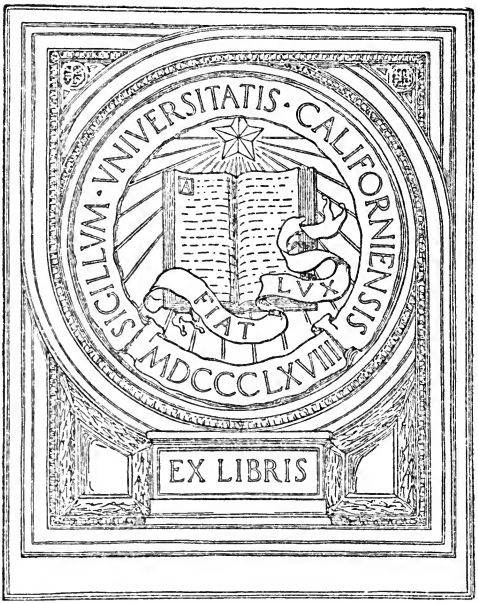
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DRAMATIC STORIES *for* READING AND ACTING

BY

ADA M. SKINNER

ST. AGATHA SCHOOL, NEW YORK CITY

AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

NEW YORK CINCINNATI CHICAGO

DRAMATIC STORIES FOR READING AND ACTING.
E. P. I

Go, little book, and wish to all,
Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
A living river by the door,
A nightingale in the sycamore.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

INTRODUCTION

Learning to read is more than learning to recognize and pronounce printed words. Reading in a listless manner is a dull and unprofitable exercise. In teaching children to read, the good primary teacher seeks, therefore, by furnishing an incentive through interesting material, and by stimulating intelligent and reasoned activity, to prevent discouragement and to banish *ennui*. Hence the value of selections that are dramatic in quality, and, to some extent, dramatic in form; for they encourage the children to read as if they were participants in the action of the story. Such material satisfies the child's love of action, stimulates his imagination, and, by keeping his faculties alert, helps him to read with understanding and with intelligent inflection. Thus the gap between the spoken language of his daily life and the printed language of the page is bridged over, and reading becomes to him a real way of acquiring and conveying ideas.

Like many other good modern ideas in education, the dramatic work in the schools has often been carried to a ridiculous excess. Dramatization presupposes a certain emphasis, a certain heightening of effects. But the school is not a training-ground for

the stage; and the dramatic exaggeration in good reading should fall below that of the stage, and even below the more exciting passages in real life. Good reading *suggests* the action and the emotion; it does not mimic or reproduce them. It does not call for shouting, for fierce gesticulation, for violent action; if it avoids, on the one hand, dull and lifeless monotones, it also avoids, on the other hand, all boisterousness and affectation. In short, the school is not the place for melodrama or for the abandonment of those restraints that indicate good breeding. Such excesses do not educate.

The stories in the present volume are admirably chosen and admirably told. They are classics, by virtue of their place either in well-known folklore or in the books that all educated people know. They are dramatic in quality because they are full of action, because the action is steadily developed in the dialogue, and because the dialogue leads up to a climactic situation that is interesting in itself. Whether acted or merely read — and it is properly within the author's plan that they may be handled in either way — the dramatic quality of these stories will make itself felt. They are free from the driveling emptiness and meaningless conversation that leads nowhither; and they are equally free from the bad taste of stridency and bombast.

FRANKLIN T. BAKER.

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DRAMATIC STORIES

SEEING THE WORLD

A little pig was standing at the door of his sty. His mother stood behind him.

"Ho, ho!" said the little pig, "the farmer boy has left this door ajar and I can push it open. I have always wanted to see the world, and now is my time; I'm off."

"No, no," said his mother; "stay here with me. You will be safer in the sty."

"No," said the little pig; "I have always wanted to see the world, and I'm going. It

would be of no use for you to come. You would be in my way, and in your own as well, for I know you do not care to see the world. Good-by."

"Take care, take care. It may be well to go out in the world if you must, but it is best to stop at home if you can," called his mother.

"Poor old thing! I'm off;" and out he walked into the square, walled-in farmyard.

"So this is the world. What a large place it is. Dear me, I must take care or I shall be lost. I must keep close to the edge of the world. Then I shall not lose my way."

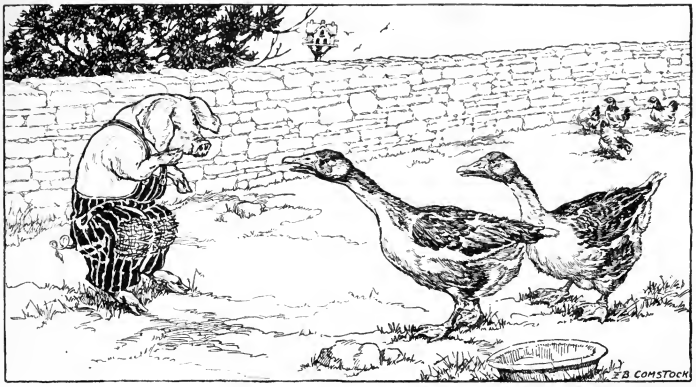
"Quack, quack," called two geese, standing in his way and putting out their heads at him.

"I don't like this," said little pig. "I'll go as fast as I can."

"Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck," cried four hens that were standing by the wall a little farther on.

"What does this mean? How much I shall have to tell when I get home!" On he went until he came to a door. A red cow was standing there.

"This must be the end of the world. See that great, ugly pig with the big horns. I will



get out of her way as fast as I can. I will make haste. Why, here I am back at the door of my own sty."

"So here you are back again," said his mother, when she saw him.

"Here I am."

"What have you seen?" she asked.

"Oh, such things. I have been round the world. I find it is square and has a wall all around it, lest pigs should fall off. In fact it is like a big sty."

"Well, to be sure!" said his mother.

"And the end of the world is made of wood and has two high posts, one on each side to mark the place. The first thing that I saw in

the world was a pair of the queerest pigs. They had but two legs, and they had very long necks. There are but two in the world. Think of that! Then I saw four smaller pigs, and they said 'Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck.'"

"What does that mean?" asked his mother.

"Oh, it is what they say in the world. It is of no use to tell you what it means, for you have not been there, and you wouldn't understand. Then I saw a huge red pig with two horns. There is but one pig of this sort in the whole world."

"Well, to be sure!" said his mother.

"I should have made friends with her, but she did not look my way. And then as I had gone all round the world, I came home. Ah, the world is a fine place. To think that you have never seen it, you poor old thing. Now the farmer boy may shut the door when he likes. I know all about the world."

"Well, to be sure!" said his mother as she trotted off.

THE RACE OF THE HARE AND THE HEDGEHOG

One day a hedgehog went for a walk in the fields to see how his turnips were getting on. He had not gone very far when he met the hare who was out on the same errand.

"Good morning," said the hedgehog, when he caught sight of the hare.

The hare, who thought himself a high and mighty person, did not answer the hedgehog's greeting. He only asked, "Why are you out in the fields so early this morning?"

"I came out for a walk," said the good-natured hedgehog.

"Out for a walk? I should think you'd try

to use those silly little legs of yours for something better than that."

Now the hedgehog was a good-natured fellow, but he did not like being made game of.

"No doubt you think your legs are better than mine," he said.

"I do, indeed," answered the hare.

"That remains to be seen. For my part, I think my legs quite as good as yours," said the hedgehog, in rather a sharp way.

"As good as mine? Nonsense, hedgehog; you can only walk with your legs."

"Only walk? I'll run a race with *you* any day, and I bet I shall outstrip you, Mr. Hare," said the hedgehog.

"How absurd! You, with your little legs. But if you wish to try, I have no objection."

"We'll start right away," said the hare, who was now anxious to begin.

"Very well, if I win the race, all the turnips in the field are mine."

"Agreed," said the hare.

"But I haven't had any breakfast," said the hedgehog, "and I feel a bit faint. I'll just run home and take a bite and be back here in no time."

"Very well, and I'll run to the cabbage field and back while you are gone"; and off scampered Mr. Hare.

Away trotted the hedgehog to his home. Then he thought to himself: "That hare thinks a lot of his long legs. But he's not so clever. I'll get the better of him this time, and all the *turnips* — see if I don't."

As soon as he got home he said to his wife, "Quick! get dressed. You must come out with me."

"Oh, what is the matter?" said Mrs. Hedgehog.

"The hare and I are going to run a race. If I win, I am to have all the turnips. He thinks

he'll beat me, but I'll show him. Get ready, quick; I want you to be there."

"Good gracious me! have you lost your senses? How can you think of racing with

him? You'll lose, and then we'll not have a turnip to eat."

"We've no time to talk. Listen! We are to run our race in that plowed field. The hare will run in one furrow and I in another. We start at the top. All you have to do is to lie low at the other end of my furrow. As soon as the hare reaches the end of his furrow, you must jump up and call out, 'I'm here already.'"

"Ha-ha-ha," laughed Mrs. Hedgehog. "I see, I see. That's a good joke. He will think that I am *you*."

"Exactly. Look sharp; now put on your things and we'll make off."

They reached the field. The hedgehog told his wife where to lie low, and he went on to the other end of the furrow. The hare was waiting for him.

"Well, are you ready?" asked the hare.

"I am ready."

Each took his place.

"But wait a minute," said the hedgehog. "Who will do the counting?"

"Leave that to me," said the hare. "Ready! One — two — three, go!"

"I cannot understand this," said the hare.

Away went the hare like the wind, not looking to the right or the left. The hedgehog took about three steps, turned back, and ducked down in his furrow; and there he sat, laughing and laughing and laughing. Now, the moment the hare got to the other end of his furrow, Mrs. Hedgehog called out, "I'm here already."

"Well — well — well. I do not understand this; let us run back to the starting point. Are you ready?"

"As often as you like. I am ready," said Mrs. Hedgehog.

"Very well, one — two — three, go!"

Away went the hare running as fast as he could. But Mrs. Hedgehog ran a few steps, turned back, and ducked down in her furrow.

When the hare got to the starting point, up jumped the hedgehog.

"I'm here already," he called out.

"I cannot understand this," said the hare. "We must run again."

"As often as you like, I am ready," said the hedgehog.

They tried again and again, running backward and forward a great many times. But every

time the hare arrived at one end of the furrow or the other, the hedgehog or his wife called out, "I'm here already."

At last the hare, tired out, said, "This is very strange."

"Shall we run again?" asked the hedgehog.

"No — no," answered the hare; "the race is yours."

"*And the turnips?*" said the hedgehog.

But the hare did not hear him; he had scampered off over the fields.

So the hedgehog and his wife went home very well pleased with themselves. On the way, Mrs. Hedgehog said, "Mr. Hedgehog, you may be short on legs, but you are long on wits."

A STRANGE FRIENDSHIP EXPLAINED

Once upon a time a strong friendship grew up between a lion and an elephant. The other animals of the forest thought this very strange. They could not understand how a lion, the king of beasts, could feel such admiration for so clumsy, rude, and ugly a creature as an elephant.

One day the animals met together at a clearing in the forest to talk the matter over among themselves. "Is it quite true that the lion and the elephant are friends?" asked the deer, in disgust.

"Quite true," answered the fox. "See, there they go now."

"I could not have believed it," continued the deer as he caught sight of the two animals on their way to the forest together. "Elephants can't *run* swiftly. I watched one only the other day come lumbering along. I have always felt that one's friends should be able to bound gracefully in and out of the forest at a moment's notice, — just as I do. Then his eyes are so very small, not at all like mine.

The Lion and the Elephant.

One needs large, soft eyes. Oh, he is a huge ugly beast." And with that the deer made a graceful plunge into the stream close by, swam across it and bounded away into the woods.

"The deer is quite right," said a little squirrel. "The elephant is clumsy and rude, too, particularly to little creatures like me. The other day he came up to the tree where I was gathering nuts. The way he crowded and pushed me was shocking. And his manners when he is eating are not at all like *mine*. I do not dare to think of them." With that he whisked up the nearest tree and had a nut in no time. Down he came with it and he sat eating it in his own dainty way just to show what he meant by fine squirrel manners.

"I must say it has puzzled me for a long time," said the fox. "Just look at his ridiculous tail, more like a rope than anything else. It makes me laugh every time I see it. One could understand the lion's admiration if the elephant had such a splendid bushy tail as I have." He walked up and down before the other animals, holding his tail high as if he meant them to see that he had much to be proud of.

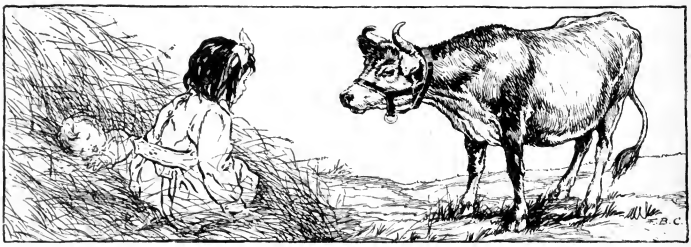
"I can forgive him his funny tail," said the

bear. "Tails are nothing to be proud of anyway; but he should have some good sharp claws like mine. He can't climb up a tree or over the rocks, he can't scratch, he can't dig in the ground. Why, he hasn't a claw to his feet! For my part, I don't see how a friendship can spring up without claws," and the bear walked away to sharpen his on the nearest tree trunk.

"I'm sure it's the tusks," said the cow. "No doubt the lion thinks they are horns. Of course no one can help admiring horns, but the elephant's tusks turn *down* instead of up, as mine do. I wonder the lion didn't notice that." Then she tossed her head proudly just to show how beautiful she thought her own horns were.

"Stop," said the donkey. "You need not discuss this matter any longer. Come, gather around me and I'll explain it to you all. Listen! Have you *never* noticed that the elephant has long, beautiful ears, — just like mine?" And off he walked, making his way quickly to the stream near by where he could see the reflection of his own ears in the clear, smooth water below.

SUSIE'S DREAM



Susie carried her baby sister out to the great farmyard. She laid the baby on some hay. Then she sat down by her side and sang softly: —

"What will you give, what will you give
For my little baby fair?
Nothing so bright as her bonny blue eyes,
Or soft as her curling hair.

"What will you bring, what will you bring
To trade for my treasure here?
No one can show a baby so sweet
Anywhere far or near."

"Moo, moo," said the Jersey cow, as she came and looked at the baby.

"What will I give? Can she kick up her heels and run all over the yard?"

"Why, no," said Susie; "she can't walk yet."

"Ah, how old is she?"

"Nearly a year old," said Susie.

"Nearly a year! My little one walked before she was two days old. I will not trade my baby for yours." And the cow walked away.

"Baa, baa," said an old sheep. "Let me see. She is a nice little thing. Has she only two legs?"

"That's all," said Susie.

"Then my lamb is worth twice as much. And I see she has no wool. I do not wish to trade with you." And she trotted away.

"Quack, quack," said the duck. "Let us have a look. Can she swim well?"

"Oh, no; she can't swim at all. It isn't safe for her to go near the water."

"All my darlings can swim." And away she waddled.

"Cheer up, cheer up. Let me see," said a robin. "Can she sing?"

"She is not old enough yet," answered Susie.

"All my children sang when only four months old," said the robin. "I wouldn't trade my babies for yours." And away he flew.

"Cluck, cluck!" said the white hen. "I haven't much time to look. Can your baby sister peep when she is hungry?"

"No; when she's hungry, she cries," said Susie.

"Well, that's a funny baby. At any rate I see her legs are not yellow. All my children have yellow legs." And away she went to find her twelve chicks.

"Meow, meow, meow!" said the pussy, as she came up. "Can she catch a mouse?"

"No, she's afraid of a mouse," said Susie.

"Let me see her claws."

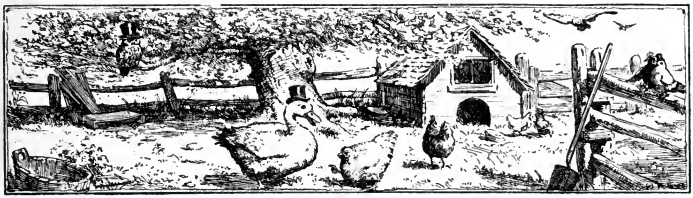
"She hasn't any. She has pretty pink fingers."

"Well, she is pretty. I think I'll take your baby and let you have one of my kittens. I have three." And Pussy took hold of the baby's dress as if she were going to carry her away.

"Oh, no, Pussy," said Susie, "I don't want to trade her at all. I'd rather have my baby sister than all the chickens, lambs, ducks, chicks, and kittens in the whole world."

And Susie awoke with a start and carried her baby sister away.

ONE LITTLE FEATHER



"Dear me," said a little white hen as she flew up on the perch, "there goes another feather. How funny I shall look if one falls out every time I scratch myself."

She was a merry little hen. But she forgot all about the feather and was soon fast asleep. A little red hen, sitting next to her, heard all that the little white hen said. At least, she thought she heard. "How dreadful of little white hen! She said she had scratched out nearly all of her feathers. I must run and tell the others."

The little red hen left the hen house and made her way quickly to the barnyard.

"Have you heard the news?" asked the little red hen. "A little hen, — I shan't say which

one, — said she had scratched out all her feathers."

"Shocking," said the gray goose, "I never heard of such a thing." And the gray goose went to visit the owl who lived in a tree close by.

"Have you heard?" she asked the owl. "Have you heard about that little hen who scratched out every one of her feathers and now is not fit to be seen?"

"Who, who!" hooted the old owl. "Where did you hear that?"

"I heard it in the barnyard this morning. It is as good as seeing it with my own eyes," said the gray goose.

"I believe it, I believe it," said the owl.

"Coo-ooo," cooed the pigeons as they flew from the tree.

"Did you hear it, too?" asked the owl.

"Yes, yes," said the pigeons. "We heard it in the other barnyard. They say the little hen plucked *all* her feathers out, and is going about quite bare. She'll freeze to death if she's not dead already," and away they flew back to the barnyard.

"Have you heard?" said the pigeons to a little black hen.

"Heard what?" asked the little black hen.

"The dreadful story. A little hen plucked out all her feathers and went about quite bare. I should think she would freeze to death. No doubt she has done so by this time."

Now the little black hen was the little white hen's friend. So she ran right to the hen house to tell the story. There was the little white hen just waking up from her nap.

"Have you heard about the little hen who plucked out all her feathers and went about quite bare? They all think she is dead by this time," said the little black hen.

"I don't believe it. Who told you this?"

"Oh, I heard it from the pigeons, and they heard it—"

"Never mind! Let's go and see if we can find that little hen, and then I shall believe the story."

Little white hen and little black hen went out of the hen house together and into the barnyard. Do you think they ever found that little hen?

A GOOD THANKSGIVING

Said old Grandfather Gay, "On a Thanksgiving Day,
If you want a good time, then give something away."
So he sent a fat turkey to Shoemaker Price,
And the shoemaker said, "What a big bird! how nice!
And since a good dinner's before me, I ought
To give poor Widow Lee the small chicken I bought."

"This fine chicken — oh, see!" said the pleased
Widow Lee,
"And the kindness that sent it, how precious to
me!
I would like to make some one as happy as I,
So I'll give Mrs. Murphy my big pumpkin
pie."

"And oh, sure," poor Mrs. Murphy said, "'tis
the queen of pies!
Just to look at its yellow face gladdens my eyes.
Now it's my turn, I think. So a sweet ginger
cake
For the motherless Finnigan children I'll bake."

"A sweet cake, all our own! 'Tis too good to
be true!"
Said the Finnigan children, Rose, Denny, and
Hugh;
"It smells sweet of spice, and we'll carry a slice
To little Lame Jake — who has nothing that's
nice."

"Oh, I thank you, and thank you!" said little
Lame Jake;
"Oh, what beautiful, beautiful, beautiful cake!

And oh, such a big slice! I'll save all the crumbs!
And will give them to each little sparrow that comes!"

And the sparrows, they twittered as if they would say,
Like old Grandfather Gay, "On a Thanksgiving Day,
If you want a good time, give something away."

THE STONE IN THE ROAD

There was once a king whose home was in a beautiful castle near a village. He loved the people of this village and did everything he could to make them happy. But, try as hard as he might, they were never satisfied. The truth was, that they thought the king should make them rich.

As soon as the king learned the cause of their discontent he said to one of his courtiers: "So these people wish to be rich. They do not love work well enough for that. I have felt for a long time that they are unwilling and often afraid to do hard things. Come, see if I am not right. I'll place a big stone in the middle of this highroad, and you may watch to see if any one of them will take the trouble to move it."

They found a large stone and rolled it right into the middle of the road.

"Now," said the king, "hide behind these bushes and see what will happen."

The courtier took his place while the king went back to the castle.

By and by a farmer came along. "Ah, the laziness of these village people," he said. "Here is a stone, a big one, right in the middle of the road. I am sure it has been here a long time, and no one has taken the trouble to move it. Such laziness!" So saying, he turned to one side and passed on.

Soon an old woman came by. "Such carelessness!" she said. "Who can have left this great stone here where people must pass up and down?" Then she walked around it and went on her way.

Presently a soldier came that way. He carried his head so high that he did not even see the stone until he stumbled against it. "A fine road, this!" he said. "I wonder how long that stone will lie there. It's a pity some neighbor could not move it out of the way." And lifting his head he went on.

Towards evening a farmer's boy came past on his way home. He had been hard at work in the fields all day and was now very, very

tired. When he saw the stone, he stood still and looked at it.

"That's a big stone to be in the road," he said. "I'm glad it was not too dark for me to have seen it. But it will soon be night. Some one may fall over it in the dark and be badly

hurt. I'll roll it out of the way." He pushed the heavy stone with all his might till at last he moved it from its place.

"What's this?" he said as his eyes caught sight of a small leather bag, tied with a string, lying in the place where the stone had been. He picked it up. The bag was full of bright golden coins and on it was written these words: "*This gold is for the one that moves the stone.*"

"For me!" said the farmer's boy, aloud.

"Yes, it is for you," said the courtier, as he came forward from behind the bushes. "Our king will be happy to learn that I have found one villager, at least, who is not afraid to do hard things."

LITTLE HALF-CHICK

There was once a handsome black hen who had a large brood of chickens. They were all fine fat chicks, but one. He was very odd and very ugly. With only one eye, one wing, one leg, half a head, and half a beak, he was a *real* half-chick.

One day his mother called her brood to her and said, "My chicks, you may go out into the world and seek your fortune. But you, my little Half-Chick, you must stay at home with me."

"Indeed, mother, I am tired myself of this barnyard. It's too small for me. I am going out to seek *my* fortune, too."

"To seek your fortune, my little Half-Chick?" said his mother. "Nowhere will you find a better barnyard than this. Here you have plenty to eat and drink and some one to care for you."

"Quite true — and everything may be good enough for the other chicks. But it does not suit me at all. I shall go to Madrid."

"To Madrid!" said his mother. "You silly chick. It's a long way, and you will be tired to death before you get halfway there."

"I shall go to Madrid, I say — and then to the palace."

"To the palace? My son, my dear Half-Chick! You do not know what you are saying."

"I shall go to Madrid — and then to the palace to see the king."

"To see the king! Well, well, well, I shall say no more about it," cried his mother, who now saw that he would go.

"To Madrid — to the palace — to the king! I'm off," and away he flew.

"Be sure you are kind to every one you meet, Half-Chick," called his mother. But he did not hear a word she said.

Away flew Half-Chick across the field.

"I'm quite big enough to go alone," he said in a very proud way. He had not gone far when he came to a small brook so choked up with weeds that the water could scarcely flow. He was about to hop over it when the brook said: —

"Oh, Half-Chick, do help me. These weeds are choking me, and I am so weak I cannot help myself."

"Help you, indeed! Help yourself. I have no time to stop. I am off to Madrid — to the palace — to see the king." And away he flew.

A little farther on, he came to a fire which was burning very low.

"Oh, Half-Chick," called out the fire in a very weak voice, "do help me. In a few minutes I shall go out if you don't put some sticks and dry leaves on me."

"Help you, indeed! Help yourself. I've no time to gather sticks and dry leaves to help you. I am off to Madrid — to the palace — to see the king." And away he flew.

A little farther on he saw West Wind caught in the branches of a large tree.

"Oh, Half-Chick, do help me. See what has happened. I am caught in the branches of this tree and I cannot get away. Do help me."

"Help you, indeed! Help yourself. Shake yourself off the branches. I have no time to stay here with you. I am off to Madrid — to the palace — to see the king." And away he flew.

Towards evening he came to a large town. There he saw the king's palace. "I shall wait here at the gates till the king comes out. He will be pleased to see me," said the vain little Half-Chick. But just as he hopped past one of the windows of the palace the king's cook saw him.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha," he said, "this is the very thing I want for the king's dinner," and with that he stretched out his arm through the window and caught poor little Half-Chick.

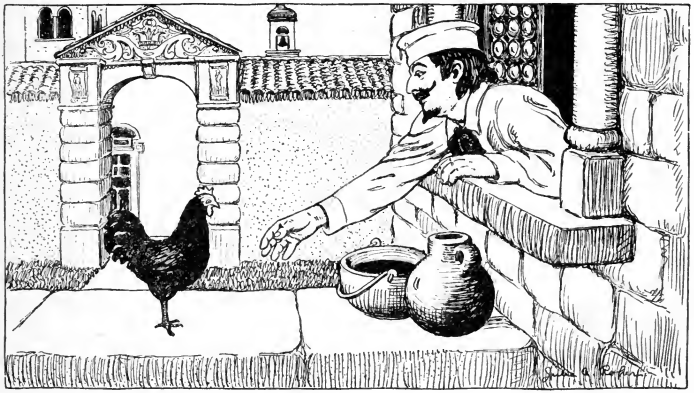
"There, pop into the pot you go."

Down, down went poor little Half-Chick into the water.

"Oh, water, water, please have pity on me. Do not wet me," he called out.

"Oh, Half-Chick, when I was a little brook choked with weeds and leaves, you would not stay to help me. I can do nothing for you now."

"Oh, water, I am drenched from head to foot," pleaded little Half-Chick.



"Now I'll put him into the oven and roast him," said the king's cook. "I'll make up a good fire."

"Oh, fire, fire, please have pity on me!" cried Half-Chick. "Do not scorch me like this."

"Ah, Half-Chick, you would not help me when I was dying in the woods. I can do nothing for you now."

At last the cook opened the oven door.

"Dear me, this chicken is burned up. The fire was too hot. I can't send this up to the king's table," and he took Half-Chick by the wing and threw him out of the window.

West Wind caught him and whirled him round and round. For a few minutes he did not know where he was.

"West Wind, have pity on me. Do not blow me around like this."

"Oh, Half-Chick, you did not help me when I was caught in the branches of the tree. I can do nothing for you now."

"Where are you taking me, West Wind?" asked Half-Chick in a frightened voice.

"Wait, and you will see. I am going to put you where every wind can blow you whichever way it chooses and you shall stay there for ever and ever."

Then with a sudden whirl, West Wind took Half-Chick up over the roofs of the houses to the top of a tall church steeple. And there he stands to this very day.

THE SERVANT OF ALL

"My master told me that if I sell this drove of pigs in the town that lies at the other side of the forest, I may have the money for my own," said Carl to himself. "Mine — my own!"

"Your own, Carl?" said a voice close to his ear.

Carl turned and saw an old man sitting down with a book in his hand. Carl peeped over the old man's shoulder.

"Trying to peep into my book, I see," said the old man.

"Oh, indeed, I beg your pardon," said Carl.

"No offense, I assure you," answered the other. "Sit down by me and you shall read as much as you like."

So Carl sat by the old man and looked into his book.

"It is only a list of names," said Carl.

"Do you see nothing that interests you?"

"I see one thing," said Carl; "one of the names is written in gilt letters. What is that for?"

"That name is the name of a king," answered the old man, shutting his book.

"And what is a king?" asked Carl. "I have never seen one, though I have been a swineherd these three years and walked about a good deal."

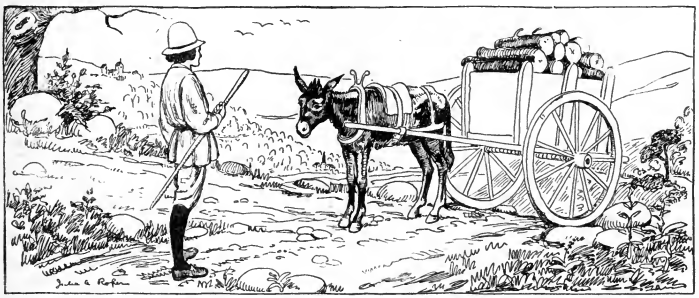
"You may see one this evening, for the people of yonder city to which you are going expect to find a king to-day. They have been looking for one for a long time. All the people are waiting, for they think the king will come to-day."

"I will walk on, then," said Carl, "for I should certainly like to see him." So Carl walked on.

Presently Carl overtook a thin, miserable-looking donkey, who was trying in vain to drag after him a cartload of wood.

"Good Master Carl," said the donkey, "will you not help me on with this load a little way? I am so tired I shall never reach my master's cottage."

"Never despair, my good friend," said Carl, as he placed himself behind the cart and began



to push it vigorously along. By and by he said to the donkey, "That will do now. I think you can go your way and I will go mine."

"But I can't go my way," said the donkey, standing stock-still and beginning to bray.

"Now I really think you are a little unreasonable," said Carl. "Look what a long distance I have pushed you."

But the donkey went on braying.

"He can't help being a donkey," said Carl, "and I dare say he's very tired."

So Carl went on pushing the cart for him, until they came to his master's cabin.

"Thank you, thank you, good Master Carl," said the donkey.

"Good-by," said Carl, and he ran after his pigs. "They are eating their dinner, so I think I may as well eat mine."

And then Carl sat down and pulled his bread and cheese out of his pocket.

"Master Carl," said a little voice at his elbow; and Carl saw a rabbit sitting beside him.

"Now, little rabbit," said Carl, "I do hope you're not going to say, 'Carl, give me some bread and cheese,' for indeed I'm very hungry, and there's not nearly enough for us both."

"Then I must go without my dinner," remarked the little rabbit.

"That's altogether ridiculous," answered Carl. "Don't you see how many dandelions there are all about under the trees."

"But it's so unwholesome living entirely on green food," said the rabbit. "It gives one the heartburn, I assure you, and I'm particularly ordered to eat bread and cheese."

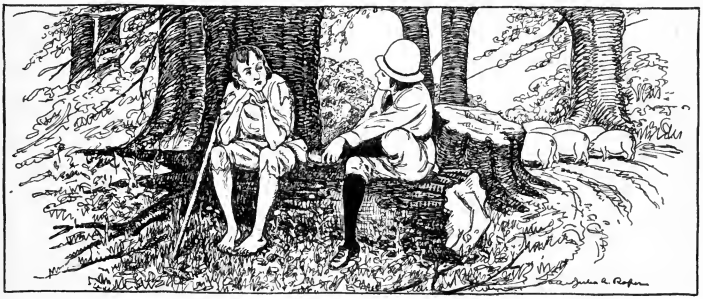
"Very well, then," said Carl, "you shall eat

bread and cheese," and he fed the little rabbit out of his hand, and kept only a very little piece for himself.

"I am so much obliged to you," said the rabbit, when she got up to go away.

"Well, really, I think you ought to be," answered Carl, "for I am very hungry yet."

On went Carl through the woods — but suddenly he stopped. He saw some one sitting under a tree. It was a beggar, all in rags, looking very miserable.



Carl went up to the beggar and said: "I am very sorry for you. Can I do anything?"

"God bless you, my little master," answered the beggar. "See how sore my feet are from walking so long upon the stony ground without shoes or stockings."

"You shall have mine," said Carl, sitting down and pulling off his shoes and stockings.

"And from having no hat on, the sun has made my eyes quite weak," added the beggar.

"I see," said Carl, "and my eyes will very soon be weak if I give you my hat, but I will do so, nevertheless. So here it is, and good-by." Then he put his hat on the beggar's head and ran on, bareheaded, after his pigs.

"Carl, Carl!" said a voice from the ground.

"Where are you?" asked Carl.

"Here, under the stone, under the —"

"Speak a little louder, will you?" said Carl. "I can't hear what you say."

"Here I am then," said the voice, "almost crushed beneath the stone, just beside your right foot. Will you not stoop down and lift the stone and save me?"

"Can't you just wait till I have passed the cavern, and then I'll come back to you?"

"And in the meantime I shall be crushed to death," answered the worm.

Carl stooped down and lifted the stone from the back of the half-dead worm.

A throne was standing empty.

"I thank you, Carl," said the worm. "Now go and look after your pigs."

"But they are all gone into the enchanted cavern and, once in there, it's not a bit likely they'll ever come out again," said Carl; "but I'll go to the town at any rate and see whether the king has come."

"What do you want here, Carl?" asked the porter at the gate of the city.

"I came to sell my pigs."

"Where are they?"

"I do not know. I've lost them," said Carl.

"Then come down with me to the market place."

He led Carl to the market place where a throne was standing empty. In front of the throne stood the old man who had spoken to Carl in the morning, and beside him Carl saw the donkey, the rabbit, the beggar, the worm, and an army of soldiers who had been Carl's pigs.

"Carl," said the old man, "where have you been to-day?"

"Through the woods," answered Carl.

"What have you been doing there?"

"Indeed I hardly know."

"Carl helped me with my load of wood," said the donkey.

"Carl fed me with his own dinner," said the rabbit.

"Carl gave me his cap and shoes," said the beggar.

"Carl saved me from being crushed," said the worm.

"And who are these?" asked Carl, turning to the soldiers.

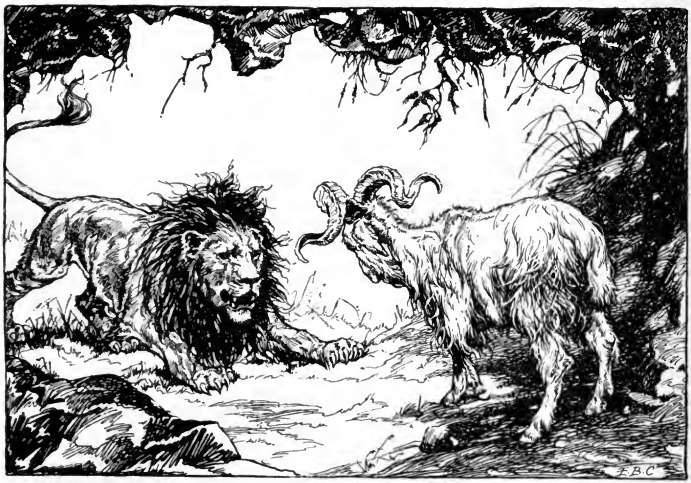
"We are your pigs, Carl," they answered.

"Soldiers, what do you think of Carl?" asked the old man.

"Carl is king," they all shouted.

"And I never knew it," said Carl.

OLD BILLY



There was once an old goat who was noted far and wide for his shrewdness. One day he found himself in a lion's den.

"Dear me, this will never do."

He turned to go out, but suddenly stopped. He heard a deep roar. The lion was coming home.

"My horns, however sharp, will be of no use to me against this monster," thought Old Billy. "I must try what wits can do."

In stalked the lion, hungry and out of temper. Seeing Old Billy, he paused, surprised, and then crouched to spring upon him.

"Oh, how lucky I am," called out Old Billy.

"What is this?" roared the lion, angrily. "You mean how lucky *I* am, for it is great fortune to find a good fat goat waiting for me in my own den when I am hungry."

"No," said Old Billy, "I am the lucky one. I am a lion hunter, and good fortune has sent you to me just when my horns are needing exercise— Whoop!" And Old Billy pretended to jump for joy.

"An old goat a lion hunter! I never heard of such a thing," said the lion.

"Never mind. Now you see a lion-killing goat, but you will not live to see another one. This has been rather a dull week for me so far — only four lions. Prepare to die this minute."

Old Billy lowered his horns and rushed at the astonished lion. The lion, taken by surprise at Old Billy's boldness, turned and fled out of the cave. Old Billy slipped out as soon as the lion had disappeared and ran in the opposite direction as fast as his legs could take him.

The lion had not gone far when he met a jackal. He told the jackal the story.

"You say it was an old whiskered goat?" asked the jackal. "I know him. That's Old Billy. Ha, ha, ha! You say he called himself a lion killer? That's a good joke. Why, he could not kill a rabbit."

"What's this you tell me?" asked the lion.

"It's Old Billy, I say. He scared you with his big talk. Come, let's hunt him up and kill him. I'll take his carcass if you don't want it."

Back went the lion and the jackal to catch Old Billy. Old Billy saw them coming. He knew they would overtake him in a few minutes, and he feared that all was lost.

"I can't run away from them, and I can't fight them. I must try what I can do again with my wits." Turning around he ran toward them.

"Ha, jackal!" he called out in an angry tone. "How is this? You promised to bring me three lions to kill and you have brought me only one, and a small one at that. Go and find two more at once. No, wait! Wait till I kill this one."

Old Billy rushed at the lion. The lion roared at the jackal, then bounded down the valley. The jackal, too, got away as quickly as he could.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Old Billy, as he trotted homeward.

HANS, THE SHEPHERD BOY

Hans was a little shepherd boy who tended his master's flocks, day by day. One morning, as he was keeping the sheep near a great forest, a hunter rode up to him.

"How far is it to the next village, my lad?" asked the hunter.

"It is just six miles, sir," answered Hans. "But there is only a sheep track through the woods. If you do not know the way, you might easily get lost, sir."

"I am already lost, my lad, and tired and

hungry. Show me the way so that I lose no more time, and I will pay you well."

Hans shook his head. "I cannot leave the sheep, sir. They might stray into the woods and get lost or be eaten by wolves."

"If such a thing should happen to any of your sheep, I will pay you more than the sheep are worth. Come, show me the way."

"Sir, I cannot go," said Hans. "These sheep are not mine — they are my master's. He pays me to take care of them, and if harm should come to any of them, no one would be to blame but me. I cannot go."

"Since you will not show me the way, then find some one else that can do so," said the hunter. "I will take care of the sheep for you while you are gone."

Hans shook his head again. "No," he said, "I cannot do that. You are a stranger to the sheep, and they do not know your voice, and —"

"And what?" asked the hunter. "Can't you trust me?"

"No," said Hans. "You tried to make me break my word to my master. How do I know that you would keep your word to me?"

The hunter laughed. "You are right, my

lad. Show me the path of which you spoke and I will try to get to the village without a guide."

Just as he finished speaking, several hunters came out of the forest near by. When they saw their master, they shouted for joy.

"Oh, Prince," cried one, "we feared your Royal Highness was lost."

"Or killed," cried another.

"A prince," said Hans, in surprise. "Oh, sir, I hope you are not angry with me."

"No, no, my lad. I wish I could trust my servants as your master can trust you."

And the men went on their way.

A few days later a servant was sent by the prince to bring Hans to the palace.

"My good boy," said the prince to Hans. "I want you to leave your sheep and come to serve me. You are a boy whom I know I can trust."

"Oh, sir, I thank you for my good fortune. As soon as my master can find another boy to keep his sheep I will come and serve you." And Hans went back to his master's flocks.

WHY THE TIP OF THE FOX'S TAIL IS WHITE

There was once a farmer's wife who wanted to hire a shepherd for her sheep.

"It is of no use for me to try to do without one any longer," she said. So one day she went out in search of a shepherd that could

watch her cattle and call her sheep properly. On the way she happened to meet a bear, and the bear asked her where she was going.

"Oh, I am going to hire a shepherd," she answered.

"Will you take me for your shepherd?" asked the bear.

"Yes," said the woman, "if you can watch over the cattle and call the sheep properly."

"I can, hear me. Ho–o–o–y," growled the bear.

"No, that will not do. I cannot hire you," and on she went.

Soon she met a wolf. "Where are you going?" asked the wolf.

"Oh, I am going to hire a shepherd," answered the woman.

"Will you take me for your shepherd?" asked the wolf.

"Yes, if you can watch over the cattle and call the sheep properly," replied the woman.

"I can do that. Uh–uh!" howled the wolf.

"No, I cannot hire you," said the woman.

A little farther on she met a fox. "What is the matter, friend?" called out the fox.

"Matter enough," said the old woman. "I am trying to find a shepherd that can watch my cattle and call my sheep properly."

"Only that?" said the fox. "Take me for your shepherd. Nothing would suit me better."

"Can you watch my cattle and call my sheep properly?"

"Nothing is easier for a fox," was the answer.

"Then let me hear you."

"Dil-dal-holom, dil-dal-holom," called out the fox.

"Good," said the woman. "I will hire you. Come along with me."

And she took the fox for her shepherd.

The farmer's wife was busy all the afternoon over the butter tub, making butter. Every now and then she would stop her churning and run to the door to look for her new shepherd. But evening came and still the fox did not return.

"It is time my cattle and sheep were back from the fields. I can't leave my churning, or I'd soon find out why they are not here. Here comes the fox now. Well, my shepherd, where did you leave the cattle and sheep?" she asked, seeing that he had come back without them.

"Their heads are in the brook," answered the fox.

"What is this you say?" asked the woman, in surprise.

"And their bones are in the bushes," he continued.

"Come, come, fox, you are talking nonsense. I see I must go for myself and find out how things are." And away she went.

As soon as she was out of the cottage the fox sprang to the butter tub.

"Ha, ha, some fine cream for me," he said. "Two feasts in one day, and such feasts!" He put his head into the tub and drank up nearly

all of the cream. He was about to take the last drop when the farmer's wife came back. She saw what he had done.

"Wretched beast, you have eaten all my sheep and you have taken nearly all my cream. Out

with you!" She seized a clot of cream that still remained in the tub and flung it at the fox, so that it made a white spot on his tail. "There, take that for all your wicked ways. You'll never get rid of *that spot* to the end of your life."

THE RAT'S DAUGHTER

Mr. Rat was well-to-do in life. His home had long been in a snug, warm, and cozy bank by one of the largest rice fields in the countryside. He had a beautiful daughter whom he wished to marry to the highest in the land. But no one among the people of Mr. Rat's neighborhood could tell him where to find the mighty person.

"I will go to the oracle for advice. There is no one around here who can help me," said the rat, and off he went.

"Welcome, Mr. Rat. What does this visit mean?" asked the oracle as soon as he caught sight of his visitor.

"I have a beautiful daughter," said the rat, "and I wish to marry her to the highest in the land. No one can tell me who he is, and so I have come to you."

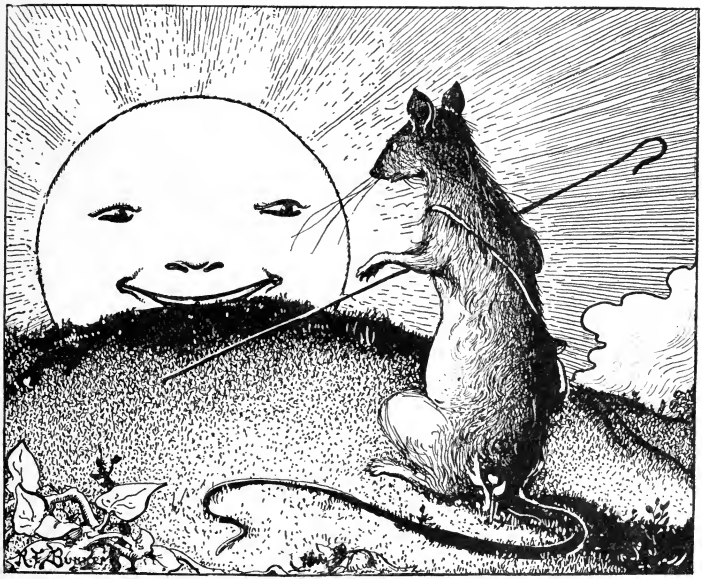
"There is no doubt," said the oracle, slowly, "that His Majesty, the Sun, is the highest person in the land. Had I a daughter, I should

make my visit to him, and I should lose no time about it."

"A thousand thanks," said the rat. "I shall go at once."

"Good fortune go with you," said the oracle.

Mr. Rat lost no time, as you may be sure. He presented himself to the sun just as His Majesty was about to set.



"Your Majesty," he said, "I have a beautiful daughter whom I wish to offer you in marriage."

"I thank you, Mr. Rat, but why, may I ask, have you chosen me for this honor?"

"I wish to marry her to the most powerful person in the world," answered the rat, "and that is why I offer her to you."

"Alas, you are wrong in thinking me the most powerful person in the world. I have found one more powerful than I am. It is to him you should marry your daughter."

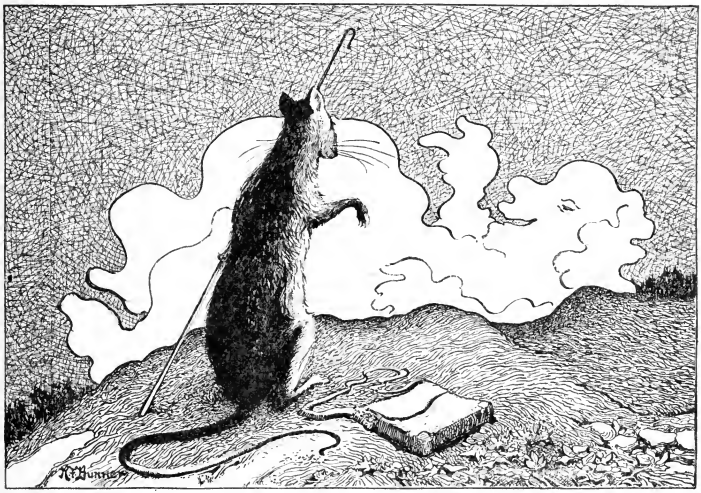
"And who is he, may I ask?"

"Certainly," said the sun. "It is the cloud. He comes across my path and covers my face so that the people cannot see me. As long as he can do that I am not the most powerful person in the world. You should give your daughter in marriage to no one else than the cloud."

"A thousand thanks!" said the rat. "I will go to the cloud at once."

He journeyed on till he saw the cloud lying on top of a tall mountain. "Oh, cloud," he said, "I have a beautiful daughter whom I wish to marry to the highest in the land. His Majesty, the Sun, said that I should offer my daughter in marriage to you."

"I am, indeed, honored, Mr. Rat. It is quite true as the sun says. I can go across his path and cover his face so that people cannot see him. But if you wish to marry your daughter to the most powerful person, you must



seek the wind. I have no strength against him. When he blows, I must fly away where he chooses. Marry your daughter to the wind."

"You surprise me," said the rat, "but I believe you. Will the wind soon come this way?"

"I am afraid I cannot tell you that. If I were you, I would go down to the seashore and await his coming," said the cloud.

"A thousand thanks, I shall go at once," said the rat, and he ran toward the seashore.

The wind in the fairest good humor came over the water toward Mr. Rat.

"Ah, wind," he said, "I have a beautiful daughter whom I wish you to marry. The cloud tells me you are the most powerful person in the world. He says he has no strength when you blow."

"Nonsense," said the wind, "the cloud well knows I have no strength to match his. Where do you come from, Mr. Rat?"

"I have a snug, warm hole in a cozy bank near the largest rice field in the country."

"Well, well! I know where you live. Near that very place there is one stronger than I am. It is a stone wall that fences in the home of one of your neighbors. I have no strength against that wall. If you would marry your daughter to the most powerful in the land, wed her to the stone wall. I wish you a good day."

"There is nothing for me to do but return home," said the rat. "I know that wall very well." And off he started.

"Mr. Wall," said the rat, "the wind tells me that you are the most powerful in the land. I wish you to marry my daughter."

"I, the most powerful?" said the stone wall, in surprise; "that shows how little he knows. Only yesterday your nephew, a big brown rat, gnawed a hole right through me. I, the strongest thing in the world! Marry your daughter to the big brown *rat*."

"It shall be so. She shall marry one of my people. I have thought for a long time that *we rats* are the highest in the land."

SHINGEBISS

A little duck whose name was Shingebiss lived by himself in a little hut and was very, very happy. Every morning he went to the large pond near his home in search of food.

It was all very well when the days were warm. He could catch the fish with no trouble at all. But in winter, when the ice formed over the water, it was a different matter indeed. He had to hunt for places where the rushes came through the thin ice. Then he would pull out the rush with his strong bill and have an opening to the water in no time.

He had only four logs to keep his fire. "That will be enough for me," he said. "Each log is large and will burn a month. I do not

need another log, for there are only four cold months in the year."

Summer and winter he was a happy little duck.

One day the North Wind watched the brave little duck come out of his hut and go in search of food. He said to himself, "What a strange creature this is! He sings and is out on the coldest days. But I shall stop his singing. Woo-oo-oooo-oo-oo."

He blew a cold blast which froze the ice on the pond. Happy Shingebiss did not notice the cold blast. He went on to the pond, caught his fish, and ran back home, singing: —

"Blow you may your coldest breeze,
Shingebiss you cannot freeze."

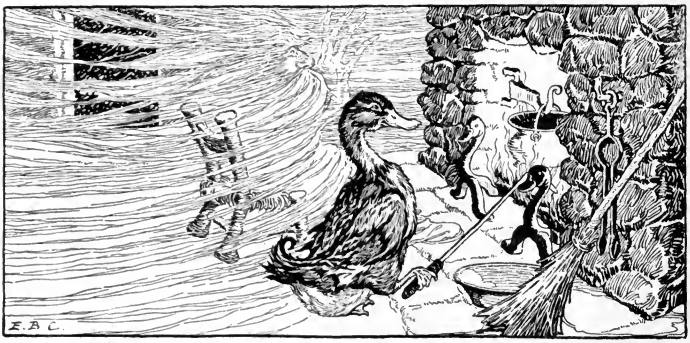
"How strange!" said the North Wind. "I cannot freeze him out here, so I will go and visit his hut. I will blow my icy breath upon him and freeze him then, through and through."

That very night he went to the door of the hut and knocked. Shingebiss was within, sitting on one side of the fire and singing: —

"Cold North Wind, I know your plan;
You are but my fellow-man."

He heard the North Wind knock at the door, but he pretended that he did not. He went on singing: —

"Heigh, for life! ho, for bliss!
Who's so free as Shingebiss?"



He felt the cold wind on his back. "I know who is there," he said. But he went on singing: —

"Cold North Wind, I know your plan;
You are but my fellow-man."

North Wind heard and grew very angry. He blew his coldest blast. Shingebiss felt the cold wind, but he went on singing as before: —

"Heigh, for life! ho, for bliss!
Who's so free as Shingebiss?"

"I cannot freeze him; perhaps I can put out his fire," said North Wind. "He cannot live long after I have done that."

Then North Wind opened the door and walked in. He took a seat beside the fire. Shingebiss still pretended not to see him. He went on singing: —

"You may blow your coldest breeze,
Shingebiss you cannot freeze."

Shingebiss took the poker and stirred the fire. It grew too hot for North Wind. He pushed back his chair from the fire, and tried to blow his icy breath on the blazing logs. Shingebiss went on singing: —

"Blow the strongest wind you can,
Shingebiss is still your man."

"I cannot stay here," said North Wind. So he pushed his chair still farther from the fire. "I am melting, and I cannot put out his fire. My icy breath does not trouble this duck. But I will freeze the pond *so deep* that he will not be able to catch any more fish."

Then North Wind blew his coldest breath. "The ice on the pond is very thick this morn-

ing," said brave little Shingebiss. "I must go from place to place till I find a thin spot."

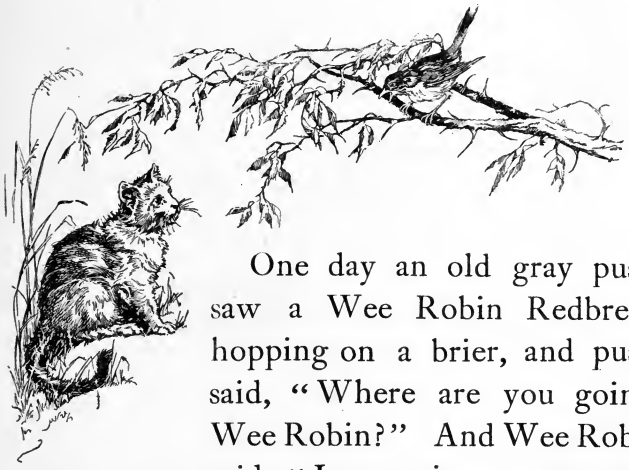
At last he found some rushes growing up through the ice. With his beak he pulled them out and made a hole. He looked down into the hole, and saw several fine fish. "A good meal for me," he said, and he sang: —

"Cold North Wind, I know your plan;
You are but my fellow-man."

North Wind heard the song. "This is a wonderful duck. Some spirit must help him. I will leave him in peace after this."

And Shingebiss never saw North Wind again.

WEE ROBIN'S YULE SONG



One day an old gray pussy saw a Wee Robin Redbreast hopping on a brier, and pussy said, "Where are you going, Wee Robin?" And Wee Robin said, "I am going away to the king to sing him a song this good Yule morning." And the pussy said, "Come here, Wee Robin, and I'll let you see a bonnie white ring around my neck." But Wee Robin said, "No, no, gray pussy; no, no! You worry the wee mousie, but you shall not worry me."

So Wee Robin flew away till he came to a turf wall, and there he saw a gray, greedy hawk sitting. The gray, greedy hawk said, "Where

are you going, Wee Robin?" And the Wee Robin said, "I am going away to the king to sing him a song this good Yule morning." And the gray, greedy hawk said, "Come here, Wee Robin, and I'll let you see a bonnie feather in my wing." But Wee Robin said, "No, no, gray, greedy hawk; no, no! You pecked at the wee linnet, but you shall not peck me."

So Wee Robin flew away till he came to the hollow of a big rock, and there he saw a sly fox sitting. And the sly fox said, "Where are you going, Wee Robin?" And Wee Robin said, "I am going away to the king to sing him a song this good Yule morning." And sly fox said, "Come here, Wee Robin, and I'll let you see a bonnie spot on the tip of my tail." But Wee Robin said, "No, no, sly fox; no, no! You worry the wee lammies, but you shall not worry me."

So Wee Robin flew away till he came to a

bonnie brook, and there he saw a wee hunter sitting. And the wee hunter said, "Where are you going, Wee Robin?" And Wee Robin said, "I am going to the king to sing him a song this good Yule morning." And the wee hunter said, "Come here, Wee Robin, and I'll give you some crumbs out of my pouch." But Wee Robin said, "No, no, wee hunter; no, no! You shot the goldfinch, but you shall not shoot me."

So Wee Robin flew away till he came to the king. There he sat on a window sill and sang and sang a bonnie song.

"What shall we give to the Wee Robin for singing us his bonnie song?" said the king to the queen.

"I think we should give him the bonnie Wee Wren to be his wife, don't you?"

"Oh, yes," said the king, "that will be best; for they are both beautiful and good."

So they called Wee Wren and asked her if

she would be Wee Robin's wife. And Wee Wren and Wee Robin flew away together.

"O Wee Wren and Wee Robin! may you always sing sweetly as now," said the king and queen.

BABOUSCKA

A RUSSIAN LEGEND OF CHRISTMAS

Russian children think that their Christmas gifts are brought to them by a little old woman called Babouscka. Every Christmas Eve she goes from house to house, leaving her gifts wherever there is a child. She hopes that among the children she may some day find the one she has sought so long. But always when she asks for the child, the answer is the same; "Farther on! Farther on!"

THE STRANGERS THREE

Babouscka sits before the fire,
Upon a winter's night.
The driving winds heap up the snow,
Her hut is snug and tight;
The howling winds, they only make
Babouscka's fire more bright.

She hears a knocking at the door;
So late — who can it be?
She hastes to lift the wooden latch
(No thought of fear has she).
The wind-blown candle in her hand
Shines out on strangers three.

Their beards are white with age, and snow
That in the darkness flies;

Their floating locks are long and white,
But kindly are the eyes
That sparkle underneath their brows
Like stars in frosty skies.

"Babouscka, we have come from far:
We tarry but to say,
A little Prince is born this night
Who all the world will sway.
Come, join the search; come, go with us
Who go these gifts to pay."

Babouscka shivers at the door,
"I would I might behold
The little Prince who shall be King;
But, ah! the night is cold,
The wind so fierce, the snow so deep,
And I, good sirs, am old."

The strangers three, no word they speak,
But fade in snowy space.
Babouscka sits before the fire,
And looks with wistful face.
"I wish that I had questioned them
So I the way might trace.

"When morning comes, with blessed light,
I'll early be awake,

Babouscka's Search.

My staff in hand. I'll go — perchance,
Those strangers overtake —
And for the Child some little toys
I'll carry for His sake."

Babouscka's Search

The morning came, and, staff in hand,
She wandered in the snow;
And asked the way of all she met,
But none the way could show.
"It must be farther, yet," she sighed;
"Then farther will I go."

And still 'tis said on Christmas Eve,
When high the drifts are piled,
With staff and basket on her arm,
Babouscka seeks the Child.
At every door her face is seen,
Her wistful face and mild.

At every door her gifts she leaves,
And bends and murmurs low,
Above each little face half hid
By pillows white as snow;
"And is *He* here?" — then softly sighs,
"Nay, farther must I go!"

THE COLD COUNTRY

Ever so many days ago, and ever so far away, up among the great lakes, it was always summer. There the trees were green, and the flowers never ceased to bloom, nor the birds to sing.

Every one was merry and happy because it was summer all the year.

But at last the animals and the trees and the flowers made up their minds that it was unpleasant to have hot weather all the time.

"Ah me!" said the Bear. "I get so fat. It would be as easy to roll as to walk."

"Just so," sighed the trees. "What a bore to have to make leaves all the time!"

"I am comfortable," said the Owl, and he gave his feathers a lazy shake and went to sleep again.

"For my part," said the Fox, "I think that we should go in search of cold weather and bring a little back with us by way of change."

"We agree," said all the discontented ones.

"I, for one, will go," said Trowel-Ku, the Beaver. "I am tired of summer and of building dams."

"Fewer feathers or else a little cold would suit me best," said Kanecri, the Loon.

"I'll go. It's always too hot for me," said Weeska, the Fox.

"We cannot do without the Owl, he looks so wise," said the Beaver. At last they agreed that the Beaver, the Loon, the Fox, and the Owl should go in search of cold weather.

"All ready?" asked the Fox.

"All ready, except Hoots, the Owl," was the answer.

"I am comfortable. What's the use?" said the Owl, and he fell asleep again.

But the Fox pulled his toes, and the Loon sang in his ears, and at last they woke him. "I am comfortable," he said.

"But you must go; we cannot do without you," said the Beaver.

"He *shall* go," said the Fox. "You must pull out one of his feathers every time he falls asleep, Beaver; that will keep him awake.

"Now, my comrades, fill a birch-bark bag with food, and we will set off at once."

After a long journey they came to the hut of the Weather Spirit.

"What now?" asked the Weather Spirit, when he saw the four.

"Sir," answered Trowel-Ku, the Beaver, "I am tired of summer and of building dams. Tell us where we can buy a little cold to take home for a change."

"And I," said the Fox, "I find it always too hot."

"For my part," said the Loon, Kanecri, "you have given us only summer. Either give me fewer feathers or else a little cold. As for the trees, they are all growling about having no rest at making leaves."

"And what do *you* want?" said the Weather Spirit to the Owl.

"Oh, I'm comfortable," said Hoota, the Owl, and he went right to sleep.

"Well," said the Weather Spirit, "I will take you to the cold country, and you can all take home a bag of cold to your friends. We will start at once."

"Dear me," said Trowel-Ku, the Beaver, "this must be the cold land. OO–OO–OO."

"Let us fill our bag and be off," cried Weeska, the Fox.

"Here is too much cold for me; I'm not comfortable," said Hoota, the Owl. "Boo, hoo, how it bites my toes!"

They filled their bags with cold, of which there was plenty, and started homeward; but after a little while they all became so cold that their teeth chattered.

"What now?" asked the Weather Spirit.

"Too much cold," said the Beaver.

"I think one bag will be enough," said the Fox, "and we could carry it by turns."

"I'm *not* comfortable," said the Owl; "my toes are frozen."

"Could you not help us carry the cold home, Weather Spirit?" asked the Loon.

"Ho," answered the Weather Spirit, for now he was very angry. "You wanted winter, and I gave it to you. You had leave to take as much cold as you wanted, and you were greedy and took too much. Now you want me to help you carry the cold home! I will warm you a little and send your cold home, too. I will tear the sunset out of the west and throw it a thousand miles into your country, and I will take these bags of cold and throw them after the sunset."

They watched him as he did so. Then he turned to them and said, "Be gone."

When the animals reached home they saw a great change. The trees told their story.

"The sunset stained some of our leaves yellow — some red and some brown. We were so frightened when the sunset burst that we let all our leaves fall."

"I see," said the Fox, "where the white cold has fallen in little fleecy blankets on the naked trees. Ooh! Ooh!" he cried, and ran shivering into his den.

"Woe is me," said Trowel-Ku, the Beaver, "the water has become white stone."

"I am comfortable once more," said Hoota, the Owl, and he fell asleep in a hollow stump.

THE TWELVE MONTHS

Katrinka and Dobrunka were sisters. Their father and mother were dead and they lived with a cross old woman in a hut near a deep forest.

Katrinka, the younger sister, was gentle and good, but the cross old woman was very unkind to her and made her do all the work in the house. Dobrunka, idle and lazy as she was, sat at home and did much as she pleased all the day long.

One winter morning the cross old woman said to Katrinka, "Come, finish your sweeping and cooking and spinning and weaving. You have been at it a long time and there is other work for you to do."

"Yes, Katrinka," added the idle sister. "You must go into the woods this morning and get me some violets. I want some violets this very day."

"Dear Dobrunka," said Katrinka, "it is winter and the ground is all covered with snow. I cannot get violets in the woods now."

"I must have a bunch of violets. So say no more about it, but do as I tell you," said Dobrunka.

"Yes, hold your tongue and go to the woods as you are told. If you come back without the violets, I shall punish you." As the cross old woman finished speaking she opened the door and pushed Katrinka, who had not so much as a shawl to throw about her shoulders, out into the cold.

Katrinka made her way to the forest through the deep snow, but not a leaf or a blade of grass was to be seen anywhere. There was not even a path among the trees.

"Violets — where shall I find any? Snow, snow everywhere. I believe I've lost my way." Poor Katrinka shivered with the cold.

As she went on, she saw a light at the top of a hill just beyond her. Katrinka stopped and looked, for she could scarcely believe her own eyes. "Can it be a fire? It is, it is. I'll go to the top of the hill and see if I can just warm myself." Still shivering with the cold, she climbed the hill. As she drew nearer she saw twelve old men wrapped in cloaks from head to foot, sitting on stones around a blazing fire.

"There are twelve of them," said Katrinka to herself. "Three of them have on cloaks white like the snow on the ground. Three of the cloaks are green, three are yellow, and three purple. But I am not afraid. I'll go up to

them and ask if I may warm myself a little at their fire."

The twelve old men did not seem to notice the child until she drew quite near.

"Please, good men, may I warm myself a little at your fire? I am very cold," she said.

"Welcome, dear child," said one who wore a white cloak. "Come near the fire. We are the Twelve Months."

"Thank you," said Katrinka. She went forward and seated herself. "I fear I have lost my way."

"What brings you into the woods when the snow is deep?" asked one of the old men.

"Oh, I came for violets."

"Violets? This is not the time for them," said January.

"I know it, but I want the violets for my sister, and if I do not get them, I shall be punished when I go home. Can you tell me where I can find them?"

"This is our work," said the three men in the green cloaks like the leaves of spring. "We will do what we can to help this child." March, April, and May rose and stirred the fire; then, waving their long staffs, they said: —

" Blow, wind ; melt, snow !
Bloom, flowers ; sing, birds !

" Child, spring is here. Gather your violets."

Katrinka lost no time, and she picked as many as her little hands could hold.

" Thank you, good men, thank you all. Now I must run home." And away she went.

No sooner had she gone than the three old men with white cloaks waved their staffs over the fire, and it was winter again, everywhere.

The next day as the twelve old men were sitting in their places around the fire, they looked up and saw Katrinka standing once more before them.

" Please, good men," said the child, " may I warm myself again at your fire ? I am very cold."

" Welcome, dear child," said January. " But what brings you back to us ? "

" I came to find strawberries for my sister," said Katrinka, whose teeth were now chattering with the cold.

" Strawberries ? " said January. " This is not the time for strawberries."

"I know it," said Katrinka, "but my sister says she must have strawberries for her supper to-night. If I do not get them, I shall be punished when I go home. Can you tell me where I can find them?"

"This is our work," said the three old men in the cloaks yellow as the ripe grain of summer. "We will do what we can to help you, child." June, July, and August rose and stirred the fire; then, waving their staffs, they said:—

"Melt, snow; sing, birds!
Bud, trees; bloom, flowers!
Shine, warm sun!

"Child, summer is here. Gather your strawberries."

Katrinka filled her apron with the ripe red berries.

"Thank you, kind sirs," she said. "Thank you. Now I must run home." And off she went. Again the three old men in the white cloaks waved their staffs over the fire, and a deep snow covered everything.

Once more Katrinka went to the forest, and once more she found the twelve old men sitting around the bright fire.

"Welcome again, dear child. Come and warm yourself, then tell us why you have come to us this third time."

"My sister says she must have some ripe red apples," said Katrinka, as she drew nearer the fire.

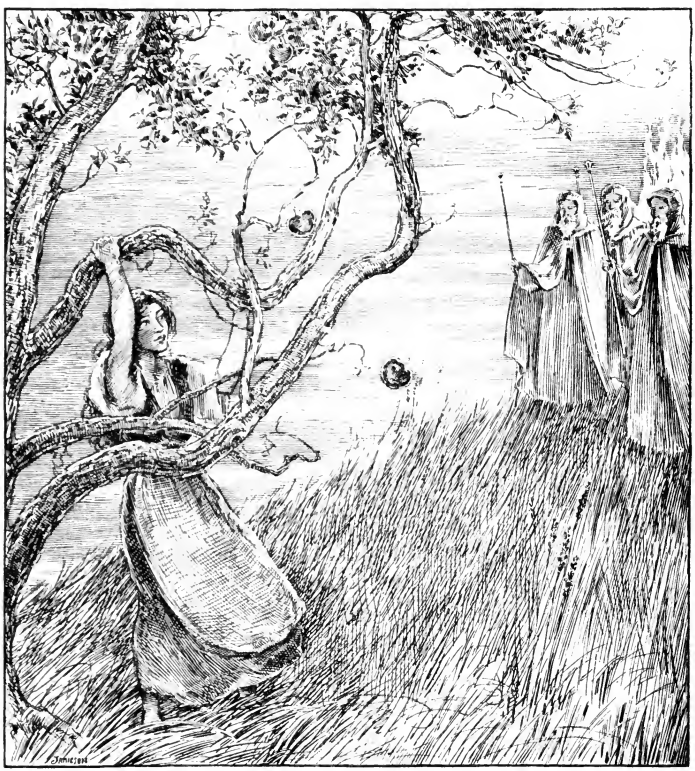
"Ripe red apples, child?" said January. "This is not the time for ripe red apples."

"I know it," said Katrinka, "but my sister wants some red apples, and I dare not go home without them. Can you tell me where I can find some?"

"This is our work," said the three old men with cloaks purple like the grapes of autumn. "We must do what we can to help this child."

September, October, and November rose and stirred the fire. Waving their wands, they said:

"Melt, snow; shine, sun!
Chirp, crickets; ripen, nuts!
Trees, put on your dresses of red, brown, and gold!



"Child, autumn is here. Shake the tree only twice. You may have all the apples that drop."

Katrinka shook the tree. One apple fell. She shook the tree again. Another apple fell.

"Only two apples," said Katrinka to herself, "but I cannot ask for more." Then she said to the old men, "Thank you, for all your kindness to me. Now I must go home."

Once more the three old men in white waved their staffs over the fire, and snow and ice covered everything and a cold wind blew.

"Where did you get these apples?" asked Dobrunka, looking at the two ripe ones Katrinka had put into her lap.

"Out in the woods, dear sister. The tree was full of ripe red apples," said the kind Katrinka.

"You have brought me but two. Why did you not bring me more?"

"I could not. I was allowed to shake the tree but twice, and these two apples were all that fell."

"You do not tell the truth. Whoever heard of only *two* apples falling?" said the old woman, in a very cross way.

"You ate all the rest on the way home," said Dobrunka. "There must be a great many

more where these came from. Come with me," she said to the cross old woman, "you and I will go to the woods and find the tree ourselves. Then we can have as many apples as we wish."

They wrapped themselves up well in warm cloaks and set out for the forest.

"I see nothing but snow, snow, snow, snow everywhere, and I do not see a tree in bloom," said Dobrunka, who now began to feel the cold bitterly in spite of her warm clothing.

"That looks like a fire at the top of the hill. Let's go to it," said the cross old woman.

They soon reached the place where the twelve old men were still sitting around their fire. Dobrunka went forward.

"We saw your fire on the hill and have come to warm ourselves," she said.

"Why have you come here, child?" asked January.

"I will not tell you," said Dobrunka.

"Then we cannot help you," said the old men.

"Well, if you must know," called out the cross old woman, "we came for ripe red apples.

Tell this child where to find them, and be quick about it. Don't keep us waiting in the cold."

The twelve old men looked very angry, but they did not say one word. Then the three in white cloaks stood up and waved their staffs. Out went the fire. A bitter wind blew and a deep, deep snow began to cover everything.

"The fire has gone out and it is getting dark. All the men are gone. Where are we?" called out Dobrunka, in great fear.

"I do not know. I do not even know the way home. We are lost, Dobrunka — lost, I say. Where shall we find shelter for the night?"

Blinded by the thick snow, they trudged on and on, searching for a path that would lead them out of the forest.

Katrinka, alone in the little hut, waited and waited.

"Oh, I wish they would come. They've been in the woods so long that I fear something has happened."

As she spoke these words a knocking was heard at the door.

"There they are," said the child; and she ran to welcome them back. But what was her

surprise on opening the door to find, instead of Dobrunka and the cross old woman, her twelve friends of the forest standing before her.

"Welcome, my friends of the woods. Come in."

"We have come to tell you, Katrinka, that Dobrunka and the cross old woman will never come back. The hut and the garden and everything is yours," said January.

"And we shall still be your friends and bring violets to your door every year," said March, April, and May.

"We shall bring ripe red strawberries and plenty of sunshine," said June, July, and August.

"We shall bring ripe red apples on your trees, and you may shake the trees as often as you like," said September, October, and November.

"And we shall make the fire glow in your chimney and cover the roof of your hut in winter with a soft blanket of snow," said December, January, and February.

THE WEATHER HEN

Everybody — men, women, and especially children — knows that there is a neat little red brick cottage on the slopes of Mt. Olympus. It is set in the midst of a great garden. There is a beehive on one side of the path to the front door and a butterfly hive on the other; and at the end of the garden is a well through which you can look down on the world below.

In this cottage, which is closed all winter, lives Harlequin, Columbine, Pantaloon, and Clown.

One cold gray day Clown said: "The weather is depressing. Let's have the Weather Hen down and complain."

"She has an awful temper," said Columbine. "But I'll whistle for her if you like." She put her lips together and made a little sound. In a moment the Weather Hen pushed open the garden gate.

"Who blew?" she asked fiercely.

"I did," said Columbine.

"What for?" asked the Weather Hen.

"Please, Mrs. Hen," said Columbine, "could

you change the weather? We are so tired of this."

The Weather Hen waddled on to the grass, put her head on one side, and looked at them

crossly. "Never," she said, and she ruffled her feathers and went to sleep.

"What are we to do now?" said Columbine.

"Sing to her," said Clown. "I'll begin."

"An elephant flying too high
Hit a bumble bee straight in the eye."

The Weather Hen opened one eye.

"You sing next," said Clown.

"'When there's room up above,
Why come here and shove?'
Said the bumble bee, starting to cry."

The Weather Hen opened her other eye.

"Splendid," she said, waking up completely. "Now I'll tell you the news. You know the way the Weather Cock sits on the top of church spires and makes believe he rules the wind — its ridiculous, isn't it?"

"It is," said Columbine.

"We Weather Hens never get our rights. Why, if I didn't change my mind several times a day, the wind would always blow from the same quarter. But bless you, my dears, the Weather Cock always gets the credit. So I was annoyed this spring and just set my foot down."

"Please take it up," said Columbine, "and give us some nice weather."

"And what credit shall I get for it?" said the Weather Hen. "The Weather Cock will spin around and swell up his comb for all the world to think he has altered the weather himself. And anyway, its grumble, grumble, grumble, day and night, no matter what the weather is."

"Plenty of sunshine again will put everybody in a good humor," said Columbine. "The new potatoes are frostbitten, and the flowers and the fruit are coming to dreadful harm."

"Well, I'll see, my dear," said the Weather Hen. "If I think the world will be a bit more grateful for fine weather, I shall do what I can."

"It's very important to the world — fine weather," said Columbine.

"Of course it is," said the Weather Hen. "The weather has more effect on the day's work and the day's happiness than most people ever know."

"And when people learn not to grumble," said Harlequin, "and are happy, all days will seem fine."

"Bosh," said the Weather Hen.

They heard a low whistle. The Weather Hen started up.

"That's for me," she said.

"Promise," said Columbine, "promise sun, sun, give us our summer." They heard a sound like a gate creaking.

"That's the wind changing," said the Weather Hen. "Now look out." And she was gone. They all ran to the well to look down at the world below.

WHAT WAS HER NAME?

"Wake up," said an old gentleman dressed in brown and white, as he gently shook the shoulder of a lady in green who was lying sound asleep under the trees.

"Wake up, ma'am! it is your watch now, and time for me to take myself off." The young lady stirred a very little and opened one of her eyes the least little bit.

"Who are you?" she asked drowsily. "What is your name?"

"My name is Winter. What is yours?" replied the old man.

"I have not the faintest idea," said the lady, closing her eyes again.

"Humph," growled the old man, "a pretty person you are to take my place. Well, good day, Madam Sleepyhead, and good luck to you."

And off he went over the dead leaves. As soon as he was gone, the young lady opened her eyes and looked about her.

"Madam Sleepyhead, indeed," she said. "I am sure that is not my name, anyhow. The question is, What is it?"

She looked about her again. "Nothing to be seen here but the bare branches of the trees, and the dead brown leaves and dry moss underfoot," she said. "Trees, do you happen to know what my name is?" she asked.

"We do not know," they said, "but perhaps when the wind comes he will be able to tell you." The girl shivered a little and drew her green cloak about her and waited.

By and by the wind came blustering along. He caught the trees by their branches, and shook them a rough, friendly greeting.

"Well, boys," he shouted, "old winter is gone, is he? I wish you joy for his departure. But where is the lady who was coming to take his place?"

"She is here," answered the trees, "sitting on the ground, but she does not know her name, which seems to trouble her."

"Ho, ho!" roared the wind. "Not know

her own name? That is news, indeed. And here she has been sleeping while all the world has been looking for her and calling her and wondering where upon earth she was. Come, young lady, we'll show you the way to your dressing room, which has been ready and waiting for you for a fortnight or more."

So he led the way through the forest and the girl followed, rubbing her sleepy eyes and dragging her cloak behind her.

Now it was a very singular thing that whatever the green mantle touched instantly turned

green itself. The brown moss put out little tufts of emerald velvet, fresh shoots came push-

ing up from the dead dry grass, and even the shrubs and twigs broke out with tiny swelling buds, all ready to open into leaves.

By and by the wind paused and pushed aside the branches which made a close screen before him.

"Here is your dressing room, young madam," he said with a low bow. "Be pleased to enter it and you will find all things in readiness. But I beg you to make your toilet speedily, for all the world is waiting for you."

Greatly wondering, the young girl passed through the screen of branches and found herself in a most marvelous place. "How strange," she said, "the pine trees make a dense green wall all around, and the ground is carpeted with pine needles, soft and thick and brown. And here are piled great heaps of buds all ready to blossom — violets, anemones, hepaticas, bloodroot, and the pale pink buds of the Mayflower. They are all asleep and waiting for some one to waken them. Perhaps if I do it, they will tell me in turn what my name is."

She shook the buds lightly, and lo! every blossom opened its eyes and raised its head and

said: "Welcome, gracious lady! Welcome! we have looked for you long."

The young girl took the lovely blossoms and twined them in her fair locks and hung them in garlands round her white neck.

"What a beautiful carved casket hidden under this pile of spicy leaves," said the girl. "And

a soft rustling sound comes from the inside of it — the softest sound that I ever heard. I'll lift the lid." She lifted the lid. "Butterflies, rainbow-tinted, thousands and thousands!" she cried.

Out they flew, softly, glitteringly, gayly, fluttering, and hovered about the maiden's head. The

soft sound of their wings seemed to say, "Welcome, welcome!"

At the same moment a great flock of beautiful birds came flying and lighted on the branches, and they, too, sang, "Welcome, welcome."

The maiden clasped her hands and cried: "Why are you all so glad to see me? I feel — I know — that you are all mine, and I am yours. But how is it? Who am I? What is my name?"

The birds and the flowers and rainbow-tinted butterflies and the pine trees all answered: "Spring! The beautiful, the long-expected! Hail to the Maiden Spring!"

THE SKYLARK'S SPURS

Out in the meadow grass sat a fine young skylark looking very unhappy.

"What is the matter with you, cousin?" asked the meadow fairy.

"I am so unhappy. I want to build a nest and I have no mate," replied the lark.

"Why don't you look for a mate, then?" said the meadow fairy, laughing at him. "Fly up and sing a beautiful song, and perhaps some pretty lark will hear you and want to be your mate."

"Oh, I don't like to fly up," said the lark.

"If I do, my feet will be seen and no other bird has feet like mine. My claws are enough to frighten any one, they are so long."

"Let me see them," said the fairy.

The lark lifted up one of his feet which he had kept hidden in the long grass.

"It looks very fierce," said the fairy. "Your hind claw is at least one inch long, and all your toes have very sharp points. Are you sure you never use them to fight with?"

"Never," said the lark. "But these claws grow longer and longer. I am so ashamed of their being seen that I often lie in the grass instead of going up to sing as I should like to do."

"I think, if I were you, I would pull them off," said the fairy.

"That is not so easy to do," said the lark. "You cannot think how fast they stick on."

"Well, I am sorry for you. You must be a quarrelsome bird or you would not have such long spurs. I cannot help you. Good morning."

So the fairy went off and the poor lark sat moping in the grass.

By and by a grasshopper came chirping up

to the lark and tried to comfort him. "I have known you for some time," said the grasshopper, "and I have never seen you fight. I will tell every one that you are a good-tempered bird and that you are looking for a mate."

"Thank you, grasshopper," said the lark.

"At the same time," said the grasshopper, "I should be glad if you could tell me the use of those claws. The question might be asked me and I should not know what to answer."

"Grasshopper," said the lark, "I do not know what they are for; that is the truth."

"Well," said the kind grasshopper, "perhaps time will show." So he went away.

The lark was delighted with the grasshopper's promise to speak well of him. He flew up into the air, and the higher he went, the sweeter and louder he sang.

A pretty brown lark heard him sing and cried, "I never heard so beautiful a song in my life, — never!"

"It was sung by my friend the skylark," said the grasshopper. "He is a very good-tempered bird and he wants a mate."

"Indeed!" said the pretty brown lark.

"Well done, my friend!" cried the grass-

hopper, when the lark came down. "Your song greatly pleased the little brown lark. I will take you to see her."

The skylark thought he had never seen such a pretty bird before. He asked her not to mind his ugly spurs and to be his mate.

"I do not mind your spurs very much," said the brown lark. "Indeed, they seem to be of no use to you."

The skylark soon won her for his mate, and they built a cunning little nest in the grass.

After several days the fairy came back and met the grasshopper.

"How is your friend, the lark, who found such a pretty brown mate the other day?" asked the fairy.

"Suppose you come and see the eggs in their nest," said the grasshopper, "three pretty eggs spotted with brown. I am sure the lark will show them to you with pleasure."

Off they went together. What was their surprise to find the poor little brown lark sitting on her nest with drooping head and trembling limbs.

"Ah, my pretty eggs," she said. "I am so unhappy about them. I have just heard the farmer say that to-morrow he will begin to cut the grass."

"That is very sad," said the grasshopper. "What a pity that you laid your eggs on the ground."

"Larks always do," said the poor little brown bird. "Ah; my pretty eggs. I shall never hear my nestlings chirp."

"We are sorry that we can do nothing to help you," said the fairy and the grasshopper.

Just then the skylark dropped down from the white cloud where he had been singing.

"What is the matter?" he asked his mate when he saw her drooping. The little brown

lark told him just what she had told the fairy and the grasshopper, and he was very much shocked.

But presently he lifted one of his feet and then the other, and looked at his long spurs.

"If I had only laid my eggs on the other side of the hedge," said the poor little mother, "I could have reared my birds before harvest time."

"My dear," said the skylark, "don't be unhappy." So saying, he hopped up to the eggs, and laying one foot upon the prettiest, he clasped it with his long spur. Strange to say, it fitted exactly.

"Oh, my clever mate," cried the poor mother bird. "Do you think you can carry them away for me?"

"To be sure I can," said the lark, hopping on, with the egg in his right foot, to the hedge.

When he had got through the hedge, he laid the egg down in a nice little hollow place and went back for the others.

"Oh, hurrah!" cried the fairy. "Never be ashamed of your long spurs again."

"Hurrah!" cried the grasshopper, "lark-spurs forever!"

THE TRAVELER AND THE CAMEL

Long, long ago a company of merchants with loaded camels were traveling across a desert. After they had gone a short distance they found, to their great surprise, that one of their richly laden beasts had strayed away. They looked about in all directions, but they did not find him. On they went and gave up the camel for lost.

They had gone but a little way when they met a traveler who was crossing the desert alone.

"Good man," said one of the merchants, "did you chance to see a stray camel as you came on your way?"

"There is a stray camel in the desert. Is he not blind in one eye?" asked the traveler.

"He is," cried the merchants in one voice.

"And lame in his foreleg?"

"He is, he is," was the answer.

"Has he not lost a front tooth?"

"He has," came the answer again.

"And is he not loaded with honey on one side and grain on the other?"

"With honey and grain! He has seen our camel. Come, tell us where we can find him."

"I have not seen your camel," said the traveler; and he started again on his way.

The merchants were convinced by this time that the traveler had seen their camel. They suspected, too, that he had taken the jewels and gold which were part of the beast's load. They were very angry.

"Wretch! he knows it's our camel," cried one of the merchants.

"Very likely he has taken the riches with which it was loaded," cried another.

"We'll seize him and have justice," called out a third. "Come!" and the merchants started in pursuit of the traveler, who was now well on his way. They soon overtook him. They seized him and brought him to the town before the nearest judge, to whom they told the story.

The judge listened carefully until the story was finished. "I believe this traveler knows more about that camel than he cares to tell," said the judge. Then turning to the traveler he said: "You asked the merchants whether their camel is not blind in one eye. How did you learn that?"

"I saw that the grass on only one side of the path was eaten," answered the traveler.

"How did you learn he is lame in one of the forelegs?"

"The print of the left forefoot was lighter than that of the others."

"How did you learn that he has lost one tooth?"

"A small tuft of grass was left uneaten in the center of each bite."

"But how could you tell that he is loaded on one side with grain and on the other with honey?"

"The ants were busy on one side of the path and flies on the other."

"Come, sir," said the judge, "tell where this camel can be found."

"He has not strayed far away, as there are no fresher footprints either behind him or before him," answered the traveler.

Then the judge turned to the merchants and said: —

"Go and look for your camel."

The merchants did so, and they found their camel very near the spot from which it had strayed.

THE FOREST FULL OF FRIENDS

There was once a king who chose every New Year's Day a little boy and a little girl from among the children of his kingdom. These children he kept at the palace to be brought up among the pages and maids of honor. But he always chose the best-looking and the best-behaved that could be found.

Early one New Year's morning a little orphan girl named Elsa and the old woman of the forest, with whom she lived, went to the king's palace. The old woman thought Elsa

the most beautiful child in the world. When they came to the palace door, they asked if they might go in. The servant said, "Where are your friends?"

"I have no friends," said Elsa, "except this woman."

"You must have other friends," said the servant. "Do you not know that every child coming to-day must bring five friends to introduce him to the king?" So Elsa and the old woman turned and went away very unhappy.

The next day the old woman said to Elsa, "I think you had better go into the forest to play."

"Why, what do you mean?" asked Elsa. "The forest is big and dark. It is called the Forest Full of Fears. Are you not afraid to have me go there?"

"No," answered the old woman; "I think you may find some friends there."

"How strange!" said Elsa.

"Come here, Elsa," said the old woman. "I have something to give you. Here are some drops that I have been keeping for you for many years."

"And what are they for?" asked Elsa.

"To put on your ears so that you may understand any one who speaks to you in a different language from your own. I think you may find some friends in the forest that you could not understand without them. So take them with you."

When Elsa reached the Forest Full of Fears, she rubbed one of the drops on each of her ears. Then a strange thing happened. The leaves on the trees seemed to rustle just as they had before, but she knew now that they said, "Welcome to the Forest Full of Friends, Elsa."

"Dear me," said Elsa, "is that what you have been saying all along? I thought this was the Forest Full of Fears."

All the leaves said, "No, no, no, no, no;" and they waved again and said, "Welcome to the Forest Full of Friends."

Elsa heard a little brown bird that sat singing on the branch of a tree. "Is it possible that I can understand the bird, too?"

She put another tiny drop on each of her ears and listened. The little bird was singing: "Good morning! good morning! It's a beautiful morning."

"Good morning," said Elsa. "It is a lovely morning. Do you live here in the forest?"

"Yes, indeed! Yes, indeed! I'm very glad to see you," said the bird.

Elsa walked on into the forest and sat down on a mossy bank to rest. While she was sitting there a squirrel came down from a branch over her head and began chirruping merrily at her. "Jolly old forest, isn't it? You've no idea where my nuts are, have you? But you're perfectly welcome to any you find."

"Thank you," said Elsa, "I should like a nut or two. My walk has made me hungry." The squirrel made no answer, but ran up the side of the tree again. He dropped her a nut from high up in an oak tree and it fell right into her lap. "Jolly old forest, isn't it?"

"Surely there never was a forest more polite and with more friendly people in it," answered Elsa.

After Elsa left the squirrel's tree, she met a little chipmunk, a frog, and a wood mouse. She could understand them, every one; and they told her they didn't need any drops to understand her. "We have a way of understanding boys and girls that we have known for years,"

Elsa in the Forest.

they all said. "It is growing dark," said Elsa. "I must run home and tell the good woman all that has happened. Now I have plenty of friends."

"Sure enough," said the old woman when Elsa told her. "We will go to the palace again, and we can tell the porter that you have a Forest Full of Friends, if he will come here to see them."

When the old woman woke in the morning, she found Elsa already dressed for the journey.

"Why, what in the world is all this?" asked the woman. For there was Elsa with a squirrel, a bird, a frog, a butterfly, and a cricket ready to go with her.

"These are my five friends," said Elsa. "I went to the forest very early and asked them if they would be willing to go with us. When they knew why I wanted them, they were all glad to come."

Off they went.

When the porter at the door of the palace saw Elsa and the old woman, he knew them at once. "But why have you all these creatures with you? Are they presents to the king?"

"No," said Elsa. "They are the five friends you said I must have to introduce me. Last time I came, I had only one friend; now I have plenty."

"Very good," said the porter, "but I do not see how these friends can introduce you to the king. He will not understand them."

"Only let me take them in. I promise that he shall understand what they say." So the porter threw open the door and led them to the king.

"Your Majesty," said Elsa, "I have brought five friends to introduce me. If you will only

touch each of your ears with a drop from my little bottle, you will know what they are saying."

The king was much surprised. He took the

little bottle from Elsa, and touched each of his ears. Just then the bird began to chirp, the squirrel began to chatter, the frog began to croak, the cricket began to sing, and the butterfly flew close to the king's ear and whispered into it. The king was much pleased to hear them all and to understand what they said.

"So you wish to come to live in the palace?" he asked.

"Yes," said Elsa, "if your Majesty wants me, and if my oldest friend, who has taken care of me all my life, can stay here, too."

"It shall be done," said the king. "And would you not like to keep some of your forest friends here with you? I should really like to have them for my friends, too."

"They will be your friends, but they would not be happy away from their own forest." Then Elsa took her five friends to the palace gate. She knew they could easily find their way back to the forest. "And I do not think I can be happy, either, unless I can often go back there to visit them," said Elsa to the king.

"You shall do so," said the king, "and from this day the Forest Full of Fears shall be called the Forest Full of Friends."

WORK

"Sweet wind, fair wind, where have you been?"
"I've been sweeping the cobwebs out of the sky;
I've been grinding a grist in the mill hard by;
I've been laughing at work, while others sigh;
Let those laugh who win."

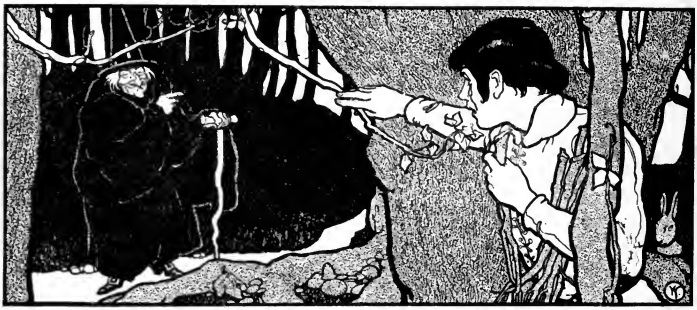
"Sweet rain, soft rain, what are you doing?"
"I'm urging the corn to fill out its cells.
I'm helping the lily to fashion its bells;
I'm swelling the torrent and brimming the wells;
Is that worth pursuing?"

"Redbreast, redbreast, what have you done?"
"I've been watching the nest where my fledglings lie;
I've sung them to sleep with a lullaby;
By and by I shall teach them to fly,
Up and away, every one."

"Honeybee, honeybee, where are you going?"
"To fill my basket with precious pelf;
To toil for my neighbor as well as myself;
To find out the sweetest flower that grows,
Be it a thistle or be it a rose —
A secret worth knowing!"

"Wind and rain fulfilling His word!
Tell me was ever a legend heard
Where the wind, commanded to blow, deferred;
Or the rain that was bidden to fall demurred?"

SWAN, HOLD FAST



PETER LEAVES HOME

Once upon a time there were three brothers. The eldest was called Jacob, the second Hans, and the youngest Peter. This youngest brother was very unhappy in his home, for he was treated shamefully by the other two. If anything went wrong, Peter had to bear the blame. So the poor fellow led a sad life, and, day and night, he wondered what he could do to make it better.

One day when he was in the wood gathering sticks and crying bitterly, he saw a little old woman, and the little old woman saw him. As soon as she caught sight of Peter, she came up

to him and asked him what was the matter. Peter told her all his troubles as best he could.

"Come, come, my good lad," said the little old woman, "stop crying. Isn't the world wide enough?"

"Yes, it is," said Peter, "but what can I do?"

"Do? Why don't you set out and try your luck somewhere else? Set out, I say, this very day."

"I will," said Peter. "I'll stand this ill treatment no longer. Early to-morrow morning I'll go out into the world and seek my fortune." So saying, he bid the old woman "good day" and went back to his home.

True to his word, Peter left his home early the next morning and set out to seek his fortune as the old woman had advised him to do. He had gone but a short distance when he sat down on a hill to rest. After all, he was not at all sure he was glad to leave home.

"The world is wide, indeed," said Peter to himself. There's no telling what the lad would have done if the little old woman had not appeared just then before him.

"So far, so good, my lad," she said, tapping

him gently on the shoulder. "But why do you sit here? What do you mean to do now?"

"I do not know," said Peter.

The old woman laughed kindly. "I'll tell you what you must do to make your fortune. But you must promise me one thing before I tell you."

"What is that?" said Peter.

"You must promise not to forget me when you have made your fortune."

"That I will," said Peter, earnestly.

"Very well, then. Keep right on this path, and at sunset you will come to a large oak tree which you will find growing at the crossroads."

"That is not hard," said Peter.

"Fastened to this oak tree you will find a beautiful swan. That is no common swan, my lad, and you must get it from the tree, for it will bring you your fortune."

"It must be a magic swan. But how will it help me?" asked Peter, who was most anxious now to hear the rest of the plan.

"It is a magic swan," continued the old woman. "Every one who sees that swan will wish to have it, or, at least, every one will wish to have a feather from its beautiful plumage.

Let any one who likes try to pull out a feather. As soon as that swan feels so much as a finger on it, it will scream out."

"Then what must I do?"

"You must say, 'Swan, hold fast,' and the one who has tried to get a feather will be held so fast that nothing will set him free until you touch him with this little stick which I shall give you."

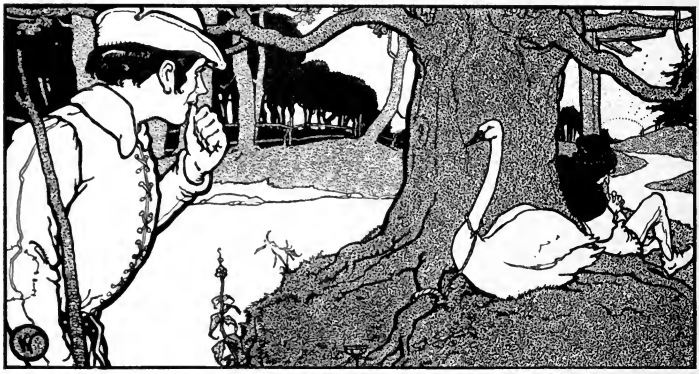
"Surely it is a magic swan," said Peter.

"But I have not told you all. When you have caught a lot of people in that way, go straight on with them until you come to a beautiful palace in which the king lives with his daughter, whom he loves very much. This princess, his daughter, is so sad that she never laughs. It grieves the king greatly to see her unhappy all the time, so he has made it known that he will give either the princess in marriage or half his kingdom to the man who can make her laugh. Now, my lad, get the magic swan, go to the palace, make the princess laugh — that is your fortune. But one thing more, be careful not to waken the man you will find sleeping under the oak tree. Remember your promise."

Peter promised again not to forget her, and he started on his journey.

THE MAGIC SWAN

At sunset he came to the oak tree. There lay the man fast asleep, and a beautiful swan



was tied to the tree close by, — all was just as the old woman had said. Peter lost no time in loosening the swan, and he was careful to lead it away without waking the bird's master. They walked on and on for some time, when he came to a place where some young men were at work. As soon as the men saw Peter, one of them said: —

"What a beautiful swan! I should like to have one of those fine feathers."

"Pull one of them, then," called out Peter. Just as the young man laid his hand on the bird, it screamed out, and Peter called, "Swan, hold fast." Try as hard as he might, the young fellow could not get his hand away from the swan. He pulled and pulled. The more he pulled, the more his companions laughed at him.

Soon a young girl came up to see what all the laughing was about. When she saw the poor man fastened to the swan, she said: "That is too bad. I will free you in a minute." With that she stretched out her hand to free him and the bird screamed.

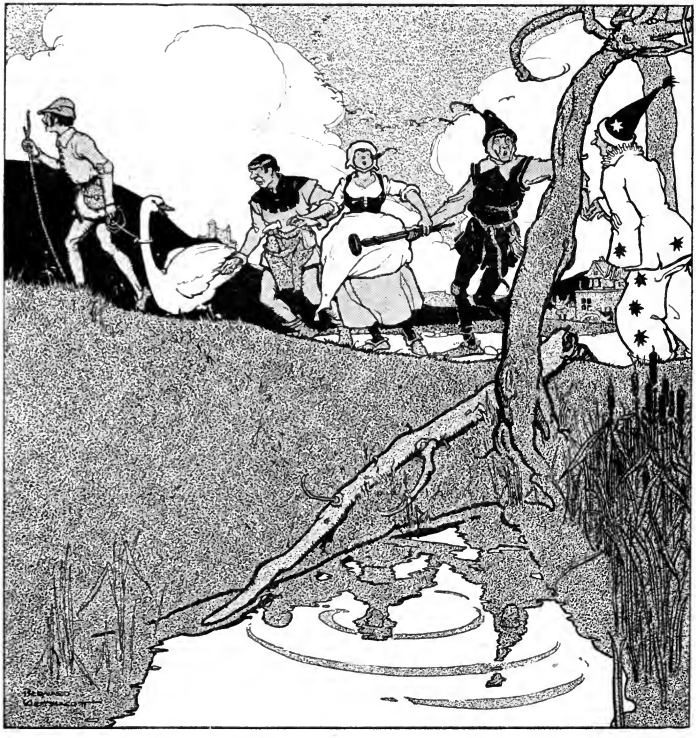
"Swan, hold fast," called out Peter. The young girl was caught and had to go on with Peter.

On went Peter with his captives. They had not gone far when they met a chimney-sweep, who laughed and laughed to see a man and a girl fastened to the swan's tail.

"Oh, my friend," called out the young girl, "give me your hand and set me free."

"That I will," said the chimney-sweep. As he did so, the bird screamed. "Swan, hold fast," cried Peter, and the chimney-sweep had to go along with them, whether he wished to or not.

They soon came to a village where a traveling circus was giving a performance. When the clown saw the strange three, he could not help laughing as he called out, "Well, that's the queerest flock of birds I ever saw."



"It's nothing to laugh at," called out the chimney-sweep. "Stop your nonsense and come

and set me free. I'll do a good turn for you some day."

The clown took the chimney-sweep's outstretched hand, and the bird screamed. "Swan, hold fast," called out Peter. So the clown had to go along with the rest.

Now when the mayor of the village saw what had happened, he was very angry. "It's all some foolish trick. Come, sirs, stop this nonsense," he said, as he seized the clown by the hand just as the bird screamed again.

"Swan, hold fast," called out Peter, and the mayor had to go along with the rest.

Peter finds his Fortune

In a short time, Peter, with his captives, reached the palace gates, and he made straight for the palace to see the princess.

He soon spied a beautiful young woman with a sad look on her face standing at one of the palace windows. Peter knew in a moment it was the princess. But no sooner did the princess catch sight of Peter and his train than she burst into a fit of laughter. She laughed and laughed and laughed, and all her ladies-in-waiting joined her.

"The princess has laughed, the princess has laughed," cried the king as he rushed out of the palace. "Who has done this?"

"It was the boy with the swan," called the ladies-in-waiting.

"My good lad," said the king, "do you know what I promised to any one who could make my daughter laugh?"

"I do," said Peter.

"Then which do you choose, one half my kingdom or the princess in marriage?"

"I choose one half your kingdom," said Peter.

"As you say," answered the king.

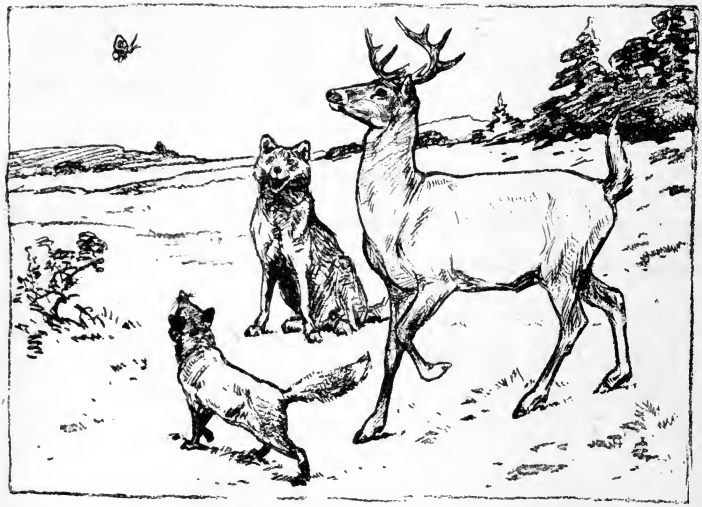
Peter touched the young man, then the girl, the sweep, the clown, and, last of all, the angry mayor, with the little stick which the old woman had given him, and all his captives were free, and you may be sure they ran home as fast

as they could go. But Peter stood by with his swan.

"That's a splendid bird," the princess said to him. "Do let me stroke it."

She just laid her hand upon one of its feathers when the bird screamed. The mischievous Peter called out, "Swan, hold fast," and the princess could no more get away than if she had been bound by the strongest rope.

So Peter had half the kingdom *and* the princess, too, for his fortune. But he did not forget his promise to the woman who had been so kind to him.



"Come, come, my butterfly. Take a message to my friends quickly. Tell them to come to me here on the green hill with all haste," said the whispering grass.

Away flew the butterfly and soon came back with the deer, the wolf, and the fox.

"Listen to me, my friends. South Wind has just told me there is great danger for you this

day. Three hunters have come across the prairie to take your lives."

"Hunters? What are they?" asked the fox.

"We have never heard of such a thing," said the wolf.

"They are Indians," said the whispering grass, "with bows and arrows that will pierce your hearts."

"What must we do?" they all asked. "You are wise, whispering grass, tell us how to save ourselves."

"Go to your homes and stay there. When all is safe, I'll send my butterfly to tell you to come to me."

The animals hurried away.

When the Indians reached the green hill, they could see nothing but butterflies hovering above the grass.

"There is no game in this land and I am hungry. Let us go back," said the first Indian.

"Not so," said the second Indian. "Let us wait. We can eat grass; see, here is a hill all covered with it. The animals eat it, why not we?" said the second.

"But it is *whispering grass*. And he who eats of this whispering grass can no longer kill anything with his arrows."

"No, no, it is *not* whispering grass," said the third. "Listen, there is a west wind blowing through it and I can hear no sound of whispering."

They all listened — not a sound came.

"You are right. Let us eat."

They ate the whispering grass then rolled themselves in their deerskins and fell asleep. As soon as they were asleep, whispering grass called a butterfly.

"Go to my friends and tell them they are all safe. They can come from their homes and wander among the hills. The Indians will try to shoot them with their arrows, but the arrows of these hunters can do no harm. Go quickly."

The animals came from their home gladly. But they had not gone far when the Indians woke up and saw them. In a minute they drew their bows, and away shot the arrows. Every arrow flew swiftly through the air, but soon fell to the ground at the animals' feet.

"That must have been whispering grass that

we ate last night. For, see, not one of the arrows has hit the mark," said the first hunter.

"Why did the grass not whisper then?" asked the second hunter.

"Yes, it kept silent while we listened. That is the way it deceived us. Now we have lost our power for hunting. We must fight the whispering grass. Let us go and *pull* it up by the roots so that it can never deceive any hunter again."

"Not now. It is best to wait till the moon rises high in the sky," said the second.

"Very well, — but when we leave, this green hill will be bare and naked."

The butterfly who had been hovering near the Indians heard what they said. It flew with all speed to the animals.

"The hunters have planned to kill whispering grass to-night. Can you not save it?"

"We must save it," said the deer. "It has saved us. Oh, fox, you are wise and great. Can you not think of a plan to save whispering grass?"

"I am not wise enough for that, but I know one who is. On the Dark Hills lives the Fire Spirit. He is wise and great. He tells the deer where to hide in the hills so that hunters

cannot kill them. He tells the hungry gray wolf where to find food, and in summer he shows the red fox how to get away from his enemies. He will surely help us. Let us all go to him."

The animals ran as fast as they could to the Dark Hills, and soon reached the home of the Fire Spirit. They found him in the center of a large, low cave seated before a bright fire.

"You have come to me for help," he said; "what is wrong?"

"Our friend, the whispering grass, is going to be uprooted to-night by hunters. Can you tell us how to save it? It has saved us."

"My friends," he said, "I will help you. Do you see these things which look like dark stones? The Mighty Spirit put them there. I will place some of these in my fire, and they will soon be ready for you."

As he said this, the Fire Spirit placed a number of dark stones in his fire. In a moment they were in a bright red glow. "Take these burning coals and make a glowing circle on the hillside around the whispering grass. They will not harm the grass, and they will *not* harm you.

They found him in the center of a large, low cave.

But after to-night, my animals, always beware of a glowing fire. I can give you my protection from it but once; I can never, never give it again."

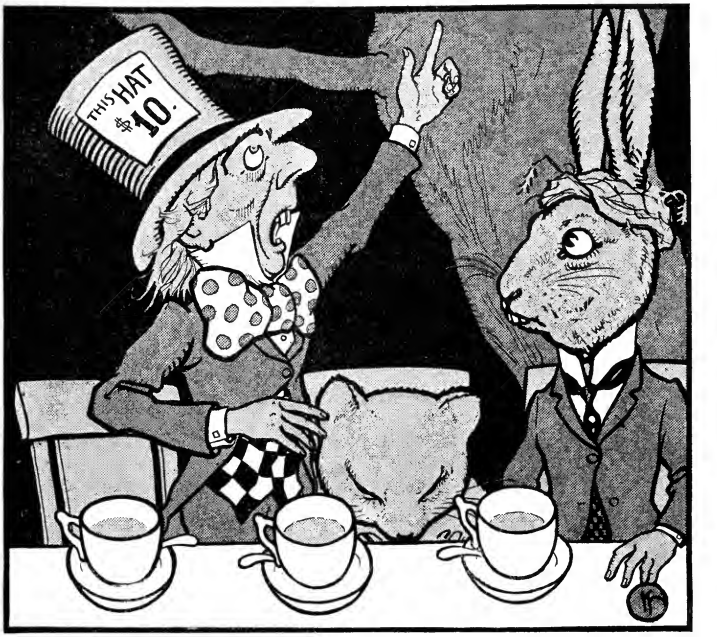
The animals took the coals and ran back to the hill. The hunters were still asleep.

"We will save you, whispering grass," they cried. "See!" They placed the coals in a circle on the side of the hill and hid themselves behind the trees.

Scarcely had they done this when the hunters awoke. They saw a glowing circle of fire on the hillside. They rubbed their eyes and looked again. At last one said, "My brothers, this whispering grass must be a friend of the Mighty Spirit, and he will let no harm come to it. We must go back to our homes at once and tell the others."

"You are right," said another. "This is a warning which the Mighty Spirit has sent to us."

So saying, they fled into the forest. But ever since that night animals have been afraid of a glowing fire, for they know the Fire Spirit cannot give his protection *another time*.



A MAD TEA PARTY

Alice joins the Party

There was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea at it; a Dormouse was sitting between them, fast asleep, and the two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and talking over its head. "Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse," thought Alice; "only as it's asleep I suppose it doesn't mind."

The table was a large one, but the three were all crowded together at one corner of it. "No room, no room!" they cried out when they saw Alice coming. "There's plenty of room," said Alice, indignantly, and she sat down in a large armchair at one end of the table.

"Have some wine," the March Hare said in an encouraging tone.

Alice looked all round the table, but there was nothing on it but tea. "I don't see any wine," she remarked.

"There isn't any," said the March Hare.

"Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it," said Alice, angrily.

"It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited," said the March Hare.

"I didn't know it was your table," said Alice; "it's laid for a great many more than three."

"Your hair wants cutting," said the Hatter. He had been looking at Alice for some time with great curiosity, and this was his first speech.

"You should learn not to make personal remarks," Alice said with some severity; "it's very rude."

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hear-

ing this; but all he said was, "Why is a raven like a writing desk?"

"Come, we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles — I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.

"Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.

"Exactly so," said Alice.

"Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.

"I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least — at least, I mean what I say — that's the same thing, you know."

"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter. "Why, you might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see'!"

"You might just as well say," added the March Hare, "that 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like'!"

"You might just as well say," added the Dormouse, who seemed to be talking in his sleep, "that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same thing as 'I sleep when I breathe'!"

"It is the same thing with you," said the

Hatter, taking his watch out of his pocket, shaking it every now and then, and holding it to his ear.

The Hatter was the first to break the silence.

"What day of the month is it?" he said, turning to Alice.

"The fourth," said Alice.

"Two days wrong," said the Hatter. "I told you butter wouldn't suit the works!" he added, looking angrily at the March Hare.

"It was the best butter," the March Hare said.

"Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as

well," the Hatter grumbled; "you shouldn't have put it in with the bread knife."

The March Hare took the watch and looked at it gloomily; then he dipped it into his cup of tea, and looked at it again; but he could think of nothing better to say than his first remark, "It was the best butter, you know."

Alice had been looking over his shoulder with some curiosity.

"What a funny watch! It tells the day of the month, and it doesn't tell what o'clock it is!"

"Why should it?" muttered the Hatter. "Does your watch tell you what year it is?"

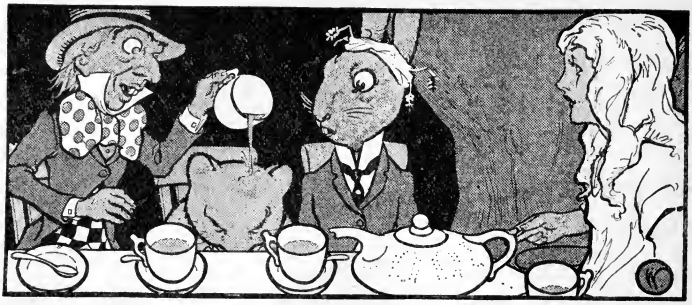
"Of course not," Alice replied very readily; "but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together."

"Which is just the case with mine," said the Hatter.

"I don't quite understand you," she said.

"The Dormouse is asleep again," said the Hatter, and he poured a little hot tea upon its nose.

The Dormouse shook its head impatiently, and said without opening its eyes, "Of course, of course; just what I was going to remark myself."



"Have you guessed the riddle yet?" the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

"No, I give it up," Alice replied; "what's the answer?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," said the Hatter.

"Nor I," said the March Hare.

Alice sighed wearily. "I think you might do something better with the time," she said, "than wasting it in asking riddles that have no answers."

"If you knew Time as well as I do," said the Hatter, "you wouldn't talk about wasting it. It's him."

"I don't know what you mean," said Alice.

"Of course you don't!" the Hatter said, tossing his head contemptuously. "I dare say you never even spoke to Time!"

"Perhaps not," Alice cautiously replied; "but

I know I have to beat time when I learn music."

"Ah! that accounts for it," said the Hatter. "He won't stand beating. Now if you only keep on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock. For instance, suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons; you'd only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half past one, time for dinner."

("I only wish it was," the March Hare said to itself in a whisper.)

"That would be grand, certainly," said Alice, thoughtfully; "but then — I shouldn't be hungry for it, you know."

"Not at first, perhaps," said the Hatter; "but you could keep it to half past one as long as you liked."

"Is that the way you manage?" Alice asked.

The Hatter shook his head mournfully.

"Not I," he replied. "We quarreled last March — just before he went mad, you know —" (pointing with his teaspoon at the March Hare) "— it was at the great concert

given by the Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing: —

"'Twinkle, twinkle, little hat!
How I wonder what you're at!'

You know the song, perhaps?"

"I've heard something like it," said Alice.

"It goes on, you know," the Hatter continued, "in this way: —

"'Up above the world you fly
Like a tea-tray in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle —'"

Here the Dormouse shook itself, and began singing in its sleep, "Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle," and went on so long that they had to pinch it to make it stop.

"Well, I'd hardly finished the first verse," said the Hatter, "when the Queen bawled out, 'He's murdering the time! Off with his head!'"

"How dreadfully savage!" exclaimed Alice.

"And ever since that," the Hatter went on in a mournful tone, "he won't do a thing I ask. It's always six o'clock now."

"Is that the reason so many tea things are put out here?" she asked.

"Yes, that's it," said the Hatter with a sigh; "it's always tea time and we've no time to wash the things between whiles."

"Then you keep moving round, I suppose?" said Alice.

"Exactly so," said the Hatter; "as the things get used up."

"But when you come to the beginning again?" Alice ventured to ask.

"Suppose we change the subject," the March Hare interrupted, yawning. "I'm getting tired of this. I vote the young lady tells us a story."

"I'm afraid I don't know one," said Alice, rather alarmed at the proposal.

"Then the Dormouse shall!" they both cried. "Wake up, Dormouse!" And they pinched it on both sides at once.

The Dormouse slowly opened his eyes. "I wasn't asleep," he said in a hoarse, feeble voice. "I heard every word you fellows were saying."

"Tell us a story!" said the March Hare.

"Yes, please do!" pleaded Alice.

"And be quick about it," said the Hatter, "or you'll be asleep again before it's done."

THE STORY

"Once upon a time there were three little sisters," the Dormouse began in a great hurry; "and their names were Elsie, Lacie, and Tillie; and they lived at the bottom of a well —"

"What did they live on?" said Alice, who always took a great interest in questions of eating and drinking.

"They lived on treacle," said the Dormouse.

"They couldn't have done that," Alice gently remarked; "they'd have been ill."

"So they were," said the Dormouse; "very ill."

Alice helped herself to some tea and bread and butter, and then turned to the Dormouse, and repeated her question.

"Why did they live at the bottom of a well?"

The Dormouse again took a minute or two to think about it, and then said, "It was a treacle well."

"There's no such thing!" Alice was beginning very angrily, but the Hatter and the March Hare went "Sh! sh!" and the Dormouse sulkily remarked, "If you can't be civil, you'd better finish the story for yourself."

"No, please go on!" Alice said very humbly; "I won't interrupt you again. I dare say there may be one."

"One, indeed!" said the Dormouse, indignantly. "And so these three little sisters — they were learning to draw, you know —"

"What did they draw?" said Alice.

"Treacle," said the Dormouse.

"But I don't understand. Where did they draw the treacle from?" asked Alice.

"You can draw water out of a water well," said the Hatter; "so I should think you could draw treacle out of a treacle well, — eh, stupid?"

"But they were in the well," Alice said to the Dormouse.

"Of course they were," said the Dormouse, "well in."

This answer confused poor Alice.

"They were learning to draw," the Dormouse went on, yawning and rubbing its eyes, for it was getting very sleepy; "and they drew all manner of things — everything that begins with an M."

"Why with an M?" said Alice.

"Why not?" said the March Hare.

Alice was silent.

The Dormouse had closed its eyes, and was going off into a dose, but, on being pinched by the Hatter, it woke up again with a little shriek, and went on: "— that begins with an M, such as muchness— you know you say things are 'much of a muchness'— did you ever see such a thing as a drawing of a muchness?"

"Really, now you ask me," said Alice, very much confused, "I don't think —"

"Then you shouldn't talk," said the Hatter.

This piece of rudeness was more than Alice could bear; she got up in great disgust, and walked off. The Dormouse fell asleep instantly

"At any rate, I'll never go there again!" said Alice. "It's the stupidest tea party I ever was at in all my life."

THE BABY SEED'S SONG

Under the Soil

"Little brown seed, O little brown brother,
Are you awake in the dark?
Here we lie cozily, close to each other,
Wake! There's the song of the lark."

The Lark

"Waken, brown seeds, awaken and dress you,
Put on your green coats and gay,
Blue sky will shine on you, sunshine caress you,
Waken! 'Tis morning, 'tis May!"

The Choice

"Little brown seed, O little brown brother,
What kind of a flower will you be?
I'll be a poppy all white like my mother,
Do be a poppy like me!
What? You, a sunflower? O how I shall miss you
When you're grown golden and high.
But I shall send all the bees up to kiss you,
Little brown brother, good-by."

THE LARK AND THE ROOK

THE LARK

"Good night, Sir Rook," said a little lark,
"The daylight fades, it will soon be dark,
I've bathed my wings in the sun's last ray,
I've sung my hymn to the parting day;
So now I haste to my quiet nook
In yon dewy meadow,—good night, Sir Rook!"

SIR ROOK

"Good night, poor Lark," said his titled friend
With a haughty toss and a distant bend,
"I also go to my rest profound,
But not to sleep on the cold, damp ground;
The fittest place for a bird like me
Is the topmost branch of yon tall pine tree.

"I opened my eyes at peep of day
And saw you taking your upward way,
Dreaming your fond romantic dreams,
An ugly speck in the sun's bright beams,
Soaring too high to be seen or heard.
And I said to myself, 'What a foolish bird.'

"I trod the park with a princely air,
I filled my crop with the richest fare,
I cawed all day 'mid a lordly crew
And I made more noise in the world than you!
The sun shone forth on my ebon wing,
I looked and wondered — good night, poor thing!"

THE LARK

"Good night, once more," said the lark's sweet voice,
"I see no cause to repent my choice.
You build your nest in the lofty pine,
But is your slumber more sweet than mine?
You make more noise in the world than I
But whose is the sweeter melody?"

PANDORA

The Little Playmate

Long ago there lived a little boy who had neither brothers nor sisters. He often longed for some one to play with.

"I am so lonely," he said one day, as he sat by the cottage door. "How I wish I had a playmate!" Just then he looked up and saw a tall stranger and a lovely little girl standing before him. Epimetheus knew by the wings on the stranger's shoes and cap that it was Mercury. "I have brought you a playmate, Epimetheus. Come, Pandora."

The little girl, who had been hanging back, came forward and took Epimetheus's hand.

"Here is your companion. But don't forget about the box, Epimetheus," and with that Mercury was gone.

"Come, dear Pandora," said Epimetheus. "Let us go into the garden and have a merry time with the children."

Off they ran together to join in the play.

THE STRANGE BOX

The first thing that Pandora saw when they came back to the cottage was a great box. "What have you in that box, Epimetheus?" she asked.

"My dear little Pandora, that is a secret. The box was left here to be kept safely. I do not know myself what is in it."

"But where did it come from?" asked Pandora.

"That is a secret, too," said Epimetheus.

"How provoking," said Pandora, "at least you can tell me how it came here."

"It was left at the door," said Epimetheus, "by a stranger who was dressed in an odd kind of cloak. He had wings on his shoes and wings on his cap."

"I know him," said Pandora. "He was Mercury, and he brought me here as well as the box. No doubt he meant it for me."

"Perhaps so," said Epimetheus.

"If I could but just peep into the box!"

"Oh, come, Pandora! Don't think any more about that box. Let us run out and have a merry time with our playmates."

"I am tired of merry times, I'll stay here."

"Just as you like. I shall go into the garden and gather figs and grapes."

Epimetheus was gone. Pandora stood looking at the box. The more she thought about it the more she wished to open it.

"I wonder what is in it," she said, looking at the golden cord which held the lid fast.

"Just a peep won't matter." She took the golden cord up in her fingers. "I think I can untie it, just a little. I'll try." As she leaned over she was sure she heard a buzzing sound inside. "What can it be?" said Pandora. "Is there something *alive* in the box? Well, yes, I will take just one peep — only one peep, and the lid shall be closed down as safely as ever. There can be no harm in one little peep." Just then Pandora gave the knot a

kind of twist: the golden cord untwined of itself and left the box unfastened.

Pandora put her hand to the lid, and was just on the point of opening the box when Epimetheus came into the room.

"What are you doing, Pandora?"

"Oh, Epimetheus, I wanted so much to see what was in this box and now that I have

untied the cord I can't lift the lid. Do help me."

"Naughty Pandora," said Epimetheus, coming to the box. "But if you must see inside, we'll lift the lid since the cord is already untied."

They lifted the lid. In a moment it seemed as if a swarm of winged creatures brushed past Pandora, taking flight out of the box.

"Ah, I am stung," cried Epimetheus. "Why have you opened this wicked box?"

"And I, too," cried Pandora, as she dropped the lid, "how it hurts. Can't we get them back? Why was I so foolish as to let them out! Can't we get them back?" The children began to cry.

HOPE

Suddenly there was a gentle little tap on the inside of the lid.

"What can that be?" cried Pandora, lifting her head. The tap came again. "Who are you?" asked Pandora. "Who are you inside of this naughty box?"

"Only lift the lid and you shall see."

"No, no," said Pandora. "I have had

enough of lifting the lid. You are inside of the box and there you shall stay."

"Ah," said the little voice. "You had much better let me out. I am not like those naughty creatures that have stings in their tails. Come, Pandora, let me out."

"Epimetheus, I think I will open the box again."

"The lid is heavy, Pandora, I will help you."

The children opened the box and out flew a beautiful winged creature. "Who are you, beautiful creature?" asked Pandora and Epimetheus in one voice.

"I am called Hope," said the little figure. "I will take away your pain." She touched the children and made them well. "And now I must fly away and help other people who have been hurt and are in trouble. I shall come back, though, whenever you need me — I promise never to desert you."

THE BROWNIES

THE BOYS LEARN ABOUT THE BROWNIES

"Children are a burden," said the tailor as he sat on his bench.

"Children are a blessing," said his mother who sat in an armchair knitting rugs.

"What have my two boys ever done for me? Look at Tommy. He does nothing but play. I have almost to pull him out of bed every morning. And there's Johnny; he might be different, but his brother leads him by the nose."

At this moment the two boys came in.

"Is there any supper, father?" asked Tommy.

"No, there is not, unless you know how to get it," said the tailor. He picked up his pipe

lying on the bench beside him and left the room.

"Is there really nothing to eat, Granny?" asked Tommy.

"No, my child, only some bread for breakfast to-morrow."

"Oh, Granny, we are so hungry," said Johnny.

"What can I do for my poor children?" said the good woman.

"Tell us a story, please, so we can forget we are hungry. We shall not think of the bread a bit if you tell us about the fairies," said Johnny.

"Tell us about the brownie that lived in your grandfather's house. What was he like?" asked Tommy.

"Like a little man," said grandmother. "He came early in the morning and lighted the fire and swept the room, and did all sorts of housework. He never would be seen and was off before they could catch him. But they could hear him playing about the house sometimes."

"Did they give him any wages, Granny?"

"No, my dear, they always set a little pan of clear water for him over night, and now and

then a bowl of bread and milk or cream. He liked that."

"Oh, Granny, where did he go?"

"The old owl in the woods knows. I do not. People go to see the owl at moonrise and ask him what they want to know."

"How fine if a brownie would come and live with us!" cried both Tommy and Johnny.

"He'd tidy the room," said Johnny.

"He'd pick up the chips," said Tommy.

"He'd sort your scraps, Granny," said Johnny.

"He'd do everything," said Tommy.

"Will you let us set out a pan of water for the brownies?" asked Johnny.

"You may set out what you like, but you must go to bed now," said Granny.

The boys brought out a pan of water. Then they climbed the ladder to their little bedroom over the kitchen.

Johnny was soon asleep, but Tommy lay awake, thinking about the brownies.

"There's an owl that lives in the grove," he said to himself. "It might be the old owl herself, and she knows where the brownie lives, Granny says. When the moon rises I'll go and find her myself."

TOMMY VISITS THE OWL

"The moon has risen," said Tommy, "and it's time for me to go."

He crept softly out into the still night.

"Hoot! hoot!" cried a voice from the grove.

"It's the old owl, I do believe," said Tommy. He ran to a big tree and looked up. There sat the owl.

"Come up, come up," she said.

Tommy waited.

"Come up here, come up here!"

Tommy climbed up the tree and sat face to

face with the owl. "Now what do you want?" she said.

"Please," said Tommy, "can you tell me

where to find the brownies and how to get one to come and live with us?"

"Hoo-o-hoo! hoo-o-hoo!" said the owl. "That's it, is it? I know of two brownies."

"Oh!" said Tommy, "where do they live?"

"In your *own* house," said the owl.

"In our house?" asked Tommy. "Where? Why do they do nothing?"

"They are idle, they are idle," said the owl, and she gave herself a shake.

"Then we don't want them," said Tommy. "What is the use of having brownies in the house if they do nothing to help us?"

"Perhaps they don't know how, as no one has told them," said the owl.

"I wish you would tell me where to find them," said Tommy. "I could tell them what to do."

"Could you?" said the owl. "Hoo-o-hoo! hoo-o-hoo!" And Tommy could not tell whether the owl was hooting or laughing.

"Of course I could," said Tommy. "They might get up early in the morning and sweep the floor. They might light the fire, and they might spread the table, before my father comes downstairs. Oh, there's lots to do."

"So there is," said the owl. "Well, I can tell you where to find one of the brownies. He can tell you where to find his brother. Now listen. Go to the north side of the pond where the moon is shining on the water. Turn yourself around three times and say:—

"'Twist me and turn me and show me the elf,
I looked in the water and saw ——'

Then look in the water and think of a word which rimes with *elf*."

"Well, I'll do as you say," said Tommy. "Good-by, and thank you, Old Owl."

Tommy knew the place well, for there was a fine echo there. He ran to the pond and turned himself around three times, as the old owl had told him to do, and said:—

"Twist me and turn me and show me the elf,
I looked in the water and saw ——"

Tommy looked in and saw *himself*. "Why, there is no one but myself, I can't think of the right word, I must have done it wrong."

"Wrong," said the echo.

"Hold your tongue," cried Tommy. "Matters are bad enough of themselves. Belf, Celf, Delf, Felf, Gelf, Jelf — there can't be a word

to fit it. And then to look for a brownie and see nothing but myself."

"Myself," said the echo.

"Will you be quiet?" said Tommy. "If you would tell me the word, it would help. But you roar *myself* at me, and it neither rimes nor runs — it *does* rime, though — and it runs, too. What can it mean? The old owl knows. I'll go back and ask her."

"Ask her," said the echo.

"Didn't I say I should," said Tommy. "I wonder I didn't think of it long ago."

"Go," said the echo.

"Yes, go to sleep," said Tommy to the echo. "I am going back to the owl."

The Grove

"O-hoo!" said the owl, "did you find out the word?"

"No," said Tommy. "I could find no word that would rime with elf but *myself*."

"Well, that's the word," said the owl. "Now, do you know where your brother is?"

"At home in bed," said Tommy.

"Then all your questions are answered. Good night," and the owl began to shake her feathers.

"Don't go yet. I do not understand you. I am not a brownie, am I?"

"Oh, yes, you are, and a very idle one, too. All children are brownies."

"But are there really no brownies, but children?" asked Tommy.

"No, there are not. Now, listen to me, Tommy. The brownies are little things. When they are idle they are called boggarts, and they are a burden to the house they live in. When they are useful they are brownies, and are a blessing to every one."

"I'll be a brownie," said Tommy. "I won't be a boggart. Now I'll go home and tell Johnny." And away he went.

ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP

THE MAGICIAN MEETS ALADDIN

There was once an African magician who came to Persia to find a wonderful lamp. This lamp was hidden in a cave beneath the earth. The magician knew that a dangerous passage led to the cave, and he did not wish to risk his life in order to get the lamp. So he made friends with a Persian boy, whom he met one day on the street. The boy's name was Aladdin.

"Are you not the son of Mustapha, the tailor?" he asked Aladdin.

"I am, sir," said Aladdin, "but my father died long ago."

"Alas, alas! I am sorry to hear that. I am your uncle, your father's brother. Go to your mother and tell her I am coming to see her."

Aladdin ran home in great haste.

ALADDIN'S HOME

"Mother, mother," called Aladdin, "I met a stranger in the street, who says he is my uncle. He is coming to see you."

"Indeed, child, your father had a brother, but I always thought he was dead."

"Here he comes, now, mother," said Aladdin, looking out the window; "and he is laden with wine and fruit." Aladdin ran to open the door for the stranger.

"My brother's house at last," said the magician. "Do not be surprised at not seeing me before. I have been out of the country for forty years. But come, tell me something about this boy, my nephew."

"Ah, Aladdin, I fear, is an idle fellow. He will learn no trade. In spite of my tears, he will not mend his ways."

"I am sorry to hear this; however, we must see what can be done. Aladdin, what do you say to having a shop? I will furnish one for you with fine linens and silks."

Aladdin never liked work, but he seemed pleased with this plan.

"You are very kind, sir," said Aladdin.

"Very well. To-morrow I will buy you a new suit of clothes and then we will open the shop. And now, good-by."

The Cave

The next morning the magician came for Aladdin.

"We will spend the day in the country, Aladdin, and to-morrow we will buy the shop."

On and on they walked till they came to a valley between the mountains. They stopped before a square, flat stone which marked the opening to a passage down under the ground.

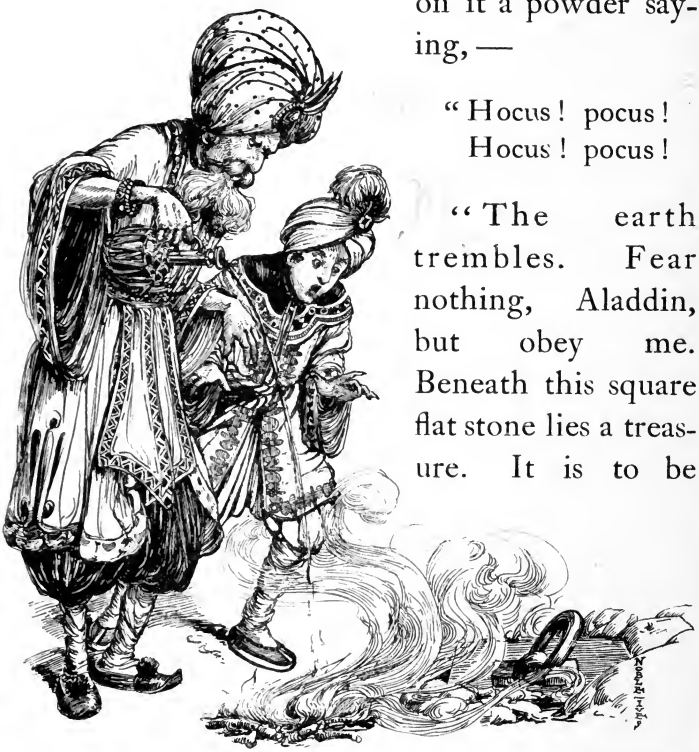
"Aladdin, we will go no farther," said the magician. "I will show you something wonderful. Gather up all the loose sticks you see, and I will kindle a fire."

There were so many sticks lying about that

Aladdin soon had enough. The magician lighted the fire. As it blazed up, he threw on it a powder saying, —

"Hocus! pocus!
Hocus! pocus!

"The earth trembles. Fear nothing, Aladdin, but obey me. Beneath this square flat stone lies a treasure. It is to be



yours, but in order to get it you must do exactly as I tell you. Take hold of this ring and lift up that stone."

"I am not strong enough to lift that stone, uncle," said Aladdin.

"It will come quite easily," said the magician. To Aladdin's surprise he raised the stone with little effort. "You must go down into this cave," said the magician. "At the foot of these stairs you will find an open door leading into three halls. Pass through these halls, but do not so much as touch *anything* or you will die instantly. Walk on, until you come to a garden. Cross the garden to a terrace where you will see a niche in which is a lighted lamp. Blow out the light and put the lamp into your pocket. Here, take this ring, and good fortune go with you."

Down went Aladdin into the passage.

"Make haste, make haste," called the magician. "Touch nothing as you go. (It's a wonderful lamp," he said to himself. "It will make me the most powerful man in all the world. I will get it in my own hand, and then I will put the boy out of the way. . . . Ah, here you are back! Make haste, give me the lamp and then I will help you out."

"No," said Aladdin, "help me out first, and then I will give you the lamp."

"Give me the lamp, I say," said the magician.

"I will *not* give it to you till I get out of the cave."

"Wretch!" said the magician, who was now very angry. "You shall be punished for this. You shall never leave that cave.

"Hocus! pocus!
Hocus! pocus!"

And with that the stone returned to its place and Aladdin was left in the cave.

For two days Aladdin wandered about the cave without finding anything to eat or drink. "I am afraid I shall never see the light again," he said. He clapped his hands together. As he did so he rubbed the ring which the magician had put upon his finger. To his surprise a genie rose up and stood before him.

"I am the slave of the ring. I am ready to obey you. What do you wish me to do?"

"Whoever you are," said Aladdin, "take me from this place if you can."

Aladdin had scarcely said these words before he found himself outside the cave just where the magician had stood.

THE WONDERFUL LAMP

As soon as his eyes could bear the light Aladdin went home and told his mother all that had happened.

"Alas, mother, I found myself in a dark cave. I could not get out. Then I clasped my hands in prayer and as I did so I rubbed this ring which the stranger gave me. A frightful genie stood before me in a moment and asked me what I wanted. 'Take me from this place,' I said. In the twinkling of an eye I found myself outside of the cave. And now, mother, come and look at the lamp and the fruits that I gathered in the garden."

"They are pretty things, Aladdin."

"I am very hungry, mother, I should like something to eat."

"Alas, my child," said his mother, "I have not a bite of bread for you to eat, but I have a little cotton which I have spun. Wait here and I will go and sell it and buy some food."

"Keep your cotton, mother," said Aladdin. "I will go out and sell this lamp which I found in the cave."

"Very well, but let me clean it first — it is very dirty," she said, giving the lamp a hard rub.

No sooner had she done this than a frightful genie appeared before her and said in a voice like thunder: "I am the slave of the lamp. I am ready to obey you."

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried his mother.

"A magic lamp, a wonderful lamp!" called out Aladdin as he snatched it from his mother's hand.

"We are hungry, bring us some food."

The genie disappeared, but came back in a moment with everything ready for a feast.

"What does this mean, Aladdin?"

"Don't be frightened, mother. Come with me and eat. This food will strengthen you."

So they sat down to the feast and Aladdin told his mother about the wonderful lamp.

"It's the one the stranger wished to get, mother. It was in the cave, but he was afraid to go after it himself, so he sent me. I would not give it to him before I came out of the cave, and the spell was broken. Mother, it's the most wonderful lamp in the whole world."

"Have nothing to do with the lamp, my child, it is evil and will bring harm to both of us. Sell it."

"No, I shall not sell it, mother. Chance has made us know its wonderful power and we will use it for our good."

KING ALFRED

THE KING AND THE COWHERD

Many years ago the people of England were in great trouble.

The cruel Danes landed upon their shores and tried to drive them out of their country and capture the king.

Good King Alfred was a brave man. With a small army and little money, he fought battle after battle with these savage people. But he did not succeed in driving them out of England, and at last was forced to flee for his life. Homeless and all alone, he wandered for many months through the wild parts of his country.

At last he said, "I would rather lose my life fighting these Danes than die here in the woods from cold and hunger. I will go to my soldiers and gather them together for one last battle." So the good king left the forest and wandered about, not knowing in the least where he was. He had not gone far when he met an old man driving his cattle home from the field.

"My good man," said King Alfred, "will you allow me to lodge with your cattle for the night? I have neither house nor money."

"How do I know you will not steal my cattle?" asked the old man, looking him over. "Perhaps you are a Dane."

"I am no Dane, my good man," said the king. "I am a Saxon."

"Well, then, you are welcome to a lodging to-night. Perhaps you would like some food."

"That I should," said the king. "I should be thankful for a crust of bread."

"Bread? You'll get nothing but oaten cakes from my good wife to-night."

"I shall be thankful for anything to eat."

"Follow me, then."

The old man led the king over a rough cattle track to the hut where he and his good wife lived.

The Good Wife

"My good wife, I have brought home a stranger. He asked food and shelter for the night."

"Food and shelter? Have I nothing more to do than to give food and shelter to a stranger?" asked the old dame.

"He is a Saxon, good wife, and it will be a charity to feed him," said the old man; and taking a large oaten cake, he put it upon a wooden plate and handed it to the king. "Eat, you are hungry," he said. "Your clothes are the clothes of a beggar, but I believe you are something more in disguise — perhaps you are a lord. Is it true?"

"I am neither a beggar nor a lord. I am your King Alfred, for whom the Danes are searching. Do not betray me to any one; not even to your good wife."

"Not for all the treasures in England," cried the old man.

The Oaten Cakes

The king stayed all winter in the hut with the cowherd and his wife. He spent most of the time in hunting. One day a storm came up and the king could not go out of doors. So he set himself to make a new stock of arrows, while the good wife kneaded some oaten cake for supper.

"Now, if you want oaten cake for supper, stranger," said the old woman, "you must leave off mending your arrows and give me some help. These cakes must be watched. Do you hear?"

"Yes, my good dame, they shall be watched," said the king.

"They must be watched *well*, for they are quick to burn. Do you hear?"

"Yes, my good dame, they shall be watched *well*," answered the king, taking a minute to look up from the arrow he was mending.

"You might as well do that as sit mending arrows and dreaming over the fire. I have plenty to do besides making cakes, but I'm not sure that I should leave my fine cakes to such a lazy fellow as you are."

"Burnt and black, I say. Be off!"

"They shall be watched carefully, good dame."

"Very well, then, that's some work for you to do instead of dreaming. Mind you, do it well." And the good wife left the king in charge as she went out of the cottage.

"Ay, my good woman! I have plenty of work to do, and it must be done well, or it will be worse for all of us. Oh, my poor people! Here I am, hiding away. What can I do to help you? Oh, if I ever —"

At this moment the old woman rushed into the hut.

"The cakes are burning! I smelt them burning before I got to the house. Shame on you, you good-for-nothing! Look at them — burnt *black!*" And with that she slapped the king on the cheek. "Burnt and black, I say. Be off! I shall have nothing more to do with such a lazy fellow. Be off!"

The king rose and walked toward the door just as a loud rap was heard. "What's that?" asked the old woman.

"A stranger," answered the king, and he opened the door.

"Oh, my friend — my good friend!" said the

king, as soon as he saw who the stranger was. "What news? What news?"

"Good news," said the stranger. "We have fought a battle and have won."

"This is good news, indeed," said the king.

"You must come with me. All England is asking for their king," continued the stranger.

"The king, the king, what does it mean?" said the good dame, looking anxiously at the two men.

"We shall conquer now. I am ready."

"Mercy! the king, — King Alfred — burned my cakes black, and I boxed his ears for it — to think of it! The king! Our good king!"

"It is true, my good dame, I let your cakes burn, but you shall have a gold piece for every one. I am ready. There is much work yet to be done." And King Alfred and his friend left the hut together.

"Our good King Alfred — and I never knew!" said the woman, as she watched the king and his companion take the road to the forest.

THE FISHERMAN AND THE GENIE

THE FISHERMAN CASTS HIS NET

One day a fisherman went out early to fish. He cast his net and waited awhile; then he drew it to the shore. It was very heavy. "A good draft of fishes this time," he thought as he pulled hard. Yet, when he got it to shore, he found he had dragged up an old basket filled with mud and sand.

He threw his net in again and waited. When he thought it was time he drew it in again. It was heavier than before. "There's no doubt about a good haul this time," he said

to himself. But upon opening the net, he found it contained nothing but stones and shells and seaweed.

"I shall try once more," said the fisherman, "for I must get something to take home to my wife and children." So saying, he threw the net in for the third time and waited. Once more the net was so heavy that he could scarcely draw it in. "Fortune is with me this time."

At last he got it in. "What's this? What have I brought up in my net this time?" He looked and found he had brought up a copper jar, with a stopper to it. He shook the jar, but it seemed empty. "Strange, indeed! Out with the stopper!"

He looked into the jar, but could see nothing. "Empty! At any rate I can sell it in the market where I may get enough for it to buy some corn." Just as he finished speaking he saw a light smoke come out of the jar and rise slowly. Up, up it went and as it rose it grew thicker and heavier until it was a great column. "Hm, a cloud of smoke for all my trouble." The column changed slowly and took the form of a great giant, the great giant changed slowly and took the form of a genie.

"Ah, it's good to be free, again," said the genie, stretching himself. "And now, fisherman, I am going to kill you."

"Kill me!" said the fisherman, "did I not free you from the jar? Why do you wish to kill me?"

"I will tell you. Three hundred years ago I was put into that jar for punishment. I would not obey the laws of the king, and so I was shut up in that jar and the jar was given to a genie, who threw it into the sea. I hoped that some one would fish up the jar and set me free."

"Alas, that I should have done it!" said the fisherman.

"For one hundred years I was a prisoner in the jar. I would have made the one who set me free a rich man, but no one came. Another hundred years went by and still I lay there a prisoner at the bottom of the sea. I would have made the one who set me free during that time a *king*. Still no one came. Then I lost patience. I waited another hundred years —and then I swore a great oath that I would

kill the one who set me free. I will now kill you."

"Have mercy, genie. If I had not freed

you, you would still be a prisoner."

"Say no more. I am going to kill you."

"If you mean to kill me, then I must die," said the poor fisherman. "But before I die let me ask you one question."

"One question, then. Make haste."

"Did you really come out of that jar?"

"How can you ask me? Certainly I did."

"I cannot believe it. You are so big and the jar is so small. How could such a mighty genie as you are get into such a little jar? No, I cannot believe it."

"You do not believe it?"

"No, I must see you do it with my own eyes."

"See me do it, then."

At that, the genie folded himself once more in a thick veil of smoke, which decended slowly into the jar until not one bit of the cloud could be seen.

"Now, do you believe it?" came a voice from inside the jar.

"Indeed I do," said the fisherman, as he clapped the stopper on the jar, "and I think you'd better stay right where you are for another hundred years."

THE KNIGHT OF THE SILVER SHIELD

Sir Roland is chosen Guard

There was once a splendid castle in a forest. The forest was dark and dangerous and many cruel giants lived in it. In this castle lived a company of knights who were kept there to help travelers passing through the forest and to fight with the giants whenever they could.

Each of these knights wore a beautiful suit of armor and carried a long spear, while over his helmet there floated a great red plume. But the most wonderful thing about the knights' armor was their shields. They were made of silver, and when any of the knights fought a hard battle and won it, or when he went on some hard errand for the lord of the castle and was successful, his shield would grow brighter, and in the center of it one could see something like a golden star shining in its very heart.

There came a time when the worst of the giants made ready to fight the knights. Sir

Roland, a young knight, was most eager for this battle, which, he thought, would be the great opportunity of his life. He hoped that he would be put in the most dangerous place of all.

When the lord of the castle came to Sir Roland, he said: "One brave knight must stay behind and guard the gateway of the castle. It is you, Sir Roland. You are one of the youngest, and I have chosen you for this."

Sir Roland was disappointed, but he said nothing. He went quietly to look after his duties at the gateway. "Keep guard over the gate until we return, and let *no one* enter the castle," said the lord of the castle as he rode away with the knights.

Sir Roland at the Gateway

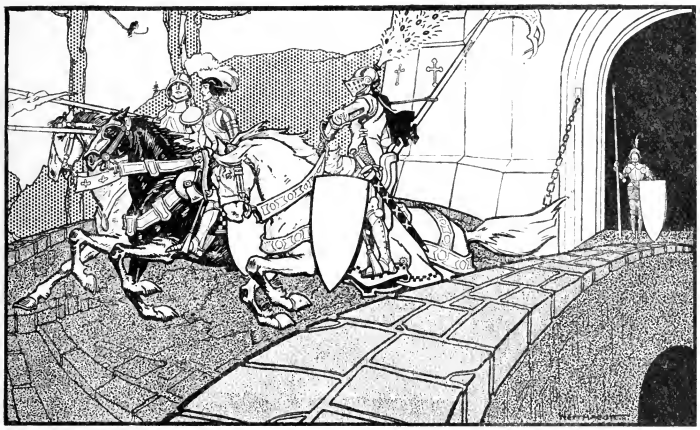
Sir Roland stood looking after them thinking how happy he would be if he were on the way to battle with them. At last he saw one of the knights come limping down the path. "I have been hurt," he said, "so that I can fight no more. But I could watch at this gate for you if you would like to go back in my place."

"I should like to go," said Sir Roland, "but

a knight belongs where his lord has put him. My place is here at the gate, and I cannot open it for you. Your place is at the battle."

The knight turned about and went into the forest.

Then there came an old beggar woman down the path to the castle. She asked Sir Roland if



she might come in and have some food. Sir Roland told her that no one could enter the castle that day, but he said that he would send a servant out to her with food. "You may sit and rest as long as you wish."

"I have been in the forest where the battle is going on," she said, while waiting for her food.

"And how do you think it is going?" asked Sir Roland.

"Badly for the knights, I am afraid. The giants are fighting hard. I should think *you* had better go and help your friends."

"I should like to go, indeed," said Sir Roland, "but I am set to guard the gateway of the castle and I cannot leave."

"One fresh knight would make a great difference. I suppose that you are one of the kind of knights who like to keep out of the fighting. You are lucky to have so good an excuse for staying at home." And she laughed as she took the food given to her and went away.

It was not long before he heard some one calling outside. He opened the gate and saw a little old man standing at the other end of the drawbridge. "Why are you knocking here?" asked Sir Roland. "The castle is closed to-day."

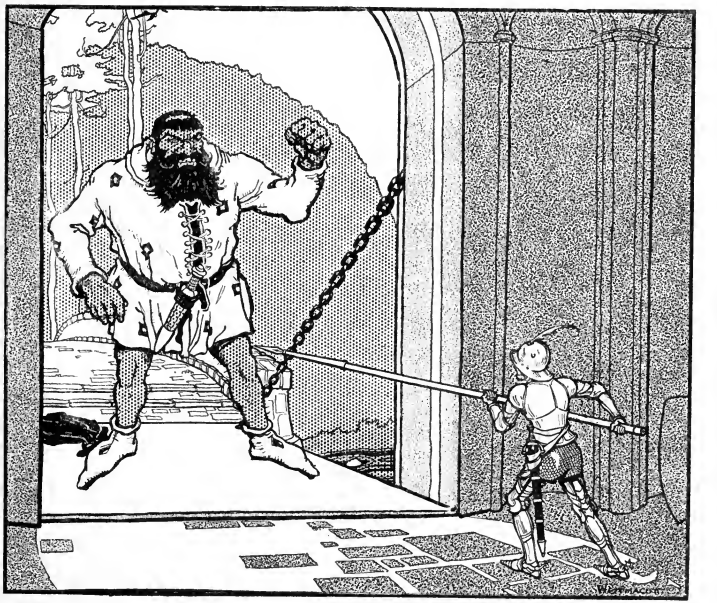
"Are you Sir Roland?" asked the little old man.

"Yes," said Sir Roland.

"Then you ought not to be staying here when your lord and his knights are having so hard a struggle with the giants. Listen to me. I have brought you a magic sword. See! This is the sword of all swords. It is for you. Leave

your idling here by the castle gate and carry it to the battle. Nothing can stand before it. When you lift it the giants will fall back, your lord will be saved, and you will be the victorious knight and soon become lord of this castle."

It seemed so wonderful to Sir Roland that the sword should be brought to him, that he reached out his hand as though he would take it. As he did so the little old man came forward as if to go into the castle. "It is for you; take it and win."

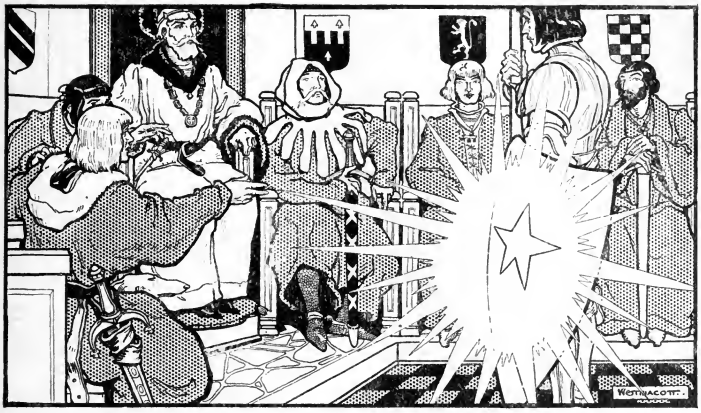


Just then Sir Roland remembered that he had been set to guard the gate. "No," he called out so loudly that the old man stopped suddenly. He struck the great bell and the servants inside began to pull the chains of the drawbridge. "You cannot come across this drawbridge."

Then Sir Roland saw a wonderful thing. The little old man threw off his cloak. As he did so he grew bigger and bigger until he was as tall as any giant in the forest. Then Sir Roland knew that this must be one of the giants, and that he had come to make his way into the castle while the knights were fighting. The giant shook his fist and, knowing that he could do nothing more, he went back into the forest.

"I shall not open the gate again," said Sir Roland. Just then he heard the sound that made him spring forward in joy. It was the bugle of the lord of the castle and his knights. He was sure they had won the fight. So he gave the signal to let down the drawbridge and he greeted them all as they passed in over the bridge. When he had closed the gate and fastened it he followed them into the hall of the castle.

THE GOLDEN STAR



The lord of the castle took his place on the highest seat, with the other knights about him. Sir Roland came forward to give up the key of the gate and to tell what he had done that day. The lord of the castle bowed to him as a sign to begin, but just as he began to speak, one of the knights cried out: —

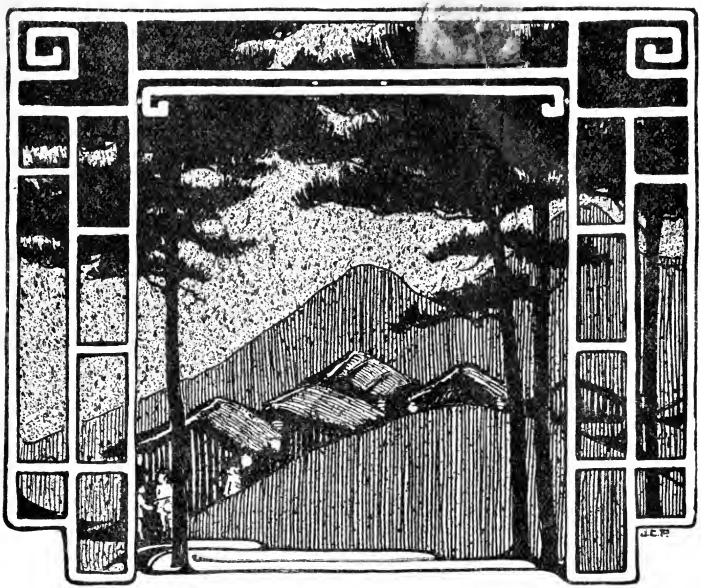
"The shield! The shield! Sir Roland's shield!"

Every one turned and looked at the shield which Sir Roland carried on his left arm. There, shining from the center, was the golden star of knighthood.

"Speak, Sir Knight," said the lord of the castle. "Tell us all that happened to-day at the gate. Were you attacked? Did any giants come? Did you fight them alone?"

"No, my lord," said Sir Roland, "only one giant has been here and he went away silently when he found he could not enter." Then he told them what had happened through the day.

"Men may make mistakes," said the lord of the castle, "but our silver shields, never! Sir Roland has fought and won the hardest battle of all to-day."



THE FEAST OF LANTERNS

WANG CHI GOES TO THE MOUNTAIN

Wang Chi was only a poor man, but he was happy with a wife and two children to love. He worked all day in the fields and was content to come home at night to the bowl of rice which his wife always had ready for him.

One morning as he was setting out to his work, his little son, Han Chung, came running out of the cottage after him. "Father," he called, "mother wants you to bring home some firewood."

"I shall have to go up on the mountain for it at noon," said Wang Chi. "Go and bring me my ax, Han Chung."

"But you won't stay long, will you, father?" asked little Ho-Seen-Ko, as she came toward him. "Remember it is the Feast of Lanterns to-night, and we want you to come back and light ours for us. Look!" She held up her lantern for her father to see, "Red, black, and yellow!"

"It is very pretty, my child. But I must be off. Here comes Han Chung with my ax. Thank you, my boy."

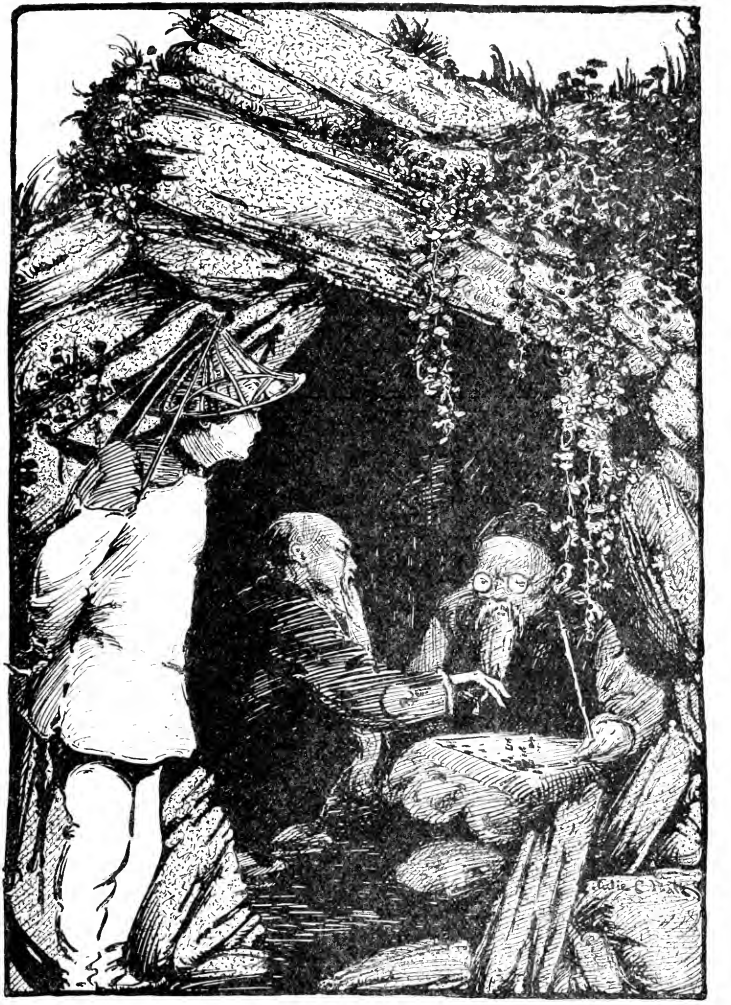
"See *my* lantern, big, round, and all crimson," said Han Chung.

"They are both pretty, very pretty. I'm not likely to forget. You children have talked of nothing else for a month. I shall be back in time to light them, never fear," and off he went.

"Remember, father," called the children as they watched him make his way across the fields. "*Don't fall asleep on the mountain.*"

The Genii of the Mountain

Wang Chi started up the mountain slope to find a small tree for firewood. He walked a



The Genii of the Mountain.

long, long way, and at last saw one growing at the mouth of a cave.

"This will be just the thing," he said to himself, "I'll peep into this cave first to see if it is empty." He looked in. "Some one is here. It is so dark I cannot make out who it is. Now I see! Ah, two old men playing chess. What long white beards they have. I'll just step into the cave. As soon as they look up I can ask them if I may chop down a tree."

He went in and stood watching the two men play. They did not appear to see him. "These are strange creatures," he said half aloud. "They do not seem to know that I am here." He became so interested in the game that he put down his ax and sat on the floor so that he would be better able to watch it.

Wang Chi could now see clearly two old men seated on the ground before a stone on which rested a chessboard. On one corner of the chessboard lay a heap of small brown objects which looked to him more like date stones than anything else. Every few minutes each player put one of the brown objects into his mouth, and, without saying a word, went on with the game.

"Date stones?" asked Wang Chi, pointing. The two old men looked up, and, for the first time, saw Wang Chi.

"Better," said one, shaking his head.

"More wonderful," said the second, taking one, and at the same time putting one into Wang Chi's mouth.

"That was a delicious sweetmeat, stranger," said Wang Chi. "I was hungry and thirsty when I came into this cave, but it has taken both my hunger and thirst away. I feel quite comforted and refreshed. I thank you. It is wonderful, stranger. Things seem to be changed since I ate your dainty morsel. I see your beards have grown longer, they grow longer and longer, — they sweep the floor of the cave — they have even found their way out of the door. I hope my beard will never grow as quickly," said Wang Chi as he rose to go.

"Our beards have not grown quickly, young man," said one of the old men.

"How long is it since you came here?" asked the other.

"About half an hour," said Wang Chi. "But what is the meaning of this? My ax crumbles to dust beneath my fingers."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the first one of the players as he pointed to the little brown sweetmeats on the table. "Half an hour or half a century are all alike to him who tastes of these."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the second. "Go down into your village and see what has happened since you left it." Wang Chi went quickly out of the cave down the mountain toward his home.

WANG CHI GOES BACK TO HIS VILLAGE

He found a busy town where his own village had been. "How strange it all seems. Am I myself? Where is my wife? Where are Han Chung and Ho-Seen-Ko? Strange faces everywhere. Surely, this is my home I left but this morning. It is the Feast of the Lanterns. They are making ready everywhere for the procession. What has happened?" In vain he looked for his house, his wife, his children.

As he wandered along, he met a very, very old woman.

"My good woman," he said, "can you tell me where to find my wife and children, Han Chung and Ho-Seen-Ko?"

"Han Chung and Ho-Seen-Ko? I remember

hearing those names long ago," said the good woman. "Ah, yes! I well remember my grandmother saying that when *she* was a tiny girl, a poor young man went to the forest on the mountain to chop firewood. He was spirited away by the genii of the mountain on the day of the Feast of Lanterns, leaving his wife and two little children. And he never came back."

"Alas, alas, what has happened since I left here?" said poor Wang Chi. As he went on his way, with a heavy heart, he met a man carrying an armful of colored lanterns home for his children.

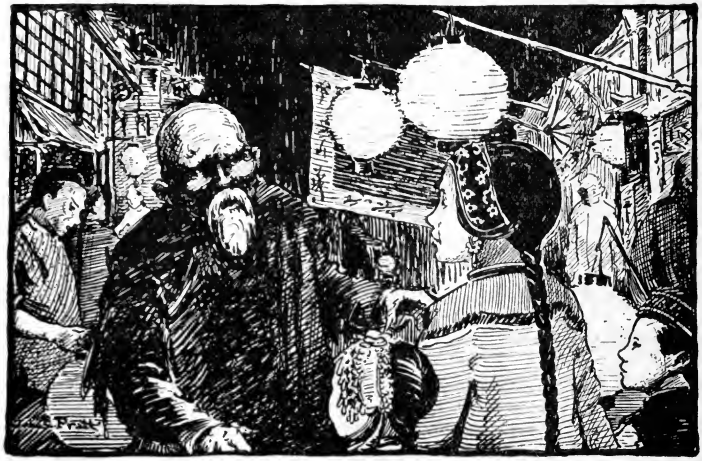
"You have pretty lanterns, stranger — red, black, and yellow, and one all crimson. Would that I could share the Feast with my children to-night."

"Your children?" said the stranger.

"Yes, my Han Chung and Ho-Seen-Ko. Do you not know them? Have you never heard their names?"

"Ah, Han Chung and Ho-Seen-Ko! Yes they will be in the procession to-night with their mother. Wait here and you will see them on their way to join the others." Wang Chi

waited. At last he saw three figures come down the street. A boy and a girl, dressed like his own children, were walking on either side of a young woman.



He went quickly toward them. But he soon discovered his mistake. "These are not my wife and children. What does all this mean? Who are you? You are dressed like my wife and children and yet you are not they."

"We do this every year at the Feast of the Lantern in memory of poor little Han Chung and Ho-Seen-Ko and their mother."

"And what of them?" asked Wang Chi.

"Ah, many, many years ago their poor father

was spirited away by the genii of the mountain, on the night of the Feast of Lanterns, leaving them with little food to eat. We do this to remind people to care for those who are left fatherless."

Poor Wang Chi turned with a heavy heart. "It is all changed and I am changed. What does it mean? I will go back to the mountain and ask the old men to help me."

Wang Chi goes back to the Cave

"Strangers," said Wang Chi, "I have come to you for help. I was myself when I came to your cave this morning, but I have changed since then and everything else has changed and I come back to you with a heavy heart."

"We can do nothing for you," said one of the players.

"Go away and do not disturb us," said the other.

But Wang Chi would not go.

"I beg of you, strangers. I have no home, no wife, no children."

"Very well, what is it you wish?"

"I want to go back to the days when my wife and children were here."

"Then you must be willing to do as we tell you."

"I will do anything in the world to get back my family."

"You must go to the White Hare of the Moon and ask him for a bottle of the water of life," said one. "If you drink that you will live forever."

"But I do not want to live forever. I wish to go back and live in the days when my wife and children were here."

"Go to the Sky Dragon then," said the other, "get some of the water out of his mouth."

"And where are they to be found?" asked Wang Chi.

"In the moon, of course," said one.

"In the sky, of course," said the other. "Go now, and leave us in peace."

THE SKY DRAGON

After a long journey through the air, Wang Chi reached the Sky Dragon's cloud cave. "I must bring the Dragon out and make him breathe water instead of fire. I'll strike a light and soon the grass in front of his cave will be ablaze."

The Sky Dragon put his head out to see what was the matter.

"Ho, ho," said the Dragon when he saw what Wang Chi had done. "I can soon change all that." He breathed, and a stream of water

came from his mouth. Wang Chi soon filled a bottle.

"Good fortune!" said Wang Chi. "Now to the White Hare of the Moon." With that he sailed away.

THE WHITE HARE OF THE MOON

When Wang Chi reached the hut where the White Hare of the Moon lived he knocked at the door. "Come in," said the White Hare. Wang Chi went into the hut.

"What do you want?"

"I have come to you for a bottle of the water of life," said Wang Chi.

"I see, I see," said the White Hare. Then he opened two windows at the back of the hut. "Come, sir, look through each one of these windows in turn and tell me what you see."

Wang Chi went to the first window. "I can see a great many homes, and people, and streets. Why, this is the town I was in yesterday. It has taken the place of my old village, how can this be?"

"Oh, that is my secret," said the wise old Hare. "Now do you want to go back there?"

"No, no," said Wang Chi, shaking his head.

"Then close the window. That is the window of the Present. Now look through the other. It is the window of the Past. Tell me what you see."

"I see my dear own little village and my wife. And there are Han Chung and Ho-Seen-Ko jumping about her as she hangs up the colored lanterns for the feast to-night. Let me go to them," cried Wang Chi.

"You can't do that till you get a bottle of water from the mouth of the Sky Dragon."

"I have it here."

"Then give it to me."

He took the bottle and poured a few drops of it into a glass which was half filled with water of life.

"Drink this and you'll live once more in the past. You will find your own dear village again and your wife and children just as they were the morning you left them to go to the mountain."

Wang Chi drank every drop. The moment he did so the window grew larger. "I see some steps leading down to a village street. It is my own dear little village." He rushed through it and ran toward his home.

A Feast of Lanterns at Home

"Father won't be in time to light the lanterns after all," said Han Chung to his little sister. "Something keeps him on the mountain."

"I will take the taper, my children, and light the lanterns over the door," said the mother.

"Why, here is father now," called out Ho-Seen-Ko. "What has kept you so long, father?"

"We were about to light the lanterns," said Han Chung. "Where have you been?" and

the children wondered why he embraced them so eagerly.

"Never mind about that now. I will tell you some other time. Come, let's light *all* the lanterns for the procession and we will make this the *merriest* feast we have ever had."

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Any exercise which helps toward making reading a *real* communication to the child, furthers a sympathetic approach to a vivid reality without which clear and effective reading is impossible. Dramatization, more than any other form of exercise, gives the child an opportunity to enter into the life of the characters in the story; in fact, through his acting, he becomes himself a part of every incident and event of which he has read. It is in this way that dramatizing, if used at all, can be made to serve the purpose of intelligent and expressive reading.

The division of the stories, in the printing, into dramatic units, is merely a device to help in planning the play. The staging should be the simplest; only such scant material as the classroom affords need be used. To the children "The play's the thing."

Suggestions:

(1) Read the story through as a regular reading lesson.

(2) Tell the story in your own words.

(3) How many characters? Name them.

(4) Tell one thing you have learned about each. Ex. *sly* fox, *haughty* hare, *brave* lion, etc. If you were playing these parts, how would you represent the *sly* fox; *haughty* hare; the *brave* lion?

(5) What season of the year is it? What action would give a hint of spring? of winter? of summer? etc.

(6) Play the story from memory.

(7) Read it again as a regular reading lesson.

As a basis for oral and written English work these stories may be very helpful.