led him round and round the walls of the house, that the company might see the monster; and to finish the work Jack ran over the drawbridge, the giant going after him with his club. But when the giant came to the middle, where the bridge had been cut on both sides, the great weight of his body made it break, and he tumbled into the water, and rolled about like a large whale. Jack now stood by the side of the moat, and laughed and jeered at him, saying: “I think you told me, you would grind my bones to powder. When will you begin?” The giant foamed at both his horrid mouths with fury, and plunged from side to side of the moat; but he could not get out to have revenge on his little foe. At last Jack ordered a cart rope to be brought to him. He then drew it over his two heads, and by the help of a team of horses, dragged him to the edge of the moat, where he cut off the monster’s heads; and before he either eat or drank, he sent them both to the court of King Arthur. He then went back to the table with the company, and the rest of the day was spent in mirth and good cheer. After staying with the knight for some time, Jack grew weary of such an idle life, and set out again in search of new adventures. He went over the hills and

dales without meeting any, till he came to the foot of a very high mountain. Here he knocked at the door of a small and lonely house; and an old man, with a head as white as snow, let him in. “Good father” said Jack, “can you lodge a traveller who has lost his way?” “Yes,” said the hermit, “I can, if you will accept such fare as my poor house affords.” Jack entered, and the old man set before him some bread and fruit for his supper. When Jack had eaten as much as he chose, the hermit said, “My son, I know you are the famous conqueror of giants; now, on the top of this mountain is an enchanted castle, kept by a giant named Galligantus, who, by the help of a vile magician, gets many knights into his castle, where he changes them into the shape of beasts. Above all I lament the hard fate of a duke’s daughter, whom they seized as she was walking in her father’s garden, and brought hither through the air in a chariot drawn by two fiery dragons, and turned her into the shape of a deer. Many knights have tried to destroy the enchantment, and deliver her; yet none have been able to do it, by reason of two fiery griffins who guard the gate of the castle, and destroy all who come nigh. But as you, my son, have an invisible coat, you may pass by them without being seen; and on the gates of the castle, you will find engraved, by what means the enchantment may be broken.“

Jack promised, that in the morning, at the risk of his life he would break the enchantment: and after a sound sleep he arose early, put on his invisible coat, and got ready for the attempt. When he had climbed to the top of the mountain, he saw the two fiery griffins; but he passed between them without the least fear of danger; for they could not see him because of his invisible coat. On the castle gate he found a golden trumpet, under which were written these lines:

> “Whoever can this trumpet blow,
> Shall cause the giant’s overthrow.”

As soon as Jack had read this, he seized the trumpet, and blew a shrill blast which made the gates fly open and the very castle itself tremble. The giant and the conjurer now knew that their wicked course was at an end, and they stood biting their thumbs and shaking with fear. Jack, with his sword of sharpness, soon killed the giant. The magician was then carried away by a whirlwind and every knight and beautiful lady, who had been changed into birds and beasts, returned to their proper shapes. The castle vanished away like smoke and the head of the giant Galligantus was sent to King Arthur. The knights and ladies rested that night at the old man’s hermitage, and next day they set out for the court. Jack then went up to the king, and gave his majesty an account of all his fierce battles. Jack’s fame had spread through the whole country; and at the king’s desire, the duke gave him his daughter in marriage, to the joy of all the kingdom. After this the king gave him a large estate; on which he and his lady lived the rest of their days, in joy and content.

CHAPTER XIX

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Once upon a time there lived in a village a country girl, who was the sweetest little creature that ever was seen; her mother naturally loved her with excessive fondness, and her grandmother doted on her still more. The good woman had made for her a pretty little red-coloured hood, which so much became the little girl, that every one called her Little Red Riding Hood.

One day her mother having made some cheesecakes, said to her, “Go, my child, and see how your grandmother does, for I hear she is ill; carry her some of these cakes, and a little pot of butter.” Little Red Riding Hood straight set out with a basket filled with the cakes and the pot of butter, for her grandmother’s house, which was in a village a little way off the town that her mother lived in. As she was crossing a wood, which lay in her road, she met a large wolf, which had a great mind to eat her up, but dared not, for fear of some wood-cutters, who were at work near them in the forest. Yet he spoke to her, and asked her whither she was going. The little girl, who did not know the danger of talking to a wolf, replied: “I am going to see my grandmamma, and carry these cakes and a pot of butter.” “Does she live far off?” said the wolf. “Oh yes!” answered Little Red Riding Hood; “beyond the mill you see yonder, at the first house in the village.” “Well,” said the wolf, “I will take this way, and you take that, and see which will be there the soonest.“

The wolf set out full speed, running as fast as he could, and taking the nearest way, while the little girl took the longest; and as she went along began to gather nuts, run after butterflies, and make nose-gays of such flowers as she found within her reach. The wolf got to the dwelling of the grandmother first, and knocked at the door. “Who is there?” said some voice in the house. “It is your grandchild, Little Red Riding Hood,” said the wolf, speaking like the little girl as well as he could. “I have brought you some cheesecakes, and a little pot of butter, that mamma has sent you.” The good old woman, who was ill in bed, called out, “Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up.” The wolf pulled the bobbin, and the door went open. The wolf then jumped upon the poor old grandmother, and ate her up in a moment, for it was three days since he had tasted any food. The wolf then shut the door, and laid himself down in the bed, and waited for Little Red Riding Hood, who very soon after reached the house. Tap! tap! “Who is there?” cried he. She was at first a little afraid at hearing the gruff voice of the wolf, but she thought that perhaps her grandmother had got a cold, so she answered: “It is your grandchild, Little Red Riding Hood. Mamma has sent you some cheesecakes, and a little pot of butter.” The wolf cried out in a softer voice, “Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up.” Little Red Riding Hood pulled the bobbin, and the door went open. When she came into the room, the wolf hid himself under the bedclothes, and said to her, trying all he could to speak in a feeble voice: “Put the basket on the stool, my dear, and take off your clothes, and come into bed.” Little Red Riding Hood, who always used to do as she was told, straight undressed herself, and stepped into bed; but she thought it strange to see how her grandmother looked in her nightclothes, so she said to her: “Dear me, grandmamma, what great arms you have got!” “They are so

much the better to hug you, my child," replied the wolf. "But grandmamma," said the little girl, "what great ears you have got!" "They are so much the better to hear you, my child," replied the wolf. "But then, grandmamma, what great eyes you have got!" said the little girl. "They are so much the better to see you, my child," replied the wolf. "And grandmamma, what great teeth you have got!" said the little girl, who now began to be rather afraid. "They are to eat you up," said the wolf; and saying these words, the wicked creature fell upon Little Red Riding Hood, and ate her up in a moment.

CHAPTER XX

THE THREE BEARS

In a far-off country there was once a little girl who was called Silver-hair, because her curly hair shone brightly. She was a sad romp, and so restless that she could not be kept quiet at home, but must needs run out and away, without leave.

One day she started off into a wood to gather wild flowers, and into the fields to chase butterflies. She ran here and she ran there, and went so far, at last, that she found herself in a lonely place, where she saw a snug little house, in which three bears lived; but they were not then at home.

The door was ajar, and Silver-hair pushed it open and found the place to be quite empty, so she made up her mind to go in boldly, and look all about the place, little thinking what sort of people lived there.

Now the three bears had gone out to walk a little before this. They were the Big Bear, and the Middle-sized Bear, and the Little Bear; but they had left their porridge on the table to cool. So when Silver-hair came into the kitchen, she saw the three bowls of porridge. She tasted the largest bowl, which belonged to the Big Bear, and found it too cold; then she tasted the middle-sized bowl, which belonged to the Middle-sized Bear, and found it too hot; then she tasted the smallest bowl, which belonged to the Little Bear, and it was just right, and she ate it all.

She went into the parlour, and there were three chairs. She tried the biggest chair, which belonged to the Big Bear, and found it too high; then she tried the middle-sized chair, which belonged to the Middle-sized Bear, and she found it too broad; then she tried the little chair, which belonged to the Little Bear, and found it just right, but she sat in it so hard that she broke it.

Now Silver-hair was by this time very tired, and she went upstairs to the chamber, and there she found three beds. She tried the largest bed, which belonged to the Big Bear, and found it too soft; then she tried the middle-sized bed, which belonged to the Middle-sized Bear, and she found it too hard; then she tried the smallest bed, which belonged to the Little Bear, and found it just right, so she lay down upon it, and fell fast asleep.

While Silver-hair was lying fast asleep, the three bears came home from their walk. They came into the kitchen, to get their porridge, but when the Big Bear went to his, he growled out:

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN TASTING MY PORRIDGE!”

and the Middle-sized Bear looked into his bowl, and said:

“Somebody Has Been Tasting My Porridge!”

and the Little Bear piped:

“*Somebody has tasted my porridge and eaten it all up!*”

Then they went into the parlour, and the Big Bear growled:

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR!“

and the Middle-sized Bear said:

“Somebody Has Been Sitting In My Chair!”

and the Little Bear piped:

“*Somebody has been sitting in my chair, and has broken it all to pieces!*”

So they went upstairs into the chamber, and the Big Bear growled:

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN TUMBLING MY BED!”

and the Middle-sized Bear said:

“Somebody Has Been Tumbling My Bed!”

and the little Bear piped:

“*Somebody has been tumbling my bed, and here she is!*”

At that, Silver-hair woke in a fright, and jumped out of the window and ran away as fast as her legs could carry her, and never went near the Three Bears’ snug little house again.

CHAPTER XXI

THE PRINCESS ON THE PEA

There was once a prince who wanted to marry a princess; but she was to be a *real* princess. So he travelled about, all through the world, to find a real one, but everywhere there was something in the way. There were princesses enough, but whether they were *real* princesses he could not quite make out: there was always something that did not seem quite right. So he came home again, and was quite sad: for he wished so much to have a real princess. One evening a terrible storm came on. It lightened and thundered, the rain streamed down; it was quite fearful! Then there was a knocking at the town gate, and the old king went out to open it.

It was a princess who stood outside the gate. But, mercy! how she looked, from the rain and the rough weather! The water ran down from her hair and her clothes; it ran in at the points of her shoes, and out at the heels; and yet she declared that she was a real princess.

“Yes, we will soon find that out,” thought the old queen. But she said nothing, only went into the bedchamber, took all the bedding off, and put a pea on the flooring of the bedstead; then she took twenty mattresses and laid them upon the pea, and then twenty eider-down beds upon the mattresses. On this the princess had to lie all night. In the morning she was asked how she had slept.

“Oh, miserably!” said the princess. “I scarcely closed my eyes all night long. Goodness knows what was in my bed. I lay upon something hard, so that I am black and blue all over. It is quite dreadful!”

Now they saw that she was a real princess, for through the twenty mattresses and the twenty eider-down beds she had felt the pea. No one but a real princess could be so delicate.

So the prince took her for his wife, for now he knew that he had a true princess; and the pea was put in the museum, and it is there now, unless somebody has carried it off.

Look you, this is a true story.

CHAPTER XXII

THE UGLY DUCKLING

It was so glorious out in the country; it was summer; the cornfields were yellow, the oats were green, the hay had been put up in stacks in the green meadows, and the stork went about on his long red legs, and chattered Egyptian, for this was the language he had learned from his good mother. All around the fields and meadows were great forests, and in the midst of these forests lay deep lakes. Yes, it was right glorious out in the country. In the midst of the sunshine there lay an old farm, with deep canals about it, and from the wall down to the water grew great burdocks, so high that little children could stand upright under the loftiest of them. It was just as wild there as in the deepest wood, and here sat a Duck upon her nest; she had to hatch her ducklings; but she was almost tired out before the little ones came and then she so seldom had visitors. The other ducks liked better to swim about in the canals than to run up to sit down under a burdock, and cackle with her.

At last one egg-shell after another burst open. “Piep! piep!” it cried, and in all the eggs there were little creatures that stuck out their heads.

“Quack! quack!” they said; and they all came quacking out as fast as they could, looking all round them under the green leaves; and the mother let them look as much as they chose, for green is good for the eye.

“How wide the world is!” said all the young ones, for they certainly had much more room now than when they were in the eggs.

“D’ye think this is all the world?” said the mother. “That stretches far across the other side of the garden, quite into the parson’s field; but I have never been there yet. I hope you are all together,” and she stood up. “No, I have not all. The largest egg still lies there. How long is that to last? I am really tired of it.” And she sat down again.

“Well, how goes it?” asked an old Duck who had come to pay her a visit.

“It lasts a long time with that one egg,” said the Duck who sat there. “It will not burst. Now, only look at the others; are they not the prettiest little ducks one could possibly see? They are all like their father. The rogue, he never comes to see me.”

“Let me see the egg which will not burst,” said the old visitor. “You may be sure it is a turkey’s egg. I was once cheated in that way, and had much anxiety and trouble with the young ones, for they are afraid of the water. Must I say it to you, I could not get them to venture in. I quacked and I clacked, but it was no use. Let me see the egg. Yes, that’s a turkey’s egg. Let it lie there, and teach the other children to swim.”

“I think I will sit on it a little longer,” said the Duck. “I’ve sat so long now that I can sit a few days more.”

“Just as you please,” said the old Duck; and she went away.

At last the great egg burst. “Piep! piep!” said the little one, and crept forth. It was very large and very ugly. The Duck looked at it.

“It’s a very large duckling,” said she; “none of the others look like that. Can it really be a turkey chick? Well, we shall soon find out. It must go into the water, even if I have to thrust it in myself.”

The next day it was bright, beautiful weather; the sun shone on all the green trees. The Mother-Duck went down to the canal with all her family. Splash! she jumped into the water. “Quack! quack!” she said, and one duckling after another plunged in. The water closed over their heads, but they came up in an instant, and swam capitally; their legs went of themselves, and they were all in the water. The ugly gray Duckling swam with them.

“No, it’s not a turkey,” said she; “look how well it can use its legs, and how straight it holds itself. It is my own child! On the whole it’s quite pretty, if one looks at it rightly. Quack! quack! come with me, and I’ll lead you out into the great world, and present you in the duck-yard; but keep close to me, so that no one may tread on you, and take care of the cats!”

And so they came into the duck-yard. There was a terrible riot going on in there, for two families were quarrelling about an eel’s head, and the cat got it after all.

“See, that’s how it goes in the world!” said the Mother-Duck; and she whetted her beak, for she too wanted the eel’s head. “Only use your legs,” she said. “See that you can bustle about, and bow your heads before the old Duck yonder. She’s the grandest of all here; she’s of Spanish blood—that’s why she’s so fat; and d’ye see? she has a red rag round her leg; that’s something particularly fine, and the greatest distinction a duck can enjoy; it signifies that one does not want to lose her, and that she’s to be known by the animals and by men too. Shake yourselves—don’t turn in your toes; a well brought-up duck turns its toes quite out, just like father and mother—so! Now bend your necks and say ‘Quack!’”

And they did so: but the other ducks round about looked at them, and said quite boldly:

“Look there! now we’re to have these hanging on, as if there were not enough of us already! And—fie!—how that duckling yonder looks; we won’t stand that!” And one duck flew up at it, and bit it in the neck.

“Let it alone,” said the mother; “it does no harm to any one.”

“Yes, but it’s too large and peculiar,” said the Duck who had bitten it; “and therefore it must be put down.”

“Those are pretty children that the mother has there,” said the old Duck with the rag round her leg. “They’re all pretty but that one; that was rather unlucky. I wish she could bear it over again.”

“That cannot be done, my lady,” replied the Mother-Duck. “It is not pretty, but it has a really good disposition, and swims as well as any other; yes, I may even say it, swims better. I think it will grow up pretty, and become smaller in time; it has lain too long in the egg, and therefore is not properly shaped.” And then she pinched it in the neck, and smoothed its feathers. “Moreover, it is a drake,” she said, “and therefore it is not of so much consequence. I think he will be very strong. He makes his way already.“

“The other ducklings are graceful enough,” said the old Duck. “Make yourself at home; and if you find an eel’s head, you may bring it me.”

And now they were at home. But the poor Duckling which had crept last out of the egg, and looked so ugly, was bitten and pushed and jeered, as much by the ducks as by the chickens.

“It is too big!” they all said. And the turkey-cock, who had been born with spurs, and therefore thought himself an emperor, blew himself up like a ship in full sail, and bore straight down upon it; then he gobbled and grew quite red in the face. The poor Duckling did not know where it should stand or walk; it was quite melancholy because it looked ugly, and was the butt of the whole duck-yard.

So it went on the first day; and afterwards it became worse and worse. The poor Duckling was hunted about by every one; even its brothers and sisters were quite angry with it, and said, “If the cat would only catch you, you ugly creature!” And the mother said, “If you were only far away!” And the ducks bit it, and the chickens beat it, and the girl who had to feed the poultry kicked at it with her foot.

Then it ran and flew over the fence, and the little birds in the bushes flew up in fear.

“That is because I am so ugly!” thought the Duckling; and it shut its eyes, but flew on farther, and so it came out into the great moor, where the wild ducks lived. Here it lay the whole night long; and it was weary and downcast.

Towards morning the wild ducks flew up, and looked at their new companion.

“What sort of a one are you?” they asked; and the Duckling turned in every direction, and bowed as well as it could. “You are remarkably ugly!” said the Wild Ducks. “But that is nothing to us, so long as you do not marry into our family.”

Poor thing! it certainly did not think of marrying, and only hoped to obtain leave to lie among the reeds and drink some of the swamp water.

Thus it lay two whole days; then came thither two wild geese, or, properly speaking, two wild ganders. It was not long since each had crept out of an egg, and that’s why they were so saucy.

“Listen, comrade,” said one of them. “You’re so ugly that I like you. Will you go with us, and become a bird of passage? Near here, in another moor, there are a few sweet lovely wild geese, all unmarried, and all able to say ‘Rap!’ You’ve a chance of making your fortune, ugly as you are.”

“Piff! paff!” resounded through the air; and the two ganders fell down dead in the swamp, and the water became blood red. “Piff! paff!” it sounded again, and the whole flock of wild geese rose up from the reeds. And then there was another report. A great hunt was going on. The sportsmen were lying in wait all round the moor, and some were even sitting up in the branches of the trees, which spread far over the reeds. The blue smoke rose up like clouds among the dark trees, and was wafted far away across the water; and the hunting dogs came—splash, splash!—into the swamp, and the rushes and the reeds bent down on every side. That was a fright for the poor Duckling! It turned its head, and put it under its wing; but at that moment a frightful great dog stood close by the Duckling. His tongue hung far out of his mouth, and his eyes gleamed horrible and ugly; he thrust out his nose close against the Duckling, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash, splash!—on he went, without seizing it.

“Oh, Heaven be thanked!” sighed the Duckling. “I am so ugly that even the dog does not like to bite me!”

And so it lay quite quiet, while the shots rattled through the reeds and gun after gun was fired. At last, late in the day, all was still; but the poor Duckling did not dare to rise up; it waited several hours before it looked round, and then hastened away out of the moor as fast as it could. It ran on over field and meadow; there was such a storm raging that it was difficult to get from one place to another.

Towards evening the Duck came to a little miserable peasant’s hut. This hut was so dilapidated that it did not itself know on which side it should fall; and that’s why it remained standing. The storm whistled round the Duckling in such a way that the poor creature was obliged to sit down, to stand against it; and the wind blew worse and worse. Then the Duckling noticed that one of the hinges of the door had given way, and the door hung so slanting that the Duckling could slip through the crack into the room; and that is what it did.

Here lived a woman, with her Cat and her Hen. And the Cat, whom she called Sonnie, could arch his back and purr, he could even give out sparks; but to make him do it one had to stroke his fur the wrong way. The Hen had quite little, short legs, and therefore she was called Chickabiddy Short-shanks. She laid good eggs, and the woman loved her like her own child.

In the morning the strange Duckling was at once noticed, and the Cat began to purr and the Hen to cluck.

“What’s this?” said the woman, and looked all round; but she could not see well, and therefore she thought the Duckling was a fat duck that had strayed. “This is a rare prize!” she said. “Now I shall have duck’s eggs. I hope it is not a drake. We must try that.”

And so the Duckling was admitted on trial for three weeks; but no eggs came. And the Cat was master of the House, and the Hen was the lady, and always said, “We and the world!” for she thought they were half the world, and by far the better half.

The Duckling thought one might have a different opinion, but the Hen would not allow it.

“Can you lay eggs?” she asked.

“No.”

“Then will you hold your tongue!”

And the Cat said, “Can you curve your back, and purr, and give out sparks?”

“No.”

“Then you will please have no opinion of your own when sensible folks are speaking.“

And the Duckling sat in a corner and was melancholy; then the fresh air and the sunshine streamed in; and it was seized with such a strange longing to swim on the water, that it could not help telling the Hen of it.

“What are you thinking of?” cried the Hen. “You have nothing to do, that’s why you have these fancies. Lay eggs, or purr, and they will pass over.”

“But it is so charming to swim on the water!” said the Duckling, “so refreshing to let it close above one’s head, and to dive down to the bottom.”

“Yes, that must be a mighty pleasure, truly,” quoth the Hen, “I fancy you must have gone crazy. Ask the Cat about it—he’s the cleverest animal I know—ask him if he likes to swim on the water, or to dive down—I won’t speak about myself. Ask our mistress, the old woman; no one in the world is cleverer than she. Do you think she has any desire to swim, and to let the water close above her head?”

“You don’t understand me,” said the Duckling.

“We don’t understand you? Then pray who is to understand you? You surely don’t pretend to be cleverer than the Cat and the woman—I won’t say anything of myself. Don’t be conceited, child, and thank your Maker for all the kindness you have received. Did you not get into a warm room, and have you not fallen into company from which you may learn something? But you are a chatterer, and it is not pleasant to associate with you. You may believe me, I speak for your good. I tell you disagreeable things, and by that one may always know one’s true friends! Only take care that you learn to lay eggs, or to purr, and give out sparks!“

“I think I will go out into the wide world,” said the Duckling.

“Yes, do go,” replied the Hen.

And so the Duckling went away. It swam on the water, and dived, but it was slighted by every creature because of its ugliness.

Now came the autumn. The leaves in the forest turned yellow and brown; the wind caught them so that they danced about, and up in the air it was very cold. The clouds hung low, heavy with hail and snow-flakes, and on the fence stood the raven, crying, “Croak! croak!” for mere cold; yes, it was enough to make one feel cold to think of this. The poor little Duckling certainly had not a good time. One evening—the sun was just setting in his beauty—there came a whole flock of great, handsome birds out of the bushes. They were dazzlingly white, with long, flexible necks—they were swans. They uttered a very peculiar cry, spread forth their glorious great wings, and flew away from that cold region to warmer lands, to fair open lakes. They mounted so high, so high! and the ugly Duckling felt quite strangely as it watched them. It turned round and round in the water like a wheel, stretched out its neck towards them, and uttered such a strange loud cry as frightened itself. Oh! it could not forget those beautiful, happy birds; and so soon as it could see them no longer, it dived down to the very bottom, and when it came up again it was quite beside itself. It knew not the name of those birds, and knew not whither they were flying; but it loved them more than it had ever loved any one. It was not at all envious of them. How could it think of wishing to possess such loveliness as they had? It would have been glad if only the ducks would have endured its company—the poor, ugly creature!

And the winter grew cold, very cold! The Duckling was forced to swim about in the water, to prevent the surface from freezing entirely; but every night the hole in which it swam about became smaller and smaller. It froze so hard that the icy covering crackled again; and the Duckling was obliged to use its legs continually to prevent the hole from freezing up. At last it became exhausted, and lay quite still, and thus froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, and when he saw what had happened, he took his wooden shoe, broke the ice-crust to pieces, and carried the Duckling home to his wife. Then it came to itself again. The children wanted to play with it; but the Duckling thought they wanted to hurt it, and in its terror fluttered up into the milk-pan, so that the milk spurted down into the room. The woman clasped her hands, at which the Duckling flew down into the butter-tub, and then into the meal-barrel and out again. How it looked then! The woman screamed, and struck at it with the fire-tongs; the children tumbled over one another in their efforts to catch the Duckling; and they laughed and they screamed!—well it was that the door stood open, and the poor creature was able to slip out between the shrubs into the newly-fallen snow—there it lay quite exhausted.

But it would be too melancholy if I were to tell all the misery and care which the Duckling had to endure in the hard winter. It lay out on the moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine again and the larks to sing. It was a beautiful spring.

Then all at once the Duckling could flap its wings. They beat the air more strongly than before, and bore it strongly away; and before it well knew how all this happened, it found itself in a great garden, where the elder-trees smelt sweet, and bent their long green branches down to the canal that wound through the region. Oh, here it was so beautiful, such a gladness of spring! and from the thicket came three glorious white swans; they rustled their wings, and swam lightly on the water. The Duckling knew the splendid creatures, and felt oppressed by a peculiar sadness.

“I will fly away to them, to the royal birds, and they will beat me, because I, that am so ugly, dare to come near them. But it is all the same. Better to be killed by *them* than to be pursued by ducks, and beaten by fowls, and pushed about by the girl who takes care of the poultry yard, and to suffer hunger in winter!” And it flew out into the water, and swam towards the beautiful swans; these looked at it, and came sailing down upon it with outspread wings. “Kill me!” said the poor creature, and bent its head down upon the water, expecting nothing but death. But what was this that it saw in the clear water? It beheld its own image; and, lo! it was no longer a clumsy dark-gray bird, ugly and hateful to look at, but a—swan!

It matters nothing if one is born in a duck-yard if one has only lain in a swan’s egg.

It felt quite glad at all the need and misfortune it had suffered, now it realised its happiness in all the splendour that surrounded it. And the great swans swam round it, and stroked it with their beaks.

Into the garden came little children, who threw bread and corn into the water; and the youngest cried, “There is a new one!” and the other children shouted joyously, “Yes, a new one has arrived!” And they clapped their hands and danced about, and ran to their father and mother; and bread and cake were thrown into the water; and they all said, “The new one is the most beautiful of all! so young and handsome!” and the old swans bowed their heads before him. Then he felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings, for he did not know what to do; he was so happy, and yet not at all proud. He thought how he had been persecuted and despised; and now he heard them saying that he was the most beautiful of all birds. Even the elder-tree bent its branches straight down into the water before him, and the sun shone warm and mild. Then his wings rustled, he lifted his slender

neck, and cried rejoicingly from the depths of his heart:

“I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was the Ugly Duckling!”

CHAPTER XXIII

THE LIGHT PRINCESS

I

What! No Children?

Once upon a time, so long ago that I have quite forgotten the date, there lived a king and queen who had no children.

And the king said to himself, “All the queens of my acquaintance have children, some three, some seven, and some as many as twelve; and my queen has not one. I feel ill-used.” So he made up his mind to be cross with his wife about it. But she bore it all like a good patient queen as she was. Then the king grew very cross indeed. But the queen pretended to take it all as a joke, and a very good one too.

“Why don’t you have any daughters, at least?” said he. “I don’t say *sons*; that might be too much to expect.”

“I am sure, dear king, I am very sorry,” said the queen.

“So you ought to be,” retorted the king; “you are not going to make a virtue of *that*, surely.”

But he was not an ill-tempered king, and in any matter of less moment would have let the queen have her own way with all his heart. This, however, was an affair of State.

The queen smiled.

“You must have patience with a lady, you know, dear king,” said she.

She was, indeed, a very nice queen, and heartily sorry that she could not oblige the king immediately.

The king tried to have patience, but he succeeded very badly. It was more than he deserved, therefore, when, at last, the queen gave him a daughter—as lovely a little princess as ever cried.

II

Won’t I, Just?

The day drew near when the infant must be christened. The king wrote all the invitations with his own hand. Of course somebody was forgotten.

Now it does not generally matter if somebody *is* forgotten, only you must mind who. Unfortunately, the king forgot without intending to forget; and so the chance fell upon the

Princess Makemnoit, which was awkward. For the princess was the king's own sister; and he ought not to have forgotten her. But she had made herself so disagreeable to the old king, their father, that he had forgotten her in making his will; and so it was no wonder that her brother forgot her in writing his invitations. But poor relations don't do anything to keep you in mind of them. Why don't they? The king could not see into the garret she lived in, could he?

She was a sour, spiteful creature. The wrinkles of contempt crossed the wrinkles of peevishness, and made her face as full of wrinkles as a pat of butter. If ever a king could be justified in forgetting anybody, this king was justified in forgetting his sister, even at a christening. She looked very odd, too. Her forehead was as large as all the rest of her face, and projected over it like a precipice. When she was angry, her little eyes flashed blue. When she hated anybody, they shone yellow and green. What they looked like when she loved anybody, I do not know; for I never heard of her loving anybody but herself, and I do not think she could have managed that if she had not somehow got used to herself. But what made it highly imprudent in the king to forget her was—that she was awfully clever. In fact, she was a witch; and when she bewitched anybody, he very soon had enough of it; for she beat all the wicked fairies in wickedness, and all the clever ones in cleverness. She despised all the modes we read of in history, in which offended fairies and witches have taken their revenges; and therefore, after waiting and waiting in vain for an invitation, she made up her mind at last to go without one, and make the whole family miserable, like a princess as she was.

So she put on her best gown, went to the palace, was kindly received by the happy monarch, who forgot that he had forgotten her, and took her place in the procession to the royal chapel. When they were all gathered about the font, she contrived to get next to it, and throw something into the water; after which she maintained a very respectful demeanour till the water was applied to the child's face. But at that moment she turned round in her place three times, and muttered the following words, loud enough for those beside her to hear:

"Light of spirit, by my charms,
Light of body, every part,
Never weary human arms—
Only crush thy parents' heart!"

They all thought she had lost her wits, and was repeating some foolish nursery rhyme; but a shudder went through the whole of them notwithstanding. The baby, on the contrary, began to laugh and crow; while the nurse gave a start and a smothered cry, for, she thought she was struck with paralysis: she could not feel the baby in her arms. But she clasped it tight and said nothing.

The mischief was done.

III

She Can't Be Ours!

Her atrocious aunt had deprived the child of all her gravity. If you ask me how this was effected, I answer, “In the easiest way in the world. She had only to destroy gravitation.” For the princess was a philosopher, and knew all the ins and outs of the laws of gravitation as well as the ins and outs of her boot-lace. And being a witch as well, she could abrogate those laws in a moment; or at least so clog their wheels and rust their bearings that they would not work at all. But we have more to do with what followed than with how it was done.

The first awkwardness that resulted from this unhappy privation was, that the moment the nurse began to float the baby up and down, she flew from her arms towards the ceiling. Happily, the resistance of the air brought her ascending career to a close within a foot of it. There she remained, horizontal as when she left her nurse’s arms, kicking and laughing amazingly. The nurse in terror flew to the bell, and begged the footman, who answered it, to bring up the house-steps directly. Trembling in every limb, she climbed upon the steps, and had to stand upon the very top, and reach up, before she could catch the floating tail of the baby’s long clothes.

When the strange fact came to be known, there was a terrible commotion in the palace. The occasion of its discovery by the king was naturally a repetition of the nurse’s experience. Astonished that he felt no weight when the child was laid in his arms, he began to wave her up and—not down; for she slowly ascended to the ceiling as before, and there remained floating in perfect comfort and satisfaction, as was testified by her peals of tiny laughter. The king stood staring up in speechless amazement, and trembled so that his beard shook like grass in the wind. At last, turning to the queen, who was just as horror-struck as himself, he said, gasping, staring, and stammering:

“She *can’t* be ours, queen!”

Now the queen was much cleverer than the king, and had begun already to suspect that “this effect defective came by cause.“

“I am sure she is ours,” answered she. “But we ought to have taken better care of her at the christening. People who were never invited ought not to have been present.”

“Oh, ho!” said the king, tapping his forehead with his forefinger, “I have it all. I’ve found her out. Don’t you see it, queen? Princess Makemnoit has bewitched her.”

“That’s just what I say,” answered the queen.

“I beg your pardon, my love; I did not hear you. John! bring the steps I get on my throne with.”

For he was a little king with a great throne, like many other kings.

The throne-steps were brought, and set upon the dining-table, and John got upon the top of them. But, he could not reach the little princess, who lay like a baby-laughter-cloud in the air, exploding continuously.

“Take the tongs, John,” said his Majesty; and getting up on the table, he handed them to him.

John could reach the baby now, and the little princess was handed down by the tongs.

IV

Where Is She?

One fine summer day, a month after these her first adventures, during which time she had been very carefully watched, the princess was lying on the bed in the queen's own chamber, fast asleep. One of the windows was open, for it was noon, and the day was so sultry that the little girl was wrapped in nothing less ethereal than slumber itself. The queen came into the room, and not observing that the baby was on the bed, opened another window. A frolicsome fairy wind, which had been watching for a chance of mischief, rushed in at the one window, and taking its way over the bed where the child was lying, caught her up, and rolling and floating her along like a piece of flue, or a dandelion seed, carried her with it through the opposite window, and away. The queen went down-stairs, quite ignorant of the loss she had herself occasioned.

When the nurse returned, she supposed that her Majesty had carried her off, and, dreading a scolding, delayed making inquiry about her. But hearing nothing, she grew uneasy, and went at length to the queen's boudoir, where she found her Majesty.

"Please, your Majesty, shall I take the baby?" said she.

"Where is she?" asked the queen.

"Please forgive me. I know it was wrong."

"What do you mean?" said the queen, looking grave.

"Oh! don't frighten me, your Majesty!" exclaimed the nurse, clasping her hands.

The queen saw that something was amiss, and fell down in a faint. The nurse rushed about the palace, screaming, "My baby! my baby!"

Every one ran to the queen's room. But the queen could give no orders. They soon found out, however, that the princess was missing, and in a moment the palace was like a beehive in a garden; and in one minute more the queen was brought to herself by a great shout and a clapping of hands. They had found the princess fast asleep under a rose-bush, to which the elfish little wind-puff had carried her, finishing its mischief by shaking a shower of red rose-leaves all over the little white sleeper. Startled by the noise the servants made, she woke, and, furious with glee, scattered the rose-leaves in all directions, like a shower of spray in the sunset.

She was watched more carefully after this, no doubt; yet it would be endless to relate all the odd incidents resulting from this peculiarity of the young princess. But there never was a baby in a house, not to say a palace, that kept the household in such constant good humour, at least below-stairs. If it was not easy for her nurses to hold her, at least she made neither their arms nor their hearts ache. And she was so nice to play at ball with! There was positively no danger of letting her fall. They might throw her down, or knock her down, or push her down, but they couldn't *let* her down. It is true, they might let her fly into the fire or the coal-hole, or through the window; but none of these accidents had happened as yet. If you heard peals of laughter resounding from some unknown region, you might be sure enough of the cause. Going down into the kitchen, or *the room*, you

would find Jane and Thomas, and Robert and Susan, all and sum, playing at ball with the little princess. She was the ball herself, and did not enjoy it the less for that. Away she went, flying from one to another, screeching with laughter. And the servants loved the ball itself better even than the game. But they had to take some care how they threw her, for if she received an upward direction, she would never come down again without being fetched.

V

What Is to Be Done?

But above-stairs it was different. One day, for instance, after breakfast, the king went into his counting-house, and counted out his money.

The operation gave him no pleasure.

“To think,” said he to himself, “that every one of these gold sovereigns weighs a quarter of an ounce, and my real, live, flesh-and-blood princess weighs nothing at all!”

And he hated his gold sovereigns, as they lay with a broad smile of self-satisfaction all over their yellow faces.

The queen was in the parlour, eating bread and honey. But at the second mouthful she burst out crying, and could not swallow it. The king heard her sobbing. Glad of anybody, but especially of his queen, to quarrel with, he clashed his gold sovereigns into his money-box, clapped his crown on his head, and rushed into the parlour.

“What is all this about?” exclaimed he. “What are you crying for, queen?”

“I can’t eat it,” said the queen, looking ruefully at the honey-pot.

“No wonder!” retorted the king. “You’ve just eaten your breakfast—two turkey eggs, and three anchovies.“

“Oh, that’s not it!” sobbed her Majesty. “It’s my child, my child!”

“Well, what’s the matter with your child? She’s neither up the chimney nor down the draw-well. Just hear her laughing.”

Yet the king could not help a sigh, which he tried to turn into a cough, saying:

“It is a good thing to be light-hearted, I am sure, whether she be ours or not.”

“It is a bad thing to be light-headed,” answered the queen, looking with prophetic soul far into the future.

“‘T is a good thing to be light-handed,” said the king.

“‘T is a bad thing to be light-fingered,” answered the queen.

“‘T is a good thing to be light-footed,” said the king.

“‘T is a bad thing—” began the queen; but the king interrupted her.

“In fact,” said he, with the tone of one who concludes an argument in which he has had

only imaginary opponents, and in which, therefore, he has come off triumphant—"in fact, it is a good thing altogether to be light-bodied."

"But it is a bad thing altogether to be light-minded," retorted the queen, who was beginning to lose her temper.

This last answer quite discomfited his Majesty, who turned on his heel, and betook himself to his counting-house again. But he was not half-way towards it, when the voice of his queen overtook him.

"And it's a bad thing to be light-haired," screamed she, determined to have more last words, now that her spirit was roused.

The queen's hair was black as night; and the king's had been, and his daughter's was, golden as morning. But it was not this reflection on his hair that arrested him; it was the double use of the word *light*. For the king hated all witticisms, and punning especially. And besides, he could not tell whether the queen meant light-*haired* or light-*heired*; for why might she not aspirate her vowels when she was exasperated herself?

He turned upon his other heel, and rejoined her. She looked angry still, because she knew that she was guilty, or, what was much the same, knew that he thought so.

"My dear queen," said he, "duplicity of any sort is exceedingly objectionable between married people of any rank, not to say kings and queens; and the most objectionable form duplicity can assume is that of punning."

"There!" said the queen, "I never made a jest, but I broke it in the making. I am the most unfortunate woman in the world!"

She looked so rueful that the king took her in his arms; and they sat down to consult.

"Can you bear this?" said the king.

"No, I can't," said the queen.

"Well, what's to be done?" said the king.

"I'm sure I don't know," said the queen. "But might you not try an apology?"

"To my old sister, I suppose you mean?" said the king.

"Yes," said the queen.

"Well, I don't mind," said the king.

So he went the next morning to the house of the princess, and, making a very humble apology, begged her to undo the spell. But the princess declared, with a grave face, that she knew nothing at all about it. Her eyes, however, shone pink, which was a sign that she was happy. She advised the king and queen to have patience, and to mend their ways. The king returned disconsolate. The queen tried to comfort him.

"We will wait till she is older. She may then be able to suggest something herself. She will know at least how she feels, and explain things to us."

"But what if she should marry?" exclaimed the king, in sudden consternation at the idea.

"Well, what of that?" rejoined the queen.

“Just think! If she were to have children! In the course of a hundred years the air might be as full of floating children as of gossamers in autumn.”

“That is no business of ours,” replied the queen. “Besides, by that time they will have learned to take care of themselves.”

A sigh was the king’s only answer.

He would have consulted the court physicians; but he was afraid they would try experiments upon her.

VI

She Laughs Too Much

Meantime, notwithstanding awkward occurrences, and griefs that she brought upon her parents, the little princess laughed and grew—not fat, but plump and tall. She reached the age of seventeen, without having fallen into any worse scrape than a chimney; by rescuing her from which, a little bird-nesting urchin got fame and a black face. Nor, thoughtless as she was, had she committed anything worse than laughter at everybody and everything that came in her way. When she was told, for the sake of experiment, that General Clanrunfort was cut to pieces with all his troops, she laughed; when she heard that the enemy was on his way to besiege her father’s capital, she laughed hugely; but when she was told that the city would certainly be abandoned to the mercy of the enemy’s soldiery —why, then she laughed immoderately. She never could be brought to see the serious side of anything. When her mother cried, she said:

“What queer faces mamma makes! And she squeezes water out of her cheeks! Funny mamma!”

And when her papa stormed at her, she laughed, and danced round and round him, clapping her hands, and crying:

“Do it again, papa. Do it again! It’s such fun! Dear, funny papa!”

And if he tried to catch her, she glided from him in an instant, not in the least afraid of him, but thinking it part of the game not to be caught. With one push of her foot, she would be floating in the air above his head; or she would go dancing backwards and forwards and sideways, like a great butterfly. It happened several times, when her father and mother were holding a consultation about her in private, that they were interrupted by vainly repressed outbursts of laughter over their heads; and looking up with indignation, saw her floating at full length in the air above them, whence she regarded them with the most comical appreciation of the position.

One day an awkward accident happened. The princess had come out upon the lawn with one of her attendants, who held her by the hand. Spying her father at the other side of the lawn, she snatched her hand from the maid’s, and sped across to him. Now when she wanted to run alone, her custom was to catch up a stone in each hand, so that she might come down again after a bound. Whatever she wore as part of her attire had no effect in this way. Even gold, when it thus became as it were a part of herself, lost all its weight for

the time. But whatever she only held in her hands retained its downward tendency. On this occasion she could see nothing to catch up but a huge toad, that was walking across the lawn as if he had a hundred years to do it in. Not knowing what disgust meant, for this was one of her peculiarities, she snatched up the toad and bounded away. She had almost reached her father, and he was holding out his arms to receive her, and take from her lips the kiss which hovered on them like a butterfly on a rosebud, when a puff of wind blew her aside into the arms of a young page, who had just been receiving a message from his Majesty. Now it was no great peculiarity in the princess that, once she was set agoing, it always cost her time and trouble to check herself. On this occasion there was no time. She *must* kiss—and she kissed the page. She did not mind it much; for she had no shyness in her composition; and she knew, besides, that she could not help it. So she only laughed, like a musical box. The poor page fared the worst. For the princess, trying to correct the unfortunate tendency of the kiss, put out her hands to keep off the page; so that, along with the kiss, he received, on the other cheek, a slap with the huge black toad, which she poked right into his eye. He tried to laugh, too, but the attempt resulted in such an odd contortion of countenance, as showed that there was no danger of his pluming himself on the kiss. As for the king, his dignity was greatly hurt, and he did not speak to the page for a whole month.

I may here remark that it was very amusing to see her run, if her mode of progression could properly be called running. For first she would make a bound; then, having alighted, she would run a few steps, and make another bound. Sometimes she would fancy she had reached the ground before she actually had, and her feet would go backwards and forwards, running upon nothing at all, like those of a chicken on its back. Then she would laugh like the very spirit of fun; only in her laugh there was something missing. What it was, I find myself unable to describe. I think it was a certain tone, depending upon the possibility of sorrow—*morbidezza*, perhaps. She never smiled.

VII

Try Metaphysics

After a long avoidance of the painful subject, the king and queen resolved to hold a council of three upon it; and so they sent for the princess. In she came, sliding and flitting and gliding from one piece of furniture to another, and put herself at last in an arm-chair, in a sitting posture. Whether she could be said *to sit*, seeing she received no support from the seat of the chair, I do not pretend to determine.

“My dear child,” said the king, “you must be aware by this time that you are not exactly like other people.”

“Oh, you dear funny papa! I have got a nose, and two eyes, and all the rest. So have you. So has mamma.”

“Now be serious, my dear, for once,” said the queen.

“No, thank you, mamma; I had rather not.”

“Would you not like to be able to walk like other people?” said the king.

“No indeed, I should think not. You only crawl. You are such slow coaches!”

“How do you feel, my child?” he resumed, after a pause of discomfiture.

“Quite well, thank you.”

“I mean, what do you feel like?“

“Like nothing at all, that I know of.”

“You must feel like something.”

“I feel like a princess with such a funny papa, and such a dear pet of a queen-mamma!”

“Now really!” began the queen; but the princess interrupted her.

“Oh, yes,” she added, “I remember. I have a curious feeling sometimes, as if I were the only person that had any sense in the whole world.”

She had been trying to behave herself with dignity; but now she burst into a violent fit of laughter, threw herself backwards over the chair, and went rolling about the floor in an ecstasy of enjoyment. The king picked her up easier than one does a down quilt, and replaced her in her former relation to the chair. The exact preposition expressing this relation I do not happen to know.

“Is there nothing you wish for?” resumed the king, who had learned by this time that it was useless to be angry with her.

“Oh, you dear papa!—yes,” answered she.

“What is it, my darling?”

“I have been longing for it—oh, such a time!—ever since last night.”

“Tell me what it is.”

“Will you promise to let me have it?”

The king was on the point of saying yes, but the wiser queen checked him with a single motion of her head.

“Tell me what it is first,” said he.

“No, no. Promise first.”

“I dare not. What is it?”

“Mind, I hold you to your promise. It is—to be tied to the end of a string—a very long string indeed, and be flown like a kite. Oh, such fun! I would rain rose-water, and hail sugar-plums, and snow whipped-cream, and—and—and—“

A fit of laughing checked her; and she would have been off again over the floor, had not the king started up and caught her just in time. Seeing that nothing but talk could be got out of her, he rang the bell, and sent her away with two of her ladies-in-waiting.

“Now, queen,” he said, turning to her Majesty, “what *is* to be done?”

“There is but one thing left,” answered she. “Let us consult the college of Metaphysicians.”

“Bravo!” cried the king; “we will.”

Now at the head of this college were two very wise Chinese philosophers—by name Hum-Drum, and Kopy-Keck. For them the king sent; and straightway they came. In a long speech he communicated to them what they knew very well already—as who did not?—namely, the peculiar condition of his daughter in relation to the globe on which she dwelt; and requested them to consult together as to what might be the cause and probable cure of her *infirmity*. The king laid stress upon the word, but failed to discover his own pun. The queen laughed; but Hum-Drum and Kopy-Keck heard with humility and retired in silence.

Their consultation consisted chiefly in propounding and supporting, for the thousandth time, each his favourite theories. For the condition of the princess afforded delightful scope for the discussion of every question arising from the division of thought—in fact, of all the Metaphysics of the Chinese Empire. But it is only justice to say that they did not altogether neglect the discussion of the practical question, *what was to be done*.

Hum-Drum was a Materialist, and Kopy-Keck was a Spiritualist. The former was slow and sententious; the latter was quick and flighty; the latter had generally the first word; the former the last.

“I reassert my former assertion,” began Kopy-Keck, with a plunge. “There is not a fault in the princess, body or soul; only they are wrong put together. Listen to me now, Hum-Drum, and I will tell you in brief what I think. Don’t speak. Don’t answer me. I *won’t* hear you till I have done. At that decisive moment, when souls seek their appointed habitations, two eager souls met, struck, rebounded, lost their way, and arrived each at the wrong place. The soul of the princess was one of those, and she went far astray. She does not belong by rights to this world at all, but to some other planet, probably Mercury. Her proclivity to her true sphere destroys all the natural influence which this orb would otherwise possess over her corporeal frame. She cares for nothing here. There is no relation between her and this world.

“She must therefore be taught, by the sternest compulsion, to take an interest in the earth as the earth. She must study every department of its history—its animal history, its vegetable history, its mineral history, its social history, its moral history, its political history, its scientific history, its literary history, its musical history, its artistical history, above all, its metaphysical history. She must begin with the Chinese dynasty and end with Japan. But first of all she must study geology, and especially the history of the extinct races of animals—their natures, their habits, their loves, their hates, their revenges. She must—”

“Hold, h-o-o-old!” roared Hum-Drum. “It is certainly my turn now. My rooted and insubvertible conviction is, that the causes of the anomalies evident in the princess’s condition are strictly and solely physical. But that is only tantamount to acknowledging that they exist. Hear my opinion. From some cause or other, of no importance to our inquiry, the motion of her heart has been reversed. That remarkable combination of the suction and the force-pump works the wrong way—I mean in the case of the unfortunate princess, it draws in where it should force out, and forces out where it should draw in. The offices of the auricles and the ventricles are subverted. The blood is sent forth by the veins, and returns by the arteries. Consequently it is running the wrong way through all

her corporeal organism—lungs and all. Is it then at all mysterious, seeing that such is the case, that on the other particular of gravitation as well, she should differ from normal humanity? My proposal for the cure is this:

“Phlebotomise until she is reduced to the last point of safety. Let it be effected, if necessary, in a warm bath. When she is reduced to a state of perfect asphyxy, apply a ligature to the left ankle, drawing it as tight as the bone will bear. Apply, at the same moment, another of equal tension around the right wrist. By means of plates constructed for the purpose, place the other foot and hand under the receivers of two air-pumps. Exhaust the receivers. Exhibit a pint of French brandy, and await the result.“

“Which would presently arrive in the form of grim Death,” said Kopy-Keck.

“If it should, she would yet die in doing our duty,” retorted Hum-Drum.

But their Majesties had too much tenderness for their volatile offspring to subject her to either of the schemes of the equally unscrupulous philosophers. Indeed, the most complete knowledge of the laws of nature would have been unserviceable in her case; for it was impossible to classify her. She was a fifth imponderable body, sharing all the other properties of the ponderable.

VIII

Try a Drop of Water

Perhaps the best thing for the princess would have been to fall in love. But how a princess who had no gravity could fall into anything is a difficulty—perhaps *the* difficulty. As for her own feelings on the subject, she did not even know that there was such a beehive of honey and stings to be fallen into. But now I come to mention another curious fact about her.

The palace was built on the shores of the loveliest lake in the world; and the princess loved this lake more than father or mother. The root of this preference no doubt, although the princess did not recognise it as such, was, that the moment she got into it, she recovered the natural right of which she had been so wickedly deprived—namely, gravity. Whether this was owing to the fact that water had been employed as the means of conveying the injury, I do not know. But it is certain that she could swim and dive like the duck that her old nurse said she was. The manner in which this alleviation of her misfortune was discovered was as follows:

One summer evening, during the carnival of the country, she had been taken upon the lake by the king and queen, in the royal barge. They were accompanied by many of the courtiers in a fleet of little boats. In the middle of the lake she wanted to get into the lord chancellor’s barge, for his daughter, who was a great favourite with her, was in it with her father. Now though the old king rarely condescended to make light of his misfortune, yet, happening on this occasion to be in a particularly good humour, as the barges approached each other, he caught up the princess to throw her into the chancellor’s barge. He lost his balance, however, and, dropping into the bottom of the barge, lost his hold of his daughter; not, however, before imparting to her the downward tendency of his own person, though

in a somewhat different direction, for, as the king fell into the boat, she fell into the water. With a burst of delighted laughter she disappeared into the lake. A cry of horror ascended from the boats. They had never seen the princess go down before. Half the men were under water in a moment; but they had all, one after another, come up to the surface again for breath, when—tinkle, tinkle, babble, and gush! came the princess's laugh over the water from far away. There she was, swimming like a swan. Nor would she come out for king or queen, chancellor or daughter. She was perfectly obstinate.

But at the same time she seemed more sedate than usual. Perhaps that was because a great pleasure spoils laughing. At all events, after this, the passion of her life was to get into the water, and she was always the better behaved and the more beautiful the more she had of it. Summer and winter it was quite the same; only she could not stay so long in the water when they had to break the ice to let her in. Any day, from morning to evening in summer, she might be descried—a streak of white in the blue water—lying as still as the shadow of a cloud, or shooting along like a dolphin; disappearing, and coming up again far off, just where one did not expect her. She would have been in the lake of a night too, if she could have had her way; for the balcony of her window overhung a deep pool in it; and through a shallow reedy passage she could have swum out into the wide wet water, and no one would have been any the wiser. Indeed, when she happened to wake in the moonlight she could hardly resist the temptation. But there was the sad difficulty of getting into it. She had as great a dread of the air as some children have of the water. For the slightest gust of wind would blow her away; and a gust might arise in the stillest moment. And if she gave herself a push towards the water and just failed of reaching it, her situation would be dreadfully awkward, irrespective of the wind; for at best there she would have to remain, suspended in her night-gown, till she was seen and angled for by somebody from the window.

"Oh! if I had my gravity," thought she, contemplating the water, "I would flash off this balcony like a long white sea-bird, headlong into the darling wetness. Heigh-ho!"

This was the only consideration that made her wish to be like other people.

Another reason for her being fond of the water was that in it alone she enjoyed any freedom. For she could not walk without a *cortège*, consisting in part of a troop of light-horse, for fear of the liberties which the wind might take with her. And the king grew more apprehensive with increasing years, till at last he would not allow her to walk abroad at all without some twenty silken cords fastened to as many parts of her dress, and held by twenty noblemen. Of course horseback was out of the question. But she bade good-bye to all this ceremony when she got into the water.

And so remarkable were its effects upon her, especially in restoring her for the time to the ordinary human gravity, that Hum-Drum and Kopy-Keck agreed in recommending the king to bury her alive for three years; in the hope that, as the water did her so much good, the earth would do her yet more. But the king had some vulgar prejudices against the experiment, and would not give his consent. Foiled in this, they yet agreed in another recommendation; which, seeing that one imported his opinions from China and the other from Thibet, was very remarkable indeed. They argued that, if water of external origin and application could be so efficacious, water from a deeper source might work a perfect cure; in short, that if the poor afflicted princess could by any means be made to cry, she might

recover her lost gravity.

But how was this to be brought about? Therein lay all the difficulty—to meet which the philosophers were not wise enough. To make the princess cry was as impossible as to make her weigh. They sent for a professional beggar, commanded him to prepare his most touching oracle of woe, helped him out of the court charade box to whatever he wanted for dressing up, and promised great rewards in the event of his success. But it was all in vain. She listened to the mendicant artist's story, and gazed at his marvellous make up, till she could contain herself no longer, and went into the most undignified contortions for relief, shrieking, positively screeching with laughter.

When she had a little recovered herself, she ordered her attendants to drive him away, and not give him a single copper; whereupon his look of mortified discomfiture wrought her punishment and his revenge, for it sent her into violent hysterics, from which she was with difficulty recovered.

But so anxious was the king that the suggestion should have a fair trial, that he put himself in a rage one day, and, rushing up to her room, gave her an awful whipping. Yet not a tear would flow. She looked grave, and her laughing sounded uncommonly like screaming—that was all. The good old tyrant, though he put on his best gold spectacles to look, could not discover the smallest cloud in the serene blue of her eyes.

IX

Put Me in Again!

It must have been about this time that the son of a king, who lived a thousand miles from Lagobel, set out to look for the daughter of a queen. He travelled far and wide, but as sure as he found a princess, he found some fault with her. Of course he could not marry a mere woman, however beautiful; and there was no princess to be found worthy of him. Whether the prince was so near perfection that he had a right to demand perfection itself, I cannot pretend to say. All I know is, that he was a fine, handsome, brave, generous, well-bred, and well-behaved youth, as all princes are.

In his wanderings he had come across some reports about our princess; but as everybody said she was bewitched, he never dreamed that she could bewitch him. For what indeed could a prince do with a princess that had lost her gravity? Who could tell what she might not lose next? She might lose her visibility, or her tangibility; or, in short, the power of making impressions upon the radical sensorium; so that he should never be able to tell whether she was dead or alive. Of course he made no further inquiries about her.

One day he lost sight of his retinue in a great forest. These forests are very useful in delivering princes from their courtiers, like a sieve that keeps back the bran. Then the princes get away to follow their fortunes. In this way they have the advantage of the princesses, who are forced to marry before they have had a bit of fun. I wish our princesses got lost in a forest sometimes.

One lovely evening, after wandering about for many days, he found that he was approaching the outskirts of this forest; for the trees had got so thin that he could see the

sunset through them; and he soon came upon a kind of heath. Next he came upon signs of human neighbourhood; but by this time it was getting late, and there was nobody in the fields to direct him.

After travelling for another hour, his horse, quite worn out with long labour and lack of food, fell, and was unable to rise again. So he continued his journey on foot. A length he entered another wood—not a wild forest, but a civilised wood, through which a footpath led him to the side of a lake. Along this path the prince pursued his way through the gathering darkness. Suddenly he paused, and listened. Strange sounds came across the water. It was, in fact, the princess laughing. Now there was something odd in her laugh, as I have already hinted; for the hatching of a real hearty laugh requires the incubation of gravity; and perhaps this was how the prince mistook the laughter for screaming. Looking over the lake, he saw something white in the water; and, in an instant, he had torn off his tunic, kicked off his sandals, and plunged in. He soon reached the white object, and found that it was a woman. There was not light enough to show that she was a princess, but quite enough to show that she was a lady, for it does not want much light to see that.

Now I cannot tell how it came about—whether she pretended to be drowning, or whether he frightened her, or caught her so as to embarrass her—but certainly he brought her to shore in a fashion ignominious to a swimmer, and more nearly drowned than she had ever expected to be; for the water had got into her throat as often as she had tried to speak.

At the place to which he bore her, the bank was only a foot or two above the water; so he gave her a strong lift out of the water, to lay her on the bank. But, her gravitation ceasing the moment she left the water, away she went up into the air, scolding and screaming.

“You naughty, *naughty*, Naughty, NAUGHTY man!” she cried.

No one had ever succeeded in putting her into a passion before. When the prince saw her ascend, he thought he must have been bewitched, and have mistaken a great swan for a lady. But the princess caught hold of the topmost cone upon a lofty fir. This came off; but she caught at another; and, in fact, stopped herself by gathering cones, dropping them as the stalks gave way. The prince, meantime, stood in the water, staring, and forgetting to get out. But the princess disappearing, he scrambled on shore, and went in the direction of the tree. There he found her climbing down one of the branches towards the stem. But in the darkness of the wood, the prince continued in some bewilderment as to what the phenomenon could be; until, reaching the ground, and seeing him standing there, she caught hold of him, and said:

“I’ll tell papa,”

“Oh no, you won’t!” returned the prince.

“Yes, I will,” she persisted. “What business had you to pull me down out of the water, and throw me to the bottom of the air? I never did you any harm.”

“Pardon me. I did not mean to hurt you.”

“I don’t believe you have any brains; and that is a worse loss than your wretched gravity. I pity you.”

The prince now saw that he had come upon the bewitched princess, and had already

offended her. But before he could think what to say next, she burst out angrily, giving a stamp with her foot that would have sent her aloft again but for the hold she had of his arm:

“Put me up directly.”

“Put you up where, you beauty?” asked the prince.

He had fallen in love with her almost, already; for her anger made her more charming than any one else had ever beheld her; and, as far as he could see, which certainly was not far, she had not a single fault about her, except, of course, that she had not any gravity. No prince, however, would judge of a princess by weight. The loveliness of her foot he would hardly estimate by the depth of the impression it could make in mud.

“Put you up where, you beauty?” asked the prince.

“In the water, you stupid!” answered the princess.

“Come, then,” said the prince.

The condition of her dress, increasing her usual difficulty in walking, compelled her to cling to him; and he could hardly persuade himself that he was not in a delightful dream, notwithstanding the torrent of musical abuse with which she overwhelmed him. The prince being therefore in no hurry, they came upon the lake at quite another part, where the bank was twenty-five feet high at least; and when they had reached the edge, he turned towards the princess, and said:

“How am I to put you in?”

“That is your business,” she answered, quite snappishly. “You took me out—put me in again.”

“Very well,” said the prince; and, catching her up in his arms, he sprang with her from the rock. The princess had just time to give one delighted shriek of laughter before the water closed over them. When they came to the surface, she found that, for a moment or two, she could not even laugh, for she had gone down with such a rush, that it was with difficulty she recovered her breath. The instant they reached the surface—

“How do you like falling in?” said the prince.

After some effort the princess panted out:

“Is that what you call *falling in*?”

“Yes,” answered the prince, “I should think it a very tolerable specimen.”

“It seemed to me like going up,” rejoined she.

“My feeling was certainly one of elevation too,” the prince conceded.

The princess did not appear to understand him, for she retorted his question:

“How do *you* like falling in?” said the princess.

“Beyond everything,” answered he; “for I have fallen in with the only perfect creature I ever saw.”

“No more of that. I am tired of it,” said the princess.

Perhaps she shared her father’s aversion to punning.

“Don’t you like falling in, then?” said the prince.

“It is the most delightful fun I ever had in my life,” answered she. “I never fell before. I wish I could learn. To think I am the only person in my father’s kingdom that can’t fall!”

Here the poor princess looked almost sad.

“I shall be most happy to fall in with you any time you like,” said the prince, devotedly.

“Thank you. I don’t know. Perhaps it would not be proper. But I don’t care. At all events, as we have fallen in, let us have a swim together.”

“With all my heart,” responded the prince.

And away they went, swimming, and diving, and floating, until at last they heard cries along the shore, and saw lights glancing in all directions. It was now quite late, and there was no moon.

“I must go home,” said the princess. “I am very sorry, for this is delightful.”

“So am I,” returned the prince. “But I am glad I haven’t a home to go to—at least, I don’t exactly know where it is.”

“I wish I hadn’t one either,” rejoined the princess; “it is so stupid! I have a great mind,” she continued, “to play them all a trick. Why couldn’t they leave me alone? They won’t trust me in the lake for a single night! You see where that green light is burning? That is the window of my room. Now if you would just swim there with me very quietly, and when we are all but under the balcony, give me such a push—*up* you call it—as you did a little while ago, I should be able to catch hold of the balcony, and get in at the window; and then they may look for me till to-morrow morning!“

“With more obedience than pleasure,” said the prince, gallantly; and away they swam, very gently.

“Will you be in the lake to-morrow night?” the prince ventured to ask.

“To be sure I will. I don’t think so. Perhaps,” was the princess’s somewhat strange answer.

But the prince was intelligent enough not to press her further; and merely whispered, as he gave her the parting lift, “Don’t tell.” The only answer the princess returned was a roguish look. She was already a yard above his head. The look seemed to say, “Never fear. It is too good fun to spoil that way.”

So perfectly like other people had she been in the water, that even yet the prince could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw her ascend slowly, grasp the balcony, and disappear through the window. He turned, almost expecting to see her still by his side. But he was alone in the water. So he swam away quietly, and watched the lights roving about the shore for hours after the princess was safe in her chamber. As soon as they disappeared, he landed in search of his tunic and sword, and, after some trouble, found them again. Then he made the best of his way round the lake to the other side. There the wood was wilder, and the shore steeper—rising more immediately towards the mountains which surrounded

the lake on all sides, and kept sending it messages of silvery streams from morning to night, and all night long. He soon found a spot where he could see the green light in the princess's room, and where, even in the broad daylight, he would be in no danger of being discovered from the opposite shore. It was a sort of cave in the rock, where he provided himself a bed of withered leaves, and lay down too tired for hunger to keep him awake. All night long he dreamed that he was swimming with the princess.

X

Look at the Moon

Early the next morning the prince set out to look for something to eat, which he soon found at a forester's hut, where for many following days he was supplied with all that a brave prince could consider necessary. And having plenty to keep him alive for the present, he would not think of wants not yet in existence. Whenever Care intruded, this prince always bowed him out in the most princely manner.

When he returned from his breakfast to his watch-cave, he saw the princess already floating about in the lake, attended by the king and queen—whom he knew by their crowns—and a great company in lovely little boats, with canopies of all the colours of the rainbow, and flags and streamers of a great many more. It was a very bright day, and the prince, burned up with the heat, began to long for the cold water and the cool princess. But he had to endure till twilight; for the boats had provisions on board, and it was not till the sun went down that the gay party began to vanish. Boat after boat drew away to the shore, following that of the king and queen, till only one, apparently the princess's own boat, remained. But she did not want to go home even yet, and the prince thought he saw her order the boat to the shore without her. At all events it rowed away; and now, of all the radiant company, only one white speck remained. Then the prince began to sing.

And this is what he sung:

"Lady fair,
Swan-white,
Lift thine eyes,
Banish night
By the might
Of thine eyes.

"Snowy arms,
Oars of snow,
Oar her hither,
Plashing low.
Soft and slow,
Oar her hither.

"Stream behind her
O'er the lake,

Radiant whiteness!
In her wake
Following, following, for her sake,
Radiant whiteness!

“Cling about her,
Waters blue;
Part not from her,
But renew
Cold and true
Kisses round her.

“Lap me round,
Waters sad
That have left her
Make me glad,
For ye had
Kissed her ere ye left her.”

Before he had finished his song, the princess was just under the place where he sat, and looking up to find him. Her ears had led her truly.

“Would you like a fall, princess?” said the prince, looking down.

“Ah! there you are! Yes, if you please, prince,” said the princess, looking up.

“How do you know I am a prince, princess?” said the prince.

“Because you are a very nice young man, prince,” said the princess.

“Come up then, princess.”

“Fetch me, prince.”

The prince took off his scarf, then his swordbelt then his tunic, and tied them all together, and let them down. But the line was far too short. He unwound his turban, and added it to the rest, when it was all but long enough; and his purse completed it. The princess just managed to lay hold of the knot of money, and was beside him in a moment. This rock was much higher than the other, and the splash and the dive were tremendous. The princess was in ecstasies of delight, and their swim was delicious.

Night after night they met, and swam about in the dark clear lake, where such was the prince’s gladness, that (whether the princess’s way of looking at things infected him, or he was actually getting light-headed) he often fancied that he was swimming in the sky instead of the lake. But when he talked about being in heaven, the princess laughed at him dreadfully.

When the moon came, she brought them fresh pleasure. Everything looked strange and new in her light, with an old, withered, yet unfading newness. When the moon was nearly full, one of their great delights was to dive deep in the water, and then, turning round, look up through it at the great blot of light close above them, shimmering and trembling and wavering, spreading and contracting, seeming to melt away, and again grow solid. Then

they would shoot up through the blot, and lo! there was the moon, far off, clear and steady and cold, and very lovely, at the bottom of a deeper and bluer lake than theirs, as the princess said.

The prince soon found out that while in the water the princess was very like other people. And besides this, she was not so forward in her questions or pert in her replies at sea as on shore. Neither did she laugh so much; and when she did laugh, it was more gently. She seemed altogether more modest and maidenly in the water than out of it. But when the prince, who had really fallen in love when he fell in the lake, began to talk to her about love, she always turned her head towards him and laughed. After a while she began to look puzzled, as if she were trying to understand what he meant, but could not—revealing a notion that he meant something. But as soon as ever she left the lake, she was so altered, that the prince said to himself, “If I marry her, I see no help for it: we must turn merman and mermaid, and go out to sea at once,“

XI

Hiss!

The princess’s pleasure in the lake had grown to a passion, and she could scarcely bear to be out of it for an hour. Imagine then her consternation, when, diving with the prince one night, a sudden suspicion seized her that the lake was not so deep as it used to be. The prince could not imagine what had happened. She shot to the surface, and, without a word, swam at full speed towards the higher side of the lake. He followed, begging to know if she was ill, or what was the matter. She never turned her head, or took the smallest notice of his question. Arrived at the shore, she coasted the rocks with minute inspection. But she was not able to come to a conclusion, for the moon was very small, and so she could not see well. She turned therefore and swam home, without saying a word to explain her conduct to the prince, of whose presence she seemed no longer conscious. He withdrew to his cave, in great perplexity and distress.

Next day she made many observations, which, alas! strengthened her fears. She saw that the banks were too dry; and that the grass on the shore, and the trailing plants on the rocks, were withering away. She caused marks to be made along the borders, and examined them, day after day, in all directions of the wind; till at last the horrible idea became a certain fact—that the surface of the lake was slowly sinking.

The poor princess nearly went out of the little mind she had. It was awful to her to see the lake, which she loved more than any living thing, lie dying before her eyes. It sank away, slowly vanishing. The tops of rocks that had never been seen till now, began to appear far down in the clear water. Before long they were dry in the sun. It was fearful to think of the mud that would soon lie there baking and festering, full of lovely creatures dying, and ugly creatures coming to life, like the unmaking of a world. And how hot the sun would be without any lake! She could not bear to swim in it any more, and began to pine away. Her life seemed bound up with it; and ever as the lake sank, she pined. People said she would not live an hour after the lake was gone.

But she never cried.

Proclamation was made to all the kingdom, that whosoever should discover the cause of the lake's decrease, would be rewarded after a princely fashion. Hum-Drum and Kopy-Keck applied themselves to their physics and metaphysics; but in vain. Not even they could suggest a cause.

Now the fact was that the old princess was at the root of the mischief. When she heard that her niece found more pleasure in the water than any one else had out of it, she went into a rage, and cursed herself for her want of foresight,

"But," said she, "I will soon set all right. The king and the people shall die of thirst; their brains shall boil and frizzle in their skulls before I will lose my revenge."

And she laughed a ferocious laugh, that made the hairs on the back of her black cat stand erect with terror.

Then she went to an old chest in the room, and opening it, took out what looked like a piece of dried seaweed. This she threw into a tub of water. Then she threw some powder into the water, and stirred it with her bare arm, muttering over it words of hideous sound, and yet more hideous import. Then she set the tub aside, and took from the chest a huge bunch of a hundred rusty keys, that clattered in her shaking hands. Then she sat down and proceeded to oil them all. Before she had finished, out from the tub, the water of which had kept on a slow motion ever since she had ceased stirring it, came the head and half the body of a huge gray snake. But the witch did not look round. It grew out of the tub, waving itself backwards and forwards with a slow horizontal motion, till it reached the princess, when it laid its head upon her shoulder, and gave a low hiss in her ear. She started—but with joy; and seeing the head resting on her shoulder, drew it towards her and kissed it. Then she drew it all out of the tub, and wound it round her body. It was one of those dreadful creatures which few have ever beheld—the White Snakes of Darkness.

Then she took the keys and went down to her cellar; and as she unlocked the door she said to herself:

"This *is* worth living for!"

Locking the door behind her, she descended a few steps into the cellar, and crossing it, unlocked another door into a dark, narrow passage. She locked this also behind her, and descended a few more steps. If any one had followed the witch-princess, he would have heard her unlock exactly one hundred doors, and descend a few steps after unlocking each. When she had unlocked the last, she entered a vast cave, the roof of which was supported by huge natural pillars of rock. Now this roof was the under side of the bottom of the lake.

She then untwined the snake from her body, and held it by the tail high above her. The hideous creature stretched up its head towards the roof of the cavern, which it was just able to reach. It then began to move its head backwards and forwards, with a slow oscillating motion, as if looking for something. At the same moment the witch began to walk round and round the cavern, coming nearer to the centre every circuit; while the head of the snake described the same path over the roof that she did over the floor, for she kept holding it up. And still it kept slowly osculating. Round and round the cavern they went, ever lessening the circuit, till at last the snake made a sudden dart, and clung to the roof with its mouth.

“That’s right, my beauty!” cried the princess; “drain it dry.“

She let it go, left it hanging, and sat down on a great stone, with her black cat, which had followed her all round the cave, by her side. Then she began to knit and mutter awful words. The snake hung like a huge leech, sucking at the stone; the cat stood with his back arched, and his tail like a piece of cable, looking up at the snake; and the old woman sat and knitted and muttered. Seven days and seven nights they remained thus; when suddenly the serpent dropped from the roof as if exhausted, and shrivelled up till it was again like a piece of dried seaweed. The witch started to her feet, picked it up, put it in her pocket, and looked up at the roof. One drop of water was trembling on the spot where the snake had been sucking. As soon as she saw that, she turned and fled, followed by her cat. Shutting the door in a terrible hurry, she locked it, and having muttered some frightful words, sped to the next, which also she locked and muttered over; and so with all the hundred doors, till she arrived in her own cellar. Then she sat down on the floor ready to faint, but listening with malicious delight to the rushing of the water, which she could hear distinctly through all the hundred doors.

But this was not enough. Now that she had tasted revenge, she lost her patience. Without further measures, the lake would be too long in disappearing. So the next night, with the last shred of the dying old moon rising, she took some of the water in which she had revived the snake, put it in a bottle, and set out, accompanied by her cat. Before morning she had made the entire circuit of the lake, muttering fearful words as she crossed every stream, and casting into it some of the water out of her bottle. When she had finished the circuit she muttered yet again, and flung a handful of water towards the moon. Thereupon every spring in the country ceased to throb and bubble, dying away like the pulse of a dying man. The next day there was no sound of falling water to be heard along the borders of the lake. The very courses were dry; and the mountains showed no silvery streaks down their dark sides. And not alone had the fountains of mother Earth ceased to flow; for all the babies throughout the country were crying dreadfully—only without tears.

XII

Where Is the Prince?

Never since the night when the princess left him so abruptly had the prince had a single interview with her. He had seen her once or twice in the lake; but as far as he could discover, she had not been in it any more at night. He had sat and sung, and looked in vain for his Nereid, while she, like a true Nereid, was wasting away with her lake, sinking as it sank, withering as it dried. When at length he discovered the change that was taking place in the level of the water, he was in great alarm and perplexity. He could not tell whether the lake was dying because the lady had forsaken it; or whether the lady would not come because the lake had begun to sink. But he resolved to know so much at least.

He disguised himself, and, going to the palace, requested to see the lord chamberlain. His appearance at once gained his request; and the lord chamberlain, being a man of some insight, perceived that there was more in the prince’s solicitation than met the ear. He felt likewise that no one could tell whence a solution of the present difficulties might arise. So

he granted the prince’s prayer to be made shoeblack to the princess. It was rather cunning in the prince to request such an easy post, for the princess could not possibly soil as many shoes as other princesses.

He soon learned all that could be told about the princess. He went nearly distracted; but after roaming about the lake for days, and diving in every depth that remained, all that he could do was to put an extra polish on the dainty pair of boots that was never called for.

For the princess kept her room, with the curtains drawn to shut out the dying lake, but could not shut it out of her mind for a moment. It haunted her imagination so that she felt as if the lake were her soul, drying up within her, first to mud, then to madness and death. She thus brooded over the change, with all its dreadful accompaniments, till she was nearly distracted. As for the prince, she had forgotten him. However much she had enjoyed his company in the water, she did not care for him without it. But she seemed to have forgotten her father and mother too.

The lake went on sinking. Small slimy spots began to appear, which glittered steadily amidst the changeful shine of the water. These grew to broad patches of mud, which widened and spread, with rocks here and there, and floundering fishes and crawling eels swarming. The people went everywhere catching these, and looking for anything that might have dropped from the royal boats.

At length the lake was all but gone, only a few of the deepest pools remaining unexhausted.

It happened one day that a party of youngsters found themselves on the brink of one of these pools in the very centre of the lake. It was a rocky basin of considerable depth. Looking in, they saw at the bottom something that shone yellow in the sun. A little boy jumped in and dived for it. It was a plate of gold covered with writing. They carried it to the king.

On one side of it stood these words:

“Death alone from death can save.
Love is death, and so is brave.
Love can fill the deepest grave.
Love loves on beneath the wave.”

Now this was enigmatical enough to the king and courtiers. But the reverse of the plate explained it a little. Its writing amounted to this:

“If the lake should disappear, they must find the hole through which the water ran. But it would be useless to try to stop it by any ordinary means. There was but one effectual mode. The body of a living man could alone staunch the flow. The man must give himself of his own will; and the lake must take his life as it filled. Otherwise the offering would be of no avail. If the nation could not provide one hero, it was time it should perish,“

XIII

Here I Am!

This was a very disheartening revelation to the king—not that he was unwilling to sacrifice a subject, but that he was hopeless of finding a man willing to sacrifice himself. No time was to be lost however, for the princess was lying motionless on her bed, and taking no nourishment but lake-water, which was now none of the best. Therefore the king caused the contents of the wonderful plate of gold to be published throughout the country.

No one, however, came forward.

The prince, having gone several days' journey into the forest, to consult a hermit whom he had met there on his way to Lagobel, knew nothing of the oracle till his return.

When he had acquainted himself with all the particulars, he sat down and thought:

"She will die if I don't do it, and life would be nothing to me without her; so I shall lose nothing by doing it. And life will be as pleasant to her as ever, for she will soon forget me. And there will be so much more beauty and happiness in the world! To be sure, I shall not see it." (Here the poor prince gave a sigh.) "How lovely the lake will be in the moonlight, with that glorious creature sporting in it like a wild goddess! It is rather hard to be drowned by inches, though. Let me see—that will be seventy inches of me to drown." (Here he tried to laugh, but could not.) "The longer the better, however," he resumed, "for can I not bargain that the princess shall be beside me all the time? So I shall see her once more, kiss her perhaps—who knows? and die looking in her eyes. It will be no death. At least, I shall not feel it. And to see the lake filling for the beauty again! All right! I am ready."

He kissed the princess's boot, laid it down, and hurried to the king's apartment. But feeling, as he went, that anything sentimental would be disagreeable, he resolved to carry off the whole affair with nonchalance. So he knocked at the door of the king's counting-house, where it was all but a capital crime to disturb him.

When the king heard the knock, he started up, and opened the door in a rage. Seeing only the shoeblack, he drew his sword. This, I am sorry to say, was his usual mode of asserting his regality when he thought his dignity was in danger. But the prince was not in the least alarmed.

"Please your majesty, I'm your butler," said he.

"My butler! you lying rascal! What do you mean?"

"I mean, I will cork your big bottle."

"Is the fellow mad?" bawled the king, raising the point of his sword.

"I will put the stopper—plug—what you call it, in your leaky lake, grand monarch," said the prince.

The king was in such a rage that before he could speak he had time to cool, and to reflect that it would be great waste to kill the only man who was willing to be useful in the present emergency, seeing that in the end the insolent fellow would be as dead as if he had died by his majesty's own hand.

“Oh!” said he at last, putting up his sword with difficulty, it was so long; “I am obliged to you, you young fool! Take a glass of wine?”

“No, thank you,” replied the prince.

“Very well,” said the king. “Would you like to run and see your parents before you make your experiment?”

“No, thank you,” said the prince.

“Then we will go and look for the hole at once,” said his majesty, and proceeded to call some attendants.

“Stop, please your majesty, I have a condition to make,” interposed the prince.

“What!” exclaimed the king, “a condition! and with me! How dare you?”

“As you please,” returned the prince, coolly. “I wish your majesty a good morning,”

“You wretch! I will have you put in a sack, and stuck in the hole.”

“Very well, your majesty,” replied the prince, becoming a little more respectful, lest the wrath of the king should deprive him of the pleasure of dying for the princess. “But what good will that do your majesty? Please to remember that the oracle says the victim must offer himself.”

“Well, you *have* offered yourself,” retorted the king.

“Yes, upon one condition.”

“Condition again!” roared the king, once more drawing his sword. “Begone! Somebody else will be glad enough to take the honour off your shoulders.“

“Your majesty knows it will not be easy to get another to take my place.”

“Well, what is your condition?” growled the king, feeling that the prince was right.

“Only this,” replied the prince; “that, as I must on no account die before I am fairly drowned, and the waiting will be rather wearisome, the princess, your daughter, shall go with me, feed me with her own hands, and look at me now and then to comfort me; for you must confess it *is* rather hard. As soon as the water is up to my eyes, she may go and be happy, and forget her poor shoeblack.”

Here the prince’s voice faltered, and he very nearly grew sentimental, in spite of his resolution.

“Why didn’t you tell me before what your condition was? Such a fuss about nothing!” exclaimed the king.

“Do you grant it?” persisted the prince.

“Of course I do,” replied the king.

“Very well. I am ready.”

“Go and have some dinner, then, while I set my people to find the place.”

The king ordered out his guards, and gave directions to the officers to find the hole in the

lake at once. So the bed of the lake was marked out in divisions and thoroughly examined, and in an hour or so the hole was discovered. It was in the middle of a stone, near the centre of the lake, in the very pool where the golden plate had been found. It was a three-cornered hole of no great size. There was water all round the stone, but very little was flowing through the hole.

XIV

This Is Very Kind of You

The prince went to dress for the occasion, for he was resolved to die like a prince.

When the princess heard that a man had offered to die for her, she was so transported that she jumped off the bed, feeble as she was, and danced about the room for joy. She did not care who the man was; that was nothing to her. The hole wanted stopping; and if only a man would do, why, take one. In an hour or two more everything was ready. Her maid dressed her in haste, and they carried her to the side of the lake. When she saw it she shrieked, and covered her face with her hands. They bore her across to the stone, where they had already placed a little boat for her. The water was not deep enough to float in, but they hoped it would be, before long. They laid her on cushions, placed in the boat wines and fruits and other nice things, and stretched a canopy over all.

In a few minutes the prince appeared. The princess recognised him at once, but did not think it worth while to acknowledge him.

“Here I am,” said the prince. “Put me in.”

“They told me it was a shoeblack,” said the princess.

“So I am,” said the prince. “I blacked your little boots three times a day, because they were all I could get of you. Put me in.“

The courtiers did not resent his bluntness, except by saying to each other that he was taking it out in impudence.

But how was he to be put in? The golden plate contained no instructions on this point. The prince looked at the hole, and saw but one way. He put both his legs into it, sitting on the stone, and, stooping forward, covered the corner that remained open with his two hands. In this uncomfortable position he resolved to abide his fate, and turning to the people, said:

“Now you can go.”

The king had already gone home to dinner.

“Now you can go,” repeated the princess after him, like a parrot.

The people obeyed her and went.

Presently a little wave flowed over the stone, and wetted one of the prince’s knees. But he did not mind it much. He began to sing, and the song he sang was this:

“As a world that has no well,

Darkly bright in forest dell;
As a world without the gleam
Of the downward-going stream;
As a world without the glance
Of the ocean’s fair expanse;
As a world where never rain
Glittered on the sunny plain;—
Such, my heart, thy world would be,
If no love did flow in thee.

“As a world without the sound
Of the rivulets underground;
Or the bubbling of the spring
Out of darkness wandering;
Or the mighty rush and flowing
Of the river’s downward going;
Or the music-showers that drop
On the outspread beech’s top;
Or the ocean’s mighty voice,
When his lifted waves rejoice;—Such,
my soul, thy world would be,
If no love did sing in thee.

“Lady, keep thy world’s delight,
Keep the waters in thy sight
Love hath made me strong to go,
For thy sake, to realms below,
Where the water’s shine and hum
Through the darkness never come.
Let, I pray, one thought of me
Spring, a little well, in thee;
Lest thy loveless soul be found
Like a dry and thirsty ground.”

“Sing again, prince. It makes it less tedious,” said the princess.

But the prince was too much overcome to sing any more, and a long pause followed.

“This is very kind of you, prince,” said the princess at last, quite coolly, as she lay in the boat with her eyes shut.

“I am sorry I can’t return the compliment,” thought the prince, “but you are worth dying for, after all.”

Again a wavelet, and another, and another flowed over the stone, and wetted both the prince’s knees; but he did not speak or move. Two—three—four hours passed in this way, the princess apparently asleep, and the prince very patient. But he was much disappointed in his position, for he had none of the consolation he had hoped for.

At last he could bear it no longer.

“Princess!” said he.

But at the moment up started the princess, crying:

“I’m afloat! I’m afloat!”

And the little boat bumped against the stone.

“Princess!” repeated the prince, encouraged by seeing her wide awake and looking eagerly at the water.

“Well?” said she, without looking round.

“Your papa promised that you should look at me, and you haven’t looked at me once.”

“Did he? Then I suppose I must. But I am so sleepy!”

“Sleep, then, darling, and don’t mind me,” said the poor prince.

“Really, you are very good,” replied the princess. “I think I will go to sleep again.”

“Just give me a glass of wine and a biscuit first,” said the prince, very humbly.

“With all my heart,” said the princess, and yawned as she said it.

She got the wine and the biscuit, however, and leaning over the side of the boat towards him, was compelled to look at him.

“Why, prince,” she said, “you don’t look well! Are you sure you don’t mind it?”

“Not a bit,” answered he, feeling very faint indeed. “Only I shall die before it is of any use to you, unless I have something to eat,”

“There, then,” said she, holding out the wine to him.

“Ah! you must feed me. I dare not move my hands. The water would run away directly.”

“Good gracious!” said the princess; and she began at once to feed him with bits of biscuit and sips of wine.

As she fed him, he contrived to kiss the tips of her fingers now and then. She did not seem to mind it, one way or the other. But the prince felt better.

“Now, for your own sake, princess,” said he, “I cannot let you go to sleep. You must sit and look at me, else I shall not be able to keep up.”

“Well, I will do anything to oblige you,” answered she, with condescension; and, sitting down, she did look at him, and kept looking at him with wonderful steadiness, considering all things.

The sun went down, and the moon rose, and, gush after gush, the waters were rising up the prince’s body. They were up to his waist now.

“Why can’t we go and have a swim?” said the princess. “There seems to be water enough just about here.”

“I shall never swim more,” said the prince.

“Oh, I forgot,” said the princess, and was silent.

So the water grew and grew, and rose up and up on the prince. And the princess sat and looked at him. She fed him now and then. The night wore on. The waters rose and rose. The moon rose likewise higher and higher, and shone full on the face of the dying prince. The water was up to his neck.

“Will you kiss me, princess?” said he, feebly. The nonchalance was all gone now.

“Yes, I will,” answered the princess, and kissed him with a long, sweet, cold kiss.

“Now,” said he, with a sigh of content, “I die happy.”

He did not speak again. The princess gave him some wine for the last time: he was past eating. Then she sat down again, and looked at him. The water rose and rose. It touched his chin. It touched his lower lip. It touched between his lips. He shut them hard to keep it out. The princess began to feel strange. It touched his upper lip. He breathed through his nostrils. The princess looked wild. It covered his nostrils. Her eyes looked scared, and shone strange in the moonlight. His head fell back; the water closed over it, and the bubbles of his last breath bubbled up through the water. The princess gave a shriek, and sprang into the lake.

She laid hold first of one leg, and then of the other, and pulled and tugged, but she could not move either. She stopped to take breath, and that made her think that he could not get any breath. She was frantic. She got hold of him, and held his head above the water, which was possible now his hands were no longer on the hole. But it was of no use, for he was past breathing.

Love and water brought back all her strength. She got under the water, and pulled and pulled with her whole might, till at last she got one leg out. The other easily followed. How she got him into the boat she never could tell; but when she did, she fainted away. Coming to herself, she seized the oars, kept herself steady as best she could, and rowed and rowed, though she had never rowed before. Round rocks, and over shallows, and through mud she rowed, till she got to the landing-stairs of the palace. By this time her people were on the shore, for they had heard her shriek. She made them carry the prince to her own room, and lay him in her bed, and light a fire, and send for the doctors.

“But the lake, your highness!” said the chamberlain, who, roused by the noise, came in, in his nightcap.

“Go and drown yourself in it!” she said.

This was the last rudeness of which the princess was ever guilty; and one must allow that she had good cause to feel provoked with the lord chamberlain.

Had it been the king himself, he would have fared no better. But both he and the queen were fast asleep. And the chamberlain went back to his bed. Somehow, the doctors never came. So the princess and her old nurse were left with the prince. But the old nurse was a wise woman, and knew what to do.

They tried everything for a long time without success. The princess was nearly distracted between hope and fear, but she tried on and on, one thing after another, and everything over and over again.

At last, when they had all but given it up, just as the sun rose, the prince opened his eyes.

XV

Look at the Rain!

The princess burst into a passion of tears and *fell* on the floor. There she lay for an hour, and her tears never ceased. All the pent-up crying of her life was spent now. And a rain came on, such as had never been seen in that country. The sun shone all the time, and the great drops, which fell straight to the earth, shone likewise. The palace was in the heart of a rainbow. It was a rain of rubies, and sapphires, and emeralds, and topazes. The torrents poured from the mountains like molten gold; and if it had not been for its subterraneous outlet, the lake would have overflowed and inundated the country. It was full from shore to shore.

But the princess did not heed the lake. She lay on the floor and wept. And this rain within doors was far more wonderful than the rain out of doors. For when it abated a little, and she proceeded to rise, she found, to her astonishment, that she could not. At length, after many efforts, she succeeded in getting upon her feet. But she tumbled down again directly. Hearing her fall, her old nurse uttered a yell of delight, and ran to her, screaming:

“My darling child! she’s found her gravity!”

“Oh, that’s it! is it?” said the princess, rubbing her shoulder and her knee alternately. “I consider it very unpleasant. I feel as if I should be crushed to pieces.”

“Hurrah!” cried the prince from the bed. “If you’ve come round, princess, so have I. How’s the lake?“

“Brimful,” answered the nurse.

“Then we’re all happy.”

“That we are indeed!” answered the princess, sobbing.

And there was rejoicing all over the country that rainy day. Even the babies forgot their past troubles, and danced and crowed amazingly. And the king told stories, and the queen listened to them. And he divided the money in his box, and she the honey in her pot, among all the children. And there was such jubilation as was never heard of before.

Of course the prince and princess were betrothed at once. But the princess had to learn to walk, before they could be married with any propriety. And this was not so easy at her time of life, for she could walk no more than a baby. She was always falling down and hurting herself.

“Is this the gravity you used to make so much of?” said she one day to the prince, as he raised her from the floor. “For my part, I was a great deal more comfortable without it.”

“No, no, that’s not it. This is it,” replied the prince, as he took her up, and carried her about like a baby, kissing her all the time. “This is gravity.”

“That’s better,” said she. “I don’t mind that so much.”

And she smiled the sweetest, loveliest smile in the prince’s face. And she gave him one little kiss in return for all his; and he thought them overpaid, for he was beside himself with delight. I fear she complained of her gravity more than once after this, notwithstanding.

It was a long time before she got reconciled to walking. But the pain of learning it was quite counterbalanced by two things, either of which would have been sufficient consolation. The first was, that the prince himself was her teacher; and the second, that she could tumble into the lake as often as she pleased. Still, she preferred to have the prince jump in with her; and the splash they made before was nothing to the splash they made now.

The lake never sank again. In process of time it wore the roof of the cavern quite through, and was twice as deep as before.

The only revenge the princess took upon her aunt was to tread pretty hard on her gouty toe the next time she saw her. But she was sorry for it the very next day, when she heard that the water had undermined her house, and that it had fallen in the night, burying her in its ruins; whence no one ever ventured to dig up her body. There she lies to this day.

So the prince and princess lived and were happy; and had crowns of gold, and clothes of cloth, and shoes of leather, and children of boys and girls, not one of whom was ever known, on the most critical occasion, to lose the smallest atom of his or her due proportion of gravity.

CHAPTER XXIV

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

There was once a very rich merchant, who had six children, three boys and three girls. As he was himself a man of great sense, he spared no expense for their education, but provided them with all sorts of masters for their improvement. The three daughters were all handsome, but particularly the youngest: indeed she was so very beautiful that in her childhood every one called her the Little Beauty, and being still the same when she was grown up, nobody called her by any other name, which made her sisters very jealous of her. This youngest daughter was not only more handsome than her sisters, but was also better tempered. The two eldest were vain of being rich, and spoke with pride to those they thought below them. They gave themselves a thousand airs, and would not visit other merchants' daughters; nor would they indeed be seen with any but persons of quality. They went every day to balls, plays, and public walks, and always made game of their youngest sister for spending her time in reading, or other useful employments. As it was well known that these young ladies would have large fortunes, many great merchants wished to get them for wives; but the two eldest always answered that, for their parts, they had no thoughts of marrying any one below a duke, or an earl at least. Beauty had quite as many offers as her sisters, but she always answered with the greatest civility, that she was much obliged to her lovers, but would rather live some years longer with her father, as she thought herself too young to marry.

It happened that by some unlucky accident the merchant suddenly lost all his fortune, and had nothing left but a small cottage in the country. Upon this, he said to his daughters, while the tears ran down his cheeks all the time, "My children, we must now go and dwell in the cottage, and try to get a living by labour, for we have no other means of support." The two eldest replied that, for their parts, they did not know how to work, and would not leave town; for they had lovers enough who would be glad to marry them, though they had no longer any fortune. But in this they were mistaken; for when the lovers heard what had happened, they said, "The girls were so proud and ill-tempered, that all we wanted was their fortune; we are not sorry at all to see their pride brought down. Let them give themselves airs to their cows and sheep." But every body pitied poor Beauty, because she was so sweet-tempered and kind to all that knew her; and several gentlemen offered to marry her, though she had not a penny; but Beauty still refused, and said she could not think of leaving her poor father in this trouble and would go and help him in his labours in the country. At first Beauty could not help sometimes crying in secret for the hardships she was now obliged to suffer; but in a very short time she said to herself, "All the crying in the world will do me no good, so I will try to be happy without a fortune."

When they had removed to their cottage, the merchant and his three sons employed themselves in ploughing and sowing the fields, and working in the garden. Beauty also did her part, for she got up by four o'clock every morning, lighted the fires, cleaned the house, and got the breakfast for the whole family. At first she found all this very hard; but she soon grew quite used to it, and thought it no hardship at all; and indeed the work greatly

amended her health. When she had done, she used to amuse herself with reading, playing on her music, or singing while she spun. But her two sisters were at a loss what to do to pass the time away: they had their breakfast in bed, and did not rise till ten o'clock. Then they commonly walked out; but always found themselves very soon tired; when they would often sit down under a shady tree, and grieve for the loss of their carriage and fine clothes, and say to each other, "What a mean-spirited poor stupid creature our young sister is, to be so content with our low way of life!" But their father thought in quite another way: he admired the patience of this sweet young creature; for her sisters not only left her to do the whole work of the house, but made game of her every moment.

After they had lived in this manner about a year, the merchant received a letter, which informed him that one of the richest ships, which he thought was lost, had just come into port. This news made the two eldest sisters almost mad with joy; for they thought they should now leave the cottage, and have all their finery again. When they found that their father must take a journey to the ship, the two eldest begged he would not fail to bring them back some new gowns, caps, rings, and all sorts of trinkets. But Beauty asked for nothing; for she thought in herself that all the ship was worth would hardly buy every thing her sisters wished for. "Beauty," said the merchant, "how comes it about that you ask for nothing; what can I bring you, my child?" "Since you are so kind as to think of me, dear father," she answered, "I should be glad if you would bring me a rose, for we have none in our garden." Now Beauty did not indeed wish for a rose, nor any thing else, but she only said this, that she might not affront her sisters, for else they would have said she wanted her father to praise her for not asking him for any thing. The merchant took his leave of them and set out on his journey; but when he got to the ship, some persons went to law with him about the cargo, and after a deal of trouble, he came back to his cottage as poor as he had gone away. When he was within thirty miles of his home, and thinking of the joy he should have in again meeting his children, his road lay through a thick forest, and he quite lost himself. It rained and snowed very hard, and besides, the wind was so high as to throw him twice from his horse. Night came on, and he thought to be sure he should die of cold and hunger, or be torn to pieces by the wolves that he heard howling round him. All at once, he now cast his eyes towards a long row of trees, and saw a light at the end of them, but it seemed a great way off. He made the best of his way towards it, and found that it came from a fine palace, lighted all over. He walked faster, and soon reached the gates, which he opened, and was very much surprised that he did not see a single person or creature in any of the yards. His horse had followed him, and finding a stable with the door open, went into it at once; and here the poor beast, being nearly starved, helped himself to a good meal of oats and hay. His master then tied him up, and walked towards the house, which he entered, but still without seeing a living creature. He went on to a large hall, where he found a good fire, and a table covered with some very nice dishes, and only one plate with a knife and fork. As the snow and rain had wetted him to the skin, he went up to the fire to dry himself. "I hope," said he, "the master of the house or his servants will excuse me, for to be sure it will not be long now before I see them." He waited a good time, but still nobody came: at last the clock struck eleven, and the merchant, being quite faint for the want of food, helped himself to a chicken, which he made but two mouthfuls of, and then to a few glasses of wine, yet all the time trembling with fear. He sat till the clock struck twelve, but did not see a single creature. He now took courage, and began to think of looking a little more about him; so he opened a door at the

end of the hall, and went through it into a very grand room, In which there was a fine bed; and as he was quite weak and tired, he shut the door, took off his clothes, and got into it.

It was ten o'clock in the morning before he thought of getting up, when he was amazed to see a handsome new suit of clothes laid ready for him, instead of his own, which he had spoiled. "To be sure," said he to himself, "this place belongs to some good fairy, who has taken pity on my ill luck." He looked out of the window, and, instead of snow, he saw the most charming arbours covered with all kinds of flowers. He returned to the hall, where he had supped, and found a breakfast table, with some chocolate got ready for him. "Indeed, my good fairy," said the merchant aloud, "I am vastly obliged to you for your kind care of me." He then made a hearty breakfast, took his hat, and was going to the stable to pay his horse a visit; but as he passed under one of the arbours, which was loaded with roses, he thought of what Beauty had asked him to bring back to her, and so he took a bunch of roses to carry home. At the same moment he heard a most shocking noise, and saw such a frightful beast coming towards him, that he was ready to drop with fear. "Ungrateful man!" said the beast, in a terrible voice, "I have saved your life by letting you into my palace, and in return you steal my roses, which I value more than any thing else that belongs to me. But you shall make amends for your fault with your life. You shall die in a quarter of an hour." The merchant fell on his knees to the beast, and clasping his hands, said, "My lord, I humbly beg your pardon. I did not think it would offend you to gather a rose for one of my daughters, who wished to have one." "I am not a lord, but a beast," replied the monster; "I do not like false compliments, but that people should say what they think: so do not fancy that you can coax me by any such ways. You tell me that you have daughters; now I will pardon you, if one of them will agree to come and die instead of you. Go; and if your daughters should refuse, promise me that you yourself will return in three months."

The tender-hearted merchant had no thought of letting any one of his daughters die instead of him; but he knew that if he seemed to accept the beast's terms, he should at least have the pleasure of seeing them once again. So he gave the beast his promise; and the beast told him he might then set off as soon as he liked. "But," said the beast, "I do not wish you to go back empty-handed. Go to the room you slept in, and you will find a chest there; fill it with just what you like best, and I will get it taken to your own house for you," When the beast had said this, he went away; and the good merchant said to himself, "If I must die, yet I shall now have the comfort of leaving my children some riches," He returned to the room he had slept in, and found a great many pieces of gold. He filled the chest with them to the very brim, locked it, and mounting his horse, left the palace as sorry as he had been glad when he first found it. The horse took a path across the forest of his own accord, and in a few hours they reached the merchant's house. His children came running round him as he got off his horse; but the merchant, instead of kissing them with joy, could not help crying as he looked at them. He held in his hand the bunch of roses, which he gave to Beauty, saying: "Take these roses, Beauty; but little do you think how dear they have cost your poor father;" and then he gave them an account of all that he had seen or heard in the palace of the beast. The two eldest sisters now began to shed tears, and to lay the blame upon Beauty, who they said would be the cause of her father's death "See," said they, "what happens from the pride of the little wretch. Why did not she ask for fine things as we did? But, to be sure, miss must not be like other people; and though she will be the

cause of her father's death, yet she does not shed a tear." "It would be of no use," replied Beauty, "to weep for the death of my father, for he shall not die now. As the beast will accept of one of his daughters, I will give myself up to him; and think myself happy in being able at once to save his life, and prove my love for the best of fathers." "No, sister," said the three brothers, "you shall not die; we will go in search for this monster, and either he or we will perish." "Do not hope to kill him," said the merchant, "for his power is far too great for you to be able to do any such thing. I am charmed with the kindness of Beauty, but I will not suffer her life to be lost. I myself am old, and cannot expect to live much longer; so I shall but give up a few years of my life, and shall only grieve for the sake of my children." "Never, father," cried Beauty, "shall you go to the palace without me; for you cannot hinder my going after you. Though young, I am not over fond of life; and I would much rather be eaten up by the monster, than die of the grief your loss would give me." The merchant tried in vain to reason with Beauty, for she would go; which, in truth, made her two sisters glad, for they were jealous of her, because everybody loved her.

The merchant was so grieved at the thoughts of losing his child, that he never once thought of the chest filled with gold; but at night, to his great surprise, he found it standing by his bedside. He said nothing about his riches to his eldest daughters, for he knew very well it would at once make them want to return to town; but he told Beauty his secret, and she then said, that while he was away, two gentlemen had been on a visit to their cottage, who had fallen in love with her two sisters. She then begged her father to marry them without delay; for she was so sweet-tempered, that she loved them for all they had used her so ill, and forgave them with all her heart. When the three months were past, the merchant and Beauty got ready to set out for the palace of the beast. Upon this, the two sisters rubbed their eyes with an onion, to make believe they shed a great many tears; but both the merchant and his sons cried in earnest. There was only Beauty who did not, for she thought that this would only make the matter worse. They reached the palace in a very few hours, and the horse, without bidding, went into the same stable as before. The merchant and Beauty walked towards the large hall, where they found a table covered with every dainty, and two plates laid ready. The merchant had very little appetite; but Beauty, that she might the better hide her grief, placed herself at the table, and helped her father; she then began herself to eat, and thought all the time that to be sure the beast had a mind to fatten her before he eat her up, as he had got such good cheer for her. When they had done their supper, they heard a great noise, and the good old man began to bid his poor child farewell, for he knew it was the beast coming to them. When Beauty first saw his frightful form, she could not help being afraid; but she tried to hide her fear as much as she could. The beast asked her if she had come quite of her own accord, and though she was now still more afraid than before, she made shift to say, "Y-e-s." "You are a good girl, and I think myself very much obliged to you." He then turned towards her father, and said to him, "Good man, you may leave the palace to-morrow morning, and take care never to come back to it again. Good night, Beauty." "Good night, beast," said she; and then the monster went out of the room.

"Ah! my dear child," said the merchant, kissing his daughter, "I am half dead already, at the thoughts of leaving you with this dreadful beast; you had better go back, and let me stay in your place." "No," said Beauty boldly, "I will never agree to that; you must go

home to-morrow morning." They then wished each other good night, and went to bed, both of them thinking they should not be able to close their eyes; but as soon as ever they had laid down, they fell into a deep sleep, and did not wake till morning. Beauty dreamed that a lady came up to her, who said, "I am very much pleased, Beauty, with the goodness you have shown, in being willing to give your life to save that of your father; and it shall not go without a reward." As soon as Beauty awoke, she told her father this dream; but though it gave him some comfort, he could not take leave of his darling child without shedding many tears. When the merchant got out of sight, Beauty sat down in the large hall, and began to cry also; yet she had a great deal of courage, and so she soon resolved not to make her sad case still worse by sorrow, which she knew could not be of any use to her, but to wait as well as she could till night, when she thought the beast would not fail to come and eat her up. She walked about to take a view of all the palace, and the beauty of every part of it much charmed her.

But what was her surprise, when she came to a door on which was written, *Beauty's room*! She opened it in haste, and her eyes were all at once dazzled at the grandeur of the inside of the room. What made her wonder more than all the rest was a large library filled with books, a harpsichord, and many other pieces of music. "The beast takes care I shall not be at a loss how to amuse myself," said she. She then thought that it was not likely such things would have been got ready for her, if she had but one day to live; and began to hope all would not turn out so bad as she and her father had feared. She opened the library, and saw these verses written in letters of gold on the back of one of the books:

"Beauteous lady, dry your tears,
Here's no cause for sighs or fears;
Command as freely as you may,
Enjoyment still shall mark your sway."

"Alas!" said she, sighing, "there is nothing I so much desire as to see my poor father and to know what he is doing at this moment," She said this to herself; but just then by chance, she cast her eyes on a looking-glass that stood near her, and in the glass she saw her home, and her father riding up to the cottage in the deepest sorrow. Her sisters came out to meet him, but for all they tried to look sorry, it was easy to see that in their hearts they were very glad. In a short time all this picture went away out of the glass: but Beauty began to think that the beast was very kind to her, and that she had no need to be afraid of him. About the middle of the day, she found a table laid ready for her; and a sweet concert of music played all the time she was eating her dinner without her seeing a single creature. But at supper, when she was going to seat herself at table, she heard the noise of the beast, and could not help trembling with fear. "Beauty," said he, "will you give me leave to see you sup?" "That is as you please," answered she, very much afraid. "Not in the least," said the beast; "you alone command in this place. If you should not like my company, you need only to say so, and I will leave you that moment. But tell me, Beauty, do you not think me very ugly?" "Why, yes," said she, "for I cannot tell a story; but then I think you are very good." "You are right," replied the beast; "and, besides being ugly, I am also very stupid: I know very well enough that I am but a beast."

"I should think you cannot be very stupid," said Beauty, "if you yourself know this." "Pray do not let me hinder you from eating," said he; "and be sure you do not want for any

thing; for all you see is yours, and I shall be vastly grieved if you are not happy." "You are very kind," said Beauty: "I must needs own that I think very well of your good nature, and then I almost forget how ugly you are." "Yes, yes, I hope I am good-tempered," said he, "but still I am a monster." "There are many men who are worse monsters than you are," replied Beauty; "and I am better pleased with you in that form, though it is so ugly, than with those who carry wicked hearts under the form of a man." "If I had any sense," said the beast, "I would thank you for what you have said; but I am too stupid to say any thing that would give you pleasure." Beauty ate her supper with a very good appetite, and almost lost all her dread of the monster; but she was ready to sink with fright, when he said to her, "Beauty, will you be my wife?" For a few minutes she was not able to speak a word, for she was afraid of putting him in a passion, by refusing. At length she said, "No, beast." The beast made no reply, but sighed deeply, and went away. When Beauty found herself alone, she began to feel pity for the poor beast. "Dear!" said she, "what a sad thing it is that he should be so very frightful, since he is so good-tempered!"

Beauty lived three months in this palace, very well pleased. The beast came to see her every night, and talked with her while she supped; and though what he said was not very clever, yet as she saw in him every day some new mark of his goodness, so instead of dreading the time of his coming, she was always looking at her watch, to see if it was almost nine o'clock; for that was the time when he never failed to visit her. There was but one thing that vexed her; which was that every night, before the beast went away from her, he always made it a rule to ask her if she would be his wife, and seemed very much grieved at her saying no. At last, one night, she said to him, "You vex me greatly, beast, by forcing me to refuse you so often; I wish I could take such a liking to you as to agree to marry you, but I must tell you plainly, that I do not think it will ever happen. I shall always be your friend; so try to let that make you easy." "I must needs do so then," said the beast, "for I know well enough how frightful I am; but I love you better than myself. Yet I think I am very lucky in your being pleased to stay with me; now promise me, Beauty, that you will never leave me." Beauty was quite struck when he said this, for that very day she had seen in her glass that her father had fallen sick of grief for her sake, and was very ill for the want of seeing her again. "I would promise you, with all my heart," said she, "never to leave you quite; but I long so much to see my father, that if you do not give me leave to visit him I shall die with grief." "I would rather die myself, Beauty," answered the beast, "than make you fret; I will send you to your father's cottage, you shall stay there, and your poor beast shall die of sorrow." "No," said Beauty, crying, "I love you too well to be the cause of your death; I promise to return in a week. You have shown me that my sisters are married, and my brothers are gone for soldiers, so that my father is left all alone. Let me stay a week with him." "You shall find yourself with him to-morrow morning," replied the beast; "but mind, do not forget your promise. When you wish to return you have nothing to do but to put your ring on a table when you go to bed. Good-bye, Beauty!" The beast then sighed as he said these words, and Beauty went to bed very sorry to see him so much grieved. When she awoke in the morning, she found herself in her father's cottage. She rung a bell that was at her bedside, and a servant entered; but as soon as she saw Beauty, the woman gave a loud shriek; upon which the merchant ran up stairs, and when he beheld his daughter he was ready to die of joy. He ran to the bedside, and kissed her a hundred times. At last Beauty began to remember that she had brought no clothes with her to put on; but the servant told her she had just found in the next room a large chest full of

dresses, trimmed all over with gold, and adorned with pearls and diamonds.

Beauty in her own mind thanked the beast for his kindness, and put on the plainest gown she could find among them all. She then told the servant to put the rest away with a great deal of care, for she intended to give them to her sisters; but as soon as she had spoken these words the chest was gone out of sight in a moment. Her father then said, perhaps the beast chose for her to keep them all for herself; and as soon as he had said this, they saw the chest standing again in the same place. While Beauty was dressing herself, a servant brought word to her that her sisters were come with their husbands to pay her a visit. They both lived unhappily with the gentlemen they had married. The husband of the eldest was very handsome; but was so very proud of this, that he thought of nothing else from morning till night, and did not attend to the beauty of his wife. The second had married a man of great learning; but he made no use of it, only to torment and affront all his friends, and his wife more than any of them. The two sisters were ready to burst with spite when they saw Beauty dressed like a princess, and look so very charming. All the kindness that she showed them was of no use; for they were vexed more than ever, when she told them how happy she lived at the palace of the beast. The spiteful creatures went by themselves into the garden, where they cried to think of her good fortune. “Why should the little wretch be better off than we?” said they. “We are much handsomer than she is.” “Sister,” said the eldest, “a thought has just come into my head: let us try to keep her here longer than the week that the beast gave her leave for: and then he will be so angry, that perhaps he will eat her up in a moment.” “That is well thought of,” answered the other, “but to do this we must seem very kind to her.” They then made up their minds to be so, and went to join her in the cottage where they showed her so much false love, that Beauty could not help crying for joy.

When the week was ended, the two sisters began to pretend so much grief at the thoughts of her leaving them, that she agreed to stay a week more; but all that time Beauty could not help fretting for the sorrow that she knew her staying would give her poor beast; for she tenderly loved him, and much wished for his company again. The tenth night of her being at the cottage she dreamed she was in the garden of the palace, and that the beast lay dying on a grass plot, and, with his last breath, put her in mind of her promise, and laid his death to her keeping away from him; Beauty awoke in a great fright, and burst into tears. “Am not I wicked,” said she, “to behave so ill to a beast who has shown me so much kindness; why will I not marry him? I am sure I should be more happy with him than my sisters are with their husbands. He shall not be wretched any longer on my account; for I should do nothing but blame myself all the rest of my life,“

She then rose, put her ring on the table, got into bed again, and soon fell asleep. In the morning she with joy found herself in the palace of the beast. She dressed herself very finely, that she might please him the better, and thought she had never known a day pass away so slow. At last the clock struck nine, but the beast did not come. Beauty then thought to be sure she had been the cause of his death in earnest. She ran from room to room all over the palace, calling out his name, but still she saw nothing of him. After looking for him a long time, she thought of her dream, and ran directly towards the grass plot; and there she found the poor beast lying senseless and seeming dead. She threw herself upon his body, thinking nothing at all of his ugliness; and finding his heart still beat, she ran and fetched some water from a pond in the garden, and threw it on his face.

The beast then opened his eyes, and said: “You have forgot your promise, Beauty. My grief for the loss of you has made me resolve to starve myself to death; but I shall die content, since I have had the pleasure of seeing you once more.” “No, dear beast,” replied Beauty, “you shall not die; you shall live to be my husband: from this moment I offer to marry you, and will be only yours. Oh! I thought I felt only friendship for you; but the pain I now feel, shows me that I could not live without seeing you.”

The moment Beauty had spoken these words, the palace was suddenly lighted up, and music, fireworks, and all kinds of rejoicings, appeared round about them. Yet Beauty took no notice of all this, but watched over her dear beast with the greatest tenderness. But now she was all at once amazed to see at her feet, instead of her poor beast, the handsomest prince that ever was seen, who thanked her most warmly for having broken his enchantment. Though this young prince deserved all her notice, she could not help asking him what was become of the beast. “You see him at your feet, Beauty,” answered the prince, “for I am he. A wicked fairy had condemned me to keep the form of a beast till a beautiful young lady should agree to marry me, and ordered me, on pain of death, not to show that I had any sense. You, alone, dearest Beauty, have kindly judged of me by the goodness of my heart; and in return I offer you my hand and my crown, though I know the reward is much less than what I owe you.” Beauty, in the most pleasing surprise, helped the prince to rise, and they walked along to the palace, when her wonder was very great to find her father and sisters there, who had been brought by the lady Beauty had seen in her dream. “Beauty,” said the lady (for she was a fairy), “receive the reward of the choice you have made. You have chosen goodness of heart rather than sense and beauty; therefore you deserve to find them all three joined in the same person. You are going to be a great Queen: I hope a crown will not destroy your virtue.“

“As for you, ladies,” said the fairy to the other two sisters, “I have long known the malice of your hearts, and the wrongs you have done. You shall become two statues; but under that form you shall still keep your reason, and shall be fixed at the gates of your sister’s palace; and I will not pass any worse sentence on you than to see her happy. You will never appear in your own persons again till you are fully cured of your faults; and to tell the truth, I am very much afraid you will remain statues for ever.”

At the same moment, the fairy, with a stroke of her wand, removed all who were present to the young prince’s country, where he was received with the greatest joy by his subjects. He married Beauty, and passed a long and happy life with her, because they still kept in the same course of goodness from which they had never departed.

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