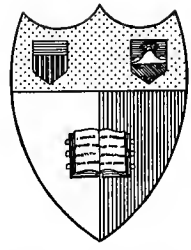
NORTH-WEST SLAV
LEGENDS & FAIRY STORIES

W. W. STRICKLAND



NORTH-WEST SLAV

LEGENDS AND FAIRY STORIES.

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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"SEGNIUS IRRITANT," or Eight Primitive Folk-lore Stories from KAREL JAROMIR ERBEN'S "A Hundred Genuine Popular Slavonic Fairy Stories in the Original Dialects." Translated and compared, with Illustrative Diagrams, Notes, Comments, Tables, and two Supplementary Essays. Cloth, gilt and silver	4	0
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LONDON: R. FORDER, 28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

NORTH-WEST SLAV

LEGENDS AND FAIRY STORIES

A SEQUEL TO

SEGNIUS IRRITANT

TRANSLATED FROM KAREL JAROMIR ERBEN'S "A HUNDRED GENUINE POPULAR SLAVONIC FAIRY STORIES IN THE ORIGINAL DIALECTS"

BY

W. W. STRICKLAND, B.A.

LONDON
ROBERT FORDER, 28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.
1897

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PREFACE.

THE present volume of Slav folk-lore stories is a continuation of *Segnius Irritant*, and contains all the stories in Karel Erben's collection down to page 128 (edition 1865), with the exception of the eight previously translated and published in *Segnius Irritant*. I have called them North-West Slav folk-lore stories, the bulk of them being so, although the term as applied to the Polish legends is not quite accurate. It is hoped in due course of time to publish the group of South Slav, and finally that of East Slav, stories in two small volumes similar to the two already brought out. The whole of Karel Erben's collection of Panslavonic folk-lore stories will then be in an English dress, and found, if read attentively, strikingly to confirm the conclusions arrived at after an analysis of the first eight fairy stories in *Segnius Irritant*. Those, however, who do not wish to be wounded in their religious sentiments, and imagine them somehow to be of vital importance, can read the three later volumes without a suspicion how fatally their contents undermine the fabric of superstition and religious legend.

A word as to the principles upon which the translations have been made. With the exception of one or two brief expressions, slightly modified out of deference to British prudery, they are as far as possible word-for-word translations, and nothing has been left out or altered intentionally. In cases, however, where in the originals the style has been elaborated and the form has thus become of importance as well as the substance, an attempt has been made to produce something more than a mere literal translation. Again, where plays upon words occur, an equivalent rather than a word-for-word rendering has sometimes been sought for. Lastly, where rhymed tags or snatches of poetry occur in the originals, these have been translated literally or rendered in a freer versified form according as their intrinsic poetical merits or the importance of the rhymed forms to the story in which they occur, seemed to demand one or the other treatment.

The stories are translations from many Slav languages, and, although folk-lore stories are not difficult to translate, and many of the Slav languages bear a close likeness to one another, a

translator who cannot pretend to a profound and thorough knowledge of all or perhaps any of them, cannot hope to have avoided many errors and inaccuracies. It may be said that in that case the translation should have been left to someone of greater competence; but is there, I would ask, any one in England who possesses a thorough knowledge of that group of languages, a complete acquaintance with which is, next to knowledge of the Indian languages, far and away of the most vital importance to the British Empire in Asia; and if such a being exists, would he deign to spend his time in translating popular legends and fairy stories, which, although Settembrini has declared that they contain more genuine historic truth than all the bulky volumes of artificial and official history put together, are generally regarded by the learned and scientific with disdain?

These two queries seem to justify the attempt that has been made; and, therefore, all that remains to be said is, in conclusion, to request anyone into whose hands the translations may fall, and who possesses a special knowledge of the languages from which the stories have been translated, to make a note of the inaccuracies and to forward them to the editor (c/o G. Standring, 7 & 9 Finsbury Street, London, E.C.). All such corrections will be received with gratitude and deference, and be embodied in a second edition in the improbable event of the stories ever reaching that happy consummation.

THE TRANSLATOR.

Klagenfurt, January 25th, 1897.

Little Shaveling (Otesanek).

THERE was once a man and a woman; they lived at the end of a village by a wood, in a cottage. They were poor; the man was a day-labourer, and the woman spun for sale, and yet they were always saying, "If only we had a little baby!" "Be thankful the Lord God has not given you one," said other people; "why, as it is, you have not enough to eat." And they would say in return: "When we dined—our little baby would also dine—if only we had one."

Once, early, this man was stubbing roots in the wood, and stubbed up a root—it looked exactly like a little baby: there was a little head, little neck, little hands, and little feet—it was only necessary to shape the little pate a bit with an axe, that it should be round and smooth, and to lop the rootlets into little hands and little feet, that they might look like toes and fingers, and there was a baby—all but the crying. The man takes this tree-root home and says to the woman, "Look! there is what thou wantedst—a child, little Shaveling! If thou wishest, thou canst bring it up." The woman swathed this little baby in swaddling clothes, dandled it on her arm, and sung to it:

Hush-a-by, baby,
  Hush-a-by, Shaveling,
When thou awakest
  I'll cook, thee, wee knaveling,
A nice little pot
  Of broth piping hot,
So hush-a-by, Shaveling,
  Hush-a-by, baby.

All at once the child began to stir in the swaddling clothes, screwed its head round and began to cry out: "Oh, mamma, I'm hungry!" The woman did not know for happiness which way to skip first. She laid the child on the bed and ran to cook pap. When she had cooked it, little Shaveling devoured it all, and after-

wards again cried out: "Oh, mamma, I'm hungry!" "Wait, little baby, wait, I'll bring thee something directly." After this she ran to a neighbour's and brought a pitcher full of milk. Little Shaveling drank, or rather, gulped it down, and when he had drunk it all up, again cried out that he was hungry. The woman wondered at this and said: "What, child, hast thou not had enough yet?" She went and got a loaf of bread on credit in the village, placed it on the table at home and then went out again, to put water on the fire for soup. Scarcely had she stalked out of the room, when little Shaveling, seeing the bread on the table, tumbled himself clear of the swaddling clothes, skipped on to the bench, and in a moment he had swallowed the quartern loaf and again cried out: "Oh, mamma, I am hungry!" Mamma came, intending to crumble the bread into the soup: looks about for the loaf—and gracious me! there in the corner stood little Shaveling like a barrel, and rolled his two eyes at her. "The Lord God be with us, Shaveling! perhaps you haven't eaten that quartern loaf?" "I have eaten it, mamma—and I'll eat thee, too!" He opened his great mouth, and before mamma expected it she was in him. After a while tata came home, and, as he stepped in at the door, Shaveling shouted: "Tata, I am hungry!" Tata started, seeing before him a body like a stove; it opened its huge mouth and goggled its two eyes. And, recognising Shaveling, he said: "The devil take thee! where's mamma?" "I've eaten her; and I'll eat thee, too!" So saying, he opened his huge mouth, and in a twinkling had tata inside him. But the more Shaveling devoured, the more he wanted to eat. In the cottage there was nothing left that would do for the purpose, and so he went to the village to look out for some one. He met a little girl; she was drawing from the field a sledge full of clover. "Thou hadst need have eaten this too, I dare say, with such a big paunch as thine," said the little girl in astonishment. Shaveling replied:

I've gobbled and gobbled
Soup from a saucepan,
Milk from a pitcher,
Bread from the baker,
Mamma—tata—
And I'll eat thee on the top of them.

He skipped up to her, and girl and sledge vanished in his paunch. After this he met a drover, bringing hay from the meadow. Shaveling posted himself in the road, and the horses stood still. "Why canst thou not move out of the way, monster? I'll come for thee—!"

exclaimed the drover, and flourished his whip. But Shaveling did not pay the slightest attention to him, and began to repeat:

I've gobbled and gobbled
Soup from a saucepan,
Milk from a pitcher,
Bread from the baker,
Mamma—tata—
A little girl and clover,
And I'll eat thee on the top of them.

And before the drover expected it, he found himself, horses, cart and all in Shaveling's paunch. After this Shaveling went further. On the field there a swine herd pastured swine. Shaveling took a fancy to them and gobbled them all up, swine herd and all; not a trace of them was left. After this he saw up above there a shepherd with a flock of sheep. Having also devoured the swine herd, he says to himself, "I can eat thee, shepherd, on the top of him." Off he went, and packed them all in, sheep, shepherd, dog Vorech and all. Then he again staggered on until he came to a field; a certain old grandmother was there hoeing greens. Shaveling did not long hesitate; went and began to wring off the tops of the greens and to gulp them down. "Why art thou doing me this injury, Shaveling?" said the grandmother; "I'm sure thou hast gobbled enough, thou oughtest to be glutted by this time." Shaveling made a grimace at her, and says:

I've gobbled and gobbled
Soup from a saucepan,
Milk from a pitcher,
Bread from the baker,
Mamma—tata—
A little girl and clover,
A load of hay and a drover,
Swine and swine herd,
Sheep and shepherd,
And I'll eat thee on the top of them.

And he tried to gobble her up. But the grandmother was too quick for him, she struck Shaveling in the stomach with her hoe and ripped it open. Shaveling rolled upon the ground—he was dead. And then wasn't there a sight for you to see! Out of the paunch first of all jumped the dog Vorech, and after him the shepherd, and after the shepherd hopped the sheep. Vorech collected them together, the shepherd piped and drove them home. After this, out of the paunch ran a herd of swine, after them out jumped the swine herd, cracked

his whip and hurried after the shepherd. Then out came horses dragging a cart full of hay; the drover tugged the reins, swore and drove after the swine herd, also to the village. After the cart out drove the little girl with clover, and, after the little girl, out from the paunch skipped the man and woman, and carried home under their arm that loaf of bread they had got on credit. And after this, that man and woman were never heard to say: "If only we had a little baby!"

Raras and Setek.

I.

In Bechary there was a peasant, they called him gossip Palicka. This man once went to Kopidlen marketing, and found a hen in a field under a pear-tree; it was black, and soaked, shivered with cold, and scratched in the ground. Gossip Palicka took it under his cloak, and when he got home put it behind the kitchen stove to dry, and then let it out in the yard among the other chickens. In the night when everything was fast asleep, Palicka suddenly hears something racketing about the room, and directly after a shrill voice, half man's, half chicken's: "Oh, Pantata, I've brought you potatoes!" The master of the house leapt out of bed and ran into the room to find out what it was, and there he sees a fiery hen and three heaps of earth-apples; the hen fluttered from heap to heap. "Fie, thou scandal!" spat out the peasant, quite taken aback, slammed the door, and went to lie down again, but he could not sleep till morning from anxiety, now he knew what he had brought home with him. Well, in the morning, as soon as it was light, he threw out all those potatoes on to the dung-hill. The next night he again hears: "Oh, Pantata, I've brought you maize, corn, and barley!" This time the peasant did not go to look what it was, but he shook with fear like an aspen-leaf, and prayed incessantly: "Deliver us from evil," and as soon as day began to dawn, he took a shovel and a brush and again threw out all that corn and swept out the room that not a single grain might remain there. He was worried to death, he did not know what help there was for it, and he also dreaded lest any of the neighbours should notice the matter. And indeed the neighbours did notice it; they saw in the night something fly into Palicka's farm-house like a burning cork, but the farm-house did not take fire; and in the day a female neighbour also observed that black hen among the chickens. Then in a jiffy the rumour was all over the village that gossip Palicka had sold

himself to the devil. A few of the more thoughtful ones shook their heads; all their lives they had known him to be a God-fearing and respectable man, and determined to give him a word of warning. They came there, and he frankly related to them everything—both the "how" and the "what," and requested them to advise him what to do. "What counsel, eh?" says a young peasant, "why, kill this creature," and he himself, without more ado, seized a bit of fire-wood and struck at the hen with it. But at that moment the hen hopped on to his back and beat him as if with a cudgel, and at every blow exclaimed:

"I'm Raras! I'm Raras! I'm Raras!"

After this some people counselled Palicka to throw up his farm and shift elsewhere, for Raras was sure to stay in that farm-house. The peasant caught at this idea at once, and tried to find a purchaser; but no one would buy the farm-house with Raras in it. Palicka then again made up his mind that, come what might, he must get rid of Raras. He sold his corn, stock, and everything that was not indispensably necessary, bought another farm-house in another village, and began to shift. And when after this he was just driving off the last time with his wagon, and had loaded it with tubs, troughs, harrows, and other such implements, he went and himself set fire to his thatched farm-buildings—for it was in a lonely place, and the fire could not injure anyone. After this he cracked his whip and prepared to drive off; but as he did so, looked round just once again at his farm-house to see how it caught fire, and says: "Burn then too, thou scandal! after all, I shall still get something for the place." "Che-che-che" chuckled something behind him on the wagon. Palicka peers round—there on a sickle sat that black hen, flapped its wings and began to pipe:

> Now we are bundling off, now we have said good-bye,
> Now we have said good-bye, now we are trundling off,
> Now we have said good-bye, now we are bundling off,
> Trundling off, bundling off, on the sly, you and I.

Gossip Palicka stopped as if he had been stunned by a thunderbolt. Now he didn't know what on earth to do. At length it occurred to him whether perhaps Raras would not hear reason and go away of his own accord, if he were well fattened. And so he bade his wife give the creature a plate of good milk, and three buns with it. Raras fared and behaved well, but showed no inclination to take his departure. One evening a farm-boy came home from the

field and sees on the steps those three buns which the peasant's wife had placed there for Raras. He was hungry, and so went and ate one. "Better that I should eat it than that nasty beast!" he says to himself. But that moment there was Raras perched on his back and crying:

One little bun—two little buns,
Three little buns has Vasek eaten.

And every time he said the word bun it gave him such a whack on the back that long afterwards the poor boy still had the scars. In the morning, when Palecka got up and went to awake the boy, he found him bruised all over, so that he could scarcely move. And when he learned all about it, he went to Raras and prayed him to take his departure, or else no farm-boy would stop in service on the place. "Che-che-che" chuckled Raras, and said:

Take me to where you found me, then
I never will trouble you again!

The peasant put on his cloak at once and took the hen back to the pear tree, under which he had found it, and after that Raras left him in peace.

II.

In Libenia, in a sheep-fold, Raras also took up his abode, but there they called him Setek. He looked like a little ragamuffin, only that he had claws on his hands and feet; and many merry pranks were recounted about him there. He liked to tease the dogs, cats, and turkeys, and also to the farm-boys and young girls never did a good turn, and everything they hid anywhere on the sly he always told about. Therefore the servants also looked upon him askance [*lit.*: had a dog's mouth for him], but they were afraid of doing anything to him lest he should avenge himself; and, moreover, the shepherd would not let them meddle with him, for as long as Setek was at the sheep-fold none of the sheep ever died.

In winter Setek generally sat by the kitchen stove* warming himself, and when a servant-girl brought scraps into the room to steep them in warm water, he always skipped off the hearthstone into the tub on to them, saying: "Whack on to the hogwash!" But once he burnt himself badly. The servant-girl brought the tub as usual, but outside the door she had filled it with boiling water

* A small square or oblong brick block, hollow to contain the fire, with a slab above forming a rude kitchen range.

and only strewed the scraps on the surface. "Whack, on to the hogwash!" says Setek, and hop—skip, but in a minute he was out of the tub again, squealing and writhing with pain, and the servants all laughed till the windows shook again. But Setek did not forgive that servant-girl. Once when she was climbing up the ladder to the granary, he twined her into the rungs in such a way that they were obliged to come to her assistance, and had enough to do to get her twined out of the ladder again.

In summer the shepherd's farm-servants used to sleep on the granary floor. Once, at night, Setek went there too, climbed half-way up the ladder, and teased the dogs that lay under the trapdoor in the yard. He stuck out first one little foot, then the other, and all the time squeaked at them:

One little foot—two little feet,
Which will you catch me by?

The dogs howled, they might grow as angry as they liked. At last, after some time, the farm-boys began to be sulky, because he would not let them sleep in peace; one of them got up, took a sheaf of straw and flung it at Setek, and with this sheaf knocked him down off the ladder. In a jiffy the dogs were on him, and gave him so rough a welcome that he scarcely escaped from their teeth. The farm-boy knew that vengeance would follow, and therefore kept on the look-out in Setek's presence, and avoided him from far; but it was all of no avail. Once he was pasturing the sheep on a meadow at the communal lands, and sat on the meadow behind a hay-cock. All of a sudden a rustling begins above his head, and before he had come to himself he had the whole of the hay-cock entangled in his hair. The boy began to cry out, the mowers collected round him, but, do what they would, they could not unplait the hay from his hair: hair and hay were so cleverly twisted together. The poor boy had to go and have his head shaved smooth. And when after this he again drove sheep to the pasturage and passed under the wild pear-tree, to the communal lands domain, there on the top of it sat Setek, winked maliciously, and jeered at him: "Holloa, bald pate! Holloa! Ho!"

The Yezinky.

THERE was a poor orphan-boy; he had neither father nor mother, and must go into service in order to keep alive. He walked a long way and could not find a situation anywhere, until one day he came to a farm-house all by itself under a wood. On the threshold sat an old grandfather; he had dark hollows in his head instead of eyes. The goats were bleating in the fold, and the grandfather said: "Poor little goats! gladly would I lead you to the pasture, but I cannot, I am blind; and I have no one to send with you." "Oh, grandfather, send me!" broke in the boy, "I will pasture these little goats for you, and I will also gladly serve you." "Who, pray, art thou? And what is thy name?" And the boy told him everything, and that they call him Janecek. "Good, Janecek! I will take thee; and first drive me forth these goats to the pasturage. But do not lead them to the hillock in the wood there: the Yezinky would come to thee, they would put thee to sleep and would then tear out thy eyes, just as they did to me." "Never fear, grandfather," answered Janecek, "my eyes the Yezinky will not tear out."

After this he let the goats out of the fold and drove them to the pasture. The first and the second day he pastured them below the wood; but the third day he said to himself: "Why should I be afraid of the Yezinky? I will push on to where there is the best pasturage." Then he cut three green bramble-stems, stowed them in his hat, and drove the goats straight into the wood to that hillock. There the goats ran hither and thither over the pasture, and Janicek sat in the cool on a stone. He had not been seated long when all at once, where she came, there she came, there stood before him a beautiful girl all dressed in white, her hair, finely combed down her back, was black as a raven, and her eyes like sloes. "Greetings to thee, young shepherd!" she says, "look what nice little apples grow in our garden! Come here, I will give thee one, that thou mayest also know how good they are." And then she offered him a beautiful

rosy little apple. But Janecek knew if he were to take the little apple and eat it, that he would fall asleep, and then she would tear out his eyes; and so he said: "I thank you finely, beautiful girl! my master has in his garden an apple-tree; on it grow yet more delicious little apples; I have eaten more than enough of them!" "Nu! If thou dost not wish, I will not force thee," said the girl, and departed. Presently came another still more beautiful girl; she held in her hand a lovely pink rose, and said: "Pleasant greetings! young shepherd boy! just look what a beautiful little rose I have gathered at the boundary! and how deliciously it smells! Smell it, too!" "I thank you finely, beautiful girl; my master has in his garden still finer little roses; I have smelt enough and to spare!" "Nu! If thou dost not wish it, never mind!" said the girl, thoroughly angry; turned round and went away again. After a while came a third girl, the youngest and most beautiful of all. "Pleasant greetings! young shepherd boy." "I thank you finely, beautiful girl!" "Faith, thou art a jolly boy," said the girl, "but thou wouldst have been still handsomer if thou hadst had thy nice hair finely combed; come and I will comb it for thee." Jenecek said nothing; but when the girl stepped up to him to comb him, he took the hat off his head, drew out of it one of the bramble-stems, and flick! he had smitten her over her two hands with it. The girl began to cry out: "Oh! Help, help!" and then to weep, and she could not stir from the spot. Janecek did not pay any heed to her tears, and bound her two hands with the bramble. Then those two other girls ran to the spot, and seeing their sister ensnared, began to implore Janecek if only he would unbind her and let her go. "Unbind her yourself!" said Janecek. "Oh! we cannot; we have such small soft hands, and we should prick ourselves!" But when they saw that the boy would not have it otherwise, they went to their sister and tried to unbind the bramble. Hereupon Janecek skipped up to them, and flick! flack! he had smitten them also with a bramble-stem, and had bound the two hands of both of them. "There, see! I have you now, you wicked Yezinky, you who have torn out my master's two eyes."

After this he ran home to his master and said: "Grandfather! Come! I have found someone who will give you your two eyes back again." And when they came to that hillock, he said to the first Yezinka: "Now, tell me, where are grandfather's two eyes? If thou dost not tell me, mind, I will throw thee into the water!"

The Yezinka excused herself, saying that she did not know, and Janecek prepared to throw her into the water which flowed there below the hillock. "Let me be, Janecek, let me be!" entreated the Yezinka, "I will give thee the grandfather's two eyes." And she led him into a cavern, where there was a great heap of pairs of eyes, large and small, black, pink, blue, and green, and she chose him two out of this heap. But when Janecek fitted them in for grandfather, the poor old fellow began to bewail: "Alas! alas! they are not my eyes; I see nothing but owls!" Janecek grew very angry at this, seized the Yezinka and threw her into the water. After this he says to the next: "Tell me, thou, where are grandfather's two eyes?" This girl also began to excuse herself and to say that she knew nothing about them, and when the boy threatened to throw her also into the water, she took him back into this cavern and chose him another pair of eyes. But grandfather again bewailed: "Oh! these are not my eyes; I see nothing but wolves!" And so the second Yezinka fared just as the first had done—and didn't the water close over her! "Tell me, thou, where are grandfather's two eyes?" said Janecek to the third and youngest Yezinka. This girl also led him to the heap in the cavern, and chose for him two eyes. But when they were fitted in, grandfather again complained that they were not his eyes, and says: "I see nothing but pike!" Janecek, seeing that this third girl had also deceived him, was just going to drown her too, but she entreated him with tears: "Let me be, Janecek, let me he! I will give thee grandfather's real pair of eyes." And she picked them out from under the whole heap. And when Janecek fitted them into the grandfather's eye-sockets, the old man exclaimed delightedly: "It is—it is my two eyes! Praised be God! Now I see again quite well!"

Afterwards Janecek and this old grandfather lived contentedly together: Janecek pastured the goats, and the grandfather made cheese at home, and then they ate it together. And the Yezinky from this day forth were never seen again upon the hillock.

The Wood-Woman.

BETUSKA was quite a little girl; her mother was a widow, and had no means of her own except a dilapidated hut and two goats; but in spite of this, Betuska was always merry. From spring to fall she used to pasture the goats at the birch copse. When she left the house her mother always used to put a small slice of bread in her wallet, and a spindle, bidding her at the same time be very industrious. As she had no distaff she wound the flax round her head. Betuska took the wallet, and singing merrily along the road, tripped after the two goats to the birch-copse. When they reached it the goats wandered over the pasture. Betuska sat under a tree; with her left hand drew the fibres from her head, and with the right let go the spindle, until it regularly whizzed over the ground. And all the time she sung until the wood rang again; and the poor goats browsed. When the sun pointed to midday she laid aside her spindle, called to the goats, and giving them a small bit of bread that they might not run away from her, skipped off to the wood for a few strawberries or other woodland fruit, according as it was the right season—that she might have some small dainties with her bread. When she had finished eating she sprang to her feet, crossed her arms, and sang and danced together. The little sun smiled at her through the trees, and the little goats, taking their ease in the grass, thought to themselves: "What a merry little shepherdess ours is!" After her dance she again spun busily, and in the evening, when she drove home the goats, her mother never had to chide her for bringing her spindle home empty.

Once when, according to her wont, just at midday, after her modest meal she is preparing for the dance—lo! where she comes, there she comes—there stands before her a surpassingly lovely maiden. Round her floats a white robe, fine as a spider's web, from head to waist roll rich golden tresses, and on her head she wears a garland of woodland flowerets. Betuska stood spell-bound. The maiden smiled upon her, and then says in a winning tone of voice: "My Betuska, dost thou love the dance?" When the maiden

addressed her so sweetly, Betuska's fear left her, and she replied: "Oh, I could go on dancing the whole day!" "Come, then, let us dance it out together; I will teach thee." So said the maiden; tucked up her skirts to her side, wound her arms round Betuska, and began to dance with her. As they flung themselves into the waltz there resounded above their heads such delicious music that Betuska's heart, too, danced with delight in her bosom. The musicians sat on the branches of the birch-trees, in black, ashen-grey, brown and shifting-coloured coats. It was a company of choice musicians that gathered at a sign from the lovely maiden: nightingales, larks, chaffinches, goldfinches, greenfinches, thrushes, blackbirds, and the highly artistic mocking-bird, the black-cap. Betuska's little cheeks glowed, her eyes shone, she forgot her task, she forgot the goats, and only gazed at her companion, who before her and around her spun and pirouetted in the most seductive curves and figures, and so wondrous lightly, that not a single blade of grass so much as swayed beneath the pressure of her fairy feet. On and on they danced from midday until evening, and Betuska's feet never paused nor ached the least. Then the lovely maiden slackened her pace, the music died away, and as she came so she vanished. Betuska looked round, the last rosy rays of sunset were disappearing behind the wood; she clapped her two hands together above her head, and feeling the flax there still unspun, bethought her of the spindle lying in the grass also still unfilled.

She took down the flax from her head and placed it with the spindle in the wallet, and, calling the goats, drove them home. She did not sing on the way, but bitterly reproached herself, that she had allowed the lovely maiden to beguile her, and she determined that, if ever it should happen to her again to see the maiden, she would not listen to her witcheries. The little goats, hearing no merry singing behind them, looked round to see if it was really their own little shepherdess who was walking behind them. And her mother, too, wondered and asked her little daughter if she were poorly that she did not sing. "Oh, no, little mother, I am not poorly, but my throat is quite parched from very singing, and that is why I do not sing now," said Betuska in excuse, and went to stow away the spindle and the unspun flax. Seeing that her mother was not going to wind off the yarn at once, she thought she would make up next day for to-day's shortcomings, and therefore did not breathe a word to her mother about the lovely maiden.

Next day Betuska again drove the little goats to the birch-copse as usual, but this time she herself again sang merrily. Off she drove them to the birch-copse; the little goats began to browse, and she, seating herself under the tree, began to spin busily and to sing the while, for the work went better with the singing to help it. The sun pointed to midday. Betuska gave the little goats a mouthful of bread, ran off for strawberries, and returning, began to dine and to converse with the goats. "Ah! my dear little goats, to-day I dare not dance," she sighed, as, after her meal, she scraped together the crumbs out of her lap into her two hands and placed them on a stone, that the birds might carry them away. "And why darest thou not?" broke in that winning voice, and the beautiful maiden stood before her, as if she had fallen from a cloud. Betuska was still more astonished than she had been before, and shut her eyes that she might not even see the maiden; but when the maiden repeated the question to her a second time, she answered shyly: "Ah! forgive me, beautiful maiden, I cannot dance with you to-day, for if I did, I should again not have spun the full measure of yarn, and mother would scold me. To-day, before the sun sets, I must make up for what I neglected yesterday." "Come and dance all the same, ere the sun set, some help shalt thou get," said the maiden, tucked up her skirts, wound her arms round Betuska, the musicians sitting in the branches of the birch-trees struck up, and the dancers whirled round together. And still more seductively the maiden danced. Betuska could * *not* take her eyes off her, and forgot all about the goats and her spinning. At last the dancer paused, the music died away, the sun stood low in the west. Betuska clasped her hands above her head, where the unspun flax was wound, and burst into tears. The beautiful maiden stretched out her hand, whipped the flax off her head, wound it round the trunk of a slender birch-tree, seized the spindle and began to spin. The spindle regularly whizzed over the ground, you could see it growing visibly thicker, and before the sun had sunk below the wood, the yarn was all spun off on it, even that which Betuska had not finished spinning the day before. Giving the reelful into the girl's hands, the beautiful maiden addressed her in these words: "Wind it and grumble not—think of my words—wind it and grumble not." With these words she vanished as if the earth had collapsed beneath her feet. Betuska was well satisfied, and thought to herself on the way

* Nechat in the text must be a misprint for ne-nechat.

home: "As she is so nice, I shall be ready to dance with her again, if she ever come again." Once more she sang so that the little goats paced merrily behind her. But her mother welcomed her home ill-pleased: wishing during the day to wind off the yarn she saw that the spindle was not full, and was therefore cross. "What wast thou doing yesterday, that thou didst not finish thy task?" said her mother, chidingly. "Forgive me, mother; I over-danced a little," said Betuska, penitently, and showing her mother the spindle added: "To-day, on the contrary, it is over full." The mother said no more, went to milk the goats, and Betuska put by the spindle. She was on the point of telling her mother her adventure, but said to herself on second thoughts: "No, if she come but once again, then I will ask who she is, and I will tell mother." So she reflected and meantime held her tongue.

The third morning, as usual, she drove the goats to the birch-copse: the goats began to browse, and Betuska sat herself under the tree and began to sing and spin. The sun pointed to midday; Betuska put down her spindle in the grass, gave the goats a mouthful of bread, made a good collection of strawberries, finished her meal, and, giving the crumbs to the birds, said: "My little goats, to-day won't I dance you a dance!" Up she sprang, crossed her arms, and wanted to try whether she could manage to dance as finely as the beautiful maiden, and lo! there the maiden herself stood before her. "Together, together let us trip it," she said, smilingly, to Betuska, caught hold of her, and at the same moment the music burst forth above their heads, and the maidens with flying steps were whirling in the dance. Betuska forgot her spindle and the goats, and saw nothing but the beautiful maiden, whose body curved and flickered in all directions like a willow wand; she heard nothing but the alluring music, which her feet skipped to of themselves. On and on they danced from midday until even. Then the maiden paused and the music died away. Betuska looked round, the sun was behind the wood. With tears she clasped her hands above her head, and, turning to the half-filled spindle, bewailed the hard words she would get at home. "Give me thy wallet, I will compensate for to-day's shortcomings," said the beautiful maiden. Betuska handed her the wallet, and the maiden vanished for a moment and then handed back the wallet to Betuska, saying: "Don't peep yet, but when home you get," and lo! 'twas as though a wind rolled her away. Betuska did not dare to look at once into

the wallet, but when half-way home she could not resist it; the wallet was so light, as if there was nothing inside it; she must look to see if the maiden had played a trick upon her. And how she started, when she saw that the wallet was full—of what do you think?—nothing but birch-leaves! Then she gave way to an agonized flood of tears, reproaching herself for having been so credulous. Angrily she threw out the leaves in handfuls, and was just going to empty the wallet altogether, but then she reflected: it will do for the little goats to sleep on: and left some of the leaves in the wallet. She was almost afraid to go home. The poor goats again could hardly recognise their little shepherdess. Her mother awaited her on the threshold, full of anxiety. "Heavens, child! What sort of reel of yarn was that you brought me home yesterday?" were her first words. "Why?" inquired Betuska anxiously. "When thou wast gone this morning, I began to wind; I wind and wind, and still the spindle keeps full. 'Sure some evil spirit has spun it!' I exclaimed, getting angry—and that instant yarn and spindle vanished together as if one had puffed them away. Tell me, then, what it means?" Here Betuska confessed, and began to tell all about the beautiful maiden. "It was the wood-woman!" exclaimed the mother, aghast; "about midday and midnight the wood-women run their rigs! Happy for thee that thou art not a little boy, or certainly thou wouldst not have escaped out of her arms alive. She would have gone on dancing with thee as long as there was breath in thy body, or she would have tickled thee to death. But with girls they have some compassion, and oftentimes even recompense them richly. To think of your not having told me! If I had not grumbled I might have had the living-room full of yarn."

Here Betuska bethought her of the wallet, and it occurred to her that perhaps after all there might be something under those leaves. She took out from the top the spindle and the unspun flax, and—"Oh, look, mother!" she exclaimed. The mother looked in and clapped her two hands. The birch-leaves were all turned to gold! "The lady bade me: 'Don't peep in yet, but when home you get,' and I did not obey her." "'Tis fortunate that thou didst not empty out the whole walletful," observed her mother. In the morning she herself went to look at the spot where Betuska had thrown out the leaves in handfuls, but on the road lay only a few fresh birch-leaves. However, the wealth that Betuska brought

home with her, even without this, was great enough. Her mother bought a farm, they had plenty of cattle, Betuska wore fine dresses, she need no longer pasture goats, and yet nothing ever afforded her so much delight as that dance with the wood-woman. Often she wandered off to the birch-copse—something seemed to draw her there—and she longed to see the beautiful maiden again, but she never more set eyes upon her.

Death the Godmother

[MORAVIAN.]

THERE was a man of extreme poverty in the world, and his wife fell into labour and bore him a little boy. No one wished to stand sponsor for him, because he was so very poor. The father says to himself: "Dear God! I am so poor that no one wishes to serve me in this matter. I will take the boy, will go, and whom I meet him I will ask to stand sponsor; and if I do not meet anyone perhaps the sacristan, anyhow, will serve me." He went and met Death, but he knew not what sort of personage it was. She was a pretty woman, like any other woman. He asked her to stand godmother. She did not excuse herself, and immediately greeted him as godfather, took the boy in her arms and carried him to church. There the little fellow was duly baptised. As they went from church, godfather took godmother to an alehouse and wished to treat her to something as godmother of his child. But she said to him: "Godfather, none of this; come instead with me to my little dwelling." She took him with her to her sitting-room, and there all was very fine. After this she led him into immense cellars, and through these cellars they went in obscurity down into the underworld. There burn tapers: small, large, middle-sized—three sorts; those that were not yet lighted were the largest of all. Godmother says to godfather: "Look, godfather; here I have the age of every man." Godfather looks at it all, finds there quite a small taper burning close to the ground, and asks her: "But, prythee, godmother, whose then is that little taper close to the ground?" She says to him: "That is yours! As any taper soever burns out, I must go for that man." He says to her: "Oh! godmother, I pray you, just replace mine." She says to him: "Oh! godfather, that I cannot do." Afterwards she went and lighted a large new candle for the little boy they had just baptised. Meanwhile, unperceived by godmother, godfather also took a large new candle, lighted it,

and stuck it up just where his own small taper was even now burning out. Godmother looked round at him and said: "Oh! godfather, you ought not to have done so to me; but since you have already added a new candle, added it is, and you have it. Come from this place out into the open air, and we will go to my good gossip, thy wife." She took a present, and went with godfather and the child to godfather's wife. She came and laid the little fellow on her good gossip's bed, and asked her how she felt and where it ailed her. Godfather's wife complained, and godfather sent for some beer and tried to honour her as godmother in his cottage, that he might show her his gratitude and be grateful. They drank and feasted together. After this, says godmother to godfather: "Godfather, thou art so extremely poor that no one was willing to serve you in this matter except me; but never mind, thou shalt keep me in remembrance! I will go for well-to-do people and will make them ill, and you shall doctor and cure them. I will tell you all the remedies; I have them all, and everyone will gladly pay you well; but only pay heed to this: him at whose head I stand give up all idea of saving." And so it was. Godfather went to the sick, when godmother afflicted hem, and saved every one of them. Thus all at once a first-rate physician was made out of him. A prince was on his death-bed, aye, was at the point of death; all the same they sent for this doctor. He came, began to anoint him with ointments and to give him his powders—and saved him. When he had cured the prince they paid him well, they did not even ask what his fees were. Again, a count was on his death-bed: and again they sent for this doctor. The doctor comes; Death stauds behind the couch at the head. The doctor exclaims: "Already it goes ill with him; but we will see what can be done." He summoned the servants and ordered them to turn round the bed with the two feet of the sick towards Death, and he began to anoint the dying man with ointments and to put his powders into his mouth, and saved him. The count gave the doctor as much as he could carry away; he did not think of asking what the fee was; he was delighted to have been cured. When Death met the doctor, she said to him: "Oh! godfather, the next time you see me stand so, don't play me such a trick again. True, you have saved him, but yet it is only for a brief moment. I must, for all that, take him away to the place where he belongs." And so things went on with godfather for some years; already he was very old. But at last life was a burden to him, and he himself

asked Death to take him. Death could not take him, because he had himself replaced his own candle with a new long one; he must wait until it burns out. Once he was driving yet again to a sick man's, to cure him. He saved him. After this, Death presented herself and drove with him in his coach. She began to tickle him and to sport with him, and smote him softly with a green branch below the neck; he rolled into her lap, and slept away into an eternity of dreamy slumber. Death laid him down in his coach and fled out of it. There they find the dead physician lying in his coach and drove him away home. All the town and parishes round mourned: "Alas for this doctor, what a good one he was! Skilful was he to save; such a physician we shall not see again."

His son survived him, but this son had none of his capacity.

The son once went to church, and godmother met him. She enquired of him: "Dear son, how art thou?" He said to her: "At present, well enough. So long as I have what my little father saved up for me, it is well with me; but afterwards, God knows how it will be with me." Godmother says: "Inu! son of mine! fear nothing. I am thy fontal mother; what thy little father had, I helped him to; and to thee, too, I will give subsistence. Thou shalt come to a physician for instruction, and thou shalt be more capable than he is himself; only behave finely." After this, she anointed him with ointment over the ears and took him to a physician. The doctor did not know whatever lady it might be, and what little son she was bringing to him for instruction. The lady bade her little son behave himself finely, and requested the physician to teach him well and place him in a good position. After this, she took leave of him and departed. The physician and the boy went together to collect herbs, and to this pupil of his every herb declared what remedy it contained, and the pupil gathered it. The pupil's herbs were of service in every malady. The doctor said to his pupil: "Thou art cleverer than I am; for if anyone comes to me I never hit upon anything, and thou knowest the herbs against every sickness. Knowest thou what? we will be partners; I will hand over my medical papers to thee and will be thy assistant, and I wish to be with thee until death." The boy doctored and cured people successfully until his candle burnt out in limbo.

Four Brothers.

THERE was a certain gamekeeper and this man had four sons; these sons wished to try their fortune in the world. As they were all more than sixteen years of age they said to their father: "We are going into the world, father, please give us money for the journey." The father gave each of them a hundred rix-dollars and a horse. They saddled their horses and rode into the mountains. In the mountains were four cross-roads, and in the middle of the cross-roads a beech-tree. At this beech they stopped, and the eldest brother said: "Brothers, here we will separate and each of us take a different road to seek our fortunes in the world. Into this beech each of us will stick his knife, and this day year we will again all collect here. These knives will be a sign to us: if any one of them be rusty, its owner will be dead, and he whose knife remains untarnished, will be preserved alive."

They separated and went each his own way, and when they reached each his proper place, they learnt a trade. One learnt to be a botcher, the next to be a thief, the third to be a stargazer, and the fourth to be a gamekeeper. When a year and a day had elapsed, they returned. The eldest came first to the beech, drew out his own knife, and looked at the remaining knives. Seeing that they were all untarnished, he was glad and said: "Thank God, we are all alive and well!" He went home. When he came to his father, his father asked him: "What sort of trade hast thou learnt?" The son replied: "My little father, with shame be it said, I am a botcher." The father: "Oh, really! a precious—a precious good-for-nothing trade hast thou learnt!" The son: "But, little father, I am not a botcher like other botchers, but I am such a botcher that if anything be ever so spoiled, I have only to say let it be botched up and it is so at once." His father had a spoiled overcoat hanging on the clothes-peg and said, "Let him repair it." The son said, "Let it be repaired," and the coat was that moment as perfectly

repaired as if it had been fresh from the calender, there was nothing the least to show that it had been botched. After this the father said no more. The next day the second son came to the beech-tree. He drew out his knife and looked at the two remaining knives; the third was no longer there. Seeing that they were all untarnished he was glad and said: "Praise God, we are all alive and well. My eldest brother is already at home." He went home also. When he came to his father's, his father asked him: "What kind of trade hast thou learnt?" The son replied: "My dear little father, with shame be it said—I am a thief!" The father said: "A precious fine trade thou hast taught thyself—oh! for shame!" The son says: "But, little father, I am no common thief; but I am such a thief that as soon as I fix my thoughts upon anything, be it what it may, I have it at once in my reach." Just then a stag fled over a hillock, it was visible from the window; the father says to him that he is to provide him with that stag. The son said at once: "Let that stag be here," and in a jiffy it was at their house. After this the father said no more. On the third day the third son came to the beech, drew out his own knife, looked at the other knife, and already two were there no longer. Seeing that they were both clean he was glad and said: "Thank God! we are all safe and sound; my eldest two brothers are already at home." He went home, too. When he came to his father's, his father asked him what trade he had learnt? The son replied: "Dear little father, with shame be it said—I am a stargazer." The father said to him: "That is a precious trade." The son said: "But, little father, I am such a stargazer that the instant I look at the firmament I see anything anywhere in the whole world." On the fourth day came the youngest son and drew out his knife—the other three were already gone—he was glad, and said: "My brothers are already all at home." He went home, too. When he came to his father's, his father inquired what trade he had learnt. His son replied that he was a gamekeeper. The father says: "Well, thou at least hast not disdained my trade, for that thou art worthy." The son says: "But, my dear little father, I am not such a gamekeeper as thou art, but such a one that, when the game is a bit bigger than myself, I say 'Let it be shot,' and immediately it is shot." A hare fled away over the hillock, it was visible from the window. The father says: "Shoot it, then!" The youngest son spoke and the hare fell. The father says: "I do not see if it has fallen." The son who was a

stargazer looked at the firmament and said, "Yes, little father, it has fallen there behind the bush." The little father says: "Yes, it has fallen there, but how shall we get it?" Brother thief says: "Let it be here," and immediately it was there. But it had fled through a thorny bush and was all rent. The father says: "The skin is all rent, who will buy it of us?" Brother botcher says, "Let it be mended," and in a jiffy it was mended. The father says: "Nu! you will manage to live very well with your trades."

They spent some time at home with their little father, and lived very well. Then a certain king lost a princess, and announced that he would give this daughter and the kingdom with her to whoever found her. The brothers said to themselves: "We will go there." The little father did not wish to let them go, but they went all the same, and gave out that they were the fellows to find this lost princess. The king at once sent his coach for them. When they came to the king's, they said that he had announced with a flourish of trumpets that he had lost a daughter, and that he who found her should have her and the kingdom with her. The king said that it was the simple truth, and asked them at once to tell him where his daughter was. The stargazer said that he could not say just then, but that when evening came, he could make out from the firmament where she tarried. At about eight and nine o'clock they went out and looked at the firmament. The stargazer said that she was held captive by a dragon; that, as she went out walking, the dragon caught her, and that he had her still on an island beyond the black sea, that she had to stroke him there, two hours every day, and that during this the dragon had his head laid on her lap. As they expected the day, they at once collected themselves and drove in a coach as far as that black sea. After this they seated themselves in a ship and sailed to that island, where the princess tarried. As they sailed up to the island, the princess was out walking there, the dragon was not at home; but the princess managed to make a sign to them that they were in a bad way, for the dragon was even then flying straight home. Brother thief hastily shouted out: "Let the princess be here!" She was at once with them in the ship, but she shrieked that they were in a bad way and would all perish. They put out to sea in the ship at full speed, but that dragon, full of fury, roared and bellowed and reared itself above them. The stargazer says to the gamekeeper: "Brother, shoot him!" Brother gamekeeper said: "Let him be shot." The dragon was shot, but

fell on the boat and struck a hole in her, so that the water poured in by the crack. They threw the dragon into the sea, and brother gamekeeper bade brother botcher "Patch up that hole." Brother botcher patched up the hole so that not a single drop of water could reach them in the boat. So they sailed happily with the princess to the edge of the sea—to the shore, in fact—and seated themselves, princess and all, in that coach and drove off. But as they drove in that coach they disputed as to which of them the princess and the kingdom belongs. The stargazer says: "Mine is the princess; if it had not been for me, we should not have known where the princess was." The thief said: "Mine is the princess; if it had not been for me, we should not have got the princess into the boat." The gamekeeper said that his was the princess, for without him they would not have shot the dragon. The botcher declared that his was the princess, for without him they would all have been drowned and have perished. As they drove up to the king's castle, they begged him to decide to whom the princess belonged. The king said: "Dear brothers, I decide according to righteousness. It is true you have all deserved her, but all cannot get her. According to my promise, brother stargazer must get her, for I announced that whoever found the lost princess, should get her and a kingdom with her. Now the stargazer found her and told us where she tarried. However, that none of you may be chuzzled, each shall get a district of his own, and in his own district each shall be a king." They were all quite satisfied. The stargazer, when his marriage was over, sent home for his little father. Their little father came and was glad that his sons were potentates, each in his own district. In the spring he stayed at the botcher's, in the summer at the thief's, in the autumn with the gamekeeper, and in the winter with the stargazer, and everywhere he was well-received until the day of his death.

The Lake of Karlovic.

[In the Wallachian Dialect.]

He who wishes to take the most direct road to Karlovic from Rosnov goes by a footpath and comes to the Lake of Karlovic, which in former days was much larger, but in course of time has noticeably grown up, so that now on its shore are meadows. Long ago on these meadows a man was cutting hay. About breakfast-time came to him a magician [*lit.*: black-priest], and entered into conversation with him. After they had conversed together in this way, the magician says: "Friend, if you wished it, I could put you in the way of making a good sum of money." In those days the inhabitants of the Wallachian mountains did not easily come in the way of such a thing as money. The high land was unsuited to wood-growing because there was no one to sell it to; there was no idea of such things as trade and business, and what any one made out of his cattle was required for buying salt and other things. Therefore, when this man heard about making some money he was glad. When the magician observed it, he continued as follows: "In this lake are two dragons, and these I wish to draw out of it. So, then, I wish you to hold the first one for me while I summon the second; afterwards we will each of us sit upon one of them and fly away; when we reach a certain place I will pay you well." The man, when he heard about dragons, was very much frightened; but the magician assured him that he need not be the least afraid, because they will tame these dragons like chickens, only all the time he must mind and not speak, and then let him do what he pleases, that not a hair of his head shall perish. The man promised, hung up his sickle, with the gourd and small sharpening hammer and anvil, on a pine, and followed the magician.

On arriving at the lake, the magician took out a small book, knelt on the ground, opened the book and began to pray. Scarcely had

he commenced to pray, when the lake began to be stirred. The more he prayed, the more the lake was agitated. Then all at once a dragon stuck out its head; however, it almost immediately hid itself again. The magician went on praying without ceasing, and so the dragon was forced to come out of the lake. When this dragon had swum so far to land that the magician could get his hand upon it from the shore, he ran a noose of twisted bast over it, drew it out on to the dry land, and gave it the man to hold firm. This man, from extreme fear, had but little spirit. But when he saw that the dragon did not move the least, he picked up courage. When the magician had bound the dragon's eyes with a handkerchief, he knelt on the ground, and a second time prayed devoutly. Scarcely had he begun to pray, again the lake began to be agitated much more terribly and to grow stormy until finally a much more horrible dragon crept out of it. As it swum to shore, again the magician threw a noose of twisted bast over it and bound up its eyes.

When all was ready, the magician constrained the man to seat himself on the lesser dragon, but all the while they did not say so much as a, b to one another; the magician himself now took his seat on the larger dragon, repeated a few unintelligible words, and at once the dragons raised themselves from the ground and flew into the air. When they flew above the mountains, the magician kept saying that they were towns. Thereupon the dragons flew with such rapidity that an awful whirlwind blew from them, which threatened to tear up and shatter all the trees in the woods above which they flew; and when they flew above parishes, the magician again kept saying that these were woods, whereupon these dragons notably diminished the rapidity of their flight, so that such an awful whirlwind no longer blew from them, because they, having their eyes bandaged, thought that everything was just as the magician had declared it to be. If he had told them the truth, they would have overturned all human habitations, because the magician had constrained them to creep out of the lake.

So they flew on and on, and the magician kept always prompting them as has been said above, until at last they flew over a certain large city. There in the middle of this town they flew down to the ground. After this the magician killed the dragons and sold their flesh to the inhabitants of the place at a very high price. The man inquired why these people bought that dragon's flesh at so high a

price, heeding nothing what they paid for it, and only bidding against one another for it. "Inu, my dear fellow," said the magician, "if they were not obliged, they would not keep buying it. In these districts it is tremendously hot: these people, to be able to withstand the heat, must carry a little dragon's flesh under their tongues."

When the magician had completed his sale, he went with this man to an alehouse, gave him plenty to eat and drink, and paid him well. When this man looked at the money, he began to cry bitterly, saying: what good was that money to him, when he could not get home again. "Do not cry," says the magician; "as I have conducted you safely here, so I will be responsible for a messenger to lead you home again; gather up your money and follow me." They went. When they had come out of the city, the magician began to pipe upon a shepherd's pipe, and immediately a black goat appeared; he bade the man seat himself upon its back, and it would soon carry him home again. Willy-nilly, the man must seat himself on the goat, which in no long time brought him to the spot where he had been cutting hay, and as soon as he dismounted, it immediately disappeared from view. The man went to the pine for his sickle, and worked on and on until midday. At midday, when he went for his dinner, his wife stood thunderstruck, for a year had passed since he had been at home. But he wondered how it could possibly be, because this time had not appeared so long to him.

The Devil and the Cobbler.

[In the Hanatsky Dialect.]

There was once a cobbler, and he had such a nose that he could neither make a living by his trade nor bring up his sons. And so he allowed himself to make himself over by writing to the devil; himself, all his blood, his wife, and children, although he did it unwillingly. And when the agreement was finally signed, this devil asks him: "Well! what, then, do you want in return?" And the cobbler says to him: "I say, give me so much money as will enable me to live myself and bring up these, my children." The devil gladly promised him this, and brought him daily five rix-dollars. And it was just at the time when the Lord God walked about the world with Saint Peter. And so they came also to this cobbler's who had signed himself over to the devil, when it was just beginning to grow dusk. The cobbler did not know who they were and where they came from, and he felt bashful about asking them, for he saw that they were really quite distinguished persons. They requested a night's lodging, and the cobbler promised it them with great readiness. His wife honoured them finely, prepared them a good supper; after supper, decently arranged for them a bed, and herself slept outside under the lean-to between the hall and the yard.

In the morning she was up betimes, and prepared breakfast for them, as was proper. When they had finished breakfast and were just on the go, the Lord Christ asks: "What do we owe you?" To this the cobbler: "Oh! nothing." And the Lord Christ: "Oh! I am sure there must be something!" And the cobbler again: "Oh! well, if something there must be, then I should be glad that these three things should be carried out in my behalf. In the first place, he who plumps himself down on my waxy old three-legged stool, on which I am wont to sit when I patch any boots with holes in them, let him stick there as if he were a horse-shoe hammered to it, as long as I choose; after this, he who shall look into the room

at me through the window from outside, let him not be able to go away from this window until I wish it; and lastly, whoever in my garden shakes damsons out of my plum-tree or meddles with the branch of that pear-tree there, let him not be able to stir from the spot so long as I do not wish it." And the Son of God: "It shall be as thou desirest." And so he departed and Saint Peter with him.

When now the cobbler's time had run out, the devil came for him saying: "Cobbler, now thou must go with me to hell, thou knowest that it is quite time." To this the cobbler: "I know it, I know it; but wait until we finish supper, and meanwhile rest thyself there on my three-legged stool." The devil did not require much pressing, but plumped down directly and began petting the end of his tail. And the cobbler after supper prepared himself with his wife and children for hell. And then when they were all quite ready with everything, he shouted to the devil that now he was off. The poor little devil stuck and stuck and writhed in every direction until he ached all over. If only he could wrench himself free! but —not for Joe! And so he shouts to the poor cobbler: "Brother, here it burns like the devil! Please help me and let me go just once, let me go, and I will gladly give you a little time extra." And the cobbler: "If thou wilt give me extra time, just give it me and be off." And so the devil gave him another seven years.

And when these seven years were now elapsed, the devil again ran off for his cobbler; but this time he wouldn't go into the room, but only looked in by the window from outside, and knocking at the window, called out: "Cobbler, now I am again here for thee, get ready! thou knowest perfectly well where thou hast to go." The cobbler was just sewing boots, and his wife made supper ready. And when he heard and saw the devil, he said to him: "Oh, wait only a little, until we finish supper." The devil then waited outside for the cobbler. And thus when they had finished supper and had prepared themselves for the journey, the cobbler says: "Nu! little devilkin, come along, now we are ready!" but the poor devil could not get away from the window anyhow, his great hoofs were as if hammered down fast there. And seeing himself in a pickle, he had recourse to entreaty. "Let me go, little brother, and I will gladly give thee some time extra!" And the cobbler: "If thou wilt give it me, then give it me and be off! But this I tell thee: if thou comest for me a third time, when I am not ready, and as soon as I prepare myself, thou again wilt not go, after this expect no more of

me! I do not wish to be thy fool." The devil gave him again seven years extra and went away home alone.

And when again the seven years had run out, the devil again came for his cobbler, and stalked straight into the room. Here the cobbler turns to him with a hearty welcome: "Well, well it is that thou art come, just at this very time our fruit is ripened, which tastes really quite excellent; hop off there into my garden and beat the plum-tree or shake the pear-tree, as much as thou wishest, the more the better, my old woman shall put them altogether in a large packet that we may have wherewithal to refresh ourselves on our way; I am sure thou wilt also like to take these too." Here the devil skips out and runs over the flags into the garden and beats the plum-tree until even all the leaves and branches fell down round it, and only the bare trunk remained. Meantime the cobbler and his belongings had now prepared themselves, and he calls to the devil: "Well, thou hast done it finely for us! Thou didst not wish, perhaps, to take the whole tree with thee? Why, I really only told thee to shake the plum-tree, and there thou hast been raging as if in hell! Come now, please, straight off to hell! I and my belongings are ready." The poor devil tugs this way and that to get from the stem, but can't budge an inch. Then the cobbler to him rudely: "Did I not tell thee if thou camest when I was not ready, and as soon as I prepared myself, if thou would not then go, that thou must not expect me any more? I wish to go and thou won't; dost thou think that I am thy fool? Wait a bit!" And so the poor cobbler ruus into the room, takes his strap, and with it post-haste to the devil and lathered him—didn't he just lather him! The devil howls as loud as he can, shrieks and squeals with all the breath in his body, until the people run together from the whole village. How astonished they were, when with their own eyes they saw how the cobbler was waxing the devil's back for him. When he had at last thrashed him enough, so that the poor fellow was not like even the devil, he let him go. "Be off, and see whether they recognize thee in hell!" And the devil thankfully fled away home, as he came, alone; and henceforth and for ever left the cobbler in peace.

Before his death the cobbler ordered that when they buried him they should put with him the apron which he wore; and so they put it with him. Scarcely was he dead, when he went straight off to heaven, and arriving there, knocked at the entrance gate of heaven, that they might open to him. And so Saint Peter undoes

the gate of heaven with his key, looks the person over from head to foot, and says: "Oh! cobbler, here thou hast no place! Be off with thee. What thou chosest, that hast thou gotten. If thou hadst chosen the kingdom of God thou wouldst have had it." So he spoke and closed the gate. But the cobbler says to himself: "What's to be done now?" And so he decided to go straight off to hell. When the devils saw him in the distance coming post haste, they called and shrieked to one another: "The cobbler is running hither! Quick, quick, let's shut the gate; don't let's have the cobbler in here, or he'll chivvy us all out of hell!" The cobbler knocked hard enough, but in vain! So when they wouldn't even let him into hell, he went again to Saint Peter in heaven. Saint Peter undid the gate, looked at him, and says: "Once for all, there is no place for thee here; thou lookest in vain!" And so the poor fellow must hie away again to hell, and the devils again shrieked: "Don't let that cobbler in here, whatever you do!" Then back again to Saint Peter. And when Saint Peter undid the gate with the key, the poor cobbler with a swish flung his waxy apron into heaven, and says: "If I ain't to be there, at least let my apron remain." And again he went to hell. But there not even a sound was to be heard; the gate was locked and everything within was perfectly quiet. So the cobbler says to himself: "I will go just once more to that Saint Peter." And so he went and knocked again. Saint Peter undoes the gate, and the cobbler, with a quick twist, dodges under his arm and wriggles into heaven; and there he spreads out his apron and seats himself upon it. Saint Peter tries to drive him away that he may go to where he belongs; in heaven that he is quite out of place. But the cobbler had now sat down once for all, and wouldn't budge, and said to Peter: "I'm not sitting on yours, if you please, I'm sitting on my own." And so Saint Peter goes to the Lord Christ and explains it to him: "Lord, the cobbler, we can't get him to go away, and yet here he has no place." But the Son of God had pity upon the cobbler, and bade as follows: "Well, let him, then, let him sit there by the gate."

Bird-Brother.

SOMEWHERE among desolate mountains dwelt two children with a witch-stepmother, like two nestlings with a cat, in a little cottage. Their father but rarely came home from his work in the woods, and even then the wretched orphans dared not complain to him how their mother beat them and tortured them with hunger; they thought to themselves: "Hitherto it has been bad, but after that it would be still worse!" And so they only kept silence and suffered. Their stepmother spent the household money on herself, on her own maw, as she only knew how, until she had fairly cleared out till and cupboard. And so, once when her hungry husband had to return home from his work in the woods, there was nothing left, either in the saucepan or in the dresser-drawer; she began to shift her cap, now to the right, now to the left side of her head, puzzled to know where and how she should prepare anything for her husband. Here an unhappy idea occurs to her. Just as the little boy, running before his little sister, trots into the room, she closes the door, and with a long knife—snick, snack—she has cut off the poor little boy's head. After this she cut him up, sliced him into a pot, placed him on the fire, and cooked him with vinegar. When the father came home supper was already waiting for him on the table. He set to at once heartily, heeding nothing—aye, if she had served up the old devil himself, he would have got down his grace, so hungry was he! The little girl only glanced sorrowfully from her corner at her unhappy father, but what she knew she dared not tell him. Only those little bones, as they fell one by one under the table, she straightway picked up one after the other, and when she had collected them all together, the poor thing crept out and buried them by the road under a green rosebush. Next morning at daybreak, on the blossoming wild rosebush, warbled a beautiful bird—warbled so piercingly as if it would cleave the hearer's heart:

Mamicka ma zarezala, otecko ma zeu
A sestricka, nebozticka
Rostialiky posbierala
A pod sipek zahrabala
Vyrastol znich vtacik
Maly neboracik, d'eu, d'eu.

(My little mother cut my head off, my little father ate me,
And my little sister, unhappy one,
Collected my poor little bones
And buried them under a wild-rose bush.
Out of them grew a little bird,
A little luckless wretch, d'eu, d'eu.)

The retail-dealers as they passed that way just then, paused and listened to the beautiful bird. It so touched them that in return for that song they hung upon the rosebush at their departure, their most beautiful silk handkerchief, by the grave of the unhappy orphan. Not long after them, again, came the hatters, and the little bird again did nothing but hop about the green rosebush and sing:

Mamicka ma zarezala, etc.

The master hatter remained as if glued to the spot—he couldn't stir a finger until that song had ceased. After that he took out his best hat; "There," he says, "as thou hast sung to us so beautifully, we too will give thee something in return!" and he fastened the hat upon the rosebush. After a little while birdie again begins:

Mamicka ma zarezala, etc.

The stonemasons, as they passed by, could not sufficiently admire that heartrending song. "Ah!" they say, "as thou hast sung to us so finely, we too must give thee a fine stone for this little grave." And as they said, so they actually did; they rolled under the rosebush the biggest stone they had. In the night—how? how not? that God knows—this beautiful bird carried all these gifts to the top of his paternal roof, and betimes in the morning began to sing:

Mamicka ma zarezala, etc.

Out ran his little sister at the sound of his dear voice, with "Who is that? What is it?" She looks about her on all sides, but can make out nothing save when a fine silk handkerchief flies down into her hand. Close at her heels out came her astonished father. Down fell the new, bran new hat upon his head. "Great God! what is it all about?" With that the stepmother runs out, too, quite delighted to think that something nice will fall to her share also. And scarcely had she stepped from under the eaves—crash, down comes the stone upon her head!

Then the little bird ceased to sing, and flew—flew far away to the very end of the world. And he who wishes to know any more about him had better go there, too.

The Golden (Darling) Pea-hen.

THERE was once a king and he had three sons, and was so fond of them that he would not have given them in exchange even for the whole world. The good father was fond of them, oh, so fond of them! but their good mother could not long be fond of them. Poor thing, all at once she falls ill and feels that she must soon take leave of them. As once all three are standing sorrowfully round her death-bed, she raises her head yet once and thus addresses them: "My children, how can I leave you on this sad world? how can I take leave of you? But no—grieve not—I will not desert you even after death. So now, my children, take these three nuts, bury them every evening in the ashes—they will be your good angels," and as she said this she expired.

Her three little sons mourned her, even her husband mourned her, and the whole country mourned for the good queen. But, as you know, everything in the world is only for a time; the king, when the year was out, threw off his sorrow and married again. He got a handsome wife, but the orphans did not get a mother—only a stepmother—and as to her, it was whispered that she was a witch. And indeed she was not only a stepmother but a witch, for nothing so much enraged her as when she had to look at those three worthy little princes. "Stay," she thought to herself, "you sha'n't have breath much longer to blow your porridge with!"

Once in the evening when they had laid down, this precious stepmother goes, prowls about the cabin where the three little princes slept, listens, knocks at the door. "Are you asleep? Do you hear me, you young princelings?" They, in truth, were already fast asleep, but the three nuts which they had buried in the ashes as their mother had bade them, replied: "We are not asleep, we hear you; we are asking one another riddles." And the witch with the long knife departed.

The next night the witch goes again with a big knife. She listens at the door, and there it is as quiet as the grave. "Oh, they are certainly fast asleep," she thought to herself; but yet for better

security she tapped. "Are you asleep? Do you hear me, you young princes?" and here the nuts sang out to her: "We are not asleep, we hear you; we are asking one another riddles." "Why, what is that thunder grumbling? there must be something out of the way in all this!" the old witch mutters. The following day, while the little princes are away from the cabin, she creeps in, turned everything upside down, even pokes into the oven, but where there is nothing there is nothing, only, as she drags herself out of the oven, something flicks her on the nose. She snuffs and snuffs. "Aha!" says she, "there's certainly some devil in those ashes: but stop, won't I smoke him out!"

The third evening she had the oven fumigated so thoroughly that she pretty well drove all the mice from the house, and the poor nuts were frizzled and roasted. She comes to the door and listens, but there is already nothing to be heard. She knocks. "Are you asleep? Do you hear me, you young princes?" "We are not asleep; we are asking riddles," pipes out, in a feeble voice, one of the three nuts that was not yet quite reduced to cinders.

I wonder the devil did not carry off the witch then and there for her wickedness—as she went away growling under her nose: "Nu! give me time to sharpen this knife, and then all three of you shall soon be little cherubs up aloft!" In a minute or two she came again with her knife sharpened, listened, knocked, called, but no one answered: on this she very quietly opens the door, steals to the bed, and—snick! snack! snick!—one after the other she has cut off all the three heads, and dragged the three dead bodies into that last-chamber [*lit.*: cabin or hut], which the king is wont to visit only once a year.

Next morning there was a searching and a running about the castle in every direction, and no one knew nor could discover what had become of the three little princes. The king, poor fellow, knew not what to do from very grief.

Some time after this, just as the witch is sweeping out the royal chamber, a pea-hen flies to the window and struggles to get in. "Aha! thou screeching nuisance, whither would'st thou?" she shouts at it, and runs after it with her broom; but the king says to her: "Ah! do not drive away the lovely creature, rather let her in, that I may console myself at least with her," and he opens the window to her. The poor pea-hen comes to him, places in his hands out of its beak a herb and begins to sing:

By her lord a pea-hen nestled,
Items three of news she's brought him :
That his sons are murdered taught him,
And lie in that hall so lonely,
Where he goes each year once only.
Herbs too she has brought to render
Life back to those corpses tender.

So she sang and then flew away.

The king, astonished, followed her abstractedly with his eyes, and it came to him as he thought it over, that this pea-hen was not like other pea-hens, but that it must be his poor wife. On this he ran at once to that spare chamber, where in fact he found his three sons murdered. He touched them on the throat with that herb and his three little sons, yet more blooming than before, leapt to their feet. "Well, that's all right; but woe to him who has done this deed!" But all at once he convinced himself, that in very deed, it could be no other than the queen herself, for she alone had the latch-key. And so the king, enraged, at once had the queen seized, and called to his servants: "Lead out into the courtyard four of the wildest horses, bind this miscreant to their tails, let them carry her in fragments to the four quarters of the world." As he said, so was it done; they led out the four horses, bound the queen to them by their tails, whipped them up, and of that precious witch not the veriest shred remained. From that time forth the king never married again, only delighted himself with his three sons, and ruled and ruled until he died.

The Golden Spinneress.

[In the Liptovsky Dialect.]

Far, far away on the other side of the black sea, once upon a time lived a young squire. When he had now come to years of discretion, it occurred to him that verily it would be no bad thing to look about him in the world and select some good housewife and well-conducted bride. There! as he determined, so he did. Off he went on his travels in this world, but without very much success, for the sort of girl he wanted he could not find. At last after this, he somehow came to the dwelling of a widow who had three daughters, all marriageable. The two elder set to work like two axes, but the youngest, who was called Hannah, was like a leaden bird at her task. When this young man came to them, the day's work was half over, and he wondered to see Hannah dozing over the fire while the other two sisters were spinning so busily, and so he says to their mother: "Prythee tell me, old dame, why do you not set her yonder to spin also. Why, she is a girl already quite fit for service, and in the working she would find the time pass more pleasantly." "My dear young man," replied the mother, "I should be heartily glad to let her spin, aye, I would even turn the spindle for her myself; but what's to be done when she is such a nimble spinneress, that by morning she alone and unaided would have spun off not only all our flax, but all the sheaves too from the thatch, and that into threads of gold! Ay, the end of it would be that she would set to work upon my poor grey hair; and so you see I am obliged to let her be." "If that's how it is," exclaims the suitor, delighted, "and if it is the will of heaven, you might very well give her to me in marriage. Look you, I have a well-ordered property: flax and hemp, tow and fibre—whole heaps of them, she could spin and spin to her heart's content."

The old mother did not need to reflect much about such an offer: a fine wedding garment painted with oil colours, was produced from the wardrobe for the bridegroom, and the evening was passed in the

betrothal festivities. The other two girls at their spinning even envied our Hanka her good luck a little, but in the end consoled themselves with the reflection that they too would be sure soon to don the bridal wreath, when even Lazy-hand, as they nicknamed Hannah, had so soon got a husband. The next day our young bridegroom has the horses got ready and when they were harnessed and put to, placed the weeping maiden beside him in the fine chaise, gave his hand to his mother-in-law, shouted to his young bride's sisters: "All prosperity be with you here!" and drove off at a gallop from the village.

For better or worse. Poor Hanka sat beside the young bridegroom gloomy and full of tears, as though the chickens had eaten all her bread up. He had plenty to say to her, but Hanka sat there as mute as a fish. "What ails thee?" he says, "never fear; at my house you won't be left to snooze life away, I can tell you. I will give thee just what thy soul desires: flax, hemp, tow, fibre, thou shalt have enough for the whole winter; and I have even provided the apples for thee to keep the saliva going."

But as for our Hanka, the further they went, the gloomier she became. Thus by evening they came to the young man's castle, alighted from the chaise, and after the evening meal, the future mistress was conducted to a spacious chamber, where, piled up from floor to ceiling, lay nothing but raw flax and hemp to be spun. "Nu!" he says, "there's a distaff, spindle and winder, and rosy apples and a few peas to keep your mouth moist. Spin! If it is all spun into gold thread by morning, we will be married immediately; if not, without law or trial I will have thee ruined." So saying, the young master of the house departed and left our young spinneress to spin.

When Hanka was left alone, she did not seat herself under the distaff, for she had not the least idea how to twist the threads; but she began to vent her griefs: "Oh God, oh God, to what dog's shame am I come at last! Why ever did not my mother teach me also to work and spin like my two sisters? I should now be at home in peace and quiet, but as it is I must perish—a sinful creature hateful to God and man." As she uttered these reproaches, all at once the wall opened, and before the astonished Hanka stood a little fellow, with a little pink cap on his head, a small apron girded up; and before him he drove a small cart. "Why are thy eyes so red with weeping?" he enquired of Hannah; "what has happened

to thee?" "How can I, sinful soul, not fail to weep," says she; "just fancy, they have bade me spin all this raw hemp and flax into gold thread by to-morrow morning, and if I do it not they will have me ruined without law or trial. Oh God, oh God! what shall I do alone and deserted in this strange, outlandish world?" "If that is all," says the little fellow, "never fear; I will soon teach thee to spin gold thread; but only on condition that in such and such a year I shall find thee in this same place. Then after this if thou failest to guess my respected name, thou shalt be my wife, and I shall carry thee off on this hand-cart; but if thou guessest it I shall leave thee in peace. But this I tell thee, if on this very night of said year thou triest to hide from me, and to take flight anywhere under the bare heaven, I shall find thee and shall wring thy neck. There! wilt thou stand by this compact?" Truth to say, it did not particularly please Hanka; but what had the poor thing to do? Finally she thought to herself: "As I am doomed one way or the other, so help me heaven! I will agree." On hearing this, the little fellow ran round her three times with that golden hand-cart, sat under the distaff and began to repeat:

Thus, little Hannah, thus and thus;
Thus, little Hannah, thus and thus;
Thus, little Hannah, thus and thus;

and soon he had taught her perfectly how to spin gold thread. Thereupon, as he came so he departed, and the wall closed behind him of its own accord.

Our heroine, from this time forth a regular jewel of a spinneress, sat under the distaff, and, seeing how the flax diminished and the golden thread increased, spun and spun, and by morning had not only spun it all off, but had a good sleep as well. In the morning, as soon as the young master of the house awoke, he dressed himself and went to have a look at his precious spinneress. When he entered the chamber he was almost blinded by the glitter, and would hardly believe his own eyes, that it was all gold. But when he was convinced that it was so, he began to embrace his golden spinneress and gave orders for an immediate wedding. Thus they lived in divine fear; and as our hero in past times had delighted to see his little Hannah golden spindle in hand, so now he rejoiced a thousand times more to see her with the lovely son, which she had borne him in the meantime.

Ah, well! There is no such thing as a footpath without an end. Not even the happiness of our married couple could last for ever.

One day followed another until at last, as if from the bare palm of your hand, the destined year arrived. And then you can fancy how our Hanka grew from moment to moment gloomier and gloomier—her eyes were as red as fire, she could scarcely crawl like a shadow from room to room. And indeed it was surely no trifling matter, to have to lose all at once both a good husband and a son she doted on. Her poor husband knew as yet nothing about anything, and consoled his wife as well as he could, but she refused to be comforted. When she reflected that in exchange for her worthy husband she was to get such a nasty little imp, it was a wonder she did not tear the wall down from vexation and misery. Finally, with a great effort she constrained herself and revealed to her husband everything that had happened on that first night. He grew as pale as a wall from fear, and had it announced throughout the district that if any one recognized anywhere such and such an imp and could mention his true name, he should be given a piece of gold as large as his own head. "Eh! but that would be a nice warming-pan, all that gold!" whispered one neighbour to another; and away they ran in all directions, rummaged every hole and corner, peeped and pried even down to the very mouse-holes, but there indeed they could not sniff out anything. No one recognized the imp, no one had seen him, and not a living soul could guess what his name was.

Thus the last day arrived. About the little fellow not a rumour, not a scrap of evidence; and our Hanka, with her own little boy at her breast, beats her two hands together not only for his sake but her husband's. The husband, poor fellow, whose own eyes, too, were now quite dry with weeping, in order that, at any rate, he he should not be obliged to look on at the sufferings of his wife, shouldered his gun, bound his trusty hounds in the leash, and went off to the chase. While he was engaged in hunting (it would he about luncheon time), it began to lighten, criss-cross, in all directions, the rain began to pour down so that it was not fit weather to drive even a dog out of doors on to the high road; and in this mire and slush all the attendants of our hero groped their way as best they could, and got so dispersed that he was left alone with only one single follower in dense, unknown mountains, and this sole companion like a drowned rat. Where on earth were they to take refuge from the increasing tempest, where dry themselves, where pass the night? The poor fellows, master and man, look about them in all directions to see if they could not at least discover some shepherd's or herds-

man's hut; but where there is nothing, there is nothing. At last, when they had quite stared the two eyes out of their head, they observe, as if from the holes of a gallery, puffs of smoke issuing as if from a lime-kiln. "Hie thee, my son," says the master to the servant, "and find out where that smoke comes from. There must be people there. Ask them if they would kindly take us in for the night?"

Off went the servant, and before time enough for a cock to lay an egg had elapsed, returned with the news that, on his soul, no trace of door, hut or people was to be found there. "Bah! thou art but an idle chatterbox!" says the master to the servant, whose teeth were chattering with cold. "I will go alone, and thou for penance shalt be left to soak and sulk out here." Well, off goes his respected master—but there, i' faith, even he couldn't rummage anything out, only in one place from this gallery a faint smoke issued. At last he exclaimed crossly, "Well, if the devil shall ride the devil, I must at least know where this smoke comes from." And he goes close to the hole, kneels down and peeps in. As he thus peeps in, he observes, far away down underground, that meat is being fried in a kitchen, and places for two persons are laid at a small stone table. Round this table ran a creature like a little boy in a small red cap with a golden hand-cart before him, and every time he ran round he sang:

I found my lord a golden spinneress,
And she this very night my name must guess;
If she guesses aright, I leave her alone,
If she guesses it not, I take her for my own,
And my name's little Martin Klyngash.

And again he went running round the table like one possessed, and shouted:

Nine dishes for supper we will prepare,
And I'll lay her to rest in a silken bed;
If she guesses, etc.

Our hero had no need to hear more—away he sped as fast as his legs would carry him to the servant, and as now the rain had somewhat abated, they happily found a footpath by which they hastened home.

At home he found his wife quite broken down, utterly wretched, having cried till she could cry no more, for the thought that now she would not even be able to take leave of her husband, when all this time he never returned. "Worry yourself no more my dear,"

were the first words our hero spoke as he entered the room; "I know all you need: his name is little Martin Klyngash." And here he related fully where he had been and what had happened. Hanka nearly dropped from her feet from happiness, embraced and fondled her husband, and betook herself in high glee to the room in which she had spun that first night, to spin golden thread once again.

About midnight the wall opened and the little fellow with the little red cap comes, as that other year, and running round her with the golden hand-cart, cries with all the breath in his body:

If you guess my name, I let you alone,
If you guess it not, I take you for my own;
Guess away! guess away!

"I will try and guess it," says Hanka, "thy name is little Martin Klyngash." As she pronounced these words, the little imp seized his hand-cart, flung his cap on the ground, and as he came so he departed, the wall closed behind him, and Hanka breathed free again.

From that time forth she spun no more golden thread, but there was no need, for they were sufficiently wealthy. She and her husband enjoyed each other's society, their little boy grew as if from water, and they bought themselves a cow, and for this cow a bell, and that's the end of this story.

Are You Angry?

[In the Sarrisky Dialect.]

Where it was, there it was, there was once a village, and in that village dwelt the father of three sons. One of them was a dolt and never did anything but sit behind the stove, but the other two fancied themselves extremely clever. One of these went off to service in an adjacent village. His mother filled his wallet full of girdle cakes. And so he went to a house and engaged himself to serve the master on the following terms: that the one who was the first to lose his temper should have his nose cut off.

And so the farmer sent the servant to thrash corn. At breakfast-time he was never summoned by the farmer's wife, nor at dinner. And the farmer asked him: "Miska! nu! art thou angry?" "And, pray, what should make me angry?" Evening came and the evening meal was boiled; well, again they never summoned Miska. And then the farmer asked him: "Nu, art thou angry, Miska?" "And pray what should I be angry at?" He was not angry; the girdle cakes from home still held out. But by the second and third day the wallet was emptied, and again he was not summoned to dinner. The farmer inquires: "Miska, aren't you angry?" "And what devil wouldn't be angry, when you are plaguing me so with hunger?" Then the farmer drew out his knife and cut off Miska's nose.

Thus noseless, he sped home and complained to his father and brothers of the savage farmer. "Oh, you booby!" remarked his younger brother, Pavko (Paulet): "Stay; just let me go! Hi! mother! roast us the girdle cakes." Off went Pavko, and, in fact, came to the very village and to the very same house where Miska had been, and he agreed with the same farmer that the one who lost his temper first should also lose his nose. They ordered him also to thrash for three days, but neither the first, second, or third day did they summon him to feed with them. "Pavko, aren't you

angry?" inquired the farmer of him. "As if the devils wouldn't be angry with you, sir: here's my poor stomach already grown to be like a heap of bones in a cemetery." Then the farmer drew out his knife and cut off Pavko's nose.

Home went Pavko without his nose, and said to his elder brother: "Their ways of going on there are downright barbarous; my nose has gone to the deuce, too!" Hereupon Adam, the youngest, squeaked out from behind the stove: "Noodles, ye are, both of ye, just let me go and you'll soon see whether I don't serve my time and the farmer out as well."

Off he went with the girdle-cakes in his wallet, and lit upon just the same village in which his brothers had been, and agreed with the farmer that the one who first lost his temper should have his nose cut off. But Adam knew how to act with intelligence. As the farmer's wife did not summon him to dinner, with what he thrashed he went to the ale-house and put it all in pawn. The farmer came and saw no grain. Then Adam inquired of him: "Art thou angry, farmer?" "And pray, why should I be angry?" So things went on several times; and the farmer, in order not to lose his nose, always said that he was not angry. Thrashing ceased, and Adam carried away to the ale-house what he had thrashed out.

Once a day came when the farmer and the farmer's wife were obliged to go from home, and they ordered Adam, in prospect of their return, to kill the first sheep that looked at him when he went into the fold, and then to clean it and boil it in the copper and garnish it with parsley. And so Adam went into the sheep-fold with a great banging and racketting, so that all the sheep looked at him at once, and thereupon he killed them all. Then, having cleaned and washed one, he placed it in the copper, and instead of parsley flung into the copper the sheep-dog, which was called Parsley. Now come the farmer and the farmer's wife and enquire of Adam whether he has prepared everything properly. He replies: "The sheep I have cut in pieces and have flung dog Parsley into the copper, so that his feet are uppermost. Nu! are you angry, master?" "The idea of my being angry!" He would keep his nose at any cost.

At the time of the Christmas-eve service, when they had to go to church, it was very dark. So the farmer said to Adam: "It would be well if thou wouldst kindle that chip of pine to light us to the chapel with." "Go, sir; go, ma'am; I'll light you on your honoured way." He took a match and set fire to the thatch, until the

whole house was a-blaze. Then the farmer hurried home, and Adam called after him: "Well, are you angry, master?" "The idea of my being angry!"—for his nose was dearer to him than his house. But what was he to do without house, without anything? They went into the world, the farmer, the farmer's wife, and their servant. They wanted to put him to death, and plotted between them that at night, when he was asleep, the farmer should throw him into the water.

But Adam knew all about it; he did not lie down by the water's side, but got up in the night and flung into the water the farmer's wife, who was at the edge of it. The farmer awoke, and seeing nothing of his precious wife, began to cry out. But Adam merely enquired: "Well, are you angry, farmer?" "Who the devil wouldn't be angry, when you've rooked me of everything?" Then Adam seized the knife and cut off the farmer's nose. Adam took to his heels and reached home. And to his two brothers he said: "There, you see, you sapient Solomons, I've served my time and saved my nose!"

"*We Three Brothers.*"

[In the Gemersky Dialect.]

There was once a peasant, and he had three sons; but he was so poor that he had not enough to keep himself alive with, much less to support three sons. The lads were jolly, strapping fellows. Once he says to the eldest: "Dzuro, dost thou hear me?" "Yes, father." "Thou must go somewhere to look out for a place." "Well, I will go, if you do not want me at home." He shouldered his knapsack and went. On and on he trudges, among desolate mountains and miners' tracks, until a limping fellow meets him. "Where art thou going to, my lad?" "I am going to look out for a place; you couldn't offer me one, could you?" "Ay! i'faith I'll take thee; just come along. At my house thou wilt have nothing to do but to boil three souls in a cauldron, and to stir them, and all the time keep exclaiming perpetually: 'We three brothers!'" "Well said! I am quite ready to agree to it." This limping fellow walked on and on, and the young man with him, through those desolate mountains yet farther, until at last they came to an old castle; there the lame man led him into a room and pointed to a cauldron, under which even then a fire was burning. "There's your work cut out for you," says his conductor. "If thou doest as I have bid thee for a year, thou shalt carry away as much gold as thou pleasest. Work away, and I shall now go about my affairs, and shall return here this day year." Off went the lame fellow, and perhaps all the devils knew where he hobbled off to! Our worthy young fellow made up the fire under that cauldron, stirred those three souls in it, and never ceased repeating until the year was out: "We three brothers!" At the end of the year the lame fellow returned, saw that everything was in order, and said to him: "Take as much gold and silver as thou pleasest and go home!"

He stuffed his knapsack full to bursting and hastened home. While still some way off, he began shouting to his father: "We three brothers!" "Ay, there ye are, neither more nor less, and all

safe and sound, now that I've got thee home again," responded the father, for he imagined his son was enquiring after his brothers to know whether they were also safe and sound. But, in reality, the poor son had been sticking the whole year by that cauldron and continually shouting out: "We three brothers!" whatever was asked him. In spite of this the father was highly delighted when his son teamed his ducats out of his knapsack upon the table. So he says to his second son: "Dost hear me, Andrew?" "I hear thee, what is it?" "Thou must go into service there, too." "Aye, that I will," took his knapsack and was off. On and on went this second, also by desolate mountains and miners' trackways, and the lame fellow meets him. "Come with me, lad." "That I will, if you will give me employment." "I'll give it thee, I'll give it thee; thou hast nothing to do but to boil three souls in a cauldron and stir them, and all the while never cease exclaiming: 'For a peck [*lit.*: a bag] of pepper.' If you serve me zealously a full year, I will give you gold and silver to your heart's content." The lame man led him away to the castle, showed him that cauldron, and our youth set to work to boil those three souls—and made up the fire and stirred them about in that cauldron a full year, and for ever and a day kept crying out: "For a peck of pepper!"

When the year was out the lame fellow gave him his knapsack choke-full of gold and silver. He was still quite a long way from home when his father shouted to him: "Well, art thou come with good news?" and he replied: "With a peck of pepper!" And the father exclaimed: "Oh, dear, we've plenty as it is; now we shall have both hands and [both] nostrils full." But the poor son knew nothing else but how to keep bawling out: "With a peck of pepper!" But when he teamed his gold out upon the table, it compensated for everything. The father gloated over it, and said even to the third son: "Dost hear me, Jan?" "I hear thee, what is it?" "Off with you, too, into the same service." "I will go at once." He took his knapsack and was off. On and on goes number three, like the two others, by lonely mountains and miners' trackways, until he too was settled in service with the lame man. He boiled and stirred those three souls in that cauldron, and never ceased to shout as he did so: "Even there we shall be well off!"

When the year was over, he took the gold and silver, and as he neared home, while yet some way from the house, shouted: "Even there we shall be well off!" "Aye, that we shall, if thou too hast

brought home as much gold as the others." He brought it, truth to tell, in heaps, but he knew nothing else but only how to bawl perpetually: "Even there we shall be well off!" just as he had learnt it at the lame man's house the previous year.

Well, "We Three Brothers" (for now people never called them anything else) went off with all their money to the spring fair, to buy up the whole fair. On the way they caught up a grocer and went with him. Soon after the lame fellow also caught them up and went with them. In the evening they came to a meadow halfway to the fair, and on it they stopped the night. In the night the lame man murdered the grocer, stole all their wealth, and vanished. Next morning other people are passing that way to the fair, and see the murdered grocer. In a twinkling they have bound our worthy three brothers, and dragged them off to the city before the judge, for no one else, they were sure, could have committed the crime but they.

Then the judge asks: "Who killed this grocer?" "We three brothers!" exclaimed the eldest. "And what did you kill him for?" "For a peck of pepper!" cried the second. "Just so, and now we'll have you hanged." "Even there we shall be well off!" added the youngest. "Well, if you're content, we are," said the judge, and ordered them to be taken away to the gallows. There stood Asmodeus with his lame leg (for it was, if you wish to know, the Devil), and waited for their three souls. As they were being drawn under the gallows, they looked hard at him and pointed at him with their thumbs. "We three brothers!" shouted the first. "Yes, yes, we know it was you who killed him," replied the people; "but what did you kill him for?" "For a peck of pepper!" cried the second. "Just so, and that's why you are going to be strung up." "And even there we shall be well off!" added the third, and click! it was all over with them. The devil clutched their three souls and forthwith carried them off to stew in his cauldron.

Janek and Hanka.

[UPPER LUSATIAN]

THERE was once a man and wife; these two had a very large number of children. And the man goes to the town and buys a quart of peas and gives to each child a portion of pease-pudding, but there wasn't enough for Janek and Hanka. And so they both began to cry bitterly. Then the father says to them: "Be quiet and don't cry; I am going into the wood to cut faggots, and you shall both come too for strawberries." The man takes his beater and roller and hangs them on a tree. To Janek and Hanka he said: "Off with you, children, and pick strawberries; as long as I am chopping wood you can gather strawberries." Now the wind kept knocking the beater and the roller together, and the children thought that it was their father cutting wood, and went on gathering strawberries. At last they had eaten to their heart's content, and had also filled their jug with the berries, and went to seek their father. And they came to where the beater and roller are hanging, but no father is to be seen there.

Now they both begin to cry bitterly, and run about and shout through the wood in all directions, but find no one. All at once they find themselves at the cottage of the gingerbread baker, and keep tapping away at it: "Tap, tap, at old Vera's cottage door!" Then old Vera runs out. "Who's there?" and they both sneak off and hide so cleverly that she cannot find them. After this they again go on tapping at the cottage. "Tap, tap, at old Vera's cottage door!" Then old Vera again runs out. "Who's there?" and they run off and conceal themselves so that she cannot find them. After this they again go on tapping at the cottage. "Tap, tap, at old Vera's cottage door!" This time she jumps out right briskly and catches them. She takes them in with her and says: "Now I am going to fatten you up, both of you;" and so saying she shuts them up in the sheepfold, and gives them nothing but soft bread soaked in

milk to eat. After a while she goes to see if they are fat enough yet. "Janek, put out your finger, I want to see if you are fat enough yet." Then he sticks out the reed-pipe which he brought from home with him. She cuts into it. "Och! thou art not yet fat enough; it is all very bony yet. Hanka, put out thy finger, I want to see if thou art fat enough." So she sticks out her finger with a finger-ring on it. Vera keeps hacking away at the finger-ring. "Oh! thou art not yet fat enough."

After this they clap their hands and scream with delight, so much that Janek loses his pipe and Hanka her ring. Now, old Vera again comes to see if they aren't yet fat enough. "Janek, stick out thy finger that I may see if thou art fat enough." He sticks out his finger and old Vera hacks away at it until the blood just pours out. "Hanka, stick thy finger out that I may see if thou art fat enough." She sticks it out and old Vera hacks away at it until the blood pours out. "Haj! haj! now you are both fat enough; now I'll bake you both!" She prepares the oven then and there, takes out Janek and Hanka and says: "Now seat yourselves nicely on the shovel." They seat themselves on the shovel, first in one way, then in another, and she keeps telling them all the while how they ought to sit, but they every time keep tumbling down again. "We don't know how we ought to sit; do please just show us." Thereupon old Vera seated herself on the shovel, and they, quick as lightning, shovel her into the glowing oven. Old Vera is burnt up entirely in the glowing oven, and the children run merrily before the house.

There was ice at that season on the pond, and Janek and Hanka slid merrily over the ice. Here Vera's sister catches sight of them and would like to snap them up. Post-haste out of the cottage she rushes, and runs after them on the ice, but here she over-reaches herself, and falling, breaks in two, and is drowned. Janek and Hanka had now the cottage of the gingerbread-maker all to themselves, and have it still, unless they have sold it.

The Virgin Mary as Godmother.

Now it once happened that a man wandered about very miserably. And he met a stranger who said to him: "Friend, why dost thou wander about so miserably?" "And who wouldn't wander about miserably?" replied the other. "I wish to prepare a christening, and no one is willing to be invited because I have asked them so often before." "Then invite me," said the stranger. "Then come to-morrow, my well-found friend." And when he had gone a little further he met another strange man, who also said to him: "Friend, why art thou wandering about so miserably?" "Who wouldn't wander about miserably?" he replied. "I want to prepare a christening, and no one is willing to be invited because I have asked them so frequently." "Then invite me," said the stranger. "Then come to-morrow, my well-found friend." And when he had gone a little further he met a strange woman, who also said to him: "Friend, why dost thou wander about so miserably?" "And who wouldn't wander about miserably?" he replied. "I want to prepare a christening, and no one is ready to be invited because I have asked them so often before." "Then ask me," says the strange woman. "Then come to morrow, my well-found friend."

The next day came, and there assembled at his house, the devil, Saint Peter, and the Virgin Mary. When they were just about to go to the christening, they began to quarrel about the child, until at last, as it was a little girl, it fell to the lot of the Virgin Mary. When the christening was over, she said at her departure that in three years' time she would come for her godchild. Three years elapsed, and when the appointed day arrived the mother dressed all her children in their smartest things, and seated them on the bench near the stove; but the youngest, as it was very pretty, she put into the kneading-trough. The Virgin Mary came into the room and examined the children seated in a row on the bench by the stove. And she began to ask the first child: "Art thou my godchild?"

And so on in succession; but none of them replied, until at last, somewhere behind her, a small voice was to be heard, saying: "I am, godmother!" The Virgin Mary now looks all about the room and discovers her godchild in the kneading-trough. She takes the little girl with her and carries it off to her castle. "There! my godchild," says she, "is our dwelling-place. In the castle are ten rooms. It will be thy task to sweep and tidy nine of them, but the tenth thou art forbidden to enter. Thou must not even look into it through the keyhole, nor ever try to open it."

For a long time the godchild of the Virgin Mary faithfully obeyed her godmother's orders; but once, when her godmother had gone away, the little girl thought she would enter the forbidden room. Having tried first one way and then another, without any success, she stuck a finger into the key-hole, and lo! when she drew it out again, it was gilded! She was very much taken aback, and hastily tied it up in her handkerchief. When the Virgin Mary came home, she soon began to enquire what the girl had done to her finger. "I was chopping cabbage-stalks for the goslings," replied the other, "and in doing so cut my finger." Thereupon the Virgin Mary took her and led her away into a wood. There she placed her in a bush, and said: "Thou hast been a disobedient girl; therefore be dumb and come no more into my castle."

After a while a prince rode past, and his two dogs ran backwards and forwards through the wood, and began all at once to bark loudly. The prince bade his huntsman to go and see what the two dogs were barking at. The huntsman went and found in the bush a very pretty princess. And the prince and the huntsman perceive that she is dumb, and carry her home with them. And as she was so pretty, the prince made her his wife. Now for a long time he was unwilling to tell his mother what he had done, and she in consequence was very ill-disposed towards the young bride.

Now when the girl had given birth to her first child, you must know the Virgin Mary came in the night, took away the babe, and smeared the young mother's lips with blood. In the morning they noticed this, and her mother-in-law said that no other explanation was possible but that she had eaten the child. She therefore advised her son to have his wife burnt immediately. But as her son dearly loved his wife, this was repugnant to him, and he said he would wait a little longer. And when she gave birth to her second child, the Virgin Mary came again in the night, took the baby and smeared the

mother's lips with blood. In the morning they again remarked it, and her mother-in-law said that it could not be but that she had eaten the child, and she counselled her son yet more strongly to have his young wife burnt in consequence. But as he loved his wife very dearly, this was repugnant to him, and he said he would wait yet a little longer. And when she had given birth to her third child, the Virgin Mary came yet again, took away the baby, and smeared the mother's lips with blood. Again in the morning they observe this, and her mother-in-law says that it cannot be but that she has eaten the child, and she urges her son to have a fire made and to have his wife thrust into it. This was a matter of deep grief to him, and he went there after a while to look, and lo! his wife sat in front of the pyre on a golden chair, and held her youngest child in her arms, and at each side sat one of the other two. And he wondered and rejoiced exceedingly, and yet more so when he discovered that she could speak. And she related to him everything, and told him also how the Virgin Mary had come to her with the three children, had led her out of the fire, and had said: "Thou hast suffered sufficiently for thy disobedience; henceforth obey thy lord, and be thy speech restored thee." And when after this they wanted to burn the old mother, she begged and prayed for her, until at last they spared her life. And ever after the old mother loved her devotedly.

And she gave birth to many more children, and they were all very pretty and obedient. And she sent to her parents and to her brothers and sisters to say where she was, and that in her children they had descendants. And, as you may suppose, they were all very pleased at this, and rejoiced to think that she had fared so well.

The Golden Treasure.

A WEALTHY man had three sons whom he dearly loved and brought up suitably to their condition. The two elder ones grew up very worthy fellows, but neither of them had such a good heart as the youngest, Peter, who, in the popular estimation, was somewhat clownish, and on that account was looked upon by the other two as a nuisance. The two elder brothers, in fact, passed in the neighbourhood for very pretty fellows, for they were now able to hold their own fairly well in any society. Everywhere they were treated with deference, for everyone knew that the sick fox, their father, could not last for ever, and that after his death they would inherit the golden treasure. In all families where there were daughters, the young men were welcomed with delight, and every mother in the neighbourhood was enchanted if they invited her daughter to dance with them.

As for Peter, nobody smoothed the way for him; indeed, people hardly noticed him, for he had nothing particularly interesting about him. He himself knew very well that he was ill-suited for society; so it was better to keep to himself and not cause annoyance.

For many a long year the two elder brothers had waited for the day when their father should hand over to them the possession of the golden treasure, and reserve for himself the pleasure of peaceful retirement. At last, in extreme old age, he summoned his three sons and said: "My children! I am no longer capable of administering the golden treasure, and wish to leave it to one of you; I should have preferred to apportion it equally among all my dear sons, but the treasure cannot be divided. I shall impose upon you therefore three tasks; he who best fulfils them will get the golden treasure. First, then, he will win who brings from his sweetheart the most beautiful dress." Off went the two elder brothers in high glee, and never thought for a moment that Peter could get the better of them, for he knew no young woman intimately. They asked their respective sweethearts for their most beautiful dresses. Now each young woman

reserved her best dress, and did not give it, thinking that her rival would be equally chary. Peter, who had previously never thought about the golden treasure, went sick at heart behind the barn, not knowing which way to turn. Fancy, then, how pleased he was when he heard his name pronounced by a strange but yet friendly voice. He could not discover at first who was calling him; he looked all round and could see nobody. After a while he observed that a large green frog was speaking to him. And now the frog began to ask what was the cause of his unhappiness. When Peter had told her everything very faithfully, she said to him: "Do not be unhappy; I have myself a daughter, who can give thee the most beautiful dress. Come with me." Now she led him a few paces further into a hole, by which, finally, they came to an elegant little apartment. The frog instantly called her daughter, who was sewing by the window, and said to her: "I have promised this boy here a dress; give him your finest one." Gaily she led him to the wardrobe, that he might select the finest. But her mother hereupon bade her to choose it herself, the male sex being so incompetent in the matter. When he had obtained her most beautiful dress, he thanked her affably, and went off in high glee home, where his two brothers and their father were already waiting for him. Fancy how surprised they were when they were forced to confess themselves that Peter had brought home the most beautiful dress.

Their father, however, paid no further heed to it, and said: "My children! so far, nothing has as yet been decided: you must all of you perform another task, and each of you bring home a precious ring." The two elder brothers went away grumbling, and Peter was also vexed to think that he must again importune the inhabitant of that strange underworld. However, he makes up his mind, and asks her for her ring, which he gets without much trouble. But it astonished him to see there, instead of a frog, only an old woman, walking in the garden. But he did not stop to wonder, and hastened home, where they had been for a long time awaiting him. Merrily he presented the ring which he had been unable to fit on to his own finger.

This time also Peter won, his ring being by far the prettiest. The two brothers were now quite convinced that it was all up with them. All the same their father again said: "My children, with this nothing is settled as yet; he alone will get the golden treasure who to-morrow brings home the most beautiful and best-dressed bride."

Full of exultation, off went the two elder brothers to their wealthy brides, and were certain in their own minds that they would win; poor Peter hadn't gumption enough to look girls in the face, much less to enter into conversation with them, or to confess his love for them. Again he went, bereft of all hope, behind the barn, not forgetful, indeed, of his former benefactress, but quite incapable of asking her to be his bride. And so he walked slowly about the garden, when all at once he again hears the well-known voice, which inquires what is the cause of his distress. Then he replies: "How can I fail to be distressed? Yesterday I thought I had won the golden treasure, but now father only promises it to the one of us who brings home to-morrow the fairest bride. My two brothers will indeed laugh at me when I come home alone." The frog again encouraged him and promised him her aid. Quickly she led him to her dwelling, where she said jestingly to her daughter: "My daughter, thou hast helped the boy with thy dress and thy ring, but his father wishes also to see his bride. How much we have raised his hopes, and now is he to be left to be the laughing stock of his two brothers? Come, give him thy hand in marriage!" The daughter hereupon replied, all smirks and smiles: "Do you know whether he is willing to be my husband?" At these friendly words Peter lost all his bashfulness, and said: "With all my heart! my thoughts have been fixed upon thee, but I did not trust myself to express my feelings and wishes." They very soon came to an understanding, and then the girl said that she must go and put on her wedding dress. After a while she came back again with her mother as a lovely and beautifully dressed bride. Peter, without great difficulty, reached home first with her, and his father was not a little surprised to see that his Peter had also managed to find a mate. After a while in stalk the other two brothers with their two gorgeous brides. Now the father bids each of them to spin round with his bride in a rapid dance. Off they set, and before very long the outer dresses of the three beauties blew off, being only lightly tacked on. Peter's bride had a yet more gorgeous dress on underneath; the other two stood there in their everyday apparel. In astonishment the father begins: "I saw from the first that she was the fairest figure of the three; but I never thought that under that surpassing dress of hers she had on one yet more costly and better-fitting. See, then, my sons, Peter must receive the gift of the golden treasure, contrary to my hopes." Here he stepped up to Peter's

bride and saluted her as his daughter-in-law. But as his father knew that the two elder brothers at home would envy Peter and endeavour to injure him, he gave them a good round sum of money to buy themselves a small estate and manage it together.

The Tinkling Linden.

THERE was once a man and woman, and they had a dear little daughter. Before this dear little daughter grew up her mother died. And once the little thing went to its godmother for a holiday. And her godmother kept telling her little goddaughter that papa ought to marry her (the godmother). "You dear little thing," said her godmother, petting her, "then I'd wash your dear little feet with milk, and your pretty little head with beer." And so papa marries godmother, and godmother washes its little feet with milk, and its little head with beer. But the next time, and ever after, godmother washes the poor little dear in sewage water. After a time godmother has four dear little girls of her own; the first has one eye, the second has two eyes, the third has three eyes, and the fourth has four eyes. Now the poor little godchild has to pasture the cows, and get from her stepmother greasy scraps and peppery cheese to take to the pasturage with her, and yet her small cheeks glow rosier and healthier than those of all her four half-sisters put together. The stepmother now wants to know what makes her godchild so fresh and pretty. So she sends with her to the pasturage her own first-born child with one eye, to discover what makes her godchild so pretty. When they had driven the cows on to the common, the little girl with one eye said: "Sit and plait my hair." And while the little godchild did so, she kept muttering: "Sleep, little one-eye." And off it went to sleep. Now came a striped cow and gave her food from one horn, and drink from the other. In the evening the two little girls drove the cows home again, and the stepmother asked her little daughter: "Well, and what did you see?"—but she had seen and knew nothing.

The next day the second child went to the pasture with her half-sister, and said: "Comb my hair." And the godchild whispered: "Go to sleep, one-eye; go to sleep, two-eyes!" Again came the striped cow, and gave her from one horn food, and from the other drink. And when it was evening the godchild said: "Up! up! little

sister and drive the herd home again!" The stepmother asked her little daughter what she had seen; but she had seen and knew nothing.

Next day "three eyes" went to pasture, and when the two girls had reached it, she said: "Sister, sit and comb my hair." And the other kept muttering: "Sleep, little one-eye; sleep, little two-eyes; sleep, all three of you." Again came the striped cow, and gave her from one horn to eat, and from the other to drink. And when it was evening, the godchild said: "Little sister, up! up! and drive the herd home again." At home the stepmother asked her little daughter: "What sawest thou?"—but she also had seen and knew nothing.

And on the fourth day the fourth little daughter was sent off. And when the two girls reached the pasture, she said: "Sister, sit and comb my hair." And her sister sat and combed her hair, and murmured all the time: "Sleep, little one-eye, sleep, little two-eyes, sleep, all three of you." But she forgot about the fourth eye. Again the striped cow came and gave her from one horn to eat, and from the other to drink. The fourth little eye saw it all, while the other three were asleep. In the evening the godchild said: "Up, little sister, and drive them home again." At home the stepmother asked her little daughter: "What sawest thou?" She replied: "While the three little eyes slept, came the striped cow and gave her from one horn to eat, and from the other to drink."

The stepmother was angry and ordered that the striped cow should be fattened and then killed. The poor little girl had now to stay at home and to eat greasy scraps of peppery cheese. And every day she visited her dear striped cow and wept over it. One day the cow said: "To-morrow, I am going to be killed; but beg my hide for dressing from thy godmother; in it thou wilt find a pip, sow this pip under the window, from it will grow a little linden tree, and it will be all of glass, and under the little linden there will be a little dog barking: 'Bow, wow, wow!'"

The little girl did as the cow bade her, and from the pip grew a little glass linden tree, and there was a little dog barking—bow! wow! wow!—under it. And under the little linden bubbled a little well, and in this little well the little girl had to wash clothes until her two poor hands bled again.

Once an unmarried prince rode past, and when he had looked at the girl, he wanted to have her as his wife, though she was quite

poor. But her stepmother would not agree to it. Next week the prince came again, and again asked for her hand. This time her stepmother consented, but bade her own daughters to take a net and tie up the little linden in it.

The girl got ready, seated herself in the coach and drove off. And, just fancy! the little linden uprooted itself, and flew on to the coach, and the little dog ran barking—bow! wow! wow!—after the coach. When the year was out, the young princess had a little son. When the stepmother heard of it, she went to make inquiries. "My little daughter, art thou well or poorly?" said she, and before she went away she promised to come again on the morrow. The next day she brought her own little "Two-eyes" with her, and inquired: "Little godchild, art thou well or poorly?" "Thank God! well!" replied the dear girl. "Look out of the window, deary," said her stepmother, "and see how the little fish are sporting in the little fish-pond." And while the young princess looked out of the window, her stepmother flung her out of it into the fish-pond, so that the poor thing was drowned, and her soul flew into a duck, and swam miserably about over the fish-pond. The stepmother laid her own daughter in the bed and went away home. And when the young prince came home and saw his princess, he exclaimed: "What has made thee so ugly? Perhaps thou art poorly?" "Poorly I am indeed," replied the other, and the prince lamented over her.

In the night, at twelve o'clock, the duck flew in by the window and changing itself into the young princess, bathed, weeping, her little son; and when she had taken him out of the bath again, kissed him fondly, and then murmured sadly: "My little linden tinkles not, little doggy bow-wow-wows not, and my little son cries all day long. Two little nights I come again, and then never no more." And she flies away again in the form of a duck, out of the window to the fish-pond.

The next little night in at the window again flies the poor duck, and changes itself into a human being; pours water into the bath, and bathes its little son. And when she has taken him out she kissed him fondly, and murmured sadly: "My little linden tinkles not, my little doggy bow-wow-wows not, and my little son does nothing but cry. Yet one little night I will come again, and then never no more." And again she flew out of the window in the form of a duck, away to the fish-pond. Now the prince had been seated weeping behind the curtain, and had seen her and heard her words.

The third little night she again flew in, washed her little son; and when she had taken him out of the bath, she wept bitterly, and muttered sadly to herself: "My little linden tinkles not, my little doggy bow-wow-wows not, and my little son keeps crying, crying, crying; now I go away; I go away for ever and come no more." At this moment jumps out the young prince who had been concealed behind the curtains, and seized her before she had time to turn into the duck. The young princess begged piteously: "Let me go, dear one, let me go, now it is a good hour I have been here." "I will not let thee go," exclaimed the prince. And the young princess said: "Perhaps thou could'st accomplish it. I have a belt round my waist; if thou canst cut through it at one blow with a small knife, I may remain with thee, otherwise it will go ill with me." The prince took the little knife and cut through the belt with it, and before him stood his young princess again, as fresh and lovely as ever, and related to him what her stepmother had done to her.

Next morning the witch was tied by the hair to the tail of a horse, the horse's eyes were then bound, it was whipped up, and driven among the roots and stocks of trees in the forest. And when it sped home again, it only had the witches' hair about its loins. Again the little linden went tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, the little dog went "bow, wow, wow," and the little son was all smirks and smiles.

Little Red Riding Hood (Cerwjenawka).

[Lower Lusatian.]

There was once a darling little child, whom everyone who saw it loved, but its old grandmother loved it best of all; she did not know what on earth to give the dear little girl, to show how much she loved her. Once she gave her a little cap of crimson velvet, and as it suited her so admirably and as she never wore anything else on her head, they nicknamed her "Little Red Riding Hood."

Once her mamma called little Red Riding Hood and said to her: "Run off, child: here thou hast a piece of cake and a flask of wine, carry them to poor old grandmother, she is poorly and weak, and they will make her strong again. Mind and be nice and obedient, do not peep into all the holes and corners when thou enterest the room, and do not fail to say 'Good-morrow, grandmother!' And mind and go straight there; don't stray off the path, for if thou dost, thou wilt fall and break the flask, and then poor old grandmother will have nothing." Little Red Riding Hood said: "I will be very careful to do all you have bidden," and gave her hand to her mother in assurance of it.

Now, grandmother lived in a wood out of the way, and about half an hour's walk from the village. When Red Riding Hood came into the wood she met a wolf. She, however, had no notion what a wicked creature the wolf was, and had no fear of it. "God be with thee, Red Riding Hood!" said he. "In God's name, thanks, wolf!" "Whither so early, Red Riding Hood?" "To grandmother's." "What hast thou under thy apron?" "Cake and wine; we baked yesterday. Grandmother, who is old and weak, ought to have a good meal once in a way; this will perhaps make her strong again." "Where does thy grandmother live, Red Riding Hood?" "Yet a good quarter of an hour further into the wood, under those three big oak trees, there stands her house; further down are those fox-bushes (hazel-nut trees), you will know it by

that," said Red Riding Hood. The wolf thought to himself: "This young, jolly, little girl would be a tasty morsel, far more liquorish than the old one; one ought to contrive some knave's trick to nobble both of them." For a while he walked by Red Riding Hood's side. Then he said to her: "Red Riding Hood, just look what beautiful flowers there are everywhere, why wilt thou not look at them? It seems to me that thou dost not even hear how delightfully the birds are singing. Thou art as wrapped up in thyself as if thou wert going to school, and everything is full of life and joy in the wood."

Red Riding Hood raised her eyes, and when she saw how the rays of the sun flickered among the branches of the trees, and how every bit of ground was covered with flowers, she thought to herself: "If I were to take grandmother a beautiful sweet-smelling bunch of flowers it would please her as much as the cake and wine; it is still quite early, and I shall get to her in plenty of time." So saying she skipped away into the wood and began looking for flowers. And when she had gathered one, she thought another a little farther off was still more beautiful, and ran to get it, and strayed further and further into the wood. Meanwhile the wolf took the direct road to the old grandmother's and knocked at the door. "Who's there?" "Red Riding Hood, who has brought cake and wine, open!" "Press the latch, I am so weak I cannot get up." The wolf pressed the latch, walked into the room, and went, without saying a word, straight off to grandmother's bed and ate her up. Then he took her dress, put it on, set her cap on his head, laid himself down in her bed and drew the curtains.

All this time Red Riding Hood was running about after the flowers, and when she had so many that she could not find a single one more, grandmother came into her head, and she set off along the road to visit her. She was surprised to see the door wide open, and as she stepped into the room everything somehow seemed queer to her, and she thought to herself: "Oh! my God, why does it all feel so queer to me here to-day, and yet in general I feel so happy when I am with grandmother?" Then she said: "Good morrow, grandmother!" but she got no answer in return. And so she went to the bed and drew aside the curtains. There lay grandmother, and had her cap pulled over her eyes, and looked so funny. "Oh! grandmother, what long ears thou hast!" "The better to hear with." "Oh! grandmother, what large eyes thou hast!" "The better to see with." "Oh! grandmother, what large hands thou hast!"

"The better to seize thee with." "But, grandmother, what a horribly big mouth thou hast!" "The better to eat thee with." And so saying, the wolf suddenly jumped out of bed upon poor Red Riding Hood and ate her up.

When the wolf had satisfied his appetite, he laid himself down again in bed, went to sleep and began to snore. The gamekeeper passed the house just then, and thought to himself: "How can the old woman snore so? I should like to see what is the matter." He steps into the room, looks into the bed: there lies the wolf! "So I've caught thee at last, old grisly!" said he. "I've long been on the look-out for thee." He had just levelled his gun, when the idea occurred to him that perhaps the wolf might have eaten grandmother, and there might be yet help for her, so he did not shoot, but took her pair of scissors and began to rip up the stomach of the sleeping wolf. When he had made a few cuts, he saw Red Riding Hood's red cap begin to dawn, and when he had snipped a little further out jumped Red Riding Hood and exclaimed: "Oh, how frightened I have been; how dark it was in the wolf's stomach." And after her the old grandmother also came forth alive, and could scarcely breathe. Red Riding Hood now hastily fetched some big stones, and with these she filled the wolf's paunch, and when he felt them he tried to jump up and run away, but the stones were so heavy that he fell to the ground and beat himself to death. Now they were all three in high glee: the gamekeeper took the skin from that wolf, grandmother ate that cake and drank that wine, and grew strong again, while Red Riding Hood thought to herself: "Never again, in all my life, will I wander away from the path into the wood, when mamma has forbidden it."

Short Stories.

HOW A PIG FINDS A BELL IN TREEN.

In Treen, about half-way or a hundred paces from the tower, there is a little fish-pond in which the water is muddy and shallow. Once in dry weather, somewhere in this fish-pond, a pig was rooting and a cock scratching, and together they managed to unearth a large and handsome bell, which the inhabitants of Treen hung up in the tower. In its chiming you heard the words: "Hury rampa, kokos drapa!" ("Peck, oh! cock, and rout, oh! porker!") The inhabitants of Chosobuzar, hearing of this bell and its beautiful tone, wished to buy it; but no amount of money would induce the people of Treen to part with it. Consequently the people of Chosobuzar decided that they must steal the bell. The bell was taken down at night, wrapped up in a feather bed, and placed upon a cart; and, unseen by any one, successfully conveyed from the village as far as the boundary. There the bell began to ring, and moreover no power on earth would move it a step farther. Thus the people of Treen got their bell again, and it rings out to them, even at the present day: "Hury rampa, kokos drapa." In that pond there still lies a smaller bell, but on account of the abysmal mud no one has ever yet dug down to it.

THE ELVES.

In Lutol, behind the churchyard, is a mountain known as the vineyard. In this vineyard elves once used to dwell; they were little people who lived underground, and kept good fellowship with other people. The elves once came to the people of Halka and said: "Lend us a baking-trough that is no baking-trough; we want to bake you a cake that is not a cake." The Hulka folk placed the required baking-trough near the threshold; the elves seated themselves in it and bowled it away home with them. The next morning there stood the baking-trough before the threshold, and in it a

delicious beautifully-baked cake. After a time bells came into the world, and the elves could not endure their tones. Saying "they are roaring lions," off ran the elves, and to this day have never come back again. People tried to find the elves' house, but it was all fallen in, only here and there they lit upon larger or smaller "elfin skulls."

THE WILL-O'-THE-WISPS.

[BLUDY.]

IN our meadows and marshes used once to dwell little folk, who held in their hands burning besoms, and when it was dark ran about with them. If anyone teazed them: "Will-o'-the-wisp! will-o'-the-wisp! swinish little dung-flies!" a whole swarm of them would be about him in a moment and would lead him astray through the marshes and ravines until he was wet through and through. But if anyone gave them a good word and said: "Will-o'-the-wisp! will-o'-the-wisp! lead me home, and I will give thee a ring!" they would light him home. But if, after this, they did not get the ring, they would scorch and scald and frizzle the man until he gave them the ring, and when they had got the promised ring, they would go skipping over the meadows.

SERP (OR SICKLE)-WOMAN.

As the will-o'-the-wisps lived in the meadows, so a female sprite had her abode in the corn-fields. She was dressed in long white robes; it was impossible to look into her eyes; in her hand she held a large sharp sickle, for which reason she also had the name "Sickle." As soon as it was midday, Serp called all the people home from the field, and him who would not go of his own accord, Serp slashed at with her sickle until at last he was forced to hie away home. Besides this, Serp lived also in the furrows, and waited for the children who went for husks, cut off their heads and tied them up in a bladder.

THE OATH.

THE people of Bobowar and Zusowar had once a great law-suit about their boundary. The Bobowarites maintained that the river Krisowka was the boundary; the Zusowarites, on the other hand, were of opinion that the boundary went further into the territory of Bobowar.

After various lengthy law-suits the authorities went off to have the whole question investigated on the spot. While they were there a certain Zusoffskeyite stepped a good long way into the Boboffsky territory and began to swear and declare on oath that there where he stood was the true boundary. Among other things he said: "May I sink into the earth where in old time the boundary-stone stood." And lo! he began to sink and to call out for help; but before any one could come to his assistance he sank altogether, and the earth closed over his head. In memory of this they rolled a large stone on to the spot as an indication of this tragical event. And the man who was swallowed up alive wanders year by year round and round it, crying out unceasingly: "Here, here is the true boundary." This stone, and the field round it, which is now a meadow, is called to this day "the field of the oath"; and every one, after sunset, makes a détour to avoid it.

THE WIFE OF THE MERMAN.

When among the Serbians they talk about the merman, they also tell all sorts of wonderful stories about his wife. Long ago they used to see her by the river, now seated and twining threads together, now bleaching her clothes, now combing her moist locks. In those days she also used to come like her husband to market. When he bought corn and paid dearer for it than others did, the price of corn rose. When on the contrary he paid a less price than the rest its price fell. The same was the case with his wife, only that she bought butter and not corn. She could be recognized at the fairs by the moist edge bordering her linen. At least once she was *enceinte*, and one story tells of her need of help in her hour of labour in the following wise: A woman was once mowing grass on an ing (where is not known), and an enormously fat frog sidled up to her and tried to make friends. Vexed, and at the same time a little uneasy at the appearance of this creature, she addressed it thus, in the words of a proverb familiar to women: "Off with you, frog, or I shall play the midwife with thee!" After some time, when she had quite forgotten all about this occurrence, there came to her a man and reminded her of her promise, and requested of her that she should go with him and act as midwife to his wife. In great distress of heart she sought advice and instruction of half the authorities, spiritual and temporal. And the advice she obtained was this:

that she must fulfil her promise. So now she went without fear with the man. When they reached the place where in her time she had made the acquaintance of that frog, the man divided with his rod, as Moses once did with his staff, the water into two parts, and led her dryshod into his moist habitation. Here she found his wife in the extreme pains of child-birth. With all dexterity and to the high satisfaction of the sufferer she performed her duty, and not long after a fresh and healthy infant was born into the world. As recompense for the help she had brought, she got this piece of advice from the woman: not to venture to ask for anything more than she had a right to and an occasion like the present would demand. This advice she was wise enough to follow; and when the merman afterwards brought a whole sackful of all kinds of money, and told her she might take as much money as she chose, she only took as much as was her due. And this was her salvation, and to the discomfort of the merman who would most gladly have wrung her neck for her previous insolence. Since, then, she did not demand more, he was constrained to let her go away again uninjured. As previously, he again smote the water with his rod and the water divided, and along the dry pathway which hereupon showed itself, that woman again wended out of the water, which immediately closed up again as she stepped out of it. What became of the child which she had helped to bring into the world, she never was able to discover.

About Three Brothers.

[KASUBIAN.]

THERE was once a king that had but one daughter; and he made a proclamation that whoever should build a ship that could go on land and sea might marry his daughter. Then there was a man that had three sons, two sensible and one a noodle. Those two did nothing but laugh at that stupid one, and they would not take him anywhere with them. So also on this occasion they said nothing to that stupid one, but went off by themselves to work at the ship. While they were at work an old man walked past and said: "God assist ye, my sons!" To which they replied: "God reward thee!" This grandfather wanted to go on talking, and said: "Give me a pipeful of tobacco!" To which they curtly replied, without looking round: "We have not time." Then he, at his departure, said to them: "That which you two are making shall be a simple swine's trough; and the king's daughter you two shall not obtain." Meanwhile, that stupid one had learnt about their work, and he also wished to try his luck. Then he went to make a vessel, and an old fellow also walked past him and said: "God prosper thee!" The noodle answered: "God reward thee, little father," and began to continue the conversation. "I should also like to ask your advice, little father, how to build a vessel so that it may go by sea and by land." To that the old man replied: "Just work, my son; perhaps God will give thee good fortune." And so also it was. He made a vessel which went over sea and land. When he had just finished this work, came to him again that old fellow, and then said to him: "When thou goest to the king, mind thou takest with thee every one thou happenest to meet upon the road." He met first, at a brook, an old grandfather, whom the whole stream could not provide with enough water to slake his thirst, and took him with him. Afterwards, when he got to a mountain, he met a beggar in warm furs, who, although the rays of the sun were pouring down,

kept exclaiming: "Oh! I'm so cold, oh! I'm so cold!" And this man he took with him. Going on still further with his ship, he again came upon a beggar that gnawed a bone and howled; "Oh! I'm so hungry; oh! I'm so hungry!"

With his three beggars in the ship, our pilgrim appeared before the king; and the king saw that this structure was so made that it could go over sea and land. It was an ordinary ship, but it had under it a carriage with wheels. However, the builder appeared to him very poor, and he did not wish to give him his daughter to wife. Therefore he imposed upon him further different tasks. Thus he had to provide the king with a man of such a kind that in one night he could eat twelve loaves of broad; and then another who would eat twelve bulls in one night and drink dry twelve barrels of beer; and yet one who could sit out a whole night in an iron stove, heated red hot. Then this suitor had great distress of mind, and went to ask advice of those old men that he had with him in the ship. Until one said to him that he had never yet eaten his fill, and the second, that he had never yet either eaten or drunk his fill, and that third, he had never once been warm. In the morning the king came to see if everything was accomplished, and if they were still alive, and still they kept exclaiming: "I'm so hungry!" "I'm so thirsty!" "I'm so cold!"

But the king was very obstinate, and still did not wish to give his daughter at once; but declared war with a neighbouring king, and gave out that he who proved himself the best soldier in his kingdom—*he* should have his daughter. Then those two sensible brothers rode forth on two goodly chargers, and their stupid brother is a little at fault. As he strolled thus along a path he met an old man and said to him: "Praised be the Lord Jesus!" This old man received with pleasure that Christian salutation, and replied: "For ever and ever, amen!" After this they began to converse at length, and the elder, as was his wont, to give advice to the younger, and among others the following: "When you go into that great wood and stand at the cross-roads, you will then see on the right hand a very large linden; to this linden say but the words: 'Little linden! Little linden, open!' and then a magnificently caparisoned horse will come out of it, on which will be lying a new suit of clothes for you, and by the mane will be hanging a leathern wallet. In this suit of clothes dress yourself, and seat yourself on horseback, and when you meet the soldiers of the enemy, just simply say: 'A whole

army from the wallet!' then you will have more than a thousand soldiers, and they will fight so fiercely that they will fight down all opposition. Now go, in God's name!" Our noodle did everything as that noble old man advised him. In this manner he, unaided, beat to tatters the whole army of the enemy; but one soldier wounded him in the foot. The king saw it, took one half of his own handkerchief, and bound it round his foot, but kept the other half.

When the war was concluded, our hero rode to the linden and there gave everything back again. Then the king, however, did not know who that warlike man was, and sent out his servants to look for one who had his foot wounded and bound with half of his own (the king's) handkerchief. For a long, long time they could not find such a man, for they only went to look among the nobility. Then the king ordered that they should go and examine the foot of every man in the whole kingdom. And in this manner they came to the cottage where the two sensible sons sat at the fire, and the stupid brother baked himself girdle-cakes (*lit.:* small fritters) in the ashes. But how astonished they were when in that "stick-by-the-fire" they noticed a wounded foot that was bound up with half a handkerchief, and who would under no consideration leave his girdle-cakes.

It grieved the elder servant to think that the daughter of his king, such an elegant princess as she was, should have to espouse such a sorry fellow, and he himself would gladly have had her to wife. With this idea, in the first wood through which their road lay, he first of all killed his fellow-servant, and afterwards that lazybones wounded himself in the foot, and tied it up in the handkerchief he had cut off the body of the murdered man. And thus he went to the king. And he was a smart fellow, so that the king and his daughter were delighted.

But that noble old man saw the murder, and stepped up to those murdered men and awoke them, and then said to them: "Rise, both of you, and walk; for to-morrow the princess is to hold her marriage festival." Then they both ran in haste to the capital city, and betook themselves straight to the king himself, and told him everything: how that servant had killed them and then wounded himself in the foot.

Then the king ordered him to be summoned, and asked him: "What is he worthy of, who should do in such and such a way?"

And he on that answered the king: "Such an one is not worthy of anything, but that he should be torn in pieces with iron harrows." For he never thought that his treachery could be known. Then the king said to him: "By such a death as thou hast thyself appointed, shalt thou go out of the world;" and he bade yoke four black Hungarians to iron harrows and to tear him to pieces. And so that stupid one got the king's daughter for his wife, and there was a grand wedding festival.

I was at it, too: ate, drank, and danced; but they dressed me for it in a very unbecoming manner, for they gave me glass shoes, a paper skirt, and a hat made of butter. As I warmed at the dance, the butter melted, the paper tore, and the glass cracked. Then they loaded a cannon with me and fired me off, and that's how I came to be here telling stories on this stool of repentance. And as to the two young men, they are still alive to this day, eat, drink, and enjoy themselves—if they didn't expire yesterday.

"Stick, Bestir Thyself!"

A SHOEMAKER on Saturday was engrossed in cobbling old shoes, in order that he might go to church on Sunday. He worked on late into the evening, and having finished what he had to do early next morning, dressed himself tidily, took his prayer-book and went to the service. In the sermon he heard this news: that if any one will offer his property to the church, then the Lord God will recompense him a hundred-fold in other ways. And, as he was a poor man, he decided to sell his cottage and stock of shoes, and take all it fetched to the priest for the church. Having returned home, he told his wife of his intention, and before many days had elapsed the money was at the parson's. But one day succeeded another, the children cried for food; and at last his wife took a stick to her good man, and here, surely, nothing was to be seen of the promised recompense. Finally, when the cobbler himself also began to feel the pinch of hunger, he dressed himself like an old grandfather, took a stick in his hand, and went to search for the Lord God.

Wandering one, and then another day, he chanced upon an old shepherd, who pastured a large flock of lambs. And as he was very hungry he made up his mind to approach the old man and ask him for the scraps to eat, from his two-handled pot. While eating he related everything he had done and how he now fared. Then the old shepherd had pity upon the poor cobbler and gave him a lamb, which at every summons: "Lamb, don't forget thyself!" dripped ducats; but he presented him with it on this understanding, that he should not step in and visit his old godmother in a certain village through which he must pass on his way home. With great delight the cobbler threw the lamb over his shoulder, thanked the old man for it, and hastened home to rejoice his wife and children. No sooner was he behind the hill, than he began to mistrust the words of the old shepherd, for it was impossible for him to imagine that an ordinary lamb could drip ducats. So, wishing to be well assured of the truth of it, he placed the lamb on the ground and uttered the

words of the old man: "Lamb, do not forget thyself!" and when, at the very same moment, he observed the ducats round the feet of the lamb, he reckoned himself the happiest man in the whole world. Without delay he placed the lamb at the back of his neck and pursued his homeward way; and as he went past the hostelry of his godmother, she begged him to look in a while, for they had not seen one another for such a long time. At first the cobbler munched his scraps, but wishing to show that he had ducats in his pocket, and that he had met with such a stroke of good fortune, he stepped in to his godmother's; and, having first handed her his present from the old shepherd to take care of, with these words: "Mind you don't say to it: 'Lamb, don't forget thyself!'" seated himself at the table and drank off a glass of brandy. But his godmother, a shrewd old soul, at once conjectured that in those words must lie something mysterious. So she took the lamb into another room, and as soon as she was alone there with it, said to it: "Lamb, don't forget thyself!" When she saw that it dripped ducats she began to reflect how she might chuzzle her godson. After a short time she made up her mind to make the cobbler tipsy, keep him at her house for the night, and next day, early, instead of his lamb, give him another like it out of her own flock, which plan, moreover, she carried out to her full satisfaction. Early in the morning the cobbler took the lamb on his shoulders, and now hastened straight home to his wife and children, and flung the weeping family a couple of ducats that his poor wife might provide a good dinner for them. His wife could not conceive where on earth he had gained the money, but she did not venture to enquire. After dinner the cobbler placed the lamb upon the table, called the children in order that they might share with him the delight of witnessing the ducats rolling down, and exclaimed: "Lamb, don't forget thyself!" But the lamb stood as if it were made of wood, and did not even raise its head. The children, having had a good meal, began to laugh, and the woman thought that her husband must be wrong in his head. The cobbler, enraged at the non-fulfilment of his demand, repeated once again the words of the old shepherd; but this time also without effect, so he removed the lamb from the table. As long as the ducats held out, contentment reigned at home; but as soon as they began to fail in the establishment, the wife commenced to curse her husband for an idle do-nothing, who took no trouble about a livelihood. So the cobbler had nothing for it but to take his stick in hand and go in

search of the old man. How sarcastically he would welcome him—that the cobbler knew well—but what to do? The old shepherd, however, pitied the wretched family, and gave him this time a cloth, which at every summons: "Cloth, unfold," unfolded of itself, and on it stood food and drink most tidily served up, but on the understanding that he should not step in to his godmother's. The cobbler, well contented with the gift, thanked the old man, and hurried home. In a short time he was behind the hill, and there sat on the ground, bade the cloth, not out of curiosity but from hunger, for the music of a dawning appetite began to be audible inside him, unfold itself. When he had eaten his fill he walked past the hostelry; at the door appears his old godmother; she besought him for his love to her not to pass her hospitable roof, and quoted the old proverb: "Past the ale-house who totters, will soon blister his trotters." The cobbler long vacillated, but in the end entered and confided the cloth to her with these words: "Dear godmother, do not say: 'Cloth, unfold thyself!'" The shrewd old crone kept plying him with brandy, not for money, but out of hospitality; so her godson swallowed one cup after another, until his head was quite fuddled. Then the godmother did with the cloth as she had done with the lamb. The cobbler ran home to his wife and children, threw the cloth on the table, and called out: "Cloth, unfold thyself!" But the cloth did not move, and the cobbler began to reflect and to curse his old godmother. He returned at once to the old man, begged pardon on his knees for not having fulfilled, even this time, the conditions; only let him have pity and preserve him this once. The old shepherd, for a long time, was obdurate; finally he gave him a stick with a silver handle, set with precious stones, and bade him this time turn aside and visit his godmother, and indicated these words: "Stick, bestir thyself!" The cobbler, now all smiles and satisfaction again, thanked the old man a hundred times and hastened as fast as he could to his wife and children; but all the same, when behind the hill he was curious to know what the stick could signify, and wishing to test it, said: "Stick, bestir thyself!" In a moment two enormous fellows stood before him and began to thrash him without pity. The cobbler, seized with a terrible panic, did not know in what way to bid them stop beating him; at last, after a good drubbing, he howled out: "Stick, stop beating!" In a twinkling the fellows vanished, and the stick was standing before him. "Capital! capital!" said the cobbler,

getting up from the ground; "this will help me to the two previous gifts." When he came to the village where his godmother dwelt, he stepped into her and greeted her as an old acquaintance. She was very glad at this, for she thought again to have her money's worth out of him; she did him the honours liberally, and then began to enquire whether he had anything for her to take care of. Then the cobbler handed her his stick with the request that she should not say: "Stick, bestir thyself!" The old crone laughed inwardly at the simpleton, thinking to herself: "At least he would not have told me what I really ought not to say to the stick." She went with the stick into another room, and scarcely had she crossed the threshold than she called out impatiently: "Stick, bestir thyself!" Then and there two fellows began whacking her with their sticks so that she lost all presence of mind. At her piercing cries mine host flew to help her, and "Whack! thwack!" he got it too. Meanwhile the cobbler kept crying out constantly: "Harder, stick! harder! until they give me back my lamb and cloth." Then nothing remained to the godmother but to restore him his property; and she ordered the cloth and lamb to be brought.

As soon as the cobbler had convinced himself of their genuineness, he cried out: "Stick, cease!" and went in all haste home to his wife and children with those three presents. And at home they were henceforth very happy, for they had money in abundance, and the means of subsistence. Moreover, he never neglected his duty to God and other people, but spared something for every poor man.

The Conversation of the Animals.

THE old people relate to one another that at Easter the animals converse together about what shall happen to them in that year, and what shall be done with them. Once a farmer was inquisitive, and went to listen at the cowstall what the animals were saying to one another. In the night one bull said to another: "In a week we shall carry our master to the grave." When the farmer heard this he was very much disturbed; crept immediately out of the cowstall, went to the living-room and told his wife. But she would not believe it, and said: "As though our horses could not draw thee to the grave; and even if they could not, assuredly our neighbours would perform this last service for thee with theirs." The third day after this the farmer fell ill, and the next day died. And then it happened just as the bulls had predicted. For thieves stole their horses the night the man was poorly, and the friendliest neighbours' horses also fell ill, while the other neighbours would not give theirs for the funeral. And so must those bulls, as they had said to one another, be put to and carry the dead man's body to the grave.

About an Enchanted Castle.

ABOVE the lake of Zarnoff, in Karbek, there is a great hill, and on this hill an enchanted castle. Once a clergyman went there for pea-sticks and lost his way; and there came to him a maiden dressed completely in black, who entreated him to carry her into the church, and all the while not to speak a word; thus she and the whole castle would be freed from the enchantment. He promised to do

so, but begged her to excuse him that day as he had lost his axe in the bushes, and would search for it as long as it was the least possible, and already it was growing dusk. The next day he sent his brother, a very daring fellow, to look for the axe. When he was about to return home, there came to him the same maiden, with the above-mentioned prayer, and it was also late. The fellow was daring and powerful; he took her on his shoulders and carried her by a small footpath as far as the bed of a stream, where the water collected. But when he attempted to go further down hill to the village—to Zarnoff, there arose such a whistling and roaring, such huge spectres appeared in the air, that the fellow lost his head, fell, and howled out: "Oh! Jesus!" In an instant those airy phantasms clutched the wretched maiden, and the castle, which was just visible at the top of the hill, together with the maiden, sank much deeper; and at the present day only the four corners of a chimney or tower are visible, in the form of a well, which any one of an inquisitive turn of mind can even now see for himself with his own eyes.

Scant-Wit the Wolf.

Once a wolf dreamt that he had got a good supper, and the dream came true. He rose from his lair, went by a footpath, and found a piece of fat. He was surprised at this coincidence, and said to himself: "Lo! they say that dreams are vain things, and lo! for all that, one dream that has come true." He ate half of this fat and stowed away the other half. Then he went further and came to a wood; here a mare was walking along with her foal, and he said to her: "I will eat that foal for thee." This mare was not a simpleton, and said to the wolf: "Then be quick about it, for I have many miseries; this foal nibbles at me, the peasant makes me draw his cart, and I have many vexations, and, added to all this, I am still lame. But if you would be so good, and would kindly take a thorn out of my foot, for it hurts me very much." The wolf was not idle; the mare raised her hind hoof, and the wolf looked to see what she wanted to have drawn out. While he was so doing, the mare flung out her heels to such purpose that the unlucky wolf turned a series of somersaults, and then lay a while with all the wind knocked out of him. When he got up again the mare and her foal were already miles away. So this wolf went further, and came upon a sow with a litter of young pigs, and he said to this sow: "I will eat up all thy young pigs for thee." But the sow was cunning, and said to him: "That would be delightful, for they are always nibbling at me, and I have a sorry life; but as they are not yet washed, we must wash them first." My wolf was not idle, but off he went with the little pigs to the river. And there was a mill not far off. The little pigs set up such a tremendous squealing that the miller's dogs heard the noise and ran out to the river. Then the sow took courage, snatched the rest of the pigs from the wolf in the river, and pushed the wolf himself right into the water. Well ducked he crept out of the river, and then those miller's dogs set upon him, and mauled him until his fell hung in tatters. However, he clawed himself free alive, and continued his journey, and came to a high

mountain where goats were roving, and he said to them: "Goats, I will eat you all." They said to him: "Do what you please, but before death we must pray a little." "Then be quick about it," said the wolf, and began to chant the rosary with them: "Ahu! ahu! ahu!" No wonder the shepherd's dog heard them, fell upon him, and finished what the miller's dogs had left undone, so that the unlucky wolf had not a single sound spot on his whole body, and only just escaped with life. Then he lay close a whole hour, and afterwards got up and sat upon his tail; and now a good device occurred to him. He got up and went further, and came upon an old ram that was still feeding alone. Then he said to it: "Ram, I'm going to eat you." And the ram replied: "Do as you please, for I am old and tough enough; but what's the good of spoiling your teeth on me? Do you know what?—step down into the valley and open your mouth, then I will jump into it for you." The wolf was such a simpleton that he crept down the mountain and stood in the valley with his mouth open. The ram let himself go full swing down the hillside, and charged the wolf so hard that he rolled over and over, and fell half breathless, while the ram went his own way. After a long, long time, the wolf himself went home, and staggering, lurched now to one side now the other, now upward now downward, now forward now backward, like a drunken man. Thus he slunk off to a large oak tree, and underneath it sat upon his tail, and said to himself: "What a fool I have made of myself! True, I dreamt rightly that I should get a good supper, but all the luck and ill-luck I should meet with afterwards, I never dreamt of. However, I have myself to thank for the whole of it. Was it reasonable in me to turn horse-doctor to a mare? And was it any better to betake myself, like the village confessor, to washing pigs? But what a noodle I was to go and chant the rosary, like some pious organist, with a flock of goats. And was it any better to let a whole ram jump down my throat? Peccavi! I'm good for nothing but to have my tail chopped off at the root." And a man was standing at the other side of the oak, and had an axe in his hand, for he was there cutting rods for cask-hoops; and so, slap! and off flew the wolf's tail. And that unlucky simpleton of a wolf, still to this very day, runs about without his tail, if he didn't give up the ghost yesterday.

Polish.

ISKRZYCKI.

A CERTAIN gentleman of the neighbourhood of Tarnoff, was in need of a steward. While he was worrying himself about the matter, an unknown man came and said that he was called Iskrzycki, and that he was looking out for a place. He was exactly the sort of man wanted. An agreement was now come to without difficulty, and finally, the contract signed. Now the gentleman turned to Iskrzycki, when he observed that his newly engaged steward had nails not the least human. Considerably surprised, he reflected for a while what he should do, then finally plucked up spirit and tore up the whole agreement. But Iskrzycki wouldn't hear of it; stuck to the agreement, and protested that once the contract had been signed he must fulfil what he had committed himself to, until the stipulated time had been served out; so saying, he made his bow and vanished. But he took up his abode in one of the fireplaces of the house, and from there fulfilled his services most zealously at every summons, only that no one ever saw him. At first his master and mistress were frightened, but little by little they became so accustomed to Iskrzycki and so convinced of his devotion that when they went from home they entrusted to him the care of their children. But the neighbours were indignant at this subserviency to the devil, and murmured audibly; their talk very greatly disquieted the lady herself; she began on her part to worry her husband, and after a long course of importunity she forced him to agree to leave the property at such and such a time. In consequence of this determination he took a place somewhere beyond Wislau, and they set off to it. Fancy them then in a carriage, glad to give the devil and his wiles the slip. As ill-luck would have it, they reached a road so bad in one place that the carriage lurched to one side, and the lady uttered a cry of terror, when a small voice squeaked out as if in answer behind the coach:

Fear not, mistress nor mister,
For Iskrzycki is with yer.

Madame and her lord now became pensive, and all at once realized that there were no means of ridding themselves of their too faithful servitor; they therefore drove home again, and lived with him on the same good terms as before, until the period mentioned in the contract had run out. After that time Iskrzycki left the house for ever.

THE WHIRLWIND.

A RUSSIAN, having lost wife and children through the pestilence-hag, fled to the wood from his desolate hut and there sought for deliverance. He wandered the whole day; towards evening he made a booth of branches, kindled a fire, and, tired out, fell asleep. It was already past midnight when a tremendous uproar woke him. Leaping on his feet the serf listened, and heard a kind of singing in the distance, and with the songs the din of drums and pipes. The serf wondered not a little that when death was reigning all around, here people should make merry and enjoy themselves. The uproar he had heard approached rapidly, and the terrified Podolian perceived that a whirlwind was drifting along the broad highway. It was a procession of wild spectres that whirled in a circle round a hearse; the hearse was black and lofty, and upon it sat the pestilence-hag. At every step the awful cortège rapidly increased in size; far along the road everything was utterly thrown into confusion at the vision.

His fire flickered feebly, a few brands were still just smoking. Scarcely had the whirlwind approached when the brands stood upon feet, stretched out a pair of arms and glowed and glowered with two sparkling eyes, and then began to sing in company with the other spectres. The villager stood frozen to marble; in silent terror he clutched his axe and tried to hew down the nearest spectre, but the axe flew out of his hand, transformed itself into a tall female figure, and, singing in a droning wail, spun in the dance before his eyes. The whirlwind sped onward, and the Podolian saw how woods, bushes, owls and foul night-birds, assuming huge and fantastic forms, increased that wan procession, the awful herald of all-dreadful death. He fell to the ground powerless; and when in the morning the warmth of the sun awoke him, implements were dinted and smashed as if they had been knocked down. He recognized that it was nothing but that whirl-wind which had inflicted upon him so much misery, and, thanking God that he had at least escaped with life, he pursued his way in search of food and shelter.

THE SHEPHERD'S PIPE.

THERE were three sisters, all adult and fair to look upon, but the youngest surpassed the other two in beauty. A nobleman from distant Ukraine met the sisters on a meadow as they were gathering flowers and violets for garlands. Fair was the eldest, but he was most captivated by the youngest, and wished to take her to wife. A few days after the sisters went into a wood to gather strawberries; the eldest, being enamoured of the nobleman, killed the youngest, although the second sister tried to defend her. She dug a deep grave for her, and there laid the dead body, and covered it with turf, giving out before her parents that wolves had fallen upon her and eaten her. The nobleman rode to visit them, and enquired for his beloved; all, with tears, related to him the story of her dreadful end.

Deeply and bitterly he bewailed her death; but time soothed his grief, and her murderess, consoling the nobleman, so ingratiated herself, so won his heart, that he asked for her hand, and a day for the betrothal was appointed.

And on the grave of the murdered sister a willow grew. The shepherd sat there, carved a shepherd's pipe out of the branches of that willow, and breathed into it. But how astonished he was when he did not draw from it its accustomed tones—only from all parts issued this ditty, sung in a doleful voice:

It was mine elder sister
  That took my life away;
It was my younger sister
  That happed me up in clay;
So, shepherd, pipe mine undersong,
  And Heaven help thee punish wrong.

He went to the mother and father of the murdered one, and the shepherd's pipe did nothing but pipe the same words. When the mother breathed into it she heard this ditty:

It was mine elder sister
  That took my life away;
It was my younger sister
  Who happed me up in clay;
Mother, flute mine undersong,
  God assist thee punish wrong.

If the father took it into his hands he also heard the same.

The second sister, all in tears, took the shepherd's pipe from her father, and again the same mournful ditty:

Sister, pipe mine undersong,
Heaven help thee punish wrong;
It was mine elder sister
That took my life away;
It was my younger sister
That happed me up in clay;
Sister, pipe mine undersong,
Heaven help thee punish wrong.

Hearing this song the murderess blanched; as she did so, her father and mother handed her the shepherd's pipe. Scarcely had it touched her lips when the blood of the murdered sister mounted to her cheeks, and the shepherd's pipe again piped its wonted refrain:

Sister, pipe mine undersong,
God shall smite and punish wrong;
It was my elder sister
Who took my life away;
It was my younger sister
Who happed me up in clay;
It was mine elder sister
Who quenched my little light;
For she would have the lover
Who had been mine of right.
Then deep in yonder valley,
Mine earthly couch she graves,
Now o'er my bones a willow
Its murmuring branches waves;
And o'er mine earth-cold pillow
The fluttering breezes play,
And sing mine endless sorrow,
As now I sing to-day.
So, cruel sister, pipe mine undersong,
And Heaven punish wrong.

In this way the crime of the wicked elder sister was discovered. She was therefore bound hand and foot to four wild horses and torn to pieces alive. As for the nobleman, he did not affect deep sorrow for her loss, but consoled himself with the hand of the remaining sister.

THE DEVIL'S DANCE.

A WORKWOMAN had two daughters at home, but one was her own daughter, and the other her step-daughter. As she herself worked for her living, so also those two girls had to work for theirs; all through the spring and summer all three dug in the gardens and lived in the fields. On the approach of winter their mother got a quantity of flax from the lady of the place; the girls sat one beside the other singing until midnight and telling all sorts of fairy stories,

and spun. But as those girls were not sisters to one another in the proper sense of the word, they did not go together to other spinning girls, but one went to one end of the village, and the other to the other.

At one end of the village was a lonely cottage. One evening the step-daughter, one of the two girls of the workwoman, going to other girls for spinning, observed in this cottage a light; and when, out of curiosity to know who could divert himself there, she stepped into the cottage, a dapper gentleman seized her for a dance, and the girl was so taken aback that she crossed herself. When that girl crossed herself the dapper gentleman let her go, but soon begged her very humbly to sit down and spin tow and he would help her so effectually that by midnight she should have spun more than all the other girls. The girl sat down and spun, and although it was yet not near midnight she had spun off all the tow; and the dapper gentleman said: "Thou hast spun the distaff bare, come and dance, oh! maiden fair." The girl replied to this: "Though I've spun the distaff bare, I'll not weave the dance until I've reposed and eat my fill." Thereupon the dapper gentleman flew off and brought her all sorts of dainties; and when she had eaten them he said: "Thou hast spun the distaff bare, spun and supped, oh! maiden fair, come and weave the dance with me." But to this she again responded: "Though I've spun the distaff bare, supped on viands rich and rare, to the dance you'll not allure me, ere fresh water you procure me." And the dapper gentleman flew off and brought the purest water from the spring, which when she had drunk all up, he said: "Thou hast spun the distaff bare, rested, supped on viands rare, drunk thy fill, oh! maiden fair, come and weave the dance with me." And she replied to him: "Though I've spun the distaff bare, rested, supped on viands rare, drunk my fill of water fair, I'll not join thy dance so eery, till yon logs burn brisk and cheery." At this moment the cock crowed, and the dapper gentleman vanished. The step-daughter went home and handed over to her step-mother three times more spun tow than her sister. And when, just as the previous evening, the step-daughter went to spin in the lonely cottage, the dapper gentleman helped her, and brought everything one after the other; but she excused herself from dancing until the cock crew. In the evening she handed over to her step-mother three times more spun tow than her half-sister. And when her step-mother was curious to know whom she went to spin with, who helped her so, and her step-daughter told her all about it, the mother sent her own daughter there as well.

The step-mother's daughter went off to the lonely cottage; before long the dapper gentleman hurried up to her and said to her: "A distaff full of tow, oh maiden, a distaff full of tow; let us come and have a dance." And she replied: "Bring me food and bring me drink, and light a warm fire, then I'll come and dance." The dapper gentleman flew off, brought everything, lighted a warm fire on the hearth, and then seizing the step-mother's daughter, who, by the way, had never crossed herself, dragged her into the dance, whirled round twice with her, and the third time round cut off her head, stuck it in the window, clutched her soul, aud flew away with it. And the mother, going very early in the morning past the lonely cottage, when she observed her daughter's head in the window, said: "Ah! my daughter must long have finished her spinning, for she is looking out of the window and smiling." Only when she entered the cottage did she discover how it all was.

THE WAN WOMAN.

A BROKEN-DOWN farmer had a fine daughter, whom an old cavalier, the squire of the village, was absolutely determined, by hook or by crook, to marry; but as the girl hated the idea, and her father was unwilling to force the marriage upon her, the old squire tormented them in every way he possibly could, and was so exacting in his feudal claims upon their services, and had ordered them to be beaten so mercilessly on the slightest pretext, that the broken-down farmer could bear it no longer, and determined to quit the village with all his family. In this cottage which this farmer occupied, something behind the fire-place used constantly to make a scraping sound; but although they had often looked for it, and turned fender and everything about the stove upside down, they had never as yet been able to discover anything. But when in their preparations for flitting they had carried out of the home the rest of their goods and chattels, they heard all at once behind the grate a most unmistakeable scraping; and while all listened inquisitively, as it went skrzyp! skrzyp! hyc! hyc! out at last from behind the fire-place leapt a wan and slender figure like a ghost from the grave. "The devil!" shouted the farmer. "Lord ha' mercy on us," shrieked his wife, and all the children after her. "No, I am no devil," said the slender, wan maiden, "but I am your Want; and so as soon as ever you take yourselves off from here you are under the obligation to take me with you as well to your new habitation." The worthy

farmer was by no means wanting in the top storey; he reflected a little; he did not clutch Want by the throat and wring her neck, but bowing before her feet he said: "Dear and respected lady, if you are so fond of living amongst us, do pray come with us; but as you see yourself, we are carrying everything out ourselves, so do you help as well to lift something and carry it out of the house." Want consented, and was about to take a pair of vases out, but the farmer, giving the smaller articles to the children to carry out, observed that in the court-yard there was a block of wood which he did not wish to leave behind; so he and the wan woman went into the court-yard; he split the block of wood in two from above with an axe, and then summoning Want, politely requested her to help him to carry it away. Want did not know from which side to lift the block until the farmer pointed to the cleft, and she inserted one of her long slender thumbs into the chink; the farmer, pretending to raise the block of wood from the other side, contrived hurriedly to whip the axe-blade out of the cleft, and Want's long and slender thumb remained wedged so firmly in the cleft, that not being able by any manner of means to draw it out again, she began to howl with all the breath in her body, but all was of no avail. The farmer and his children carried away all the remaining knick-knacks, took a final leave of the cottage, and never more returned to it.

When this farmer took up his abode in the other village his affairs prospered so well that before very long he became the richest man in the whole village; his beautiful daughter married an honest and well-behaved youth of twenty, the son of a peasant proprietor, and the whole family was prosperous and happy. On the other hand, the squire of the first village, the oppressor of those needy ones, having to find a new tenant for the empty cottage, went to look round the place deserted by that broken-down farmer who would not give him his daughter. Here the old squire discovered Want by the tree-root, all huddled together from the pain her thumb caused her; he began to feel pity for the wan woman; by the help of a wedge, disengaged her thumb, and wholly and entirely liberated her. The wan woman, from the time of her deliverance, never ceased to dog the footsteps of her liberator; and when, besides this, the devil himself also began to flare up in the old fire-place; and the old squire went stark mad for desire of his light o' love; what with revelries and develries, he had soon squandered everything he possessed.

Noodle-Doodleum;

Or, GAWKY SIT-BY-THE-FIRE.

By a fishing river once dwelt an old man with three sons; two were knowing and intelligent, and the third, Noodle-Doodleum, was without sense, and thick-witted. The old man, in heavy sickness, feeling his end approaching, entrusted his whole estate to his two elder sons, and gave a hundred dollars apiece in ready money to all three; he then died. He was buried with due pomp, and a sumptuous funeral banquet prepared; and once, as the two reasonable brothers were leaving the property for a while, they said to Noodle-Doodleum: "Do you know what, brother? hand us over your money; we are going to do business in the world, and if we win any considerable gains we will, on our return, buy you a crimson cap, a crimson belt, and boots to match; and meanwhile, stay you at home and do what your brothers tell you." Noodle-Doodleum had long desired a crimson belt, boots and cap, so he readily agreed to everything, and handed over the money. The brothers roved about in the world, sought their fortune beyond the sea, and Noodle-Doodleum remained at home; but as besides being a noodle, he was the laziest of the lazy, all the time he stretched himself by the warm stove and did not obey his brothers' orders when they told him to do anything; again, more than any other dainties, he preferred kwas, sausages and onions.

"Come, Noodle-Doodleum," his brothers once said to him, "bring us water." It was in winter time, and thick ice covered the court-yard, so not wishing to leave the stove, Noodle-Doodleum replied: "Go yourselves, I don't want to go." "Go, noodle-head, and meanwhile we will prepare your kwas, sausages and onions; and if you don't obey us, when our men return, neither hat, cap, nor crimson boots shall you get from us." For the inveigling of a

Noodle-Doodleum, that was enough, indeed one of the most effective baits you could wish for; he crawled out of his corner by the stove, took the pails and an axe, and went for the water.

He came to the river, hacked a hole in the ice, drew the water, placed the pails on the ice, and, scratching his head, gazed inquisitively into the hole. At this moment a pike showed itself there; Noodle-Doodleum, with a sudden movement, caught hold of it and grasped it under the gills. "Let me go," entreated the pike, "and in return for your tender-heartedness, I will fulfil whatever desires you wish fulfilled." "I wish to possess such power of will that everything I crave may be accomplished immediately." "Whatever you desire shall instantly present itself to your eyes as soon as you utter these words:

At my urgent supplication,
And the Jack-pike's incantation,
Be without procrastination—
This or that accomplished.

"I will test the spell," replied Noodle-Doodleum, and cried out: "At my urgent supplication, and the Jack-pike's incantation, be here without procrastination, onions, kwas and sausages!" And in a twinkling it was all there; our numb-skull ate and drank his fill, and then exclaimed: "Good, I'm choke full and desire nothing more! and the next time it will be the same?" "Just the same." Noodle-Doodleum let the pike go into the river, and standing himself above the pails full of water, exclaimed: "At my urgent supplication, and the Jack-pike's incantation, may the pails take up their station, by the kitchen fire." The handles of the pails rose, and lifting themselves, trundled off to the house; and Noodle-Doodleum marched after them, munching his sausage and onions, quaffing his kwas, and driving the pails before him like a couple of geese; the pails, eyeful of water, plumped down in the cottage and Noodle-Doodleum stretched himself out again by the stove and snoozed off.

In a short time the brothers again began to storm at him: "Just be off, Noodle-Doodleum, and cut wood for us." "Ugh! why can't you go yourselves?" "Is it work for a woman? If you don't cut it, you yourself will freeze by the stove in winter, and as for the red cap, belt and boots, you won't even get a glimpse of them, not even in sleep." Lazy-bones shifted his place at the stove and cried out: "At my earnest supplication, and the Jack-pike's incantation, be without premeditation, what I will performed," and instantly from

behind the bench out skipped the axe on to the wood-shed, cut up a load of wood, brought it to the stove, and then squatted down again behind the bench, and Lazy-bones meanwhile stretched himself out by the stove, munched his onions and sausages, and guzzled his kwas.

"Noodle-Doodleum!" shouted the brothers a few days afterwards, "there is already no more wood at the wood-shed; go into the wood and fetch some, for if you don't fetch it you shall never get the red cap, belt and boots." Lazy-bones this time obeyed at once, for he wanted to cut a pretty figure before all the village; so he crept out from his place by the stove, yawned, put his clogs on, went out into the stable-yard, drew the sledge out from under the lean-to, loaded it with a good supply of onions and sausages, seated himself with his whip in hand, and at Noodle-Doodleum's supplication, and the pike's solicitation, the sledge drove off of itself through the village, straight to the wood, till the snow just whizzed under the runners. Going in this way to the wood through a populous town, at the sight of a sledge running along without horses, the people thronged forth in such numbers that Noodle-Doodleum, in his rapid journey, inflicted no little injury on the spectators, upset carts and carriages, and terrified women and children.

Briskly he drove into the wood and said the words: "At my urgent supplication, and the pike's solicitation, be without procrastination, what I bid fulfilled: axe go chop wood, wood go fill barrow, barrow trundle with your bundle, quick march and shunt it on to the sledge here!" And everything which he ordered was done before you could say Jack Robinson; while Lazy-bones lounged on the sledge, munched his sausage and onions, gulped down his kwas, and when the sledge was loaded it carried him back again.

But in the town where he had caused such damage, as soon as they again caught sight of him, they leapt out from all sides, dragged him off his vehicle on to the pavement, and catching him by the hair began to tumble him about. Noodle-Doodleum at first thought that they were only whooping to make fun of him, but when he felt the pain, he said mentally: "At my earnest supplications, and the pike's solicitations, be established warm relations, twixt my sledge of fresh cut bludgeons, and the backs of these curmudgeons!" Out of the sledge skipped the faggots and began to lay about them on all sides, so that the crowd of people took to flight in every direction, and

Noodle-Doodleum, laughing like to burst, rattled through the town and was soon by his stove again.

From that focus our hero's fame spread far and wide throughout the kingdom, so that the people streamed out as if to a shrine where you may get indulgences, to get a glimpse of the wonder-worker, until finally a rumour about him reached the king himself, who also desired to see him, and sent his chief privy counsellor to fetch him to court. "Creep out of your corner by the stove, Noodle-Doodleum, put your best things on, and come along to the king," said this grand personage on arriving. "What for? Haven't I plenty of onions, kwas, and sausages here at home."

For this outburst the privy counsellor rewarded him with a box on the ear, and Lazy-bones, without stirring from the stove, murmured: "At my urgent supplication, and the pike's solicitation, mop! be at the man of fashion!" The mop immediately soaked itself in soot and soapsuds, and went spinning after the courtly messenger. The poor fellow had scarcely time to wriggle through the window, jump into his carriage, and drive off to the king, with nothing but a flea in his ear. The king, surprised at Noodle-Doodleum's reply, despatched a fresh messenger—and he, instructed by the insuccess of his predecessor, proceeded more discreetly with our hero; first enquired what he liked, and standing in the kitchen before the stove, bowed and said: "Noodle-Doodleum, come with me to the king, he is desirous of having a red cap, red belt, and red boots sewn for you." "Oh! if that's what it is, I'll come; you, sir, set off first, I'll catch you up."

The messenger drove off, and Noodle-Doodleum stuffed himself with sausages and onions, drank off his kwas, and went to sleep; and when his brothers woke him, saying that it was high time he should be on his journey, without stirring from his stove, remarked: "At my urgent supplication, and the pike's solicitation, let me immediately stand before the king by this stove." All at once it began to smoke and blaze inside the stove, the door flew wide open, and stove, Noodle-Doodleum, and all trundled off along the high road, overtook the messenger, and stood before the royal palace. The king, with his whole court, ran out astonished into the corridor, and Noodle-Doodleum, meanwhile, tucked into his onions and sausages, quaffed his kwas, and lurched from side to side, without giving a thought to any of them. "Who art thou, what dost thou do, and why hast thou driven off here?" enquired the king. "I am

Noodle-Doodleum, otherwise Lazy-bones; I eat my sausage and my onions, I drink my kwas, and I am come to you, oh king! for a red cap, a red belt, and a red pair of boots."

While Noodle-Doodleum was thus answering the king, and the king was preparing to ply him with other questions, his royal daughter came out on to the corridor, the elegant princess Gapiomila, and scarcely had our hero caught sight of her than he took a great fancy to her, and repeated mentally: "At my urgent supplication, and the pike's solicitation, may the princess become my sweetheart!" After this, by the power of the same words, he moved his stove from the place, rode happily upon it home to his native village; the doors opened, the stove stood in its usual place, and Noodle-Doodleum once more stretched himself out by it, eat his onions and sausage, and drank his kwas.

Meanwhile, that darling daughter of the king, the very elegant Gapiomila, grew so love-sick for our prince of Noodle-Doodleums, and felt such a passionate tenderness towards him, that she fell at the king's feet and confessed the whole truth. The king said this and that to her, but when nothing was of any avail, and the princess drooped and withered from her passion, he sent once more for our noodle. This time Noodle-Doodleum was determined not to go to the king under any considerations, so the messenger made him tipsy, bound him when intoxicated, and so brought him to the king. The king immediately summoned a magician to himself, and promised this magician a bagful of ducats, for Noodle-Doodleum was grumbling at the cord, if he would contrive by his art to put our hero and the princess Gapiomila all at once into a glass barrel, cooper it, tar it, and let it go in the air under the vault of heaven, for in this manner the king determined to punish his daughter for her unreasonable passion. The magician (*lit.*: black-priest) drew a whale's bladder from his bosom, inserted a quill, inflated it like a hay-cock, attached it by a cord to the barrel in which the princess and Noodle-Doodleum were seated, and the barrel flew along under the vault of heaven like a sky-lark.

The princess in the barrel wept bitterly, and weeping entreated Noodle-Doodleum to let her out of it; but our Lazy-bones said that he found it very comfortable even in the barrel. However, by her constant prayers, she bothered him so much that at last he exclaimed vehemently: "At my urgent supplication, and the pike's solicitation, may this cask take up its station on a fair and lonely

island." The cask flew over the sea, dropped on to a fair and lonely island, and then burst. And we know that he who stands on that island at his every request will obtain everything he desires!

So our noodle and the Princess Gapiomila walked about the island together, and they had plenty to eat and drink; for when they desired it a table immediately put its own cloth on, and on this table stood various dainty dishes and sweet drinks; when they had refreshed themselves, the table once more vanished. Noodle-doodleum felt himself most fortunate, but for the Princess Gapiomila all this was not enough; so she entreated our Noodleum to see about a palace for her. And at his urgent supplication, and the pike's solicitation, in the middle of the uninhabited island stood a palace of marble, with windows of crystal, gilded furniture, and an amber roof. In a few days the princess has a new request to make to the noodle, that he should put them in connection with the mainland and provide the island with inhabitants, for she herself was terribly bored there; she could not go about without female attendants; and finally, she should like to see her father again. So Noodle-doodleum said: "At my urgent supplication, and the pike's solicitation, let the princess's wishes be gratified." And on the morrow morning a bridge of crystal spanned the sea, on arches of gold, with a diamond parapet, and so long that one end rested upon the ground near the corridor of the palace of the king, the father of Gapiomila. Noodle-Doodleum now wanted to drive off there in a carriage with the Princess Gapiomila, when it suddenly came into his mind that all people were as people should be and that he was only a noodle-doodleum, and so that it would be shameful for him to show himself at the king's court with his daughter; so he determined yet once, but now once for all, to take advantage of the pike's boon, and exclaimed:

At my urgent supplication,
And the pike's solicitation,
Let me henceforth fill my station,
Mid our highly polished nation,
In a staid, decorous fashion.

Scarcely had the words been spoken when Noodle-doodleum in a twinkling turned into an ordinary, properly dressed personage; so he seated himself in the carriage with Princess Gapiomila and they drove off over the miraculous bridge on to the mainland, went straight to the king, fell at his feet and begged his blessing. And

that very evening the young lovers plighted their troth; the king proclaimed his son-in-law heir to the throne, and invited guests to the wedding festivities. They amused themselves, ate and drank; even poor I was also there, drank mead and wine like a beech-tree, and have related everything that happened as faithfully—as could be expected under the circumstances!

About Prince Unexpectedly;

Or, THE SKELETON KING.

There was once a king married to a queen; they had already lived three years together, and not having children, troubled each other with mutual repinings. Once then it occurred to the king that he ought to inspect his dominion; he therefore took leave of his wife, rode off, and had now been absent from home about eight months. At the end of the ninth month the king returned from his tour through the country, and was already in the neighbourhood of his capital, when riding through an unpopulated stretch of country, in the excessive summer heat, he was seized with such a burning thirst that he despatched his servants to seek for water in the neighbourhood and immediately to bring him word. The servants ran this way and that in all directions, sought in vain for a whole hour, and returned to the king empty-handed. The king, parched with thirst, decided to ride himself over the whole length and breadth of the piece of country, not believing but that there must be a spring of water somewhere or other; he rode forward, and lo! on the plain where previously not a drop of water was to be seen, he suddenly perceived a well with a bran new cope-stone, full to the very brim with crystal-clear water, and in the middle floated a silver bowl with a golden handle. And so the king leapt off his horse, leant upon the cope-stone with his left hand, and stretched out his right for the bowl; but the bowl, as if it were alive and had little eyes, instantly dodged to one side and once more floated quietly; the king was surprised, and tried to catch it with his left as well as his right hand, but it curled about and slipped through his fingers in such a way that not being able to hold it with one hand, he tried to grasp it with both together, but as soon as he reached out, the bowl bobbed under the water like a little fish, and then once more floated on the surface. "The mischief!" said the king to himself, "I can make nothing of the drinking bowl, so I will satisfy my thirst without

it." And he stooped down to the water which was as clear as crystal and as cold as ice, and began to drink, quite parched with the drought; and as he did so his beard, which grew down to his waist, dippped into the water. When he had slaked his fiery thirst he wished to rise . . . something held him by the beard and would not let him go. He tugged once, twice, it was of no avail, so he cried out angrily: "Who is there? let me go!" "It is I, autumn's dread king, the immortal Skeleton! and I will never let thee go until thou dost present me with that which, without knowing it, thou didst leave at home, and which at thy return thou didst not expect to find there." The king gazed into the depths of the well—lo! there a head huge as a cask, with glowing eyes and a mouth grinning from ear to ear, held him by the beard, with long skinny claws like a crayfish's, and laughed a hollow mocking laugh. The king thought to himself that the thing which he did not know about at his departure from home, and which he did not expect at his return, could not be a matter of much importance, so he said to the spectre: "I present it!" The spectre, with a wild burst of laughter and a lurid flash of lightning, vanished, and with it also vanished the well, the water, the cope-stone, and the drinking-bowl. The king, again upright, thankfully knelt upon the hot dry sand, and nothing more was there to be seen. The king rose to his feet, crossed himself, again leapt to his feet, caught up his escort, and proceeded on his journey.

After a week, or it may be two, the king reached his capital; the people thronged out to meet him; he rode in pomp to his hereditary palace, and entered the corridor. In the corridor the queen was awaiting him, and held in her arms a cushion on which, beautiful as a floweret, lay a little child enveloped in swaddling clothes. The king mused a moment, heaved a deep sigh of anguish, and said inwardly: "Lo! that is what I left without knowing it, and found without expecting it"; and bitterly, bitterly he wept. All wondered, but no one ventured to enquire what was the cause of it all. The king took his infant son in his arms, gazed long and wistfully at the innocent little countenance, carried the child himself into the palace, laid it in its cradle, and repressing his grief, betook himself to the counsel of the chief authorities. But never again was he cheerful as he once was wont to be, for he constantly tortured himself with the thought that some day or other King Skeleton would remember about his son.

Meanwhile, weeks, months, years flew by, and for his son no one ever came. The prince called Unexpectedly grew and grew, and soon became a grown-up young man. And so the king, too, in time regained his accustomed cheerfulness, and forgot about what had happened; but all, alas! did not forget so lightly.

Once the prince was hunting in the forest, detached himself from his attendants, and plunged all alone into a savage wilderness. All at once a hideous old man appeared, with glowing eyes, and said: "How art thou, Prince Unexpectedly? long hast thou caused me to wait for thee!" "Who art thou?" "That thou wilt learn anon; and now when thou returnest to thy father take him my humble respects and say that I should like to settle accounts with him, for if he doesn't shortly clear himself from the debt of his own accord, he will bitterly repent it." So saying the hideous old man vanished, and the prince, amazed, turned his horse's head, rode home and related the circumstance to the king. The king grew as pale as a sheet, and revealed the dreadful secret to his son. "Weep not, father!" responded the prince, "'tis not such a great misery! I must go and find King Skeleton, as he claims the right to me, which he extorted so cunningly; and if, in the course of a year, I do not return, it will be a sign that we shall not see one another again." The prince prepared himself for the journey, the king gave him a suit of steel armour, a sword, and a horse, and the queen hung about his neck a cross of pure gold; then on taking leave of him they embraced him fondly, wept heartily, and the prince rode away.

He rode one day, then a second and a third; towards the end of the third day, about sunset, he reached the shore of the sea, and just on the verge he perceived twelve maidens' shirts white as snow, although on the water, as far as eye could see, there was not a living soul in sight, only far away from the shore twelve white geese were swimming. Curious to know to whom the shirts belonged, he took one of them, let his horse loose on the meadow, and concealing himself in a neighbouring bed of reeds, awaited what might happen. And now the geese, having collected together on the sea, swam ashore; eleven of them ran to the shirts, and each, as it touched the ground, turned into a beautiful maiden, who dressed herself in haste and then quickly hurried away into the field. The twelfth, and smallest goose, more beautiful than the first ones, could not venture out upon the shore, and only timidly stretched out her neck, glancing in all directions, and observing the prince, announced her

presence in a human voice: "Prince Unexpectedly, give me my shirt; I shall be grateful to you for it." The prince was agreeable, laid the shirt on the grass, and modestly turned in a different direction. The goose ran out upon the beach, transformed herself into a girl, hastily dressed herself, and stood before the prince; and she was young and of such beauty as no eye had seen nor ear heard of. Blushing, she offered him her white hand, and casting down her eyes, said in a bewitching voice: "I thank you, good young prince, for having done as I asked you; I am the youngest daughter of the immortal skeleton; he has us twelve young daughters, and rules in the kingdom of the underworld. My father has long been expecting you, prince, and so is very angry; do not be anxious, however, and do not be frightened, but do as I tell you. As soon as you see King Skeleton, fall instantly on your knees, and heeding not his roaring, stampings and threatenings, approach him boldly. What will happen afterwards you will see, and now let us be going." So saying the princess tapped with her little foot upon the ground, the ground immediately opened and let them through into the underworld kingdom, close to the palace of King Skeleton, which, brighter than our sun, illuminated the whole nether world. The prince boldly entered the apartment. With a beaming crown upon his head sat King Skeleton upon a throne of gold; his eyes flashed like two globes of glass, and his hands were like a crab's claws. As soon as he saw the king at a distance the prince fell on his knees, and King Skeleton roared so horribly that the vaults of the infernal empire rang again; but the prince boldly crept on his knees to the throne, and when he was already only a few paces from him the king laughed and said: "Thou hast a kittle fortune, in that it has been thy lot to make me laugh; remain in our nether kingdom; but before you can remain as one of its genuine citizens, you must accomplish three of my behests; and as to-day it is already late, we will begin to-morrow; meanwhile, go off to your bedroom.

In the bedroom set apart for him the prince slept soundly, and the next morning, early, Skeleton summoned him and said: "Let us see, prince, what you know. During the night you must build me a palace of pure marble, let the windows be of crystal, the roof of gold, all round it there must be a beautiful garden, with seats and fountains; if you build it you shall find love and delight in my kingdom, if not—I shall order you to be beheaded." The prince heard, returned to his room, and reflecting upon the death that

threatened him, sat moodily, when all of a sudden outside the window a bee began buzzing, and said: "Let me in!" He undid the sash, and before the astonished prince appeared the princess, the youngest daughter of King Skeleton. "And what are you so thoughtful about, Prince Unexpectedly?" "Ach! I am thinking how that your father means to deprive me of life." "Don't be frightened! Lie down and sleep, and when you get up in the morning your palace will be already prepared."

And so it was. At daybreak the prince went out of his room, and beheld a palace finer than any he had ever seen before; and King Skeleton, when he looked at it, grew moody, and would hardly believe his own eyes. "Well, you've won this time, and now hearken to my second behest. To-morrow I shall place my twelve daughters before you; if you do not guess which of them is the youngest, your head falls under the axe." "As though I should not recognize the youngest princess," said the prince to himself in his bedroom, "what difficulty can there be in that?" "Such," replied the princess, flying into the room in the form of a bee, "that if I do not help you, you will never recognize me, for we are all so exactly like one another that even our father himself only distinguishes us by our dress." "What am I to do?" "Listen what; she will be the youngest above whose right eyebrow you observe a lady-bird; only keep a good look out, and so—*au revoir*." The next morning King Skeleton once more summoned Prince Unexpectedly. The princesses already stood side by side in a line, all uniformly dressed and with downcast eyes. The prince observed them, and was surprised to see how exactly alike all the princesses were; he walked up and down once, twice—nothing to be seen of the pre-concerted sign; the third time he observes the lady-bird above the eyebrow, and exclaims: "That is the youngest princess." "How the mischief has he guessed her?" said King Skeleton angrily, "there must be some kind of hocus pocus here. . . . Well! in three hours' time come here again, and in my presence give us a proof of your wisdom; I will light a match, and before it goes out you must sew me a pair of boots; and if you don't do that for me, then I shall do for you."

The prince returned to his room in a very ill humour, and found the bee already in the apartment. "What are you so thoughtful about this time, prince?" "How can I be otherwise when your father desires me to sew him a pair of boots—how on earth am *I* to

sew them?" "Well, but what shall you do?" "What *am* I to do? I shall never sew the boots, and am not afraid of death; it is only to die once."

"No, prince, you shall not die! it shall be my care to extricate you, and we will either regain our freedom, or else perish together! Now we must take to flight, other help there is none." So saying, the princess spat upon the window-pane, and the spittle immediately froze; after this she went out of the room together with the prince, locked the door after them, and threw the key to a distance; then taking one another by the hand they quickly rose through the earth, and in a moment found themselves on the very same spot from which they had descended into the nether regions; the same sea, the same stretch of sea-beach, overgrown with reeds and rushes, the same fresh meadow, and over the meadow raced the prince's well-fed steed, which, when it saw its master, whinnied, and then trotted straight towards him. The prince, without taking much time for thought, leapt on horseback, the princess seated herself behind him, and away they sped like an arrow.

At the appointed hour King Skeleton did not trouble to await Prince Unexpectedly, but sent messengers to enquire why he did not appear. They found the door locked; the servants knocked hard at it, and from the middle of the room the spittle answered in the voice of the prince: "Immediately!" This answer the servants took back to the king; he waited and waited—the prince never comes; so he sends the same messengers again, and they, hearing the very same "Immediately," reported to the king what they had heard. "What is this? does he think to jest with me?" exclaimed the king angrily; "run as quickly as possible, break open the doors, and drag him here." The servants rushed off, burst open the doors, and looked in—the mischief, there was no one, and the spittle on the pane of glass was splitting with laughter. King Skeleton almost exploded with rage, and bade them all rush off in full chase after the prince, and if they returned without him he threatened them all with death. They leapt on horseback and away they went.

All this time Prince Unexpectedly and the princess, daughter of King Skeleton, were galloping away on their gallant steed; and in the midst of their rapid flight, heard the thud! thud! behind them. The prince leapt off his horse, put his ear to the ground, and said: "Yes! certainly they are in full chase after us!" "If so," said the princess, "there is not a moment to be lost." And that very instant

she changed herself into a river, transformed the prince into a bridge, the horse into a raven, and the highway on the further side of the bridge divided itself into three roads. Their pursuers had followed the fresh track at a rapid pace, but when they reached the bridge they stopped, as if turned to marble; they saw the footprints as far as the bridge, there they ceased, and the high-road divided into three. To return, to proceed, each was equally futile, so they went home again empty-handed. King Skeleton thundered, hoarse with fury: "The bridge and the river were they; how was it you did not think of that? Back again! and without them do not venture to return!" And the chase began again.

"Listen to the thud! thud!" exclaimed in an undertone a second time the princess, daughter of King Skeleton, to the Prince Unexpectedly, who, leaping from his horse, laid his ear to the ground, and replied: "They press forward, and are near at hand." The same instant the princess touched the prince, and they and their horse turned into a dark wood, in which were roads, lanes, and footpaths innumerable, and along one of them two riders seemed to be pressing forward on horseback. Following up the fresh track, the pursuers plunge into the wood, and when they perceive the fugitives in it, gallop post haste after them. On and on the pursuers gallop, and constantly see before them the wood with its thickets, the broad road, and the fugitives upon it; now it appears as though they were on the very point of catching them up, when lo! the fugitives and the wood with its thickets suddenly vanished, and they found themselves on the very same spot from which they set out in pursuit. So once more they returned to King Skeleton, empty-handed. "My horse! my horse! I will race them myself, my claws they shall not elude!" bellowed the Skeleton King hoarsely, and flew after them like the wind.

Once more, to the Prince Unexpectedly, said the princess: "It seems to me they are again pursuing us, and this time it is my father, the Skeleton King himself; but at the first church ends the limits of his kingdom, and he cannot pursue us farther. Give me your cross of gold." The prince drew forth the gift of his fond mother, and handed it to the princess, who immediately changed herself into a church, the prince into the priest, and the horse into the bell; and at that instant the Skeleton King rode up. "Tell me, monk, hast thou not seen two wayfarers on horseback?" asked King Skeleton of the priest. "No one has ridden this way except Prince

Unexpectedly, with the princess, daughter of the Skeleton King, and they have gone into the church, prayed, and paid for a mass to your health, and they begged me to give you their humble respects, if you should pass this way." . . . And so the Skeleton King himself returned empty-handed. And Prince Unexpectedly, with the royal daughter of the Skeleton King, no longer apprehensive of pursuit, rode forward on their journey.

They rode together at a foot's pace; at this moment they see before them an elegant city, into which the prince feels an irresistible desire to ride off. "Prince," said the princess, "do not ride off thither, my heart forbodes misluck there." "I will only ride off thither for a moment, take a look round the place, and then we will pursue our further way together." "To ride thither is not difficult, but to return—who knows if you ever will come back? However, since, finally, you so desire it, go, and I will await your return as a white stone; be on your guard, my beloved! the king and queen, and their royal daughter, will come out to meet you, and with them there will be a graceful boy. Do not kiss him, for if you kiss him, you will straightway forget all about me, and then you will never see me again in this world. I shall die of despair. Lo! here on this road for three days I will await you, and if you do not return the third day, remember, that I perish; I perish for your sake." The prince fondly took leave of her, and then rode away to the city, and the princess changed herself into a white stone and remained upon the road.

One day passed, then another, then a third, and still no prince returned. Unhappy princess! He had not listened to her warning; in the city came out to meet him the king and queen, and their royal daughter, and beside them ran a little boy, Kedzierzavietszaviets (Curly-haired-gibble-gabble), with eyes as bright as stars, who rushed to the prince and clung to his hand, and he was so carried away by the beauty of the boy that he forgot about everything, and kissed the darling child. That instant his memory became clouded, and he entirely forgot about the princess, daughter of King Skeleton.

The princess lay as a white stone the first and second day, by the road, and when the third also elapsed and the prince did not return from the town, she heaved a deep and agonized sigh, changed into a blue cornflower, and leapt into the rye which bordered the highway. "Here by the road I will remain; perhaps some of the passers-by will uproot me or trample me under foot into the ground,"

she said, and her tears glittered like drops of dew upon the pale blue petals of the cornflower. Just then an old man passed along the road, observed the cornflower in the rye by the roadside, was enchanted by its beauty, drew it out of the ground heedfully, carried it to his apartment, planted it in a vase, sprinkled it with water, and began to tend it sedulously. But oh! wonderful; exactly from the moment that the blue cornflower was brought into the apartment a kind of miracle began, so to say, to dawn in it. Scarcely was the old man awake when everything in the apartment was already tidied, not the least trace of dust remained anywhere. At midday he came home—there was dinner ready, the table laid; he had but to sit and eat, and welcome. The old man wondered and wondered, at last a panic seized him, and he betook himself for advice to an old witch, well known in the neighbourhood. "Do as follows," said the witch. "Get up before the first morning ray of light, before the crowing of the cock at sunrise, and carefully observe what first begins to stir in the apartment, and what does so, cover with this handkerchief; what will further happen you shall see."

The old man did not close an eye the whole night, and as soon as the first glimmer of light appeared, and things began to grow distinct in the apartment, he watched until the blue cornflower suddenly stirred in its vase, leapt out of it, and began to bustle about the chamber, when forthwith everything began to tidy itself into its proper place, the dust briskly swept itself away, and in the stove the fire began to burn of itself. The old man hastily sprang out of bed, and flung the handkerchief over the erratic floweret, when lo! the flower transformed itself into a lovely girl — the princess, daughter of King Skeleton. "What hast thou done?" exclaimed the princess, "why hast thou recalled me to life? My promised husband, Prince Unexpectedly, has forgotten me, and life has become a burden to me." "Thy affianced, Prince Unexpectedly, is to be married this very day; a gay wedding festival is already prepared, and the guests are beginning to assemble."

The princess wept, but after a while she dried her eyes, dressed herself in frieze, and went to the city as a village maiden. She presented herself at the royal kitchen, when all was din and confusion there; approaching the chief cook with humility and flatteries, she addressed him with honied words: "Kind and honoured sir, prythee do me a favour; allow me to bake Prince Unexpectedly's wedding cake." The chief cook, overwhelmed with work, would have forged

upon the damsel then and there, but when he looked at her the words died away upon his lips, and he replied frankly: "Ah! my beauty, beyond all beauties! do what you please. I will take your cake to the prince myself." And lo! the cake was baked, and all the guests were seated at table.

The chief cook himself placed the enormous cake before the prince, on a silver trencher, but scarcely had the prince cut a slice from one side, when lo! in the presence of all the guests occurred an unheard-of miracle. A grey pigeon and a white she-pigeon ran out of the cake, the pigeon walked over the table, and the white she-pigeon followed, cooing after him:

Cruel pigeon mine, oh! stay thee,
Fly not from thy love, I pray thee;
False to me who do adore thee,
Like the bridegroom prince before thee,
Who betrayed the Bone King's daughter.

Scarcely had Prince Unexpectedly heard the cooing of the pigeon than suddenly he regained his lost memory; he tore himself from the table, rushed to the door, and at the door the princess, daughter of the Skeleton King, grasped him by the hand; both together flew into the corridor, and before them stood the horse saddled.

What more need be told? Prince Unexpectedly, with the princess, daughter of King Skeleton, leapt on horseback, sped along the road, and finally, happily reached the kingdom of the father of Prince Unexpectedly. The king and queen welcomed them with joy and merriment, and it was not long before they prepared the young couple such a boisterous aud sumptuous wedding that the like of it neither eye hath seen nor ear heard.

The Beggar.

A POOR old man went through a village begging, and stepped into Dame Blazek's. Dame Blazek, however, was so close and grasping that she would not give the beggar so much as a scrap of dry bread, but, forging upon him, thrust him from the room, not even saying as she did so: "May the Lord God provide for thee." The old man went begging from house to house, and having strayed out of Mrs. Blazek's, now strayed into Mrs. John's. Mrs. John was a good and kind-hearted dame, and no sooner did she perceive the poor old man than she hastily snatched the two hunks of bread which she had just buttered for her children, out of their mouths, and presented them to that old man, saying: "May the Lord God help thee better than I can," for she was poor and had nothing in the cottage. "God repay thee, kind-hearted dame; may he reward thee tenfold, mayest thou clothe thy naked children, and whatever thou beginnest to do now, mayest thou scarce have completed doing by the going down of the sun." Thus said the old man on leaving the cottage. "God repay thee, God repay thee," said Dame John, thanking him for his benediction; but as to what the old man's words meant she never reflected, nor indeed understood them the least.

Dame John was a needy woman, and besides this, a widow; she had two children, which she supported by day labour. When the poor old man quitted them it was already past midday, and her children had not yet had dinner, and she had nothing for them for supper. Needy Dame John got in spring from Dame Blazek three hanks of flax, for which she had to work hard enough for many days; but she worked and got it. This flax she took home, soaked it, beat it, combed it, spun it, everything that flax requires to be done to it she did herself, and from this flax she managed to weave twelve ells of linen cloth; and this linen cloth, her whole property, she stowed away for the winter to make shirts of for her children and herself. When the poor old grandfather quitted the cottage they were in such want and misery that they hadn't so much as a

stick for an axe to cut, the children cried for food, and she herself also had recourse to tears. She knew not what to do, until it occurred to her that she could take a few ells of cloth to the Jew, sell them to him, and so buy bread and salt. She now set to work to measure this cloth, the children quieted down, and she measured and measured off the cloth by the ell yard, measured without end, measured and measured, and went on measuring until the sun went down. Of her twenty ells of linen cloth she had measured off a thousand! Rejoicing greatly, she first of all thanked God, and wishing to get the children some strengthening food as soon as possible, she did not wish to run to the Jew's at the end of the village, and so took a few ells of the cloth and sold them to neighbour Blazek; true, she got a sorry price for them, but what was the poor thing to do when her children were so hungry?

The following day was fair day in the town. Dame John went off with with her linen cloth, and as it was thick and smooth, they paid her well for it; and thus Dame John returned home from the fair with all sorts of different purchases and a tight bagful of money. Not long after the worthy woman bought herself two cows, a bit of cornfield and meadow, engaged some servants, praised God, and laboured.

This Johnian stroke of fortune was by no means gratifying to Dame Blazek, and although they now ate and drank comfortably at both houses, and moreover, became good neighbours, the Blazekovian by no means compared favourably with the Johnian prosperity. On one occasion, over just a thimbleful of vodka, Dame Blazek enquired of Dame John in what way she had managed to emerge from poverty into a state of affluence (or exactly, how it was she had come into a state of poverty and then of affluence). And Dame John: how it all was from the beginning, how the old grandfather came begging to her house, how she gave him the hunks of bread snatched from the mouths of her two children, how he had given her his blessing and prayed God, how she had given no heed to that, how afterwards the children had cried for food, how she made up her mind to take the cloth to the Jew for bread and salt, how she went on measuring that cloth until sunset, everything, everything she faithfully related to Dame Blazek. Dame Blazek took a sip of her vodka, toasted her companion when she heard the story, and then observed: "Oh! my dear good gossip, if you only knew how hard up we are at times, even at my house; for you know I too have small children, my old

man is not up to much, and although we both work, it is often all we can do to live. Oh my dear gossip! if that blessed old grandfather should ever appear at your house again, mind and tell him not to forget to step in and visit me as well." Dame John, a kind-hearted soul to every living being, answered Dame Blazek thus: "My good gossip! if the Lord God sends him to me, be assured that I will certainly request him not to overlook you." Dame Blazek ordered just another thimbleful; after this they kissed, embraced, and went their several ways.

From that time, perhaps a week elapsed, perhaps less, and the old man again passed through the village—that same old man that at Dame John's had prayed for her good success—and again he stepped in to see her. She good soul, did not know what to do with herself for pleasure, thanked him again and again, it was all "be pleased to take this, sir," and "oh, do take that," and when the old man took leave of her in God's name and departed, she begged him not to forget her good gossip Dame Blazek; and the old man promised that when he had returned from the other end of the village he would also pay her neighbour a visit. The poor old grandfather came begging from the other end of the village, and Dame Blazek, having observed him while still at a distance, hastily buttered her children a hunk of bread, and as the old man was stepping in to her, whipped the bread in a twinkling out of their mouths and handed it to the poor old fellow. "God repay thee!" said the old man, "and whatever thou beginnest to do, mayest thou scarce have finished doing it by the going down of the sun." So saying, he departed. Dame Blazek, having some dyed cloth (or some cloth purposely prepared) for measuring, had just taken her yard measure out of the corner and was in the very act of beginning to measure, when the children called out for something to drink, and she herself also began to feel a terrible thirst come over her. But not to lose more time she ran off then and there to the spring with a pitcher for water; but when she had brought one pitcherful, she ran off for a second, when she had brought a second, she ran off for a third, a fourth, a tenth, and so she went on fetching water without ceasing until the sun went down.

The Spirit of the Buried One.

A POOR student went his way into a city, and under the walls of the city gate stumbled upon the body of a dead man, unburied, and trampled by the feet of the passers-by. He had but little in his purse, but freely gave what he could for a grave, that the man might rest unmoved and undisturbed. He prayed above the freshly strewn mould, and then went onward to wander about in the world. A heavy sleep came upon him in an oak wood, and when he awoke he observed with surprise that his wallet was full of gold. Thanking his unknown benefactor, he reached a broad river which it was necessary for him to cross. Two ferrymen noticed that his wallet was full of gold pieces, took him into their boat and, in mid-stream, seized the gold, and flung him into the river. As the eddies carried along their victim, he accidentally clutched a plank, and by its help drifted safely to the bank. It was not really a plank, but the Spirit of the Buried One, and it addressed him in these words: "Thou hast shown respect to my body by having it buried; thanks to thee for that! In token of my gratitude I will teach thee how it is possible to transform thyself into a crow, a hare, and a roebuck." And then he taught him the incantation. The student, having learnt the spell, was now easily able to transform himself into a crow, a hare, and a roebuck. He wandered long and he wandered far, until at last he reached the court of a powerful king, where he remained as court shaftsman. This king had a beautiful daughter, but she lived in an inaccessible island, which was surrounded on all sides by the sea. She lived in a castle of copper, and possessed a sword of such a kind that he who brandished it could conquer any army, however great. The enemies of the country came to the frontiers of that king; how sorely he needed, how much he longed for that sword of victory! But how ever to obtain it when no one

had ever as yet reached that desolate island? Hereupon he announced that whosoever should bring the sword of victory from the princess should not only obtain her hand, but also mount the throne after him. No one was so venturesome; but the wandering student, now the court shaftsman, stood before the king and announced his readiness, praying for a letter that on that token the princess might consign the brand into his hands. All were amazed, and the king entrusted him with a letter to his daughter. He went into a wood, not at all knowing that another court shaftsman had followed on his tracks. He first turned himself into a hare, and then into a roebuck, and flew along at full speed; already he had run the full course, and stood upon the seashore. Hereupon he changed himself into a crow and then flew over the waters of the sea, and never rested until he was on the island. He entered the castle of copper, handed the handsome princess the letter from her father, and begged her to give him the sword of victory. The handsome princess looked at the shaftsman. All at once her heart was smitten. She asked inquisitively in what way he had succeeded in reaching her castle when it was surrounded by water on all sides, and had never seen the print of a human footstep. Then the shaftsman told her about his knowledge of a secret incantation, by means of which he could change himself into a roebuck, a hare, and a crow. The handsome princess now requested the shaftsman to transform himself into a roebuck before her eyes. And when he had transformed himself into a graceful roebuck, and began to fawn on her and to skip about, the princess secretly plucked a tuft of hairs just from the back. When he changed himself anew into a hare, and leapt about with lopping ears, the princess secretly plucked a little of his fur just from the back. And when he turned himself into a black crow, and began to flutter about in the room, she secretly tore out a few feathers from the wings of the bird. She then composed a letter to her father and handed over the sword of victory. The young student flew across the sea as a crow, then ran quite to the end of the road as a roebuck, until near the wood he resumed the form of a hare. But the treacherous shaftsman was already on the watch for him, saw how he transformed himself into a hare, and now recognized him. He drew his bow, let fly an arrow—the hare fell dead. He extracted the letter and took away the sword from him, went to the castle, handed the sword and letter to the king, but demanded the immediate fulfilment of his promise. The king was overjoyed, and

immediately pledged him his daughter's hand; mounted on horseback, and with this sword, ventured to ride against the enemy. Scarcely had he perceived their standards when he brandished the sword energetically several times, and towards the four quarters of the heavens. At each swoop of the sword a detachment of the enemy fell down in a heap, and the others, panic-stricken, fled like hares. He returned gaily from his victory, and prepared his handsome daughter for an immediate marriage with the shaftsman who had brought the sword. Everything was in readiness. Burr! burr! go the instruments of the musicians, the whole castle is a blaze of light. But the princess sits in gloomy sorrow by the side of the murderous shaftsman; she has recognized at once that it was not he at all whom she had seen in the castle, but she did not venture to enquire of her father where that other, that noble shaftsman was; she only wept bitterly and secretly, her heart beat for that other.

And he, poor luckless student, in the skin of the hare, lay smitten to death under an oak tree, lay there a whole year, until one night he feels himself awakened from his deep sleep. And before him stands, he, the well-known Spirit, whose body he had buried. The Spirit related to him the state of his affairs, restored him to life, and said: "To-morrow is the princess's wedding day, so hasten to the castle as promptly as possible; she will recognize you, so will the shaftsman who killed you so treacherously." The young man rose up alive, went to the castle with a beating heart, entered the grand hall where a numerous company feasted and caroused. And the handsome princess recognized him, cried out for joy, and fainted; the shaftsman, his murderer, recognized him too, and grew pale with fear and green with jealousy. Then the young man related the story of the shaftsman's treachery and his own murder; and to give credence to his words, in the presence of all there assembled, he transformed himself into a graceful roebuck, and began to fawn upon the princess. She placed the hairs that she had plucked from him in the castle on the back of the roebuck, and the hair at once took root and grew. And now he changed himself into a hare, and similarly the fur plucked out and preserved by the princess, the moment it touched him took root and grew. All looked on with amazement, when the young man turned himself into a crow. The princess produced the feathers which she had secretly torn out of his wings in the castle, and the feathers at once took root and grew. Meanwhile, the old king had ordered that the murderous shaftsman

should be executed. Four horses were led out, and they were all wild and savage. He was bound hand and foot to them, and the horses were lashed up with a whip, and they, at one bound, tore the treacherous shaftsman in pieces. The young student obtained the hand of the young and elegant princess. The whole castle was a blaze of light; they feasted and drank in mirth and jollity, and the princess wept no more, for she had the husband she desired.