

Andersen's
Fairy Tales



by
Hans Andersen

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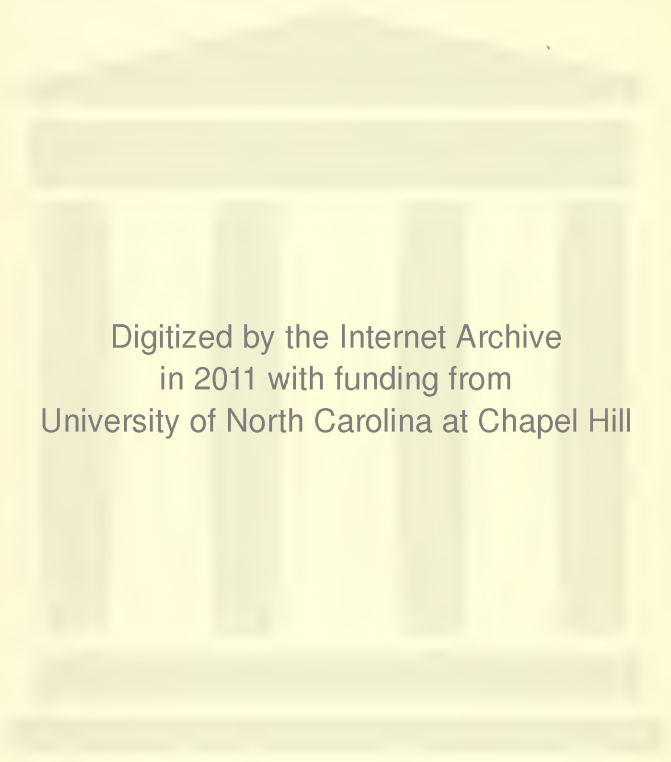
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Fairy Tales and Stories ❧ ❧

❧ **By Hans Christian Andersen**

Translated by Dr. H. W. Dulcken ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧



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CONTENTS.

-	The Silver Shilling.....	5
	The Old Church Bell.....	9
	The Snail and the Rose Tree.....	14
-	Little Ida's Flowers.....	16
	The Tinder-Box	23
	Great Claus and Little Claus.....	29
	Thumbelina	40
	The Goloshes of Fortune.....	50
	The Hardy Tin Soldier.....	76
	The Story of a Mother.....	80
-	The Daisy.....	85
-	A Great Grief.....	89
-	The Shirt Collar.....	91
	Ole-Luk-Oie	93
-	The Beetle.....	103
-	What the Old Man Does is Always Right.....	111
-	Good Humor.....	116
-	Children's Prattle.....	120
	The Flying Trunk.....	122
+	The Last Pearl.....	127
	The Storks.....	130
-	Grandmother	134
-	The Ugly Duckling.....	136
+	The Loveliest Rose in the World.....	145
	Holger Danske.....	147
-	The Puppet Showman.....	152
	A Picture from the Fortress Wall.....	156
-	In the Duck Yard.....	157
	The Red Shoes.....	162
-	Soup on a Sausage-Peg.....	168
-	The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweeper.....	181
-	The Old Street Lamp.....	186
-	The Lovers.....	193
	Little Tuk.....	195

PZ 8
An 22

—	The Flax.....	199
	The Girl who Trod on the Loaf.....	203
	The Money-Pig.....	211
—	The Darning-Needle.....	214
—	The Fir Tree.....	217
—	Something	225
—	A Leaf from the Sky.....	231
—	The Jewish Girl.....	234
—	The Elder Tree Mother.....	239
—	The Farmyard Cock and the Weather Cock.....	246
—	The Old Gravestone.....	248
—	The Old Bachelor's Nightcap.....	251
	A Rose from the Grave of Homer.....	264
	The Wind Tells about Waldemar Daa and His Daughters....	265
—	Five Out of One Shell.....	276
—	The Metal Pig.....	279
	The Snow Queen—In Seven Stories.....	290
	The Nightingale.....	320
—	The Neighboring Families.....	329
	The Little Match Girl.....	338
	The Elf Hill.....	340
—	The Buckwheat.....	347
—	The Old House.....	349
—	The Happy Family.....	356
	The Rose-Elf.....	359
—	The Shadow.....	364
	The Angel.....	376
—	Twelve by the Mail.....	378
	What the Moon Saw.....	382

ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES.

THE SILVER SHILLING.

There was once a Shilling. He came out quite bright from the Mint, and sprang up, and rang out, "Hurrah! now I'm off into the wide world." And into the wide world he certainly went.

The child held him with soft, warm hands; the miser clutched him in a cold, avaricious palm; the old man turned him goodness knows how many times before parting with him; while careless youth rolled him lightly away. The Shilling was of silver, and had very little copper about him; he had been now a whole year in the world—that is to say, in the country in which he had been struck. But one day he started on his foreign travels; he was the last native coin in the purse borne by his traveling master. The gentleman himself was not aware that he still had this coin until he came across it by chance.

"Why, here's a shilling from home left to me," he said. "Well, he can make the journey with me."

And the Shilling rattled and jumped for joy as it was thrust back into the purse. So here it lay among strange companions, who came and went, each making room for a successor; but the Shilling from home always remained in the bag, which was a distinction for it.

Several weeks had gone by, and the Shilling had traveled far out into the world without exactly knowing where he was, though he learned from the other coins that they were French or Italian. One said they were in such and such a town, another that they had reached such and such a spot; but the Shilling could form no idea of all this. He who has his head in a bag sees nothing; and this was the case with

the Shilling. But one day, as he lay there, he noticed that the purse was not shut, and so he crept forward to the opening, to take a look around. He ought not to have done so; but he was inquisitive, and people often have to pay for that. He slipped out into the fob; and when the purse was taken out at night the Shilling remained behind, and was sent out into the passage with the clothes. There he fell upon the floor; no one heard it, no one saw it.

Next morning the clothes were carried back into the room; the gentleman put them on, and continued his journey, while the Shilling remained behind. The coin was found, and was required to go into service again, so he was sent out with three other coins.

"It is a pleasant thing to look about one in the world," thought the Shilling, "and to get to know strange people and foreign customs."

And now began the history of the Shilling, as told by himself.

"'Away with him, he's bad—no use!' These words went through and through me," said the Shilling. "I knew I sounded well and had been properly coined. The people were certainly mistaken. They could not mean me! but, yes, they did mean me. I was the one of whom they said, 'He's bad—he's no good.' 'I must get rid of that fellow in the dark,' said the man who had received me; and I was passed at night and abused in the daytime. 'Bad—no good,' was the cry; 'we must make haste and get rid of him.'

"And I trembled in the fingers of the holder each time I was to be passed on as a coin of the country.

"What a miserable Shilling I am! Of what use is my silver to me, my value, my coinage, if all these things are looked on as worthless? In the eyes of the world one has only the value the world chooses to put upon one. It must be terrible indeed to have a bad conscience, and to creep along on evil ways, if I, who am quite innocent, can feel so badly because I am only thought guilty.

"Each time I was brought out I shuddered at the thought of the eyes that would look at me, for I knew that I should be rejected and flung back upon the table, like an impostor and a cheat. Once I came into the hands of a poor old woman, to whom I was paid for a hard day's work, and she

could not get rid of me at all. No one would accept me, and I was a perfect worry to the old dame.

“‘I shall certainly be forced to deceive someone with this shilling,’ she said; ‘for, with the best will in the world, I can’t hoard up a false shilling. The rich baker shall have him; he will be able to bear the loss—but it’s wrong in me to do it, after all.’

“‘And I must lie heavy on that woman’s conscience, too,’ sighed I. ‘Am I really so much changed in my old age?’

“And the woman went her way to the rich baker; but he knew too well what kind of shillings would pass to take me, and he threw me back at the woman, who got no bread for me. And I felt miserably low to think that I should be the cause of distress to others—I who had been in my young days so proudly conscious of my value and of the correctness of my mintage. I became as miserable as a poor shilling can be whom no one will accept; but the woman took me home again, and looked at me with a friendly, hearty face, and said:

“‘No, I will not deceive anyone with thee. I will bore a hole through thee, that everyone may see thou art a false thing. And yet—it just occurs to me—perhaps this is a lucky shilling; and the thought comes so strongly upon me that I am sure it must be true! I will make a hole through the shilling, and pass a string through the hole, and hang the coin round the neck of my neighbor’s little boy for a lucky shilling.’

“So she bored a hole through me. It is certainly not agreeable to have a hole bored through one; but many things can be borne when the intention is good. A thread was passed through the hole, and I became a kind of medal, and was hung round the neck of the little child; and the child smiled at me, and kissed me, and I slept all night on its warm, innocent neck.

“When the morning came, the child’s mother took me up in her fingers and looked at me, and she had her own thoughts about me; I could feel that very well. She brought out a pair of scissors, and cut the string through.

“‘A lucky shilling!’ she said. ‘Well, we shall soon see that.’

“And she laid me in vinegar, so that I turned quite green. Then she plugged up the hole, and carried me in the even-

ing twilight, to the lottery collector, to buy a lottery ticket that should bring her luck.

"How miserably wretched I felt! There was a stinging feeling in me, as if I should crumble to bits. I knew that I should be called false and thrown down—and before a crowd of shillings and other coins, too, who lay there with an image and superscription of which they might be proud. But I escaped that disgrace, for there were many people in the collector's room; he had a great deal to do, and I went rattling down into the box among the other coins. Whether my ticket won anything or not I don't know; but this I do know, that the very next morning I was recognized as a bad shilling, and was sent out to deceive and deceive again. That is a very trying thing to bear when one knows one has a good character, and of that I am conscious.

"For a year and a day I thus wandered from house to house and from hand to hand, always abused, always unwelcome; no one trusted me; and I lost confidence in the world and in myself. It was a heavy time. At last, one day a traveler, a strange gentleman, arrived, and I was passed to him, and he was polite enough to accept me for current coin; but he wanted to pass me on, and again I heard the horrible cry, 'No use—false!'

"'I received it as a good coin,' said the man, and he looked closely at me; suddenly he smiled all over his face; and I had never seen that expression before on any face that looked at me. 'Why, whatever is that?' he said. 'That's one of our own country coins, a good, honest shilling from my home, and they've bored a hole through him, and they called him false. Now, this is a curious circumstance. I must keep him and take him home with me.'

"A glow of joy thrilled through me when I heard myself called a good, honest shilling; and now I was to be taken home, where each and everyone would know me, and be sure that I was real silver and properly coined. I could have thrown out sparks for very gladness; but, after all, it's not in my nature to throw out sparks, for that's the property of steel, not of silver.

"I was wrapped up in clean white paper, so that I should not be confounded with the other coins and spent; and on festive occasions, when fellow-countrymen met together, I was shown about, and they spoke very well of me; they said

I was interesting—and it is wonderful how interesting one can be without saying a single word.

“And at last I got home again. All my troubles were ended, joy came back to me, for I was of good silver, and had the right stamp, and I had no more disagreeables to endure, though a hole had been bored through me, as through a false coin; but that does not matter if one is not really false. One must wait for the end, and one will be righted at last—that’s my belief,” said the Shilling.

THE OLD CHURCH BELL.

In the German land of Wurtemberg, where the acacias bloom by the high road, and the apple trees and pear trees bend in autumn under their burden of ripe fruit, lies the little town of Marbach. Although this place can only be ranked among the smaller towns, it is charmingly situated on the Neckar stream, that flows on and on, hurrying past villages and old castles and green vineyards, to pour its waters into the proud Rhine.

It was late in autumn. The leaves still clung to the grapevine, but they were already tinged with red. Rainy gusts swept over the country, and the cold autumn winds increased in violence and roughness. It was no pleasant time for poor folk.

The days became shorter and gloomier; and if it was dark out in the open air, in the little old-fashioned houses it was darker still. One of these houses was built with its gable end toward the street, and stood there, with its small, narrow windows, humble and poor enough in appearance; the family was poor, too, that inhabited the little house, but good and industrious, and rich in a treasure of piety concealed in the depth of the heart. And they expected that God would soon give them another child; the hour had come, and the mother lay in pain and sorrow. Then from the church tower opposite the deep, rich sound of the bell came to her. It was a solemn hour, and the song of the bell filled the heart of the praying woman with trustfulness and faith; the thoughts of her inmost heart soared upward toward the Almighty, and in the same hour she gave birth to a son. Then

she was filled with a great joy, and the bell of the tower opposite seemed to be ringing to spread the news of her happiness over town and country. The clear child-eyes looked at her, and the infant's hair gleamed like gold. Thus was the little one ushered into the world with the ringing of the church bell on the dark November day. The mother and father kissed it, and wrote in their Bible: "On the 10th of November, 1759, God gave us a son;" and soon afterward the fact was added that the child had been baptized under the name of "Johann Christoph Friedrich."

And what became of the little fellow, the poor boy in the pretty town of Marbach? Ah, at that time no one knew what would become of him, not even the old church bell that had sung at his birth, hanging so high in the tower, over him who was one day himself to sing the beautiful "Lay of the Bell."

Well, the boy grew older, and the world grew older with him. His parents certainly removed to another town, but they had left dear friends in little Marbach; and thus it was that mother and son one day arose and drove over to Marbach on a visit. The lad was only six years old, but he already knew many things out of the Bible, and many a pious psalm; and many an evening he had sat on his little stool listening while his father read aloud from "Gellert's Fables," or from the lofty "Messiah" of Klopstock; and he and his sister, who was his senior by two years, had wept hot tears of pity for Him who died on the cross that we might live eternally.

At the time of this first visit to Marbach the little town had not greatly changed; and indeed they had not long left it. The houses stood as on the day of the family's departure, with their pointed gables, projecting walls, the higher stories leaning over the lower, and their tiny windows; but there were new graves in the churchyard; and there, in the grass, hard by the wall, lay the old bell. It had fallen from its position, and had sustained such damage that it could sound no more, and accordingly a new bell had been put in its place.

Mother and son went into the churchyard. They stopped where the old bell lay, and the mother told the boy how for centuries this had been a very useful bell, and had rung at christenings, at weddings, and at burials; how it had spoken

at one time to tell of feasts and rejoicings, at another to spread the alarm of fire; and how it had, in fact, sung the whole life of man. And the boy never forgot what his mother told him that day. It resounded and echoed at intervals in his heart, until, when he was grown a man, he was compelled to sing it. The mother told him also how the bell had sung of faith and comfort to her in the time of her peril, that it had sung at the time when he, her little son, was born. And the boy gazed, almost with a feeling of devotion, at the great old bell; and he bent over it and kissed it, as it lay all rusty and broken among the long grass and nettles.

The old bell was held in kindly remembrance by the boy, who grew up in poverty, tall and thin, with reddish hair and freckled face—yes, that's how he looked; but he had a pair of eyes, clear and deep as the deepest water. And what fortune had he? Why, good fortune, enviable fortune. We find him graciously received into the military school, and even in the department where sons of people in society were taught, and was that not honor and fortune enough? And they educated him to the words of command, "Halt! march! front!" and on such a system much might be expected.

Meanwhile the old church bell had been almost completely forgotten. But it was to be presumed that the bell would find its way into the furnace, and what would become of it then? It was impossible to say, and equally impossible to tell what sounds would come forth from the bell that kept echoing through the young heart of the boy from Marbach; but that bell was of bronze, and kept sounding so loud that it must at last be heard out in the wide world; and the more cramped the space within the school walls, and the more deafening the dreary shout of "March! halt! front!" the louder did the sound ring through the youth's breast; and he sang what he felt in the circle of his companions, and the sound was heard beyond the boundaries of the principality. But it was not for this that they had given him a presentation to the military school, and board, and clothing. Had he not been already numbered and destined to be a certain wheel in the great watchwork to which we all belong as pieces of practical machinery? How imperfectly do we understand ourselves! and how, then, shall others, even the

best men, understand us? But it is the pressure that forms the precious stone. There was pressure enough here; but would the world be able, some day, to recognize the jewel?

In the capital of the prince of the country, a great festival was being celebrated. Thousands of candles and lamps gleamed brightly, and rockets flew toward the heavens in streams of fire. The splendor of that day yet lives in the remembrance of men, but it lives through him, the young scholar of the military school, who was trying in sorrow and tears to escape unperceived from the land; he was compelled to leave all—mother, native country, those he loved—unless he could resign himself to sink into the stream of oblivion among his fellows.

The old bell was better off than he, for the bell would remain peaceably by the churchyard wall in Marbach, safe, and almost forgotten. The wind whistled over it, and might have told a fine tale of him at whose birth the bell had sounded, and over whom the wind had but now blown cold in the forest of a neighboring land, where he had sunk down, exhausted by fatigue, with his whole wealth, his only hope for the future, the written pages of his tragedy "Fiasco:" the wind might have told of the youth's only patrons, men who were artists, and who yet slunk away to amuse themselves at skittles while his play was being read; the wind could have told of the pale fugitive, who sat for weary weeks and months in the wretched tavern, where the host brawled and drank, and coarse boozing was going on while he sang of the ideal. Heavy days, dark days! The heart must suffer and endure for itself the trials it is to sing.

Dark days and cold nights also passed over the old bell. The iron frame did not feel them, but the bell within the heart of man is affected by gloomy times. How fared it with the young man? How fared it with the old bell. The bell was carried far away, farther than its sound could have been heard from the lofty tower in which it had once hung. And the youth? The bell in his heart sounded farther than his eye should ever see or his foot should ever wander; it is sounding and sounding on, over the ocean, round the whole earth. But let us first speak of the belfry bell. It was carried away from Marbach, was sold for old metal, and destined for the melting furnace in Bavaria. But when and how did this happen? In the capital of Bavaria, many years

after the bell had fallen from the tower, there was a talk of its being melted down, to be used in the manufactory of a memorial in honor of one of the great ones of the German land. And behold how suitable this was—how strangely and wonderfully things happened in the world! In Denmark, on one of those green islands where the beech woods rustle, and the many Huns' graves are to be seen, quite a poor boy had been born. He had been accustomed to walk about in wooden shoes, and to carry a dinner wrapped in an old handkerchief to his father, who carved figureheads on the ship-builders' wharves; but this poor lad had become the pride of his country, for Thorwaldsen knew how to hew marble blocks into such glorious shapes as made the whole world wonder, and to him had been awarded the honorable commission that he should fashion of clay a noble form that was to be cast in bronze—a statue of him whose name the father in Marbach had inscribed in the old Bible as Johann Christoph Friedrich.

And the glowing metal flowed into the mold. The old bellfry bell—of whose home and of whose vanished sounds no one thought—this very old bell flowed into the mold, and formed the head and bust of the figure that was soon to be unveiled, which now stands in Stuttgart, before the old palace—a representation of him who once walked to and fro there, striving and suffering, harassed by the world without—he, the boy of Marbach, the pupil of the "Karlschule," the fugitive, Germany's great immortal poet, who sang of the liberator of Switzerland and of the Heaven-inspired Maid of Orleans.

It was a beautiful, sunny day; flags were waving from roofs and steeples in the royal city of Stuttgart; the bells rang for joy and festivity; one bell alone was silent, but it gleamed in another form in the bright sunshine—it gleamed from the head and breast of the statue of honor. On that day, exactly one hundred years had elapsed since the day on which the bell at Marbach had sung comfort and peace to the suffering mother, when she bore her son, in poverty, in the humble cottage—him who was afterward to become the rich man, whose treasures enriched the world, the poet who sang of the noble virtues of women, who sang of all that was great and glorious—Johann Christoph Friedrich Schiller.

THE SNAIL AND THE ROSE TREE.

Around the garden ran a hedge of hazels; beyond this hedge lay fields and meadows, wherein were cows and sheep; but in the midst of the garden stood a blooming Rose Tree; and under this Rose Tree lived a Snail, who had a good deal in his shell—namely, himself.

"Wait till my time comes!" he said; "I shall do something more than produce roses, bear nuts, or give milk, like the Rose Tree, the hazel bush, and the cows!"

"I expect a great deal of you," said the Rose Tree. "But may I ask when it will appear?"

"I take my time," replied the Snail. "You're always in such a hurry. You don't rouse people's interest by suspense."

When the next year came, the Snail lay almost in the same spot, in the sunshine under the Rose Tree, which again bore buds that bloomed into roses, until the snow fell and the weather became raw and cold; then the Rose Tree bowed its head, and the Snail crept into the ground.

A new year began, and the roses came out, and the Snail came out also.

"You're an old Rose Tree now!" said the Snail. "You must make haste and come to an end, for you have given the world all that was in you; whether it was of any use is a question that I have had no time to consider; but so much is clear and plain, that you have done nothing at all for your own development, or you would have produced something else. How can you answer for that? In a little time you will be nothing at all but a stick. Do you understand what I say?"

"You alarm me," replied the Rose Tree. "I never thought of that at all."

"No, you have not taken the trouble to consider anything. Have you ever given an account to yourself, why you bloomed, and how it is that your blooming comes about—why it is thus, and not otherwise?"

"No," answered the Rose Tree. "I bloomed in gladness, because I could not do anything else. The sun shone and

warmed me, and the air refreshed me. I drank the pure dew and the fresh rain, and I lived, I breathed. Out of the earth there arose a power within me, from above there came down a strength; I perceived a new, ever-increasing happiness, and consequently I was obliged to bloom over and over again; that was my life; I could not do otherwise."

"You have led a very pleasant life," observed the Snail.

"Certainly. Everything I have was given to me," said the Rose Tree. "But more still was given to you. You are one of those deep, thoughtful characters, one of those highly gifted spirits, which will cause the world to marvel."

"I've no intention of doing anything of the kind," cried the Snail. "The world is nothing to me. What have I to do with the world? I have enough of myself and in myself."

"But must we not all, here on earth, give to others the best that we have and offer what lies in our power? Certainly I have only given roses. But you—you who have been so richly gifted—what have you given to the world? what do you intend to give?"

"What have I given—what do I intend to give? I spit at it. It's worth nothing. It's no business of mine. Continue to give your roses, if you like; you can't do anything better. Let the hazel bush bear nuts, and the cows and ewes give milk; they have their public; but I have mine within myself—I retire within myself, and there I remain; the world is nothing to me."

And so saying the Snail retired into his house, and closed up the entrance after him.

"That is very sad!" said the Rose Tree. "I cannot creep into myself, even if I wish it—I must continue to produce roses. They drop their leaves and are blown away by the wind. But I saw how a rose was laid in the matron's hymn-book, and one of my roses had a place on the bosom of a fair young girl, and another was kissed by the lips of a child in the full joy of life. That did me good; it was a real blessing: That's my remembrance—my life!"

And the Rose Tree went on blooming in innocence, while the Snail lay and idled away his time in his house—the world did not concern him.

And years rolled by.

The Snail had become dust in the dust, and the Rose

Tree was earth in the earth; the rose of remembrance in the hymn-book was faded, but in the garden bloomed fresh rose trees, and under the trees lay new snails; and these still crept into their houses, and spat at the world, for it did not concern them.

Suppose we begin the story again, and read it right through. It will never alter.

LITTLE IDA'S FLOWERS.

"My poor flowers are quite dead!" said little Ida. "They were so pretty yesterday, and now all the leaves hang withered. Why do they do that?" she asked the student, who sat on the sofa; for she liked him very much. He knew the prettiest stories, and could cut out the most amusing pictures—hearts, with little ladies in them who danced, flowers, and great castles, in which one could open the doors; he was a merry student. "Why do the flowers look so faded to-day?" she asked again, and showed him a nose-gay, which was quite withered.

"Do you know what's the matter with them?" said the student. "The flowers have been at a ball last night, and that's why they hang their heads."

"But flowers cannot dance!" cried little Ida.

"Oh, yes," said the student, "when it grows dark, and we are asleep, they jump about merrily. Almost every night they have a ball."

"Can children go to this ball?"

"Yes," said the student, "quite little daisies, and lilies of the valley."

"Where do the beautiful flowers dance?" asked little Ida.

"Have you not often been outside the town-gate, by the great castle, where the King lives in summer, and where the beautiful garden is with all the flowers. You have seen the swans, which swim up to you when you want to give them bread-crumbs? There are capital balls there, believe me."

"I was out there in the garden yesterday, with my mother," said Ida; "but all the leaves were off the trees, and there was not one flower left. Where are they? In the summer I saw so many."

"They are within, in the castle," replied the student. "You must know, as soon as the King and all the Court go to town, the flowers run out of the garden into the castle and are merry. You should see that. The two most beautiful roses seat themselves on the throne, and then they are King and Queen; all the red coxcombs range themselves on either side, and stand and bow; they are the chamberlains. Then all the pretty flowers come, and there is a great ball. The blue violets represent little naval cadets; they dance with the hyacinths and crocuses, which they call young ladies; the tulips and great tiger-lilies are old ladies, who keep watch that the dancing is well done, and that everything goes on with propriety."

"But," asked little Ida, "is nobody there who hurts the flowers for dancing in the King's castle?"

"There is nobody who really knows about it," answered the student. "Sometimes, certainly, the old steward of the castle comes at night, and he has to watch there. He has a great bunch of keys with him; but as soon as the flowers hear the keys rattle they are quite quiet, hide behind the long curtains, and only poke their heads out. Then the old steward says, 'I smell that there are flowers here,' but he cannot see them."

"That is famous!" cried little Ida, clapping her hands. "But should I not be able to see the flowers?"

"Yes," said the student; "only remember, when you go out again, to peep through the window; then you will see them. That is what I did to-day. There was a long yellow lily lying on the sofa and stretching herself. She was a Court lady."

"Can the flowers out of the Botanical Garden get there? Can they go the long distance?"

"Yes, certainly," replied the student; "if they like they can fly. Have you not seen the beautiful butterflies, red, yellow, and white? They almost look like flowers, and that is what they have been. They have flown off their stalks high into the air, and have beaten it with their leaves, as if these leaves were little wings, and thus they flew. And because they behaved themselves well, they got leave to fly about in the day-time, too, and were not obliged to sit still upon their stalks at home; and thus at last the leaves became real wings. That you have seen yourself. It may be,

however, that the flowers in the Botanical Garden have never been in the King's castle, or that they don't know of the merry proceedings there at night. Therefore I will tell you something; he will be very much surprised, the botanical professor, who lives close by here. You know him, do you not? When you come into his garden, you must tell one of the flowers that there is a great ball yonder at the castle. Then that flower will tell it to all the rest, and then they will fly away; when the professor comes out into the garden there will not be a single flower left, and he won't be able to make out where they are gone."

"But how can one flower tell it to another? For you know flowers cannot speak."

"That they cannot, certainly," replied the student; "but then they make signs. Have you not noticed that when the wind blows a little the flowers nod at one another and move all their green leaves? They can understand that just as well as we when we speak together."

"Can the professor understand these signs?" asked Ida.

"Yes, certainly. He came one morning into his garden and saw a great stinging-nettle standing there, and making signs to a beautiful red carnation with its leaves. It was saying, 'You are so pretty, and I love you with all my heart.' But the professor does not like that kind of thing, and he directly slapped the stinging-nettle upon its leaves, for those are its fingers; but he stung himself, and since that time he has not dared to touch a stinging-nettle."

"That is funny," cried little Ida; and she laughed.

"How can anyone put such notions into a child's head?" said the tiresome privy councilor, who had come to pay a visit, and was sitting on the sofa. He did not like the student, and always grumbled when he saw him cutting out the merry funny pictures—sometimes a man hanging on a gibbet and holding a heart in his hand, to show that he stole hearts; sometimes an old witch riding on a broom and carrying her husband on her nose. The councilor could not bear this, and then he said, just as he did now, "How can anyone put such notions into a child's head? Those are stupid fancies!"

But, to little Ida, what the student told her about her flowers seemed very droll; and she thought much about it. The flowers hung their heads, for they were tired, because

they had danced all night: they were certainly ill. Then she went with them to her other toys, which stood on a pretty little table, and the whole drawer was full of beautiful things. In the doll's bed lay her doll Sophy, asleep; but little Ida said to her:

"You must really get up, Sophy, and manage to lie in the drawer for to-night. The poor flowers are ill, and they must lie in your bed; perhaps they will then get well again."

And she at once took the doll out; but the doll looked cross, and did not say a single word; for she was cross because she could not keep her own bed.

Then Ida laid the flowers in the doll's bed, pulled the little coverlet quite up over them, and said they were to lie still and be good, and she would make them some tea, so that they might get well again, and be able to get up to-morrow. And she drew the curtains closely round the little bed, so that the sun should not shine in their eyes. The whole evening through she could not help thinking of what the student had told her. And when she was going to bed herself, she was obliged first to look behind the curtain which hung before the windows where her mother's beautiful flowers stood—hyacinths as well as tulips; then she whispered, "I know you're going to the ball to-night!" But the flowers made as if they did not understand a word, and did not stir a leaf; but still little Ida knew what she knew.

When she was in bed she lay for a long time thinking how pretty it must be to see the beautiful flowers dancing out in the King's castle. "I wonder if my flowers have really been there?" And then she fell asleep. In the night she woke again: she had dreamed of the flowers, and of the student with whom the councilor found fault. It was quite quiet in the bedroom where Ida lay; the night-lamp burned on the table, and her father and mother were asleep.

"I wonder if my flowers are still lying in Sophy's bed?" she thought to herself. "How I should like to know it!" She raised herself a little, and looked at the door, which stood ajar; within lay the flowers and all her playthings. She listened, and then it seemed to her as if she heard someone playing on the piano in the next room, but quite softly and prettily, as she had never heard it before. "Now all the flowers are certainly dancing in there!" thought she.

"Oh, how glad I should be to see it!" But she dared not get up, for she would have disturbed her father and mother.

"If they would only come in!" thought she. But the flowers did not come, and the music continued to play beautifully; then she could not bear it any longer, for it was too pretty; she crept out of her little bed, and went quietly to the door, and looked into the room. Oh, how splendid it was, what she saw!

There was no night-lamp burning, but still it was quite light: the moon shone through the window into the middle of the floor; it was almost like day. All the hyacinths and tulips stood in two long rows in the room; there were none at all left at the window. There stood the empty flower-pots. On the floor all the flowers were dancing very gracefully round each other, making perfect turns, and holding each other by the long green leaves as they swung round. But at the piano sat a great yellow lily which little Ida had certainly seen in summer, for she remembered how the student had said, "How like that one is to Miss Lina." Then he had been laughed at by all; but now it seemed really to little Ida as if the long yellow flower looked like the young lady; and it had just her manners in playing—sometimes bending its long yellow face to one side, sometimes to the other, and nodding in tune to the charming music! No one noticed little Ida. Then she saw a great blue crocus hop into the middle of the table, where the toys stood, and go to the doll's bed and pull the curtains aside: there lay the sick flowers, but they got up directly, and nodded to the others, to say that they wanted to dance, too. The old chimney-sweep doll, whose under lip was broken off, stood up and bowed to the pretty flowers: these did not look at all ill now; they jumped down to the others, and were very merry.

Then it seemed as if something fell down from the table. Ida looked that way. It was the birch rod which was jumping down! it seemed almost as if it belonged to the flowers. At any rate, it was very neat; and a little wax doll, with just such a broad hat on its head as the councilor wore, sat upon it. The birch rod hopped about among the flowers on its three stilted legs, and stamped quite loud, for it was dancing the mazurka; and the other flowers could not manage that dance, because they were too light, and unable to stamp like that.

The wax doll on the birch rod all at once became quite great and long, turned itself over the paper flowers, and said, "How can one put such things in a child's head? those are stupid fancies!" and then the wax doll was exactly like the councilor with the broad hat, and looked just as yellow and cross as he. But the paper flowers hit him on his thin legs, and then he shrank up again, and became quite a little wax doll. That was very amusing to see; and little Ida could not restrain her laughter. The birch rod went on dancing, and the councilor was obliged to dance too; it was no use, he might make himself great and long, or remain the little yellow wax doll with the big black hat. Then the other flowers put in a good word for him, especially those who had lain in the doll's bed, and then the birch rod gave over. At the same moment there was a loud knocking at the drawer, inside where Ida's doll, Sophy, lay with many other toys. The chimney-sweep ran to the edge of the table, lay flat down on his stomach, and began to pull the drawer out a little. Then Sophy raised herself, and looked round quite astonished.

"There must be a ball here," said she; "why did nobody tell me?"

"Will you dance with me?" asked the chimney-sweep.

"You are a nice sort of fellow to dance!" she replied, and turned her back upon him.

Then she seated herself upon the drawer, and thought that one of the flowers would come and ask her; but not one of them came. Then she coughed, "Hem! hem! hem!" but for all that not one came. The chimney-sweep now danced all alone, and that was not at all so bad.

As none of the flowers seemed to notice Sophy, she let herself fall down from the drawer straight upon the floor, so that there was a great noise. The flowers now all came running up, to ask if she had not hurt herself; and they were all very polite to her, especially the flowers that had lain in her bed. But she had not hurt herself at all; and Ida's flowers all thanked her for the nice bed, and were kind to her, took her into the middle of the room, where the moon shone in, and danced with her; and all the other flowers formed a circle round her. Now Sophy was glad, and said they might keep her bed; she did not at all mind lying in the drawer.

But the flowers said, "We thank you heartily, but in any way we cannot live long. To-morrow we shall be quite dead. But tell little Ida she is to bury us out in the garden, where the canary lies; then we shall wake up again in summer, and be far more beautiful."

"No, you must not die," said Sophy; and she kissed the flowers.

Then the door opened, and a great number of splendid flowers came dancing in. Ida could not imagine whence they had come; these must certainly all be flowers from the King's castle yonder. First of all came two glorious roses, and they had little gold crowns on; they were a King and a Queen. Then came the prettiest stocks and carnations; and they bowed in all directions. They had music with them. Great poppies and peonies blew upon pea-pods till they were quite red in the face. The blue hyacinths and the little white snowdrops rang just as if they had been bells. That was wonderful music! Then came many other flowers, and danced altogether; the blue violets and the pink primroses, daisies and the lilies of the valley. And all the flowers kissed one another. It was beautiful to look at!

At last the flowers wished one another good-night; then little Ida, too, crept to bed, where she dreamed of all she had seen.

When she rose next morning, she went quickly to the little table, to see if the little flowers were still there. She drew aside the curtains of the little bed; there were they all, but they were quite faded, far more than yesterday. Sophy was lying in the drawer where Ida had laid her; she looked very sleepy.

"Do you remember what you were to say to me?" asked little Ida.

But Sophy stood quite stupid, and did not say a single word.

"You are not good at all!" said Ida. "And yet they all danced with you."

Then she took a little paper box, on which were painted beautiful birds, and opened it, and laid the dead flowers in it.

"That shall be your pretty coffin," said she, "and when my cousins come to visit me by-and-by, they shall help me to

bury you outside in the garden, so that you may grow again in summer, and become more beautiful than ever."

These cousins were two merry boys. Their names were Gustave and Adolphe; their father had given them two new crossbows, and they had brought these with them to show to Ida. She told them about the poor flowers that had died, and then they got leave to bury them. The two boys were first, with their crossbows on their shoulders, and little Ida followed with the dead flowers in the pretty box. Out in the garden a little grave was dug. Ida first kissed the flowers, and then laid them in the earth in the box, and Adolphe and Gustave shot with their crossbows over the grave, for they had neither guns nor cannons.

THE TINDER-BOX.

There came a soldier marching along the high road— one, two! one, two! He had his knapsack on his back and a saber by his side, for he had been in the wars, and now he wanted to go home. And on the way he met with an old witch; she was very hideous, and her under lip hung down upon her breast. She said, "Good evening, soldier. What a fine sword you have, and what a big knapsack! You're a proper soldier. Now you shall have as much money as you like to have."

"I thank you, you old witch!" said the soldier.

"Do you see that great tree?" quoth the witch; and she pointed to a tree which stood beside them. "It's quite hollow inside. You must climb to the top, and then you'll see a hole, through which you can let yourself down and get deep into the tree. I'll tie a rope round your body, so that I can pull you up again when you call me."

"What am I to do down in the tree?" asked the soldier.

"Get money," replied the witch. "Listen to me. When you come down to the earth under the tree, you will find yourself in a great hall: it is quite light, for above three hundred lamps are burning there. Then you will see three doors; those you can open, for the keys are hanging there. If you go into the first chamber, you'll see a great chest in the middle of the floor; on this chest sits a dog, and he's got

a pair of eyes as big as two tea-cups. But you need not care for that. I'll give you my blue-checked apron, and you can spread it out upon the floor; then go up quickly and take the dog, and set him on my apron; then open the chest, and take as many shillings as you like. They are of copper; if you prefer silver, you must go into the second chamber. But there sits a dog with a pair of eyes as big as mill-wheels. But do not you care for that. Set him upon my apron, and take some of the money. And if you want gold, you can have that, too—in fact, as much as you can carry—if you go into the third chamber. But the dog that sits on the money-chest there has two eyes as big as round towers. He is a fierce dog, you may be sure; but you needn't be afraid, for all that. Only set him on my apron, and he won't hurt you; and take out of the chest as much gold as you like."

"That's not so bad," said the soldier. "But what am I to give you, old witch? for you will not do it for nothing, I fancy."

"No," replied the witch, "not a single shilling will I have. You shall only bring me an old tinder-box which my grandmother forgot when she was down there last."

"Then tie the rope round my body," cried the soldier.

"Here it is," said the witch, "and here's my blue-checked apron."

Then the soldier climbed up into the tree, let himself slip down into the hole, and stood, as the witch had said, in the great hall where the three hundred lamps were burning.

Now he opened the first door. Ugh! there sat the dog with eyes as big as tea-cups staring at him. "You're a nice fellow!" exclaimed the soldier; and he sat him on the witch's apron, and took as many copper shillings as his pockets would hold, and then locked the chest, set the dog on it again, and went into the second chamber. Aha! there sat the dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels.

"You should not stare so hard at me," said the soldier; "you might strain your eyes." And he set the dog upon the witch's apron. And when he saw the silver money in the chest, he threw away all the copper money he had, and filled his pocket and his knapsack with silver only. Then he went into the third chamber. Oh, but that was horrid! The dog there really had eyes as big as towers, and they turned round and round in his head like wheels.

"Good evening!" said the soldier; and he touched his cap, for he had never seen such a dog as that before. When he had looked at him a little more closely, he thought, "that will do," and lifted him down to the floor, and opened the chest. Mercy! what a quantity of gold was there! He could buy with it the whole town, and the sugar sucking-pigs of the cake woman, and all the tin soldiers, whips, and rocking-horses in the whole world. Yes, that was a quantity of money! Now the soldier threw away all the silver coin with which he had filled his pockets and his knapsack, and took gold instead; yes, all his pockets, his knapsack, his boots, and his cap were filled, so that he could scarcely walk. Now indeed he had plenty of money. He put the dog on the chest, shut the door, and then called up through the tree, "now pull me up, you old witch."

"Have you the tinder-box?" asked the witch.

"Plague on it!" exclaimed the soldier, "I had clean forgotten that." And he went and brought it.

The witch drew him up, and he stood on the high road again, with pockets, boots, knapsack, and cap full of gold.

"What are you going to do with the tinder-box?" asked the soldier.

"That's nothing to you," retorted the witch. "You've had your money—just give me the tinder-box."

"Nonsense!" said the soldier. "Tell me directly what you're going to do with it, or I'll draw my sword and cut off your head."

"No!" cried the witch.

So the soldier cut off her head. There she lay. But he tied up all his money in her apron, took it on his back like a bundle, put the tinder-box in his pocket, and went straight off toward the town.

That was a splendid town! And he put up at the very best inn and asked for the finest rooms, and ordered his favorite dishes, for now he was rich, as he had so much money. The servant who had to clean his boots certainly thought them a remarkably old pair for such a rich gentleman; but he had not bought any new ones yet. The next day he procured proper boots and handsome clothes. Now our soldier had become a fine gentleman; and the people told him of all the splendid things which were in their city,

and about the King, and what a pretty princess the King's daughter was.

"Where can one get to see her?" asked the soldier.

"She is not to be seen at all," said they, all together; "she lives in a great copper castle, with a great many walls and towers round about it; no one but the King may go in and out there, for it has been prophesied that she shall marry a common soldier, and the King can't bear that."

"I should like to see her," thought the soldier; but he could not get leave to do so. Now he lived merrily, went to the theater, drove in the King's garden, and gave much money to the poor; and this was very kind of him, for he knew from old times how hard it is when one has not a shilling. Now he was rich, had fine clothes, and gained many friends, who all said he was a rare one, a true cavalier; and that pleased the soldier well. But as he spent money every day and never earned any, he had at last only two shillings left; and he was obliged to turn out of the fine rooms in which he had dwelt, and had to live in a little garret under the roof, and clean his boots for himself, and mend them with a darning-needle. None of his friends came to see him, for there were too many stairs to climb.

It was quite dark one evening, and he could not even buy himself a candle, when it occurred to him that there was a candle-end in the tinder-box which he had taken out of the hollow tree into which the witch had helped him. He brought out the tinder-box and the candle-end; but as soon as he struck fire and the sparks rose up from the flint, the door flew open, and the dog who had eyes as big as a couple of tea-cups and whom he had seen in the tree, stood before him, and said:

"What are my lord's commands?"

"What is this?" said the soldier. "That's a famous tinder-box, if I can get everything with it that I want! Bring me some money," said he to the dog: and whisk! the dog was gone, and whisk! he was back again, with a great bag full of shillings in his mouth.

Now the soldier knew what a capital tinder-box this was. If he struck it once, the dog came who sat upon the chest of copper money; if he struck it twice, the dog came who had the silver; and if he struck it three times, then appeared the dog who had the gold. Now the soldier moved back into

the fine rooms, and appeared again in handsome clothes; and all his friends knew him again, and cared very much for him indeed.

Once he thought to himself, "It is a very strange thing that one cannot get to see the Princess. They all say she is very beautiful; but what is the use of that, if she has always to sit in the great copper castle with the many towers? Can I not get to see her at all? Where is my tinder-box?" And so he struck a light, and whisk! came the dog with eyes as big as tea-cups.

"It is midnight, certainly," said the soldier, "but I should very much like to see the Princess, only for one little moment."

And the dog was outside the door directly, and, before the soldier thought it, came back with the Princess. She sat upon the dog's back and slept; and everyone could see she was a real Princess, for she was so lovely. The soldier could not refrain from kissing her, for he was a thorough soldier. Then the dog ran back again with the Princess. But when morning came, and the King and Queen were drinking tea, the Princess said she had had a strange dream, the night before, about a dog and a soldier—that she had ridden upon the dog, and the soldier had kissed her.

"That would be a fine history!" said the Queen.

So one of the old Court ladies had to watch the next night by the Princess' bed, to see if this was really a dream, or what it might be.

The soldier had a great longing to see the lovely Princess again; so the dog came in the night, took her away, and ran as fast as he could. But the old lady put on water-boots, and ran just as fast after him. When she saw that they both entered a great house, she thought "Now I know where it is;" and with a bit of chalk she drew a great cross on the door. Then she went home and lay down, and the dog came up with the Princess; but when he saw that there was a cross drawn on the door where the soldier lived, he took a piece of chalk too, and drew crosses on all the doors in the town. And that was cleverly done, for now the lady could not find the right door, because all the doors had crosses upon them.

In the morning early came the King and the Queen, the old Court lady and all the officers, to see where it was the

Princess had been. "Here it is!" said the King, when he saw the first door with a cross upon it. "No, my dear husband, it is there!" said the Queen, who descried another door which also showed a cross. "But there is one, and there is one!" said all, for wherever they looked there were crosses on the doors. So they saw that it would avail them nothing if they searched on.

But the Queen was an exceedingly clever woman, who could do more than ride in a coach. She took her great gold scissors, cut a piece of silk into pieces, and made a neat little bag; this bag she filled with fine wheat flour, and tied it on the Princess' back; and when that was done, she cut a little hole in the bag, so that the flour would be scattered along all the way which the Princess should take.

In the night the dog came again, took the Princess on his back, and ran with her to the soldier, who loved her very much, and would gladly have been a prince, so that he might have her for his wife. The dog did not notice at all how the flour ran out in a stream from the castle to the windows of the soldier's house, where he ran up the wall with the Princess. In the morning the King and Queen saw well enough where their daughter had been, and they took the soldier and put him in prison.

There he sat. Oh, but it was dark and disagreeable there! And they said to him, "To-morrow you shall be hanged." That was not amusing to hear, and he had left his tinder-box at the inn. In the morning he could see, through the iron grating of the little window, how the people were hurrying out of the town to see him hanged. He heard the drums beat and saw the soldiers marching. All the people were running out, and among them was a shoemaker's boy with leather apron and slippers, and he galloped so fast that one of his slippers flew off, and came right against the wall where the soldier sat looking through the iron grating.

"Halloo, you shoemaker's boy! you needn't be in such a hurry," cried the soldier to him; "it will not begin till I come. But if you will run to where I lived, and bring me my tinder-box, you shall have four shillings; but you must put your best leg foremost."

The shoemaker's boy wanted to get the four shillings, so

he went and brought the tinder-box, and—well, we shall hear now what happened.

Outside the town a great gallows had been built, and around it stood the soldiers and many hundred thousand people. The King and Queen sat on a splendid throne, opposite to the Judges and the whole Council. The soldier already stood upon the ladder; but as they were about to put the rope round his neck, he said that before a poor criminal suffered his punishment an innocent request was always granted to him. He wanted very much to smoke a pipe of tobacco, as it would be the last pipe he should smoke in the world. The King would not say "No" to this; so the soldier took his tinder-box and struck fire. One—two—three!—and there suddenly stood all the dogs—the one with eyes as big as tea-cups, the one with eyes as large as mill-wheels, and the one whose eyes were as big as round towers.

"Help me now, so that I may not be hanged," said the soldier. And the dogs fell upon the Judge and all the Council, seized one by the leg and another by the nose, and tossed them all many feet into the air, so that they fell down and were all broken to pieces.

"I won't!" cried the King; but the biggest dog took him and the Queen and threw them after the others. Then the soldiers were afraid, and the people cried, "Little soldier, you shall be our King, and marry the beautiful Princess!"

So they put the soldier into the King's coach, and all the three dogs darted on in front and cried "Hurrah!" and the boys whistled through their fingers, and the soldiers presented arms. The Princess came out of the copper castle, and became Queen, and she liked that well enough. The wedding lasted a week, and the three dogs sat at the table, too, and opened their eyes wider than ever at all they saw.

GREAT CLAUS AND LITTLE CLAUS.

There lived two men in one village, and they had the same name—each was called Claus; but one had four horses and the other only a single horse. To distinguish them from each other, folks called him who had four horses Great Claus, and the one who had only a single horse Little Claus.

Now we shall hear what happened to each of them, for this is a true story.

The whole week through little Claus was obliged to plow for Great Claus, and to lend him his one horse; then Great Claus helped him out with all his four, but only once a week, and that on a holiday. Hurrah! how Little Claus smacked his whip over all five horses, for they were as good as his own on that one day. The sun shone gayly, and all the bells in the steeples were ringing; the people were all dressed in their best, and were going to church, with their hymn-books under their arms, to hear the clergyman preach, and they saw Little Claus plowing with five horses; but he was so merry that he smacked his whip again and again, and cried, "Gee up, all my five!"

"You must not talk so," said Great Claus, "for only the one horse is yours."

But when no one was passing Little Claus forgot that he was not to say this, and he cried, "Gee up, all my horses!"

"Now, I must beg of you to let that alone," cried Great Claus, "for if you say it again, I shall hit your horse on the head so that it will fall down dead, and then it will be all over with him."

"I will certainly not say it any more," said Little Claus.

But when people came by soon afterward and nodded "good day" to him, he became very glad, and thought it looked very well after all that he had five horses to plow his field; and so he smacked his whip again, and cried, "Gee up, all my horses!"

"I'll 'gee up' your horses!" said Great Claus. And he took the hatchet and hit the only horse of Little Claus on the head, so that it fell down and was dead immediately.

"Oh, now I haven't any horse at all!" said Little Claus, and began to cry.

Then he flayed the horse, and let the hide dry in the wind, and put it in a sack and hung it over his shoulder, and went to the town to sell his horse's skin. ff

He had a very long way to go, and was obliged to pass through a great dark wood, and the weather became dreadfully bad. He went quite astray, and before he got into the right way again it was evening, and it was too far to get home again or even to the town before nightfall.

Close by the road stood a large farm-house. The shut-

ters were closed outside the windows, but the light could still be seen shining out over them.

"I may be able to get leave to stop here through the night," thought Little Claus; and he went and knocked.

The farmer's wife opened the door; but when she heard what he wanted she told him to go away, declaring that her husband was not at home, and she would not receive strangers.

"Then I shall have to lie outside," said Little Claus. And the farmer's wife shut the door in his face.

Close by stood a great haystack, and between this and the farm-house was a little outhouse thatched with straw.

"Up there I can lie," said Little Claus, when he looked up at the roof; "that is a capital bed. I suppose the stork won't fly down and bite me in the legs." For a living stork was standing on the roof, where he had his nest.

Now Little Claus climbed up to the roof of the shed, where he lay, and turned round to settle himself comfortably. The wooden shutters did not cover the windows at the top, and he could look straight into the room. There was a great table, with the cloth laid, and wine and roast meat and a glorious fish upon it. The farmer's wife and the clerk were seated at table, and nobody besides. She was filling his glass, and he was digging his fork into the fish, for that was his favorite dish.

"If one could only get some, too!" thought Little Claus, as he stretched out his head toward the window. Heavens! what a glorious cake he saw standing there! Yes, certainly, that was a feast.

Now he heard someone riding along the high road. It was the woman's husband, who was coming home. He was a good man enough, but he had the strange peculiarity that he could never bear to see a clerk. If a clerk appeared before his eyes he became quite wild. And that was the reason why the clerk had gone to the wife to wish her good-day, because he knew that her husband was not at home; and the good woman therefore put the best fare she had before him. But when they heard the man coming they were frightened, and the woman begged the clerk to creep into a great empty chest which stood there; and he did so, for he knew the husband could not bear the sight of a clerk. The woman quickly hid all the excellent meat and wine in

her baking-oven; for if the man had seen that, he would have been certain to ask what it meant.

"Ah, yes!" sighed Little Claus, up in his shed, when he saw all the good fare put away.

"Is there anyone up there?" asked the farmer; and he looked up at Little Claus. "Who are you lying there? Better come with me into the room."

And Little Claus told him how he had lost his way, and asked leave to stay there for the night.

"Yes, certainly," said the peasant; "but first we must have something to live on."

The woman received them both in a very friendly way, spread the cloth on a long table, and gave them a great dish of porridge. The farmer was hungry, and ate with a good appetite; but Little Claus could not help thinking of the capital roast meat, fish, and cake, which he knew were in the oven. Under the table, at his feet, he had laid the sack with the horse's hide in it; for we know that he had come out to sell it in the town. He did not relish the porridge, so he trod upon the sack, and the dry skin crackled quite loudly.

"Why, what have you in your sack?" asked the farmer.

"Oh, that's a magician," answered Little Claus. "He says we are not to eat porridge, for he has conjured the oven full of roast meat, fish, and cake."

"Wonderful!" cried the farmer; and he opened the oven in a hurry, and found all the dainty provisions which his wife had hidden there, but which, as he thought, the wizard had conjured forth. The woman dared not say anything, but put the things at once on the table; and so they both ate of the meat, the fish, and the cake. Now Little Claus again trod on his sack, and made the hide creak.

"What does he say now?" said the farmer.

"He says," replied Claus, "that he has conjured three bottles of wine for us, too, and that they are standing there in the corner behind the oven."

Now the woman was obliged to bring out the wine which she had hidden, and the farmer drank it and became very merry. He would have been very glad to see such a conjuror as Little Claus had there in the sack.

"Can he conjure the demon forth?" asked the farmer. "I should like to see him, for now I am merry."

"Oh, yes," said Little Claus; "my conjuror can do anything that I ask of him—Can you not?" he added, and trod on the hide, so that it crackled. "He says 'Yes.' But the demon is very ugly to look at; we had better not see him."

"Oh, I'm not at all afraid. Pray, what will he look like?"

"Why, he'll look the very image of a clerk."

"Ha!" said the farmer, "that is ugly! You must know, I can't bear the sight of a clerk. But it doesn't matter now, for I know that he's a demon, so I shall easily stand it. Now I have courage, but he must not come too near me."

"Now I will ask my conjuror," said Little Claus; and he trod on the sack and held his ear down.

"What does he say?"

"He says you may go and open the chest that stands in the corner, and you will see the demon crouching in it; but you must hold the lid so that he doesn't slip out."

"Will you help me to hold him?" asked the farmer. And he went to the chest where the wife had hidden the real clerk, who sat in there and was very much afraid. The farmer opened the lid a little way and peeped in underneath it.

"Hu!" he cried, and sprang backward. "Yes, now I've seen him, and he looked exactly like our clerk. Oh, that was dreadful!"

Upon this they must drink. So they sat and drank until late into the night.

"You must sell me that conjuror," said the farmer. "Ask as much as you like for him; I'll give you a whole bushel of money directly."

"No, that I can't do," said Little Claus; "only think how much use I can make of this conjuror."

"Oh, I should so much like to have him!" cried the farmer; and he went on begging.

"Well," said Little Claus, at last, "as you have been so kind as to give me shelter for the night, I will let it be so. You shall have the conjuror for a bushel of money; but I must have the bushel heaped up."

"That you shall have," replied the farmer. "But you must take the chest yonder away with you. I will not keep it in my house an hour. One cannot know—perhaps he may be there still."

Little Claus gave the farmer his sack with the dry hide in

it, and got in exchange a whole bushel of money, and that heaped up. The farmer also gave him a big truck, on which to carry off his money and chest.

"Farewell!" said Little Claus; and he went off with his money and the big chest, in which the clerk was still sitting.

On the other side of the wood was a great deep river. The water rushed along so rapidly that one could scarcely swim against the stream. A fine new bridge had been built over it. Little Claus stopped on the center of the bridge, and said quite loud, so that the clerk could hear it.

"Ho, what shall I do with this stupid chest? It's as heavy as if stones were in it. I shall only get tired if I drag it any farther, so I'll throw it into the river; if it swims home to me, well and good; and if it does not, it will be no great matter."

And he took the chest with one hand, and lifted it up a little, as if he intended to throw it into the river.

"No! let be!" cried the clerk from within the chest; "let me out first!"

"Hu!" exclaimed Little Claus, pretending to be frightened, "he's in there still! I must make haste and throw him into the river, that he may be drowned."

"Oh, no, no!" screamed the clerk. "I'll give you a whole bushelful of money if you'll let me go."

"Why, that's another thing!" said Little Claus; and he opened the chest.

The clerk crept quickly out and pushed the empty chest into the water, and went to his house, where Little Claus received a whole bushelful of money. He had already received one from the farmer, and so now he had his truck loaded with money.

"See, I've been well paid for the horse," he said to himself when he had got home to his own room, and was emptying all the money into a heap in the middle of the floor. "That will vex Great Claus when he hears how rich I have grown through my one horse; but I won't tell him about it outright."

So he sent a boy to Great Claus to ask for a bushel measure.

"What can he want with it?" thought Great Claus. And he smeared some tar underneath the measure so that some

part of whatever was measured should stick to it. And thus it happened; for when he received the measure back, there were three new eight-shilling pieces adhering thereto.

"What's this?" cried Great Claus; and he ran off at once to Little Claus. "Where did you get all that money from?"

"Oh, that's for my horse's skin. I sold it yesterday evening."

"That's really being well paid," said Great Claus. And he ran home in a hurry, took an ax, and killed all his four horses; then he flayed them, and carried off their skins to the town.

"Hides! hides! who'll buy any hides?" he cried through the streets.

All the shoemakers and tanners came running, and asked how much he wanted for them.

"A bushel of money for each!" said Great Claus.

"Are you mad?" said they. "Do you think we have money by the bushel?"

"Hides! hides!" he cried again; and to all who asked him what the hides would cost, he replied, "A bushel of money."

"He wants to make fools of us," they all exclaimed. And the shoemakers took their straps, and the tanners their aprons, and they began to beat Great Claus.

"Hides! hides!" they called after him, jeeringly. "Yes, we'll tan your hide for you till the red broth runs down. Out of the town with him!" And Great Claus made the best haste he could, for he had never yet been thrashed as he was thrashed now.

"Well," said he, when he got home, "Little Claus shall pay for this. I'll kill him for it."

Now, at Little Claus' the old grandmother had died. She had been very harsh and unkind to him, but yet he was very sorry, and took the dead woman and laid her in his warm bed, to see if she would not come to life again. There he intended she should remain all through the night, and he himself would sit in the corner and sleep on a chair, as he had often done before. As he sat there, in the night the door opened, and Great Claus came in with his ax. He knew where Little Claus' bed stood; and, going straight up to it, he hit the old grandmother on the head, thinking she was Little Claus.

"D'ye see," said he, "you shall not make a fool of me again." And then he went home.

"That's a bad fellow, that man," said Little Claus. "He wanted to kill me. It was a good thing for my old grandmother that she was dead already. He would have taken her life."

And he dressed his grandmother in her Sunday clothes, borrowed a horse from his neighbor, harnessed it to a car, and put the old lady on the back seat, so that she could not fall out when he drove. And so they trundled through the wood. When the sun rose they were in front of an inn; there Little Claus pulled up, and went in to have some refreshment.

The host had very, very much money; he was also a very good man, but exceedingly hot, as if he had pepper and tobacco in him.

"Good morning," said he to Little Claus. "You've put on your Sunday clothes early to-day."

"Yes," answered Little Claus; "I'm going to town with my old grandmother; she's sitting there on the car without. I can't bring her into the room. Will you give her a glass of mead? But you must speak very loud, for she can't hear well."

"Yes, that I'll do," said the host. And he poured out a great glass of mead, and went out with it to the dead grandmother, who had been placed upright in the carriage.

"Here's a glass of mead from your son," quoth mine host. But the dead woman replied not a word, but sat quite still. "Don't you hear?" cried the host, as loud as he could, "here is a glass of mead from your son!"

Once more he called out the same thing, but as she persisted in not hearing him, he became angry at last, and threw the glass in her face, so that the mead ran down over her nose, and she tumbled backward into the car, for she had only been put upright, and not bound fast.

"Hallo!" cried Little Claus, running out at the door, and seizing the host by the breast; "you've killed my grandmother now! See, there's a big hole in her forehead."

"Oh, here's a misfortune!" cried the host, wringing his hands. "That all comes of my hot temper. Dear Little Claus, I'll give you a bushel of money, and have your grandmother buried as if she were my own; only keep

quiet, or I shall have my head cut off, and that would be so very disagreeable!"

So Little Claus again received a whole bushel of money, and the host buried the old grandmother as if she had been his own. And when Little Claus came home with all his money, he at once sent his boy to Great Claus to ask to borrow a bushel measure.

"What's that?" said Great Claus. "Have I not killed him? I must go myself and see to this." And so he went over himself with the bushel to Little Claus.

"Now, where did you get all that money from?" he asked; and he opened his eyes wide when he saw all that had been brought together.

"You killed my grandmother, and not me," replied Little Claus; "and I've been and sold her, and got a whole bushel of money for her."

"That's really being well paid," said Great Claus; and he hastened home, took an ax, and killed his own grandmother directly. Then he put her on a carriage, and drove off to the town with her, to where the apothecary lived, and asked him if he would buy a dead person.

"Who is it, and where did you get him from?" asked the apothecary.

"It's my grandmother," answered Great Claus. "I've killed her to get a bushel of money for her."

"Heaven save us!" cried the apothecary, "you're raving! Don't say such things, or you may lose your head." And he told him earnestly what a bad deed this was that he had done, and what a bad man he was, and that he must be punished. And Great Claus was so frightened that he jumped out of the surgery straight into his carriage, and whipped the horses, and drove home. But the apothecary and all the people thought him mad, and so they let him drive whither he would.

"You shall pay for this!" cried Great Claus, when he was out upon the high road; "yes, yes, you shall pay me for this, Little Claus!" And directly he got home he took the biggest sack he could find, and went over to Little Claus, and said, "Now, you've tricked me again! First I killed my horses, and then my old grandmother! That's all your fault, but you shall never trick me any more." And he seized Little Claus round the body, and thrust him into

the sack, and took him upon his back, and called out to him, "Now I shall go off with you and drown you."

It was a long way that he had to travel before he came to the river, and Little Claus was not too light to carry. The road led him close to a church; the organ was playing, and the people were singing so beautifully! Then Great Claus put down his sack, with Little Claus in it, close to the church door, and thought it would be a very good thing to go in and hear a psalm before he went farther; for Little Claus could not get out, and all the people were in church; and so he went in.

"Ah, yes, yes!" sighed Little Claus in the sack. And he turned and twisted, but he found it impossible to loosen the cord. Then there came by an old drover with snow-white hair, and a great staff in his hand; he was driving a whole herd of cows and oxen before him, and they stumbled against the sack in which Little Claus was confined, so that it was overthrown.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Little Claus, "I am so young yet, and am to go to heaven directly!"

"And I, poor fellow," said the drover, "am so old already, and can't get there yet!"

"Open the sack," cried Little Claus; "creep into it instead of me, and you will get to heaven directly."

"With all my heart," replied the drover; and he untied the sack, out of which Little Claus crept forth immediately.

"But will you look after the cattle?" said the old man; and he crept into the sack at once, whereupon Little Claus tied it up, and went his way with all the cows and oxen.

Soon afterward Great Claus came out of the church. He took the sack on his shoulders again, although it seemed to him as if the sack had become lighter; for the old drover was only half as heavy as Little Claus.

"How light he is to carry now! Yes, that is because I have heard a psalm."

So he went to the river, which was deep and broad, threw the sack with the old drover in it into the water, and called after him, thinking that it was Little Claus, "You lie there! Now you shan't trick me any more!"

Then he went home; but when he came to a place where there was a cross road, he met Little Claus driving all his beasts.

"What's this?" cried Great Claus. "Have I not drowned you?"

"Yes," replied Little Claus, "you threw me into the river less than half an hour ago."

"But wherever did you get all those fine beasts from?" asked Great Claus.

"These beasts are sea-cattle," replied Little Claus. "I'll tell you the whole story—and thank you for drowning me, for now I'm at the top of the tree. I am really rich! How frightened I was when I lay huddled in the sack, and the wind whistled about my ears when you threw me down from the bridge into the cold water! I sank to the bottom immediately; but I did not knock myself, for the most splendid soft grass grows down there. Upon that I fell; and immediately the sack was opened, and the loveliest maiden, with snow-white garments and a green wreath upon her wet hair, took me by the hand, and said, 'Are you come, Little Claus? Here you have some cattle to begin with. A mile farther along the road there is a whole herd more, which I will give to you.' And now I saw that the river formed a great highway for the people of the sea. Down in its bed they walked and drove directly from the sea, and straight into the land, to where the river ends. There it was so beautifully full of flowers and of the freshest grass; the fishes, which swam in the water, shot past my ears, just as here the birds in the air. What pretty people there were there, and what fine cattle pasturing on mounds and in ditches!"

"But why did you come up again to us directly?" asked Great Claus. "I should not have done that, if it is so beautiful down there."

"Why," replied Little Claus, "in that I just acted with good policy. You heard me tell you that the sea-maiden said, 'a mile farther along the road—' and by the road she meant the river, for she can't go anywhere else—'there is a whole herd of cattle for you.' But I know what bends the stream makes—sometimes this, sometimes that; there's a long way to go round; no, the thing can be managed in a shorter way by coming here to the land, and driving across the fields toward the river again. In this manner I save myself almost half a mile, and get all the quicker to my sea-cattle!"

"Oh, you are a fortunate man!" said Great Claus. "Do

you think I should get some sea-cattle too if I went down to the bottom of the river?"

"Yes, I think so," replied Little Claus. "But I cannot carry you in the sack as far as the river; you are too heavy for me! But if you will go there, and creep into the sack yourself, I will throw you in with a great deal of pleasure."

"Thanks!" said Great Claus; "but if I don't get any sea-cattle when I am down there, I shall beat you, you may be sure."

"Oh, no; don't be so fierce!"

And so they went together to the river. When the beasts, which were thirsty, saw the stream, they ran as fast as they could to get at the water.

"See how they hurry!" cried Little Claus. "They are longing to get back to the bottom."

"Yes, but help me first!" said Great Claus, "or else you shall be beaten."

And so he crept into the great sack, which had been laid across the back of one of the oxen.

"Put a stone in, for I'm afraid I shan't sink else," said Great Claus.

"That can be done," replied Little Claus; and he put a big stone into the sack, tied the rope tightly, and pushed against it. Plump! Down went Great Claus into the river, and sank at once to the bottom.

"I'm afraid he won't find the cattle!" said Little Claus; and then he drove homeward with what he had.

THUMBELINA.

There was once a woman who wished for a very little child; but she did not know where she could procure one. So she went to an old witch and said:

"I do so very much wish for a little child! can you not tell me where I can get one?"

"Oh! that could easily be managed," said the witch. "There you have a barleycorn; that is not the kind which grows in the countryman's field, and which the chickens get to eat. Put that into a flower-pot, and you shall see what you shall see."

"Thank you," said the woman; and she gave the witch twelve shillings, for that is what it cost.

Then she went home and planted the barleycorn, and immediately there grew up a great handsome flower, which looked like a tulip; but the leaves were tightly closed, as though it were still a bud.

"That is a beautiful flower," said the woman; and she kissed its yellow and red leaves. But just as she kissed it the flower opened with a pop! It was a real tulip, as one could now see; but in the middle of the flower there sat upon the green velvet stamens a little maiden, delicate and graceful to behold. She was scarcely half a thumb's length in height, and, therefore, she was called Thumbelina.

A neat polished walnut-shell served Thumbelina for a cradle, blue violet-leaves were her mattresses, with a rose-leaf for a coverlet. There she slept at night; but in the day-time she played upon the table, where the woman had put a plate with a wreath of flowers around it, whose stalks stood in water; on the water swam a great tulip-leaf, and on this the little maiden could sit, and row from one side of the plate to the other, with two white horse-hairs for oars. That looked pretty indeed! She could also sing, and, indeed, so delicately and sweetly, that the like had never been heard.

Once as she lay at night in her pretty bed, there came an old Toad creeping through the window, in which one pane was broken. The Toad was very ugly, big and damp; it hopped straight down upon the table, where Thumbelina lay sleeping under the rose-leaf.

"That would be a handsome wife for my son," said the Toad; and she took the walnut-shell in which Thumbelina lay asleep, and hopped with it through the window down into the garden.

There ran a great broad brook; but the margin was swampy and soft, and here the Toad dwelt with her son. Ugh! he was ugly, and looked just like his mother. "Croak! croak; brek-kek-kex!" that was all he could say when he saw the graceful little maiden in the walnut-shell.

"Don't speak so loud, or she will awake," said the old Toad. "She might run away from us, for she is as light as a bit of swan's-down. We will put her out in the brook upon one of the broad water-lily leaves. That will be just like an island for her, she is so small and light. Then she

can't get away, while we put the stateroom under the marsh in order, where you are to live and keep house together."

Out in the brook grew many water-lilies with broad green leaves, which looked as if they were floating on the water. The leaf which lay farthest out was also the greatest of all, and to that the old Toad swam out and laid the walnut-shell upon it with Thumbelina. The little tiny Thumbelina woke early in the morning, and when she saw where she was she began to cry very bitterly; for there was water on every side of the great green leaf, and she could not get to land at all. The old Toad sat down in the marsh, decking out her room with rushes and yellow weed—it was to be made very pretty for the new daughter-in-law; then she swam out, with her ugly son, to the leaf on which Thumbelina was. They wanted to take her pretty bed, which was to be put in the bridal chamber before she went in there herself. The old Toad bowed low before her in the water, and said:

"Here is my son; he will be your husband, and you will live splendidly together in the marsh."

"Croak! croak! brek-kek-kex!" was all the son could say.

Then they took the delicate little bed, and swam away with it; but Thumbelina sat all alone upon the green leaf and wept, for she did not like to live at the nasty Toad's, and have her ugly son for a husband. The little fishes swimming in the water below had both seen the Toad, and had also heard what she said; therefore they stretched forth their heads, for they wanted to see the little girl. So soon as they saw her they considered her so pretty that they felt very sorry she should have to go down to the ugly Toad. No, that must never be! They assembled together in the water around the green stalk which held the leaf on which the little maiden stood, and with their teeth they gnawed away the stalk, and so the leaf swam down the stream; and away went Thumbelina far away, where the Toad could not get at her.

Thumbelina sailed by many cities, and the little birds which sat in the bushes saw her, and said, "What a lovely little girl!" The leaf swam away from them, farther and farther; so Thumbelina traveled out of the country.

A graceful little white Butterfly always fluttered round her, and at last alighted on the leaf. Thumbelina pleased

him, and she was very glad of this, for now the Toad could not reach them; and it was so beautiful where she was floating along—the sun shone upon the water, and the water glistened like the most splendid gold. She took her girdle and bound one end of it round the Butterfly, fastening the other end of the ribbon to the leaf. The leaf now glided onward much faster and Thumbelina, too, for she stood upon the leaf.

There came a big Cockchafer flying up; and he saw her, and immediately clasped his claws round her slender waist, and flew with her up into a tree. The green leaf went swimming down the brook, and the Butterfly with it; for he was fastened to the leaf, and could not get away from it.

Mercy! how frightened poor little Thumbelina was when the Cockchafer flew with her up into the tree! But especially she was sorry for the fine white Butterfly whom she had bound fast to the leaf, for, if he could not free himself from it, he would be obliged to starve. The Cockchafer, however, did not trouble himself at all about this. He seated himself with her upon the biggest green leaf of the tree, gave her the sweet part of the flowers to eat, and declared that she was very pretty, though she did not in the least resemble a cockchafer. Afterward came all the other Cockchafers who lived in the tree to pay a visit; they looked at Thumbelina, and said:

“Why, she has not even more than two legs!—that has a wretched appearance.”

“She has not any feelers!” cried another.

“Her waist is quite slender—fie! she looks like a human creature—how ugly she is!” said all the lady Cockchafers.

And yet Thumbelina was very pretty. Even the Cockchafer who had carried her off saw that; but when all the others declared she was ugly, he believed it at last, and would not have her at all—she might go whither she liked. Then they flew down with her from the tree, and set her upon a daisy, and she wept, because she was so ugly that the Cockchafers would have nothing to say to her; and yet she was the loveliest little being one could imagine, and as tender and delicate as a rose-leaf.

The whole summer through poor Thumbelina lived quite alone in the great wood. She wove herself a bed out of blades of grass, and hung it up under a shamrock, so that

she was protected from the rain; she plucked the honey out of the flowers for food, and drank of the dew which stood every morning upon the leaves. Thus summer and autumn passed away; but now came winter, the cold, long winter. All the birds who had sung so sweetly before her flew away; trees and flowers shed their leaves; the great shamrock under which she had lived shriveled up, and there remained nothing of it but a yellow, withered stalk; and she was dreadfully cold, for her clothes were torn, and she herself was so frail and delicate—poor little Thumbelina! she was nearly frozen. It began to snow, and every snowflake that fell upon her was like a whole shovelful thrown upon one of us, for we are tall, and she was only an inch long. Then she wrapped herself in a dry leaf, but that tore in the middle, and would not warm her—she shivered with cold.

Close to the wood into which she had now come lay a great corn-field, but the corn was gone long ago; only the naked dry stubble stood up out of the frozen ground. These were just like a great forest for her to wander through; and, oh! how she trembled with cold. Then she arrived at the door of the Field Mouse. This Mouse had a little hole under the stubble. There the Field Mouse lived, warm and comfortable, and had a whole roomful of corn—a glorious kitchen and larder. Poor Thumbelina stood at the door just like a poor beggar girl, and begged for a little bit of a barleycorn, for she had not had the smallest morsel to eat for the last two days.

“You poor little creature,” said the Field Mouse—for after all she was a good old Field Mouse—“come into my warm room and dine with me.”

As she was pleased with Thumbelina, she said, “If you like you may stay with me through the winter, but you must keep my room clean and neat, and tell me little stories, for I am very fond of those.”

And Thumbelina did as the kind old Field Mouse bade her, and had a very good time of it.

“Now we shall soon have a visitor,” said the Field Mouse. “My neighbor is in the habit of visiting me once a week. He is even better off than I am, has great rooms, and beautiful black velvety fur. If you could only get him for your husband you would be well provided for. You must tell him the prettiest stories you know.

But Thumbelina did not care about this; she thought nothing of the neighbor, for he was a Mole. He came and paid his visits in his black velvet coat. The Field Mouse told how rich and how learned he was, and how his house was more than twenty times larger than hers; that he had learning, but that he did not like the sun and beautiful flowers, for he had never seen them.

Thumbelina had to sing, and she sang "Cockchafer, fly away," and "When the parson goes afield." Then the Mole fell in love with her, because of her delicious voice; but he said nothing, for he was a sedate Mole.

A short time before he had dug a long passage through the earth from his own house to theirs; and Thumbelina and the Field Mouse obtained leave to walk in this passage as much as they wished. But he begged them not to be afraid of the dead bird which was lying in the passage. It was an entire bird, with wings and beak. It certainly must have died only a short time before, and was now buried just where the Mole had made his passage.

The Mole took a bit of decayed wood in his mouth, and it glimmered like fire in the dark; then he went first and lighted them through the long, dark passage. When they came where the dead bird lay, the Mole thrust up his broad nose against the ceiling, so that a great hole was made, through which the daylight could shine down. In the middle of the floor lay a dead Swallow, his beautiful wings pressed close against his sides, and his head and feet drawn back under his feathers; the poor bird had certainly died of cold. Thumbelina was very sorry for this; she was very fond of all the little birds, who had sung and twittered so prettily before her through the summer; but the Mole gave him a push with his crooked legs, and said, "Now he doesn't pipe any more. It must be miserable to be born a little bird. I'm thankful that none of my children can be that; such a bird has nothing but his 'tweet-tweet,' and has to starve in the winter!"

"Yes, you may well say that, as a clever man," observed the Field Mouse. "Of what use is all this 'tweet-tweet' to a bird when the winter comes? He must starve and freeze. But they say that's very aristocratic."

Thumbelina said nothing; but when the two others turned their backs on the bird, she bent down, put the

feathers aside which covered his head, and kissed him upon his closed eyes.

"Perhaps it was he who sang so prettily before me in the summer," she thought. "How much pleasure he gave me, the dear, beautiful bird!"

The Mole now closed up the hole through which the daylight shone in, and accompanied the ladies home. But at night Thumbelina could not sleep at all; so she got up out of her bed, and wove a large, beautiful carpet of hay, and carried it and spread it over the dead bird, and laid the thin stamens of flowers, soft as cotton, and which she had found in the Field Mouse's room, at the bird's sides, so that he might lie soft in the ground.

"Farewell, you pretty little bird!" said she. "Farewell! and thanks to you for your beautiful song in the summer, when all the trees were green, and the sun shone down warmly upon us." And then she laid the bird's head upon her heart. But the bird was not dead; he was only lying there torpid with cold; and now he had been warmed, and came to life again.

In autumn all the swallows fly away to warm countries; but if one happens to be belated, it becomes so cold that it falls down as if dead, and lies where it fell, and then the cold snow covers it.

Thumbelina fairly trembled, she was so startled; for the bird was large, very large, compared with her, who was only an inch in height. But she took courage, laid the cotton closer round the poor bird, and brought a leaf that she had used as her own coverlet, and laid it over the bird's head.

The next night she crept out to him again—and now he was alive, but quite weak; he could only open his eyes for a moment and look at Thumbelina, who stood before him with a bit of decayed wood in her hand, for she had not a lantern.

"I thank you, you pretty little child," said the sick Swallow; "I have been famously warmed. Soon I shall get my strength back again, and I shall be able to fly about in the warm sunshine."

"Oh!" she said, "it is so cold without. It snows and freezes. Stay in your warm bed, and I will nurse you."

Then she brought the Swallow water in the petal of a flower; and the Swallow drank, and told her how he had

torn one of his wings in a thorn-bush, and thus he had not been able to fly so fast as the other swallows, which had sped away, far away, to the warm countries. So at last he had fallen to the ground; but he could remember nothing more, and did not know at all how he had come where she had found him.

The whole winter the Swallow remained there, and Thumbelina nursed and tended him heartily. Neither the Field Mouse nor the Mole heard anything about it, for they did not like the poor Swallow. So soon as the spring came, and the sun warmed the earth, the Swallow bade Thumbelina farewell, and she opened the hole which the Mole had made in the ceiling. The sun shone in upon them gloriously, and the Swallow asked if Thumbelina would go with him; she could sit upon his back, and they would fly away far into the green wood. But Thumbelina knew that the old Field Mouse would be grieved if she left her.

"No, I cannot!" said Thumbelina.

"Farewell, farewell, you good, pretty girl!" said the Swallow; and he flew out into the sunshine. Thumbelina looked after him, and the tears came into her eyes, for she was heartily and sincerely fond of the poor Swallow.

"Tweet-weet! tweet-weet!" sang the bird, and flew into the green forest. Thumbelina felt very sad. She did not get permission to go out into the warm sunshine. The corn which was sown in the field over the house of the Field Mouse grew up high into the air; it was quite a thick wood for the poor girl, who was only an inch in height.

"You are betrothed now, Thumbelina," said the Field Mouse. "My neighbor has proposed for you. What great fortune for a poor child like you! Now you must work at your outfit, woolen and linen clothes both; for you must lack nothing when you have become the Mole's wife."

Thumbelina had to turn the spindle, and the Mole hired four spiders to weave for her day and night. Every evening the Mole paid her a visit; and he was always saying that when the summer should draw to a close, the sun would not shine nearly so hot, for that now it burned the earth almost as hard as a stone. Yes, when the summer should have gone, then he would keep his wedding day with Thumbelina. But she was not glad at all, for she did not like the tiresome Mole. Every morning when the sun rose, and every even-

ing when it went down, she crept out at the door; and when the wind blew the corn-ears apart, so that she could see the blue sky, she thought how bright and beautiful it was out here, and wished heartily to see her dear Swallow again. But the Swallow did not come back; he had doubtless flown far away, in the fair green forest. When autumn came on, Thumbelina had all her outfit ready.

"In four weeks you shall celebrate your wedding," said the Field Mouse to her.

But Thumbelina wept, and declared she would not have the tiresome Mole.

"Nonsense!" said the Field Mouse; "don't be obstinate, or I will bite you with my white teeth. He is a very fine man whom you will marry. The Queen herself has not such a black velvet fur; and his kitchen and cellar are full. Be thankful for your good fortune."

Now the wedding was to be held. The Mole had already come to fetch Thumbelina; she was to live with him, deep under the earth, and never to come out into the warm sunshine, for that he did not like. The poor little thing was very sorrowful; she was now to say farewell to the glorious sun, which after all, she had been allowed by the Field Mouse to see from the threshold of the door.

"Farewell, thou bright sun!" she said, and stretched out her arms toward it, and walked a little way forth from the house of the Field Mouse, for now the corn had been reaped, and only the dry stubble stood in the fields. Farewell!" she repeated, twining her arms round a little red flower which still bloomed there. "Greet the little Swallow from me, if you see him again."

"Tweet-weet! tweet-weet!" a voice suddenly sounded over her head. She looked up; it was the little Swallow, who was just flying by. When he saw Thumbelina he was very glad; and Thumbelina told him how loth she was to have the ugly Mole for her husband, and that she was to live deep under the earth, where the sun never shone. And she could not refrain from weeping.

"The cold winter is coming now," said the Swallow; "I am going to fly far away into the warm countries. Will you come with me? You can sit upon my back, then we shall fly from the ugly Mole and his dark room—away, far away, over the mountains to the warm countries, where the sun

shines warmer than here, where it is always summer, and there are lovely flowers. Only fly with me, you dear little Thumbelina, you who saved my life when I lay frozen in the dark earthy passage."

"Yes, I will go with you!" said Thumbelina; and she seated herself on the bird's back, with her feet on his outspread wing, and bound her girdle fast to one of his strongest feathers; then the Swallow flew up into the air over forest and over sea, high up over the great mountains, where the snow always lies; and Thumbelina felt cold in the bleak air, but then she hid under the bird's warm feathers, and only put out her little head to admire all the beauties beneath her.

At last they came to the warm countries. There the sun shone far brighter than here; the sky seemed twice as high; in ditches and on the hedges grew the most beautiful blue and green grapes; lemons and oranges hung in the woods; the air was fragrant with myrtles and balsams, and on the roads the loveliest children ran about, playing with gay butterflies. But the Swallow flew still farther, and it became more and more beautiful. Under the more glorious green trees by the blue lake stood a palace of dazzling white marble, from the olden time. Vines clustered around lofty pillars; at the top were many swallows' nests, and in one of these the Swallow lived who carried Thumbelina.

"That is my house," said the Swallow; "but it is not right that you should live there. It is not yet properly arranged by a great deal, and you will not be content with it. Select for yourself one of the splendid flowers which grow down yonder, then I will put you into it, and you shall have everything as nice as you can wish."

"That is capital," cried she, and clapped her little hands.

A great marble pillar lay there, which had fallen to the ground and had been broken into three pieces; but between these pieces grew the most beautiful great white flowers. The Swallow flew down with Thumbelina, and set her upon one of the broad leaves. But what was the little maid's surprise? There sat a little man in the midst of the flower, as white and transparent as if he had been made of glass; he wore the neatest of gold crowns on his head, and the brightest wings on his shoulders; he himself was not bigger than Thumbelina. He was the Angel of the flower.

In each of the flowers dwelt such a little man or woman, but this one was King over them all.

"Heavens! how beautiful he is!" whispered Thumbelina to the Swallow.

The little Prince was very much frightened at the Swallow, for it was quite a gigantic bird to him, who was so small. But when he saw Thumbelina, he became very glad; she was the prettiest maiden he had ever seen. Therefore he took off his golden crown, and put it on her head, asked her name, and if she would be his wife, and then she should be Queen of all the flowers. Now this was truly a different kind of man to the son of the Toad, and the Mole with the black velvet fur. She therefore said "Yes" to the charming Prince. And out of every flower came a lady or lord, so pretty to behold that it was a delight; each one brought Thumbelina a present; but the best gift was a pair of beautiful wings which had belonged to a great white fly; these were fastened to Thumbelina's back, and now she could fly from flower to flower. Then there was much rejoicing; and the little Swallow sat above them in the nest, and was to sing the marriage song, which he accordingly did as well as he could; but yet in his heart he was sad, for he was so fond, Oh! so fond of Thumbelina, and would have liked never to part from her.

"You should not be called Thumbelina," said the Flower Angel to her; "that is an ugly name, and you are too fair for it—we will call you Maia."

THE GOLOSHES OF FORTUNE.

I.

A BEGINNING.

In a house in Copenhagen, not far from the King's New Market, a company—a very large company—had assembled, having received invitations to an evening party there. One-half of the company had already sat at the card-tables, the other half awaited the result of the hostess' question, "What shall we do now?" They had progressed so far, and

the entertainment began to show some degree of animation. Among other subjects the conversation turned upon the Middle Ages. Some considered that period much more interesting than our own time; yes, Councilor Knap defended this view so zealously that the lady of the house went over at once to his side; and both loudly exclaimed against Oersted's treatise in the Almanac on old and modern times, in which the chief advantage is given to our own day. The councilor considered the times of the Danish King Hans as the noblest and happiest age.

While the conversation takes this turn, only interrupted for a moment by the arrival of a newspaper, which contained nothing worth reading, we will betake ourselves to the ante-chamber, where the cloaks, sticks, and goloshes had found a place. Here sat two maids—an old one and a young one. One would have thought they had come to escort their mistresses home; but, on looking at them more closely, the observer could see that they were not ordinary servants; their shapes were too graceful for that, their complexions too delicate, and the cut of their dresses too uncommon. They were two fairies. The younger was not Fortune, but lady's-maid to one of her ladies of the bed-chamber, who carry about the more trifling gifts of Fortune. The elder one looked somewhat more gloomy—she was Care, who always goes herself in her own exalted person to perform her business, for thus she knows that it is well done.

They were telling each other where they had been that day. The messenger of Fortune had only transacted a few unimportant affairs, as, for instance, she had preserved a new bonnet from a shower of rain, had procured an honest man a bow from a titled Nobody, and so on; but what she had still to relate was something quite extraordinary.

"I can likewise tell," she said, "that to-day is my birthday; and in honor of it a pair of goloshes has been entrusted to me, which I am to bring to the human race. These goloshes have the property that everyone who puts them on is at once transported to the time and place in which he likes best to be—every wish in reference to time, place, and circumstance is at once fulfilled; and so for once man can be happy here below!"

"Believe me," said Care, "he will be very unhappy, and

will bless the moment when he can get rid of the goloshes again."

"What are you thinking of?" retorted the other. "Now I shall put them at the door. Somebody will take them by mistake, and become the happy one."

You see, this was the dialogue they held.

II.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE COUNCILOR.

It was late. Councilor Knap, lost in contemplation of the times of King Hans, wished to get home; and fate willed that instead of his own goloshes he should put on those of Fortune, and thus went out into East Street. But by the power of the goloshes he had been put back three hundred years—into the days of King Hans; and therefore he put his foot into the mud and mire in the street, because in those days there was not any pavement.

"Why, this is horrible—how dirty it is here!" said the councilor. "The good pavement is gone, and all the lamps are put out."

The moon did not yet stand high enough to give much light, and the air was tolerably thick, so that all objects seemed to melt together in the darkness. At the next corner a lamp hung before a picture of the Madonna, but the light it gave was as good as none; he only noticed it when he stood just under it, and his eyes fell upon the painted figure.

"This is probably a museum of art," thought he, "where they have forgotten to take down the sign."

A couple of men in the costume of those past days went by him.

"How they look!" he said. "They must come from a masquerade."

Suddenly there was a sound of drums and fifes, and torches gleamed brightly. The councilor started. And now he saw a strange procession go past. First came a whole troop of drummers, beating their instruments very dexterously; they were followed by men-at-arms, with longbows and crossbows. The chief man in the procession

was a clerical lord. The astonished councilor asked what was the meaning of this, and who the man might be.

"That is the Bishop of Zealand."

"What in the world has come to the bishop!" said the councilor, with a sigh, shaking his head. "This could not possibly be the bishop!"

Ruminating on this, and without looking to the right or to the left, the councilor went through the East Street, and over the Highbridge Place. The bridge which led to the Palace Square was not to be found; he perceived the shore of a shallow water and at length encountered two people, who sat in a boat.

"Do you wish to be ferried over to the Holm, sir?" they asked.

"To the Holm!" repeated the councilor, who did not know, you see, in what period he was. "I want to go to Christian's Haven and to Little Turf Street."

The men stared at him.

"Pray tell me where the bridge is?" said he. "It is shameful that no lanterns are lighted here; and it is as muddy, too, as if one were walking in a marsh." But the longer he talked with the boatmen the less could he understand them. "I don't understand your Bornhelm talk," he at last cried, angrily, and turned his back upon them. He could not find the bridge, nor was there any paling. "It is quite scandalous how things look here!" he said—never had he thought his own times so miserable as this evening. "I think it will be best if I take a cab," thought he. But where were the cabs?—not one was to be seen. "I shall have to go back to the King's New Market, where there are many carriages standing; otherwise I shall never get as far as Christian's Haven."

Now he went toward East Street, and had almost gone through it when the moon burst forth.

"What in the world have they been erecting here?" he exclaimed, when he saw the East Gate, which in those days stood at the end of East Street.

In the meantime, however, he found a passage open, and through this he came out upon our New Market; but it was a broad meadow. Single bushes stood forth, and across the

meadow ran a great canal or stream. A few miserable wooden booths for Dutch skippers were erected on the opposite shore.

"Either I behold a *Fata Morgana*, or I am tipsy," sighed the councilor. "What can that be? What can that be?"

He turned back, in the full persuasion that he must be ill. In walking up the street he looked more closely at the houses; most of them were built of laths, and many were only thatched with straw.

"No, I don't feel well at all!" he lamented. "And yet I only drank one glass of punch! But I cannot stand that; and besides, it was very foolish to give us punch and warm salmon. I shall mention that to our hostess—the agent's lady. Suppose I go back and say how I feel? But that looks ridiculous, and it is a question if they will be up still."

He looked for the house, but could not find it.

"That is dreadful!" he cried; "I don't know East Street again. Not one shop is to be seen; old, miserable, tumble-down huts are all I see, as if I were at Roeskilde or Ringstedt. Oh, I am ill! It's no use to make ceremony. But where in all the world is the agent's house? It is no longer the same; but within there are people up still. I certainly must be ill!"

He now reached a half-open door, where the light shone through a chink. It was a tavern of that date—a kind of beer-house. The room had the appearance of a Dutch wine-shop; a number of people, consisting of seamen, citizens of Copenhagen, and a few scholars, sat in deep conversation over their jugs, and paid little attention to the newcomer.

"I beg pardon," said the councilor to the hostess, "but I feel very unwell; would you let them get me a fly to go to Christian's Haven?"

The woman looked at him and shook her head; then she spoke to him in German.

The councilor now supposed that she did not understand Danish, so he repeated his wish in the German language. This, and his costume, convinced the woman that he was a foreigner. She soon understood that he felt unwell, and therefore brought him a jug of water. It certainly tasted a little of sea-water, though it had been taken from the spring outside.

The councilor leaned his head upon his hand, drew a deep breath, and thought of all the strange things that were happening about him.

"Is that to-day's number of the Day?" he said, quite mechanically, for he saw the woman was putting away a large sheet of paper.

She did not understand what he meant, but handed him the leaf; it was a woodcut representing a strange appearance in the air which had been seen in the city of Cologne.

"That is very old," said the councilor, who became quite cheerful at sight of this antiquity. "How did you come by this strange leaf? This is very interesting, although the whole thing is a fable. Nowadays these appearances are explained to be northern lights that have been seen; probably they arise from electricity."

Those who sat nearest to him and heard his speech looked at him in surprise, and one of them rose, took off his hat respectfully, and said, with a very grave face:

"You must certainly be a very learned man, sir!"

"Oh, no!" replied the councilor; "I can only say a word or two about things one ought to understand."

"*Modestia* is a beautiful virtue," said the man. "Moreover, I must say to your speech, '*mihi secus videtur*;' yet I will gladly suspend my *judicium*."

"May I ask with whom I have the pleasure of speaking?" asked the councilor.

"I am a bachelor of theology," replied the man.

This answer sufficed for the councilor; the title corresponded with the garb.

"Certainly," he thought, "this must be an old village schoolmaster, a queer character, such as one finds sometimes over in Jutland."

"This is certainly not a *locus docendi*," began the man; "but I beg you to take the trouble to speak. You are doubtless well read in the ancients?"

"Oh, yes," replied the councilor. "I am fond of reading useful old books; and am fond of the modern ones too, with the exception of the 'Every-day Stories,' of which we have enough, in all conscience."

"Every-day Stories?" said the bachelor, inquiringly.

"Yes, I mean the new romances we have now."

"Oh!" said the man, with a smile, "they are very witty,

and are much read at court. The King is especially partial to the romances by Messieurs Iffven and Gaudian, which talks about King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table. He has jested about it with his noble lords."

"That I certainly have not yet read," said the councilor; "that must be quite a new book published by Heiberg."

"No," retorted the man, "it is not published by Heiberg, but by Godfrey von Gehmen."*

"Indeed! is he the author?" asked the councilor. "That is a very old name: was not that the name of about the first printer who appeared in Denmark?"

"Why, he is our first printer," replied the man.

So far it had gone well. But now one of the men began to speak of a pestilence which he said had been raging a few years ago; he meant the plague of 1484. The councilor supposed he meant the cholera, and so the conversation went on tolerably. The Freebooters' War of 1490 was so recent that it could not escape mention. The English pirates had taken ships from the very wharves, said the man; and the councilor, who was well acquainted with the events of 1801, joined in manfully against the English. The rest of the talk, however, did not pass over so well; every moment there was a contradiction. The good bachelor was terribly ignorant, and the simplest assertion of the councilor seemed too bold or too fantastic. They looked at each other, and when it became too bad, the bachelor spoke Latin, in the hope that he would be better understood, but it was of no use.

"How are you now?" asked the hostess, and she plucked the councilor by the sleeve.

Now his recollection came back; in the course of the conversation he had forgotten everything that had happened.

"Good Heavens! where am I?" he said, and he felt dizzy when he thought of it.

"We'll drink claret, mead, and Bremen beer," cried one of the guests, "and you shall drink with us."

Two girls came in. One of them had on a cap of two colors. They poured out drink and bowed; the councilor felt a cold shudder running all down his back. "What's

* The first printer and publisher in Denmark under King Hans.

that? what's that?" he cried; but he was obliged to drink with them. They took possession of the good man quite politely. He was in despair, and when one said that he was tipsy he felt not the slightest doubt regarding the truth of the statement, and only begged them to procure him a droschky. Now they thought he was speaking Muscovite.

Never had he been in such rude, vulgar company.

"One would think the country was falling back into heathenism," was his reflection. "This is the most terrible moment of my life."

But at the same time the idea occurred to him to bend down under the table, and then to creep to the door. He did so; but just as he had reached the entry, the others discovered his intention. They seized him by the feet, and now the goloshes, to his great good fortune, came off, and—the whole enchantment vanished.

The councilor saw quite plainly, in front of him, a lamp burning, and behind it a great building; everything looked familiar and splendid. It was East Street, as we know it now. He lay with his legs turned toward a porch, and opposite to him sat the watchman asleep.

"Good Heavens! have I been lying here in the street dreaming?" he exclaimed. "Yes, this is East Street, sure enough! how splendidly bright and gay! It is terrible what an effect that one glass of punch must have had on me!"

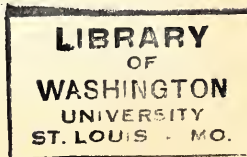
Two minutes afterward he was sitting in a fly, which drove him out to Christian's Haven. He thought of the terror and anxiety he had undergone, and praised from his heart the happy present, our own time, which, with all its shortcomings, was far better than the period in which he had been placed a short time before.

III.

THE WATCHMAN'S ADVENTURES.

"On my word, yonder lies a pair of goloshes!" said the watchman. "They must certainly belong to the lieutenant who lives upstairs. They are lying close to the door."

The honest man would gladly have rung the bell and delivered them, for upstairs there was a light still burning;



but he did not wish to disturb the other people in the house, and so he let it alone.

"It must be very warm to have a pair of such things on," said he. "How nice and soft the leather is!" They fitted his feet very well. "How droll it is in the world! Now, he might lie down in his warm bed, and yet he does not! There he is pacing up and down the room. He is a happy man! He has neither wife nor children, and every evening he is at a party. Oh, I wish I were he, then I should be a happy man!"

As he uttered this wish, the goloshes he had put on produced their effect, and the watchman was transported into the body and being of the lieutenant. Then he stood up in the room, and held a little pink paper in his fingers, on which was a poem, a poem written by the lieutenant himself. For who is there who has not once in his life had a poetic moment? and at such a moment, if one writes down one's thoughts, there is poetry.

Yes, people write poetry when they are in love; but a prudent man does not print such poems. The lieutenant was in love—and poor—that's a triangle, or, so to speak, the half of a broken square of happiness. The lieutenant felt that very keenly, and so he laid his head against the window-frame and sighed a deep sigh.

"The poor watchman in the street yonder is far happier than I. He does not know what I call want. He has a home, a wife, and children, who weep at his sorrow and rejoice at his joy. Oh! I should be happier than I am, could I change my being for his, and pass through life with his humble desires and hopes. Yes, he is happier than I!"

In that same moment the watchman became a watchman again; for through the power of the goloshes of Fortune he had assumed the personality of the lieutenant; but then we know he felt far less content, and preferred to be just what he had despised a short time before. So the watchman became a watchman again.

"That was an ugly dream," said he, "but droll enough. It seemed to me that I was the lieutenant up yonder, and that it was not pleasant at all. I was without the wife, and the boys, who are now ready to half stifle me with kisses."

He sat down again and nodded. The dream would not

go quite out of his thoughts. He had the goloshes still on his feet. A falling star glided down along the horizon.

"There went one," said he, "but for all that, there are enough left. I should like to look at those things a little nearer, especially the moon, for that won't vanish under one's hands. The student for whom my wife washes says that when we die we fly from one star to another. That's not true, but it would be very nice. If I could only make a little spring up there, then my body might lie here on the stairs for all I care."

Now there are certain assertions we should be very cautious of making in this world, but doubly careful when we have goloshes of Fortune on our feet. Just hear what happened to the watchman.

So far as we are concerned, we all understand the rapidity of dispatch by steam; we have tried it either in railways, or in steamers across the sea. But this speed is as the crawling of the sloth or the march of the snail in comparison with the swiftness with which light travels. That flies nineteen million times quicker. Death is an electric shock we receive in our hearts, and on the wings of electricity the liberated soul flies away. The sunlight requires eight minutes and a few seconds for a journey of more than ninety-five millions of miles; on the wings of electric power the soul requires only a few moments to accomplish the same flight. The space between the orbs of the universe is, for her, not greater than, for us, the distances between the houses of our friends dwelling in the same town, and even living close together. Yet this electric shock costs us the life of the body here below, unless, like the watchman, we have the magic goloshes on.

In a few seconds the watchman had traversed the distance of two hundred and sixty thousand miles to the moon, which body, as we know, consists of a much lighter material than that of our earth, and is, as we should say, soft as new-fallen snow. He found himself on one of the many ring mountains with which we are familiar through Dr. Mâdler's great map of the moon. Within the ring a great bowl-shaped hollow went down to the depth of a couple of miles. At the base of the hollow lay a town, of whose appearance we can only form an idea by pouring the white of an egg into a glass of water; the substance here was just as soft as the white of an egg, and formed similar towers, and cupolas,

and terraces like sails, transparent and floating in the thin air. Our earth hung over his head like a great dark, red ball.

He immediately became aware of a number of beings, who were certainly what we call "men," but their appearance was very different from ours. If they had been put up in a row and painted, one would have said, "that's a beautiful arabesque!" They had also a language; but no one could expect that the soul of the watchman should understand it. But the watchman's soul did understand it, for our souls have far greater abilities than we suppose. Does not its wonderful dramatic talents show itself in our dreams? Then every one of our acquaintances appears speaking in his own character, and with his own voice, in a way that no one of us could imitate in our waking hours. How does our soul bring back to us people of whom we have not thought for many years? Suddenly they come into our souls with their smallest peculiarities about them. In fact, it is a fearful thing, that memory which our souls possess; it can reproduce every sin, every bad thought. And then, it may be asked, shall we be able to give an account of every idle word that has been in our hearts and on our lips?"

Thus the watchman's soul understood the language of the people in the moon very well. They disputed about this earth, and doubted if it could be inhabited; the air, they asserted, must be too thick for a sensible moon-man to live there. They considered that the moon alone was peopled; for that, they said, was the real body in which the old-world people dwelt. They also talked of politics.

But let us go down to the East Street, and see how it fared with the body of the watchman.

He sat lifeless upon the stairs. His pipe had fallen out of his hand, and his eyes stared up at the moon, which his honest body was wondering about.

"What's o'clock, watchman?" asked a passer-by. But the man who didn't answer was the watchman. Then the passengers tweaked him quite gently by the nose, and then he lost his balance. There lay the body stretched out at full length—the man was dead. All his comrades were very much frightened; dead he was, and dead he remained. It

was reported, and it was discussed, and in the morning the body was carried out to the hospital.

That would be a pretty jest for the soul if it should chance to come back, and probably seek its body in the East Street, and not find it! Most likely it would go first to the police and afterward to the address office, that inquiries might be made from thence respecting the missing goods; and then it would wander out to the hospital. But we may console ourselves with the idea that the soul is most clever when it acts upon its own account; it is the body that makes it stupid.

As we have said, the watchman's body was taken to the hospital, and brought into the washing-room; and naturally enough the first thing they did there was to pull off the goloshes; and then the soul had to come back. It took its way directly toward the body, and in a few seconds there was life in the man. He declared that this had been the most terrible night of his life; he would not have such feelings again, not for a shilling; but now it was past and over.

The same day he was allowed to leave; but the goloshes remained at the hospital.

IV.

A GREAT MOMENT.—A VERY UNUSUAL JOURNEY.

Everyone who belongs to Copenhagen knows the look of the entrance to the Frederick's Hospital in Copenhagen; but, as perhaps a few will read this story who do not belong to Copenhagen, it becomes necessary to give a short description of it.

The hospital is separated from the street by a tolerably high railing, in which the thick iron rails stand so far apart, that certain very thin inmates are said to have squeezed between them, and thus paid their little visits outside the premises. The part of the body most difficult to get through was the head; and here, as it often happens in the world, small heads were the most fortunate. This will be sufficient as an introduction.

One of the young volunteers, of whom one could only say in one sense that he had a great head, had the watch that

evening. The rain was pouring down; but in spite of this obstacle he wanted to go out, only for a quarter of an hour. It was needless, he thought, to tell the porter of his wish, especially if he could slip through between the rails. There lay the goloshes which the watchman had forgotten. It never occurred to him in the least that they were goloshes of Fortune. They would do him very good service in this rainy weather, and he pulled them on. Now the question was whether he could squeeze through the bars; till now he had never tried it. There he stood.

"I wish to goodness I had my head outside!" cried he. And immediately, though his head was very thick and big, it glided easily and quickly through. The goloshes must have understood it well; but now the body was to slip through also, and that could not be done. "I am too fat. I thought my head was the thickest. I shan't get through."

Now he wanted to pull his head back quickly, but he could not manage it; he could move his neck, but that was all. His first feeling was one of anger, and then his spirits sank down to zero. The goloshes of Fortune had placed him in this terrible condition, and, unfortunately, it never occurred to him to wish himself free. No; instead of wishing, he only strove, and could not stir from the spot. The rain poured down; not a creature was to be seen in the street; he could not reach the gate bell, and how was he to get loose? He foresaw that he would have to remain here until morning, and then they would have to send for a blacksmith to file through the iron bars. But such a business is not to be done quickly. The whole charity school would be upon its legs; the whole sailors' quarter close by would come up and see him standing in the pillory; and a fine crowd there would be.

"Hu!" he cried, "the blood's rising to my head, and I shall go mad! Yes, I'm going mad! If I were free, most likely it would pass over."

That is what he ought to have said at first. The very moment he had uttered the thought his head was free; and now he rushed in, quite dazed with the fright the goloshes of Fortune had given him. But we must not think the whole affair was over; there was much worse to come yet.

The night passed away, and the following day too, and nobody sent for the goloshes. In the evening a display of

oratory was to take place in an amateur theater in a distant street. The house was crammed, and among the audience was the volunteer from the hospital, who appeared to have forgotten his adventure of the previous evening. He had the goloshes on, for they had not been sent for; and as it was dirty in the streets, they might do him good service. A new piece was recited; it was called "My Aunt's Spectacles." These were spectacles which, when anyone put them on in a great assembly of people, made all present look like cards, so that one could prophesy from them all that would happen in the coming year.

The idea struck him; he would have liked to possess such a pair of spectacles. If they were used rightly, they would perhaps enable the wearer to look into people's hearts; and that, he thought, would be more interesting than to see what was going to happen in the next year; for future events would be known in time, but the people's thoughts never.

"Now I'll look at the row of ladies and gentlemen on the first bench; if one could look directly into their hearts! yes, that must be a hollow, a sort of shop. How my eyes would wander about in that shop! In every lady's, yonder, I should doubtless find a great milliner's warehouse; with this one here the shop is empty, but it would do no harm to have it cleaned out. But would there really be such shops? Ah, yes!" he continued, sighing, "I know one in which all the goods are first-rate, but there's a servant in it already; that's the only drawback in the whole shop! From one and another the word would be 'Please to step in!' Oh, that I might only step in, like a neat little thought, and slip through their hearts!"

That was the word of command for the goloshes. The volunteer shriveled up, and began to take a very remarkable journey through the hearts of the first row of spectators. The first heart through which he passed was that of a lady, but he immediately fancied himself in the Orthopaedic Institute, in the room where the plaster casts of deformed limbs are kept hanging against the walls; the only difference was, that these casts were formed in the institute when the patients came in, but here in the heart they were formed and preserved after the good persons had gone away. For they were casts of female friends, whose bodily and mental faults were preserved here.

Quickly he had passed into another female heart. But this seemed to him like a great holy church; the white dove of innocence fluttered over the high altar. Gladly would he have sunk down on his knees; but he was obliged to go away into the next heart. Still, however, he heard the tones of the organ, and it seemed to him that he himself had become another and a better man. He felt himself not unworthy to enter into the next sanctuary, which showed itself in the form of a poor garret, containing a sick mother. But through the window the warm sun streamed in, and two sky-blue birds sang full of childlike joy, while the sick mother prayed for a blessing on her daughter.

Now he crept on his hands and knees through an over-filled butcher's shop. There was meat, and nothing but meat, wherever he went. It was the heart of a rich, respectable man, whose name is certainly to be found in the address book.

Now he was in the heart of this man's wife; this heart was an old dilapidated pigeon-house. The husband's portrait was used as a mere weathercock; it stood in connection with the doors, and these doors opened and shut according as the husband turned.

Then he came into a cabinet of mirrors, such as we find in the Castle of Rosenburg; but the mirrors magnified in a great degree. In the middle of the floor sat, like a Grand Lama, the insignificant I of the proprietor, astonished in the contemplation of his own greatness.

Then he fancied himself transported into a narrow needle-case full of pointed needles; and he thought, "This must decidedly be the heart of an old maid!" But that was not the case. It was the heart of a young officer, wearing several orders, and of whom one said, "He's a man of intellect and heart."

Quite confused was the poor volunteer when he emerged from the heart of the last person in the first row. He could not arrange his thoughts, and fancied it must be his powerful imagination which had run away with him.

"Gracious powers!" he sighed, "I must certainly have a great tendency to go mad. It is also unconscionably hot in here; the blood is rising to my head!"

And now he remembered the great event of the last even-

ing; how his head had been caught between the iron rails of the hospital.

"That's where I must have caught it," thought he. "I must do something at once. A Russian bath might be very good. I wish I were lying on the highest board in the bath-house."

And there he lay on the highest board in the vapor bath; but he was lying there in all his clothes, in boots and goloshes, and the hot drops from the ceiling were falling on his face.

"Hi!" he cried, and jumped down to take a plunge bath.

The attendant uttered a loud cry on seeing a person there with all his clothes on. The volunteer had, however, enough presence of mind to whisper to him, "It's for a wager!" But the first thing he did when he got into his own room was to put a big blister on the nape of his neck, and another on his back, that they might draw out his madness.

Next morning he had a very sore back; and that was all he had got by the goloshes of Fortune.

V.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE COPYING CLERK.

The watchman, whom we surely have not yet forgotten, in the meantime thought of the goloshes, which he had found and brought to the hospital. He took them away; but as neither the lieutenant nor anyone in the street would own them, they were taken to the police office.

"They look exactly like my own goloshes," said one of the copying gentlemen, as he looked at the unowned articles and put them beside his own. "More than a shoemaker's eye is required to distinguish them from one another."

"Mr. Copying Clerk," said a servant, coming in with some papers.

The copying clerk turned and spoke to the man; when he had done this, he turned to look at the goloshes again; he was in great doubt if the right-hand or the left-hand pair belonged to him.

"It must be those that are wet," he thought. Now here

he thought wrong, for these were the goloshes of Fortune; but why should not the police be sometimes mistaken? He put them on, thrust his papers into his pocket, and put a few manuscripts under his arm, for they were to be read at home, and abstracts to be made from them. And now it was Sunday morning, and the weather was fine. "A walk to Fredericksburg would do me good," said he; and he went out accordingly.

There could not be a quieter, steadier person than this young man. We grant him his little walk with all our hearts; it will certainly do him good after so much sitting. At first he only walked like a vegetating creature, so the goloshes had no opportunity of displaying their magic power.

In the avenue he met an acquaintance, one of our younger poets, who told him he was going to start next day on a summer trip.

"Are you going away again already?" asked the copying clerk. "What a happy, free man you are! You can fly wherever you like; we others have a chain to our foot."

"But it is fastened to the bread tree!" replied the poet. "You need not be anxious for the morrow; and when you grow old you get a pension."

"But you are better off, after all," said the copying clerk. "It must be a pleasure to sit and write poetry. Everybody says agreeable things to you, and then you are your own master. Ah, you should just try it, poring over the frivolous affairs in the court."

The poet shook his head; the copying clerk shook his head also; each retained his own opinion; and thus they parted.

"They are a strange race, these poets!" thought the copying clerk. "I should like to try and enter into such a nature—to become a poet myself. I am certain I should not write such complaining verses as the rest. What a splendid spring day for a poet! The air is so remarkably clear, the clouds are so beautiful, and the green smells so sweet. For many years I have not felt as I feel at this moment."

We already notice that he has become a poet. To point this out would, in most cases, be what the Germans call "mawkish." It is a foolish fancy to imagine a poet different from other people, for among the latter there may be na-

tures more poetical than those of many an acknowledged poet. The difference is only that the poet has a better spiritual memory; his ears hold fast the feeling and the idea until they are embodied clearly and firmly in words; and the others cannot do that. But the transition from an everyday nature to that of a poet is always a transition, and as such it must be noticed in the copying clerk.

"What glorious fragrance!" he cried. "How it reminds me of the violets at Aunt Laura's! Yes, that was when I was a little boy. I have not thought of that for a long time. The good old lady! She lies yonder, by the canal. She always had a twig or a couple of green shoots in the water, let the winter be as severe as it might. The violets bloomed, while I had to put warm farthings against the frozen window-panes to make peep-holes. That was a pretty view. Out in the canal the ships were frozen in, and deserted by the whole crew; a screaming crow was the only living creature left. Then, when the spring breezes blew, it all became lively; the ice was sawn asunder amid shouting and cheers, the ships were tarred and rigged, and then they sailed away to strange lands. I remained here, and must always remain, and sit at the police office, and let others take passports for abroad. That's my fate. Oh, yes!" and he sighed deeply. Suddenly he paused. "Good Heaven! what is come to me? I never thought or felt as I do now. It must be the spring air; it is just as dizzying as it is charming!" He felt in his pockets for his papers.

"These will give me something else to think of," said he, and let his eyes wander over the first leaf. There he read: "'Dame Sigbirth; an original tragedy in five acts.' What is that? And it is my own hand. Have I written this tragedy? 'The Intrigue on the Promenade; or, the Day of Penance—Vaudeville.' But where did I get that from? It must have been put into my pocket. Here is a letter. Yes, it was from the manager of the theater; the pieces were rejected, and the letter is not at all politely worded. H'm! H'm!" said the copying clerk, and he sat down upon a bench; his thoughts were elastic; his head was quite soft. Involuntarily he grasped one of the nearest flowers; it was a common little daisy. What the botanists required several lectures to explain to us, this flower told in a minute. It told the glory of its birth; it told of the strength of the sunlight, which

spread out the delicate leaves and made them give out fragrance. Then he thought of the battles of life, which likewise awaken feelings in our breasts. Air and light are the lovers of the flower, but light is the favored one. Toward the light it turned, and only when the light vanished the flower rolled her leaves together and slept in the embrace of the air.

"It is light that adorns me!" said the Flower.

"But the air allows you to breathe," whispered the poet's voice.

Just by him stood a boy, knocking with his stick upon the marshy ground. The drops of water spurted up among the green twigs, and the copying clerk thought of the millions of infusoria which were cast up on high with the drops, which were the same to them, in proportion to their size, as it would be to us if we were hurled high over the region of clouds. And the copying clerk thought of this, and of the great change which had taken place within him; he smiled. "I sleep and dream! it is wonderful, though, how naturally one can dream and yet know all the time that it is a dream. I should like to be able to remember it all clearly to-morrow when I wake. I seem to myself quite unusually excited. What a clear appreciation I have of everything, and how free I feel! But I am certain that if I remember anything of it to-morrow, it will be nonsense. That has often been so with me before. It is with all the clever, famous things one says and hears in dreams, as with the money of the elves under the earth; when one receives it, it is rich and beautiful, but, looked at by daylight, it is nothing but stones and dried leaves. Ah!" he sighed, quite plaintively, and gazed at the chirping birds, as they sprang merrily from bough to bough, "they are much better off than I. Flying is a noble art. Happy he who is born with wings. Yes, if I could change myself into anything, it should be into a lark."

In a moment his coat-tails and sleeves grew together and formed wings; his clothes became feathers, and his goloshes claws. He noticed it quite plainly, and laughed inwardly. "Well, now I can see that I am dreaming, but so wildly I have never dreamed before." And he flew up into the green boughs and sang; but there was no poetry in the song, for the poetic nature was gone. The goloshes, like everyone who wishes to do any business thoroughly, could only do

one thing at a time. He wished to be a poet, and he became one. Then he wished to be a little bird, and, in changing thus, the former peculiarity was lost.

"That is charming!" he said. "In the day-time I sit in the police office among the driest of law papers; at night I can dream that I am flying about as a lark in the Fredericksburg Garden. One could really write quite a popular comedy upon it."

Now he flew down into the grass, turned his head in every direction, and beat with his beak upon the bending stalks of grass, which, in proportion to his size, seemed to him as long as palm branches of Northern Africa.

It was only for a moment, and then all around him became as the blackest night. It seemed to him that some immense substance was cast over him; it was a great cap, which a sailor-boy threw over the bird. A hand came in and seized the copying clerk by the back and wings in a way that made him whistle. In his first terror he cried aloud, "The impudent rascal! I am copying clerk at the police office!" But that sounded to the boy only like "piep! piep!" and he tapped the bird on the beak and wandered on with him.

In the alley the boy met with two other boys, who belonged to the educated classes, socially speaking; but, according to abilities, they ranked in the lowest class in the school. These bought the bird for a few Danish shillings; and so the copying clerk was carried back to Copenhagen.

"It's a good thing that I am dreaming," he said, "or I should become really angry. First I was a poet, and now I'm a lark! Yes, it must have been the poetic nature which transformed me into that little creature. It is a miserable state of things, especially when one falls into the hands of boys. I should like to know what the end of it will be."

The boys carried him into a very elegant room. A stout and smiling lady received them. But she was not at all gratified to see the common field bird, as she called the lark, coming in, too. Only for one day she would consent to it; but they must put the bird in the empty cage which stood by the window.

"Perhaps that will please Polly," she added, and laughed at a great Parrot swinging himself proudly in his ring in

the handsome brass cage. "It's Polly's birthday," she said, simply, "so the little field bird shall congratulate him."

Polly did not answer a single word; he only swung proudly to and fro. But a pretty Canary bird, who had been brought here last summer out of his warm, fragrant fatherland, began to sing loudly.

"Screamer!" said the lady; and she threw a white handkerchief over the cage.

"Piep! piep!" sighed he; "here's a terrible snowstorm." And thus sighing, he was silent.

The copying clerk, or, as the lady called him, the field bird, was placed in a little cage close to the Canary, and not far from the Parrot. The only human words which Polly could say, and which often sounded very comically, were "Come, let's be men now!" Everything else that he screamed out was just as unintelligible as the song of the Canary bird, except for the copying clerk, who was now also a bird, and who understood his comrades very well.

"I flew under the green palm tree and the blossoming almond tree!" sang the Canary. "I flew with my brothers and sisters over the beautiful flowers and over the bright sea, where the plants waved in the depths. I also saw many beautiful parrots, who told the merriest stories."

"Those were wild birds," replied the Parrot. "They had no education. Let us be men now! Why don't you laugh? If the lady and all the strangers could laugh at it, so can you. It is a great fault to have no taste for what is pleasant. No, let us be men now."

"Do you remember the pretty girls who danced under the tents spread out beneath the blooming trees? Do you remember the sweet fruits and the cooling juice in the wild plants?"

"Oh, yes!" replied the Parrot; "but here I am far better off. I have good care and genteel treatment. I know I've a good head, and I don't ask for more. Let us be men now. You are what they call a poetic soul. I have thorough knowledge and wit. You have genius but no prudence. You mount up into those high natural notes of yours, and then you get covered up. This is never done to me; no, no, for I cost them a little more. I make an impression with my beak, and can cast wit round me. Now let us be men!"

"Oh, my poor blooming fatherland!" sang the Canary.

"I will praise thy dark green trees and thy quiet bays, where the branches kiss the clear watery mirror; I'll sing of the joy of all my shining brothers and sisters, where the plants grow by the desert springs."

"Now, pray leave off these dismal tones," cried the Parrot. "Sing something at which one can laugh! Laughter is the sign of the highest mental development. Look if a dog or a horse can laugh! No; they can cry; but laughter—that is given to men alone. Ho! ho! ho!" screamed Polly, and finished the jest with: "Let us be men now."

"You little gray northern bird," said the Canary; "so you have also become a prisoner. It is certainly cold in your woods, but still liberty is there. Fly out! they have forgotten to close your cage; the upper window is open. Fly! fly!"

Instinctively the copying clerk obeyed, and flew forth from his prison. At the same moment the half-opened door of the next room creaked, and stealthily, with fierce, sparkling eyes, the house cat crept in, and made chase upon him. The Canary fluttered in its cage, the Parrot flapped its wings, and cried "Let us be men now!" The copying clerk felt mortally afraid, and flew through the window, away over the houses and streets; at last he was obliged to rest a little.

The house opposite had a homelike look; one of the windows stood open, and he flew in. It was his own room; he perched upon the table.

"Let us be men now," he broke out, involuntarily imitating the Parrot; and in the same moment he was restored to the form of the copying clerk; but he was sitting on the table.

"Heaven preserve me!" he cried. "How could I have come here and fallen so soundly asleep? That was an unquiet dream, too, that I had. The whole thing was great nonsense."

VI.

THE BEST THAT THE GOLOSHESES BROUGHT.

On the following day, quite early in the morning, as the clerk still lay in bed, there came a tapping at his door; it was his neighbor, who lodged on the same floor, a young theologian; and he came in.

"Lend me your goloshes," said he. "It is very wet in the garden. But the sun shines gloriously, and I should like to smoke a pipe down there."

He put on the goloshes, and was soon in the garden, which contained a plum tree and an apple tree. Even a little garden like this is highly prized in the midst of great cities.

The theologian wandered up and down the path; it was only six o'clock, and a post-horn sounded out in the street.

"Oh, traveling! traveling!" he cried out, "that's the greatest happiness in all the world. That's the highest goal of my wishes. Then this disquietude that I feel would be stilled. But it would have to be far away. I should like to see beautiful Switzerland, to travel through Italy, to——"

Yes, it was a good thing that the goloshes took effect immediately, for he might have gone too far even for himself, and for us others, too. He was traveling; he was in the midst of Switzerland, packed tightly with eight others in the interior of a diligence. He had a headache and a weary feeling in his neck, and his feet had gone to sleep, for they were swollen by the heavy boots he had on. He was hovering in a condition between sleeping and waking. In the right-hand pocket he had his letters of credit, in his left-hand pocket his passport, and a few louis d'or were sewn into a little bag he wore on his breast. Whenever he dozed off, he dreamed he had lost one or other of these possessions; and then he would start up in a feverish way, and the first movement his hand made was to describe a triangle from left to right, and toward his breast, to feel whether he still possessed them or not. Umbrellas, hats, and walking-sticks swung in the net over him and almost took away the

prospect, which was impressive enough; he glanced out at it, and his heart sang what one poet at least, whom we know, has sung in Switzerland, but has not yet printed:

'Tis a prospect as fine as heart can desire,
Before me Mont Blanc the rough;
'Tis pleasant to tarry here and admire,
If only you've money enough.

Great, grave, and dark was all nature around him. The pine woods looked like little mosses upon the high rocks, whose summits were lost in cloudy mists; and then it began to snow, and the wind blew cold.

"Hu!" he sighed; "if we were only on the other side of the Alps, then it would be summer, and I should have got money on my letter of credit; my anxiety about this prevents me from enjoying Switzerland. Oh, if I were only at the other side!"

And then he was on the other side, in the mists of Italy, between Florence and Rome. The Lake Thrasymene lay spread out in the evening light, like flaming gold among the dark blue hills. Here, where Hannibal beat Flaminius, the grape vines held each other by their green fingers; pretty, half-naked children were keeping a herd of coal-black pigs under a clump of fragrant laurels by the wayside. If we could reproduce this scene accurately, all would cry, "Glorious Italy!" But neither the theologian nor any of his traveling companions in the carriage of the vetturino thought this.

Poisonous flies and gnats flew into the carriage by thousands. In vain they beat the air frantically with a myrtle branch—the flies stung them nevertheless. There was not one person in the carriage whose face was not swollen and covered with stings. The poor horses looked miserable, the flies tormented them wofully, and it only mended the matter for a moment when the coachman dismounted and scraped them clean from the insects that sat upon them in great swarms. Now the sun sank down; a short but icy coldness pervaded all nature; it was like the cold air of a funeral vault after the sultry summer day; and all around the hills and clouds put on that remarkable green tone which we notice on some old pictures, and consider unnatural unless we

have ourselves witnessed a similar play of color. It was a glorious spectacle; but the stomachs of all were empty and their bodies exhausted, and every wish of the heart turned toward a resting-place for the night; but how could that be won? To descry this resting place all eyes were turned more eagerly to the road than to the beauties of nature.

The way now led through an olive wood; he could have fancied himself passing between knotty willow trunks at home. Here, by the solitary inn, a dozen crippled beggars had taken up their positions; the quickest among them looked, to quote an expression of Marryat's, like the eldest son of Famine, who had just come of age. The others were either blind or had withered legs, so that they crept about on their hands, or they had withered arms and fingerless hands. This was misery in rags indeed. "*Eccellenza miserabili!*" they sighed, and stretched forth their diseased limbs. The hostess herself, in untidy hair, and dressed in a dirty blouse, received her guests. The doors were tied up with string; the floor of the room was of brick, and half of it was grubbed up; bats flew about under the roof, and the smell within——

"Yes, lay the table down in the stable," said one of the travelers. "There, at least, one knows what one is breathing."

The windows were opened, so that a little fresh air might find its way in; but quicker than the fresh air came the withered arms and the continual whining, "*Miserabili, Eccellenza!*" On the walls were many inscriptions; half of them were against "*La bella Italia.*"

The supper was served. It consisted of a watery soup, seasoned with pepper and rancid oil. This last dainty played a chief part in a salad; musty eggs and roasted cocks'-combs were the best dishes. Even the wine had a strange taste—it was a dreadful mixture.

At night the boxes were placed against the doors. One of the travelers kept watch while the others slept. The theologian was the sentry. Oh, how close it was in there! The heat oppressed him, the gnats buzzed and stung, and the *miserabili* outside moaned in their dreams.

"Yes, traveling would be all very well," said the theologian, "if one had no body. If the body could rest and the mind fly! Wherever I go, I find a want that oppresses my

heart; it is something better than the present moment I desire. Yes, something better—the best; but what is that, and where is it? In my own heart I know very well what I want; I want to attain to a happy goal, the happiest of all!”

And so soon as the word was spoken he found himself at home. The long white curtains hung down from the windows, and in the middle of the room stood a black coffin; in this he was lying in the quiet sleep of death; his wish was fulfilled—his body was at rest and his spirit roaming. “Esteem no man happy who is not yet in his grave,” were the words of Solon; here their force was proved anew.

Every corpse is a sphinx of immortality; the sphinx here also in the black sarcophagus answered, what the living man had laid down two days before:

“Thou strong, stern Death! Thy silence waketh fear;
Thou leavest mold’ring gravestones for thy traces.
Shall not the soul see Jacob’s ladder here?
No resurrection type, but churchyard grasses?
The deepest woes escape the world’s dull eye:
Thou that alone on duty’s path hath sped,
Heavier those duties on thy heart would lie
Than lies the earth now on thy confined head.”

Two forms were moving to and fro in the room. We know them both. They were the Fairy of Care and the Ambassador of Happiness. They bent down over the dead man.

“Do you see?” said Care. “What happiness have your goloshes brought to men?”

“They have at least brought a permanent benefit to him who slumbers here,” replied Happiness.

“Oh, no!” said Care. “He went away of himself; he was not summoned. His spirit was not strong enough to lift the treasures which he had been destined to lift. I will do him a favor.”

And she drew the goloshes from his feet; then the sleep of death was ended, and the awakened man raised himself up. Care vanished, and with her the goloshes disappeared too; doubtless she looked upon them as her property.

THE HARDY TIN SOLDIER.

There were once five-and-twenty tin soldiers; they were all brothers, for they had all been born of one old tin spoon. They shouldered their muskets, and looked straight before them; their uniform was red and blue, and very splendid. The first thing they had heard in the world, when the lid was taken off their box, had been the words "Tin soldiers!" These words were uttered by a little boy, clapping his hands; the soldiers had been given to him, for it was his birthday; and now he put them upon the table. Each soldier was exactly like the rest; but one of them had been cast last of all, and there had not been enough tin to finish him; but he stood as firmly upon his one leg as the others on their two; and it was just this Soldier who became remarkable.

On the table on which they had been placed stood many other playthings, but the toy that attracted most attention was a neat castle of cardboard. Through the little windows one could see straight into the hall. Before the castle some little trees were placed round a little looking glass, which was to represent a clear lake. Waxen swans swam on this lake, and were mirrored in it. This was all very pretty; but the prettiest of all was a little lady, who stood at the open door of the castle; she was also cut out in paper, but she had a dress of the clearest gauze, and a little narrow blue ribbon over her shoulders, that looked like a scarf; and in the middle of this ribbon was a shining tinsel rose as big as her whole face. The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer; and then she lifted one leg so high that the Tin Soldier could not see it at all, and thought that, like himself, she had but one leg.

"That would be the wife for me," thought he; "but she is very grand. She lives in a castle, and I have only a box, and there are five-and-twenty of us in that. It is no place for her. But I must try to make acquaintance with her."

And then he lay down at full length behind a snuff-box which was on the table; there he could easily watch the little

dainty lady, who continued to stand upon one leg without losing her balance.

When the evening came all the other tin soldiers were put into their box, and the people in the house went to bed. Now the toys began to play at "visiting," and at "war," and "giving balls." The tin soldiers rattled in their box, for they wanted to join, but could not lift the lid. The nut-cracker threw somersaults, and the pencil amused itself on the table; there was so much noise that the Canary woke up, and began to speak too, and even in verse. The only two who did not stir from their places were the Tin Soldier and the Dancing Lady; she stood straight up on the point of one of her toes, and stretched out both her arms; and he was just as enduring on his one leg; and he never turned his eyes away from her.

Now the clock struck twelve—and, bounce! the lid flew off the snuff-box; but there was no snuff in it, but a little black Goblin; you see, it was a trick.

"Tin Soldier!" said the Goblin, "don't stare at things that don't concern you."

But the Tin Soldier pretended not to hear him.

"Just you wait till to-morrow!" said the Goblin.

But when the morning came, and the children got up, the Tin Soldier was placed in the window; and whether it was the Goblin or the draught that did it, all at once the window flew open, and the Soldier fell head over heels out of the third story. That was a terrible passage! He put his leg straight up, and stuck with helmet downward and his bayonet between the paving-stones.

The servant-maid and the little boy came down directly to look for him, but though they almost trod upon him, they could not see him. If the Soldier had cried out "Here I am!" they would have found him; but he did not think it fitting to call out loudly, because he was in uniform.

Now it began to rain; the drops soon fell thicker, and at last it came down into a complete stream. When the rain was past, two street boys came by.

"Just look!" said one of them, "there lies a Tin Soldier. He must come out and ride in the boat."

And they made a boat out of a newspaper, and put the Tin Soldier in the middle of it, and so he sailed down the gutter, and the two boys ran beside him and clapped their

hands. Goodness preserve us! how the waves rose in that gutter, and how fast the stream ran! But then it had been a heavy rain. The paper boat rocked up and down, and sometimes turned round so rapidly that the Tin Soldier trembled; but he remained firm, and never changed countenance, and looked straight before him, and shouldered his musket.

All at once the boat went into a long drain, and it became as dark as if he had been in his box.

"Where am I going now?" he thought. "Yes, yes, that's the Goblin's fault. Ah! if the little lady only sat here with me in the boat, it might be twice as dark for what I should care."

Suddenly there came a great Water Rat, which lived under the drain.

"Have you a passport?" said the Rat. "Give me your passport."

But the Tin Soldier kept silence, and held his musket tighter than ever.

The boat went on, but the Rat came after it. Hu! how he gnashed his teeth, and called out to the bits of straw and wood.

"Hold him! hold him! He hasn't paid toll—he hasn't shown his passport!"

But the stream became stronger and stronger. The Tin Soldier could see the bright daylight where the arch ended; but he heard a roaring noise, which might well frighten a bolder man. Only think—just where the tunnel ended, the drain ran into a great canal; and for him that would have been as dangerous as for us to be carried down a great waterfall.

Now he was already so near it that he could not stop. The boat was carried out, the poor Tin Soldier stiffening himself as much as he could, and no one could say that he moved an eyelid. The boat whirled round three or four times, and was full of water to the very edge—it must sink. The Tin Soldier stood up to his neck in water, and the boat sank deeper and deeper, and the paper was loosened more and more; and now the water closed over the soldier's head. Then he thought of the pretty little Dancer, and how he

should never see her again; and it sounded in the soldier's ears:

Farewell, farewell, thou warrior brave,
For this day thou must die!

And now the paper parted, and the Tin Soldier fell out; but at that moment he was snapped up by a great fish.

Oh, how dark it was in that fish's body! It was darker yet than in the drain tunnel; and then it was very narrow too. But the Tin Soldier remained unmoved, and lay at full length shouldering his musket.

The fish swam to and fro; he made the most wonderful movements, and then became quite still. At last something flashed through him like lightning. The daylight shone quite clear, and a voice said aloud, "The Tin Soldier!" The fish had been caught, carried to market, bought, and taken into the kitchen, where the cook cut him open with a large knife. She seized the Soldier round the body with both her hands, and carried him into the room, where all were anxious to see the remarkable man who had traveled about in the inside of a fish; but the Tin Soldier was not at all proud. They placed him on the table, and there—no! What curious things may happen in the world. The Tin Soldier was in the very room in which he had been before! he saw the same children, and the same toys stood on the table; and there was the pretty castle, with the graceful little Dancer. She was still balancing herself on one leg, and held the other extended in the air. She was hardy too. That moved the Tin Soldier; he was very nearly weeping tin tears, but that would not have been proper. He looked at her, but they said nothing to each other.

Then one of the little boys took the Tin Soldier and flung him into the stove. He gave no reason for doing this. It must have been the fault of the Goblin in the snuff-box.

The Tin Soldier stood there quite illuminated, and felt a heat that was terrible; but whether this heat proceeded from the real fire or from love he did not know. The colors had quite gone off from him; but whether that had happened on the journey, or had been caused by grief, no one could say. He looked at the little lady, she looked at him, and he felt that he was melting; but he still stood firm, shouldering his musket. Then suddenly the door flew open, and the

draught of air caught the Dancer, and she flew like a sylph just into the stove to the Tin Soldier, and flashed up in a flame, and she was gone. Then the Tin Soldier melted down into a lump; and when the servant-maid took the ashes out next day, she found him in the shape of a little tin heart. But of the Dancer nothing remained but the tinsel rose, and that was burned as black as a coal.

THE STORY OF A MOTHER.

A Mother sat by her little child; she was very sorrowful, and feared that it would die. Its little face was pale, and its eyes were closed. The child drew its breath with difficulty, and sometimes so deeply as if it were sighing; and then the mother looked more sorrowfully than before on the little creature.

Then there was a knock at the door, and a poor old man came in, wrapped up in something that looked like a great horse-cloth, for that keeps warm; and he required it, for it was cold winter. Without everything was covered with ice and snow, and the wind blew so sharply that it cut one's face.

And as the old man trembled with cold, and the child was quiet for a moment, the mother went and put some beer on the stove in a little pot, to warm it for him. The old man sat down and rocked the cradle, and the mother seated herself on an old chair by him, looked at her sick child that drew its breath so painfully, and seized the little hand.

"You think I shall keep it, do you not?" she asked. "The good God will not take it from me!"

And the old man—he was Death—nodded in such a strange way, that it might just as well mean yes as no. And the mother cast down her eyes, and tears rolled down her cheeks. Her head became heavy; for three days and three nights she had not closed her eyes; and now she slept, but only for a minute; then she started up and shivered with cold.

"What is that?" she asked, and looked round on all sides; but the old man was gone, and her little child was gone; he had taken it with him. And there in the corner the old

clock was humming and whirring; the heavy leaden weight ran down to the floor—plump!—and the clock stopped.

But the poor mother rushed out of the house crying for her child.

Out in the snow sat a woman in long black garments, and she said, "Death has been with you in your room; I saw him hasten away with your child; he strides faster than the wind, and never brings back what he has taken away."

"Only tell me which way he has gone," said the mother. "Tell me the way, and I will find him."

"I know him," said the woman in the black garments; "but before I tell you, you must sing me all the songs that you have sung to your child. I love those songs; I have heard them before. I am Night, and I saw your tears when you sang them."

"I will sing them all, all!" said the mother. "But do not detain me, that I may overtake him, and find my child."

But Night sat dumb and still. Then the mother wrung her hands, and sang and wept. And there were many songs, but yet more tears, and then Night said, "Go to the right into the dark fir wood; for I saw Death take that path with your little child."

Deep in the forest there was a cross road, and she did not know which way to take. There stood a Blackthorn Bush, with not a leaf nor a blossom upon it; for it was in the cold winter-time, and icicles hung from the twigs.

"Have you not seen Death go by, with my little child?"

"Yes," replied the Bush; "but I shall not tell you which way he went unless you warm me on your bosom. I'm freezing to death here. I'm turning to ice."

And she pressed the Blackthorn Bush to her bosom, quite close, that it might be well warmed. And the thorns pierced into her flesh, and her blood oozed out in great drops. But the Blackthorn shot out fresh green leaves, and blossomed in the dark winter night, so warm is the heart of a sorrowing mother! And the Blackthorn Bush told her the way that she should go.

Then she came to a great Lake, on which there was neither ships nor boat. The Lake was not frozen enough to carry her, nor sufficiently open to allow her to wade through, and yet she must cross it if she was to find her child. Then she laid herself down to drink the Lake; and

that was impossible for anyone to do. But the sorrowing mother thought that perhaps a miracle might be wrought.

"No, that can never succeed," said the Lake. "Let us rather see how we can agree. I'm fond of collecting pearls, and your eyes are the two clearest I have ever seen; if you will weep them out into me I will carry you over into the great greenhouse, where Death lives and cultivates flowers and trees; each of these is a human life."

"Oh, what would I not give to get my child!" said the afflicted mother; and she wept yet more, and her eyes fell into the depths of the Lake, and became two costly pearls. But the Lake lifted her up, as if she sat in a swing, and she was wafted to the opposite shore, where stood a wonderful house, miles in length. One could not tell if it was a mountain containing forests and caves, or a place that had been built. But the poor mother could not see it, for she had wept her eyes out.

"Where shall I find Death, who went away with my little child?" she asked.

"He has not arrived here yet," said an old gray-haired woman, who was going about and watching the hothouse of Death. "How have you found your way here, and who helped you?"

"The good God has helped me," she replied. "He is merciful, and you will be merciful, too. Where—where shall I find my little child?"

"I do not know it," said the old woman, "and you cannot see. Many flowers and trees have faded this night, and Death will soon come and transplant them. You know very well that every human being has his tree of life, or his flower of life, just as each is arranged. They look like other plants, but their hearts beat. Children's hearts can beat too. Think of this. Perhaps you may recognize the beating of your child's heart. But what will you give me if I tell you what more you must do?"

"I have nothing more to give," said the afflicted mother. "But I will go for you to the ends of the earth."

"I have nothing for you to do there," said the old woman, "but you can give me your long black hair. You must know yourself that it is beautiful, and it pleases me. You

can take my white hair for it, and that is always something."

"Do you ask for nothing more?" asked she. "I will give you that gladly." And she gave her beautiful hair, and received in exchange the old woman's white hair.

And then they went into the great hothouse of Death where flowers and trees were growing marvelously intertwined. There stood the fine hyacinths under glass bells, some quite fresh, others somewhat sickly; water snakes were twining about them, and black crabs clung tightly to the stalks. There stood gallant palm trees, oaks, and plantains, and parsley and blooming thyme. Each tree and flower had its name; each was a human life; the people were still alive, one in China, another in Greenland, scattered about in the world. There were great trees thrust into little pots, so that they stood quite crowded, and were nearly bursting the pots; there was also many a little weakly flower in rich earth, with moss round about it, cared for and tended. But the sorrowful mother bent down over all the smallest plants, and heard the human heart beating in each, and out of millions she recognized that of her child.

"That is it!" she cried, and stretched out her hands over a little crocus flower, which hung down quite sick and pale.

"Do not touch the flower," said the old dame; "but place yourself here; and when Death comes—I expect him every minute—then don't let him pull up the plant, but threaten him that you will do the same to the other plants; then he'll be frightened. He has to account for them all; not one may be pulled up till he receives commission from Heaven."

And all at once there was an icy cold rush through the hall, and the blind mother felt that Death was arriving.

"How did you find your way hither?" said he. "How have you been able to come quicker than I?"

"I am a mother," she answered.

And Death stretched out his long hands toward the little delicate flower; but she kept her hands tight about it, and held it fast; and yet she was full of anxious care lest he should touch one of the leaves. Then Death breathed upon her hands, and she felt that his breath was colder than the icy wind; and her hands sank down powerless.

"You can do nothing against me," said Death.

"But the merciful God can," she replied.

"I only do what He commands," said Death. "I am His gardener. I take all His trees and flowers, and transplant them into the great Paradise gardens, in the unknown land. But how they will flourish there, and how it is there, I may not tell you."

"Give me back my child," said the mother; and she implored and wept. All at once she grasped two pretty flowers with her two hands, and called to Death, "I'll tear off all your flowers, for I am in despair."

"Do not touch them," said Death. "You say you are so unhappy, and now you would make another mother just as unhappy!"

"Another mother?" said the poor woman; and she let the flowers go.

"There are your eyes for you," said Death. "I have fished them out of the lake; they gleamed up quite brightly. I did not know that they were yours. Take them back—they are clearer now than before—and then look down into the deep well close by. I will tell you the names of the two flowers you wanted to pull up, and you will see what you were about to frustrate and destroy."

And she looked down into the well, and it was a happiness to see how one of them became a blessing to the world, how much joy and gladness she diffused around her. And the woman looked at the life of the other, and it was made up of care and poverty, misery and woe.

"Both are the will of God," said Death.

"Which of them is the flower of misfortune, and which the blessed one?" she asked.

"That I may not tell you," answered Death, "but this much you shall hear; that one of these two flowers is that of your child. It was the fate of your child that you saw—the future of your own child."

Then the mother screamed aloud for terror.

"Which of them belongs to my child? Tell me that! Release the innocent child! Let my child free from all that misery! Rather carry it away! Carry it into God's kingdom! Forget my tears, forget my entreaties, and all that I have done!"

"I do not understand you," said Death. "Will you have

your child back, or shall I carry it to that place that you know not?"

Then the mother wrung her hands, and fell on her knees, and prayed to the good God.

"Hear me not when I pray against Thy will, which is at all times the best! Hear me not! hear me not!" And she let her head sink down on her bosom.

And Death went away with her child to the unknown land.

THE DAISY.

Now you shall hear!

Out in the country, close by the roadside, there was a country house; you yourself have certainly once seen it. Before it is a little garden with flowers, and a paling which is painted. Close by it, by the ditch, in the midst of the most beautiful green grass, grew a little Daisy. The sun shone as warmly and as brightly upon it as on the great splendid garden flowers, and so it grew from hour to hour. One morning it stood in full bloom, with its little shining white leaves spreading like rays round the little yellow sun in the center. It never thought that no man would notice it down in the grass, and that it was a poor despised floweret; no, it was very merry, and turned to the warm sun, looked up at it, and listened to the Lark caroling high in the air.

The little Daisy was as happy as if it were a great holiday, and yet it was only Monday. All the children were at school; and while they sat on their benches learning, it sat on its little green stalk, and learned also from the warm sun, and from all around, how good God is. And the Daisy was very glad that everything it silently felt was sung so loudly and charmingly by the Lark. And the Daisy looked up with a kind of respect to the happy bird who could sing and fly; but it was not at all sorrowful because it could not fly and sing also.

"I can see and hear," it thought; "the sun shines on me, and the forest kisses me. Oh, how richly have I been gifted!"

Within the palings stood many stiff, aristocratic flowers—

the less scent they had the more they flaunted. The peonies blew themselves out to be greater than the roses, but size will not do it; the tulips had the most splendid colors, and they knew that, and held themselves bolt upright, that they might be seen more plainly. They did not notice the little Daisy outside there, but the Daisy looked at them the more, and thought, "How rich and beautiful they are! Yes, the pretty birds fly across to them, and visit them. I am glad that I stand so near them, for at any rate I can enjoy the sight of their splendor!" And just as she thought that—"keevit!"—down came flying the Lark, but not down to the peonies and tulips—no, down into the grass to the lowly Daisy, which started so with joy that it did not know what to think.

The little bird danced round about it, and sang:

"Oh, how soft the grass is! and see what a lovely little flower, with gold in its heart and silver on its dress!"

For the yellow point in the Daisy looked like gold, and the little leaves around it shone silvery white.

How happy was the little Daisy—no one can conceive how happy! The bird kissed it with his beak, sang to it, and then flew up again into the blue air. A quarter of an hour passed, at least, before the Daisy could recover itself. Half ashamed, and yet inwardly rejoiced, it looked at the other flowers in the garden; for they had seen the honor and happiness it had gained, and must understand what a joy it was. But the tulips stood up twice as stiff as before, and they looked quite peaky in the face and quite red, for they had been vexed. The peonies were quite wrong-headed; it was well they could not speak, or the Daisy would have received a good scolding. The poor little flower could see very well that they were not in a good humor, and that hurt it sensibly. At this moment there came into the garden a girl with a great, sharp, shining knife; she went straight up to the tulips, and cut off one after another of them.

"Oh!" sighed the little Daisy, "this is dreadful; now it is all over with them."

Then the girl went away with the tulips. The Daisy was glad to stand out in the grass, and to be only a poor little flower. It felt very grateful; and when the sun went down

it folded its leaves and went to sleep, and dreamed all night long about the sun and the pretty little bird.

Next morning, when the flower again happily stretched out all its white leaves, like little arms, toward the air and the light, it recognized the voice of the bird, but the song he was singing sounded mournfully. Yes, the poor Lark had good reason to be sad; he was caught and now sat in a cage close by the open window. He sang of free and happy roaming, sang of the young green corn in the fields, and of the glorious journey he might make on his wings high through the air. The poor Lark was not in good spirits, for there he sat a prisoner in a cage.

The little Daisy wished very much to help him. But what was it to do? Yes, that was difficult to make out. It quite forgot how everything was beautiful around, how warm the sun shone, and how splendidly white its own leaves were. Ah! it could think only of the imprisoned bird, and how it was powerless to do anything for him.

Just then two little boys came out of the garden. One of them carried in his hand the knife which the girl had used to cut off the tulips. They went straight up to the little Daisy, which could not at all make out what they wanted.

"Here we may cut a capital piece of turf for the Lark," said one of the boys; and he began to cut off a square patch round about the Daisy, so that the flower remained standing in its piece of grass.

"Tear off the flower!" said the other boy.

And the Daisy trembled with fear, for to be torn off would be to lose its life; and now it wanted particularly to live, as it was to be given with the piece of turf to the captive Lark.

"No, let it stay," said the other boy; "it makes such a nice ornament."

And so it remained, and was put into the Lark's cage. But the poor bird complained aloud of his lost liberty, and beat his wings against the wires of his prison; and the little Daisy could not speak—could say no consoling word to him, gladly as it would have done so. And thus the whole morning passed.

"Here is no water," said the captive Lark. "They are all gone out, and have forgotten to give me anything to drink. My throat is dry and burning. It is like fire and ice within

me, and the air is close. Oh, I must die! I must leave the warm sunshine, the fresh green, and all the splendor that God has created!"

And then he thrust his beak into the cool turf to refresh himself a little with it. Then the bird's eye fell upon the Daisy, and he nodded to it, and kissed it with his beak, and said:

"You also must wither in here, you poor little fellow. They have given you to me with a little patch of green grass on which you grow, instead of the whole world which was mine out there! Every little blade of grass shall be a great tree for me, and every one of your fragrant leaves a great flower. Ah, you only tell me how much I have lost!"

"If I could only comfort him!" thought the little Daisy.

It could not stir a leaf; but the scent which streamed forth from its delicate leaves was far stronger than is generally found in these flowers; the bird also noticed that, and though he was fainting with thirst, and in his pain plucked up the green blades of grass, he did not touch the flower.

The evening came, and yet nobody appeared to bring the poor bird a drop of water. Then he stretched out his pretty wings and beat the air frantically with them; his song changed to a mournful piping, his little head sank down toward the flower, and the bird's heart broke with want and yearning. Then the flower could not fold its leaves, as it had done on the previous evening, and sleep; it drooped, sorrowful and sick, toward the earth.

Not till the next morning did the boys come; and when they found the bird dead they wept—wept many tears—and dug him a neat grave, which they adorned with leaves of flowers. The bird's corpse was put in a pretty red box, for he was to be royally buried—the poor bird! While he was alive and sang they forgot him, and let him sit in his cage and suffer want; but now that he was dead he had adornment and many tears.

But the patch of turf with the Daisy on it was thrown out into the high road; no one thought of the flower that had felt the most for the little bird, and would have been so glad to console him.

A GREAT GRIEF.

This story really consists of two parts; the first part might be left out, but it gives us a few particulars, and these are useful.

We were staying in the country at a gentleman's seat, where it happened that the master was absent for a few days. In the meantime there arrived from the next town a lady; she had a pug dog with her, and came, she said, to dispose of shares in her tanyard. She had her papers with her, and we advised her to put them in an envelope, and to write thereon the address of the proprietor of the estate, "General War-Commissary Knight," etc.

She listened to us attentively, seized the pen, paused, and begged us to repeat the direction slowly. We complied, and she wrote; but in the midst of the "General War" she stuck fast, sighed deeply, and said, "I am only a woman!" Her Puggie had seated itself on the ground while she wrote, and growled; for the dog had come with her for amusement and for the sake of its health; and then the bare floor ought not to be offered to a visitor. His outward appearance was characterized by a snub nose and a very fat back.

"He doesn't bite," said the lady; "he has no teeth. He is like one of the family, faithful and grumpy; but the latter is my grandchildren's fault, for they have teased him; they play at wedding, and want to give him the part of the bridesmaid, and that's too much for him, poor old fellow."

And she delivered her papers, and took Puggie upon her arm. And this is the first part of the story, which might have been left out.

Puggie died! That's the second part.

It was about a week afterward we arrived in the town, and put up at the inn. Our windows looked into the tanyard, which was divided into two parts by a partition of planks; in one-half were many skins and hides, raw and tanned. Here was all the apparatus necessary to carry on a tannery, and it belonged to the widow. Puggie had died in the morning, and was to be buried in this part of the

yard; the grandchildren of the widow (that is, of the tanner's widow, for Puggie himself had never been married) filled up the grave, and it was a beautiful grave—it must have been quite pleasant to lie there.

The grave was bordered with pieces of flower-pots and strewn over with sand; quite at the top they had stuck up half a beer bottle, with the neck upward, and that was not at all allegorical.

The children danced round the grave, and the eldest of the boys among them, a practical youngster of seven years, made a proposition that there should be an exhibition of Puggie's burial-place for all who lived in the lane; the price of admission was to be a trouser button, for every boy would be sure to have one, and each might also give one for a little girl. This proposal was adopted by acclamation.

And all the children out of the lane—yes, even out of the little lane at the back—flocked to the place, and each gave a button. Many were noticed to go about on that afternoon with only one brace, but then they had seen Puggie's grave, and the sight was worth much more.

But in front of the tanyard, close to the entrance, stood a little girl clothed in rags, very pretty to look at, with curly hair, and eyes so blue and clear that it was a pleasure to look into them. The child said not a word, nor did she cry; but each time the little door was opened she gave a long, long look into the yard. She had not a button—that she knew right well, and therefore she remained standing sorrowfully outside, till all the others had seen the grave and had gone away; then she sat down, held her little brown hands before her eyes and burst into tears; this girl alone had not seen Puggie's grave. It was a grief as great to her as any grown person can experience.

We saw this from above; and, looked at from above, how many a grief of our own and of others can make us smile! That is the story, and whoever does not understand it may go and purchase a share in the tanyard from the widow.

THE SHIRT COLLAR.

There was once a rich cavalier whose whole effects consisted of a Bootjack and a Hairbrush, but he had the finest Shirt Collar in the world, and about this Shirt Collar we will tell a story.

The Collar was now old enough to think of marrying, and it happened that he was sent to the wash together with a Garter.

"My word!" exclaimed the Shirt Collar. "I have never seen anything so slender and delicate, so charming and genteel. May I ask your name?"

"I shall not tell you that," said the Garter.

"Where is your home?" asked the Shirt Collar.

But the Garter was of rather a retiring nature, and it seemed such a strange question to answer.

"I presume you are a girdle?" said the Shirt Collar—"a sort of under-girdle? I see that you are useful as well as ornamental, my little lady."

"You are not to speak to me," said the Garter. "I have not, I think, given you any occasion to do so."

"Oh! when one is as beautiful as you are," cried the Shirt Collar, "I fancy that is occasion enough."

"Go!" said the Garter; "don't come so near me, you look to me quite like a man."

"I am a fine cavalier, too," said the Shirt Collar. "I possess a bootjack and a hairbrush."

And that was not true at all, for it was his master who owned these things, but he was boasting.

"Don't come too near me," said the Garter; "I am not used to that."

"Affectation!" cried the Shirt Collar.

And then they were taken out of the wash, and starched, and hung over a chair in the sunshine, and then laid on the ironing-board; and now came the hot Iron.

"Mrs. Widow!" said the Shirt Collar, "little Mrs. Widow, I'm getting quite warm; I'm being quite changed; I'm losing all my creases; you're burning a hole in me! Ugh! I propose to you."

"You old rag!" said the Iron, and rode proudly over the Shirt Collar, for it imagined that it was a steam boiler, and that it ought to be out on the railway dragging carriages. "You old rag!" said the Iron.

The Shirt Collar was a little frayed at the edges, therefore the Paper Scissors came to smooth away the frayed places.

"Ho, ho!" said the Shirt Collar; "I presume you are a first-rate dancer. How you can point your toes! no one in the world can do that like you."

"I know that," said the Scissors.

"You deserve to be a countess," said the Shirt Collar. "All that I possess consists of a genteel cavalier, a bootjack, and a comb. If I had only an estate!"

"What! do you want to marry?" cried the Scissors; and they were angry, and gave such a deep cut that the Collar had to be cashiered.

"I shall have to propose to the Hairbrush," thought the Shirt Collar. "It is wonderful what beautiful hair you have, my little lady. Have you never thought of engaging yourself?"

"Yes; you can easily imagine that," replied the Hairbrush. "I am engaged to the Bootjack."

"Engaged!" cried the Shirt Collar.

Now there was no one left to whom he could offer himself, and so he despised love-making.

A long time passed, and the Shirt Collar was put into the sack of a paper dealer. There was a terribly ragged company, and the fine ones kept to themselves, and the coarse ones to themselves, as is right. They all had much to tell, but the Shirt Collar had most of all, for he was a terrible Jack Brag.

"I have had a tremendous number of love affairs," said the Shirt Collar. "They would not leave me alone; but I was a fine cavalier, a starched one. I had a bootjack and a hairbrush that I never used; you should only have seen me then, when I was turned down. I shall never forget my first love; it was a girdle; and how delicate, how charming, how genteel it was! And my first love threw herself into a wash-tub, and all for me! There was also a widow desperately fond of me, but I let her stand alone till she turned quite black. Then there was a dancer, who gave me the

wound from which I still suffer—she was very hot tempered. My own hairbrush was in love with me, and lost all her hair from neglected love. Yes, I've had many experiences of this kind; but I am most sorry for the Garter—I mean for the girdle, that jumped into the wash-tub for love of me. I've a great deal on my conscience. It's time I was turned into white paper."

And to that the Shirt Collar came. All the rags were turned into white paper, but the Shirt Collar became the very piece of paper we see here, and upon which this story has been printed, and that was done because he boasted so dreadfully about things that were not at all true. And this we must remember, so that we may on no account do the same, for we cannot know at all whether we shall not be put into the rag bag and manufactured into white paper, on which our whole history, even the most secret, shall be printed, so that we shall be obliged to run about and tell it, as the Shirt Collar did.

OLE-LUK-OIE.

There's nobody in the whole world who knows so many stories as Ole-Luk-Oie. He can tell capital histories. Toward evening, when the children still sit nicely at table, or upon their stools, Ole-Luk-Oie comes. He comes up the stairs quite softly, for he walks in his socks; he opens the door noiselessly, and whisk! he squirts sweet milk in the children's eyes, a small, small stream, but enough to prevent them from keeping their eyes open; and thus they cannot see him. He creeps just among them, and blows softly upon their necks, and this makes their heads heavy. Yes, but it doesn't hurt them, for Ole-Luk-Oie is very fond of the children; he only wants them to be quiet, and that they are not until they are taken to bed; they are to be quiet in order that he may tell them stories.

When the children sleep, Ole-Luk-Oie sits down upon their bed. He is well dressed; his coat is of silk, but it is impossible to say of what color, for it shines red, green, and blue, according as he turns. Under each arm he carries an umbrella; the one with pictures on it he spreads over

the good children, and then they dream all night the most glorious stories; but on his other umbrella nothing at all is painted; this he spreads over the naughty children, and these sleep in a dull way, and when they awake in the morning they have not dreamed of anything.

Now we shall hear how Ole-Luk-Oie, every evening through one whole week, came to a little boy named Hjalmar, and what he told him. There are seven stories, for there are seven days in the week.

MONDAY.

"Listen," said Ole-Luk-Oie in the evening, when he had put Hjalmar to bed; "now I'll clear up."

And all the flowers in the flower-pots became great trees, stretching out their long branches under the ceiling of the room and along the walls, so that the whole room looked just like a beauteous bower; and all the twigs were covered with flowers, and each flower was more beautiful than a rose, and smelt so sweet that one wanted to eat it—it was sweeter than jam. The fruit gleamed like gold, and there were cakes bursting with raisins. It was incomparably beautiful. But at the same time a terrible wail sounded from the table drawer, where Hjalmar's school-book lay.

"Whatever can that be?" said Ole-Luk-Oie; and he went to the table, and opened the drawer. It was the slate, which was suffering from convulsions, for a wrong number had got into the sum, so that it was nearly falling in pieces; the slate pencil tugged and jumped at its string, as if it had been a little dog who wanted to help the sum; but he could not. And thus there was great lamentation in Hjalmar's copy-book; it was quite terrible to hear. On each page the great letters stood in a row, one beneath the other, and each with a little one at its side; that was the copy; and next to these were a few more letters which thought they looked just like the first; and these Hjalmar had written; but they lay down just as if they had tumbled over the pencil-lines on which they were to stand.

"See, this is how you should hold yourself," said the Copy. "Look, sloping in this way, with a powerful swing!"

"Oh, we shall be very glad to do that," replied Hjalmar's Letters, "but we cannot; we are too weakly."

"Then you must take medicine," said Ole-Luk-Oie.

"Oh, no," cried they; and they immediately stood up so gracefully that it was beautiful to behold.

"Yes, now we cannot tell any stories," said Ole-Luk-Oie; "now I must exercise them. One, two! one, two!" and thus he exercised the Letters; and they stood quite slender, and as beautiful as any copy can be. But when Ole-Luk-Oie went away, and Hjalmar looked at them next morning, they were as weak and miserable as ever.

TUESDAY.

As soon as Hjalmar was in bed, Ole-Luk-Oie touched all the furniture in the bedroom with his little magic squirt, and they immediately began to converse together, and each one spoke of itself, with the exception of the spittoon, which stood silent, and was vexed that they should be so vain as to speak only of themselves, and think only of themselves, without any regard for him who stood so modestly in the corner for everyone's use.

Over the chest of drawers hung a great picture in a gilt frame—it was a landscape. One saw therein large old trees, flowers in the grass, and a broad river which flowed round about a forest, past many castles, and far out into the wide ocean.

Ole-Luk-Oie touched the painting with his magic squirt, and the birds in it began to sing, the branches of the trees stirred, and the clouds began to move across it; one could see their shadows glide over the landscape.

Now Ole-Luk-Oie lifted little Hjalmar up to the frame, and put the boy's feet into the picture, just in the high grass; and there he stood; and the sun shone upon him through the branches of the trees. He ran to the water, and seated himself in a little boat which lay there; it was painted red and white; the sails gleamed like silver, and six swans, each with a gold circlet round its neck and a bright blue star on its forehead, drew the boat past the great wood, where the trees tell of robbers and witches, and the flowers tell of the graceful little elves, and of what the butterflies have told them.

Gorgeous fishes, with scales like silver and gold, swam after their boat; sometimes they gave a spring, so that it

splashed in the water; and birds, blue and red, little and great, flew after them in two long rows; the gnats danced, and the cockchafers said, "Boom! boom!" They all wanted to follow Hjalmar, and each one had a story to tell.

That was a pleasure voyage. Sometimes the forest was thick and dark, sometimes like a glorious garden full of sunlight and flowers; and there were great palaces of glass and of marble; on the balconies stood Princesses, and these were all little girls whom Hjalmar knew well—he had already played with them. Each one stretched forth her hand, and held out the prettiest sugar heart which ever a cake-woman could sell; and Hjalmar took hold of each sugar heart as he passed by, and the Princess held fast, so that each of them got a piece—she the smaller share, and Hjalmar the larger. At each palace little Princes stood sentry. They shouldered golden swords, and caused raisins and tin soldiers to shower down; one could see that they were real Princes. Sometimes Hjalmar sailed through forests, sometimes through halls or through the midst of a town. He also came to the town where his nurse lived, who had always been so kind to him; and she nodded and beckoned, and sang the pretty verse she had made herself and had sent to Hjalmar:

"I've loved thee, and kissed thee, Hjalmar, dear boy;
I've watched thee waking and sleeping:
May the good Lord guard thee in sorrow, in joy,
And have thee in His keeping."

And all the birds sang too, the flowers danced on their stalks, and the old trees nodded, just as if Ole-Luk-Oie had been telling stories to them.

WEDNESDAY.

How the rain was streaming down without! Hjalmar could hear it in his sleep; and when Ole-Luk-Oie opened a window, the water stood quite up to the window-sill; there was quite a lake outside, and a noble ship lay close by the house.

"If thou wilt sail with me, little Hjalmar," said Ole-Luk-Oie, "thou canst voyage to-night to foreign climes, and be back again to-morrow."

And Hjalmar suddenly stood in his Sunday clothes upon the glorious ship, and immediately the weather became fine, and they sailed through the streets, and steered round by the church; and now everything was one great, wild ocean. They sailed on until the land was no longer to be seen, and they saw a number of storks, who also came from their home, and were traveling toward the hot countries; these storks flew in a row, one behind the other, and they had already flown far—far! One of them was so weary that his wings would scarcely carry him farther; he was the very last in the row, and soon remained a great way behind the rest; at last he sank, with out-spread wings, deeper and deeper; he gave a few more strokes with his pinions, but it was of no use; now he touched the rigging of the ship with his feet, then he glided down from the sail, and—bump!—he stood upon the deck.

Now the cabin-boy took him and put him into the hen-coop with the Fowls, Ducks, and Turkeys; the poor Stork stood among them quite embarrassed.

"Just look at the fellow!" said all the Fowls.

And the Turkey-cock swelled himself up as much as ever he could, and asked the Stork who he was; and the Ducks walked backward and quacked to each other, "Quackery! quackery!"

And the Stork told them of hot Africa, of the Pyramids, and of the ostrich which runs like a wild horse through the desert; but the ducks did not understand what he said, and they said to one another:

"We're all of the same opinion, namely, that he's stupid."

"Yes, certainly he's stupid," said the Turkey-cock; and he gobbled.

Then the Stork was quite silent, and thought of his Africa.

"Those are wonderful thin legs of yours," said the Turkey-cock. "Pray, how much do they cost a yard?"

"Quack! quack! qua-a-ck!" grinned all the Ducks; but the Stork pretended not to hear it at all.

"You may just as well laugh, too," said the Turkey-cock to him, "for that was very wittily said. Or was it, perhaps, too high for you? Yes, yes, he isn't very penetrating. Let us continue to be interesting among ourselves."

And then he gobbled, and the Ducks quacked, "Gick!

gack! gick! gack!" It was terrible how they made fun among themselves.

But Hjalmar went to the hen-coop, opened the back door, and called to the Stork; and the Stork hopped out to him on to the deck. Now he was quite rested, and it seemed as if he nodded at Hjalmar, to thank him. Then he spread his wings, and flew away to the warm countries; but the Fowls clucked, and the Ducks quacked, and the Turkey-cock became fiery red in the face.

"To-morrow we shall make songs of you," said Hjalmar; and so saying he awoke, and was lying in his linen bed. It was a wonderful journey that Ole-Luk-Oie had caused him to take that night.

THURSDAY.

"I tell you what," said Ole-Luk-Oie, "you must not be frightened. Here you shall see a little Mouse," and he held out his hand with the pretty little creature in it. "It has come to invite you to a wedding. There are two little Mice here who are going to enter into the marriage state to-night. They live under the floor of your mother's store-closet; that is said to be a charming dwelling place!"

"But how can I get through the little mouse-hole in the floor?" asked Hjalmar.

"Let me manage that," said Ole-Luk-Oie. "I will make you small."

And he touched Hjalmar with his magic squirt, and the boy began to shrink and shrink and shrink, until he was not so long as a finger.

"Now you may borrow the uniform of a tin soldier. I think it would fit you, and it looks well to wear a uniform when one is in society."

"Yes, certainly," said Hjalmar.

And in a moment he was dressed like the spiciest of tin soldiers.

"Will your honor not be kind enough to take a seat in your mamma's thimble?" asked the Mouse. "Then I shall have the pleasure of drawing you."

"Will the young lady really take so much trouble?" cried Hjalmar.

And thus they drove to the Mouse's wedding. First they

came into a long passage beneath the boards, which was only just so high that they could drive through it in the thimble, and the whole passage was lit up with rotten wood.

"Is there not a delicious smell here?" observed the Mouse. "The entire road has been greased with bacon-rinds, and there can be nothing more exquisite."

Now they came into the festive hall. On the right hand stood all the little lady mice; and they whispered and giggled as if they were making fun of each other; on the left stood all the gentlemen mice, stroking their whiskers with their forepaws; and in the center of the hall the bridegroom and bride might be seen standing in a hollow cheese-rind, and kissing each other terribly before all the guests; for this was the betrothal, and the marriage was to follow immediately.

More and more strangers kept flocking in. One mouse was nearly treading another to death; and the happy couple had stationed themselves just in the little door-way, so that one could neither come in nor go out. Like the passage, the room had been greased with bacon-rinds, and that was the entire banquet; but for the dessert a pea was produced, in which a mouse belonging to the family had bitten the name of the betrothed pair—that is to say, the first letter of the name; that was something quite out of the common way.

All the mice said it was a beautiful wedding, and that the entertainment had been very agreeable. And then Hjalmar drove home again; he had really been in grand company; but he had been obliged to crawl through a mouse-hole, to make himself little, and to put on a tin soldier's uniform.

FRIDAY.

"It is wonderful how many grown-up people there are who would be very glad to have me!" said Ole-Luk-Oie; "especially those who have done something wrong. 'Good little Ole,' they say to me, 'we cannot close our eyes, and so we lie all night and see our evil deeds, which sit upon the bedstead like ugly little goblins, and throw hot water over us; will you not come and drive them away, so that we may have a good sleep?'—and then they sigh deeply—'We would really be glad to pay for it. Good-night, Ole; the

money lies on the window-sill.' But I do nothing for money," says Ole-Luk-Oie.

"What shall we do this evening?" asked Hjalmar.

"I don't know if you care to go to another wedding to-night. It is a different kind from that of yesterday. Your sister's great doll, that looks like a man, and is called Hermann, is going to marry the doll Bertha. Moreover, it is the doll's birthday, and therefore they will receive very many presents."

"Yes, I know that," replied Hjalmar. "Whenever the dolls want new clothes, my sister lets them either keep their birthday or celebrate a wedding; that has certainly happened a hundred times already."

"Yes, but to-night is the hundred and first wedding; and when number one hundred and one is past, it is all over; and that is why it will be so splendid. Only look!"

And Hjalmar looked at the table. There stood the little cardboard house with the windows illuminated, and in front of it all the tin soldiers were presenting arms. The bride and bridegroom sat quite thoughtful, and with good reason, on the floor, leaning against a leg of the table. And Ole-Luk-Oie, dressed up in the grandmother's black gown, married them to each other. When the ceremony was over, all the pieces of furniture struck up the following beautiful song, which the pencil had written for them. It was sung to the melody of the soldiers' tattoo:

"Let the song swell like the rushing wind,
In honor of those who this day are joined,
Although they stand here so stiff and blind,
Because they are both of a leathery kind.
Hurrah! hurrah! though they're deaf and blind,
Let the song swell like the rushing wind."

And now they received presents—but they had declined to accept provisions of any kind, for they intended to live on love.

"Shall we now go into a big summer lodging, or start on a journey?" asked the bridegroom.

And the Swallow, who was a great traveler, and the old yard Hen, who had brought up five broods of chickens, were consulted on the subject. And the Swallow told of the beautiful warm climes, where the grapes hung in ripe,

heavy clusters, where the air is mild, and the mountains glow with colors unknown here.

"But you have not our brown cole there!" objected the Hen. "I was once in the country, with my children, in one summer that lasted five weeks. There was a sand pit, in which we could walk about and scratch; and we had the entrée to a garden where brown cole grew; it was so hot there that one could scarcely breathe. And then we have not all the poisonous animals that infest these warm countries of yours, and we are free from robbers. He is a villain who does not consider our country the most beautiful—he certainly does not deserve to be here!" And then the Hen wept, and went on: "I have also traveled. I rode in a coop about twelve miles; and there is no pleasure at all in traveling!"

"Yes, the Hen is a sensible woman!" said the doll Bertha. "I don't think anything of traveling among mountains, for you only have to go up and then down again. No, we will go into the sand-pit beyond the gate, and walk about in the cabbage garden."

And so it was settled.

SATURDAY.

"Am I to hear some stories now?" asked little Hjalmar, as soon as Ole-Luk-Oie had sent him to sleep.

"This evening we have no time for that," replied Ole-Luk-Oie; and he spread his finest umbrella over the lad. "Only look at these Chinamen!"

And the whole umbrella looked like a great China dish, with blue trees and pointed bridges with little Chinamen upon them, who stood there nodding their heads.

"We must have the whole world prettily decked out for to-morrow morning," said Ole-Luk-Oie, "for that will be a holiday—it will be Sunday. I will go to the church steeples to see that the little church goblins are polishing the bells, that they may sound sweetly. I will go out into the field, and see if the breezes are blowing the dust from the grass and leaves; and, what is the greatest work of all, I will bring down all the stars, to polish them. I take them in my apron; but first each one must be numbered, and the holes in which they are to be placed up there must be numbered

likewise, so that they may be placed in the same grooves again; otherwise they would not sit fast, and we should have too many shooting stars, for one after another would fall down."

"Hark ye! Do you know, Mr. Ole-Luk-Oie," remarked an old Portrait which hung upon the wall of the bedroom, where Hjalmar slept. "I am Hjalmar's great-grandfather! I thank you for telling the boy stories; but you must not confuse his ideas. The stars cannot come down and be polished! The stars are world-orbs, just like our own earth, and that is just the good thing about them."

"I thank you, old great-grandfather," said Ole-Luk-Oie, "I thank you! You are the head of the family; you are the ancestral head. But I am older than you! I am an old heathen; the Romans and Greeks called me the Dream God. I have been in the noblest houses, and am admitted there still! I know how to act with great people and with small! Now you may tell your own story!" And Ole-Luk-Oie took his umbrella, and went away.

"Well, well! May one not even give an opinion now-adays?" grumbled the old Portrait. And Hjalmar awoke.

SUNDAY.

"Good-evening!" said Ole-Luk-Oie; and Hjalmar nodded, and then ran and turned his great-grandfather's Portrait against the wall, that it might not interrupt them, as it had done yesterday.

"Now you must tell me stories—about the five green peas that lived in one shell, and about the cock's foot that paid court to the hen's foot, and of the darning-needle who gave herself such airs because she thought herself a working-needle."

"There may be too much of a good thing!" said Ole-Luk-Oie. "You know that I prefer showing you something. I will show you my own brother. His name, like mine, is Ole-Luk-Oie, but he never comes to anyone more than once; and he takes him to whom he comes upon his horse, and tells him stories. He only knows two. One of these is so exceedingly beautiful that no one in the world can imagine it, and the other so horrible and dreadful that it cannot be described."

And then Ole-Luk-Oie lifted little Hjalmar up to the window, and said:

"There you will see my brother, the other Ole-Luk-Oie. They also call him Death! Do you see? He does not look so terrible as they make him in the picture-books, where he is only a skeleton. No, that is silver embroidery that he has on his coat; that is a splendid hussar's uniform; a mantle of black velvet flies behind him over the horse. See how he gallops along!"

And Hjalmar saw how this Ole-Luk-Oie rode away, and took young people as well as old upon his horse. Some of them he put before him, and some behind; but he always asked first—"How stands it with the mark-book?" "Well," they all replied. "Yes, let me see it myself," he said. And then each one had to show him the book; and those who had "very well" and "remarkably well" written in their books, were placed in front of his horse, and a lovely story was told to them; while those who had "middling" or "tolerably well," had to sit up behind, and hear a very terrible story indeed. They trembled and wept, and wanted to jump off the horse, but this they could not do, for they had all, as it were, grown fast to it.

"But Death is a most splendid Ole-Luk-Oie," said Hjalmar. "I am not afraid of him!"

"Nor need you be," replied Ole-Luk-Oie; "but see that you have a good mark-book!"

"Yes, that is improving!" muttered the great-grandfather's Picture. "It is of some use giving one's opinion." And now he was satisfied.

You see, that is the story of Ole-Luk-Oie; and now he may tell you more himself, this evening!

THE BEETLE.

The Emperor's favorite horse was shod with gold. It had a golden shoe on each of its feet.

And why was this?

He was a beautiful creature, with delicate legs, bright, intelligent eyes, and a mane that hung down over his neck like a veil. He had carried his master through the fire and

smoke of battle, and heard the bullets whistling around him, had kicked, bitten, and taken part in the fight when the enemy advanced, and had sprung with his master on his back over the fallen foe, and had saved the crown of red gold, and the life of the Emperor, which was even more valuable than the red gold; and that is why the Emperor's horse had golden shoes.

And a Beetle came creeping forth.

"First the great ones," said he, "and then the little ones; but greatness is not the only thing that does it." And so saying, he stretched out his thin legs.

"And pray what do you want?" asked the smith.

"Golden shoes, to be sure," replied the Beetle.

"Why, you must be out of your senses!" cried the smith. "Do you want to have golden shoes, too?"

"Golden shoes? Certainly," replied the Beetle. "Am I not just as good as that big creature yonder, that is waited on, and brushed, and has meat and drink put before him? Don't I belong to the imperial stable?"

"But why is the horse to have golden shoes? Don't you understand that?" asked the smith.

"Understand? I understand that it is a personal slight offered to myself," cried the Beetle. "It is done to annoy me, and therefore I am going into the world to seek my fortune."

"Go along!" said the smith.

"You're a rude fellow!" cried the Beetle; and then he went out of the stable, flew a little way, and soon afterward found himself in a beautiful flower garden, all fragrant with roses and lavender.

"Is it not beautiful here?" asked one of the little Lady-Birds that flew about, with their delicate wings and their red and black shields on their backs. "How sweet it is here—how beautiful it is!"

"I'm accustomed to better things," said the Beetle. "Do you call this beautiful? Why, there is not so much as a dung-heap."

Then he went on, under the shadow of a great stack, and found a Caterpillar crawling along.

"How beautiful the world is!" said the Caterpillar; "the sun is so warm, and everything so enjoyable! And when I go to sleep, and die, as they call it, I shall wake up as a butterfly, with beautiful wings to fly with."

"How conceited you are!" exclaimed the Beetle. "You fly about as a butterfly, indeed! I've come out of the stable of the Emperor, and no one there—not even the Emperor's favorite horse, that, by the way, wears my cast-off golden shoes—has any such idea. To have wings to fly! Why, we can fly now." And he spread his wings and flew away. "I don't want to be annoyed, and yet I am annoyed," he said, as he flew off.

Soon afterward he fell down upon a great lawn. For awhile he lay there and feigned slumber; at last he really fell asleep in earnest.

Suddenly a heavy shower of rain came falling from the clouds. The Beetle woke up at the noise, and wanted to escape into the earth, but could not. He was tumbled over and over; sometimes he was swimming on his stomach, sometimes on his back, and as for flying, that was out of the question; he doubted whether he should escape from the place with his life. He therefore remained lying where he was.

When the weather had moderated a little, and the Beetle had rubbed the water out of his eyes, he saw something gleaming. It was linen that had been placed there to bleach. He managed to make his way up to it, and crept into a fold of the damp linen. Certainly the place was not so comfortable to lie in as the warm stable; but there was no better to be had, and therefore he remained lying there for a whole day and a whole night, and the rain kept on during all the time. Toward morning he crept forth; he was very much out of temper about the climate.

On the linen two Frogs were sitting. Their bright eyes absolutely gleamed with pleasure.

"Wonderful weather this!" one of them cried. "How refreshing! And the linen keeps the water together so beautifully. My hind legs seem to quiver as if I were going to swim."

"I should like to know," said the second, "if the swallow, who flies so far round, in her many journeys in foreign lands, ever meets with a better climate than this. What delicious dampness! It is really as if one were lying in a wet ditch. Whoever does not rejoice in this, certainly does not love his fatherland."

"Have you been in the Emperor's stable?" asked the

Beetle; "there the dampness is warm and refreshing. That's the climate for me; but I cannot take it with me on my journey. Is there never a muck-heap, here in the garden, where a person of rank, like myself, can feel himself at home, and take up his quarters?"

But the Frogs either did not or would not understand him.

"I never ask a question twice!" said the Beetle, after he had already asked this one three times without receiving any answer.

Then he went a little farther, and stumbled against a fragment of pottery, that certainly ought not to have been lying there; but as it was once there, it gave a good shelter against wind and weather. Here dwelt several families of Earwigs; and these did not require much, only sociality. The female members of the community were full of the purest maternal affection, and, accordingly, each one considered her own child the most beautiful and cleverest of all.

"Our son has engaged himself," said one mother. "Dear, innocent boy! His greatest hope is that he may creep one day into a clergyman's ear. It's very artless and lovable, that; and being engaged will keep him steady. What joy for a mother!"

"Our son," said another mother, "had scarcely crept out of the egg, when he was already off on his travels. He's all life and spirits; he'll run his horns off! What joy that is for a mother! Is it not so, Mr. Beetle?" for she knew the stranger by his horny coat.

"You are both quite right," said he; so they begged him to walk in; that is to say, to come as far as he could under the bit of pottery.

"Now you also see my little earwig," observed a third mother and a fourth; "they are lovely little things, and highly amusing. They are never ill-behaved, except when they are uncomfortable in their inside; but, unfortunately, one is very subject to that at their age."

Thus each mother spoke of her baby; and the babies talked among themselves, and made use of the little nippers they have in their tails to nip the beard of the Beetle.

"Yes, they are always busy about something, the little rogues!" said the mothers; and they quite beamed with

maternal pride; but the Beetle felt bored by that, and therefore he inquired how far it was to the nearest muck-heap.

"That is quite out in the big world, on the other side of the ditch," answered an Earwig. "I hope none of my children will go so far, for it would be the death of me."

"But I shall try to get so far," said the Beetle; and he went off without taking formal leave; for that is considered the polite thing to do. And by the ditch he met several friends; Beetles, all of them.

"Here we live," they said. "We are very comfortable here. Might we ask you to step down into this rich mud? You must be fatigued after your journey."

"Certainly," replied the Beetle. "I have been exposed to the rain, and have had to lie upon linen, and cleanliness is a thing that greatly exhausts me. I have also pains in one of my wings, from standing in a draught under a fragment of pottery. It is really quite refreshing to be among one's companions once more."

"Perhaps you come from a muck-heap?" observed the oldest of them.

"Indeed, I come from a much higher place," replied the Beetle. "I come from the Emperor's stable, where I was born with golden shoes on my feet. I am traveling on a secret embassy. You must not ask me any questions, for I can't betray my secret."

With this the little Beetle stepped down into the rich mud. There sat three young maiden Beetles; and they tittered, because they did not know what to say.

"Not one of them is engaged yet," said their mother; and the Beetle maidens tittered again, this time from embarrassment.

"I have never seen greater beauties in the royal stables," exclaimed the Beetle, who was now resting himself.

"Don't spoil my girls," said the mother; "and don't talk to them, please, unless you have serious intentions. But of course your intentions are serious, and therefore I give you my blessing."

"Hurrah!" cried all the other Beetles together; and our friend was engaged. Immediately after the betrothal came the marriage, for there was no reason for delay.

The following day passed very pleasantly, and the next in

tolerable comfort; but on the third it was time to think of food for the wife, and perhaps also for children.

"I have allowed myself to be taken in," said our Beetle to himself. "And now there's nothing for it but to take them in, in turn."

So said, so done. Away he went, and he stayed away all day, and stayed away all night; and his wife sat there, a forsaken widow.

"Oh," said the other Beetles, "this fellow whom we received into our family is nothing more than a thorough vagabond. He is gone away, and has left his wife a burden upon our hands."

"Well, then, she shall be unmarried again, and sit here among my daughters," said the mother. "Fie on the villain who forsook her!"

In the meantime the Beetle had been journeying on, and had sailed across the ditch on a cabbage-leaf. In the morning two persons came to the ditch. When they saw him, they took him up, and turned him over and over, and looked very learned, especially one of them—a boy.

"Allah sees the black beetle in the black stone and in the black rock. Is not that written in the Koran?" Then he translated the Beetle's name into Latin, and enlarged upon the creature's nature and history. The second person, an older scholar, voted for carrying him home. He said they wanted just such good specimens; and this seemed an uncivil speech to our Beetle, and in consequence he flew suddenly out of the speaker's hand. As he had now dry wings, he flew a tolerable distance, and reached a hotbed, where a sash of the glass roof was partly open, so he quietly slipped in and buried himself in the warm earth.

"Very comfortable it is here," said he.

Soon after he went to sleep, and dreamed that the Emperor's favorite horse had fallen, and had given him his golden shoes, with the promise that he should have two more.

That was all very charming. When the Beetle woke up, he crept forth and looked around him. What splendor was in the hothouse! In the background great palm trees growing up on high; the sun made them look transparent; and beneath them what a luxuriance of green, and of beaming

flowers, red as fire, yellow as amber, or white as fresh-fallen snow!

"This is an incomparable plenty of plants," cried the Beetle. "How good they will taste when they are decayed! A capital storeroom this! There must certainly be relations of mine living here. I will just see if I can find anyone with whom I may associate. I'm proud, certainly, and I'm proud of being so."

And so he prowled about in the earth, and thought what a pleasant dream that was about the dying horse, and the golden shoes he had inherited.

Suddenly a hand seized the Beetle, and pressed him, and turned him round and round.

The gardener's little son and a companion had come to the hotbed, and espied the Beetle, and wanted to have their fun with him. First he was wrapped in a vine-leaf, and then put into a warm trousers pocket. He cribbled and crabbled about there with all his might; but he got a good pressing from the boy's hand for this, which served as a hint to him to keep quiet. Then the boy went rapidly toward the great lake that lay at the end of the garden. Here the Beetle was put in an old broken wooden shoe, on which a little stick was placed upright for a mast, and to this mast the Beetle was bound with a woolen thread. Now he was a sailor, and had to sail away.

The lake was not very large, but to the Beetle it seemed an ocean; and he was so astonished at its extent, that he fell over on his back and kicked out with his legs.

The little ship sailed away. The current of the water seized it; but whenever he went too far from the shore, one of the boys turned up his trousers and went in after it, and brought it back to the land. But at length, just as it went merrily out again, the two boys were called away, and very harshly, so that they hurried to obey the summons, ran away from the lake, and left the little ship to its fate. Thus it drove away from the shore, farther and farther into the open sea; it was terrible work for the Beetle, for he could not get away in consequence of being bound to the mast.

Then a Fly came and paid him a visit.

"What beautiful weather!" said the Fly. "I'll rest here, and sun myself. You have an agreeable time of it."

"You speak without knowing the facts," replied the Beetle. "Don't you see that I'm a prisoner?"

"Ah! but I'm not a prisoner," observed the Fly; and he flew away accordingly.

"Well, now I know the world," said the Beetle to himself. "It is an abominable world. I'm the only honest person in it. First, they refuse me my golden shoes; then I have to lie on wet linen, and to stand in the draught; and, to crown all, they fasten a wife upon me. Then, when I've taken a quick step out into the world, and found out how one can have it there, and how I wished to have it, one of those human boys comes and ties me up, and leaves me to the mercy of the wild waves, while the Emperor's horse prances about proudly in golden shoes. That is what annoys me more than all. But one must not look for sympathy in this world! My career has been very interesting; but what's the use of that, if nobody knows it? The world does not deserve to be made acquainted with my history, for it ought to have given me golden shoes, when the Emperor's horse was shod, and I stretched out my feet to be shod, too. If I had received golden shoes, I should have been an ornament to the stable. Now the stable has lost me, and the world has lost me. It is all over!"

But all was not over yet. A boat, in which there were a few young girls, came rowing up.

"Look, yonder is an old wooden shoe sailing along," said one of the girls.

"There's a little creature bound fast to it," said another.

The boat came quite close to the Beetle's ship, and the young girls fished him out of the water. One of them drew a small pair of scissors from her pocket, and cut the woolen thread, without hurting the Beetle; and when she stepped on shore, she put him down on the grass.

"Creep, creep—y, fly—if thou canst," she said. "Liberty is a splendid thing."

And the Beetle flew up, and straight through the open window of a great building; there he sank down, tired and exhausted, exactly on the mane of the Emperor's favorite horse, who stood in the stable when he was at home, and the Beetle also. The Beetle clung fast to the mane, and sat there a short time to recover himself.

"Here I'm sitting on the Emperor's favorite horse—sit-

ting on him just like the Emperor himself!" he cried. "But what was I saying? Yes, now I remember. That's a good thought, and quite correct. The smith asked me why the golden shoes were given to the horse. Now I'm quite clear about the answer. They were given to the horse on my account."

And now the Beetle was in a good temper again.

"Traveling expands the mind rarely," said he.

The sun's rays came streaming into the stable, and shone upon him, and made the place lively and bright.

"The world is not so bad upon the whole," said the Beetle; "but one must know how to take things as they come."

WHAT THE OLD MAN DOES IS ALWAYS RIGHT.

I will tell you the story which was told to me when I was a little boy. Every time I thought of the story, it seemed to me to become more and more charming; for it is with stories as it is with many people—they become better as they grow older.

I take it for granted that you have been in the country, and seen a very old farmhouse with a thatched roof, and mosses and small plants growing wild upon the thatch. There is a stork's nest on the summit of the gable; for we can't do without the stork. The walls of the house are sloping, and the windows are low, and only one of the latter is made so that it will open. The baking-oven sticks out of the wall like a little fat body. The elder tree hangs over the paling, and beneath its branches, at the foot of the paling, is a pool of water in which a few ducks are disporting themselves. There is a yard dog, too, who barks at all comers.

Just such a farmhouse stood out in the country; and in this house dwelt an old couple—a peasant and his wife. Small as was their property, there was one article among it that they could do without—a horse, which made a living out of the grass it found by the side of the high road. The old peasant rode into the town on this horse; and often his neighbors borrowed it of him, and rendered the old couple some service in return for the loan of it. But they thought

it would be best if they sold the horse, or exchanged it for something that might be more useful to them. But what might this something be?

"You'll know that best, old man," said the wife. "It is fair day to-day, so ride into town, and get rid of the horse for money, or make a good exchange; whichever you do will be right to me. Ride off to the fair."

And she fastened his neckerchief for him, for she could do that better than he could; and she tied it in a double bow, for she could do that very prettily. Then she brushed his hat round and round with the palm of her hand, and gave him a kiss. So he rode away upon the horse that was to be sold or to be bartered for something else. Yes, the old man knew what he was about.

The sun shone hotly down, and not a cloud was to be seen in the sky. The road was very dusty, for many people, who were all bound for the fair, were driving or riding, or walking upon it. There was no shelter anywhere from the sunbeams.

Among the rest, a man was trudging along, and driving a cow to the fair. The cow was as beautiful a creature as any cow can be.

"She gives good milk, I'm sure," said the peasant. "That would be a very good exchange—the cow for the horse."

"Hallo, you there with the cow!" he said; "I tell you what—I fancy a horse costs more than a cow, but I don't care for that; a cow would be more useful to me. If you like, we'll exchange."

"To be sure I will," returned the man; and they exchanged accordingly.

So that was settled, and the peasant might have turned back, for he had done the business he came to do; but as he had once made up his mind to go to the fair, he determined to proceed, merely to have a look at it; and so he went on to the town with his cow.

Leading the animal, he strode sturdily on; and after a short time, he overtook a man who was driving a sheep. It was a good fat sheep, with a fine fleece on its back.

"I should like to have that fellow," said our peasant to himself. "He would find plenty of grass by our palings, and in the winter we could keep him in the room with us."

Perhaps it would be more practical to have a sheep instead of a cow. Shall we exchange?"

The man with the sheep was quite ready, and the bargain was struck. So our peasant went on in the high road with his sheep.

Soon he overtook another man, who came into the road from a field, carrying a great goose under his arm.

"That's a heavy thing you have there. It has plenty of feathers and plenty of fat, and would look well tied to a string, and paddling in the water at our place. That would be something for my old woman; she could make all kinds of profit out of it. How often she has said, 'If we only had a goose!' Now, perhaps, she can have one; and, if possible, it shall be hers. Shall we exchange? I'll give you my sheep for your goose, and thank you into the bargain."

The other man had not the least objection; and accordingly they exchanged, and our peasant became proprietor of the goose.

By this time he was very near the town. The crowd on the high road became greater and greater; there was quite a crush of men and cattle. They walked in the road, and close by the paling; and at the barrier they even walked into the tollman's potato field, where his own fowl was strutting about with a string to its legs, lest it should take fright at the crowd, and stray away, and so be lost. This fowl had short tail-feathers, and winked with both its eyes, and looked very cunning. "Cluck, cluck!" said the fowl. What it thought when it said this I cannot tell you; but directly our good man saw it, he thought, "That's the finest fowl I've ever seen in my life! Why, it's finer than our parson's brood hen. On my word, I should like to have that fowl. A fowl can always find a grain or two, and can almost keep itself. I think it would be a good exchange if I could get that for my goose. Shall we exchange?" he asked the toll-taker.

"Exchange!" repeated the man; "well, that would not be a bad thing."

And so they exchanged; the toll-taker at the barrier kept the goose, and the peasant carried away the fowl.

Now, he had done a good deal of business on his way to the fair, and he was hot and tired. He wanted something to eat, and a glass of brandy to drink; and soon he was in front

of the inn. He was just about to step in, when the hostler came out; so they met at the door. The hostler was carrying a sack.

"What have you in that sack?" asked the peasant.

"Rotten apples," answered the hostler; "a whole sackful of them—enough to feed the pigs with."

"Why, that's terrible waste! I should like to take them to my old woman at home. Last year the old tree by the turf-hole only bore a single apple, and we kept it in the cupboard till it was quite rotten and spoiled. 'It was always property,' my old woman said; but here she could see a quantity of property—a whole sackful. Yes, I shall be glad to show them to her."

"What will you give me for the sackful?" asked the hostler.

"What will I give? I will give my fowl in exchange."

And he gave the fowl accordingly, and received the apples, which he carried into the guest-room. He leaned the sack carefully by the stove, and then went to the table. But the stove was hot; he had not thought of that. Many guests were present—horse dealers, ox-herds, and two Englishmen—and the two Englishmen were so rich that their pockets bulged out with gold coins, and almost burst; and they could bet, too, as you shall hear.

Hiss-s-s! hiss-s-s! What was that by the stove? The apples were beginning to roast.

"What is that?"

"Why, do you know——" said our peasant.

And he told the whole story of the horse that he had exchanged for a cow, and all the rest of it down to the apples.

"Well, your old woman will give it you well when you get home," said one of the Englishmen. "There will be a disturbance."

"What?—give me what?" said the peasant. "She will kiss me, and say, 'What the old man does is always right.'"

"Shall we wager?" said the Englishman. "We'll wager coined gold by the ton—a hundred pounds to the hundred-weight!"

"A bushel will be enough," replied the peasant. "I can only set the bushel of apples against it; and I'll throw my-

self and my old woman into the bargain—and I fancy that's piling up the measure!"

"Done—taken!"

And the bet was made. The host's carriage came up, and the Englishmen got in, and the peasant got in; away they went, and soon they stopped before the peasant's hut.

"Good-evening, old woman."

"Good-evening, old man."

"I've made exchange."

"Yes, you understand what you're about," said the woman.

And she embraced him and paid no attention to the stranger guests, nor did she notice the sack.

"I got a cow in exchange for the horse," said he.

"Heaven be thanked!" said she. "What glorious milk we shall now have, and butter and cheese upon the table! That was a most capital exchange!"

"Yes, but I changed the cow for a sheep."

"Ah, that's better still!" cried the wife. "You always think of everything; we have just pasture enough for a sheep. Ewe's milk and cheese, and woolen jackets and stockings! The cow cannot give those, and her hairs will only come off. How you think of everything!"

"But I changed away the sheep for a goose."

"Then this year we shall really have roast goose to eat, my dear old man. You are always thinking of something to give me pleasure. How charming that is! We can let the goose walk about with a string to her leg, and she'll grow fatter still before we roast her."

"But I gave away the goose for a fowl," said the man.

"A fowl? That was a good exchange!" replied the woman. "The fowl will lay eggs and hatch them, and we shall soon have chickens; we shall have a whole poultry yard! Oh, that's just what I was wishing for."

"Yes, but I exchanged the fowl for a sack of shriveled apples."

"What!—I must positively kiss you for that," exclaimed the wife. "My dear, good husband! Now I'll tell you something. Do you know, you had hardly left me this morning before I began thinking how I could give you something very nice this evening. I thought it should be pancakes with savory herbs. I had eggs, and bacon, too;

but I wanted herbs. So I went over to the schoolmaster's—they have herbs there, I know—but the schoolmistress is a mean woman, though she looks so sweet. I begged her to lend me a handful of herbs. 'Lend!' she answered me; 'nothing at all grows in our garden, not even a shriveled apple. I could not even lend you a shriveled apple, my dear woman.' But now I can lend her twenty, or a whole sackful. That I'm very glad of; that makes me laugh!" And with that she gave him a sounding kiss.

"I like that!" exclaimed both the Englishmen together. "Always going down-hill, and always merry; that's worth the money."

So they paid a hundredweight of gold to the peasant, who was not scolded, but kissed.

Yes, it always pays, when the wife sees and always asserts that her husband knows best, and that whatever he does is right.

You see, that is my story. I heard it when I was a child; and now you have heard it, too, and know that "What the old man does is always right."

GOOD HUMOR.

My father left me the best inheritance, to wit—good humor. And who was my father? Why, that has nothing to do with the humor. He was lively and stout, round and fat; and his outer and inner man was in direct contradiction to his calling. And pray what was he by profession and calling in civil society? Yes, if this were to be written down and printed in the very beginning of a book, it is probable that many when they read it would lay the book aside and say, "It looks so uncomfortable; I don't like anything of that sort." And yet my father was neither a horse slaughterer nor an executioner; on the contrary, his office placed him at the head of the most respectable gentry of the town; and he held his place by right, for it was his right place. He had to go first before the bishop even, and before the Princess of the Blood. He always went first—for he was the driver of the hearse.

There, now it's out! And I will confess that when people

saw my father sitting perched up on the omnibus of death, dressed in his long, wide, black coat, and with his black-bordered, three-cornered hat on his head—and then his face, exactly as the sun is drawn, round and jocund—it was difficult for them to think of the grave and of sorrow. The face said, "It doesn't matter; it doesn't matter; it will be better than one thinks."

You see I have inherited my good-humor from him, and also the habit of going often to the churchyard, which is a good thing to do if it be done in the right spirit; and then I take in the *Intelligencer*, just as he used to do.

I am not quite young. I have neither wife, nor children, nor a library; but, as aforesaid, I take in the *Intelligencer*, and that's my favorite newspaper, as it was also my father's. It is very useful, and contains everything that a man needs to know—such as who preaches in the church and the new books. And then what a lot of charity, and what a number of innocent, harmless verses are found in it! Advertisements for husbands and wives, and requests for interviews—all quite simple and natural. Certainly, one may live merrily and be contentedly buried if one takes in the *Intelligencer*. And as a concluding advantage, by the end of his life a man will have such a capital store of paper, that he may use it as a soft bed, unless he prefers to rest upon wood shavings.

The newspaper and my walk to the churchyard were always my most exciting occupations—they were like bathing places for my good humor.

The newspaper everyone can read for himself. But please come with me to the churchyard; let us wander there, where the sun shines and the trees grow green. Each of the narrow houses is like a closed book, with the back placed uppermost, so that one can only read the title and judge what the book contains, but can tell nothing about it; but I know something about them. I heard it from my father, or found it out myself. I have it all down in my record that I wrote out for my own use and pleasure; all that lie here, and a few more, too, are chronicled in it.

Now we are in the churchyard.

Here, behind the white railing, where once a rose tree grew—it is gone now, but a little evergreen from the next grave stretches out its green fingers to make a show—there

rests a very unhappy man; and yet, when he lived, he was in what they call a good position. He had enough to live upon, and something over; but worldly cares, or, to speak more correctly, his great artistic taste, weighed heavily upon him. If in the evening he sat in the theater to enjoy himself thoroughly, he would be quite put out if the machinist had put too strong a light into one side of the moon, or if the sky-pieces hung down over the scenes when they ought to have hung behind them, or when a palm tree was introduced into a scene representing the Berlin Zoölogical Gardens, or a cactus in a view of the Tyrol, or a beech tree in the far north of Norway. As if that was of any consequence. Is it not quite immaterial? Who would fidget about such a trifle? It's only make-believe, after all, and everyone is expected to be amused. Then sometimes the public applauded too much to suit his taste, and sometimes too little, "They're like wet wood this evening," he would say; "they won't kindle at all!" And then he would look around to see what kind of people they were; and sometimes he would find them laughing at the wrong time, when they ought not to have laughed, and that vexed him and he fretted and was an unhappy man, and at last fretted himself into his grave.

Here rests a very happy man. That is to say, a very grand man. He was of high birth, and that was lucky for him, for otherwise he would never have been anything worth speaking of; and nature orders all that very wisely, so that it's quite charming when we think of it. He used to go about in a coat embroidered back and front, and appeared in the saloons of society just like one of those costly, pearl-embroidered bell-pulls, which have always a good, thick, serviceable cord behind them to do the work. He likewise had a good stout cord behind him in the shape of a substitute, who did his duty, and who still continues to do it behind another embroidered bell-pull. Everything is so nicely managed, it's enough to put one into a good humor.

Here rests—well it's a very mournful reflection—here rests a man who spent sixty-seven years considering how he should get a good idea. The sole object of his life was to say a good thing, and at last he felt convinced in his own mind that he had got one, was so glad of it that he died of pure joy at having caught an idea at last. Nobody derived any benefit from it, and nobody even heard what the good

thing was. Now, I can fancy that this same good thing won't let him lie quiet in his grave; for let us suppose that it is a good thing which can only be brought out at breakfast if it is to make an effect, and that he, according to the received opinion concerning ghosts, can only rise and walk at midnight. Why, then the good thing would not suit the time, and the man must carry his good idea down with him again. What an unhappy man he must be!

Here rests a remarkably stingy woman. During her lifetime she used to get up at night and mew, so that the neighbors might think she kept a cat—she was so remarkably stingy.

Here is a maiden of another kind. When the canary bird of the heart begins to chirp, reason puts her fingers in her ears. The maiden was going to be married, but—well, it's an everyday story, and we will let the dead rest.

Here sleeps a widow, who carried melody in her mouth and gall in her heart. She used to go out for prey in the families round about; and the prey she hunted was her neighbors' faults, and she was an indefatigable hunter.

Here's a family sepulcher. Every member of this family held so firmly to the opinions of the rest, that if all the world, and the newspapers into the bargain, said of a certain thing it is so and so, and the little boy came home from school, and said, "I've learned it thus and thus," they declared his opinion to be the only true one, because he belonged to the family. And it is an acknowledged fact, that if the yard cock of the family crowed at midnight, they would declare it was morning, though the watchman and all the clocks in the city were crying out that it was twelve o'clock at night.

The great poet Goëthe concludes his "Faust" with the words "May be continued"; and our wanderings in the churchyard may be continued, too. If any of my friends, or my non-friends, go on too fast for me, I go out to my favorite spot, and select a mound, and bury him or her there—bury that person who is yet alive; and there those I bury must stay till they come back as new and improved characters. I inscribe their life and their deeds, looked at in my fashion, in my record; and that's what all people ought to do. They ought not to be vexed when anyone goes on ridiculously, but bury him directly, and maintain their good

humor; and keep to the *Intelligencer*, which is often a book written by the people with its hand guided.

When the time comes for me to be bound with my history in the boards of the grave, I hope they will put up as my epitaph, "A good-humored one." And that's my story.

CHILDREN'S PRATTLE.

At the rich merchant's there was a children's party; rich people's children and grand people's children were there. The merchant was a learned man; he had once gone through the college examination, for his honest father had kept him to this, his father who had at first only been a cattle dealer, but always an honest and industrious man. The trade had brought money, and the merchant had managed to increase the store. Clever he was, and he had also a heart, but there was less said of his heart than of his money. At the merchant's, grand people went in and out—people of blood, as it is called, and people of intellect, and people who had both of these, and people who had neither. Now there was a children's party there, and children's prattle, and children speak frankly from the heart. Among the rest there was a beautiful little girl, but the little one was terribly proud; but the servants had taught her that, not her parents, who were far too sensible people. Her father was a Groom of the Bedchamber, and that is a very grand office, and she knew it.

"I am the child of the bedchamber," she said.

Now she might just as well have been a child of the cellar, for nobody can help his birth; and then she told the other children that she was "well born," and said that no one who was not well born could get on far in the world; it was of no use to read and to be industrious; if one was not well born one could not achieve anything.

"And those whose names end with 'sen,'" said she, "they cannot be anything at all. One must put one's arms akimbo and make the elbows quite pointed, and keep them at a great distance, these 'sen'!"

And she stuck out her pretty little arms, and made her elbows quite pointed, to show how it was to be done, and

her little arms were very pretty. She was a sweet little girl.

But the little daughter of the merchant became very angry at this speech, for her father's name was Petersen, and she knew that the name ended in "sen"; and therefore she said, as proudly as ever she could:

"But my papa can buy a hundred dollars' worth of bonbons, and throw them to the children! Can your papa do that?"

"Yes, but my papa," said an author's little daughter, "my papa can put your papa and everybody's papa into the newspaper. All people are afraid of him, my mamma says, for it is my father who rules in the paper."

And the little maiden looked exceedingly proud, as though she had been a real Princess, who is expected to look proud.

But outside the door, which was ajar, stood a poor boy, peeping through the crack of the door. He was of such lowly station that he was not even allowed to enter the room. He had turned the spit for the cook, and she had allowed him to stand behind the door, and to look at the well-dressed children who were making a merry day within, and for him that was a great deal.

"Oh, to be one of them!" thought he; and then he heard what was said, which was certainly calculated to make him very unhappy. His parents at home had not a penny to spare to buy a newspaper, much less could they write one; and, what was worst of all, his father's name, and consequently his own, ended completely in "sen," and so he could not turn out well. That was terrible. But, after all, he had been born, and very well born as it seemed to him; that could not be otherwise.

And that is what was done on that evening.

Many years have elapsed since then, and in the course of years children became grown-up persons.

In the town stood a splendid house; it was filled with all kinds of beautiful objects and treasures, and all people wished to see it; even people who dwelt out of town came to see it. Which of the children of whom we have told might call this house his own? To know that is very easy. No, no; it is not so very easy. The house belonged to the poor little boy who had stood on that night behind the door, and

he had become something great, although his name ended in "sen"—Thorwaldsen.

And the three other children? the children of blood and of money, and of spiritual pride? Well, they had nothing wherewith to reproach each other—they turned out well enough, for they had been well dowered by bountiful nature; and what they had thought and spoken on that evening long ago was mere children's prattle.

THE FLYING TRUNK.

There was once a merchant, who was so rich that he could pave the whole street with gold, and almost have enough left for a little lane. But he did not do that; he knew how to employ his money differently. When he spent a shilling he got back a crown, such a clever merchant was he; and this continued till he died.

His son now got all this money; and he lived merrily, going to the masquerade every evening, making kites out of dollar notes, and playing at ducks and drakes on the sea-coast with gold pieces instead of pebbles. In this way the money might soon be spent, and indeed it was so. At last he had no more than four shillings left, and no clothes to wear but a pair of slippers and an old dressing-gown. Now his friends did not trouble themselves any more about him, as they could not walk with him in the street, but one of them, who was good-natured, sent him an old trunk, with the remark, "Pack up!" Yes, that was all very well, but he had nothing to pack, therefore he seated himself in the trunk.

That was a wonderful trunk. So soon as anyone pressed the lock, the trunk could fly. He pressed it, and whirr! away flew the trunk with him through the chimney and over the clouds, farther and farther away. But as often as the bottom of the trunk cracked a little he was in great fear lest it might go to pieces, and then he would have flung a fine somersault! In that way he came to the land of the Turks. He hid the trunk in a wood under some dry leaves, and then went into the town. He could do that very well, for among the Turks all the people went dressed like himself in dress-

ing-gown and slippers. Then he met a nurse with a little child.

"Here, you Turkish nurse," he began, "what kind of a great castle is that close by the town, in which the windows are so high up?"

"There dwells the Sultan's daughter," replied she. "It is prophesied that she will be very unhappy respecting a lover; and therefore nobody may go to her, unless the Sultan and Sultana are there too."

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

She was lying asleep on the sofa, and she was so beautiful that the merchant's son was compelled to kiss her. Then she awoke, and was very much startled; but he said he was a Turkish angel, who had come down to her through the air, and that pleased her.

They sat down side by side, and he told her stories about her eyes; he told her they were the most glorious dark lakes, and that thoughts were swimming about in them like mermaids. And he told her about her forehead; that it was a snowy mountain, with the most splendid halls full of pictures. And he told her about the stork who brings the lovely little children.

Yes, those were fine histories! Then he asked the Princess if she would marry him, and she said "Yes," directly.

"But you must come here on Saturday," said she. "Then the Sultan and the Sultana will be here to tea. They will be very proud that I am to marry a Turkish angel. But take care that you know a very pretty story, for both my parents are very fond indeed of stories. My mother likes them high-flown and moral, but my father likes them merry, so that one can laugh."

"Yes, I shall bring no marriage gift but a story," said he; and so they parted. But the Princess gave him a saber, the sheath embroidered with gold pieces, and that was very useful to him.

Now he flew away, bought a new dressing-gown, and sat in the forest and made up a story; it was to be ready by Saturday, and that was not an easy thing.

By the time he had finished it Saturday had come. The

Sultan and his wife and all the Court were at the Princess's to tea. He was received very graciously.

"Will you relate us a story?" said the Sultana; "one that is deep and edifying."

"Yes, but one that we can laugh at," said the Sultan.

"Certainly," he replied; and began. And now listen well.

"There was once a bundle of Matches, and these Matches were particularly proud of their high descent. Their genealogical tree, that is to say, the great fir tree of which each of them was a little splinter, had been a great old tree out in the forest. The Matches now lay between a Tinder Box and an old Iron Pot; and they were telling about the days of their youth. 'Yes, when we were upon the green boughs,' they said, 'then we really were upon the green boughs! Every morning and evening there was diamond tea for us (meaning dew); we had sunshine all day long whenever the sun shone, and all the little birds had to tell stories. We could see very well that we were rich, for the other trees were only dressed out in summer, while our family had the means to wear green dresses in the winter as well. But then the woodcutter came, like a great revolution, and our family was broken up. The head of the family got an appointment as mainmast in a first-rate ship, which could sail round the world if necessary; the other branches went to other places, and now we have the office of kindling a light for the vulgar herd. That's how we grand people came to be in the kitchen.'

"'My fate was of a different kind,' said the Iron Pot, which stood next to the Matches. 'From the beginning, ever since I came into the world, there has been a great deal of scouring and cooking done in me. I look after the practical part, and am the first here in the house. My only pleasure is to sit in my place after dinner, very clean and neat, and to carry on a sensible conversation with my comrades. But except the Water Pot, which sometimes is taken down into the courtyard, we always live within our four walls. Our only news-monger is the Market Basket; but he speaks very uneasily about the government and the people. Yes, the other day, there was an old pot that fell down from fright, and burst. He's liberal, I can tell you!' 'Now you're talking too much,' the Tinder Box interrupted, and

the steel struck against the flints, so that sparks flew out. 'Shall we not have a merry evening?'

"'Yes, let us talk about who is the grandest,' said the Matches.

"'No, I don't like to talk about myself,' retorted the Pot. 'Let us get up an evening entertainment. I will begin. I will tell a story from real life, something that everyone has experienced, so that we can easily imagine the situation, and take pleasure in it. On the Baltic, by the Danish shore——'

"'That's a pretty beginning!' cried all the Plates. 'That will be a story we shall like.'

"'Yes, it happened to me in my youth, when I lived in a quiet family where the furniture was polished, and the floors scoured, and new curtains were put up every fortnight.'

"'What an interesting way you have of telling a story!' said the Carpet Broom. 'One can tell directly that a man is speaking who has been in woman's society. There's something pure runs through it.'

"And the Pot went on telling his story, and the end was as good as the beginning.

"All the Plates rattled with joy, and the Carpet Broom brought some green parsley out of the dust-hole, and put it like a wreath on the Pot, for he knew that it would vex the others. 'If I crown him to-day,' it thought, 'he will crown me to-morrow.'

"'Now I'll dance,' said the Fire Tongs, and they danced. Preserve us! how that implement could lift up one leg! The old Chair Cushion burst to see it. 'Shall I be crowned, too?' thought the Tongs; and indeed a wreath was awarded.

"'They're only common people, after all!' thought the Matches.

"Now the Tea-Urn was to sing; but she said she had taken cold, and could not sing unless she felt boiling within. But that was only affectation; she did not want to sing, except when she was in the parlor with the grand people.

"In the window sat an old Quill Pen, with which the maid generally wrote; there was nothing remarkable about this pen, except that it had been dipped too deep into the ink, but she was proud of that. 'If the Tea-Urn won't sing,' she said, 'she may leave it alone. Outside hangs a nightingale

in a cage, and he can sing. He hasn't had any education, but this evening we'll say nothing about that.'

"'I think it very wrong,' said the Tea-Kettle—he was the kitchen singer, and half-brother to the Tea-Urn—'that that rich and foreign bird should be listened to. Is that patriotic? Let the Market Basket decide.'

"'I am vexed,' said the Market Basket. 'No one can imagine how much I am secretly vexed. Is that a proper way of spending the evening? Would it not be more sensible to put the house in order? Let each one go to his own place, and I would arrange the whole game. That would be quite another thing.'

"'Yes, let us make a disturbance,' cried they all. Then the door opened and the maid came in, and they all stood still; not one stirred. But there was not one pot among them who did not know what he could do, and how grand he was. 'Yes, if I had liked,' each one thought, 'it might have been a very merry evening.'

"The servant girl took the Matches and lighted the fire with them. Mercy! how they sputtered and burst out into flame! 'Now everyone can see,' thought they, 'that we are the first. How we shine! what a light!'—and they burned out."

"That was a capital story," said the Sultana. "I feel myself quite carried away to the kitchen, to the Matches. Yes, now thou shalt marry our daughter."

"Yes, certainly," said the Sultan, "thou shalt marry our daughter on Monday."

And they called him *thou* because he was to belong to the family.

The wedding was decided on, and on the evening before it the whole city was illuminated. Biscuits and cakes were thrown among the people; the street boys stood upon their toes, called out "Hurrah!" and whistled on their fingers. It was uncommonly splendid.

"Yes, I shall have to give something as a treat," thought the merchant's son. So he bought rockets and crackers and every imaginable sort of firework, put them all into his trunk, and flew up into the air.

"Crack!" how they went, and how they went off! All the Turks hopped up with such a start that their slippers flew about their ears; such a meteor they had never yet seen.

Now they could understand that it must be a Turkish angel who was going to marry the Princess.

What stories people tell! Everyone whom he asked about it had seen it in a different way; but one and all thought it fine.

"I saw the Turkish angel himself," said one. "He had eyes like glowing stars, and a beard like foaming water."

"He flew in a fiery mantle," said another; "the most lovely little cherub peeped forth from among the folds."

Yes, they were wonderful things that he heard; and on the following day he was to be married.

Now he went back to the forest to rest himself in his trunk. But what had become of that? A spark from the fireworks had set fire to it, and the trunk was burned to ashes. He could not fly any more, and could not get to his bride.

She stood all day on the roof waiting; and most likely she is waiting still. But he wanders through the world telling fairy tales; but they are not so merry as that one he told about the matches.

THE LAST PEARL.

We are in a rich, a happy house; all are cheerful and full of joy, master, servants, and friends of the family; for on this day an heir, a son had been born, and mother and child were doing exceedingly well.

The burning lamp in the bedchamber had been partly shaded, and the windows were guarded by heavy curtains of some costly silken fabric. The carpet was thick and soft as a mossy lawn, and everything invited to slumber—was charmingly suggestive of repose; and the nurse found that, for she slept; and here she might sleep, for everything was good and blessed. The guardian spirit of the house leaned against the head of the bed; over the child at the mother's breast there spread, as it were, a net of shining stars in endless number, and each star was a pearl of happiness. All the good stars of life had brought their gifts to the newborn one; here sparkled health, wealth, fortune, and love—in short, everything that man can wish for on earth.

"Everything has been presented here," said the guardian spirit.

"No, not everything," said a voice near him, the voice of the child's good angel. "One fairy has not yet brought her gift; but she will do so some day; even if years should elapse first, she will bring her gift. The last pearl is yet wanting."

"Wanting! here nothing may be wanting; and if it should be the case, let me go and seek the powerful fairy; let us be-take ourselves to her."

"She comes! she will come some day unsought! Her pearl may not be wanting; it must be there, so that the complete crown may be won."

"Where is she to be found. Where does she dwell? Tell it me, and I will procure the pearl."

"You will do that?" said the good angel of the child. "I will lead you to her directly, wherever she may be. She has no abiding place—sometimes she rules in the Emperor's palace, sometimes you will find her in the peasant's humble cot; she goes by no person without leaving a trace; she brings two gifts to all, be it a world or a trifle. To this child also she must come. You think the time is equally long, but not equally profitable. Come, let us go for this pearl, the last pearl in all this wealth."

And hand in hand they floated toward the spot where the fairy was now lingering.

It was a great house, with dark windows and empty rooms, and a peculiar stillness reigned therein; a whole row of windows had been opened, so that the rough air could penetrate at its pleasure; the long, white hanging curtains moved to and fro in the current of wind.

In the middle of the room was placed an open coffin, and in this coffin lay the corpse of a woman, still in the bloom of youth, and very beautiful. Fresh roses were scattered over her, so that only the delicate folded hands and the noble face, glorified in death by the solemn look of consecration and entrance to the better world, were visible.

Around the coffin stood the husband and the children, a whole troop; the youngest child rested on the father's arm, and all bade their mother their last farewell; the husband kissed her hand, the hand which now was as a withered leaf, but which, a short time ago, had been working and striving

in diligent love for them all. Tears of sorrow rolled over their cheeks, and fell in heavy drops to the floor; but not a word was spoken. The silence which reigned here expressed a world of grief. With silent footsteps, and with many a sob, they quitted the room.

A burning light stands in the room, and the long red wick peers out high above the flame that flickers in the current of air. Strange men come in, and lay the lid on the coffin over the dead one, and drive the nails firmly in, and the blows of the hammer resound through the house, and echo in the hearts that are bleeding.

"Whither art thou leading me?" asked the guardian spirit. "Here dwells no fairy whose pearl might be counted amongst the best gifts of life!"

"Here she lingers; here in this sacred hour," said the angel, and pointed to a corner of the room; and there, where in her lifetime the mother had taken her seat amid flowers and pictures; there from whence, like the beneficent fairy of the house, she had greeted husband, children, and friends; from whence, like the sunbeams, she had spread joy and cheerfulness, and been the center and the heart of all—there sat a strange woman, clad in long garments. It was "the Chastened Heart," now mistress and mother here in the dead lady's place. A hot tear rolled down into her lap, and formed itself into a pearl glowing with all the colors of the rainbow. The angel seized it, and the pearl shone like a star of sevenfold radiance.

The pearl of Chastening, the last, which must not be wanting! it heightens the luster and the meaning of the other pearls. Do you see the sheen of the rainbow—of the bow that unites heaven and earth? A bridge has been built between this world and the heaven beyond. Through the earthly night we gaze upward to the stars, looking for perfection. Contemplate it, the pearl of Chastening, for it hides within itself the wings that shall carry us to the better world.

THE STORKS.

In the last house in a little village stood a Stork's nest. The Mother-Stork sat in it with her four young ones, who stretched out their heads with the pointed black beaks, for their beaks had not yet turned red. A little way off stood the Father-Stork, all alone on the ridge of the roof, quite upright and stiff; he had drawn up one of his legs, so as not to be quite idle while he stood sentry. One would have thought he had been carved out of wood, so still did he stand. He thought, "It must look very grand, that my wife has a sentry standing by her nest. They can't tell that it is her husband. They certainly think I have been commanded to stand here. That looks so aristocratic!" And he went on standing on one leg.

Below in the street a whole crowd of children were playing; and when they caught sight of the Storks, one of the boldest of the boys, and afterward all of them, sang the old verse about the storks. But they only sang it just as he could remember it:

"Stork, stork, fly away!
Stand not on one leg to-day.
Thy dear wife is in the nest,
Where she rocks her young to rest.

The first he will be hanged,
The second will be hit,
The third, he will be shot,
And the fourth put on the spit."

"Just hear what those boys are saying!" said the little Stork-children. "They say we are to be hanged and killed!"

"You're not to care for that!" said the Mother-Stork. "Don't listen to it, and then it won't matter."

But the boys went on singing, and pointed at the Storks mockingly with their fingers; only one boy, whose name was Peter, declared that it was a sin to make a jest of animals, and he would not join in it at all.

The Mother-Stork comforted her children. "Don't you

mind it at all," she said; "see how quiet your father stands, though it's only on one leg."

"We are very much afraid," said the young Storks; and they drew their heads far back into the nest.

Now to-day, when the children came out again to play, and saw the Storks, they sang their song:

"The first, he will be hanged,
The second will be hit——"

"Shall we be hanged and beaten?" asked the young Storks.

"No, certainly not," replied the mother. "You shall learn to fly; I'll exercise you; then we shall fly out into the meadows and pay a visit to the frogs; they will bow before us in the water, and sing 'Coax! coax!' and then we shall eat them up. That will be a real pleasure."

"And what then?" asked the young Storks.

"Then all the Storks will assemble, all that are here in the whole country, and the autumn exercises begin; then one must fly well, for that is highly important, for whoever cannot fly properly will be thrust dead by the general's beak; so take care and learn well when the exercising begins."

"But then we shall be killed, as the boy says—and only listen, now they're singing again."

"Listen to me and not to them," replied the Mother-Stork. "After the great review we shall fly away to the warm countries, far away from here, over mountains and forests. We shall fly to Egypt, where there are three covered houses of stone, which curl in a point and tower above the clouds; they are called pyramids, and are older than a stork can imagine. There is a river in that country, which runs out of its bed, and then all the land is turned to mud. One walks about in the mud, and eats frogs."

"Oh-h!" cried the young ones.

"Yes! It is glorious there! One does nothing all day long but eat; and while we are so comfortable over there, here there is not a green leaf on the trees; here it is so cold that the clouds freeze to pieces, and fall down in little white rags!"

It was snow that she meant, but she could not explain it in any other way.

"And do the naughty boys freeze to pieces?" asked the young Storks.

"No, they do not freeze to pieces; but they are not far from it, and must sit in a dark room and cower. You, on the other hand, can fly about in foreign lands, where there are flowers, and the sun shines warm."

Now some time had elapsed, and the nestlings had grown so large that they could stand upright in the nest and look far around; and the Father-Stork came every day with delicious frogs, little snakes, and all kinds of stork-dainties as he found them. Oh! it looked funny when he performed feats before them! He laid his head quite back upon his tail, and clapped with his beak as if he had been a little clapper; and then he told them stories, all about the marshes.

"Listen! now you must learn to fly," said the Mother-Stork, one day; and all the four young ones had to go out on the ridge of the roof. Oh, how they tottered! how they balanced themselves with their wings, and yet they were nearly falling down.

"Only look at me," said the Mother. "Thus you must hold your heads! Thus you must pitch your feet! One, two! one, two! That's what will help you on in the world."

Then she flew a little way, and the young ones made a little clumsy leap. Bump!—there they lay, for their bodies were too heavy.

"I will not fly!" said one of the young Storks, and crept back into the nest; "I don't care about getting to the warm countries."

"Do you want to freeze to death here when the winter comes? Are the boys to come and hang you, and singe you, and roast you? Now I'll call them."

"Oh, no!" cried the young Stork, and hopped out on to the roof again like the rest.

On the third day they could actually fly a little, and then they thought they could also soar and hover in the air. They tried it, but—bump!—down they tumbled, and they had to flap their wings again quickly enough. Now the boys came into the street again, and sang their song:

"Stork, stork, fly away!"

"Shall we fly down and pick their eyes out?" asked the young Storks.

"No," replied the mother, "let them alone. Only listen to me, that's far more important. One, two, three!—now we fly round to the right. One, two, three!—now to the left round the chimney. See, that was very good! the last kick with the feet was so neat and correct that you shall have permission to-morrow to fly with me to the marsh! Several nice stork families go there with their young; show them that mine are the nicest, and that you can start proudly; that looks well, and will get you consideration."

"But are we not to take revenge on the rude boys?" asked the young Storks.

"Let them scream as much as they like. You will fly up to the clouds, and get to the land of the pyramids, when they will have to shiver, and not have a green leaf or a sweet apple."

"Yes, but we will revenge ourselves!" they whispered to one another; and then the exercising went on.

Among all the boys down in the street, the one most bent upon singing the teasing song was he who had begun it, and he was quite a little boy. He could hardly be more than six years old. The young Storks certainly thought he was a hundred, for he was much bigger than their mother and father; and how should they know how old children and grown-up people can be? Their revenge was to come upon this boy, for it was he who had begun, and he always kept on. The young Storks were very angry; and as they grew bigger they were less inclined to bear it; at last their mother had to promise them that they should be revenged, but not till the last day of their stay.

"We must first see how you behave at the grand review. If you get through badly, so that the general stabs you through the chest with his beak, the boys will be right, at least, in one way. Let us see."

"Yes, you shall see!" cried the young Storks; and then they took all imaginable pains. They practiced every day, and flew so neatly and so lightly that it was a pleasure to see them.

Now the autumn came on; all the Storks began to assemble, to fly away to the warm countries while it is winter here. That was a review. They had to fly over forests

and villages, to show how well they could soar, for it was a long journey they had before them. The young Storks did their part so well that they got as a mark, "Remarkably well, with frogs and snakes." That was the highest mark; and they might eat the frogs and snakes; and that is what they did.

"Now we will be revenged!" they said.

"Yes, certainly!" said the Mother-Stork. "What I have thought of will be the best. I know the pond in which all the little mortals lie till the stork comes and brings them to their parents. The pretty little babies lie there and dream so sweetly as they never dream afterward. All parents are glad to have such a child, and all children want to have a sister or a brother. Now we will fly to the pond, and bring one for each of the children who have not sung the naughty song and laughed at the storks."

"But he who began to sing—that naughty, ugly boy!" screamed the young Storks; "what shall we do with him?"

"There is a little dead child in the pond, one that has dreamed itself to death; we will bring that for him. Then he will cry because we have brought him a little dead brother. But that good boy—you have not forgotten him, the one who said, 'It is wrong to laugh at animals!' for him we will bring a brother and a sister too. And as his name is Peter, all of you shall be called Peter, too."

And it was done as she said; all the storks were named Peter, and so they are all called even now.

GRANDMOTHER.

Grandmother is very old; she has many wrinkles, and her hair is quite white; but her eyes, which are like two stars, and even more beautiful, look at you mildly and pleasantly, and it does you good to look into them. And then she can tell the most wonderful stories; and she has a gown with great flowers worked in it, and it is of heavy silk, and it rustles. Grandmother knows a great deal, for she was alive before father and mother, that's quite certain! Grandmother has a hymn book with great silver clasps, and she often reads in that book: in the middle of the book

lies a rose, quite flat and dry; it is not as pretty as the roses she has standing in the glass, and yet she smiles at it most pleasantly of all, and tears even come into her eyes. I wonder why Grandmother looks at the withered flower in the old book in that way? Do you know? Why, each time that Grandmother's tears fall upon the rose, its colors become fresh again; the rose swells and fills the whole room with its fragrance; the walls sink as if they were but mist, and all around her is the glorious green wood, where in summer the sunlight streams through the leaves of the trees; and Grandmother—why, she is young again, a charming maid with light curls and full blooming cheeks, pretty and graceful, fresh as any rose; but the eyes, the mild blessed eyes, they have been left to Grandmother. At her side sits a young man, tall and strong; he gives the rose to her, and she smiles; Grandmother cannot smile thus now!—yes, now she smiles! But now he has passed away, and many thoughts and many forms of the past; and the handsome young man is gone, and the rose lies in the hymn book, and Grandmother sits there again, an old woman, and glances down at the withered rose that lies in the book.

Now Grandmother is dead. She had been sitting in her armchair, and telling a long, long, capital tale; and she said the tale was told now, and she was tired; and she leaned her head back to sleep awhile. One could hear her breathing as she slept; but it became quieter and more quiet, and her countenance was full of happiness and peace; it seemed as if a sunshine spread over her features; and she smiled again, and then the people said she was dead.

She was laid in the black coffin; and there she lay shrouded in the white linen folds, looking beautiful and mild, though her eyes were closed; but every wrinkle had vanished, and there was a smile around her mouth; her hair was silver-white and venerable; and we did not feel at all afraid to look at the corpse of her who had been the dear good Grandmother. And the hymn book was placed under her head, for she had wished it so, and the rose was still in the old book; and then they buried Grandmother.

On the grave, close by the churchyard wall, they planted a rose tree; and it was full of roses; and the nightingale flew singing over the flowers and over the grave. In the church the finest psalms sounded from the organ—the

psalms that were written in the old book under the dead one's head. The moon shone down upon the grave, but the dead one was not there. Every child could go safely, even at night, and pluck a rose there by the churchyard wall. A dead person knows more than all we living ones. The dead know what a terror would come upon us, if the strange thing were to happen that they appeared among us; the dead are better than we all; the dead return no more. The earth has been heaped over the coffin, and it is earth that lies in the coffin; and the leaves of the hymn book are dust, and the rose, with all its recollections, has returned to dust likewise. But above there bloom fresh roses; the nightingale sings and the organ sounds, and the remembrance lives of the old Grandmother with the mild eyes that always looked young. Eyes can never die! Ours will once behold Grandmother again, young and beautiful, as when for the first time she kissed the fresh red rose that is now dust in the grave.

THE UGLY DUCKLING.

It was glorious out in the country. It was summer, and the cornfields were yellow, and the oats were green; the hay had been put up in stacks in the green meadows, and the stork went about on his long red legs, and chattered Egyptian, for this was the language he had learned from his good mother. All around the fields and meadows were great forests, and in the midst of these forests lay deep lakes. Yes, it was really glorious out in the country. In the midst of the sunshine there lay an old farm, surrounded by deep canals, and from the wall down to the water grew great burdocks, so high that little children could stand upright under the loftiest of them. It was just as wild there as in the deepest wood. Here sat a Duck upon her nest, for she had to hatch her young ones; but she was almost tired out before the little ones came; and then she so seldom had visitors. The other ducks liked better to swim about in the canals than to run up to sit down under a burdock, and cackle with her.

At last one eggshell after another burst open. "Piep!

piep!" it cried, and in all the eggs there were little creatures that stuck out their heads.

"Rap! rap!" they said; and they all came rapping out as fast as they could, looking all round them under the green leaves; and the mother let them look as much as they chose, for green is good for the eyes.

"How wide the world is!" said the young ones, for they certainly had much more room now than when they were in the eggs.

"Do you think this is all the world!" asked the mother. "That extends far across the other side of the garden, quite into the parson's field, but I have never been there yet. I hope you are all together," she continued, and stood up. "No, I have not all. The largest egg still lies there. How long is that to last? I am really tired of it." And she sat down again.

"Well, how goes it?" asked an old Duck who had come to pay her a visit.

"It lasts a long time with that one egg," said the Duck who sat there. "It will not burst. Now, only look at the others; are they not the prettiest ducks one could possibly see? They are all like their father; the bad fellow never comes to see me."

"Let me see the egg which will not burst," said the old visitor. "Believe me, it is a turkey's egg. I was once cheated in that way, and had much anxiety and trouble with the young ones, for they are afraid of the water. I could not get them to venture in. I quacked and clucked, but it was of no use. Let me see the egg. Yes, that's a turkey's egg! Let it lie there, and you teach the other children to swim."

"I think I will sit on it a little longer," said the Duck. "I've sat so long now that I can sit a few days more."

"Just as you please," said the old Duck; and she went away.

At last the great egg burst. "Piep! Piep!" said the little one, and crept forth. It was very large and very ugly. The Duck looked at it.

"It's a very large duckling," said she; "none of the others look like that; can it really be a turkey chick? Now we shall soon find it out. It must go into the water, even if I have to thrust it in myself."

The next day the weather was splendidly bright, and the sun shone on all the green trees. The Mother-Duck went down to the water with all her little ones. Splash! she jumped into the water. "Quack! quack!" she said, and then one duckling after another plunged in. The water closed over their heads, but they came up in an instant, and swam capitably; their legs went of themselves, and there they were, all in the water. The ugly gray Duckling swam with them.

"No, it's not a turkey," said she; "look how well it can use its legs, and how upright it holds itself. It is my own child! On the whole it's quite pretty, if one looks at it rightly. Quack! quack! come with me, and I'll lead you out into the great world, and present you in the poultry-yard; but keep close to me, so that no one may tread on you; and take care of the cats!"

And so they came into the poultry-yard. There was a terrible riot going on in there, for two families were quarrelling about an eel's head, and the cat got it after all.

"See, that's how it goes in the world!" said the Mother-Duck; and she whetted her beak, for she, too, wanted the eel's head. "Only use your legs," she said. "See that you bustle about, and bow your heads before the old Duck yonder. She's the grandest of all here; she's of Spanish blood—that's why she's so fat; and do you see, she has a red rag round her leg; that's something particularly fine, and the greatest distinction a duck can enjoy; it signifies that one does not want to lose her, and that she's to be recognized by man and beast. Shake yourselves—don't turn in your toes; a well-brought-up Duck turns its toes quite out, just like father and mother, so! Now bend your necks and say 'Rap!'"

And they did so; but the other Ducks round about looked at them, and said quite boldly:

"Look there! now we're to have these hanging on, as if there were not enough of us already! And—fie—! how that Duckling yonder looks; we won't stand that!" And one duck flew up immediately, and bit it in the neck.

"Let it alone," said the mother; "it does no harm to anyone."

"Yes, but it's too large and peculiar," said the Duck who had bitten it; "and therefore it must be buffeted."

"Those are pretty children that the mother has there," said the old Duck with the rag round her leg. "They're all pretty but that one; that was a failure. I wish she could alter it."

"That cannot be done, my lady," replied the Mother-Duck. "It is not pretty, but it has a really good disposition, and swims as well as any other; I may even say it swims better. I think it will grow up pretty, and become smaller in time; it has lain too long in the egg, and therefore is not properly shaped." And then she pinched it in the neck, and smoothed its feathers. "Moreover, it is a drake," she said, "and therefore it is not of so much consequence. I think he will be very strong; he makes his way already."

"The other ducklings are graceful enough," said the old Duck. "Make yourself at home; and if you find an eel's head, you may bring it me."

And now they were at home. But the poor Duckling which had crept last out of the egg, and looked so ugly, was bitten and pushed and jeered, as much by the ducks as by the chickens.

"It is too big!" they all said. And the turkey-cock, who had been born with spurs, and therefore thought himself an Emperor blew himself up like a ship in full sail, and bore straight down upon it; then he gobbled, and grew quite red in the face. The poor Duckling did not know where it should stand or walk; it was quite melancholy, because it looked ugly and was scoffed at by the whole yard.

So it went on the first day; and afterward it became worse and worse. The poor Duckling was hunted about by every one; even its brothers and sisters were quite angry with it, and said, "If the cat would only catch you, you ugly creature!" And the mother said, "If you were only far away!" And the ducks bit it, and the chickens beat it, and the girl who had to feed the poultry kicked at it with her foot.

Then it ran and flew over the fence, and the little birds in the bushes flew up in fear.

"That is because I am so ugly!" thought the Duckling; and it shut its eyes, but flew no further; thus it came out into the great moor, where the Wild Ducks lived. Here it lay the whole night long; and it was weary and downcast.

Toward morning the Wild Ducks flew up, and looked at their new companion.

"What sort of a one are you?" they asked; and the Duckling turned in every direction, and bowed as well as it could. "You are remarkably ugly!" said the Wild Ducks. "But that is very indifferent to us, so long as you do not marry into our family."

Poor thing! It certainly did not think of marrying, and only hoped to obtain leave to lie among the reeds and drink some of the swamp-water.

Thus it lay two whole days; then came thither two Wild Geese, or, properly speaking, two wild ganders. It was not long since each had crept out of an egg, and that's why they were so saucy.

"Listen comrade," said one of them. "You're so ugly that I like you. Will you go with us, and become a bird of passage? Near here, in another moor, there are a few sweet lovely wild geese, all unmarried, and all able to say 'Rap!' You've a chance of making your fortune, ugly as you are!"

"Piff! paff!" resounded through the air; and the two ganders fell down dead in the swamp, and the water became blood-red. "Piff! paff!" it sounded again, and whole flocks of wild geese rose up from the reeds. And then there was another report. A great hunt was going on. The hunters were lying in wait all round the moor, and some were even sitting up in the branches of the trees which spread far over the reeds. The blue smoke rose up like clouds among the dark trees, and was wafted far away across the water; and the hunting dogs came—splash, splash!—into the swamp, and the rushes and the reeds bent down on every side. That was a fright for the poor Duckling! It turned its head, and put it under its wing; but at that moment a frightful great dog stood close by the Duckling! His tongue hung far out of his mouth and his eyes gleamed horrible and ugly; he thrust out his nose close against the Duckling, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash, splash!—on he went without seizing it.

"Oh, Heaven be thanked!" sighed the Duckling. "I am so ugly, that even the dog does not like to bite me!"

And so it lay quite quiet, while the shots rattled through the reeds and gun after gun was fired. At last, late in the

day, silence was restored; but the poor Duckling did not dare to rise up; it waited several hours before it looked round, and then hastened away out of the moor as fast as it could. It ran on over field and meadow; there was such a storm raging that it was difficult to get from one place to another.

Toward evening the Duck came to a little miserable peasant's hut. This hut was so dilapidated that it did not know on which side it should fall; and that's why it remained standing. The storm whistled round the Duckling in such a way that the poor creature was obliged to sit down, to stand against it; and the tempest grew worse and worse. Then the Duckling noticed that one of the hinges of the door had given way, and the door hung so slanting that the Duckling could slip through the crack into the room; and it did so.

Here lived a woman, with her Tom Cat and her Hen. And the Tom Cat, whom she called Sonnie, could arch his back and purr, he could even give out sparks; but for that one had to stroke his fur the wrong way. The Hen had quite little short legs, and therefore she was called Chickabiddy-shortshanks; she laid good eggs, and the woman loved her as her own child.

In the morning the strange Duckling was at once noticed, and the Tom Cat began to purr, and the Hen to cluck.

"What's this?" said the woman, and looked all round; but she could not see well, and therefore she thought the Duckling was a fat duck that had strayed. "This is a rare prize," she said. "Now I shall have duck's eggs. I hope it is not a drake. We must try that."

And so the Duckling was admitted on trial for three weeks; but no eggs came. And the Tom Cat was master of the house, and the Hen was the lady, and they always said "We and the world!" for they thought they were half the world, and by far the better half. The Duckling thought one might have a different opinion, but the Hen would not allow it.

"Can you lay eggs?" she asked.

"No."

"Then you'll have the goodness to hold your tongue."

And the Tom Cat said, "Can you curve your back, and purr, and give out sparks?"

"No."

"Then you cannot have any opinion of your own when sensible people are speaking."

And the Duckling sat in a corner and was melancholy; then the fresh air and the sunshine streamed in; and it was seized with such a strange longing to swim on the water, that it could not help telling the Hen of it.

"What are you thinking of?" cried the Hen. "You have nothing to do, that's why you have these fancies. Purr or lay eggs, and they will pass over."

"But it is so charming to swim on the water!" said the Duckling, "so refreshing to let it close above one's head, and to dive down to the bottom."

"Yes, that must be a mighty pleasure, truly," quoth the Hen. "I fancy you must have gone crazy. Ask the Cat about it—he's the cleverest animal I know—ask him if he likes to swim on the water, or to dive down: I won't speak about myself. Ask our mistress, the old woman; no one in the world is cleverer than she. Do you think she has any desire to swim, and to let the water close above her head?"

"You don't understand me," said the Duckling.

"We don't understand you? Then pray who is to understand you? You surely don't pretend to be cleverer than the Tom Cat and the old woman—I won't say anything of myself. Don't be conceited, child, and be grateful for all the kindness you have received. Did you not get into a warm room, and have you not fallen into company from which you may learn something? But you are a chatterer, and it is not pleasant to associate with you. You may believe me, I speak for your good. I tell you disagreeable things, and by that one may always know one's true friends. Only take care that you learn to lay eggs, or to purr and give out sparks!"

"I think I will go out into the wide world," said the Duckling.

"Yes, do go," replied the Hen.

And the Duckling went away. It swam on the water, and dived, but it was slighted by every creature because of its ugliness.

Now came the autumn. The leaves in the forest turned

yellow and brown; the wind caught them so that they danced about, and up in the air it was very cold. The clouds hung low, heavy with hail and snow-flakes, and on the fence stood the raven, crying, "Croak! croak!" for mere cold; yes, it was enough to make one feel cold to think of this. The poor little Duckling certainly had not a good time. One evening—the sun was just setting in his beauty—there came a whole flock of great handsome birds out of the bushes; they were dazzlingly white, with long flexible necks; they were swans. They uttered a very peculiar cry, spread forth their glorious great wings, and flew away from that cold region to warmer lands, to fair open lakes. They mounted so high, so high! and the ugly little Duckling felt quite strangely as it watched them. It turned round and round in the water like a wheel, stretched out its neck toward them, and uttered such a strange loud cry as frightened itself. Oh! it could not forget those beautiful, happy birds; and so soon as it could see them no longer, it dived down to the very bottom, and when it came up again, it was quite beside itself. It knew not the name of those birds, and knew not whither they were flying; but it loved them more than it had ever loved anyone. It was not at all envious of them. How could it think of wishing to possess such loveliness as they had? It would have been glad if only the ducks would have endured its company—the poor ugly creature!

And the winter grew cold, very cold! The Duckling was forced to swim about in the water, to prevent the surface from freezing entirely; but every night the hole in which it swam about became smaller and smaller. It froze so hard that the icy covering crackled again; and the Duckling was obliged to use its legs continually to prevent the hole from freezing up. At last it became exhausted, and lay quite still, and thus froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, and when he saw what had happened, he took his wooden shoe, broke the ice-crust to pieces, and carried the Duckling home to his wife. Then it came to itself again. The children wanted to play with it; but the Duckling thought they would do it an injury, and in its terror fluttered up into the milk-pan, so that the milk spurted down into the room. The woman clasped her hands, at which the Duckling flew down into the

butter-tub, and then into the meal-barrel and out again. How it looked then! The woman screamed, and struck at it with the fire-tongs; the children tumbled over one another, in their efforts to catch the Duckling; and they laughed and screamed finely! Happily the door stood open, and the poor creature was able to slip out between the shrubs into the newly-fallen snow; and there it lay quite exhausted.

But it would be too melancholy if I were to tell all the misery and care which the Duckling had to endure in the hard winter. It lay out on the moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine again and the larks to sing; it was a beautiful spring.

Then all at once the Duckling could flap its wings; they beat the air more strongly than before, and bore it strongly away; and before it well knew how all this had happened, it found itself in a great garden, where the elder trees smelt sweet, and bent their long green branches down to the canal that wound through the region. Oh, here it was so beautiful, such a gladness of spring! and from the thicket came three glorious white swans; they rustled their wings, and swam lightly on the water. The Duckling knew the splendid creatures, and felt oppressed by a peculiar sadness.

"I will fly away to them, to the royal birds! and they will kill me, because I, that am so ugly, dare to approach them. But it is of no consequence! Better to be killed by them than to be pursued by ducks, and beaten by fowls, and pushed about by the girl who takes care of the poultry-yard, and to suffer hunger in winter!" And it flew out into the water, and swam toward the beautiful swans: these looked at it, and came sailing down upon it with outspread wings. "Kill me!" said the poor creature, and bent its head down upon the water, expecting nothing but death. But what was this that it saw in the clear water? It beheld its own image—and, lo! it was no longer a clumsy dark-gray bird, ugly and hateful to look at, but—a swan.

It matters nothing if one was born in a duck-yard, if one has only lain in a swan's egg.

It felt quite glad at all the need and misfortune it had suffered, now it realized its happiness in all the splendor that surrounded it. And the great swans swam round it, and stroked it with their beaks.

Into the garden came little children, who threw bread and corn into the water; the youngest cried, "There is a new one!" and the other children shouted joyously, "Yes, a new one has arrived!" And they clapped their hands and danced about, and ran to their father and mother; and bread and cake were thrown into the water; and they all said, "The new one is the most beautiful of all! so young and handsome!" and the old swans bowed their heads before him.

Then he felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wing, for he did not know what to do; he was so happy, and yet not at all proud. He thought how he had been persecuted and despised; and now he heard them saying that he was the most beautiful of all the birds. Even the elder tree bent its branches straight down into the water before him, and the sun shone warm and mild. Then his wings rustled, he lifted his slender neck, and cried rejoicingly from the depths of his heart:

"I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was still the Ugly Duckling!"

THE LOVELIEST ROSE IN THE WORLD.

Once there reigned a Queen, in whose garden were found the most glorious flowers at all seasons, and from all the lands in the world; but especially she loved roses, and therefore she possessed the most various kinds of this flower, from the wild dog-rose, with the apple-scented green leaves, to the most splendid Provence rose. They grew against the earth walls, wound themselves round pillars and window frames, into the passages, and all along the ceiling in all the halls. And the roses were various in fragrance, form, and color.

But care and sorrow dwelt in these halls: the Queen lay upon a sick-bed, and the doctors declared that she must die.

"There is still one thing that can serve her," said the wisest of them. "Bring her the loveliest rose in the world, the one which is the expression of the brightest and purest love; for if that is brought before her eyes ere they close, she will not die."

And the young and old came from every side with roses,

the loveliest that bloomed in each garden; but they were not the right sort. The flower was to be brought out of the garden of Love; but what rose was it there that expressed the highest and purest love?

And the poets sang of the loveliest rose in the world, and each one named his own; and intelligence was sent far round the land to every heart that beat with love, to every class and condition, and to every age.

"No one has till now named the flower," said the wise man. "No one has yet pointed out the place where it bloomed in its splendor. They are not the roses from the coffin of Romeo and Juliet, or from the Walburg's grave, though these roses will be ever fragrant in song. They are not the roses that sprouted from Winkelried's blood-stained lances, from the blood that flows in a sacred cause from the breast of the hero who dies for his country; though no death is sweeter than this, and no rose redder than the blood that flows then. Nor is it that wondrous flower, to cherish which man devotes, in a quiet chamber, many a sleepless night, and much of his fresh life—the magic flower of science."

"I know where it blooms," said a happy mother, who came with her pretty child to the bedside of the Queen. "I know where the loveliest rose of the world is found! The rose that is the expression of the highest and purest love springs from the blooming cheeks of my sweet child when, strengthened by sleep, it opens its eyes and smiles at me with all its affection."

"Lovely is this rose; but there is still a lovelier," said the wise man.

"Yes, a far lovelier one," said one of the women. "I have seen it, and a loftier, purer rose does not bloom. I saw it on the cheeks of the Queen. She had taken off her golden crown, and in the long, dreary night she was carrying her sick child in her arms; she wept, kissed it, and prayed for her child as a mother prays in the hour of her anguish."

"Holy and wonderful in its might is the white rose of Grief; but it is not the one we seek."

"No, the loveliest rose of the world I saw at the altar of the Lord," said the good old Bishop. "I saw it shine as if an angel's face had appeared. The young maidens went to the Lord's Table, and renewed the promise made at their baptism, and roses were blushing and pale roses shining

on their fresh cheeks. A young girl stood there; she looked with all the purity and love of her young spirit up to heaven: that was the expression of the highest and the purest love."

"May she be blessed!" said the wise man; "but not one of you has yet named to me the loveliest rose of the world."

Then there came into the room a child, the Queen's little son. Tears stood in his eyes and glistened on his cheeks; he carried a great open book, and the binding of it was velvet, with great silver clasps.

"Mother!" cried the little boy, "only hear what I have read."

And the child sat by the bedside, and read from the book of Him who suffered death on the cross to save men, and even those who were not yet born.

"Greater love there is not——"

And a roseate hue spread over the cheeks of the Queen, and her eyes gleamed, for she saw that from the leaves of the book there bloomed the loveliest rose, that sprang from the blood of Christ shed on the Cross.

"I see it!" she said: "he who beholds this, the loveliest rose on earth, shall never die."

HOLGER DANSKE.

"In Denmark there lies a castle named Kronenburgh. It lies close by the Oer Sound, where the ships pass through by hundreds every day—English, Russian, and likewise Prussian ships. And they salute the old castle with cannons—'Boom!' And the castle answers with a 'Boom!' for that's what the cannons say instead of 'Good-day' and 'Thank you!' In winter no ships sail there, for the whole sea is covered with ice quite across to the Swedish coast; but it has quite the look of a high road. There wave the Danish flag and the Swedish flag, and Danes and Swedes say 'Good-day' and 'Thank you!' to each other, not with cannons, but with a friendly grasp of the hand; and one gets white bread and biscuits from the other—for strange fare tastes best. But the most beautiful of all is the old Kron-

enburgh; and here it is that Holger Danske sits in the deep dark cellar, where nobody goes. He is clad in iron and steel, and leans his head on his strong arms; his long beard hangs down over the marble table, and has grown into it. He sleeps and dreams, but in his dreams he sees everything that happens up here in Denmark. Every Christmas Eve comes an angel, and tells him that what he has dreamed is right, and that he may go to sleep in quiet, for that Denmark is not yet in any real danger; but when once such a danger comes, then old Holger Danske will rouse himself, so that the table shall burst when he draws out his beard! Then he will come forth and strike, so that it shall be heard in all the countries in the world."

An old grandfather sat and told his little grandson all this about Holger Danske; and the little boy knew that what his grandfather told him was true. And while the old man sat and told his story, he carved an image which was to represent Holger Danske, and to be fastened to the prow of a ship; for the old grandfather was a carver of figure-heads, that is, one who cuts out the figures fastened to the front of ships, and from which every ship is named. And here he had cut out Holger Danske, who stood there proudly with his long beard, and held the broad battle-sword in one hand, while with the other he leaned upon the Danish arms.

And the old grandfather told him so much about distinguished men and women, that it appeared at last to the little grandson as if he knew as much as Holger Danske himself, who, after all, could only dream: and when the little fellow was in his bed, he thought so much of it, that he actually pressed his chin against the coverlet, and fancied he had a long beard that had grown fast to it.

But the old grandfather remained sitting at his work, and carved away at the last part of it; and this was the Danish coat of arms. When he had finished, he looked at the whole, and thought of all he had read and heard, and that he had told this evening to the little boy; and he nodded, and wiped his spectacles, and put them on again, and said:

"Yes, in my time Holger Danske will probably not come; but the boy in the bed yonder may get to see him, and be there when the push really comes."

And the good old grandfather nodded again; and the

more he looked at Holger Danske the more plain did it become to him that it was a good image he had carved. It seemed really to gain color, and the armor appeared to gleam like iron and steel; the hearts in the Danish arms became redder and redder, and the lions with the golden crowns on their heads leaped up.*

"That's the most beautiful coat of arms there is in the world!" said the old man. "The lions are strength, and the heart is gentleness and love!"

And he looked at the uppermost lion, and thought of King Canute, who bound great England to the throne of Denmark; and he looked at the second lion, and thought of Waldemar, who united Denmark and conquered the Wendish lands; and he glanced at the third lion, and remembered Margaret, who united Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. But while he looked at the red hearts, they gleamed more brightly than before; they became flames, and his heart followed each of them.

The first heart led him into a dark narrow prison: there sat a prisoner, a beautiful woman, the daughter of King Christian IV., Eleanor Ulfeld; † and the flame, which was shaped like a rose, attached itself to her bosom and blossomed, so that it became one with the heart of her, the noblest and best of all Danish women.

And his spirit followed the second flame, which led him out upon the sea, where the cannons thundered and the ships lay shrouded in smoke; and the flame fastened itself in the shape of a ribbon of honor on the breast of Hvitfeld, as he blew himself and his ship into the air, that he might save the fleet.‡

And the third flame led him to the wretched huts of

* The Danish arms consist of three lions between nine hearts.

† This highly gifted Princess was the wife of Corfitz Ulfeld, who was accused of high treason. Her only crime was the most faithful love to her unhappy consort; but she was compelled to pass twenty-two years in a horrible dungeon, until her persecutor, Queen Sophia Amelia, was dead.

‡ In the naval battle in Kjøge Bay between the Danes and the Swedes, in 1710, Hvitfeld's ship, the Danebrog, took fire. To save the town of Kjøge, and the Danish fleet, which was being driven by the wind toward his vessel, he blew himself and his whole crew into the air.

Greenland, where the preacher Hans Egede † wrought, with love in every word and deed: the flame was a star on his breast, another heart in the Danish arms.

And the spirit of the old grandfather flew on before the waving flames, for his spirit knew whither the flames desired to go. In the humble room of the peasant woman stood Frederick VI., writing his name with chalk on the beam.‡ The flame trembled on his breast, and trembled in his heart; in the peasant's lowly room his heart too became a heart in the Danish arms. And the old grandfather dried his eyes, for he had known King Frederick with the silvery locks and honest blue eyes, and had lived for him: he folded his hands, and looked in silence straight before him. Then came the daughter-in-law of the old grandfather, and said it was late, he ought now to rest; and the supper table was spread.

"But it is beautiful, what you have done, grandfather!" said she. "Holger Danske, and all our old coat of arms! It seems to me just as if I had seen that face before!"

"No, that can scarcely be," replied the old grandfather; "but I have seen it, and I have tried to carve it in wood as I have kept it in my memory. It was when the English lay in front of the wharf, on the Danish 2d of April,§ when we showed that we were old Danes. In the Denmark, on board which I was, in Steen Bille's squadron, I had a man at my side—it seemed as if the bullets were afraid of him! Merrily he sang old songs, and shot and fought as if he were something more than a man. I remember his face

† Hans Egede went to Greenland in 1721, and toiled there during fifteen years among incredible hardships and privations. Not only did he spread Christianity, but exhibited in himself a remarkable example of a Christian man.

‡ On a journey on the west coast of Jutland, the King visited an old woman. When he had already quitted her house, the woman ran after him, and begged him, as a remembrance, to write his name upon a beam; the King turned back, and complied. During his whole lifetime he felt and worked for the peasant class; therefore the Danish peasants begged to be allowed to carry his coffin to the royal vault at Roeskilde, four Danish miles from Copenhagen.

§ On the 2d of April, 1801, occurred the sanguinary naval battle between the Danes and the English, under Sir Hyde Parker and Nelson.

yet; but whence he came, and whither he went, I know not—nobody knows. I have often thought he might have been old Holger Danske himself, who had swum down from the Kronenburgh, and aided us in the hour of danger; that was my idea, and there stands his picture.”

And the statue threw its great shadow up against the wall, and even over part of the ceiling; it looked as though the real Holger Danske were standing behind it, for the shadow moved, but this might have been because the flame of the candle did not burn steadily. And the daughter-in-law kissed the old grandfather, and led him to the great armchair by the table; and she and her husband, who was the son of the old man, and father of the little boy in bed, sat and ate their supper; and the grandfather spoke of the Danish lions and of the Danish hearts, of strength and of gentleness; and quite clearly did he explain that there was another strength besides the power that lies in the sword; and he pointed to the shelf on which were the old books, where stood the plays of Holberg, which had been read so often, for they were very amusing; one could almost fancy one recognized the people of by-gone days in them.

“See, he knew how to strike, too,” said the grandfather; “he scourged the foolishness and prejudice of the people so long as he could”—and the grandfather nodded at the mirror, above which stood the calendar, with the “Round Tower”* on it, and said “Tycho Brahe was also one who used the sword, not to cut into flesh and bone, but to build up a plainer way among all the stars of heaven. And then he whose father belonged to my calling, the son of the figure-head carver, he whom we have ourselves seen with his silver hairs and his broad shoulders, he whose name is spoken of in all lands! Yes, he was a sculptor; I am only a carver. Yes, Holger Danske may come in many forms, so that one hears in every country in the world of Denmark’s strength. Shall we now drink the health of Bertel!” †

But the little lad in the bed saw plainly the old Kronenburgh with the Oer Sound, the real Holger Danske, who sat deep below, with his beard grown through the marble table, dreaming of all that happens up here. Holger

* The astronomical observatory at Copenhagen.

† Bertel Thorwaldsen.

Danske also dreamed of the little, humble room where the carver sat; he heard all that passed, and nodded in his sleep, and said:

"Yes, remember me, ye Danish folk; remember me. I shall come in the hour of need."

And without, by the Kronenburgh, shone the bright day, and the wind carried the note of the hunting horn over from the neighboring land; the ship sailed past, and saluted, "Boom! boom!" and from the Kronenburgh came the reply, "Boom! boom!" But Holger Danske did not awake, however loudly they shot, for it was only "Good-day" and "Thank you!" There must be another kind of shooting before he awakes; but he will awake, for there is faith in Holger Danske.

THE PUPPET SHOWMAN.

On board the steamer was an elderly man with such a merry face that, if it did not belie him, he must have been the happiest fellow in creation. And, indeed, he declared he was the happiest man; I heard it out of his own mouth. He was a Dane, a traveling theater director. He had all his company with him in a large box, for he was proprietor of a puppet-show. His inborn cheerfulness, he said, had been purified by a Polytechnic candidate, and the experiment had made him completely happy. I did not at first understand all this, but afterward he explained the whole story to me, and here it is. He told me:

"It was in the little town of Slaglese I gave a representation in the hall of the posting house, and had a brilliant audience, entirely a juvenile one, with the exception of two respectable matrons. All at once a person in black, of student-like appearance, came into the room and sat down; he laughed aloud at the telling parts, and applauded quite appropriately. That was quite an unusual spectator for me! I felt anxious to know who he was, and I heard he was a candidate from the Polytechnic Institution in Copenhagen, who had been sent out to instruct the folks in the provinces. Punctually at eight o'clock my performance closed; for children must go early to bed, and a manager

must consult the convenience of his public. At nine o'clock the candidate commenced his lecture, with experiments, and now I formed part of his audience. It was wonderful to hear and to see. The greater part of it was beyond my scope; but still it made me think that if we men can find out so much, we must be surely intended to last longer than the little span until we are hidden away in the earth. They were quite miracles in a small way that he showed, and yet everything flowed as naturally as water! At the time of Moses and the prophets such a man would have been received among the sages of the land; in the middle ages they would have burned him at the stake. All night long I could not go to sleep. And the next evening, when I gave another performance, and the candidate was again present, I felt fairly overflowing with humor. I once heard from a player that when he acted a lover he always thought of one particular lady among the audience; he only played for her, and forgot all the rest of the house; and now the Polytechnic candidate was my 'she,' my only auditor, for whom alone I played. And when the performance was over, all the puppets were called before the curtain, and the Polytechnic candidate invited me into his room to take a glass of wine; and he spoke of my comedies, and I of his science; and I believe we were both equally pleased. But I had the best of it, for there was much in what he did of which he could not always give me an explanation. For instance, that a piece of iron that falls through a spiral should become magnetic. Now, how does that happen? The spirit comes upon it; but whence does it come? It is as with people in this world; they are made to tumble through the spiral of this world, and the spirit comes upon them, and there stands a Napoleon, or a Luther, or a person of that kind. 'The whole world is a series of miracles,' said the candidate; 'but we are so accustomed to them that we call them everyday matters.' And he went on explaining things to me until my skull seemed lifted up over my brain, and I declared that if I were not an old fellow I would at once visit the Polytechnic Institution, that I might learn to look at the sunny side of the world, though I am one of the happiest of men. 'One of the happiest!' said the candidate, and he seemed to take real pleasure in it. 'Are you happy?'

'Yes,' I replied, 'and they welcome me in all the towns where I come with my company; but I certainly have one wish, which sometimes lies like lead, like an Alp, upon my good humor; I should like to become a real theatrical manager, the director of a real troupe of men and women!' 'I see,' he said; 'you would like to have life breathed into your puppets, so that they might be real actors, and you their director; and would you then be quite happy?' He did not believe it; but I believed it, and we talked it over all manner of ways without coming any nearer to an agreement; but we clanked our glasses together, and the wine was excellent. There was some magic in it, or I certainly should have become tipsy. But that did not happen; I retained my clear view of things, and somehow there was sunshine in the room, and sunshine beamed out of the eyes of the Polytechnic candidate. It made me think of the old stories of the gods, in their eternal youth, when they still wandered upon earth and paid visits to the mortals; and I said so to him, and he smiled, and I could have sworn he was one of the ancient gods in disguise, or that, at any rate, he belonged to the family! and certainly he must have been something of the kind, for my highest wish was to have been fulfilled, the puppets were to be gifted with life, and I was to be director of a real company. We drank to my success and clinked our glasses. He packed all my dolls into a box, bound the box on my back, and then let me fall through a spiral. I heard myself tumbling, and then I was lying on the floor—I know that quite well—and the whole company sprang out of the box. The spirit had come upon all of us: all the puppets had become distinguished artists, so they said themselves, and I was the director. All was ready for the first representation; the whole company wanted to speak to me, and the public also. The dancing lady said the house would fall down if she did not keep it up by standing on one leg; for she was the great genius, and begged to be treated as such. The lady who acted the Queen wished to be treated off the stage as a Queen, or else she should get out of practice. The man who was only employed to deliver a letter gave himself just as many airs as the first lover, for he declared the little ones were just as important as the great ones, and all were of equal consequence, considered as an artistic whole. The hero would

only play parts composed of nothing but points; for those brought him down the applause. The prima donna would only play in a red light; for she declared that a blue one did not suit her complexion. It was like a company of flies in a bottle; and I was in the bottle with them, for I was the director. My breath stopped and my head whirled round; I was as miserable as a man can be. It was quite a novel kind of men among whom I now found myself. I only wished I had them all in the box again, and that I had never been a director at all; so I told them roundly that after all they were nothing but puppets; and then they killed me. I found myself lying on my bed in the room; and how I got there, and how I got away at all from the Polytechnic candidate, he may perhaps know, for I don't. The moon shone upon the floor where the box lay open, and the dolls all in a confusion together—great and small, all scattered about; but I was not idle. Out of bed I jumped, and into the box they had all to go, some on their heads, some on their feet, and I shut down the lid and seated myself upon the box. 'Now you'll just have to stay there,' said I, 'and I shall beware how I wish you flesh and blood again.' I felt quite light; my good humor had come back, and I was the happiest of mortals. The Polytechnic student had fully purified me. I sat as happy as a King, and went to sleep on the box. The next morning—strictly speaking it was noon, for I slept wonderfully late that day—I was still sitting there, happy, and conscious that my former wish had been a foolish one. I inquired for the Polytechnic candidate, but he was gone, like the Greek and Roman gods; and from that time I've been the happiest of men. I am a happy director: none of my company ever grumble, nor my public either, for they are always merry. I can put my pieces together just as I please. I take out of every comedy what pleases me best, and no one is angry at it. Pieces that are neglected nowadays by the great public, but which it used to run after thirty years ago, and at which it used to cry till the tears ran down its cheeks, these pieces I now take up. I put them before the little ones, and the little ones cry just as papa and mamma used to cry thirty years ago; but I shorten them, for the youngsters don't like a long palaver; what they want is something mournful, but quick."

A PICTURE FROM THE FORTRESS WALL.

It is autumn: we stand on the fortress wall, and look out over the sea; we look at the numerous ships, and at the Swedish coast on the other side of the Sound, which rises far above the mirror of waters in the evening glow; behind us the woods stand sharply out; mighty trees surround us; the yellow leaves flutter down from the branches. Below, at the foot of the wall, stand gloomy houses fenced in with palisades; in these it is very narrow and dismal, but still more dismal is it behind the grated loopholes in the wall, for there sit the prisoners, the worst criminals.

A ray of the sinking sun shines into the bare cell of one of the captives. The sun shines upon the good and the evil. The dark, stubborn criminal throws an impatient look at the cold ray. A little bird flies toward the grating. The bird twitters to the wicked as to the just. He only utters his short "tweet! tweet!" but he perches upon the grating, claps his wings, pecks a feather from one of them, puffs himself out, and sets his feathers on end on his neck and breast; and the bad chained man looks at him; a milder expression comes into the criminal's hard face; in his breast there swells up a thought—a thought he himself cannot rightly analyze; but the thought has to do with the sunbeam, with the scent of violets which grow luxuriantly in spring at the foot of the wall. Now the horns of the chasseur soldiers sound merry and full. The little bird starts and flies away; the sunbeam gradually vanishes, and again it is dark in the room, and dark in the heart of the bad man; but still the sun shone into that heart, and the twittering of the bird has touched it!

Sound on, ye glorious strains of the hunting horns! Continue to sound, for the evening is mild, and the surface of the sea, smooth as a mirror, heaves slowly and gently.

IN THE DUCK YARD.

A Duck arrived from Portugal. Some said she came from Spain, but that's all the same. At any rate she was called the Portuguese, and laid eggs, and was killed and cooked, and that was her career. But the Ducklings which crept forth from her eggs were afterward also called Portuguese, and there is something in that. Now, of the whole family there was only one left in the duck yard, a yard to which the Chickens had access likewise, and where the Cock strutted about in a very aggressive manner.

"He annoys me with his loud crowing!" observed the Portuguese Duck. "But he's a handsome bird, there's no denying that, though he is not a drake. He ought to moderate his voice, but that's an art inseparable from polite education, like that possessed by the little singing birds over in the lime trees in the neighbor's garden. How charmingly they sing! There's something quite pretty in their warbling. I call it Portugal. If I had only such a little singing bird, I'd be a mother to him, kind and good, for that's in my blood, my Portuguese blood!"

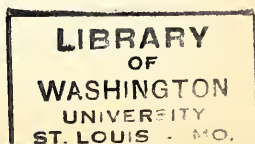
And while she was still speaking, a little Singing Bird came head over heels from the roof into the yard. The cat was behind him, but the Bird escaped with a broken wing, and that's how he came tumbling into the yard.

"That's just like the cat; she's a villain!" said the Portuguese Duck. "I remember her ways when I had children of my own. That such a creature should be allowed to live, and to wander about upon the roofs! I don't think they do such things in Portugal."

And she pitied the little Singing Bird, and the other Ducks, who were not of Portuguese descent, pitied him too.

"Poor little creature!" they said, as one after another came up. "We certainly can't sing," they said, "but we have a sounding board, or something of the kind, within us; we can feel that, though we don't talk of it."

"But I can talk of it," said the Portuguese Duck; "and I'll do something for the little fellow, for that's my duty." And she stepped into the water-trough, and beat her wings upon



the water so heartily, that the little Singing Bird was almost drowned by the bath he got, but the Duck meant it kindly. "That's a good deed," she said: "the others may take example by it."

"Piep!" said the little Bird: one of his wings was broken, and he found it difficult to shake himself; but he quite understood that the bath was kindly meant. "You are very kind hearted, madam," he said; but he did not wish for a second bath.

"I have never thought about my heart," continued the Portuguese Duck, "but I know this much, that I love all my fellow-creatures except the cat; but nobody can expect me to love her, for she ate up two of my ducklings. But pray make yourself at home, for one can make one's self comfortable. I myself am from a strange country, as you may see from my bearing and from my feathery dress. My drake is a native of these parts, he's not of my race; but for all that I'm not proud. If anyone here in the yard can understand you, I may assert that I am that person."

"She's quite full of Portulak," said a little common Duck, who was witty; and all the other common Ducks considered the word Portulak quite a good joke, for it sounded like Portugal; and they nudged each other and said "Rap!" It was too witty! And all the other Ducks now began to notice the little Singing Bird.

"The Portuguese has certainly a greater command of language," they said. "For our part, we don't care to fill our beaks with such long words, but our sympathy is just as great. If we don't do anything for you, we march about with you everywhere; and we think that the best thing we can do."

"You have a lovely voice," said one of the oldest. "It must be a great satisfaction to be able to give so much pleasure as you are able to impart. I certainly am no great judge of your song, and consequently I keep my beak shut; and even that is better than talking nonsense to you, as others do."

"Don't plague him so," interposed the Portuguese Duck; "he requires rest and nursing. My little Singing Bird, do you wish me to prepare another bath for you?"

"Oh, no! pray let me be dry!" was the little Bird's petition.

"The water cure is the only remedy for me when I am unwell," quoth the Portuguese. "Amusement is beneficial too. The neighboring fowls will soon come to pay their visit. There are two Cochin Chinese among them. They wear feathers on their legs, are well educated, and have been brought from afar; consequently they stand higher than the others in my regard."

And the Fowls came, and the Cock came; to-day he was polite enough to abstain from being rude.

"You are a true Singing Bird," he said, "and you do as much with your little voice as can possibly be done with it. But one requires a little more shrillness, that every hearer may hear that one is a male."

The two Chinese stood quite enchanted with the appearance of the Singing Bird. He looked very much ruffled after his bath, so that he seemed to them to have quite the appearance of a little Cochin China fowl.

"He's charming," they cried, and began a conversation with him, speaking in whispers, and using the most aristocratic Chinese dialect.

"We are of your race," they continued. "The Ducks, even the Portuguese, are swimming birds, as you cannot fail to have noticed. You do not know us yet; very few know us, or give themselves the trouble to make our acquaintance—not even any of the fowls, though we are born to occupy a higher grade on the ladder than most of the rest. But that does not disturb us: we quietly pursue our path amid the others, whose principles are certainly not ours; for we look at things on the favorable side, and only speak of what is good, though it is difficult sometimes to find something when nothing exists. Except us two and the Cock, there's no one in the whole poultry yard who is at once talented and polite. It cannot even be said of the inhabitants of the duck yard. We warn you, little Singing Bird: don't trust that one yonder with the short tail-feathers, for she's cunning. The pied one there, with the crooked stripes on her wings, is a strife-seeker, and lets nobody have the last word, though she's always in the wrong. The fat duck yonder speaks evil of everyone, and that's against our principles: if we have nothing good to tell, we should hold our beaks. The Portuguese is the only one who has any

education, and with whom one can associate, but she is passionate, and talks too much about Portugal."

"I wonder what those two Chinese are always whispering to one another about?" whispered one Duck to her friend. "They annoy me—we have never spoken to them."

Now the Drake came up. He thought the little Singing Bird was a sparrow.

"Well, I don't understand the difference," he said; "and, indeed, it's all the same thing. He's only a plaything, and if one has them, why, one has them."

"Don't you attach any value to what he says," the Portuguese whispered. "He's very respectable in business matters; and with him business takes precedence of everything. But now I shall lie down for a rest. One owes that to one's self, that one may be nice and fat when one is to be embalmed with apples and plums."

And accordingly she lay down in the sun, and winked with one eye; and she lay comfortably, and she felt very comfortable, and she slept very comfortably.

The little Singing Bird busied himself with his broken wing. At last he lay down, too, and pressed close to his protectress; the sun shone warm and bright, and he had found a very good place.

But the neighbor's fowls were awake, and went about scratching up the earth; and, to tell the truth, they had paid the visit simply and solely to find food for themselves. The Chinese were the first to leave the duck yard, and the other fowls soon followed them. The witty little Duck said of the Portuguese that the old lady was becoming a ducky dotard. At this the other ducks laughed and cackled aloud. "Ducky dotard," they whispered; "that's too witty!" and then they repeated the former joke about Portulak, and declared that it was vastly amusing. And then they lay down.

They had been lying asleep for some time, when suddenly something was thrown into the yard for them to eat. It came down with such a thwack! that the whole company started up from sleep and clapped their wings. The Portuguese awoke too, and threw herself over on the other side, pressing the little Singing Bird very hard as she did so.

"Piep!" he cried; "you trod very hard upon me, madam."

"Well, why do you lie in my way?" the Duck retorted.

"You must not be so touchy. I have nerves of my own, but yet, I never called out 'Piep!'"

"Don't be angry," said the little Bird; "the 'piep' came out of my beak unawares."

The Portuguese did not listen to him, but began eating as fast as she could, and made a good meal. When this was ended, and she lay down again, the little Bird came up, and wanted to be amiable, and sang:

"Tillee-lilly lee,
Of the good spring-time
I'll sing so fine
As far away I flee."

"Now I want to rest after my dinner," said the Portuguese. "You must conform to the rules of the house while you're here. I want to sleep now."

The little Singing Bird was quite taken aback, for he had meant it kindly. When Madam afterward awoke, he stood before her again with a little corn that he had found, and laid it at her feet; but as she had not slept well, she was naturally in a very bad humor.

"Give that to a chicken!" she said, "and don't be always standing in my way."

"Why are you angry with me?" replied the little Singing Bird. "What have I done?"

"Done!" repeated the Portuguese Duck; "your mode of expression is not exactly genteel; a fact to which I must call your attention."

"Yesterday it was sunshine here," said the little Bird, "but to-day it's cloudy and the air is close."

"You don't know much about the weather, I fancy," retorted the Portuguese. "The day is not done yet. Don't stand looking so stupid."

"But you are looking at me just as the wicked eyes looked when I fell into the yard yesterday."

"Impertinent creature!" exclaimed the Portuguese Duck, "would you compare me with the cat, that beast of prey? There's not a drop of malicious blood in me. I've taken your part, and will teach you good manners."

And so saying she bit off the Singing Bird's head, and he lay dead on the ground.

"Now, what's the meaning of this?" she said, "could he

not bear even that? Then certainly he was not made for this world. I've been like a mother to him, I know that, for I've a good heart."

Then the neighbor's Cock stuck his head into the yard, and crowed with steam-engine power.

"You'll kill me with your crowing!" she cried. "It's all your fault. He's lost his head, and I am very near losing mine."

"There's not much lying where he fell!" observed the Cock.

"Speak of him with respect," retorted the Portuguese Duck, "for he had song, manners, and education. He was affectionate and soft, and that's as good in animals as in your so-called human beings."

And all the Ducks came crowding round the little dead Singing Bird. Ducks have strong passions, whether they feel envy or pity; and as there was nothing here to envy, pity manifested itself, even in the two Chinese.

"We shall never get such a singing bird again; he was almost a Chinese," they whispered; and they wept with a mighty clucking sound, and all the fowls clucked too, but the Ducks went about with the redder eyes.

"We've hearts of our own," they said; "nobody can deny that."

"Hearts!" repeated the Portuguese, "yes, that we have, almost as much as in Portugal."

"Let us think of getting something to satisfy our hunger," said the Drake, "for that's the most important point. If one of our toys is broken, why, we have plenty more!"

THE RED SHOES.

There once was a little girl; a very nice pretty little girl. But in summer she had to go barefoot, because she was poor, and in winter she wore thick wooden shoes, so that her little instep became quite red, altogether red.

In the middle of the village lived an old shoemaker's wife; she sat and sewed, as well as she could, a pair of little shoes, of old strips of red cloth; they were clumsy enough, but well

meant, and the little girl was to have them. The little girl's name was Karen.

On the day when her mother was buried she received the red shoes and wore them for the first time. They were certainly not suited for mourning; but she had no others, and therefore thrust her little bare feet into them and walked behind the plain deal coffin.

Suddenly a great carriage came by, and in the carriage sat an old lady; she looked at the little girl and felt pity for her and said to the clergyman:

"Give me the little girl and I will provide for her."

Karen thought this was for the sake of the shoes; but the old lady declared they were hideous; and they were burned. But Karen herself was clothed neatly and properly: she was taught to read and to sew, and the people said she was agreeable. But her mirror said, "You are much more than agreeable; you are beautiful."

Once the Queen traveled through the country, and had her little daughter with her; and the daughter was a Princess. And the people flocked toward the castle, and Karen too was among them; and the little Princess stood in a fine white dress at a window, and let herself be gazed at. She had neither train nor golden crown, but she wore splendid red morocco shoes; they were certainly far handsomer than those the shoemaker's wife had made for little Karen. Nothing in the world can compare with red shoes!

Now Karen was old enough to be confirmed: new clothes were made for her, and she was to have new shoes. The rich shoemaker in the town took the measure of her little feet; this was done in his own house, in his little room, and there stood great glass cases with neat shoes and shining boots. It had quite a charming appearance, but the old lady could not see well, and therefore took no pleasure in it. Among the shoes stood a red pair, just like those which the princess had worn. How beautiful they were! The shoemaker also said they had been made for a Count's child, but they had not fitted.

"That must be patent leather," observed the old lady, "the shoes shine so!"

"Yes, they shine!" replied Karen; and they fitted her, and were bought. But the old lady did not know that they

were red; for she would never have allowed Karen to go to her confirmation in red shoes; and that is what Karen did.

Everyone was looking at her shoes. And when she went across the church porch, toward the door of the choir, it seemed to her as if the old pictures on the tombstones, the portraits of clergymen and clergymen's wives, in their stiff collars and long black garments, fixed their eyes upon her red shoes. And she thought of her shoes only, when the priest laid his hand upon her head and spoke holy words. And the organ pealed solemnly, the children sang with their fresh sweet voices, and the old preceptor sang too; but Karen thought only of her red shoes.

In the afternoon the old lady was informed by everyone that the shoes were red; and she said it was naughty and unsuitable, and that when Karen went to church in future, she should always go in black shoes, even if they were old.

Next Sunday was Sacrament Sunday. And Karen looked at the black shoes, and looked at the red ones—looked at them again—and put on the red ones.

The sun shone gloriously; Karen and the old lady went along the footpath through the fields, and it was rather dusty.

By the church door stood an old invalid soldier with a crutch and a long beard; the beard was rather red than white, for it was red altogether; and he bowed down almost to the ground, and asked the old lady if he might dust her shoes. And Karen also stretched out her little foot.

"Look, what pretty dancing shoes!" said the old soldier. "Fit so tightly when you dance!"

And he tapped the soles with his hand. And the old lady gave the soldier an alms, and went into the church with Karen.

And everyone in the church looked at Karen's red shoes, and all the pictures looked at them. And while Karen knelt in the church she only thought of her red shoes; and she forgot to sing her psalm, and forgot to say her prayer.

Now all the people went out of church, and the old lady stepped into her carriage. Karen lifted up her foot to step in too; then the old soldier said:

"Look, what beautiful dancing shoes!"

And Karen could not resist: she was obliged to dance a few steps; and when she once began, her legs went on danc-

ing. It was just as though the shoes had obtained power over her. She danced round the corner of the church—she could not help it; the coachman was obliged to run behind her and seize her; he lifted her into the carriage, but her feet went on dancing so that she kicked the good old lady violently. At last they took off her shoes, and her legs became quiet.

At home the shoes were put away in a cupboard; but Karen could not resist looking at them.

Now the old lady became very ill, and it was said she would not recover. She had to be nursed and waited on: and this was no one's duty so much as Karen's. But there was to be a great ball in the town, and Karen was invited. She looked at the old lady who could not recover; she looked at the red shoes, and thought there would be no harm in it. She put on the shoes, and that she might very well do; but they went to the ball and began to dance.

But when she wished to go to the right hand, the shoes danced to the left, and when she wanted to go upstairs the shoes danced downward, down into the street and out at the town gate. She danced, and was obliged to dance, till she danced straight out into the dark wood.

There was something glistening up among the trees, and she thought it was the moon, for she saw a face. But it was the old soldier with the red beard: he sat and nodded, and said:

"Look, what beautiful dancing shoes!"

Then she was frightened, and wanted to throw away the red shoes; but they clung fast to her. And she tore off her stockings; but the shoes had grown fast to her feet. And she danced and was compelled to go dancing over field and meadow, in rain and sunshine, by night and by day; but it was most dreadful at night.

She danced out into the open churchyard; but the dead there do not dance; they have far better things to do. She wished to sit down on the poor man's grave, where the bitter fern grows; but there was no peace nor rest for her. And when she danced toward the open church door, she saw there an angel in long white garments, with wings that reached from his shoulders to his feet; his countenance was serious and stern, and in his hand he held a sword that was broad and gleaming.

"Thou shalt dance!" he said—"dance on thy red shoes, till thou art pale and cold, and till thy body shrivels to a skeleton. Thou shalt dance from door to door, and where proud, haughty children dwell, shalt thou knock, that they may hear thee, and be afraid of thee! Thou shalt dance, dance!"

"Mercy!" cried Karen.

But she did not hear what the angel answered, for the shoes carried her away—carried her through the door on to the field, over stock and stone, and she was always obliged to dance.

One morning she danced past a door which she knew well. There was a sound of psalm-singing within, and a coffin was carried out, adorned with flowers. Then she knew that the old lady was dead, and she felt that she was deserted by all, and condemned by the angel of heaven.

She danced and was compelled to dance—to dance in the dark night. The shoes carried her on over thorn and brier; she scratched herself till she bled; she danced away across the heath to a little lonely house. Here she knew the executioner dwelt; and she tapped with her fingers on the panes, and called:

"Come out, come out! I cannot come in for I must dance!"

And the executioner said:

"You probably don't know who I am? I cut off the bad people's heads with my ax, and mark how my ax rings!"

"Do not strike off my head," said Karen, "for if you do I cannot repent of my sin. But strike off my feet with the red shoes!"

And then she confessed all her sin, and the executioner cut off her feet with the red shoes; but the shoes danced away with the little feet over the fields and into the deep forest.

And he cut her a pair of wooden feet, with crutches, and taught her a psalm, which the criminals always sing; and she kissed the hand that had held the ax, and went away across the heath.

"Now I have suffered pain enough for the red shoes," said she. "Now I will go into the church, that they may see me."

And she went quickly toward the church door, but when

she came there the red shoes danced before her, so that she was frightened, and turned back.

The whole week through she was sorrowful, and wept many bitter tears; but when Sunday came she said:

"Now I have suffered and striven enough! I think that I am just as good as many of those who sit in the church and carry their heads high."

And she went boldly on; but she did not get farther than the churchyard gate before she saw the red shoes dancing along before her; then she was seized with terror, and turned back, and repented of her sin right heartily.

And she went to the parsonage, and begged to be taken there as a servant. She promised to be industrious, and to do all she could; she did not care for wages, and only wished to be under a roof and with good people. The clergyman's wife pitied her, and took her into her service. And she was industrious and thoughtful. Silently she sat and listened when in the evening the pastor read the Bible aloud. All the little ones were very fond of her; but when they spoke of dress and splendor and beauty, she would shake her head.

Next Sunday they all went to church, and she was asked if she wished to go too, but she looked sadly, with tears in her eyes, at her crutches. And then the others went to hear God's word; but she went alone into her little room, which was only large enough to contain her bed and a chair. And here she sat with her hymn book; and as she read it with a pious mind, the wind bore the notes of the organ over to her from the church; and she lifted up her face, wet with tears, and said:

"O Lord, help me!"

Then the sun shone so brightly; and before her stood the angel in the white garments, the same as she had seen that night at the church door. But he no longer grasped the sharp sword; he held a green branch covered with roses; and he touched the ceiling, and it rose up high, and wherever he touched it a golden star gleamed forth; and he touched the walls, and they spread forth widely, and she saw the organ which was pealing its rich sounds; and she saw the old pictures of clergymen and their wives; and the congregation sat in the decorated seats, and sang from their hymn books. The church had come to the poor girl in her narrow room, or her chamber had become a church. She sat in the chair

with the rest of the clergyman's people; and when they had finished the psalm, and looked up, they nodded and said:

"That was right that you came here, Karen."

"It was mercy!" said she.

And the organ sounded its glorious notes; and the children's voices singing in the chorus sounded sweet and lovely; the clear sunshine streamed so warm through the window upon the chair in which Karen sat; and her heart became so filled with sunshine, peace, and joy, that it broke. Her soul flew on the sunbeams to heaven; and there was nobody who asked after the Red Shoes!

SOUP ON A SAUSAGE-PEG.

I.

"That was a remarkably fine dinner yesterday," observed an old Mouse of the female sex to another who had not been at the festive gathering. "I sat number twenty-one from the old Mouse King, so that I was not badly placed. Should you like to hear the order of the banquet? The courses were very well arranged—moldy bread, bacon-rind, tallow candle, and sausage—and then the same dishes over again from the beginning: it was just as good as having two banquets in succession. There was as much joviality and agreeable jesting as in the family circle. Nothing was left but the pegs at the ends of the sausages. And the discourse turned upon these; and at last the expression, 'Soup on sausage-rinds,' or, as they have the proverb in the neighboring country, 'Soup on a sausage-peg,' was mentioned. Everyone had heard the proverb, but no one had ever tasted the sausage-peg soup, much less prepared it. A capital toast was drunk to the inventor of the soup, and it was said he deserved to be a relieving officer. Was not that witty? And the old Mouse King stood up, and promised that the young female mouse who could best prepare that soup should be his Queen; and a year was allowed for the trial."

"That was not at all bad," said the other Mouse; "but how does one prepare this soup?"

"Ah, how is it prepared? That is just what all the young

female mice, and the old ones too, are asking. They would all very much like to be Queen; but they don't want to take the trouble to go out into the world to learn how to prepare the soup, and that they would certainly have to do. But everyone has not the gift of leaving the family circle and the chimney corner. In foreign parts one can't get cheese rinds and bacon every day. No, one must bear hunger, and perhaps be eaten up alive by a cat."

Such were probably the considerations by which the majority were deterred from going out into the wide world and gaining information. Only four Mice announced themselves ready to depart. They were young and brisk, but poor. Each of them wished to proceed to one of the four quarters of the globe, and then it would become manifest which of them was favored by fortune. Everyone took a sausage-peg, so as to keep in mind the object of the journey. The stiff sausage-peg was to be to them as a pilgrim's staff.

It was at the beginning of May that they set out, and they did not return till the May of the following year; and then only three of them appeared. The fourth did not report herself, nor was there any intelligence of her, though the day of trial was close at hand.

"Yes, there's always some drawback in even the pleasantest affair," said the Mouse King.

And then he gave orders that all mice within a circuit of many miles should be invited. They were to assemble in the kitchen, where the three traveled Mice would stand up in a row, while a sausage-peg, shrouded in crape, was set up as a memento of the fourth, who was missing. No one was to proclaim his opinion till the Mouse King had settled what was to be said. And now let us hear.

II.

WHAT THE FIRST LITTLE MOUSE HAD SEEN AND LEARNED IN HER TRAVELS.

"When I went out into the wide world," said the little Mouse, "I thought, as many think at my age, that I had already learned everything; but that was not the case. Years must pass before one gets so far. I went to sea at once. I

went in a ship that steered toward the north. They had told me that the ship's cook must know how to manage things at sea; but it is easy enough to manage things when one has plenty of sides of bacon, and whole tubs of salt pork, and moldy flour. One has delicate living on board; but one does not learn to prepare soup on a sausage-peg. We sailed along for many days and nights; the ship rocked fearfully, and we did not get off without a wetting. When we at last reached the port to which we were bound, I left the ship; and it was high up in the far north.

"It is a wonderful thing to go out of one's own corner at home, and sail in a ship, where one has a sort of corner too, and then suddenly to find one's self hundreds of miles away in a strange land. I saw great pathless forests of pine and birch, which smelt so strong that I sneezed, and thought of sausage. There were great lakes there too. When I came close to them the waters were quite clear, but from a distance they looked black as ink. Great swans floated upon them: I thought at first they were spots of foam, they lay so still; but then I saw them walk and fly, and I recognized them. They belong to the goose family—one can see that by their walk; for no one can deny his parentage. I kept with my own kind. I associated with the forest and field mice, who, by the way, know very little, especially as regards cookery, though this was the very subject that had brought me abroad. The thought that soup might be boiled on a sausage-peg was such a startling statement to them, that it flew at once from mouth to mouth through the whole forest. They declared the problem could never be solved: and little did I think that there, on the very first night, I should be initiated into the method of its preparation. It was in the height of summer, and that, the mice said, was the reason why the wood smelt so strongly, and why the herbs were so fragrant, and the lakes so transparent and yet so dark, with their white swimming swans.

"On the margin of the wood, among three or four houses, a pole as tall as the mainmast of a ship had been erected, and from its summit hung wreaths of fluttering ribbons; this was called a maypole. Men and maids danced round the tree, and sang as loudly as they could, to the violin of the fiddler. There were merry doings at sundown and in the moonlight, but I took no part in them—what has a little

mouse to do with a May dance? I sat in the soft moss and held my sausage-peg fast. The moon threw its beams especially upon one spot, where a tree stood, covered with moss so exceedingly fine, I may almost venture to say it was as fine as the skin of the Mouse King; but it was of a green color, and that is a great relief to the eye.

"All at once, the most charming little people came marching forth. They were only tall enough to reach to my knee. They looked like men, but were better proportioned: they called themselves elves, and had delicate clothes on, of flower-leaves trimmed with the wings of flies and gnats, which had a very good appearance. Directly they appeared, they seemed to seek for something—I knew not what, but at last some of them came toward me, and the chief pointed to my sausage-peg, and said, 'That is just such a one as we want—it is pointed—it is capital!' and the longer he looked at my pilgrim's staff the more delighted he became.

"'I will lend it,' I said, 'but not to keep.'

"'Not to keep!' they all repeated; and they seized the sausage-peg, which I gave up to them, and danced away to the spot where the fine moss grew; and here they set up the peg in the midst of the green. They wanted to have a may-pole of their own, and the one they now had seemed cut out for them; and they decorated it so that it was beautiful to behold.

"First, little spiders spun it round with gold thread, and hung it all over with fluttering veils and flags, so finely woven, bleached so snowy white in the moonshine, that they dazzled my eyes. They took colors from the butterfly's wing, and strewed these over the white linen, and flowers and diamonds gleamed upon it, so that I did not know my sausage-peg again: there is not in all the world such a may-pole as they had made of it. And now came the real great party of elves. They were quite without clothes, and looked as genteel as possible: and they invited me to be present at the feast; but I was to keep at a certain distance, for I was too large for them.

"And now began such music! It sounded like thousands of glass bells, so full, so rich, that I thought the swans were singing. I fancied also that I heard the voice of the cuckoo and the blackbird, and at last the whole forest seemed to join in. I heard children's voices, the sound of bells, and

the song of birds; the most glorious melodies—and all came from the elves' maypole, namely, my sausage-peg. I should never have believed that so much could come out of it; but that depends very much upon the hands into which it falls. I was quite touched. I wept, as a little mouse may weep, with pure pleasure.

"The night was far too short; but it is not longer up yonder at that season. In the morning dawn the breeze began to blow, the mirror of the forest lake was covered with ripples, and all the delicate veils and flags fluttered away in the air. The waving garlands of spider's web, the hanging bridges and balustrades, and whatever else they are called, flew away as if they were nothing at all. Six elves brought me back my sausage-peg, and asked me at the same time if I had any wish that they could gratify; so I asked them if they could tell me how soup was made on a sausage-peg.

"How we do it?" asked the chief of the elves, with a smile. "Why, you have just seen it. I fancy you hardly know your sausage-peg again?"

"You only mean that as a joke," I replied. And then I told them in so many words why I had undertaken a journey, and what great hopes were founded on the operation at home. "What advantage," I asked, "can accrue to our Mouse King, and to our whole powerful state, from the fact of my having witnessed all this festivity? I cannot shake it out of the sausage-peg, and say, 'Look, here is the peg, now the soup will come.'" That would be a dish that could only be put on the table when the guests had dined.

"Then the elf dipped his little finger into the cup of a blue violet, and said to me,

"See here! I will anoint your pilgrim's staff; and when you go back to your country, and come to the castle of the Mouse King, you have but to touch him with the staff, and violets will spring forth and cover its whole surface, even in the coldest winter-time. And so I think I've given you something to carry home, and a little more than something!"

But before the little Mouse said what this "something more" was, she stretched her staff out toward the King, and in very truth the most beautiful bunch of violets burst forth; and the scent was so powerful that the Mouse King incon-

tinently ordered the mice that stood nearest the chimney to thrust their tails into the fire and create a smell of burning, for the odor of the violets was not to be borne, and was not of the kind he liked.

"But what was the 'something more,' of which you spoke?" asked the Mouse King.

"Why," the little Mouse answered, "I think it is what they call effect!" and herewith she turned the staff round, and lo! there was not a single flower to be seen upon it; she only held the naked skewer, and lifted this up, as a musical conductor lifts his bâton. "'Violets,' the elf said to me, 'are for sight, and smell, and touch. Therefore it yet remains to provide for hearing and taste!'"

And now the little Mouse began to beat time; and music was heard, not such as sounded in the forest among the elves, but such as is heard in the kitchen. There was a bubbling sound of boiling and roasting; and all at once it seemed as if the sound were rushing through every chimney, and pots and kettles were boiling over. The fire-shovel hammered upon the brass kettle, and then, on a sudden, all was quiet again. They heard the quiet subdued song of the tea-kettle, and it was wonderful to hear—they could not quite tell if the kettle were beginning to sing or leaving off; and the little pot simmered, and the big pot simmered, and neither cared for the other: there seemed to be no reason at all in the pots. And the little Mouse flourished her bâton more and more wildly; the pot foamed, threw up large bubbles, boiled over, and the wind roared and whistled through the chimney. Oh! It became so terrible that the little Mouse lost her stick at last.

"That was a heavy soup!" said the Mouse King. "Shall we not soon hear about the preparation?"

"That was all," said the little Mouse, with a bow.

"That all! Then we should be glad to hear what the next has to relate," said the Mouse King.

III.

WHAT THE SECOND LITTLE MOUSE HAD TO TELL.

"I was born in the palace library," said the second Mouse. "I and several members of our family never knew the happi-

ness of getting into the dining room, much less into the store-room; on my journey, and here to-day, are the only times I have seen a kitchen. We have indeed often been compelled to suffer hunger in the library, but we get a good deal of knowledge. The rumor penetrated even to us, of the royal prize offered to those who could cook soup upon a sausage-peg; and it was my old grandmother who thereupon ferreted out a manuscript, which she certainly could not read, but which she had heard read out, and in which it was written—'Those who are poets can boil soup upon a sausage-peg.' She asked me if I were a poet. I felt quite innocent on the subject, and then she told me I must go out, and manage to become one. I again asked what was requisite in that particular—for it was as difficult for me to find that out as to prepare the soup; but grandmother had heard a good deal of reading, and she said that three things were especially necessary: 'Understanding, imagination, feeling. If you can manage to obtain these three, you are a poet, and the sausage-peg affair will be quite easy to you.'

"And I went forth, and marched toward the west, away into the wide world, to become a poet.

"Understanding is the most important thing in every affair. I knew that, for the two other things are not held in half such respect, and consequently I went out first to seek understanding. Yes, where does he dwell? 'Go to the ant and be wise,' said the great King of the Jews; I knew that from my library experience; and I never stopped till I came to the first great ant-hill, and there I placed myself on the watch, to become wise.

"The ants are a respectable people. They are understanding itself. Everything with them is like a well-worked sum, that comes right. To work and to lay eggs, they say, is to live while you live, and to provide for posterity; and accordingly that is what they do. They were divided into the clean and the dirty ants. The rank of each is indicated by a number, and the Ant Queen is number one; and her view is the only correct one, she is the receptacle of all wisdom; and that was important for me to know. She spoke so much, and it was all so clever, that it sounded to me like nonsense. She declared her ant-hill was the loftiest thing in the world; though close by it grew a tree, which was

certainly loftier, much loftier, that could not be denied, and therefore it was never mentioned. One evening an ant had lost herself upon the tree; she had crept up the stem—not up to the crown, but higher than any ant had climbed until then; and when she turned and came back home, she talked of something far higher than the ant-hill that she had found in her travels; but the other ants considered that an insult to the whole community, and consequently she was condemned to wear a muzzle, and to continual solitary confinement. But a short time afterward another ant got on the tree, and made the same journey and the same discovery: and this one spoke with emphasis, and distinctly as they said; and as, moreover, she was one of the pure ants and very much respected, they believed her; and when she died they erected an egg-shell as a memorial of her, for they had a great respect for the sciences. I saw,” continued the little Mouse, “that the ants are always running to and fro with their eggs on their backs. One of them once dropped her egg; she exerted herself greatly to pick it up again, but she could not succeed. The two others came up, and helped her with all their might, insomuch that they nearly dropped their own eggs over it; but then they certainly at once relaxed their exertions, for each should think of himself first—the Ant Queen had declared that by so doing they exhibited at once heart and understanding.

“‘These two qualities,’ she said, ‘place us ants on the highest step among all reasoning beings. Understanding is seen among us all in predominant measure, and I have the greatest share of understanding.’ And so saying, she raised herself on her hind legs, so that she was easily to be recognized. I could not be mistaken, and I ate her up. We were to go to the ants to learn wisdom—and I had got the Queen!

“I now proceeded nearer to the before-mentioned lofty tree. It was an oak, and had a great trunk and a far-spreading top, and was very old. I knew that a living being dwelt here, a Dryad, as it is called, who is born with the tree, and dies with it. I had heard about this in the library; and now I saw an oak tree and an oak girl. She uttered a piercing cry when she saw me so near. Like all females, she was very much afraid of mice; and she had more

ground for fear than others, for I might have gnawn through the stem of the tree on which her life depended. I accosted the maiden in a friendly and honest way, and bade her take courage. And she took me up in her delicate hand; and when I had told her my reason for coming out into the wide world, she promised me that perhaps on that every evening I should have one of the two treasures of which I was still in quest. She told me that Phantasus, the genius of imagination, was her very good friend, that he was beautiful as the god of love, and that he rested many an hour under the leafy boughs of the tree, which then rustled more strongly than ever over the pair of them. He called her his Dryad, she said, and the tree his tree, for the grand gnarled oak was just to his taste, with its root burrowing so deep in the earth, and the stem and crown rising so high out in the fresh air, and knowing the beating snow, and the sharp wind, and the warm sunshine as they deserve to be known. 'Yes,' the Dryad continued, 'the birds sing aloft there in the branches, and tell each other of strange countries they have visited; and on the only dead bough the stork has built a nest which is highly ornamental, and, moreover, one gets to hear something of the land of the Pyramids. All that is very pleasing to Phantasus; but it is not enough for him: I myself must talk to him, and tell him of life in the woods, and must revert to my childhood, when I was little, and the tree such a delicate thing that a stinging nettle overshadowed it—and I have to tell everything, till now that the tree is great and strong. Sit you down under the green thyme, and pay attention; and when Phantasus comes, I shall find an opportunity to pinch his wings, and to pull out a little feather. Take the pen—no better is given to any poet—and it will be enough for you!'

"And when Phantasus came the feather was plucked, and I seized it," said the little Mouse. "I put it in water, and held it there till it grew soft. It was very hard to digest, but I nibbled it up at last. It is not very easy to gnaw one's self into being a poet, though there are many things one must do. Now I had these two things, imagination and understanding, and through these I knew that the third was to be found in the library; for a great man has said and written that there are romances whose sole and single use

is that they relieve people of their superfluous tears, and that they are, in fact, a sort of sponges sucking up human emotion. I remember a few of these old books, which had always looked especially palatable, and were much thumbed and very greasy, having evidently absorbed a great deal of feeling into themselves.

"I betook myself back to the library, and, so to speak, devoured a whole novel—that is, the essence of it, the interior part, for I left the crust or binding. When I had digested this, and a second one in addition, I felt a stirring within me, and I ate a bit of a third romance, and now I was a poet. I said so to myself, and told the others also. I had headache, and chestache, and I can't tell what aches besides. I began thinking what kind of stories could be made to refer to a sausage-peg; and many pegs, and sticks, and staves, and splinters came into my mind—the Ant Queen must have had a particularly fine understanding. I remembered the man who took a white stick in his mouth, by which means he could render himself and the stick invisible; I thought of stick hobby horse, of 'stock rhymes,' of 'breaking the staff over an offender,' and goodness knows how many phrases more concerning sticks, stocks, staves, and pegs. All my thoughts ran upon sticks, staves, and pegs; and when one is a poet (and I am a poet, for I have worked most terribly hard to become one) a person can make poetry on these subjects. I shall therefore be able to wait upon you every day with a poem or a history—and that's the soup I have to offer."

"Let us hear what the third has to say," was now the Mouse King's command.

"Peep! peep!" cried a small voice at the kitchen door, and a little Mouse—it was the fourth of the Mice who had contended for the prize, the one whom they looked upon as dead—shot in like an arrow. She toppled the sausage-peg with the crape covering over in a moment. She had been running day and night, and had traveled on the railway, in the goods train, having watched her opportunity, and yet she had almost come too late. She pressed forward, looking very much ruffled, and she had lost her sausage-peg, but not her voice, for she at once took up the word, as if they had been waiting for her, and wanted to hear none but

her, and as if everything else in the world were of no consequence. She spoke at once, and spoke fully: she had appeared so suddenly that no one found time to object to her speech or to her, while she was speaking. And now let us hear what she said:

IV.

WHAT THE FOURTH MOUSE, WHO SPOKE BEFORE THE THIRD, HAD TO TELL.

"I betook myself immediately to the largest town," she said; "the name has escaped me—I have a bad memory for names. From the railway I was carried, with some confiscated goods, to the council house, and when I arrived there, I ran into the dwelling of the jailer. The jailer was talking of his prisoners, and especially of one who had spoken unconsidered words. These words had given rise to others, and these latter had been written down and recorded.

"'The whole thing is soup on a sausage-peg,' said the jailer; 'but the soup may cost him his neck.'

"Now, this gave me an interest in the prisoner," continued the Mouse, "and I watched my opportunity and slipped into his prison—for there's a mouse hole to be found behind every locked door. The prisoner looked pale, and had a great beard and bright, sparkling eyes. The lamp flickered and smoked, but the walls were so accustomed to that, that they grew none the blacker for it. The prisoner scratched pictures and verses in white upon the black ground, but I did not read them. I think he found it tedious, and I was a welcome guest. He lured me with bread-crumbs, with whistling, and with friendly words; he was glad to see me, and gradually I got to trust him, and we became good friends. He let me run over his hand, his arm, and into his sleeve; he let me creep about in his beard, and called me his little friend. I really got to love him, for these things are reciprocal. I forgot my mission in the wide world, forgot my sausage-peg; that I had placed in a crack in the floor—it's lying there still. I wished to stay where I was, for if I went away the poor prisoner would have no one at all, and that's having too little in this world.

I stayed, but he did not stay. He spoke to me very mournfully the last time, gave me twice as much bread and cheese as usual, and kissed his hand to me; then he went away, and never came back. I don't know his history.

"'Soup on a sausage-peg!' said the jailer, to whom I now went; but I should not have trusted him. He took me in his hand, certainly, but he popped me into a cage, a treadmill. That's a horrible engine, in which you go round and round without getting any farther; and people laugh at you into the bargain.

"The jailer's granddaughter was a charming little thing, with a mass of curly hair that shone like gold, and such merry eyes, and such a smiling mouth!

"'You poor little mouse,' she said, as she peeped into my ugly cage; and she drew out the iron rod, and forth I jumped to the window board, and from thence to the roof spout. Free! free! I thought only of that, and not of the goal of my journey.

"It was dark, and night was coming on. I took up my quarters in an old tower, where dwelt a watchman and an owl. That is a creature like a cat, who has the great failing that she eats mice. But one may be mistaken, and so was I, for this was a very respectable, well-educated old owl: she knew more than the watchman, and as much as I. The young owls were always making a racket; but 'Go and make soup on a sausage-peg' were the hardest words she could prevail on herself to utter, she was so fondly attached to her family. Her conduct inspired me with so much confidence, that from the crack in which I was crouching I called out 'peep!' to her. This confidence of mine pleased her hugely, and she assured me I should be under her protection, and that no creature should be allowed to do me wrong; she would reserve me for herself, for the winter, when there would be short commons.

"She was in every respect a clever woman, and explained to me how the watchman could only 'whoop' with the horn that hung at his side, adding, 'He is terribly conceited about it, and imagines he's an owl in the tower. Wants to do great things, but is very small—soup on a sausage-peg!'

"I begged the owl to give me a recipe for this soup, and then she explained the matter to me.

"'Soup on a sausage-peg,' she said, 'was only a human

proverb, and was to be understood thus: Each thinks his own way best, but the whole signifies nothing.'

"'Nothing!' I exclaimed. I was quite struck. Truth is not always agreeable, but truth is above everything; and that's what the old owl said. I now thought about it, and readily perceived that if I bought what was above everything I bought something far beyond soup on a sausage-peg. So I hastened away, that I might get home in time, and bring the highest and best, that is above everything—namely the truth. The mice are an enlightened people, and the King is above them all. He is capable of making me Queen, for the sake of truth."

"Your truth is a falsehood," said the Mouse who had not yet spoken. "I can prepare the soup, and I mean to prepare it."

V.

HOW IT WAS PREPARED.

"I did not travel," the third mouse said. "I remained in my country—that's the right thing to do. There's no necessity for traveling; one can get everything as good here. I stayed at home. I've not learned what I know from supernatural beings, or gobbled it up, or held converse with owls. I have what I know through my own reflections. Will you make haste and put that kettle upon the fire? So—now water must be poured in—quite full—up to the brim! So—now more fuel—make up the fire, that the water may boil—it must boil over and over! So—I now throw the peg in. Will the King now be pleased to dip his tail in the boiling water, and to stir it round with the said tail? The longer the King stirs it, the more powerful will the soup become. It costs nothing at all—no further materials are necessary, only stir it round!"

"Cannot anyone else do that?" asked the Mouse King.

"No," replied the Mouse. "The power is contained only in the tail of the Mouse King."

And the water boiled and bubbled, and the Mouse King stood close beside the kettle—there was almost danger in it—and he put forth his tail, as the mice do in the dairy when they skim the cream from a pan of milk afterward

licking their creamy tails; but his tail only penetrated into the hot steam, and then he sprang hastily down from the hearth.

"Of course—certainly you are my Queen," he said. "We'll adjourn the soup question till our golden wedding in fifty years' time, so that the poor of my subjects, who will then be fed, may have something to which they can look forward with pleasure for a long time."

And soon the wedding was held. But many of the mice said, as they were returning home, that it could not be really called soup on a sausage-peg, but rather soup on a mouse's tail. They said that some of the stories had been very cleverly told. But the whole thing might have been different.

"I should have told it so—and so—and so!"

Thus said the critics, who are always wise—after the fact.

And this story went out into the wide world, everywhere; and opinions varied concerning it, but the story remained as it was. And that is the best in great things and in small, so also with regard to soup on a sausage-peg—not to expect any thanks for it.

THE SHEPHERDESS AND THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

Have you ever seen a very old wooden cupboard, quite black with age, and ornamented with carved foliage and arabesques? Just such a cupboard stood in a parlor: it had been a legacy from the great-grandmother, and was covered from top to bottom with carved roses and tulips. There were the quaintest flourishes upon it, and from among these peered forth little stags' heads with antlers. In the middle of the cupboard door an entire figure of a man had been cut out: he was certainly ridiculous to look at, and he grinned, for you could not call it laughing; he had goat's legs, little horns on his head, and a long beard. The children in the room always called him the Billygoat-legs-Major-and-Lieutenant - General - War - Commander - Sergeant; that was a difficult name to pronounce, and there

are not many who obtain this title; but it was something to have cut him out. And there he was! He was always looking at the table under the mirror, for on this table stood a lovely little Shepherdess made of china. Her shoes were gilt, her dress was adorned with a red rose, and besides this she had a golden hat and a shepherd's crook: she was very lovely. Close by her stood a little Chimney-sweeper, black as a coal, and also made of porcelain: he was as clean and neat as any other man, for it was only make-believe that he was a sweep; the china-workers might just as well have made a prince of him, if they had been so minded.

There he stood very nattily with his ladder, and with a face as white and pink as a girl's; and that was really a fault, for he ought to have been a little black. He stood quite close to the Shepherdess; they had both been placed where they stood; but as they had been placed there, they had become engaged to each other. They suited each other well. Both were young people, both made of the same kind of china, and both were brittle.

Close to them stood another figure, three times greater than they. This was an old Chinaman, who could nod. He was also of porcelain, and declared himself to be the grandfather of the little Shepherdess; but he could not prove his relationship. He declared he had authority over her, and that therefore he had nodded to Mr. Billygoat-legs-Lieutenant-and-Major-General-War-Commander-Sergeant who was wooing her for his wife.

"Then you will get a husband!" said the old Chinaman, "a man who I verily believe is made of mahogany. He can make you Billygoat-legs-Lieutenant-and-Major-General-War-Commander-Sergeant's lady: he has the whole cupboard full of silver plate, which he hoards up in secret drawers."

"I won't go into that dark cupboard!" said the little Shepherdess. "I have heard tell that he has eleven porcelain wives in there."

"Then you may become the twelfth," cried the Chinaman. "This night, so soon as it rattles in the old cupboard, you shall be married, as true as I am an old Chinaman!"

And with that he nodded his head and fell asleep. But

the little Shepherdess wept and looked at her heart's beloved, the porcelain Chimney-Sweeper.

"I should like to beg of you," said she, "to go out with me into the wide world, for we cannot remain here."

"I'll do whatever you like," replied the Chimney-Sweep. "Let us start directly! I think I can keep you by exercising my profession."

"If we were only safely down from the table!" said she. "I shall not be happy until we are out in the wide world."

And he comforted her, and showed her how she must place her little foot upon the carved corners and the gilded foliage at the foot of the table; he brought his ladder, too, to help her, and they were soon together upon the floor. But when they looked up at the old cupboard there was a great commotion within: all the carved stags were stretching out their heads, rearing up their antlers, and turning their necks; and the Billygoat-legs-Lieutenant-and-Major-General-War-Commander-Sergeant sprang high in the air, and called across to the old Chinaman:

"Now they're running away! now they're running away!"

Then they were a little frightened, and jumped quickly into the drawer of the window-seat. Here were three or four packs of cards which were not complete, and a little puppet-show, which had been built up as well as it could be done. There plays were acted, and all the ladies, diamonds, clubs, hearts, and spades, sat in the first row, fanning themselves; and behind them stood all the knaves, showing that they had a head above and below, as is usual in playing-cards. The play was about two people who were not to be married to each other, and the Shepherdess wept, because it was just like her own history.

"I cannot possibly bear this!" said she. "I must go out of the drawer."

But when they arrived on the floor, and looked up at the drawer, the old Chinaman was awake, and was shaking over his whole body—for below he was all one lump.

"Now the old Chinaman's coming!" cried the little Shepherdess; and she fell down upon her porcelain knee, so startled was she.

"I have an idea," said the Chimney-Sweeper. "Shall we creep into the great pot-pourri vase which stands in the cor-

ner? Then we can lie on roses and lavender, and throw salt in his eyes if he comes."

"That will be of no use," she replied. "Besides, I know that the old Chinaman and the pot-pourri vase were once engaged to each other, and a kind of liking always remains when people have stood in such a relation to each other. No, there's nothing left for us but to go out into the wide world."

"Have you really courage to go into the wide world with me?" asked the Chimney-Sweeper. "Have you considered how wide the world is, and that we can never come back here again?"

"I have," replied she.

And the Chimney-Sweeper looked fondly at her, and said:

"My way is through the chimney. If you have really courage to creep with me through the stove—through the iron fire-box as well as up the pipe, then we can get out into the chimney, and I know how to find my way through there. We'll mount so high that they can't catch us, and quite at the top there's a hole that leads out into the wide world."

And he led her to the door of the stove.

"It looks very black there," said she; but still she went with him, through the box and through the pipe, where it was pitch-dark night.

"Now we are in the chimney," said he; "and look, look! up yonder a beautiful star is shining."

And it was a real star in the sky, which shone straight down upon them, as if it would show them the way. And they clambered and crept: it was a frightful way, and terrible steep; but he supported her and helped her up; he held her, and showed her the best places where she could place her little porcelain feet; and thus they reached the edge of the chimney, and upon that they sat down, for they were desperately tired, as they well might be.

The sky with all its stars was high above, and all the roofs of the town deep below them. They looked far around—far, far out into the world. The poor Shepherdess had never thought of it as it really was: she leaned her little head against the Chimney-Sweeper, then she wept so bitterly that the gold ran down off her girdle.

"That is too much," she said. "I cannot bear that. The world is too large! If I were only back upon the table below the mirror! I shall never be happy until I am there again. Now I have followed you out into the wide world, you may accompany me back again if you really love me."

And the Chimney-Sweeper spoke sensibly to her—spoke of the old Chinaman and the Billygoat-legs-Lieutenant-and-Major-General-War-Commander-Sergeant; but she sobbed bitterly and kissed her little Chimney-Sweeper, so that he could not help giving way to her, though it was foolish.

And so with much labor they climbed down the chimney again. And they crept through the pipe and the fire-box. That was not pleasant at all. And there they stood in the dark stove; there they listened behind the door, to find out what was going on in the room. Then it was quite quiet: they looked in—ah! there lay the old Chinaman in the middle of the floor! He had fallen down from the table as he was pursuing them, and now he lay broken into three pieces; his back had come off all in one piece, and his head had rolled into a corner. The Billygoat-legs-Lieutenant-and-Major-General-War-Commander-Sergeant stood where he had always stood, considering.

"That is terrible!" said the little Shepherdess. "The old grandfather has fallen to pieces, and it is our fault. I shall never survive it!" and then she wrung her little hands.

"He can be mended! he can be mended!" said the Chimney-sweeper. "Don't be so violent. If they glue his back together and give him a good rivet in his neck, he will be as good as new, and may say many a disagreeable thing to us yet."

"Do you think so?" cried she.

So they climbed back upon the table where they used to stand.

"You see, we have come to this," said the Chimney-Sweeper: "we might have saved ourselves all the trouble we have had."

"If the old grandfather was only riveted!" said the Shepherdess. "I wonder if that is dear?"

And he was really riveted. The family had his back ce-

mented, and a great rivet was passed through his neck; he was as good as new, only he could no longer nod.

"It seems you have become proud since you fell to pieces," said the Billygoat-legs-Lieutenant-and-Major-General-War-Commander-Sergeant. "I don't think you have any reason to give yourself such airs. Am I to have her, or am I not?"

And the Chimney-Sweeper and the little Shepherdess looked at the old Chinaman most piteously, for they were afraid he might nod. But he could not do that, and it was irksome to him to tell a stranger that he always had a rivet in his neck. And so the porcelain people remained together, and loved one another until they broke.

THE OLD STREET LAMP.

Did you ever hear the story of the old Street Lamp? It is not very remarkable, but it may be listened to for once in a way.

It was a very honest old Lamp, that had done its work for many, many years, but which was now to be pensioned off. It hung for the last time to its post, and gave light to the street. It felt as an old dancer at the theater, who is dancing for the last time, and who to-morrow will sit forgotten in her garret. The Lamp was in great fear about the morrow, for it knew that it was to appear in the council house, and to be inspected by the mayor and the council, to see if it were fit for further service or not.

And then it was to be decided whether it was to show its light in future for the inhabitants of some suburb, or in the country in some manufactory; perhaps it would have to go at once into an iron foundry to be melted down. In this last case anything might be made of it; but the question whether it would remember, in its new state, that it had been a Street Lamp, troubled it terribly. Whatever might happen, this much was certain, that it would be separated from the watchman and his wife, whom it had got to look upon as quite belonging to its family. When the lamp had been hung up for the first time the watchman was a young, sturdy man; it happened to be the very evening on which he en-

tered on his office. Yes, that was certainly a long time ago, when it first became a Lamp and he a watchman. The wife was a little proud in those days. Only in the evening, when she went by, she deigned to glance at the Lamp; in the daytime never. But now, in these later years, when all three, the watchman, his wife, and the Lamp, had grown old, the wife had also tended it, cleaned it, and provided it with oil. The two people were thoroughly honest; never had they cheated the Lamp of a single drop of the oil provided for it.

It was the Lamp's last night in the street, and to-morrow it was to go to the council house—those were two dark thoughts! No wonder that it did not burn brightly. But many other thoughts passed through its brain. On what a number of events had it shone—how much it had seen! Perhaps as much as the mayor and the whole council had beheld. But it did not give utterance to these thoughts, for it was a good, honest old Lamp, that would not willingly hurt anyone, and least of all those in authority. Many things passed through its mind, and at times its light flashed up. In such moments it had a feeling that it, too, would be remembered.

“There was that handsome young man—it is certainly a long while ago—he had a letter on pink paper with a gilt edge. It was so prettily written, as if by a lady's hand. Twice he read it, and kissed it, and looked up to me with eyes which said plainly, ‘I am the happiest of men!’ Only he and I know what was written in this first letter from his true love. Yes, I remember another pair of eyes. It is wonderful how our thoughts fly about! There was a funeral procession in the street; the young, beautiful lady lay in the decorated hearse, in a coffin adorned with flowers and wreaths; and a number of torches quite darkened my light. The people stood in crowds by the houses, and all followed the procession. But when the torches had passed from before my face, and I looked round, a single person stood leaning against my post, weeping. I shall never forget the mournful eyes that looked up to me!”

This and similar thoughts occupied the old Street Lantern, which shone to-night for the last time.

The sentry, relieved from his post, at least knows who is to succeed him, and may whisper a few words to him; but

the Lamp did not know its successor; and yet it might have given a few useful hints with respect to rain and fog, and some information as to how far the rays of the moon lit up the pavement, from what direction the wind usually came, and much more of the same kind.

On the bridge of the gutter stood three persons who wished to introduce themselves to the Lamp, for they thought the Lamp itself could appoint its successor. The first was a herring's head, that could gleam with light in the darkness. He thought it would be a great saving of oil if they put him upon the post. Number Two was a piece of rotten wood, which also glimmers in the dark. He conceived himself descended from an old stem, once the pride of the forest. The third person was a glowworm. Where this one had come from the Lamp could not imagine; but there it was, and it could give light. But the rotten wood and the herring's head swore by all that was good that it only gave light at certain times, and could not be brought into competition with themselves.

The old Lamp declared that not one of them gave sufficient light to fill the office of a street lamp; but not one of them would believe this. When they heard that the Lamp had not the office to give away, they were very glad of it, and declared that the Lamp was too decrepit to make a good choice.

At the same moment the Wind came careering from the corner of the street, and blew through the air-holes of the old Lamp.

"What's this I hear?" he asked. "Are you to go away to-morrow? Do I see you for the last time? Then I must make you a present at parting. I will blow into your brain-box in such way that you shall be able in future not only to remember everything you have seen and heard, but that you shall have such light within you as shall enable you to see all that is read of or spoken of you in your presence."

"Yes, that is really much, very much!" said the old Lamp. "I thank you heartily. I only hope I shall not be melted down."

"That is not likely to happen at once," said the Wind. "Now I will blow a memory into you: if you receive several presents of this kind, you may pass your old days very agreeably."

"If I am only not melted down!" said the Lamp again. "Or should I retain my memory even in that case?"

"Be sensible, old Lamp," said the Wind. And he blew, and at that moment the Moon stepped forth from behind the clouds.

"What will you give the old Lamp?" asked the Wind.

"I'll give nothing," replied the Moon. "I am on the wane, and the lamps never lighted me; but on the contrary, I've often given light for the lamps."

And with these words the Moon hid herself again behind the clouds, to be safe from further importunity.

A Drop now fell upon the Lamp, as if from the roof; but the Drop explained that it came from the clouds, and was a present—perhaps the best present possible.

"I shall penetrate you so completely that you shall receive the faculty, if you wish it, to turn into rust in one night, and to crumble into dust."

The Lamp considered this a bad present, and the Wind thought so too.

"Does no one give more? Does no one give more?" it blew as loud as it could.

Then a bright shooting star fell down, forming a long, bright stripe.

"What was that?" cried the Herring's Head. "Did not a star fall? I really think it went into the Lamp! Certainly if such high-born personages try for this office, we may say good-night and betake ourselves home."

And so they did, all three. But the old Lamp shed a marvelous strong light around.

"That was a glorious present," it said. "The bright stars which I have always admired, and which shine as I could never shine, though I shone with all my might, have noticed me, a poor old Lamp, and have sent me a present, by giving me the faculty that all I remember and see as clearly as if it stood before me, shall also be seen by all whom I love. And in this lies the true pleasure; for joy that we can not share with others is only half enjoyed."

"That sentiment does honor to your heart," said the Wind. "But for that wax lights are necessary. If these are not lit up in you, your rare faculties will be of no use to others. Look you, the stars did not think of that; they take you

and every other light for wax. But I will go down." And he went down.

"Good heavens! wax lights!" exclaimed the Lamp. "I never had those till now, nor am I likely to get them!—If I am only not melted down!"

The next day—yes, it will be best that we pass over the next day. The next evening the Lamp was resting in a grandfather's chair. And guess where! In the watchman's dwelling. He had begged as a favor of the mayor and council that he might keep the Street Lamp, in consideration of his long and faithful service, for he himself had put up and lit the lantern for the first time on the first day of entering on his duties four and twenty years ago. He looked upon it as his child, for he had no other. And the Lamp was given to him.

Now it lay in the great armchair by the warm stove. It seemed as if the Lamp had grow bigger, now that it occupied the chair all alone.

The old people sat at supper, and looked kindly at the old Lamp, to whom they would willingly have granted a place at their table.

Their dwelling was certainly only a cellar two yards below the footway, and one had to cross a stone passage to get into the room. But within it was very comfortable and warm, and strips of list had been nailed to the door. Everything looked clean and neat, and there were curtains round the bed and the little windows. On the window-sill stood two curious flower-pots, which sailor Christian had brought home from the East, or West Indies. They were only of clay, and represented two elephants. The backs of these creatures had been cut off; and instead of them bloomed from within the earth with which one elephant was filled, some very excellent chives, and that was the kitchen-garden; out of the other grew a great geranium, and that was the flower-garden. On the wall hung a great colored print representing the Congress of Vienna. There you had all the Kings and Emperors at once. A clock with heavy weights went "tick! tick!" and in fact it always went too fast: but the old people declared this was far better than if it went too slow. They ate their supper, and the Street Lamp lay, as I have said, in the armchair close beside the stove. It seemed to the Lamp as if the whole world had

been turned round. But when the old watchman looked at it, and spoke of all that they two had gone through in rain and in fog, in the bright short nights of summer and in the long winter nights, when the snow beat down, and one longed to be at home in the cellar, then the old Lamp found its wits again. It saw everything as clearly as if it was happening then; yes, the Wind has kindled a capital light for it.

The old people were very active and industrious; not a single hour was wasted in idleness. On Sunday afternoon some book or other was brought out; generally a book of travels. And the old man read aloud about Africa, about the great woods, with elephants running about wild; and the woman listened intently, and looked furtively at the clay elephants which served for flower-pots.

"I can almost imagine it to myself!" said she.

And the Lamp wished particularly that a wax candle had been there, and could be lighted up in it; for then the old woman would be able to see everything to the smallest detail, just as the Lamp saw it—the tall trees with great branches all entwined, the naked black men on horseback, and whole droves of elephants crashing through the reeds with their broad clumsy feet.

"Of what use are all my faculties if I can't obtain a wax light?" sighed the Lamp. "They have only oil and tallow candles, and that's not enough."

One day a great number of wax candle-ends came down into the cellar: the larger pieces were burned, and the smaller ones the old woman used for waxing her thread. So there were wax candles enough; but no one thought of putting a little piece into the Lamp.

"Here I stand with my rare faculties!" thought the Lamp. "I carry everything with me, and cannot let them partake of it; they don't know that I am able to cover these white walls with the most gorgeous tapestry, to change them into noble forests, and all that they can possibly wish."

The Lamp, however, was kept neat and clean, and stood all shining in a corner, where it caught the eyes of all. Strangers considered it a bit of old rubbish; but the old people did not care for that; they loved the Lamp.

One day—it was the old watchman's birthday—the old

woman approached the Lantern, smiling to herself, and said:

"I'll make an illumination to-day in honor of my old man!"

And the Lamp rattled its metal cover, for it thought. "Well, at last there will be a light within me." But only oil was produced, and no wax light appeared. The Lamp burned throughout the whole evening, but now understood, only too well, that the gift of the stars would be a hidden treasure for all its life. Then it had a dream: for one possessing its rare faculties to dream was not difficult. It seemed as if the old people were dead, and itself had been taken to the ironfoundry to be melted down. It felt as much alarmed as on that day when it was to appear in the council-house to be inspected by the mayor and council. But though the power had been given to it to fall into rust and dust at will, it did not use this power. It was put in the furnace, and turned into an iron candlestick, as fair a candlestick as you would desire—one on which wax lights were to be burned. It had received the form of an angel holding a great nosegay; and the wax light was to be placed in the middle of the nosegay.

The candlestick had a place assigned to it on a green writing table. The room was very comfortable; many books stood round about the walls, which were hung with beautiful pictures; it belonged to a poet. Everything that he wrote or composed showed itself round about him. Nature appears sometimes in thick dark forests, sometimes in beautiful meadows, where the storks strutted about, sometimes again in a ship sailing on the foaming ocean, or in the blue sky with all its stars.

"What faculties lie hidden in me!" said the old Lamp, when it awoke. "I could almost wish to be melted down! But no! that cannot be so long as the old people live. They love me for myself; they have cleaned me and brought me oil. I am as well off now as the whole Congress, in looking at which they also take pleasure."

And from that time it enjoyed more inward peace; and the honest old Street Lamp had well deserved to enjoy it.

THE LOVERS.

A Whip-Top and a little Ball were together in a drawer among some other toys; and the Top said to the Ball, "Shall we not be bridegroom and bride, as we live together in the same box?"

But the Ball, which had a coat of morocco leather, and was just as conceited as any fine lady, would make no answer to such a proposal.

Next day the little boy came to whom the toys belonged; he painted the Top red and yellow, and hammered a brass nail into it; and it looked splendid when the Top turned round!

"Look at me!" he cried to the Ball. "What do you say now? Shall we not be engaged to each other? We suit one another so well! You jump and I dance! No one could be happier than we two should be."

"Indeed! Do you think so?" replied the little Ball. "Perhaps you do not know my papa and mamma were morocco slippers, and that I have a Spanish cork inside me?"

"Yes, but I am made of mahogany," said the Top; "and the mayor himself turned me. He has a turning lathe of his own, and it amuses him greatly."

"Can I depend upon that?" asked the little Ball.

"May I never be whipped again if it is not true!" replied the Top.

"You can speak well for yourself," observed the Ball, "but I cannot grant your request. I am as good as engaged to a swallow; every time I leap up into the air she puts her head out of her nest and says, 'Will you?' And now I have silently said 'Yes,' and that is as good as half engaged; but I promise I will never forget you."

"Yes, that will be much good!" said the Top.

And they spoke no more to each other.

The next day the Ball was taken out by the boy. The Top saw how it flew high into the air, like a bird; at last one could no longer see it. Each time it came back again, but gave a high leap when it touched the earth, and that was done either from its longing to mount up again, or because

it had a Spanish cork in its body. But the ninth time the little Ball remained absent, and did not come back again; and the boy sought and sought, but it was gone.

"I know very well where it is!" sighed the Top. "It is in the swallow's nest, and has married the swallow."

The more the Top thought of this, the more it longed for the Ball. Just because it could not get the Ball, its love increased; and the fact that the Ball had chosen another formed a peculiar feature in the case. So the Top danced round and hummed, but always thought of the little Ball, which became more and more beautiful in his fancy. Thus several years went by, and now it was an old love.

And the Top was no longer young! But one day he was gilt all over; never had he looked so handsome; he was now a golden Top, and sprang till he hummed again. Yes, that was something worth seeing! But all at once he sprang up too high, and—he was gone.

They looked and looked, even in the cellar, but he was not to be found. Where could he be?

He had jumped into the dustbox, where all kinds of things were lying: cabbage stalks, sweepings, and dust that had fallen down from the roof.

"Here's a nice place to lie in! The gilding will soon leave me here. Among what a rabble have I alighted."

And then he looked sideways at a long, leafless cabbage-stump, and at a curious round thing that looked like an old apple; but it was not an apple—it was an old Ball, which had lain for years in the gutter on the roof, and was quite saturated with water.

"Thank goodness, here comes one of us, with whom one can talk!" said the little Ball, and looked at the gilt Top. "I am really morocco, worked by maiden's hands, and have a Spanish cork within me; but no one would think it, to look at me. I was very nearly marrying a swallow, but I fell into the gutter on the roof, and have lain there full five years, and become quite wet through. You may believe me; that's a long time for a young girl.

But the Top said nothing. He thought of his old love; and the more he heard, the clearer it became to him that this was she.

Then came the servant girl, and wanted to turn out the dustbox.

"Aha! there's a gilt Top!" she cried.

And so the Top was brought again to notice and honor, but nothing was heard of the little Ball. And the Top spoke no more of his old love; for that dies away when the beloved object has lain for five years in a roof gutter and got wet through; yes, one does not know her again when one meets her in the dustbox.

LITTLE TUK.

Yes, that was little Tuk. His name was not really Tuk; but when he could not speak plainly, he used to call himself so. It was to mean "Charley," and it does very well if one only knows it. Now, he was to take care of his little sister Gustava, who was much smaller than he, and at the same time he was to learn his lesson; but these two things would not suit well together. The poor boy sat there with his little sister on his lap, and sang her all kinds of songs that he knew, and every now and then he gave a glance at the geography book that lay open before him: by to-morrow morning he was to know all the towns in Zealand by heart, and to know everything about them that one can well know.

Now his mother came home, for she had been out, and took little Gustava in her arms. Tuk ran quickly to the window, and read so zealously that he had almost read his eyes out, for it became darker and darker; but his mother had no money to buy candles.

"There goes the old washerwoman out of the lane yonder," said his mother, as she looked out of the window. "The poor woman can hardly drag herself along, and now she has to carry the pail of water from the well. Be a good boy, Tuk, and run across, and help the old woman. Won't you?"

And Tuk ran across quickly, and helped her; but when he came back into the room it had become quite dark. There was nothing said about a candle, and now he had to go to bed, and his bed was an old settle. There he lay, and thought of his geography lesson, and of Zealand, and of all the master had said. He ought certainly to have read it again, but he could not do that. So he put the geography

book under his pillow, because he had heard that this is a very good way to learn one's lesson; but one cannot depend upon it. There he lay, and thought and thought; and all at once he fancied someone kissed him upon his eyes and mouth. He slept, and yet he did not sleep; it was just as if the old washerwoman were looking at him with her kind eyes, and saying:

"It would be a great pity if you did not know your lesson to-morrow. You have helped me, therefore now I will help you; and Providence will help us both."

All at once the book began to crawl, crawl about under Tuk's pillow.

"Kikeliki! Put! put!" It was a Hen that came crawling up, and she came from Kjöge. "I'm a Kjöge hen!" *she said very proudly.

And then she told him how many inhabitants were in the town, and about the battle that had been fought there, though that was really hardly worth mentioning.

"Kribli, kribli, plumps!" Something fell down: it was a wooden bird, the parrot from the shooting match at Prästøe. He said that there were just as many inhabitants yonder as he had nails in his body; and he was very proud. "Thorwaldsen lived close to me.† Plumps! Here I lie very comfortably."

But now little Tuk no longer lay in bed; on a sudden he was on horseback. Gallop, gallop! hop, hop! and so he went on. A splendidly attired knight, with flowing plume, held him on the front of the saddle, and so they went riding on through the wood of the old town of Wordinborg, and that was a great and very busy town. On the King's castle rose high towers, and the radiance of lights streamed from every window; within was song and dancing, and King Waldemar and the young, gayly dressed maids of honor danced together. Now the morning came on, and so soon as the sun appeared the whole city and the King's castle

* Kjöge, a little town on Kjöge Bay. Lifting up children by putting the two hands to the side of their heads is called "showing them Kjöge hens."

† Prästøe, a still smaller town. A few hundred paces from it lies the estate of Nysoe, where Thorwaldsen usually lived when he was in Denmark, and where he executed many immortal works.

suddenly sank down, one tower falling after another; and at last only one remained standing on the hill where the castle had formerly been;* and the town was very small and poor, and the schoolboys came with their books under their arms, and said, "Two thousand inhabitants," but that was not true, for the town had not so many.

And little Tuk lay in his bed, as if he dreamed, and yet as if he did not dream; but someone stood close beside him.

"Little Tuk! little Tuk!" said the voice. It was a seaman, quite a little personage, as small as if he had been a cadet; but he was not a cadet. "I'm to bring you a greeting from Corsör; † that is a town which is just in good progress—a lively town that has steamers and mail coaches. In times past they used always to call it ugly, but that is now no longer true.

"I lie by the seashore," said Corsör. 'I have high roads and pleasure gardens; and I gave birth to a poet who was witty and entertaining, and that cannot be said of all of them. I wanted once to fit out a ship that was to sail round the world; but I did not do that, though I might have done it. But I smell deliciously, for close to my gates the loveliest roses bloom.'

Little Tuk looked, and it seemed red and green before his eyes; but when the confusion of color had a little passed by, it changed all at once into a wooden declivity close by a bay, and high above it stood a glorious old church with two high pointed towers. Out of this hill flowed springs of water in thick columns, so that there was a continual splashing, and close by sat an old King with a golden crown upon his white head: that was King Hroar of the springs, close by the town of Roeskilde, as it is now called. And up the hill into the old church went all the Kings and Queens of Denmark, hand in hand, all with golden crowns; and the organ played, and the springs plashed. Little Tuk saw all and heard all.

* Wordinborg, in King Waldemar's time a considerable town, now a place of no importance. Only a lonely tower and a few remains of a wall show where the castle once stood.

† Corsör, on the Great Belt, used to be called the most tiresome of Danish towns before the establishment of steamers; for in those days travelers had often to wait there for a favorable wind. The poet Baggesen was born there.

"Don't forget the towns,"‡ said King Hroar.

At once everything had vanished, and whither? It seemed to him like turning a leaf in a book. And now stood there an old peasant woman, who came from Sorøe, where grass grows in the market-place; she had an apron of gray cotton thrown over her head and shoulders, and the apron was very wet; it must have been raining.

"Yes, that it has!" said she; and she knew many pretty things out of Holberg's plays, and about Waldemar and Absalom. But all at once she cowered down, and wagged her head as if she were about to spring. "Koax!" said she, "it is wet! it is wet! There is a very agreeable death-silence in Sorøe!"* Now she changed all at once into a frog—"Koax!"—and then she became an old woman again. "One must dress according to the weather," she said. "It is wet! it is wet! My town is just like a bottle: one goes in at the cork, and must come out again at the rock. In old times I had capital fish, and now I've fresh red cheeked boys in the bottom of the bottle, and they learn wisdom—Hebrew, Greek.—Koax!"

That sounded just like the croak of the frogs, or the sound of someone marching across the moor in great boots; always the same note, so monotonous and wearisome that little Tuk fairly fell asleep, and that could not hurt him at all.

But even in this sleep came a dream, or whatever it was. His little sister Gustava with the blue eyes and the fair curly hair was all at once a tall slender maiden, and without having wings she could fly; and now they flew over Zealand, over the green forests and the blue lakes.

"Do you hear the cock crow, little Tuk? Kikeliki! The fowls are flying up out of Kjøge! You shall have a poultry

‡ Roeskilde (Roesquelle, Rose-spring, falsely called Rothschild), once the capital of Denmark. The town took its name from King Hroar and from the many springs in the vicinity. In the beautiful cathedral most of the Kings and Queens of Denmark are buried. In Roeskilde the Danish Estates used to assemble.

* Sorøe, a very quiet little town, in a fine situation, surrounded by forests and lakes. Holberg, the Molière of Denmark, here founded a noble academy. The poets Hanch and Ingman were professors here.

yard—a great, great poultry yard! You shall not suffer hunger nor need; and you shall hit the bird, as the saying is; you shall become a rich and happy man. Your house shall rise up like King Waldemar's tower, and shall be richly adorned with marble statues, like those of Præstøe. You understand me well. Your name shall travel with fame round the whole world, like the ship that was to sail from Corsör."

"Don't forget the town," said King Hroar. "You will speak well and sensibly, little Tuk; and when at last you descend to your grave, you shall sleep peacefully——"

"As if I lay in Sorøe," said Tuk, and he awoke. It was bright morning, and he could not remember his dream. But that was not necessary, for one must not know what is to happen.

Now he sprang quickly out of his bed, and read his book, and all at once he knew his whole lesson. The old washer-woman, too, put her head in at the door, nodded to him in a friendly way, and said:

"Thank you, you good child, for your help. May your beautiful dreams come true."

Little Tuk did not know all what he had dreamed, but there was One above who knew it.

THE FLAX.

The Flax stood in blossom; it had pretty little blue flowers, delicate as a moth's wings, and even more delicate. The sun shone on the Flax, and the rain-clouds moistened it, and this was just as good for it as it is for little children when they are washed, and afterward get a kiss from their mother; they become much prettier, and so did the Flax.

"The people say that I stand uncommonly well," said the Flax, "and that I'm fine and long, and shall make a capital piece of linen. How happy I am! I'm certainly the happiest of beings. How well I am off! And I may come to something! How the sunshine gladdens, and the rain tastes good and refreshes me! I'm the happiest of beings."

"Yes, yes, yes!" said the Hedge-stake. "You don't know

the world, but we do, for we have knots in us;" and then it creaked out mournfully:

"Snip-snap-snurre,
Bassellurre!
The song is done."

"No, it is not done," said the Flax. "To-morrow the sun will shine, or the rain will refresh us. I feel that I'm growing, I feel that I'm in blossom! I'm the happiest of beings."

But one day the people came and took the Flax by the head and pulled it up by the root. That hurt; and it was laid in water as if they were going to drown it, and then put on the fire as if it was going to be roasted. It was quite fearful!

"One can't always have good times," said the Flax. "One must make one's own experiences, and so one gets to know something."

Bad times certainly came. The Flax was moistened and roasted, and broken and hackled. Yes, it did not even know what the operations were called that they did with it. It was put on the spinning-wheel—whirr! whirr! whirr—it was not possible to collect one's thoughts.

"I have been uncommonly happy!" it thought in all its pain. "One must be content with the good one has enjoyed! Contented! contented! Oh!" And it continued to say that when it was put into the loom, and until it became a large beautiful piece of linen. All the Flax, to the last stalk, was used in making one piece.

"But this is quite remarkable! I should never have believed it! How favorable fortune is to me! The Hedge-stake was well informed, truly, with it:

"Snip-snap-snurre,
Bassellurre!

The song is not done by any means. Now it's beginning in earnest. That's quite remarkable! If I've suffered something, I've been made into something! I'm the happiest of all! How strong and fine I am, and how white and long! That's something different from being a mere plant: even if one bears flowers, one is not attended to, and only gets

watered when it rains. Now I'm attended to and cherished: the maid turns me over every morning, and I get a shower bath from the watering-pot every evening. Yes, the clergyman's wife has even made a speech about me, and says I'm the best piece in the whole parish. I cannot be happier!"

Now the linen was taken into the house, and put under the scissors: how they cut and tore it and then pricked it with needles! That was not pleasant; but twelve pieces of body linen, of a kind not often mentioned by name, but indispensable to all people, were made of it—a whole dozen!

Just look! Now something has really been made of me! So that was my destiny. That's a real blessing. Now I shall be of some use in the world, and that's right, that's a true pleasure! We've been made into twelve things, but yet we're all one and the same; we're just a dozen: how remarkably charming that is!"

Years rolled on, and now they would hold together no longer.

"It must be over one day," said each piece. "I would gladly have held together a little longer, but one must not expect impossibilities."

They were now torn into pieces and fragments. They thought it was all over now, for they were hacked to shreds, and softened and boiled; yes, they themselves did not know all that was done to them; and then they became beautiful white Paper.

"Now, that is a surprise, and a glorious surprise!" said the Paper. "Now, I'm finer than before, and I shall be written on: that is remarkable good fortune."

And really the most beautiful stories and verses were written upon it, and only once there came a blot; that was certainly remarkable good fortune. And the people heard what was upon it; it was sensible and good, and made people much more sensible and better: there was a great blessing in the words that were on this Paper.

"That is more than I ever imagined when I was a little blue flower in the fields. How could I fancy that I should ever spread joy and knowledge among men? I can't yet understand it myself, but it is really so. I have done nothing but what I was obliged with my weak powers to do for my own preservation, and yet I have been promoted from one joy and honor to another. Each time when I think 'the

song is done,' it begins again in a higher and better way. Now I shall certainly be sent about to journey through the world, so that all people may read me. That cannot be otherwise; it's the only probable thing. I've splendid thoughts, as many as I had pretty flowers in the old times. I'm the happiest of beings."

But the Paper was not sent on its travels; it was sent to the printer, and everything that was written upon it was set up in type for a book, or rather for many hundreds of books, for in this way a very far greater number could derive pleasure and profit from the book than if the one paper on which it was written had run about the world, to be worn out before it had got half-way.

"Yes, that is certainly the wisest way," thought the Written Paper. "I really did not think of that. I shall stay at home, and be held in honor, just like an old grandfather; and I am really the grandfather of all these books. Now something can be effected: I could not have wandered about thus. He who wrote all this looked at me; every word flowed from his pen right into me. I am the happiest of all."

Then the Paper was tied together in a bundle, and thrown into a tub that stood in the wash-house.

"It's good resting after work," said the Paper. "It is very right that one should collect one's thoughts. Now I'm able for the first time to think of what is in me, and to know oneself is true progress. What will be done with me now? At any rate I shall go forward again; I'm always going forward. I've found that out."

Now, one day all the Paper was taken out and laid by on the hearth; it was to be burned, for it might not be sold to hucksters to be used for covering for butter and sugar, they said. And all the children in the house stood round about, for they wanted to see the Paper burn, that flamed up so prettily, and afterward one could see many red sparks among the ashes, careering here and there. One after another faded out quick as the wind, and that they called "seeing the children come out of school," and the last spark was the schoolmaster; one of them thought he had already gone, but at the next moment there came another spark. "There goes the schoolmaster!" they said. Yes, they all knew about it; they should have known who it was that went there: we

shall get to know it, but they did not. All the old Paper, the whole bundle, was laid upon the fire, and it was soon alight. "Ugh!" it said, and burst out into bright flame. Ugh! that was not very agreeable, but when the whole was wrapped in bright flames these mounted up higher than the Flax had ever been able to lift its little blue flowers, and glittered as the white Linen had never been able to glitter. All the written letters turned for a moment quite red, and all the words and thoughts turned to flame.

"Now I'm mounting straight up to the sun," said a voice in the flame; and it was as if a thousand voices said this in unison; and the flames mounted up through the chimney and out at the top, and, more delicate than the flames, invisible to human eyes, little tiny beings floated there, as many as there had been blossoms on the Flax. They were lighter even than the flames from which they were born; and when the flame was extinguished, and nothing remained of the Paper but black ashes, they danced over it once more, and where they touched the black mass the little red sparks appeared. The children came out of school, and the school-master was the last of all. That was fun! and the children sang over the dead ashes:

"Snip-snap-snurre,
Bassellurre!
The song is done."

But the little invisible beings all said:

"The song is never done, that is the best of all. I know it, and therefore I'm the happiest of all."

But the children could neither hear that nor understand it, nor ought they, for children must not know everything.

THE GIRL WHO TROD ON THE LOAF.

The story of the girl who trod on the loaf to avoid soiling her shoes, and of the misfortune that befell this girl, is well known. It has been written, and even printed.

The girl's name was Ingé: she was a poor child, but proud and presumptuous; there was a bad foundation in her, as

the saying is. When she was quite a little child, it was her delight to catch flies, and tear off their wings, so as to convert them into creeping things. Grown older, she would take cockchafers and beetles, and spit them on pins. Then she pushed a green leaf or a little scrap of paper toward their feet, and the poor creatures seized it, and held it fast, and turned it over and over, struggling to get free from the pin.

"The cockchafer is reading," Ingé would say. "See how he turns the leaf round and round!"

With years she grew worse rather than better; but she was pretty, and that was her misfortune; otherwise she would have been more sharply reprov'd than she was.

"Your headstrong will requires something strong to break it!" her own mother often said. "As a little child, you used to trample on my apron; but I fear you will one day trample on my heart."

And that is what she really did.

She was sent into the country, in service in the house of rich people, who kept her as their own child, and dressed her in corresponding style. She looked well, and her presumption increased.

When she had been there about a year, her mistress said to her, "You ought once to visit your parents, Ingé."

And Ingé set out to visit her parents, but it was only to show herself in her native place, and that the people there might see how grand she had become; but when she came to the entrance of the village, and the young husbandmen and maids stood there chatting, and her own mother appeared among them, sitting on a stone to rest, and with a faggot of sticks before her that she had picked up in the wood, then Ingé turned back, for she felt ashamed that she, who was so finely dressed, should have for a mother a ragged woman who picked up wood in the forest. She did not turn back out of pity for her mother's poverty; she was only angry.

And another half-year went by, and her mistress said again, "You ought to go to your home, and visit your old parents, Ingé. I'll make you a present of a great wheaten loaf that you may give to them: they will certainly be glad to see you again."

And Ingé put on her best clothes, and her new shoes, and

drew her skirts around her, and set out, stepping very carefully, that she might be clean and neat about the feet; and there was no harm in that. But when she came to the place where the footway led across the moor, and where there was mud and puddles, she threw the loaf into the mud, and trod upon it to pass over without wetting her feet. But as she stood there, with one foot upon the loaf and the other uplifted to step farther, the loaf sank with her, deeper and deeper, till she disappeared altogether, and only a great puddle, from which the bubbles rose, remained where she had been.

And that's the story.

But whither did Ingé go? She sank into the moor ground, and went down to the Moor Woman, who is always brewing there. The Moor Woman is cousin to the Elf Maidens, who are well known, of whom songs are sung, and whose pictures are printed; but concerning the Moor Woman it is only known that when the meadows steam in summer-time, it is because she is brewing. Into the Moor Woman's brewery did Ingé sink down; and no one can endure that place long. A box of mud is a place compared with the Moor Woman's brewery. Every barrel there has an odor that almost takes away one's senses; and the barrels stand close to each other; and wherever there is a little opening among them, through which one might push one's way, the passage becomes impracticable from the number of damp toads and fat snakes who sit out their time there. Among this company did Ingé fall; and all the horrible mass of living, creeping things was so icy cold, that she shuddered in all her limbs, and became stark and stiff. She continued fastened to the loaf, and the loaf drew her down as an amber button draws a fragment of straw.

The Moor Woman was at home, and on that day there were visitors in the brewery. These visitors were Old Bogey and his grandmother, who came to inspect it; and Bogey's grandmother is a venomous old woman, who is never idle; she never rides out to pay a visit without taking her work with her; and accordingly she had brought it on the day in question. She sewed biting leather to be worked into men's shoes, and which makes them wander about, unable to settle anywhere. She wove webs of lies, and strung together hastily-spoken words that had fallen to the ground; and all

this was done for the injury and ruin of mankind. Yes, she knew how to sew, to weave, and to string, this old grandmother!

Catching sight of Ingé, she put up her double eyeglass, and took another look at the girl.

"That's a girl who has ability!" she observed, "and I beg you will give me the little one as a memento of my visit here. She'll make a capital statue to stand in my grandson's ante-chamber."

And Ingé was given up to her, and this is how Ingé came into Bogey's domain. People don't always go there by the direct path, but they can get there by roundabout routes if they have a tendency in that direction.

That was a never-ending ante-chamber. The visitor became giddy who looked forward, and doubly giddy when he looked back, and saw a whole crowd of people, almost utterly exhausted, waiting till the gate of mercy should be opened to them—they had to wait a long time! Great fat, waddling spiders spun webs of a thousand years over their feet, and these webs cut like wire, and bound them like bronze fetters; and, moreover, there was an eternal unrest working in every heart—a miserable unrest. The miser stood there, and had forgotten the key of his strong box, and he knew the key was sticking in the lock. It would take too long to describe the various sorts of torture that were found there together. Ingé felt a terrible pain while she had to stand there as a statue, for she was tied fast to the loaf.

"That's the fruit of wishing to keep one's feet neat and tidy," she said to herself. "Just look how they're all staring at me!"

Yes, certainly, the eyes of all were fixed upon her, and their evil thoughts gleamed forth from their eyes, and they spoke to one another, moving their lips, from which no sound whatever came forth: they were very horrible to behold.

"It must be a great pleasure to look at me!" thought Ingé, "and indeed I have a pretty face and fine clothes." And she turned her eyes, for she could not turn her head, her neck was too stiff for that. But she had not considered how her clothes had been soiled in the Moor Woman's brew-house. Her garments were covered with mud; a snake had

fastened in her hair, and dangling down her back; and out of each fold of her frock a great toad looked forth, croaking like an asthmatic poodle. That was very disconcerting. "But all the rest of them down here look horrible," she observed to herself, and derived consolation from the thought.

The worst of all was the terrible hunger that tormented her. But could she not stoop and break off a piece of the loaf on which she stood? No, her back was so stiff, her hands and arms were benumbed, and her whole body was like a pillar of stone; only she was able to turn her eyes in her head, to turn them quite round, so that she could see backward: it was an ugly sight. And then the flies came up, and crept to and fro over her eyes, and she blinked her eyes, but the flies would not go away, for they could not fly: their wings had been pulled out, so that they were converted into creeping insects: it was horrible torment added to the hunger, for she felt empty, quite, entirely empty.

"If this lasts much longer," she said, "I shall not be able to bear it."

But she had to bear it, and it lasted on and on.

Then a hot tear fell down upon her head, rolled over her face and neck, down on to the loaf on which she stood; and then another tear rolled down, followed by many more. Who might be weeping for Ingé? Had she not still a mother in the world? The tears of sorrow which a mother weeps for her child always make their way to the child; but they do not relieve it; they only increase its torment. And now to bear this unendurable hunger, and yet not be able to touch the loaf on which she stood! She felt as if she had been feeding on herself, and had become like a thin, hollow reed that takes in every sound, for she heard everything that was said of her up in the world, and all that she heard was hard and evil. Her mother, indeed, wept much and sorrowed for her, but for all that she said, "A haughty spirit goes before a fall. That was thy ruin, Ingé. Thou hast sorely grieved thy mother."

Her mother and all on earth knew of the sin she had committed; knew that she had trodden upon the loaf, and had sunk and disappeared; for the cowherd had seen it from the hill beside the moor.

"Greatly hast thou grieved thy mother, Ingé," said the mother; "yes, yes, I thought it would be thus."

"Oh, that I never had been born!" thought Ingé: "it would have been far better. But what use is my mother's weeping now?"

And she heard how her master and mistress, who had kept and cherished her like kind parents, now said she was a sinful child, and did not value the gifts of God, but trampled them under her feet, and that the gates of mercy would only open slowly to her.

"They should have punished me," thought Ingé, "and have driven out the whims I had in my head."

She heard how a complete song was made about her, a song of the proud girl who trod upon the loaf to keep her shoes clean, and she heard how the song was sung everywhere.

"That I should have to bear so much evil for that!" thought Ingé; "the others ought to be punished, too, for their sins. Yes, then there would be plenty of punishing to do. Ah, how I'm being tortured!"

And her heart became harder than her outward form.

"Here in this company one can't even become better," she said, "and I don't want to become better! Look how they're all staring at me!" And her heart was full of anger and malice against all men. "Now they've something to talk about at last up yonder. Ah, how I am being tortured!"

And then she heard how her story was told to the little children, and the little ones called her the godless Ingé, and said that she was so naughty and ugly that she must be well punished.

Thus even the children's mouths spoke hard words of her.

But one day, while grief and hunger gnawed her hollow frame, and she heard her name mentioned and her story told to an innocent child, a little girl, she became aware that the little one burst into tears at the tale of the haughty, vain Ingé.

"But will Ingé never come up here again?" asked the little girl.

And the reply was, "She will never come up again."

"But if she were to say she was sorry, and to beg pardon, and say she would never do so again?"

"Yes, then she might come; but she will not beg pardon," was the reply.

"I should be so glad if she would," said the little girl; and she appeared to be quite inconsolable. "I'll give my doll and all my playthings if she may only come up. It's too dreadful—poor Ingé!"

And these words penetrated to Ingé's inmost heart, and seemed to do her good. It was the first time anyone had said "Poor Ingé," without adding anything about her faults: a little innocent child was weeping and praying for mercy for her. It made her feel quite strangely, and she herself would gladly have wept, but she could not weep, and that was a torment in itself.

While years were passing above her, for where she was there was no change, she heard herself spoken of more and more seldom. At last one day a sigh struck on her ear: "Ingé, Ingé, how you have grieved me! I said how it would be!" It was the last sigh of her dying mother.

Occasionally she heard her name spoken by her former employers, and they were pleasant words when the woman said, "Shall I ever see thee again, Ingé? One knows not what may happen?"

But Ingé knew right well that her good mistress would never come to the place where she was.

And again time went on—a long, bitter time. Then Ingé heard her name pronounced once more, and saw two bright stars that seemed gleaming above her. They were two gentle eyes closing upon earth. So many years had gone by since the little girl had been inconsolable and wept about "poor Ingé," that the child had become an old woman, and was now to be called home to heaven; and in the last hour of existence, when the events of the whole life stand at once before us, the old woman remembered how as a child she had cried heartily at the story of Ingé.

And the eyes of the old woman closed, and the eye of her soul was opened to look upon the hidden things. She, in whose last thoughts Ingé had been present so vividly, saw how deeply the poor girl had sunk, and burst into tears at the sight; in heaven she stood like a child, and wept for poor Ingé. And her tears and prayers sounded like an echo in the dark empty space that surrounded the tormented, captive soul, and the unhoped-for love from above conquered her, for an angel was weeping for her. Why was this vouchsafed to her? The tormented soul seemed

to gather in her thoughts every deed she had done on earth, and she, Ingé, trembled and wept such tears as she had never yet wept. She was filled with sorrow about herself: it seemed as though the gate of mercy could never open to her; and while in deep penitence she acknowledged this, a beam of light shot radiantly down into the depths to her, with a greater force than that of the sunbeam which melts the snow man the boys have built up; and quicker than the snowflake melts and becomes a drop of water that falls on the warm lips of a child, the stony form of Ingé was changed to mist, and a little bird soared with the speed of lightning upward into the world of men. But the bird was timid and shy toward all things around; he was ashamed of himself, ashamed to encounter any living thing, and hurriedly sought to conceal himself in a dark hole in an old crumbling wall; there he sat cowering, trembling through his whole frame, and unable to utter a sound, for he had no voice. Long he sat there before he could rightly see all the beauty around him; for it was beautiful. The air was fresh and mild, the moon cast its mild radiance over the earth; trees and bushes exhaled fragrance, and it was right pleasant where he sat, and his coat of feathers was clean and pure. How all creation seemed to speak of beneficence and love! The bird wanted to sing of the thoughts that stirred in his breast, but he could not; gladly would he have sung as the cuckoo and the nightingale sang in the springtime. But Heaven, that hears the mute song of praise of the worm, could hear the notes of praise which now trembled in the breast of the bird, as David's psalms were heard before they had fashioned themselves into words and song.

For weeks these toneless songs stirred within the bird; at last the holy Christmas time approached. The peasant who dwelt near set up a pole by the old wall, with some ears of corn bound to the top, that the birds of heaven might have a good meal, and rejoice in the happy, blessed time.

And on Christmas morning the sun arose and shone upon the ears of corn, which were surrounded by a number of twittering birds. Then out of the hole in the wall streamed forth the voice of another bird, and the bird soared forth from his hiding place; and in heaven it was well known what bird this was.

It was a hard winter. The ponds were covered with ice,

and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air were stinted for food. Our little bird soared away over the high road, and in the ruts of the sledges he found here and there a grain of corn, and at the halting places some crumbs. Of these he ate only a few, but he called all the other hungry sparrows around him, that they, too, might have some food. He flew into the towns, and looked round about; and wherever a kind hand had strewn bread on the window sill for the birds, he only ate a single crumb himself, and gave all the rest to the other birds.

In the course of the winter, the bird had collected so many bread crumbs, and given them to the other birds, that they equaled the weight of the loaf on which Ingé had trod to keep her shoes clean; and when the last bread crumb had been found and given, the gray wings of the bird became white, and spread far out.

"Yonder is a sea swallow, flying away across the water," said the children, when they saw the white bird. Now it dived into the sea, and now it rose again into the clear sunlight. It gleamed white; but no one could tell whither it went, though some asserted that it flew straight into the sun.

THE MONEY PIG.

In the nursery a number of toys lay strewn about; high up, on the wardrobe, stood the money box, made of clay and purchased of the potter, and it was in the shape of a little pig; of course the pig had a slit in his back, and this slit had been so enlarged with a knife that whole dollar pieces could slip through; and, indeed, two such had slipped into the box, besides a number of pence. The Money Pig was stuffed so full that it could no longer rattle, and that is the highest point of perfection a money pig can attain. There it stood upon the cupboard, high and lofty, looking down upon everything else in the room. It knew very well that what it had in its stomach would have bought all the toys, and that is what we call having self-respect.

The others thought of that too, even if they did not exactly express it, for there were many other things to speak of. One of the drawers was half pulled out, and there lay

a great, handsome Doll, though she was somewhat old, and her neck had been mended. She looked out and said:

"Now we'll play at men and women, for that is always something!"

And now there was a general uproar, and even the framed prints on the walls turned round and showed that there was a wrong side to them; but they did not do it to protest against the proposal.

It was late at night; the moon shone through the window frames and afforded the cheapest light. The game was now to begin, and all even the children's Go-Cart, which certainly belonged to the coarser playthings, were invited to take part in the sport.

"Each one has his own peculiar value," said the Go-Cart; "we cannot all be noblemen. There must be some who do the work, as the saying is."

The Money Pig was the only one who received a written invitation, for he was of high standing, and they were afraid he would not accept a verbal message. Indeed, he did not answer to say whether he would come, nor did he come: if he was to take a part, he must enjoy the sport from his own home; they were to arrange accordingly, and so they did.

The little toy theater was now put up in such a way that the Money Pig could look directly in. They wanted to begin with a comedy, and afterward there was to be a tea party and a discussion for mental improvement, and with this latter part they began immediately. The Rocking Horse spoke of training and races, the Go-Cart of railways and steam power, for all this belonged to their profession, and it was quite right they should talk of it. The Clock talked politics—ticks—ticks—and knew what was the time of day, though it was whispered he did not go correctly; the Bamboo Cane stood there, stiff and proud, for he was conceited about his brass ferrule and his silver top, for being thus bound above and below; and on the sofa lay two worked Cushions, pretty and stupid, and now the play began.

All sat and looked on, and it was requested that the audience should applaud and crack and stamp according as they were gratified. But the Riding Whip said he never cracked

for old people, only for young ones who were not yet married.

"I crack for everything," said the Cracker.

All these were the thoughts they had while the play went on. The piece was worthless, but it was well played; all the characters turned their painted side to the audience, for they were so made that they should only be looked at from that side, and not from the other; and all played wonderfully well, coming out quite beyond the lamps, because the wires were a little too long, but that only made them come out the more. The darned Doll was quite exhausted with excitement—so thoroughly exhausted that she burst at the darned place in her neck, and the Money Pig was so enchanted in his way that he formed the resolution to do something for one of the players, and to remember him in his will as the one who should be buried with him in the family vault, when matters were so far advanced.

It was true enjoyment, such true enjoyment that they quite gave up the thoughts of tea, and only carried out the idea of mental recreation. That's what they called playing at men and women; and there was nothing wrong in it, for they were only playing; and each one thought of himself and of what the Money Pig might think; and the Money Pig thought farthest of all, for he thought of making his will and of his burial. And when might this come to pass? Certainly far sooner than was expected. Crack! it fell down from the cupboard—fell on the ground, and was broken to pieces; and the pennies hopped and danced in comical style: the little ones turned round like tops, and the bigger ones rolled away, particularly the one great silver dollar who wanted to go out into the world. And he came out into the world, and they all succeeded in doing so. And the pieces of the Money Pig were put into the dust bin; but the next day a new Money Pig was standing on the cupboard: it had not yet a farthing in its stomach, and therefore could not rattle, and in this it was like the other. And that was a beginning—and with that we will make an end.

THE DARNING-NEEDLE.

There was once a Darning-Needle, who thought herself so fine, she imagined she was an embroidering needle.

"Take care, and mind you hold me tight!" she said to the Fingers which took her out. "Don't let me fall! If I fall on the ground I shall certainly never be found again, for I am so fine!"

"That's as it may be," said the Fingers; and they grasped her round the body.

"See, I'm coming with a train!" said the Darning-Needle, and she drew a long thread after her, but there was no knot in the thread.

The Fingers pointed the needle just at the cook's slipper, in which the upper leather had burst, and was to be sewn together.

"That's vulgar work," said the Darning-Needle. "I shall never get through. I'm breaking! I'm breaking!" And she really broke. "Did I not say so?" said the Darning-Needle; "I'm too fine."

"Now it's quite useless," said the Fingers; but they were obliged to hold her fast, all the same; for the cook dropped some sealing wax upon the needle, and pinned her handkerchief together with it in front.

"So now I'm a breastpin!" said the Darning-Needle. "I knew very well that I should come to honor: when one is something, one comes to something."

And she laughed quietly to herself—and one can never see when a Darning-Needle laughs. There she sat, as proud as if she was in a state coach, and looked all about her.

May I be permitted to ask if you are of gold?" she inquired of the pin, her neighbor. "You have a very pretty appearance, and a peculiar head, but it is only little. You must take pains to grow, for it's not everyone that has sealing wax dropped upon him."

And the Darning-Needle drew herself up so proudly that she fell out of the handkerchief right into the sink, which the cook was rinsing out.

"Now we're going on a journey," said the Darning-Needle. "If I only don't get lost."

But she really was lost.

"I'm too fine for this world," she observed, as she lay in the gutter. "But I know who I am, and there's always something in that."

So the Darning-Needle kept her proud behavior, and did not lose her good humor. And things of many kinds swam over her, chips and straws and pieces of old newspapers.

"Only look how they sail!" said the Darning-Needle. "They don't know what is under them! I'm here; I remain firmly here. See, there goes a chip thinking of nothing in the world but of himself—of a chip! There's a straw going by now. How he turns! How he twirls about! Don't think only of yourself; you might easily run up against a stone. There swims a bit of newspaper. What's written upon it has long been forgotten, and yet it gives itself airs. I sit quietly and patiently here. I know who I am, and I shall remain what I am."

One day something lay close beside her that glittered splendidly; then the Darning-Needle believed that it was a diamond; but it was a Bit of broken Bottle; and because it shone, the Darning-Needle spoke to it, introducing herself as a breastpin.

"I suppose you are a diamond?" she observed.

"Why, yes, something of that kind."

And then each believed the other to be a very valuable thing; and they began speaking about the world, and how very conceited it was.

"I have been in a lady's box, said the Darning-Needle, "and this lady was a cook. She had five fingers on each hand, and I never saw anything so conceited as those five fingers. And yet they were only there that they might take me out of the box, and put me back into it."

"Were they of good birth?" asked the Bit of Bottle.

"No, indeed," replied the Darning-Needle, "but very haughty. There were five brothers, all of the Finger family. They kept very proudly together, though they were of different lengths: the outermost, the thumbing, was short and fat; he walked out in front of the ranks, and only had one joint in his back, and could only make a single bow; but he said if he were hacked off from a man, that man was useless from service in war. Dainty-mouth, the second finger, thrust himself into sweet and sour, pointed to the sun and

moon, and gave the impression when they wrote. Longman, the third, looked at all the others over his shoulder. Goldborder, the fourth, went about with a golden belt round his waist; and little Playman did nothing at all, and was proud of it. There was nothing but bragging among them, and therefore I went away."

"And now we sit here and glitter!" said the Bit of Bottle.

At that moment more water came into the gutter, so that it overflowed, and the Bit of Bottle was carried away.

"So, he is disposed of," observed the Darning-Needle. "I remain here, I am too fine. But that's my pride, and my pride is honorable." And proudly she sat there, and had many great thoughts. "I could almost believe I had been born of a sunbeam, I'm so fine. It really appears to me as if the sunbeams were always seeking for me under the water. Ah! I'm so fine that my mother cannot find me. If I had my old eye, which broke off, I think I should cry; but, no, I should not do that; it's not genteel to cry."

One day a couple of street boys lay grubbing in the gutter, where they sometimes found old nails, farthings, and similar treasures. It was dirty work, but they took great delight in it.

"Oh!" cried one, who had pricked himself with the Darning-Needle. "There's a fellow for you."

"I'm not a fellow, I'm a young lady," said the Darning-Needle.

But nobody listened to her. The sealing wax had come off, and she had turned black; but black makes one look slender, and she thought herself finer even than before.

"Here comes an egg-shell sailing along," said the boys; and they stuck the Darning-Needle fast into the egg-shell.

"White walls, and black myself! that looks well," re-remarked the Darning Needle. "Now one can see me. I only hope I shall not be seasick!" But she was not seasick at all. "It is good against seasickness, if one has a steel stomach, and does not forget that one is a little more than an ordinary person! Now my seasickness is over. The finer one is, the more one can bear."

"Crack!" went the egg-shell, for a handbarrow went over her.

“Good Heavens, how it crushes one!” said the Darning-Needle. “I’m getting seasick now—I’m quite sick.”

But she was not really sick, though the handbarrow went over her; she lay there at full length, and there she may lie.

THE FIR TREE.

Out in the forest stood a pretty little Fir Tree. It had a good place; it could have sunlight, air there was in plenty, and all around grew many larger comrades—pines as well as firs. But the little Fir Tree wished ardently to become greater. It did not care for the warm sun and the fresh air; it took no notice of the peasant children, who went about talking together, when they had come out to look for strawberries and raspberries. Often they came with a whole pot-full, or had strung berries on a straw; then they would sit down by the little Fir Tree and say, “How pretty and small that one is!” and the Fir Tree did not like to hear that at all.

Next year he had grown a great joint, and the following year he was longer still, for in fir trees one can always tell by the number of rings they have how many years they have been growing.

“Oh, if I were only as great a tree as the other!” sighed the little Fir, “then I would spread my branches far around, and look out from my crown into the wide world. The birds would then build nests in my boughs, and when the wind blew I could nod just as grandly as the others yonder.”

It took no pleasure in the sunshine, in the birds, and in the red clouds that went sailing over him morning and evening.

When it was winter, and the snow lay all around, white and sparkling, a hare would often come jumping along, and spring right over the little Fir Tree. Oh! this made him so angry. But two winters went by, and when the third came the little Tree had grown so tall that the hare was obliged to run round it.

“Oh! to grow, to grow, and become old; that’s the only fine thing in the world,” thought the Tree.

In the autumn woodcutters always came and felled a few

of the largest trees; that was done this year too, and the little Fir tree, that was now quite well grown, shuddered with fear, for the great stately trees fell to the ground with a crash, and their branches were cut off, so that the trees looked quite naked, long, and slender—they could hardly be recognized. But then they were laid upon wagons, and horses dragged them away out of the wood. Where were they going? What destiny awaited them?

In the spring, when the Swallows and the Stork came, the Tree asked them, "Do you know where they were taken Did you not meet them?"

The Swallows knew nothing about it, but the Stork looked thoughtful, nodded his head, and said:

"Yes, I think so. I met many new ships when I flew out of Egypt; on the ships were stately masts; I fancy these were the trees. They smelt like fir. I can assure you they're stately—very stately."

"Oh that I were only big enough to go over the sea! What kind of thing is this sea, and how does it look?"

"It would take too long to explain all that," said the Stork, and he went away.

"Rejoice in thy youth," said the Sunbeams; "rejoice in thy fresh growth, and in the young life that is within thee."

And the wind kissed the Tree, and the dew wept tears upon it; but the Fir Tree did not understand that.

When Christmas-time approached, quite young trees were felled, sometimes trees which were neither so old nor so large as this Fir Tree, that never rested, but always wanted to go away. These young trees, which were always the most beautiful, kept all their branches; they were put upon wagons, and horses dragged them away out of the wood.

"Where are they all going?" asked the Fir Tree. "They are not greater than I—indeed, one of them was much smaller. Why do they keep all their branches? Whither are they taken?"

"We know that! We know that!" chirped the Sparrows. "Yonder in the town we looked in at the windows. We know where they go. Oh! they are dressed up in the greatest pomp and splendor that can be imagined. We have looked in at the windows, and have perceived that they are planted in the middle of a warm room, and adorned with the

most beautiful things—gilt apples, honey-cakes, playthings, and many hundreds of candles.”

“And then?” asked the Fir Tree, and trembled through all its branches. “And then? What happens then?”

“Why, we have not seen anything more. But it was incomparable.”

“Perhaps I may be destined to tread this glorious path one day!” cried the Fir Tree, rejoicingly. “That is even better than traveling across the sea. How painfully I long for it! If it were only Christmas now! Now I am great and grown up, like the rest who were led away last year. Oh, if I were only on the carriage! If I were only in the warm room, among all the pomp and splendor! And then? Yes, then something even better will come, something far more charming, or else why should they adorn me so? There must be something grander, something greater still to come; but what? Oh! I’m suffering, I’m longing! I don’t know myself what is the matter with me!”

“Rejoice in us,” said Air and Sunshine. “Rejoice in thy fresh youth here in the woodland.”

But the Fir Tree did not rejoice at all, but it grew and grew; winter and summer it stood there, green, dark green. The people who saw it said, “That’s a handsome tree!” and at Christmas-time it was felled before anyone of the others. The ax cut deep into its marrow, and the tree fell to the ground with a sigh; it felt a pain, a sensation of faintness, and could not think at all of happiness, for it was sad at parting from its home, from the place where it had grown up; it knew that it should never again see the dear old companions, the little bushes and flowers all round—perhaps not even the birds. The parting was not at all agreeable.

The Tree only came to itself when it was unloaded in a yard, with other trees, and heard a man say:

“This one is famous; we only want this one!”

Now two servants came in gay liveries, and carried the Fir Tree into a large, beautiful saloon. All around the walls hung pictures, and by the great stove stood large Chinese vases with lions on the covers; there were rocking-chairs, silken sofas, great tables covered with picture books, and toys worth a hundred times a hundred dollars, at least the children said so. And the Fir Tree was put into a great tub, filled with sand; but no one could see that it was a tub,

for it was hung round with green cloth, and stood on a large, many-colored carpet. Oh, how the Tree trembled! What was to happen now? The servants, and the young ladies also, decked it out. On one branch they hung little nets, cut out of colored paper; every net was filled with sweetmeats; golden apples and walnuts hung down, as if red, white, and blue, were fastened to the different boughs. They grew there, and more than a hundred little candles, Dolls that looked exactly like real people—the Tree had never seen such before—swung among the foliage, and high on the summit of the Tree was fixed a tinsel star. It was splendid, particularly splendid.

"This evening," said all, "this evening it will shine."

"Oh," thought the Tree, "that it were evening already! Oh, that the lights may be soon lit up! When may that be done? I wonder if trees will come out of the forest to look at me? Will the Sparrows fly against the panes? Shall I grow fast here, and stand adorned in summer and winter?"

Yes, he did not guess badly. But he had a complete backache from mere longing, and the backache is just as bad for a tree as the headache for a person.

At last the candles were lighted. What a brilliance, what splendor! The Tree trembled so in all its branches that one of the candles set fire to a green twig, and it was scorched.

"Heaven preserve us!" cried the young ladies; and they hastily put the fire out.

Now the Tree might not even tremble. Oh, that was terrible! It was so afraid of setting fire to some of its ornaments, and it was quite bewildered with all the brilliance. And now the folding doors were thrown open, and a number of children rushed in as if they would have overturned the whole Tree; the older people followed more deliberately. The little ones stood quite silent, but only for a minute; then they shouted till the room rang: they danced gleefully round the Tree, and one present after another was plucked from it.

"What are they about?" thought the Tree. "What's going to be done?"

And the candles burned down to the twigs, and as they burned down they were extinguished, and then the children received permission to plunder the Tree. Oh! they rushed in upon it, so that every branch cracked again: if

it had not been fastened by the top and by the golden star to the ceiling, it would have fallen down.

The children danced about with their pretty toys. No one looked at the Tree except one old man, who came up and peeped among the branches, but only to see if a fig or an apple had not been forgotten.

"A story! A story!" shouted the children; and they drew a little fat man toward the tree; and he sat down just beneath it—"for then we shall be in the green wood," said he, "and the Tree may have the advantage of listening to my tale. But I can only tell one. Will you hear the story of Ivede-Avede, or of Klumpey-Dumpey, who fell downstairs, and still was raised up to honor and married the Princess?"

"Ivede-Avede!" cried some, "Klumpey-Dumpey!" cried others, and there was a great crying and shouting. Only the Fir Tree was quite silent, and thought, "Shall I not be in it? Shall I have nothing to do in it?" But he had been in the evening's amusement, and had done what was required of him.

And the fat man told about Klumpey-Dumpey who fell downstairs, and yet was raised to honor and married the Princess. And the children clapped their hands, and cried, "Tell another! tell another!" for they wanted to hear about Ivere-Avede; but they only got the story of Klumpey-Dumpey. The Fir Tree stood quite silent and thoughtful; never had the birds in the wood told such a story as that. Klumpey-Dumpey fell downstairs, and yet came to honor and married the Princess!

"Yes, so it happens in the world!" thought the Fir Tree, and believed it must be true, because that was such a nice man who told it. "Well, who can know? Perhaps I shall fall downstairs, too, and marry a Princess!" And it looked forward with pleasure to being adorned again, the next evening, with candles and toys, gold and fruit. "To-morrow I shall not tremble," it thought.

"I will rejoice in all my splendor. To-morrow I shall hear the story of Klumpey-Dumpey again, and perhaps that of Ivede-Avede, too."

And the Tree stood all night quiet and thoughtful.

In the morning the servants and the chambermaid came in.

"Now my splendor will begin afresh," thought the Tree.

But they dragged him out of the room, and upstairs to the garret, and here they put him in a dark corner where no daylight shone.

"What's the meaning of this?" thought the Tree. "What am I to do here? What is to happen?"

And he leaned against the wall and thought, and thought. And he had time enough, for days and nights went by, and nobody came up; and when at length someone came, it was only to put some great boxes in a corner. Now the Tree stood quite hidden away, and the supposition is that it was quite forgotten.

"Now it's winter outside," thought the Tree. "The earth is hard and covered with snow, and people cannot plant me; therefore I suppose I'm to be sheltered here until spring comes. How considerate that is! How good people are! If it were only not so dark here, and so terribly solitary!—not even a little hare? That was pretty out there in the wood, when the snow lay thick and the hare sprang past; yes, even when he jumped over me; but then I did not like it. It is terribly lonely up here!"

"Piep! piep!" said a little Mouse, and crept forward, and then came another little one. They smelt at the Fir Tree, and then slipped among the branches.

"It's horrible cold," said the two little Mice, "or else it would be comfortable here. Don't you think so, you old Fir Tree?"

"I'm not old at all," said the Fir Tree. "There are many much older than I."

"Where do you come from?" asked the Mice. "And what do you know?" They were dreadfully inquisitive. "Tell us about the most beautiful spot on earth. Have you been there? Have you been in the store room, where cheeses lie on the shelves, and hams hang from the ceiling, where one dances on tallow candles, and goes in thin and comes out fat?"

"I don't know that," replied the Tree; "but I know the wood, where the sun shines and the birds sing."

And then it told all about its youth.

And the little Mice had never heard anything of the kind; and they listened and said:

"What a number of things you have seen! How happy you must have been!"

"I?" replied the Fir Tree; and it thought about what it had told. "Yes, those were really quite happy times." But then he told of the Christmas Eve, when he had been hung with sweetmeats and candles.

"Oh!" said the little Mice, "how happy you have been, you old Fir Tree!"

"I'm not old at all," said the Tree. "I only came out of the wood this winter. I'm only rather backward in my growth."

"What splendid stories you can tell!" said the little Mice.

And next night they came with four other little Mice, to hear what the Tree had to relate; and the more it said, the more clearly did it remember everything, and thought, "Those were quite merry days. But they may come again. Klumpey-Dumpey fell downstairs, and yet he married the Princess. Perhaps I may marry a Princess too?" And then the Fir Tree thought of a pretty little Birch Tree that grew out in the forest: for the Fir Tree, that Birch was a real Princess.

"Who's Klumpey-Dumpey?" asked the little Mice.

And then the Fir Tree told the whole story. It could remember every single word; and the little Mice were ready to leap to the very top of the tree with pleasure. Next night a great many more Mice came, and on Sunday two Rats even appeared; but these thought the story was not pretty, and the little Mice were sorry for that, for now they also did not like it so much as before.

"Do you only know one story?" asked the Rats.

"Only that one," replied the Tree. "I heard that on the happiest evening of my life; I did not think then how happy I was."

"That's a very miserable story. Don't you know any about bacon and tallow candles—a store-room story?"

"No," said the Tree.

"Then we'd rather not hear you," said the Rats.

And they went back to their own people. The little Mice at last stayed away also; and then the Tree sighed and said:

"It was very nice when they sat round me, the merry little Mice, and listened when I spoke to them. Now that's past too. But I shall remember to be pleased when they take me out."

But when did that happen? Why, it was one morning

that people came and rummaged in the garret: the boxes were put away, and the Tree brought out; they certainly threw him rather roughly on the floor, but a servant dragged him away at once to the stairs, where the daylight shone.

"Now life is beginning again!" thought the Tree.

It felt the fresh air and the first sunbeams, and now it was out in the courtyard. Everything passed so quickly that the Tree quite forgot to look at itself, there was so much to look at all round. The courtyard was close to a garden, and here everything was blooming; the roses hung fresh and fragrant over the little paling, the linden trees were in blossom, and the Swallows cried, "Quinze-wit! quinze-wit! my husband's come!" But it was not the Fir Tree that they meant.

"Now I shall live!" said the Tree, rejoicingly, and spread its branches far out; but, alas! they were all withered and yellow; and it lay in the corner among nettles and weeds. The tinsel star was still upon it, and shone in the bright sunshine.

In the courtyard a couple of the merry children were playing who had danced round the Tree at Christmas time, and had rejoiced over it. One of the youngest ran up and tore off the golden star.

"Look what is sticking to the ugly old Fir Tree!" said the child, and he trod upon the branches till they cracked again under his boots.

And the Tree looked at all the blooming flowers and the splendor of the garden, and then looked at itself, and wished it had remained in the dark corner of the garret: it thought of its fresh youth in the wood, of the merry Christmas Eve, and of the little Mice which had listened so pleasantly to the story of Klumpey-Dumpey.

"Past! past!" said the old Tree. "Had I but rejoiced when I could have done so! Past! past!"

And the servant came and chopped the Tree into little pieces; a whole bundle lay there; it blazed brightly under the great brewing copper, and it sighed deeply, and each sigh was like a little shot; and the children who were at play there ran up and seated themselves at the fire, looked into it, and cried "Puff! puff!" But at each explosion, which was a deep sigh, the Tree thought of a summer day in the woods, or of a winter night there, when the stars beamed;

he thought of Christmas Eve and of Klumpey-Dumpey, the only story he had ever heard or knew how to tell; and then the Tree was burned.

The boys played in the garden, and the youngest had on his breast a golden star, which the Tree had worn on its happiest evening. Now that was past, and the Tree's life was past, and the story is past too: past! past!—and that's the way with all stories.

SOMETHING.

"I want to be something!" said the eldest of five brothers. "I want to do something in the world. I don't care how humble my position may be in society, if I only effect some good, for that will really be something. I'll make bricks, for they are quite indispensable things, and then I shall truly have done something."

"But that something will not be enough!" quoth the second brother. "What you intend doing is just as much as nothing at all. It is journeymen's work, and can be done by a machine. No, I would rather be a bricklayer at once, for that is something real; and that's what I will be. That brings rank: as a bricklayer one belongs to a guild, and is a citizen, and has one's own flag and one's own house of call. Yes, and if all goes well, I will keep journeymen. I shall become a master bricklayer, and my wife will be a master's wife—that is what I call something."

"That's nothing at all!" said the third. "That is beyond the pale of the guild, and there are many of those in a town that stand far above the mere master artisan. You may be an honest man; but as a 'master' you will after all only belong to those who are ranked among common men. I know something better than that. I will be an architect, and will thus enter into the territory of art and speculation. I shall be reckoned among those who stand high in point of intellect. I shall certainly have to serve up from the pick-ax, so to speak; so I must begin as a carpenter's apprentice, and must go about as an assistant, in a cap, though I am accustomed to wear a silk hat. I shall have to fetch beer and spirits for the common journeymen, and they will call me

'thou,' and that is insulting! But I shall imagine to myself that the whole thing is only acting, and a kind of masquerade. To-morrow—that is to say, when I have served my time—I shall go my own way, and the others will be nothing to me. I shall go to the academy, and get instructions in drawing, and shall be called an architect. That's something! I may get to be called 'sir,' and even 'worshipful sir,' or even get a handle at the front or at the back of my name, and shall go on building and building, just as those before me have built. That will always be a thing to remember, and that's what I call something!"

"But I don't care at all for that something," said the fourth. "I won't sail in the wake of others, and be a copyist. I will be a genius, and will stand up greater than all the rest of you together. I shall be creator of a new style, and will give the plan of a building suitable to the climate and material of the country, for the nationality of the people, for the development of the age—and an additional story for my own genius."

"But supposing the climate and the material are bad," said the fifth, "that would be a disastrous circumstance, for these two exert a great influence. Nationality, moreover, may expand itself until it becomes affectation, and the development of the century may run wild with your work, as youth often runs wild. I quite realize the fact that none of you will be anything real, however much you may believe in yourselves. But, do what you like, I will not resemble you: I shall keep on the outside of things, and criticise whatever you produce. To every work there is attached something that is not right—something that has gone wrong, and I will ferret that out and find fault with it; and that will be doing something!"

And he kept his word; and everybody said concerning this fifth brother: "There is certainly something in him; he has a good head, but he does nothing." And by that very means they thought something of him!

Now, you see, this is only a little story; but it will never end as long as the world lasts.

But what became of the five brothers? Why, this is nothing and not something.

Listen, it is a capital story.

The eldest brother, he who manufactured bricks, soon be-

came aware of the fact that every brick, however small it might be, produced for him a little coin, though this coin was only copper; and many copper pennies laid one upon the other can be changed into a shining dollar; and wherever one knocks with such a dollar in one's hand, whether at the baker's, or the butcher's, or the tailor's—wherever it may be, the door flies open, and the visitor is welcomed, and gets what he wants. You see that is what comes of bricks. Some of these belonging to the eldest brother certainly crumbled away, or broke in two, but there was a use even for these.

On the high rampart, the wall that kept out the sea, Margaret, the poor woman, wished to build herself a little house. All the faulty bricks were given to her, and a few perfect ones into the bargain, for the eldest brother was a good-natured man, though he certainly did not achieve anything beyond the manufacture of bricks. The poor woman put together the house for herself. It was little and narrow, and the single window was quite crooked. The door was too low, and the thatched roof might have shown better workmanship. But after all it was a shelter; and from the little house you could look far across the sea, whose waves broke plainly against the protecting rampart on which it was built. The salt billows spurted their spray over the whole house, which was still standing when he who had given the bricks for its erection had long been dead and buried.

The second brother knew better how to build a wall, for he had served an apprenticeship to it. When he had served his time and passed his examination, he packed his knapsack and sang the journeyman's song:

“While I am young I'll wander, from place to place I'll roam,
And everywhere build houses, until I come back home;
And youth will give me courage, and my true love won't forget;
Hurrah, then, for a workman's life! I'll be a master yet!”

And he carried his idea into effect. When he had come home and become a master, he built one house after another in the town. He built a whole street; and when the street was finished and become an ornament to the place, the houses built a house for him in return, that was to be his own. But how can houses build a house? If you ask them

they will not answer you, but people will understand what is meant by the expression, and say, "Certainly, it was the street that built his house for him." It was little, and the floor was covered with clay; but when he danced with his bride upon this clay floor, it seemed to become polished oak; and from every stone in the wall sprang forth a flower, and the room was gay, as if with the costliest paperhanger's work. It was a pretty house, and in it lived a happy pair. The flag of the guild fluttered before the house, and the journeymen and apprentices shouted hurrah! Yes, he certainly was something! And at last he died; and that was something too.

Now came the architect, the third brother, who had been at first a carpenter's apprentice, had worn a cap, and served as an errand boy, but had afterward gone to the academy, and risen to become an architect, and to be called "honored sir." Yes, if the houses of the street had built a house for the brother who had become a bricklayer the street now received its name from the architect, and the handsomest house in it became his property. That was something, and he was something; and he had a long title before and after his name. His children were called genteel children, and when he died his widow was "a widow of rank," and that is something! and his name always remained at the corner of the street, and lived on in the mouth of everyone as the street's name—and that was something!

Now came the genius of the family, the fourth brother, who wanted to invent something new and original, and an additional story on the top of it for himself. But the top story tumbled down, and he came tumbling down with it, and broke his neck. Nevertheless, he had a splendid funeral, with guild flags and music, poems in the papers, and flowers strewn on the paving stones in the street: and three funeral orations were held over him, each one longer than the last, which would have rejoiced him greatly, for he always liked it when people talked about him, a monument also was erected over his grave. It was only one story high, but still it was something.

Now he was dead, like the three other brothers; but the last, the one who was a critic, outlived them all; and that was quite right, for by this means he got the last word, and it was of great importance to him to have the last word. The

people always said he had a good head of his own. At last his hour came, and he died, and came to the gates of Paradise. There souls always enter two and two, and he came up with another soul that wanted to get into Paradise too; and who should this be but old Dame Margaret from the house upon the sea wall.

"I suppose this is done for the sake of contrast, that I and this wretched soul should arrive here at exactly the same time," said the critic. "Pray who are you, my good woman?" he asked. "Do you want to get in here too?"

And the old woman courtesied as well as she could; she thought it must be St. Peter himself talking to her.

"I'm a poor old woman of a very humble family," she replied. "I'm old Margaret that lived in the house on the sea wall."

"Well, and what have you done? What have you accomplished down there?"

"I have really accomplished nothing at all in the world: nothing that I can plead to have the doors here opened to me. It would be a real mercy to allow me to slip in through the gate."

"In what manner did you leave the world?" asked he, just for the sake of saying something; for it was wearisome work standing there and saying nothing.

"Why, I really don't know how I left it. I was sick and miserable during my last years, and could not well bear creeping out of bed, and going out suddenly into the frost and cold. It was a hard winter, but I have got out of it all now. For a few days the weather was quite calm, but very cold, as your honor must very well know. The sea was covered with ice as far as one could look. All the people from the town walked out upon the ice, and I think they said there was a dance there and skating. There was beautiful music and a great feast there too; the sound came into my poor little room, where I lay ill. And it was toward the evening; the moon had risen beautifully, but was not yet in its full splendor. I looked from my bed out over the wide sea, and far off, just where the sea and sky join, a strange white cloud came up. I lay looking at the cloud, and I saw a little black spot in the middle of it, that grew larger and larger; and now I knew what it meant, for I am old and experienced, though this token is not often seen. I knew it,

and a shuddering came upon me. Twice in my life I have seen the same thing; and I knew there would be an awful tempest, and a spring flood, which would overwhelm the poor people who were drinking and dancing and rejoicing— young and old, the whole city had issued forth; who was to warn them, if no one saw what was coming yonder, or knew, as I did, what it meant. I was dreadfully alarmed, and felt more lively than I had done for a long time. I crept out of bed, and got to the window, but could not crawl any further, I was so exhausted. But I managed to open the window. I saw the people outside running and jumping about on the ice; I could see the beautiful flags that waved in the wind. I heard the boys shouting 'Hurrah!' and the servant men and maids singing. There were all kinds of merriment going on. But the white cloud with the black spot! I cried as loud as I could, but no one heard me; I was too far from the people. Soon the storm would burst, and the ice would break, and all who were upon it would be lost without remedy. They could not hear me, and I could not come out to them. Oh, if I could only bring them ashore! Then kind Heaven inspired me with the thought of setting fire to my bed, and rather to let the house burn down, than that all those people should perish miserably. I succeeded in lighting up a beacon for them. The red flame blazed up on high, and I escaped out of the door, but fell down exhausted on the threshold, and could get no farther. The flames rushed out toward me, flickered through the window, and rose high above the roof. All the people on the ice yonder beheld it and ran as fast as they could to give aid to a poor old woman who, they thought, was being burned to death. Not one remained behind. I heard them coming; but I also became aware of a rushing sound in the air; I heard a rumbling like the sound of heavy artillery; the spring flood was lifting the covering of ice, which presently burst and cracked into a thousand fragments. But the people succeeded in reaching the sea wall—I saved them all! But I fancy I could not bear the cold and the fright, and so I came up here to the gates of Paradise. I am told they are opened to poor creatures like me—and now I have no house left down upon the rampart: not that I think this will give me admission here."

Then the gates of heaven were opened, and the angel led

the old woman in. She left a straw behind her, a straw that had been in her bed when she set it on fire to save the lives of many; and this straw had been changed into the purest gold—into gold that grew and grew, and spread out into beautiful leaves and flowers.

"Look, this what the poor woman brought," said the angel to the critic. "What dost thou bring? I know that thou hast accomplished nothing—thou hast not made so much as a single brick. Ah, if thou couldst only return, and effect at least as much as that! Probably the brick, when thou hadst made it, would not be worth much; but if it were made with a good will, it would at least be something. But thou canst not go back, and I can do nothing for thee!"

Then the poor soul, the old dame who had lived on the dyke, put in a petition for him. She said:

"His brother gave me the bricks and the pieces out which I built up my house, and that was a great deal for a poor woman like me. Could not all those bricks and pieces be counted as a single brick in his favor? It was an act of mercy. He wants it now; and is not this a very fountain of mercy?"

Then the angel said:

"Thy brother, him whom thou hast regarded as the least among you all, he whose honest industry seemed to thee as the most humble, hath given thee this heavenly gift. Thou shalt not be turned away. It shall be vouchsafed to thee to stand here without the gate, and to reflect, and repent of thy life down yonder; but thou shalt not be admitted until thou hast in earnest accomplished something."

"I could have said that in better words!" thought the critic, but he did not find fault aloud; and for him, after all that was "something!"

A LEAF FROM THE SKY.

High up yonder, in the thin clear air, flew an angel with a flower from the heavenly garden. As she was kissing the flower, a very little leaf fell down into the soft soil in the midst of the wood, and immediately took root, and sprouted, and sent forth shoots among the other plants.

"A funny kind of slip that," said the Plants.

And neither Thistle nor Stinging Nettle would recognize the stranger.

"That must be a kind of garden plant," said they.

And they sneered; and the plant was despised by them as being a thing out of the garden.

"Where are you coming?" cried the lofty Thistles, whose leaves are all armed with thorns. "You give yourself a good deal of space. That's all nonsense—we are not here to support you!" they grumbled.

And winter came, and snow covered the plant; but the plant imparted to the snowy covering a luster as if the sun was shining upon it from below as from above. When spring came, the plant appeared as a blooming object, more beautiful than any production of the forest.

And now appeared on the scene the botanical professor, who could show what he was in black and white. He inspected the plant and tested it, but found it was not included in his botanical system; and he could not possibly find out to what class it belonged.

"That must be some subordinate species," he said. "I don't know it. It's not included in any system."

"Not included in any system!" repeated the Thistles and the Nettles.

The great trees that stood round about saw and heard it; but they said not a word, good or bad, which is the wisest thing to do for people who are stupid.

There came through the forest a poor, innocent girl. Her heart was pure, and her understanding was enlarged by faith. Her whole inheritance was an old Bible; but out of its pages a voice said to her, "If people wish to do us evil, remember how it was said of Joseph. They imagined evil in their hearts, but God turned it to good. If we suffer wrong—if we are misunderstood and despised—then we may recall the words of Him who was purity and goodness itself, and who forgave and prayed for those who buffeted and nailed Him to the cross."

The girl stood still in front of the wonderful plant, whose great leaves exhaled a sweet and refreshing fragrance, and whose flowers glittered like a colored flame in the sun; and from each flower there came a sound as though it concealed within itself a deep fount of melody that thousands of years

could not exhaust. With pious gratitude the girl looked upon this beautiful work of the Creator, and bent down one of the branches toward itself to breathe in its sweetness; and a light arose in her soul. It seemed to do her heart good; and gladly would she have plucked a flower, but she could not make up her mind to break one off, for it would soon fade if she did so. Therefore the girl only took a single leaf, and laid it in her Bible at home; and it lay there quite fresh, always green, and never fading.

Among the pages of the Bible it was kept; and with the Bible it was laid under the young girl's head, when, a few weeks afterward, she lay in her coffin, with the solemn calm of death on her gentle face, as if the earthly remains bore the impress of the truth that she now stood before her Creator.

But the wonderful plant still bloomed without in the forest. It was almost like a tree to look upon; and all the birds of passage bowed before it.

"That's giving itself foreign airs now," said the Thistles and the Burdocks; "we never behave like that here."

And the black snails actually spat at the flower.

Then came the swineherd. He was collecting thistles and shrubs, to burn them for the ashes. The wonderful plant was placed bodily in his bundle.

"It shall be made useful," he said; and so said, so done.

But soon afterward the King of the country was troubled with a terrible depression of spirits. He was busy and industrious, but that did him no good. They read him deep and learned books, and then they read from the lightest and most superficial that they could find; but it was of no use. Then one of the wise men of the world, to whom they had applied, sent a messenger to tell the King that there was one remedy to give him relief and to cure him. He said:

"In the King's own country there grows in a forest a plant of heavenly origin. Its appearance is thus and thus. It cannot be mistaken."

"I fancy it was taken up in my bundle, and burned to ashes long ago," said the swineherd; "but I did not know any better."

"You did not know any better! Ignorance of ignorances!"

And those words the swineherd might well take to himself, for they were meant for him, and for no one else.

Not another leaf was to be found; the only one lay in the coffin of the dead girl, and no one knew anything about that.

And the King himself, in his melancholy, wandered out to the spot in the wood.

"Here is where the plant stood," he said; "it is a sacred place."

And the place was surrounded with a golden railing, and a sentry was posted there.

The botanical professor wrote a long treatise upon the heavenly plant. For this he was gilded all over, and this gilding suited him and his family very well. And indeed that was the most agreeable part of the whole story. But the King remained as low-spirited as before; but that he had always been, at least so the sentry said.

THE JEWISH GIRL.

Among the children in a charity school sat a little Jewish girl. She was a good, intelligent child, the quickest in all the school; but she had to be excluded from one lesson, for she was not allowed to take part in the Scriptural lesson, for it was a Christian school.

In that hour the girl was allowed to open the geography book, or to do her sum for the next day; but that was soon done; and when she had mastered her lesson in geography, the book indeed remained open before her, but the little one read no more in it: she listened silently to the words of the Christian teacher, who soon became aware that she was listening more intently than almost any of the other children.

"Read your book, Sara," the teacher said, in mild reproof; but her dark beaming eye remained fixed upon him; and once when he addressed a question to her, she knew how to answer better than any of the others could have done. She had heard and understood, and had kept his words in her heart.

When her father, a poor, honest man, first brought the

girl to the school, he had stipulated that she should be excluded from the lessons on the Christian faith. But it would have caused disturbance, and perhaps might have awakened discontent in the mind of the others, if she had been sent from the room during the hours in question, and consequently she stayed; but this could not go on any longer.

The teacher betook himself to her father, and exhorted him either to remove his daughter from the school, or to consent that Sara should become a Christian.

"I can no longer be a silent spectator of the gleaming eyes of the child, and of her deep and earnest longing for the words of the Gospel," said the teacher.

Then the father burst into tears.

"I know but little of the commandment given to my fathers," he said, "but Sara's mother was steadfast in the faith, a true daughter of Israel, and I vowed to her as she lay dying that our child should never be baptized. I must keep my vow, for it is even as a covenant with God Himself."

And accordingly the little Jewish maiden quitted the Christian school.

Years have rolled on.

In one of the smallest provincial towns there dwelt, as a servant in a humble household, a maiden who held the Mosaic faith. Her hair was black as ebony, her eyes dark as night, and yet full of splendor and light, as is usual with the daughters of Israel. It was Sara. The expression in the countenance of the now grown-up maiden was still that of the child sitting on the school-room bench, and listening with thoughtful eyes to the words of the Christian teacher.

Every Sunday there pealed from the church the sounds of the organ and the song of the congregation. The strain penetrated into the house where the Jewish girl, industrious and faithful in all things, stood at her work.

"Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day," said a voice within her, the voice of the Law; but her Sabbath day was a working day among the Christians, and that seemed unfortunate to her. But then the thought arose in her soul: "Doth God reckon by days and hours?" And when this thought grew strong within her, it seemed a comfort that on the Sunday of the Christians the hour of prayer remained undisturbed; and then the sound of the organ and the songs

of the congregation sounded across to her as she stood in the kitchen at her work, and even that place seemed to become a sacred one to her. Then she would read in the Old Testament, the treasure and comfort of her people, and it was only in this one she could read; for she kept faithfully in the depths of her heart the words the teacher had spoken when she left the school, and the promise her father had given to her dying mother, that she should never receive Christian baptism, or deny the faith of her ancestors. The New Testament was to be a sealed book to her; and yet she knew much of it, and the Gospel echoed faintly among the recollections of her youth.

One evening she was sitting in a corner of the living room. Her master was reading aloud; and she might listen to him, for it was not the Gospel that he read, but an old story book; therefore she might stay. The book told of a Hungarian knight who was taken prisoner by a Turkish pasha, who caused him to be yoked with his oxen to the plow, and driven with blows of the whip till blood came, and he almost sank under the pain and ignominy he endured. The faithful wife of the knight at home parted with all her jewels, and pledged castle and land. The knight's friends amassed large sums, for the ransom demanded was almost unattainably high; but it was collected at last, and the good knight was freed from servitude and misery. But soon another summons came to war against the foes of Christianity; the knight heard the cry, and he could stay no longer, for he had neither peace nor rest. He caused himself to be lifted on his war-horse; and the blood came back to his cheek, his strength appeared to return, and he went forth to battle and to victory. The very same pasha who had yoked him to the plow became his prisoner, and was dragged to his castle. But not an hour had passed when the knight stood before the captive pasha and said to him:

"What dost thou suppose awaitest thee?"

"I know it," replied the Turk. "Retribution."

"Yes, the retribution of the Christian!" resumed the knight. "The doctrine of Christ commands us to forgive our enemies, and to love our fellow-man, for it teaches us that God is love. Depart in peace, depart to thy home: I will restore thee to thy dear ones; but in future be mild and merciful to all who are unfortunate."

Then the prisoner broke out into tears, and exclaimed: "How could I believe in the possibility of such mercy? Misery and torment seemed to await me, they seemed inevitable; therefore I took poison, which I secretly carried about me, and in a few hours its effects will slay me. I must die—there is no remedy! But before I die, do thou expound to me the teaching which includes so great a measure of love and mercy, for it is great and godlike! Grant me to hear this teaching, and to die a Christian." And his prayer was fulfilled.

That was the legend which the master read out of the old story book. All the audience listened with sympathy and pleasure; but Sara, the Jewish girl, sitting alone in her corner, listened with a burning heart; great tears came into her gleaming black eyes, and she sat there with a gentle and lowly spirit as she had once sat on the school bench, and felt the grandeur of the Gospel; and the tears rolled down over her cheeks.

But again the dying words of her mother rose up within her: "Let not my daughter become a Christian," the voice cried; "and together with it arose the words of the Law: "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother."

"I am not admitted into the community of the Christians," she said; "they abuse me for being a Jew girl—our neighbor's boys hooted me last Sunday when I stood at the open church door, and looked in at the flaming candles on the altar, and listened to the song of the congregation. Ever since I sat upon the school bench I have felt the force of Christianity, a force like that of a sunbeam, which streams into my soul, however firmly I may shut my eyes against it. But I will not pain thee in thy grave, oh, my mother; I will not be unfaithful to the oath of my father; I will not read the Bible of the Christians. I have the religion of my people, and to that will I hold!"

And years rolled on again.

The master died. His widow fell into poverty, and the servant girl was to be dismissed. But Sara refused to leave the house; she became the staff in time of trouble, and kept the household together, working till late in the night to earn the daily bread through the labor of her hands, for no relative came forward to assist the family; and the widow became weaker every day, and lay for months together on

the bed of sickness. Sara worked hard, and in the intervals sat kindly ministering by the sick bed: she was gentle and pious, an angel of blessing in the poverty-stricken house.

"Yonder on the table lies the Bible," said the sick woman to Sara. "Read me something from it; for the night appears to be long—oh, so long!—and my soul thirsts for the word of the Lord."

And Sara bowed her head. She took the book, and folded her hands over the Bible of the Christians, and opened it, and read to the sick woman. Tears stood in her eyes, which gleamed and shone with ecstasy, and light shone in her heart.

"Oh my mother," she whispered to herself, "thy child may not receive the baptism of the Christians, or be admitted into the congregation—thou hast willed it so, and I shall respect thy command: we will remain in union together here on earth; but beyond this earth there is a higher union, even union in God! He will be at our side, and lead us through the valley of death. It is He that descendeth upon the earth when it is athirst, and covers it with fruitfulness. I understand it—I know not how I came to learn the truth; but it is through Him, through Christ!"

And she started as she pronounced the sacred name, and there came upon her a baptism as of flames of fire, and her frame shook, and her limbs tottered so that she sank down fainting, weaker even than the sick woman by whose couch she had watched.

"Poor Sara!" said the people: "she is overcome with night watching and toil!"

They carried her out into the hospital for the sick poor. There she died; and from thence they carried her to the grave, but not to the churchyard of the Christians, for yonder was no room for the Jewish girl; outside, by the wall, her grave was dug.

But God's sun, that shines upon the graves of the Christians, throws its beams also upon the grave of the Jewish girl beyond the wall; and when the psalms are sung in the churchyard of the Christians, they echo likewise over her lonely resting place; and she who sleeps beneath is included in the call to the resurrection, in the name of Him who spake to His disciples:

"John baptized you with water, but I will baptize you with the Holy Ghost!"

THE ELDER TREE MOTHER.

There was once a little boy who had caught cold; he had gone out and got wet feet; no one could imagine how it had happened, for it was quite dry weather. Now his mother undressed him, put to bed, and had the tea urn brought in to make a good cup of elder tea, for that warms well. At the same time there also came in at the door the friendly old man who lived all alone at the top of the house, and was very solitary. He had neither wife nor children, but he was very fond of little people, and knew so many stories that it was quite delightful.

"Now you are to drink your tea," said the mother, "and then perhaps you will hear a story."

"Ah! if one only could tell a new one!" said the old man, with a friendly nod. "But where did the little man get his feet wet?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the mother, "no one can tell how that came about."

"Shall I have a story?" asked the boy.

"Yes, if you can tell me at all accurately—for I must know that first—how deep the gutter is in the little street through which you go to school."

"Just half-way up to my knee," answered the boy, "that is, if I put my feet in the deep hole."

"You see, that's how we get our feet wet," said the old gentleman. "Now I ought certainly to tell you a story; but I don't know any more."

"You can make up one directly," answered the little boy. "Mother says that everything you look at can be turned into a story, and that you can make a tale of everything you touch."

"Yes, but those stories and tales are worth nothing! No, the real ones come of themselves. They knock at my forehead and say, 'Here I am!'"

"Will there soon be a knock?" asked the little boy, and the mother laughed, and put elder tea in the pot, and poured hot water upon it.

"A story! a story!"

"Yes, if a story would come of itself; but that kind of thing is very grand; it only comes when it's in the humor. "Wait!"

he cried all at once; "here we have it. Look you; there's one in the tea pot now."

And the little boy looked across at the tea pot. The lid raised itself more and more, and the elder flowers came forth from it, white and fresh; they shot forth long, fresh branches even out of the spout, they spread abroad in all directions, and became larger and larger; there was the most glorious elder bush—in fact, quite a great tree. It penetrated even to the bed, and thrust the curtains aside; how fragrant it was, and how it bloomed! And in the midst of the tree sat an old, pleasant looking woman in a strange dress. It was quite green, like the leaves of the elder tree, and bordered with great white elder blossoms: one could not at once discern whether this border was of stuff or of living green and real flowers.

"What is the woman's name?" the little boy asked.

"The Romans and Greeks," replied the old man, "used to call her a Dryad; but we don't understand that: out in the sailors' suburb we have a better name for her; there she's called Elder Tree Mother, and it is to her you must pay attention: only listen, and look at that glorious elder tree.

"Just such a great blooming tree stands outside; it grew there in the corner of a poor little yard, and under this tree two old people sat one afternoon in the brightest sunshine. It was an old, old sailor, and his old, old wife; they had great-grandchildren, and were soon to celebrate their golden wedding;* but they could not quite make out the date, and the Elder Tree Mother sat in the tree and looked pleased, just as she does here. 'I know very well when the golden wedding is to be,' said she; but they did not hear it—they were talking of old times.

"'Yes, do you remember,' said the old seaman, 'when we were quite little, and ran about and played together? It was in the very same yard where we are sitting now, and we planted little twigs in the yard, and made a garden.'

"'Yes,' replied the old woman, 'I remember it very well: we watered the twigs, and one of them was an elder twig; that struck root, shot out other green twigs, and has become a great tree, under which we old people sit.'

"'Surely,' said he; 'and yonder in the corner stood a butt

*The golden wedding is celebrated in several countries of the Continent, by the wedded pairs who survive to see the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage day.

of water; there I swam my boat: I had cut it out myself. How it could sail! But I certainly soon had to sail elsewhere myself.'

"'But first we went to school and learned something,' said she, 'and then we were confirmed; we both cried, but in the afternoon we went hand in hand to the round tower, and looked out into the wide world, over Copenhagen and across the water; then we went out to Fredericksburg, where the King and Queen were sailing in their splendid boats upon the canals.'

"'But I was obliged to sail elsewhere, and that for many years, far away on long voyages.'

"'Yes, I often cried about you,' she said. 'I thought you were dead and gone, and lying down in the deep waters, rocked by the waves. Many a night I got up to look if the weathercock was turning. Yes, it turned indeed; but you did not come. I remember so clearly how the rain streamed down from the sky. The man with the cart, who fetched away the dust came to the place where I was in service. I went down with him to the dust-bin, and remained standing in the doorway. What wretched weather it was! And just as I stood there the postman came up and gave me a letter. It was from you! How that letter had traveled about! I tore it open and read; I laughed and wept at once; I was so glad. There it stood written that you were in the warm countries where the coffee-beans grow. You told me so much, and I read it all while the rain was streaming down, and I stood by the dust-bin. Then somebody came and clasped me round the waist.'

"'And you gave him a terrible box on the ear—one that sounded!'

"'I did not know that it was you. You had arrived just as quickly as your letter. And you were so handsome; but that you are still. You had a large yellow silk handkerchief in your pocket, and a hat on your head. You were so handsome! And, gracious! what weather it was, and how the streets looked!'

"'Then we were married,' said he; 'do you remember? And then when our first little boy came, and then Marie, and Neils, and Peter, and Jack, and Christian?'

"'Yes; and how all of these have grown up to be respectable people, and everyone likes them.'

“‘And their children have had little ones in their turn,’ said the old sailor. ‘Yes, those are children’s children! They’re of the right sort. It was, if I don’t mistake, at this very season of the year that we were married?’

“‘Yes; this is the day of your golden wedding,’ said the Elder Tree Mother, putting out her head just between the two old people; and they thought it was a neighbor nodding to them, and they looked at each other, and took hold of one another’s hands.

“Soon afterward came their children and grandchildren—these knew very well that it was the golden wedding day; they had already brought their congratulations in the morning, but the old people had forgotten it, while they remembered everything right well that had happened years and years ago.

“And the elder tree smelt so sweet, and the sun that was just setting shone just in the faces of the old couple, so that their cheeks looked quite red; and the youngest of their grandchildren danced about them, and cried out quite glee-fully that there was to be a feast this evening, for they were to have hot potatoes; and the Elder Mother nodded in the tree, and called out ‘Hurrah!’ with all the rest.”

“But that was not a story,” said the little boy, who had heard it told.

“Yes, so you understand it,” replied the old man; “but let us ask the Elder Mother about it.”

“That was not a story,” said the Elder Mother; but now it comes; but of truth the strangest stories are formed, otherwise my beautiful elder tree could not have sprouted forth out of the tea pot.”

And then she took the little boy out of bed, and laid him upon her bosom, and the blossoming elder branches wound round them, so they sat as it were in the thickest arbor, and this arbor flew with them through the air. It was indescribably beautiful. Elder Mother all at once became a pretty young girl; but her dress was still of the green stuff with the white blossoms that Elder Mother had worn; in her bosom she had a real elder blossom, and on her head a wreath of elder flowers; her eyes were so large and blue, they were beautiful to look at! She and the boy were of the same age, and they kissed each other and felt similar joys.

Hand in hand they went forth out of the arbor, and now they stood in the beautiful flower garden of home. The father's staff was tied up near the grass plot, and for the little boy there was life in that staff. As soon as they seated themselves upon it, the polished head turned into a noble, neighing horse's head, with a flowing mane, and four slender legs shot forth; the creature was strong and spirited, and they rode at a gallop round the grass plot—hurrah!

"Now we're going to ride many miles away," said the boy; "we'll ride to the nobleman's estate, where we went last year."

And they rode round and round the grass plot, and the little girl, who, as we know, was no one else but Elder Mother, kept crying out:

"Now we're in the country! Do you see the farm house, with the great baking oven standing out of the wall like an enormous egg by the way side? The elder tree spreads its branches over it, and the cock walks about, scratching for its hens; look how he struts! Now we are near the church; it lies up on the hill, under the great oak trees, one of which is half dead. Now we are at the forge, where the fire burns, and the half-clad men beat with their hammers, so that the sparks fly far around. Away, away, to the splendid nobleman's seat!"

And everything that the little maiden mentioned, as she sat on the stick behind him, flew past them, and the little boy saw it all, though they were only riding round and round the grass plot. Then they played in the sidewalk, and scratched up the earth to make a little garden; and she took elder flowers out of her hair and planted them, and they grew just like those that the old people had planted when they were little, as has been already told. They went hand in hand just as the old people had done in their childhood; but not to the high tower, or to the Fredericksburg Garden. No, the little girl took hold of the boy round the body, and then flew far away into the country.

And it was spring, and summer came, and autumn, and winter, and thousands of pictures were mirrored in the boy's eyes and heart, and the little maiden was always singing to him.

He will never forget that; and throughout their whole journey the elder tree smelt so sweet, so fragrant; he

noticed the roses and the fresh beech trees; but the elder tree smelt stronger than all, for its flowers hung round the little girl's heart, and he often leaned against them as they flew onward.

"Here it is beautiful in spring!" said the little girl.

And they stood in the green beech wood, where the thyme lay spread in fragrance at their feet, and the pale pink anemones looked glorious among the vivid green.

"Oh, that it were always spring in the merry green wood?"

"Here it is beautiful in summer!" said she.

And they passed by old castles of knightly days, castles whose high walls and pointed turrets were mirrored in the canals, where swans swam about, and looked down the old shady avenues. In the fields the corn waved like a sea, in the ditches yellow and red flowers were growing, and in the hedges wild hops and blooming convolvulus. In the evening the moon rose round and large, and the haystacks in the meadows smelt sweet.

"Here it is beautiful in autumn!" said the little girl.

And the sky seemed twice as lofty and twice as blue as before, and the forest was decked in the most gorgeous tints of red, yellow, and green. The hunting dogs raced about; whole flocks of wild ducks flew screaming over the Huns' Graves, on which bramble bushes twined over the old stones. The sea was dark blue, and covered with ships with white sails; and in the barns sat old women, girls, and children, picking hops into a large tub; the young people sang songs, and the older ones told tales of magicians and goblins. It could not be finer anywhere.

"Here it is beautiful in winter!" said the little girl.

And all the trees were covered with hoar frost, so that they looked like white trees of coral. The snow crumbled beneath one's feet, as if everyone had new boots on; and one shooting star after another fell from the sky. In the room the Christmas tree was lighted up, and there were presents, and there was happiness. In the country people's farm-houses the violin sounded, and there were many games for apples; and even the poorest child said, "It is beautiful in winter!"

Yes, it was beautiful; and the little girl showed the boy everything; and still the blossoming tree smelt sweet, and

still waved the red flag with the white cross, the flag under which the old seaman had sailed. The boy became a youth, and was to go out into the wide world, far away to the hot countries where the coffee grows. But when they were to part, the little girl took an elder blossom from her breast, and gave it to him to keep. It was laid in his hymn book, and in the foreign land, when he opened the book, it was always at the place where the flower of remembrance lay; and the more he looked at the flower the fresher it became, so that he seemed, as it were, to breathe the forest air of home; then he plainly saw the little girl looking out with her clear blue eyes from between the petals of the flower, and then she whispered, "Here it is beautiful in spring, summer, autumn, and winter!" and hundreds of pictures glided through his thoughts.

Thus many years went by, and now he was an old man, and sat with his old wife under the blossoming elder tree; they were holding each other by the hand, just as the great-grandmother and great-grandfather had done outside; and, like these, they spoke of old times and of the golden wedding. The little maiden with the blue eyes and with the elder blossoms in her hair sat up in the tree, and nodded to both of them, and said, "To-day is our golden wedding day!" and then she took two flowers out of her hair and kissed them, and they gleamed first like silver and then like gold, and when she laid them on the heads of the old people each changed into a golden crown. There they both sat, like a King and a Queen, under the fragrant tree which looked quite like an elder bush, and he told his old wife of the story of the Elder Tree Mother, as it had been told to him when he was quite a little boy, and they both thought that the story in many points resembled their own, and those parts they liked the best of all.

"Yes, thus it is!" said the little girl in the tree. "Some call me Elder Tree Mother, others the Dryad, but my real name is Remembrance; it is I who sit in the tree that grows on and on, and I can think back and tell stories. Let me see if you have still your flower."

And the old man opened his hymn book; there lay the elder blossom as fresh as if it had only just been placed there; and Remembrance nodded, and the two old people with the golden crowns on their heads sat in the red evening

sunlight, and they closed their eyes, and—and—the story was finished.

The little boy lay in his bed and did not know whether he had been dreaming or had heard a tale told; the tea pot stood on the table, but no elder bush was growing out of it, and the old man who had told about it was just going out of the door, and indeed he went.

"How beautiful that was!" said the little boy. "Mother, I have been in the hot countries."

"Yes, I can imagine that!" replied his mother. "When one drinks two cups of hot elder tea one very often gets into the hot countries!" And she covered him up well, that he might not take cold. "You have slept well while I disputed with him as to whether it was a story or a fairy tale."

"And where is the Elder Tree Mother?" asked the little lad.

"She's in the tea pot," replied his mother; "and there she may stay."

THE FARMYARD COCK AND THE WEATHER COCK.

There were two Cocks—one on the dunghill, the other on the roof. Both were conceited; but which of the two effected most? Tell us your opinion; but we shall keep our own nevertheless.

The poultry yard was divided by a partition of boards from another yard, in which lay a manure heap, whereon lay and grew a great Cucumber, which was fully conscious of being a forcing bed plant.

"That's a privilege of birth," the Cucumber said to herself. "Not all can be born cucumbers; there must be other kinds, too. The fowls, the ducks, and all the cattle in the neighboring yard are creatures, too. I now look up to the Yard Cock on the partition. He certainly is of much greater consequence than the Weather Cock, who is so highly-placed, and who can't even creak, much less crow; and he has neither hens nor chickens, and thinks only of himself, and perspires verdigris. But the Yard Cock—he's something like a cock! His gait is like a dance, his crowing is

music; and wherever he comes, it is known directly. What a trumpeter he is! If he would only come in here! Even if he were to eat me up, stalk and all, it would be quite a blissful death," said the Cucumber.

In the night the weather became very bad. Hens, chickens, and even the Cock himself sought shelter. The wind blew down the partition between the two yards with a crash; the tiles came tumbling down, but the Weather Cock sat firm. He did not even turn round; he could not turn round, and yet he was young and newly cast, but steady and sedate. He had been "born old," and did not at all resemble the birds that fly beneath the vault of heaven, such as the sparrows and the swallows. He despised those, considering them piping birds of trifling stature—ordinary song birds. The pigeons, he allowed, were big and shining, and gleamed like mother-o'-pearl, and looked like a kind of weather cocks; but then they were fat and stupid, and their whole endeavor was to fill themselves with food.

"Moreover, they are tedious things to converse with," said the Weather Cock.

The birds of passage had also paid a visit to the Weather Cock, and told him tales of foreign lands, of airy caravans, and exciting robber stories; of encounters with birds of prey; and that was interesting enough for the first time, but the Weather Cock knew that afterward they always repeated themselves, and that was tedious.

"They are tedious, and all is tedious," he said. "No one is fit to associate with, and one and all of them are wearisome and stupid. The world is worth nothing," he cried. "The whole thing is a stupidity."

The Weather Cock was what is called "used up"; and that quality would certainly have made him interesting in the eyes of the Cucumber if she had known it; but she had only eyes for the Yard Cock, who had now actually come into her own yard.

The wind had blown down the plank, but the storm had passed over.

"What do you think of that crowing?" the Yard Cock inquired of his hens and chickens. "It was a little rough—the elegance was wanting."

And hens and chickens stepped upon the muck heap, and the Cock strutted to and fro on it like a knight.

"Garden plant!" he cried out to the Cucumber; and in this one word she understood his deep feeling, and forgot that he was pecking at her and eating her up—a happy death!

And the hens came, and the chickens came, and when one of them runs the rest run also; and they clucked and chirped, and looked at the Cock, and were proud that he was of their kind.

"Cock-a-doodle-doo!" he crowed. "The chickens will grow up large fowls if I make a noise in the poultry yard of the world!"

And hens and chickens clucked and chirped, and the Cock told them a great piece of news:

"A cock can lay an egg! and do you know what there is in that egg? In that egg lies a basilisk. No one can stand the sight of a basilisk. Men know that, and now you know it too—you know what is in me, and what a Cock of the world I am."

And with this the Yard Cock flapped his wings, and made his comb swell up, and crowed again; and all of them shuddered—all the hens and the chickens; but they were proud that one of their people should be such a cock of the world. They clucked and chirped, so that the Weather Cock heard it; and he heard it, but he never stirred.

"It's all stupid stuff!" said a voice within the Weather Cock. "The Yard Cock does not lay eggs, and I am too lazy to lay any. If I liked, I could lay a wind egg; but the world is not worth a wind egg. And now I don't like even to sit here any longer."

And with this the Weather Cock broke off; but he did not kill the Yard Cock, though he intended to do so, as the hens declared. And what does the moral say?—"Better to crow than to be 'used up' and break off."

THE OLD GRAVESTONE.

In a little provincial town, in the time of the year when the people say "the evenings are drawing in," there was one evening quite a social gathering in the home of a father of a family. The weather was still mild and warm. The lamp

gleamed on the table; the long curtains hung down in folds before the open windows, by which stood many flower pots; and outside, beneath the dark blue sky, was the most beautiful moonshine. But they were not talking about this. They were talking about the old great stone which lay below in the courtyard, close by the kitchen door, and on which the maids often laid the clean copper kitchen utensils that they might dry in the sun, and where the children were fond of playing. It was, in fact, an old gravestone.

"Yes," said the master of the house, "I believe the stone comes from the old convent churchyard; for from the church yonder, the pulpit, the memorial boards, and the gravestones were sold. My father bought the latter, and they were cut in two to be used as paving stones; but that old stone was kept back, and has been lying in the courtyard ever since."

"One can very well see that it is a gravestone," observed the eldest of the children; "we can still decipher on it an hour-glass and a piece of an angel; but the inscription which stood below is quite effaced, except that you may read the name Preben, and a great S close behind it, and a little farther down the name of Martha. But nothing more can be distinguished, and even that is only plain when it has been raining, or when we have washed the stone."

"On my word, that must be the gravestone of Preben Schwane and his wife!"

These words were spoken by a man; so old that he might well have been the grandfather of all who were present in the room.

"Yes, they were one of the last pairs who were buried in the old churchyard of the convent. They were an honest old couple. I can remember them from the days of my boyhood. Everyone knew them, everyone esteemed them. They were the oldest pair here in the town. The people declared they had more than a tubful of gold; and yet they went about very plainly dressed, in the coarsest stuffs, but always with splendidly clean linen. They were a fine old pair, Preben and Martha! When both of them sat on the bench at the top of the steep stone stairs in front of the house, with the old linden tree spreading its branches above them, and nodded at one in their kind, gentle way, it seemed quite to do one good. They were very kind to the poor;

they fed them and clothed them; and there was judgment in their benevolence and true Christianity. The old woman died first; that day is still quite clear before my mind. I was a little boy, and had accompanied my father over there, and we were just there when she fell asleep. The old man was very much moved and wept like a child. The corpse lay in the room next to the one where we sat; and he spoke to my father and to a few neighbors who were there, and said how lonely it would be now in his house, and how good and faithful she (his dead wife) had been, how many years they had wandered together through life, and how it came about that they came to know each other and to fall in love. I was, as I have told you, a boy, and only stood by and listened to what the others said; but it filled me with quite a strange emotion to listen to the old man, and to watch how his cheeks gradually flushed red when he spoke of the days of their courtship, and how beautiful she was, how many little innocent pretexts he had invented to meet her. And then he talked of the wedding day and his eyes gleamed; he seemed to talk himself back into that time of joy. And yet she was lying in the next room—dead—an old woman; and he was an old man, speaking of the past days of hope! Yes, yes, thus it is! Then I was but a child, and now I am old—as old as Preben Schwane was then. Time passes away, and all things change. I can very well remember the day when she was buried, and how Preben Schwane walked close behind the coffin. A few years before, the couple had caused their gravestone to be prepared, and their names to be engraved on it, with the inscription, all but the date. In the evening the stone was taken to the churchyard, and laid over the grave; and the year afterward it was taken up, that old Preben Schwane might be laid to rest beside his wife. They did not leave behind them anything like the wealth people had attributed to them; what there was went to families distantly related to them—to people of whom, until then, one had known nothing. The old wooden house, with the seat at the top of the steps, beneath the lime tree, was taken down by the corporation; it was too old and rotten to be left standing. Afterward, when the same fate befell the convent church, and the graveyard was leveled, Preben and Martha's tombstone was sold, like everything else, to anyone who would buy it, and

that is how it has happened that this stone was not hewn in two, as many another has been, but that it still lies below in the yard as a scouring bench for the maids and a plaything for the children. The high road now goes over the resting place of old Preben and his wife. No one thinks of them any more."

And the old man, who had told all this, shook his head scornfully.

"Forgotten! Everything will be forgotten!" he said.

And then they spoke in the room of other things; but the youngest child, a boy with great serious eyes, mounted up on a chair behind the window-curtains, and looked out into the yard, where the moon was pouring its radiance over the old stone—the old stone that had always appeared to him so tame and flat, but which lay there now like a great leaf of a book of chronicles. All that the boy had heard about old Preben and his wife seemed concentrated in the stone; and he gazed at it, and looked at the pure, bright moon and up into the clear air, and it seemed as though the countenance of the Creator was beaming over His world.

"Forgotten! Everything will be forgotten!" was repeated in the room.

But in that moment an invisible angel kissed the boy's forehead, and whispered to him:

"Preserve the seed corn that has been entrusted to thee, that it may bear fruit. Guard it well! Through thee, my child, the obliterated inscription on the old tombstone shall be chronicled in golden letters to future generations! The old pair shall wander again arm in arm through the street, and smile, and sit with their fresh, healthy faces under the lime tree on the bench by the steep stairs, and nod at rich and poor. The seed corn of this hour shall ripen in the course of time to a blooming poem. The beautiful and the good shall not be forgotten; it shall live on in legend and in song."

THE OLD BACHELOR'S NIGHTCAP.

There is a street in Copenhagen that has this strange name—"Hysken Stræde." Whence comes this name and what is its meaning? It is said to be German; but injustice has

been done to the Germans in this matter, for it would have had to be "Häuschen," and not "Hysken." For here stood, once upon a time, and indeed for a great many years, a few little houses, which were principally nothing more than mere wooden booths, just as we see now in the market places at fair time. They were, perhaps, a little larger, and had windows; but the panes consisted of horn or bladder, for glass was then too expensive to be used in every house. But then we are speaking of a long time ago—so long since, that grandfather and great-grandfather, when they talked about them, used to speak of them as "the old times"—in fact, it is several centuries ago.

The rich merchants in Bremen and Lubeck carried on trade with Copenhagen. They did not reside in the town themselves, but sent their clerks, who lived in the wooden booths in the Häuschen Street, and sold beer and spices. The German beer was good, and there were many kinds of it, as there were, for instance, Bremen, and Prussinger, and Sous beer, and even Brunswick mumm; and quantities of spices were sold—saffron, and aniseed, and ginger, and especially pepper. Yes, pepper was the chief article here; and so it happened that the German clerks got the nickname "pepper gentry"; and there was a condition made with them in Lubeck and in Bremen, that they would not marry at Copenhagen, and many of them became very old. They had to care for themselves, and to look after their own comforts, and to put out their own fires—when they had any; and some of them became very solitary old boys, with eccentric ideas and eccentric habits. From them all unmarried men, who have attained a certain age, are called in Denmark "pepper gentry"; and this must be understood by all who wish to comprehend this history.

"The "pepper gentleman" becomes a butt for ridicule, and is continually told that he ought to put on his nightcap, and draw it down over his eyes, and do nothing but sleep. The boys sing:

Cut, cut wood,
Poor bachelor so good.
Go, take your nightcap, go to rest,
For 'tis the nightcap suits you best!

Yes, that's what they sing about the "pepperer"—thus they make game of the poor bachelor and his nightcap, and turn it into ridicule, just because they know very little about either. Ah, that kind of nightcap no one should wish to earn! And why not? We shall hear.

In the old times the "Housekin Street" was not paved, and the people stumbled out of one hole into another, as in a neglected byway; and it was narrow, too. The booths leaned side by side, and stood so close together that in the summer time a sail was often stretched from one booth to its opposite neighbor, on which occasion the fragrance of pepper, saffron, and ginger became doubly powerful. Behind the counters young men were seldom seen. The clerks were generally old boys; but they did not look like what we should fancy them, namely, with wig, and nightcap, and plush small clothes, and with waistcoat and coat buttoned up to the chin. No, grandfather's great-grandfather may look like that, and has been thus portrayed, but the "peppergentry" had no superfluous means, and accordingly did not have their portraits taken; though, indeed, it would be interesting now to have a picture of one of them, as he stood behind the counter or went to church on holy days. His hat was high-crowned and broad-brimmed, and sometimes one of the youngest clerks would mount a feather. The woolen shirt was hidden behind a broad, clean collar, the close jacket was buttoned up to the chin, and the cloak hung loose over it; and the trousers were tucked into the broad-toed shoes, for the clerks did not wear stockings. In their girdles they sported a dinner knife and spoon, and a larger knife was placed there also for the defense of the owner; and this weapon was often very necessary. Just so was Anthony, one of the oldest of the clerks, clad on high days and holy days, except that, instead of a high-crowned hat, he wore a low bonnet, and under it a knitted cap (a regular nightcap), to which he had grown so accustomed that it was always on his head; and he had two of them—nightcaps, of course. The old fellow was a subject for a painter. He was as thin as a lath, had wrinkles clustering round his eyes and mouth, and long, bony fingers, and bushy gray eyebrows; over the left eye hung quite a tuft of hair, and that did not look very handsome, though it made him very noticeable. People knew that he came from Bremen; but

that was not his native place, though his master lived there. His own native place was in Thuringia, the town of Eisenach, close by the Wartburg. Old Anthony did not speak much of this, but he thought of it all the more.

The old clerks of the Häuschen Street did not often come together. Each one remained in his booth, which was closed early in the evening; and then it looked dark enough in the street; only a faint glimmer of light forced its way through the little horn pane in the roof; and in the booth sat, generally on his bed, the old bachelor, his German hymn book in his hand, singing an evening psalm in a low voice; or he went about in the booth till late into the night, and busied himself about all sorts of things. It was certainly not an amusing life. To be a stranger in a strange land is a bitter lot; nobody cares for you, unless you happen to get in anybody's way.

Often when it was dark night outside, with snow and rain, the place looked very gloomy and lonely. No lamps were to be seen, with the exception of one solitary light hanging before the picture of the Virgin that was fastened against the wall. The splash of the water against the neighboring rampart at the castle wharf could be plainly heard. Such evenings are long and dreary, unless people devise some employment for themselves. There is not always packing or unpacking to do, nor can the scales be polished or paper bags be made continually; and, failing these, people should devise other employment for themselves. And that is just what old Anthony did; for he used to mend his clothes and put pieces on his boots. When he at last sought his couch, he used from habit to keep his nightcap on. He drew it down a little closer; but soon he would push it up again, to see if the light had been properly extinguished. He would touch it, press the wick together, and then lie down on the other side, and draw his nightcap down again; but then a doubt would come upon him, if every coal in the little fire-pan below had been properly deadened and put out—a tiny spark might have been left burning, and might set fire to something and cause damage. And therefore he rose from his bed, and crept down the ladder, for it could scarcely be called a stair. And when he came to the fire-pan, not a spark was to be discovered, and he might just go back again. But often, when he had gone half of the way

back, it would occur to him that the shutters might not be securely fastened; yes, then his thin legs must carry him downstairs once more. He was cold, and his teeth chattered in his mouth when he crept back again to bed; for the cold seems to become doubly severe when it knows it cannot stay much longer. He drew up his coverlet closer around him, and pulled down the nightcap lower over his brows, and turned his thoughts away from trade and from the labors of the day. But that did not procure him agreeable entertainment; for now old thoughts came and put up their curtains, and these curtains have sometimes pins in them, with which one pricks one's self, and one cries out "Oh!" and they prick into one's flesh and burn so, that the tears sometimes come into one's eyes; and that often happened to old Anthony—hot tears. The largest pearls streamed forth, and fell on the coverlet or on the floor, and then they sounded as if one of his heart strings had broken. Sometimes again they seemed to rise up in flame, illuminating a picture of life that never faded out of his heart. If he then dried his eyes in his nightcap, the tear and the picture were indeed crushed, but the source of the tears remained, and welled up afresh from his heart. The pictures did not come up in the order in which the scenes had occurred in reality, for very often the most painful would come together; then again the most joyful would come, but these had the deepest shadows of all.

The beech woods of Denmark are acknowledged to be fine, but the woods of Thuringia arose far more beautiful in the eyes of Anthony. More mighty and more venerable seemed to him the old oaks around the proud knightly castle, where the creeping plants hung down over the stony blocks of the rock; sweeter there bloomed the flowers of the apple tree than in the Danish land. This he remembered very vividly. A glittering tear rolled down over his cheek; and in this tear he could plainly see two children playing—a boy and a girl. The boy had red cheeks, and yellow, curling hair, and honest blue eyes. He was the son of the merchant Anthony—it was himself. The little girl had brown eyes and black hair, and had a bright, clever look. She was the burgomaster's daughter Molly. The two were playing with an apple. They shook the apple, and heard the pips rattling in it. Then they cut the apple

in two, and each of them took a half; they divided even the pips, and ate them all but one, which the little girl proposed that they should lay in the earth.

"Then you shall see," she said, "what will come out. It will be something you don't at all expect. A whole apple tree will come out, but not directly."

And she put the pip in a flower pot, and both were very busy and eager about it. The boy made a hole in the earth with his finger, and the little girl dropped the pip in it, and they both covered it with earth.

"Now, you must not take it out to-morrow to see if it has struck root," said Molly. "That won't do at all. I did it with my flowers; but only twice. I wanted to see if they were growing—and I didn't know any better then—and the plants withered."

Anthony took away the flower pot, and every morning, the whole winter through, he looked at it; but nothing was to be seen but the black earth. At length, however, the spring came, and the sun shone warm again; and the two little green leaves came up out of the pot.

"Those are for me and Molly," said the boy. "That's beautiful—that's marvelously beautiful!"

Soon a third leaf made its appearance. Whom did that represent? Yes, and there came another, and yet another. Day by day and week by week they grew larger, and the plant began to take the form of a real tree. And all this was now mirrored in a single tear, which was wiped away and disappeared; but it might come again from its source in the heart of old Anthony.

In the neighborhood of Eisenach a row of stony mountains rises up. One of these mountains is round in outline, and lifts itself above the rest, naked and without tree, bush, or grass. It is called the Venus-Mount. In this mountain dwells Lady Venus, one of the deities of the heathen times. She is also called Lady Holle; and every child in and around Eisenach has heard about her. She it was who lured Tannhauser, the noble knight and minstrel, from the circle of the singers of the Wartburg into her mountain.

Little Molly and Anthony often stood by this mountain; and once Molly said:

"You may knock and say, 'Lady Holle, open the door—Tannhauser is here!'"

But Anthony did not dare. Molly, however, did it, though she only said the words "Lady Holle, Lady Holle!" aloud and distinctly; the rest she muttered so indistinctly that Anthony felt convinced she had not really said anything; and yet she looked as bold and saucy as possible—as saucy as when she sometimes came round him with other little girls in the garden, and all wanted to kiss him because he did not like to be kissed and tried to keep them off; and she was the only one who dared to kiss him in spite of his resistance.

"I may kiss him!" she would say proudly.

That was her vanity; and Anthony submitted, and thought no more about it.

How charming and how teasing Molly was. It was said that Lady Holle in the mountain was beautiful also, but that her beauty was like that of a tempting fiend. The greatest beauty and grace was possessed by Saint Elizabeth, the patron of the country, the pious Princess of Thuringia, whose good actions have been immortalized in many places in legends and stories. In the chapel her picture hung, surrounded by silver lamps; but it was not in the least like Molly.

The apple tree which the two children had planted grew year by year, and became taller and taller—so tall, that it had to be transplanted into the garden, into the fresh air, where the dew fell and the sun shone warm. And the tree developed itself strongly so that it could resist the winter. And it seemed as if, after the rigor of the cold season was past, it put forth blossoms in spring for very joy. In the autumn it brought two apples—one for Molly and one for Anthony. It could not well have produced less.

The tree had grown apace, and Molly grew like the tree. She was as fresh as an apple blossom; but Anthony was not long to behold this flower. All things change! Molly's father left his old home, and Molly went with him, far away. Yes, in our time steam has made the journey they took a matter of a few hours, but then more than a day and a night were necessary to go so far eastward from Eisenach to the farthest border of Thuringia, to the city which is still called Weimar.

And Molly wept, and Anthony wept; but all their tears melted into one, and this tear had the rosy, charming hue

of joy. For Molly told him she loved him—loved him more than all the splendors of Weimar.

One, two, three years went by, and during this period two letters were received. One came by a carrier, and a traveler brought the other. The way was long and difficult, and passed through many windings by towns and villages.

Often had Molly and Anthony heard of Tristram and Iseult, and often had the boy applied the story to himself and Molly, though the name Tristram was said to mean "born in tribulation;" and that did not apply to Anthony, nor would he ever be able to think, like Tristram, "She has forgotten me." But, indeed, Iseult did not forget her faithful knight; and when both were laid to rest in the earth, one on each side of the church, the linden trees grew from their graves over the church roof, and there encountered each other in bloom; Anthony thought that was beautiful but mournful; but it could not become mournful between him and Molly; and he whistled a song of the old minnesinger, Walter of the Vogelvede:

Under the lindens
Upon the heath.

And especially that passage appeared charming to him:

From the forest, down in the vale,
Sang her sweet song the nightingale.

This song was often in his mouth, and he sang and whistled it in the moonlight night, when he rode along the deep hollow way on horseback to get to Weimar and visit Molly. He wished to come unexpectedly, and he came unexpectedly.

He was made welcome with full goblets of wine, with jovial company, fine company, and a pretty room and a good bed were provided for him; and yet his reception was not what he had dreamed and fancied it would be. He could not understand himself—he could not understand the others; but we can understand it. One may be admitted into a house and associate with a family without becoming one of them. One may converse together as one would

converse in a post-carriage, and know one another as people know each other on a journey, each incommoding the other and wishing that either one's self or the good neighbor were away. Yes, that was the kind of thing Anthony felt.

"I am an honest girl," said Molly, "and I myself will tell you what it is. Much has changed since we were children together—changed inwardly and outwardly. Habit and will have no power over our hearts. Anthony, I should not like to have an enemy in you, now that I shall soon be far away from here. Believe me, I entertain the best wishes for you; but to feel for you what I know now one may feel for a man, has never been the case with me. You must reconcile yourself to this. Farewell, Anthony."

And Anthony bade her farewell. No tear came into his eye, but he felt that he was no longer Molly's friend. Hot iron and cold iron alike take the skin from our lips, and we have the same feeling when we kiss it; and he kissed himself into hatred as into love.

Within twenty-four hours Anthony was back in Eisenach, though certainly the horse on which he rode was ruined.

"What matter!" he said; "I am ruined, too; and I will destroy everything that can remind me of her, or of Lady Holle, or Venus, the heathen woman! I will break down the apple tree and tear it up by the roots, so that it shall never bear flower or fruit more!"

But the apple tree was not broken down, though he himself was broken down, and bound on a couch by fever. What was it that raised him up again? A medicine was presented to him which had strength to do this—the bitterest of medicines, that shakes up body and spirit together. Anthony's father ceased to be the richest of merchants. Heavy days—days of trial—were at the door; misfortune came rolling into the house like great waves of the sea. The father became a poor man. Sorrow and suffering took away his strength. Then Anthony had to think of something else besides nursing his love sorrows and his anger against Molly. He had to take his father's place—to give orders, to help, to act energetically, and at last to go out into the world and earn his bread.

Anthony went to Bremen. There he learned what pov-

erty and hard living meant; and these sometimes make the heart hard, and sometimes soften it, even too much.

How different the world was, and how different the people were from what he had supposed them to be in his childhood! What were the minnesinger's songs to him now?—an echo, a vanishing sound! Yes, that is what he thought sometimes; but again the songs would sound in his soul, and his heart became gentle.

"God's will is best!" he would say then. "It was well that I was not permitted to keep Molly's heart—that she did not remain true to me. What would it have led to now, when fortune has turned away from me? She quitted me before she knew of this loss of prosperity, or had any notion of what awaited me. That was a mercy of Providence toward me. Everything has happened for the best. It was not her fault—and I have been so bitter, and have shown so much rancor toward her."

And years went by. Anthony's father was dead, and strangers lived in the old house. But Anthony was destined to see it again. His rich employer sent him on commercial journeys and his duty led him into his native town of Eisenach. The old Wartburg stood unchanged on the mountain, with "the monk and the nun" hewn out in stone. The great oaks gave to the scene the outlines it had possessed in his childish days. The Venus Mount glimmered gray and naked over the valley. He would have been glad to cry, "Lady Holle, Lady Holle, unlock the door, and I shall enter and remain in my native earth!"

That was a sinful thought, and he blessed himself to drive it away. Then a little bird out of the thicket sang clearly, and the old minne-song came into his mind:

From the forest down in the vale,
Sang her sweet song the nightingale.

And here in the town of his childhood, which he thus saw again through tears, much came back into his remembrance. The paternal house stood as in the old times; but the garden was altered, and a field-path led over a portion of the old ground, and the apple tree that he had not broken down stood there, but outside the garden, on the farther side of the path. But the sun threw its rays on the apple tree as

in old days, the dew descended gently upon it as then, and it bore such a burden of fruit that the branches were bent down toward the earth.

"That flourishes!" he said. "The tree can grow!"

Nevertheless, one of the branches of the tree was broken. Mischievous hands had torn it down toward the ground; for now the tree stood by the public way.

"They break its blossoms off without a feeling of thankfulness—they steal its fruit and break the branches. One might say of the tree, as has been said of some men—'It was not sung at his cradle that it should come thus.' How brightly its history began, and what has it come to? Forsaken and forgotten—a garden tree by the hedge, in the field, and on the public way! There it stands unprotected, plundered, and broken! It has certainly not died, but in the course of years the number of blossoms will diminish; at last the fruit will cease altogether; and at last—at last all will be over!"

Such were Anthony's thoughts under the tree; such were his thoughts during many a night in the lonely chamber of the wooden house in the distant land—in the Häuschen Street in Copenhagen, whither his rich employer, the Bremen merchant, had sent him, first making it a condition that he should not marry.

"Marry! Ha, ha!" he laughed bitterly to himself.

Winter had set in early; it was freezing hard. Without, a snowstorm was raging, so that everyone who could do so remained at home; thus, too, it happened that those who lived opposite to Anthony did not notice that for two days his house had not been unlocked, and that he did not show himself; for who would go out unnecessarily in such weather?

They were gray, gloomy days; and in the house, whose windows were not of glass, twilight only alternated with dark night. Old Anthony had not left his bed during the two days, for he had not the strength to rise; he had for a long time felt in his limbs the hardness of the weather. Forsaken by all, lay the old bachelor, unable to help himself. He could scarcely reach the water jug that he had placed by his bedside, and the last drop it contained had been consumed. It was not fever, nor sickness, but old age that had struck him down. Up yonder, where his couch was placed,

he was overshadowed, as it were, by continual night. A little spider, which, however, he could not see, busily and cheerfully spun its web around him, as if it were weaving a little crape banner that should wave when the old man closed his eyes.

The time was very slow, and long, and dreary. Tears he had none to shed, nor did he feel pain. The thought of Molly never came into his mind. He felt as if the world and its noise concerned him no longer—as if he were lying outside the world, and no one were thinking of him. For a moment he felt a sensation of hunger—of thirst. Yes, he felt them both. But nobody came to tend him—nobody. He thought of those who had once suffered want; of Saint Elizabeth, as she had once wandered on earth; of her, the saint of his home and of his childhood, the noble Duchess of Thuringia, the benevolent lady who had been accustomed to visit the lowliest cottages, bringing to the inmates refreshment and comfort. Her pious deeds shone bright upon his soul. He thought of her as she had come to distribute words of comfort, binding up the wounds of the afflicted and giving meat to the hungry, though her stern husband had chidden her for it. He thought of the legend told of her, how she had been carrying the full basket containing food and wine, when her husband, who watched her footsteps, came forth and asked angrily what she was carrying, whereupon she answered, in fear and trembling, that the basket contained roses which she had plucked in the garden; how he had torn away the white cloth from the basket, and a miracle had been performed for the pious lady; for bread and wine, and everything in the basket, had been transformed into roses!

Thus the saint's memory dwelt in Anthony's quiet mind; thus she stood bodily before his downcast face, before his warehouse in the simple booth in the Danish land. He uncovered his head, and looked into her gentle eyes, and everything around him was beautiful and roseate. Yes, the roses seemed to unfold themselves in fragrance. There came to him a sweet, peculiar odor of apples, and he saw a blooming apple tree, which spread its branches above him—it was the tree which Molly and he had planted together.

And the tree strewed down its fragrant leaves upon him, cooling his burning brow. The leaves fell upon his parched

lips, and were like strengthening bread and wine; and they fell upon his breast, and he felt reassured and calm, and inclined to sleep peacefully.

"Now I shall sleep," he whispered to himself. "Sleep is refreshing. To-morrow I shall be upon my feet again, and strong and well—glorious, wonderful! That apple tree, planted in true affection, now stands before me in heavenly radiance——"

And he slept.

The day afterward—it was the third day that his shop had remained closed—the snowstorm had ceased, and a neighbor from the opposite house came over toward the booth where dwelt old Anthony, who had not yet shown himself. Anthony lay stretched upon his bed—dead—with his old cap clutched tightly in his two hands! They did not put that cap on his head in his coffin, for he had a new white one.

Where were now the tears that he had wept? What had become of the pearls? They remained in the nightcap—and the true ones do not come out in the wash—they were preserved in the nightcap, and in time forgotten; but the old thoughts and the old dreams still remained in the "bachelor's nightcap." Don't wish for such a cap for yourselves. It would make your forehead very hot, would make your pulse beat feverishly, and conjure up dreams which appear like reality. The first who wore that identical cap afterward felt all at once, though it was half a century afterward; and that man was the burgomaster himself, who, with his wife and eleven children, was well and firmly established, and had amassed a very tolerable amount of wealth. He was immediately seized with dreams of unfortunate love, of bankruptcy, and of heavy times.

"Hallo! how the nightcap burns!" he cried, and tore it from his head.

And a pearl rolled out, and another, and they sounded and glittered.

"This must be gout," said the burgomaster. "Something dazzles my eyes!"

They were tears, shed half a century before by old Anthony from Eisenach.

Everyone who afterward put that nightcap upon his head had visions and dreams which excited him not a little. His

own history was changed into that of Anthony, and became a story; in fact, many stories. But someone else may tell them. We have told the first. And our last word is—don't wish for "the Old Bachelor's Nightcap."

A ROSE FROM THE GRAVE OF HOMER.

All the songs of the East tell of the love of the nightingale to the rose; in the silent, starlit nights the winged songster serenades his fragrant flower.

Not far from Smyrna, under the lofty plantains, where the merchant drives his loaded camels, that proudly lift their long necks and tramp over the holy ground, I saw a hedge of roses. Wild pigeons flew among the branches of the high trees, and their wings glistened, while a sunbeam glided over them, as if they were mother-o'-pearl.

The rose hedge bore a flower which was the most beautiful among all, and the nightingale sang to her of his woes; but the Rose was silent—not a dewdrop lay, like a tear of sympathy, upon her leaves; she bent down over a few great stones.

"Here rests the greatest singer of the world!" said the Rose; "over his tomb will I pour out my fragrance, and on it I will let fall my leaves when the storm tears them off. He who sang of Troy became earth, and from that earth I have sprung. I, a rose from the grave of Homer, am too lofty to bloom for a poor nightingale!"

And the nightingale sang himself to death.

The camel driver came with his loaded camels and his black slaves; his little son found the dead bird, and buried the little songster in the grave of the great Homer. And the rose trembled in the wind. The evening came, and the Rose wrapped her leaves more closely together, and dreamed thus:

"It was a fair sunshiny day; a crowd of strangers drew near, for they had undertaken a pilgrimage to the grave of Homer. Among the strangers was a singer from the North, the home of clouds and of the Northern Light. He plucked the Rose, placed it in a book, and carried it away into another part of the world, to his distant fatherland. The Rose

faded with grief, and lay in the narrow book, which he opened in his home, saying, 'Here is a rose from the grave of Homer.'"

This the flower dreamed; and she awoke and trembled in the wind. A drop of dew fell from the leaves upon the singer's grave. The sun rose, and the Rose glowed more beautiful than before; it was a hot day, and she was in her own warm Asia. Then footsteps were heard, and Frankish strangers came, such as the Rose had seen in her dream; and among the strangers was a poet from the North; he plucked the Rose, pressed a kiss upon her fresh mouth, and carried her away to the home of the clouds and of the Northern Light.

Like a mummy the flower corpse now rests in his "Iliad," and, as in a dream, she hears him open a book and say, "Here is a rose from the grave of Homer."

THE WIND TELLS ABOUT WALDEMAR DAA AND HIS DAUGHTERS.

When the wind sweeps across the grass, the field has a ripple like a pond, and when it sweeps across the corn the field waves to and fro like a high sea. That is called the wind's dance; but the wind does not dance only; he also tells stories; and how loudly he can sing out of his deep chest, and how different it sounds in the treetops in the forest, and through the loopholes and clefts and cracks in walls! Do you see how the wind drives the clouds up yonder, like a frightened flock of sheep? Do you hear how the wind howls down here through the open valley, like a watchman blowing his horn? With wonderful tones he whistles and screams down the chimney and into the fireplace. The fire crackles and flares up, and shines far into the room, and the little place is warm and snug, and it is pleasant to sit there listening to the sounds. Let the Wind speak, for he knows plenty of stories and fairy tales, many more than are known to any of us. Just hear what the Wind can tell.

"Huh—uh—ush! roar along!" That is the burden of the song.

"By the shores of the Great Belt, one of the straits that unite the Cattegat with the Baltic, lies an old mansion with thick red walls," says the Wind. "I know every stone in it; I saw it when it still belonged to the castle of Marsk Stig on the promontory. But it had to be pulled down, and the stone was used again for the walls of a new mansion in another place, the baronial mansion of Borreby, which still stands by the coast.

"I knew them, the noble lords and ladies, the changing races that dwelt there, and now I'm going to tell about Waldemar Daa and his daughters. How proudly he carried himself—he was of royal blood! He could do more than merely hunt the stag and empty the wine-can. 'It shall be done,' he was accustomed to say.

"His wife walked proudly in gold embroidered garments over the polished marble floors. The tapestries were gorgeous, the furniture was expensive and artistically carved. She had brought gold and silver plate with her into the house, and there was German beer in the cellar. Black; fiery horses neighed in the stables. There was a wealthy look about the house of Borreby at that time, when wealth was still at home there.

"Four children dwelt there also; three delicate maidens, Ida, Joanna, and Anna Dorothea. I have never forgotten their names.

"They were rich people, noble people, born in affluence, nurtured in affluence.

"Hush—sh! roar along!" sang the Wind; then he continued:

"I did not see here, as in other great noble houses, the high-born lady sitting among her women in the great hall turning the spinning-wheel; here she swept the sounding chords of the cithern, and sang to the sound, but not always the old Danish melodies, but songs of a strange land. It was 'live and let live' here; stranger guests came from far and near, the music sounded, the goblets clashed, and I was not able to drown the noise," said the Wind. "Ostentation, and haughtiness, and splendor, and display, and rule were there, but the fear of the Lord was not there.

"And it was just on the evening of the first day of May,"

the Wind continued. "I came from the west, and had seen how the ships were being crushed by the waves, with all on board, and flung on the west coast of Jutland. I had hurried across the heath, and over Jutland's wood-girt eastern coast, and over the Island of Fünen, and now I drove over the Great Belt, groaning and sighing.

"Then I lay down to rest on the shore of Seeland in the neighborhood of the great house of Borreby, where the forest, the splendid oak forest, still rose.

"The young men-servants of the neighborhood were collecting branches and brushwood under the oak trees; the largest and driest they could find they carried into the village, and piled them up in a heap, and set them on fire; the men and maids danced, singing in a circle round the blazing pile.

"I lay quite quiet," continued the Wind; "but I silently touched a branch which had been brought by the handsomest of the men-servants, and the wood blazed up brightly, blazed up higher than all the rest; and now he was the chosen one, and bore the name of Street-goat, and might choose his Street-lamp first from among the maids; and there was mirth and rejoicing, greater than I had ever heard before in the halls of the rich baronial mansion.

"And the noble lady drove toward the baronial mansion, with her three daughters, in a gilded carriage drawn by six horses. The daughters were young and fair—three charming blossoms, rose, lily, and pale hyacinth. The mother was a proud tulip, and never acknowledged the salutation of one of the men or maids who paused in their sport to do her honor; the gracious lady seemed a flower that was rather stiff in the stalk.

"Rose, lily, and pale hyacinth; yes, I saw them all three! Whose lambkins will they one day become? thought I; their Street-goat will be a gallant knight, perhaps a prince. Huh—sh! hurry along! hurry along!

"Yes, the carriage rolled on with them, and the peasant people resumed their dancing. They rode that summer through all the villages round about. But in the night, when I rose again," said the Wind, "the very noble lady lay down, to rise again no more; that thing came upon her which comes upon all—there is nothing new in that.

"Waldemar Daa stood for a space silent and thoughtful.

'The proudest tree can be bowed without being broken,' said a voice within him. His daughters wept, and all the people in the mansion wiped their eyes; but Lady Daa had driven away—and I drove away, too, and rushed along—huh—sh!" said the Wind.

"I returned again; I often returned again over the Island of Fünen and the shores of the Belt, and I sat down by Borreby, by the splendid oak wood; there the heron made his nest, and wood pigeons haunted the place, and blue ravens, and even the black stork. It was still spring; some of them were yet sitting on their eggs, others had already hatched their young. But how they flew up, how they cried! The ax sounded, blow upon blow, the wood was to be felled. Waldemar Daa wanted to build a noble ship, a man-of-war, a three-decker, which the King would be sure to buy; and therefore the wood must be felled, the landmark of the seamen, the refuge of the birds. The hawk started up and flew away, for its nest was destroyed; the heron and all the birds of the forest became homeless, and flew about in fear and in anger; I could well understand how they felt. Crows and ravens croaked aloud as if in scorn. 'Crack! crack! the nest cracks, cracks, cracks!'

"Far in the interior of the wood, where the noisy laborers were working, stood Waldemar Daa and his three daughters; and all laughed at the wild cries of the birds; only one, the youngest, Anna Dorothea, felt grieved in her heart; and when they made preparations to fell a tree that was almost dead, and on whose naked branches the black stork had built his nest, whence the little storks were stretching out their heads, she begged for mercy for the little things, and the tears came into her eyes. Therefore the tree with the black stork's nest was left standing. The tree was not worth speaking of.

"There was a great hewing and sawing, and a three-decker was built. The architect was of low origin, but of great pride; his eyes and forehead told how clever he was, and Waldemar Daa was fond of listening to him, and so was Waldemar's daughter Ida, the eldest, who was now fifteen years old; and while he built a ship for the father, he was building for himself an airy castle into which he and Ida were to go as a married couple—which might indeed

have happened, if the castle with stone walls, and ramparts, and moats had remained. But in spite of his wise head, the architect remained but a poor bird; and, indeed, what business has a sparrow to take part in a dance of peacocks? Huh—sh! I careered away, and he careered away, too, for he was not allowed to stay; and little Ida very soon got over it, because she was obliged to get over it.

“The proud black horses were neighing in the stable; they were worth looking at, and accordingly they were looked at. The Admiral, who had been sent by the King himself to inspect the new ship and take measures for its purchase, spoke loudly in admiration of the beautiful horses.

“I heard all that,” said the Wind. “I accompanied the gentlemen through the open door, and strewed blades of straw like bars of gold before their feet. Waldemar Daa wanted to have gold, and the Admiral wished for the proud black horses, and that is why he praised them so much; but the hint was not taken, and consequently the ship was not bought. It remained on the shore covered over with boards, a Noah’s ark that never got to the water—Huh—sh! rush away! away!—and that was a pity.

“In the winter, when the fields were covered with snow, and the water with large blocks of ice that I blew up to the coast,” continued the Wind, “crows and ravens came, all as black as might be, great flocks of them, and alighted on the dead, deserted, lonely ship by the shore, and croaked in hoarse accents of the wood that was no more, of the many pretty birds’ nests destroyed, and the little ones left without a home; and all for the sake of that great bit of lumber, that proud ship that never sailed forth.

“I made the snowflakes whirl, and the snow lay like a great lake high around the ship, and drifted over it. I let it hear my voice, that it might know what a storm has to say. Certainly I did my part toward teaching it seamanship. Huh—sh! push along!

“And the winter passed away; winter and summer, both passed away, and they are still passing away, even as I pass away; as the snow whirls along, and the apple blossom whirls along, and the leaves fall—away! away!—and men are passing away, too!

“But the daughters were still young, and little Ida was a

rose, as fair to look upon as on the day when the architect saw her. I often seized her long brown hair, when she stood in the garden by the apple tree, musing, and not heeding how I strewed blossoms on her hair, and loosened it, while she was gazing at the red sun and the golden sky, through the dark underwood and the trees of the garden.

"Her sister was bright and slender as a lily. Joanna had height and deportment, but was like her mother, rather stiff in the stalk. She was very fond of walking through the great hall, where hung the portraits of her ancestors. The women were painted in dresses of silk and velvet, with a tiny little hat embroidered with pearls, on their plaited hair. They were handsome women. The gentlemen were represented clad in steel, or in costly cloaks lined with squirrels' skins; they wore little ruffs, and swords at their sides, but not buckled to their hips. Where would Joanna's picture find a place on that wall some day? and how would he look, her noble lord and husband? This is what she thought of, and of this she spoke softly to herself. I heard it, as I swept into the long hall, and turned round to come out again.

"Anna Dorothea, the pale hyacinth, a child of fourteen, was quiet and thoughtful; her great, deep blue eyes had a musing look, but the childlike smile still played around her lips; I was not able to blow it away, nor did I wish to do so.

"We met in the garden, in the hollow lane, in the field and meadow; she gathered herbs and flowers which she knew would be useful to her father in concocting the drinks and drops he distilled. Waldemar Daa was arrogant and proud, but he was also a learned man, and knew a great deal. That was no secret, and many opinions were expressed concerning it. In his chimney there was a fire even in summer time. He would lock the door of his room, and for days the fire would be poked and raked; but of this he did not talk much—the forces of nature must be conquered in silence; and soon he would discover the art of making the best thing of all—the red gold.

"That is why the chimney was always smoking, therefore the flames crackled so frequently. Yes, I was there, too," said the Wind. "'Let it go,' I sang down through the chimney; 'it will end in smoke, air, coals, and ashes! You will burn yourself! Hu-uh-ush! drive away! drive away!' But Waldemar Daa did not drive it away.

"The splendid black horses in the stable—what became of them? What became of the old gold and silver vessels in cupboards and chests, the cows in the fields, and the house and home itself? Yes, they may melt, may melt in the golden crucible, and yet yield no gold.

"Empty grew the barns and store rooms, the cellars and magazines. The servants decreased in number, and the mice multiplied. Then a window broke, and then another, and I could get in elsewhere besides at the door," said the Wind. "'Where the chimney smokes the meal is being cooked,' the proverb says. But here the chimney smoked that devoured all the meals, for the sake of the red gold.

"I blew through the courtyard gate like a watchman blowing his horn," the Wind went on, "but no watchman was there. I twirled the weather cock round on the summit of the tower, and it creaked like the snoring of the warder, but no warder was there; only mice and rats were there. Poverty laid the table cloth; poverty sat in the wardrobe and in the larder; the door fell off its hinges, cracks and fissures made their appearance, and I went in and out at pleasure; and that is how I know all about it.

"Amid smoke and ashes, amid sorrow and sleepless nights, the hair and beard of the master turned gray, and deep furrows showed themselves around his temples; his skin turned pale and yellow, as his eyes looked greedily for the gold, the desired gold.

"I blew the smoke and ashes into his face and beard; the result of his labor was debt instead of pelf. I sung through the burst window panes and the yawning clefts in the walls. I blew into the chests of drawers belonging to the daughters, wherein lay the clothes that had become faded and threadbare from being worn over and over again. That was not the song that had been sung at the children's cradle. The lordly life had changed to a life of penury. I was the only one who rejoiced aloud in that castle," said the Wind. "I snowed them up, and they say snow keeps people warm. They had no wood, and the forest from which they might have brought it was cut down. It was a biting frost. I rushed in through loopholes and passages, over gables and roofs, that I might be brisk. They were lying in bed because of the cold, three high-born daughters, and their father was crouching under his leathern coverlet. Nothing

to bite, nothing to break, no fire on the hearth—there was a life for high-born people! Hush-sh! Let it go! But this is what my Lord Daa could not do—he could not let it go.

“‘After winter comes spring,’ he said. ‘After want, good times will come; one must not lose patience; one must learn to wait! Now my house and lands are mortgaged, it is indeed high time; and the gold will soon come. At Easter!’

“I heard how he spoke thus, looking at a spider’s web. ‘Thou cunning little weaver, thou dost teach me perseverance. Let them tear thy web, and thou wilt begin it again, and complete it. Let them destroy it again, and thou wilt resolutely begin to work again—again! That is what we must do, and that will repay itself at last.’

“It was the morning of Easter day. The bells sounded from the neighboring church, and the sun seemed to rejoice in the sky. The master had watched through the night in feverish excitement, and had been melting and cooling, distilling and mixing. I heard him sighing like a soul in despair; I heard him praying, and I noticed how he held his breath. The lamp was burned out, but he did not notice it. I blew fiercely at the fire of coals, and it threw its red glow upon his ghastly white face, lighting it up with a glare, and his sunken eyes looked forth wildly out of their deep sockets—but they became larger and larger, as though they would burst.

“Look at the alchymic glass! It glows in the crucible red, hot, and pure and heavy! He lifted it with a trembling hand, and cried with a trembling voice, ‘Gold! gold!’

“He was quite dizzy—I could have blown him down,” said the Wind; “but I only fanned the glowing coals, and accompanied him through the door to where his daughters sat shivering. His coat was powdered with ashes, and there were ashes in his beard and in his tangled hair. He stood straight up, and held his costly treasure on high, in the brittle glass. ‘Found, found!—Gold, gold!’ he shouted, and again held aloft the glass to let it flash in the sunshine; but his hand trembled, and the alchymic glass fell clattering to the ground, and broke into a thousand pieces; and the last bubble of his happiness had burst! Hu—uh-sh! rushing away!—and I rushed away from the gold-maker’s house.

"Late in the autumn, when the days are short, and the mist comes and strews cold drops upon the berries and leafless branches, I came back in fresh spirits, rushed through the air, swept the sky clear, and snapped the dry twigs—which is certainly no great labor, but yet it must be done. Then there was another kind of sweeping clean at Waldemar Daa's in the mansion of Borreby. His enemy, Owe Rainel, of Basnäs, was there with the mortgage of the house and everything it contained in his pocket. I drummed against the broken window panes, beat against the old rotten doors, and whistled through cracks and rifts—huh-sh! Mr. Owe Rainel did not like staying there. Ida and Anna Dorothea wept bitterly; Joanna stood pale and proud, and bit her thumb till it bled—but what could that avail? Owe Rainel offered to allow Waldemar Daa to remain in the mansion till the end of his life, but no thanks were given him for his offer. I listened to hear what occurred. I saw the ruined gentleman lift his head and throw it back prouder than ever, and I rushed against the house and the old lime trees with such force, that one of the thickest branches broke, one that was not decayed; and the branch remained lying at the entrance as a broom when anyone wanted to sweep the place out; and a grand sweep out there was—I thought it would be so.

"It was hard on that day to preserve one's composure; but their will was as hard as their fortune.

"There was nothing they could call their own except the clothes they wore; yes, there was one thing more—the alchemist's glass, a new one that had lately been bought, and filled with what had been gathered up from the ground of the treasure which promised so much, but never kept its promise. Waldemar Daa hid the glass in his bosom, and taking his stick in his hand, the once rich gentleman passed with his daughters out of the house of Borreby. I blew cold upon his heated cheeks, I stroked his gray beard and his long white hair, and I sang as well as I could,—'Huh-sh! gone away! gone away!' And that was the end of the wealth and splendor.

"Ida walked on one side of the old man, and Anna Dorothea on the other. Joanna turned round at the entrance—why? Fortune would not turn because she did so. She

looked at the old walls of what had once been the castle of Marsk Stig, and perhaps she thought of his daughters:

The eldest gave the youngest her hand,
And forth they went to the far-off land.

Was she thinking of this old song? Here were three of them, and their father was with them, too. They walked along the road on which they had once driven in their splendid carriage—they walked forth as beggars, with their father, and wandered out into the open field, and into a mud hut, which they rented for a dollar and a half a year—into their new house with the empty rooms and empty vessels. Crows and magpies fluttered above them, and cried, as if in contempt, 'Craw! craw! out of the nest! craw! craw!' as they had done in the wood at Borreby when the trees were felled.

"Daa and his daughters could not help hearing it. I blew about their ears, for what use would it be that they should listen?"

"And they went to live in the mud hut on the open field, and I wandered away over moor and field, through bare bushes and leafless forests, to the open waters, the free shores, to other lands—huh-uh-ush! away, away!—year after year!"

And how did Waldemar Daa and his daughters prosper? The Wind tells us:

"The one I saw last, yes, for the last time, was Anna Dorothea, the pale hyacinth; then she was old and bent, for it was fifty years afterward. She lived longer than the rest; she knew all.

"Yonder on the heath, by the Jutland town of Wiborg, stood the fine new house of the cannon, built of red bricks with projecting gables; the smoke came up thickly from the chimney. The cannon's gentle lady and her beautiful daughters sat in the bay window, and looked over the hawthorn hedge of the garden toward the brown heath. What were they looking at? Their glances rested upon the stork's nest without, and on the hut, which was almost falling in; the roof consisted of moss and houseleek, in so far as a roof existed there at all—the stork's nest covered the

greater part of it, and that alone was in proper condition, for it was kept in order by the stork himself.

"That is a house to be looked at, but not to be touched; I must deal gently with it," said the Wind. "For the sake of the stork's nest the hut has been allowed to stand, though it has been a blot upon the landscape. They did not like to drive the stork away, therefore the old shed was left standing, and the poor woman who dwelt in it was allowed to stay; she had the Egyptian bird to thank for that; or was it perchance her reward, because she had once interceded for the nest of its black brother in the forest of Borreby? At that time she, the poor woman, was a young child, a pale hyacinth in the rich garden. She remembered all that right well, did Anna Dorothea.

"Oh! oh!" Yes, people can sigh like the wind moaning in the rushes and reeds. 'Oh! oh!' she sighed, 'no bells sounded at thy burial, Waldemar Daa! The poor school-boys did not even sing a psalm when the former Lord of Borreby was laid in the earth to rest! Oh, everything has an end, even misery. Sister Ida became the wife of a peasant. That was the hardest trial that befell our father, that the husband of a daughter of his should be a miserable serf, whom the proprietor could mount upon the wooden horse for punishment! I suppose he is under the ground now. And thou, Ida! Alas, alas! it is not ended yet, wretch that I am! Grant me that I may die, kind Heaven!

"That was Anna Dorothea's prayer in the wretched hut which was left standing for the sake of the stork.

"I took pity on the fairest of the sisters," said the Wind. "Her courage was like that of a man, and in man's clothes she took service as a sailor on board a ship. She was sparing of words, and of a dark countenance, but willing at her work. But she did not know how to climb; so I blew her overboard before anybody found out that she was a woman, and, according to my thinking, that was well done!" said the Wind.

"On such an Easter morning as that on which Waldemar Daa had fancied that he had found the red gold, I heard the tones of a psalm under the stork's nest, among the crumbling walls,—it was Anna Dorothea's last song.

"There was no window, only a hole in the wall. The sun rose up like a mass of gold, and looked through. What a

splendor he diffused! Her eyes and her heart were breaking—but that they would have done, even if the sun had not shone that morning on Anna Dorothea.

“The stork covered her hut till her death. I sang at her grave!” said the Wind. “I sang at her father’s grave; I know where his grave is, and where hers is, and nobody else knows it.

“New times, changed times! The old high road runs through cultivated fields; the new road winds among the trim ditches, and soon the railway will come with its train of carriages, and rush over the graves which are forgotten like the names—hu-ush!—passed away! passed away!

“That is the story of Waldemar Daa and his daughters. Tell it better, any of you, if you know how,” said the Wind, and turned away—and he was gone.

FIVE OUT OF ONE SHELL.

There were five peas in one shell; they were green, and the pod was green, and so they thought all the world was green; and that was just as it should be. The shell grew and the peas grew; they accommodated themselves to circumstances, sitting all in a row. The sun shone without, and warmed the husk, and the rain made it clear and transparent; it was mild and agreeable in the bright day and in the dark night, just as it should be, and the peas as they sat there became bigger and bigger, and more and more thoughtful, for something they must do.

“Are we to sit here everlastingly?” asked one. “I’m afraid we shall become hard by long sitting. It seems to me there must be something outside—I have a kind of inkling of it.”

And weeks went by. The peas became yellow, and the pod also.

“All the world’s turning yellow,” said they; and they had a right to say it.

Suddenly they felt a tug at the shell. The shell was torn off, passed through human hands, and glided down into the pocket of a jacket, in company with other full pods.

"Now we shall soon be opened!" they said; and that is just what they were waiting for.

"I should like to know who of us will get farthest!" said the smallest of the five. "Yes, now it will soon show itself."

"What is to be will be," said the biggest.

"Crack!" the pod burst, and all the five peas rolled out into the bright sunshine. There they lay in a child's hand. A little boy was clutching them, and said they were fine peas for his pea-shooter; and he put one in directly and shot it out.

"Now I'm flying out into the wide world, catch me if you can!" And he was gone.

"I," said the second, "I shall fly straight into the sun. That's a shell worth looking at, and one that exactly suits me." And away he went.

"We'll go to sleep wherever we arrive," said the two next, "but we shall roll on all the same." And they certainly rolled and tumbled down on the ground before they got into the pea-shooter; but they were put in for all that. "We shall go farthest," said they.

"What is to happen will happen," said the last, as he was shot forth out of the pea-shooter; and he flew up against the old board under the garret window, just into a crack which was filled up with moss and soft mold; and the moss closed round him; there he lay, a prisoner indeed, but not forgotten by provident nature.

"What is to happen will happen," said he.

Within, in the little garret, lived a poor woman, who went out in the day to clean stoves, chop wood small, and to do other hard work of the same kind, for she was strong and industrious, too. But she always remained poor; and at home in the garret lay her half-grown only daughter, who was very delicate and weak; for a whole year she had kept her bed, and it seemed as if she could neither live nor die.

"She is going to her little sister," the woman said. "I had only the two children, and it was not an easy thing to provide for both, but the good God provided for one of them by taking her home to himself; now I should be glad to keep the other that was left me; but I suppose they are not to remain separated, and my sick girl will go to her sister in heaven."

But the sick girl remained where she was. She lay quiet and patient all day long, while her mother went to earn money out of doors. It was spring, and early in the morning, just as the mother was about to go out to work, the sun shone mildly and pleasantly through the little window, and threw its rays across the floor; and the sick girl fixed her eyes on the lowest pane in the window.

"What may that green thing be that looks in at the window? It is moving in the wind."

And the mother stepped to the window, and half opened it. "Oh!" said she, "on my word, that is a little pea which has taken root here, and is putting out its little leaves. How can it have got into the crack? That is a little garden with which you can amuse yourself."

And the sick girl's bed was moved nearer to the window, so that she could always see the growing pea; and the mother went forth to her work.

"Mother, I think I shall get well," said the sick child in the evening. "The sun shone in upon me to-day delightfully warm. The little pea is prospering famously, and I shall prosper, too, and get up, and go out into the warm sunshine."

"God grant it," said the mother, but she did not believe it would be so; but she took care to prop with a little stick the green plant which had given her daughter the pleasant thoughts of life, so that it might not be broken by the wind; she tied a piece of string to the window sill and to the upper part of the frame, so that the pea might have something round which it could twine, when it shot up; and it did shoot up, indeed—one could see how it grew every day.

"Really, here is a flower coming!" said the woman one day; and now she began to cherish the hope that her sick daughter would recover. She remembered that lately the child had spoken much more cheerfully than before, that in the last few days she had risen up in bed of her own accord, and had sat upright, looking with delighted eyes at the little garden in which only one plant grew. A week afterward the invalid for the first time sat up for a whole hour. Quite happy, she sat there in the warm sunshine; the window was opened, and outside before it stood a pink pea blossom, fully blown. The sick girl bent down and gently kissed the delicate leaves. This day was like a festival.

"The Heavenly Father himself has planted that pea, and caused it to prosper, to be a joy to you, and to me also, my blessed child!" said the glad mother; and she smiled at the flower, as if it had been a good angel.

But about the other peas? Why, the one who flew out into the wide world, and said, "Catch me if you can," fell into the gutter on the roof, and found a home in a pigeon's crop; the two lazy ones got just as far, for they, too, were eaten up by pigeons, and thus, at any rate, they were of some real use; but the fourth, who wanted to go up into the sun, fell into the sink, and there he lay in the dirty water for weeks and weeks, and swelled prodigiously.

"How beautifully fat I'm growing!" said the Pea. "I shall burst at last; and I don't think any pea can do more than that. I'm the most remarkable of all the five that were in the shell."

And the Sink said he was right.

But the young girl at the garret window stood there with gleaming eyes, with the roseate hue of health on her cheeks, and folded her thin hands over the pea blossom, and thanked Heaven for it.

"I," said the Sink, "stand up for my own pea."

THE METAL PIG.

In the city of Florence, not far from the Piazza del Granduca, there runs a little cross street, I think it is called Porta Rosa. In this street, in front of a kind of market hall where vegetables are sold, there lies a Pig artistically fashioned of metal. The fresh, clear water pours from the jaws of the creature, which has become a blackish-green from age; only the snout shines as if it had been polished, and indeed it has been, by many hundreds of children and lazzaroni, who seize it with their hands, and place their mouths close to the mouth of the animal, to drink. It is a perfect picture to see the well-shaped creature clasped by a half-naked boy, who lays his red lips against its jaw.

Everyone who comes to Florence can easily find the place; he need only ask the first beggar he meets for the Metal Pig, and he will find it.

It was late on a winter evening. The mountains were covered with snow; but the moon shone, and moonlight in Italy is just as good as the light of a murky Northern winter's day; nay, it is better, for the air shines and lifts us up, while in the North the cold, gray, leaden covering seems to press us downward to the earth—the cold damp earth, which will once press down our coffin.

In the Grand Duke's palace garden, under a penthouse roof, where a thousand roses bloom in winter, a little ragged boy had been sitting all day long, a boy who might serve as a type of Italy, pretty and smiling, and yet suffering. He was hungry and thirsty, but no one gave him anything; and when it became dark, and the garden was to be closed, the porter turned him out. Long he stood musing on the bridge that spans the Arno, and looked at the stars, whose light glittered in the water between him and the splendid marble bridge of Della Trinitá.

He took his way toward the Metal Pig, half-knelt down, clasped his arms round it, put his mouth against its shining snout, and drank the fresh water in deep draughts. Close by lay a few leaves of salad and one or two chestnuts; these were his supper. No one was in the street but himself—it belonged to him alone; and he boldly sat down on the Pig's back, bent forward, so that his curly head rested on the head of the animal, and, before he was aware, fell asleep.

It was midnight. The Metal Pig stirred, and he heard it say quite distinctly, "You little boy, hold tight, for now I am going to run," and away it ran with him. This was a wonderful ride. First they got to the Piazza del Granduca, and the metal horse, which carries the Duke's statue, neighed aloud, the painted coat of arms on the old council house looked like transparent pictures, and Michael Angelo's "David" swung his sling; there was a strange life stirring among them. The metal groups representing persons, and the rape of the Sabines, stood there as if they were alive; a cry of mortal fear escaped them, and resounded over the splendid square.

By the Palazzo Degli Uffizi, in the arcade, where the nobility assembled for the Carnival amusements, the Metal Pig stopped. "Hold tight," said the creature, "for now we are going upstairs." The little boy spoke not a word, for he was half frightened, half delighted.

They came into a long gallery where the boy had already been. The walls shone with pictures; here stood statues and busts, all in the most charming light, as if it had been broad day; but the most beautiful of all was when the door of a side room opened; the little boy could remember the splendor that was there, but on this night everything shone in the most glorious colors.

Here stood a beautiful woman, as radiant in beauty as nature and the greatest master of sculpture could make her; she moved her graceful limbs, dolphins sprang at her feet, and immortality shone out of her eyes. The world calls her the Venus de Medici. By her side are statues in which the spirit of life has been breathed into the stone; they are handsome, unclothed men. One was sharpening a sword, and was called the Grinder; the Wrestling Gladiators formed another group; and the sword was sharpened, and they strove for the Goddess of Beauty.

The boy was dazzled by all this pomp; the walls gleamed with bright colors, and everything was life and movement.

What splendor, what beauty shone from hall to hall! and the little boy saw everything plainly, for the Metal Pig went step by step from one picture to another through all this scene of magnificence. Each fresh glory effaced the last. One picture only fixed itself firmly in his soul especially, through the very happy children introduced into it, for these the little boy fancied he had greeted in the daylight.

Many persons pass by this picture with indifference, and yet it contains a treasure of poetry. It represents the Savior descending into hell. But these are not the damned whom the spectator sees around him; they are heathen. The Florentine Agniolo Bronzino painted this picture. Most beautiful is the expression on the faces of the children—the full confidence that they will get to heaven. Two little beings are already embracing, and one little one stretches out his hand toward another who stands below him, and points to himself as if he were saying, "I am going to heaven!" The older people stand uncertain, hoping, but bowing in humble adoration before the Lord Jesus. The boy's eyes rested longer on this picture than on any other. The Metal Pig stood still before it. A low sigh was heard; did it come from the picture or from the animal? The boy lifted up his

hands toward the smiling children; then the Pig ran away with him, away through the open vestibule.

"Thanks and blessings to yourself," replied the Metal Pig. "I have helped you, and you have helped me, for with only an innocent child on my back do I receive power to run! Yes, you see, I may even step into the rays of the lamp in front of the picture of the Madonna, only I may not go into the church. But from without, when you are with me, I may look in through the open door. Do not get down from my back; if you do so, I shall lie dead as you see me in the daytime at the Porta Rosa."

"I will stay with you then, you dear creature!" cried the little boy.

So they went in hot haste through the streets of Florence, out into the place before the church of Santa Croce. The folding doors flew open, and lights gleamed out from the altar through the church into the deserted square.

A wonderful blaze of light streamed forth from a monument in the left aisle, and a thousand moving stars seemed to form a glory round it. A coat of arms shone upon the grave, a red letter in a blue field seemed to glow like fire. It was the grave of Galileo. The monument is unadorned, but the red ladder is a significant emblem, as if it were that of art, for in art the way always leads up a burning ladder, toward heaven. The prophets of mind soar upward toward heaven, like Elias of old.

To the right, in the aisle of the church, every statue on the richly carved sarcophagi seemed endowed with life. Here stood Michael Angelo, there Dante with the laurel wreath round his brow, Alfieri and Machiavelli; for here the great men, the pride of Italy, rest side by side.* It is a glorious church, far more beautiful than the marble cathedral of Florence, though not so large.

* Opposite to the grave of Galileo is the tomb of Michael Angelo. On the monument his bust is displayed, with three figures, representing Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture. Close by is a monument to Dante, whose corpse is interred at Ravenna; on this monument Italy is represented pointing to a colossal statue of the poet, while Poetry weeps over his loss. A few paces farther on is Alfieri's monument, adorned with laurel, the lyre, and dramatic masks. Italy weeps at his grave. Machiavelli here closes the series of celebrated men.

It seemed as if the marble vestments stirred, as if the great forms raised their heads higher and looked up, amid song and music, to the brighter altar glowing with color, where the white-clad boys swing the golden censors; and the strong fragrance streamed out of the church into the open square.

The boy stretched forth his hand toward the gleaming light, and in a moment the Metal Pig resumed its headlong career; he was obliged to cling tightly; and the wind whistled about his ears; he heard the church door creak on its hinges as it closed; but at the same moment his senses seemed to desert him, he felt a cold shudder pass over him, and awoke.

It was morning, and he was still sitting on the Metal Pig, which stood where it always stood on the Porta Rosa, and he had slipped half off its back.

Fear and trembling filled the soul of the boy at the thought of her whom he called mother, and who had yesterday sent him forth to bring money; for he had none, and was hungry and thirsty. Once more he clasped his arms round the neck of his metal horse, kissed its lips, and nodded farewell to it. Then he wandered away into one of the narrowest streets, where there is scarcely room for a laden ass. A great iron-clamped door stood ajar; he passed through it, and climbed up a brick stair, with dirty walls and a rope for a balustrade, till he came to an open gallery hung with rags; from here a flight of stairs led down into the court, where there was a fountain, and great iron wires led up to the different stories, and many water buckets hung side by side, and at times the roller creaked, and one of the buckets would dance into the air, swaying so that the water splashed out of it down into the courtyard. A second ruinous brick staircase here led upward. Two Russian sailors were running briskly down, and almost overturned the poor boy; they were going home from their nightly carouse. A large woman, no longer young, followed them.

"What do you bring home?" she asked the boy.

"Don't be angry," he pleaded. "I received nothing—nothing at all." And he seized the mother's dress, and would have kissed it.

They went into the little room. I will not describe it, but only say that there stood in it an earthen pot with handles,

made for holding fire, and called *marito*. This pot she took in her arms, warmed her fingers, and pushed the boy with her elbow.

"Certainly you must have brought some money?" said she.

The boy wept, and she struck him with her foot, so that he cried aloud.

"Will you be silent, or I'll break your screaming head!"

And she brandished the fire pot which she held in her hand. The boy crouched down to the earth with a scream of terror. Then a neighbor stepped in, also with a *marito* in her arms.

"Felicita," she said, "what are you doing to the child?"

"The child is mine," retorted Felicita. "I can murder him if I like, and you, too, Giannina."

And she swung her fire pot. The other lifted up hers in self-defense, and the two pots clashed together with such fury that fragments, fire, and ashes flew about the room; but at the same moment the boy rushed out at the door, sped across the courtyard, and fled from the house. The poor child ran till he was quite out of breath. He stopped by the church, whose great doors had opened to him the previous night, and went in. Everything was radiant. The boy knelt down at the first grave on the right hand, the grave of Michael Angelo, and soon he sobbed aloud. People came and went, and mass was performed; but no one noticed the boy, only an elderly citizen stood still, looked at him, and then went away like the rest.

Hunger and thirst tormented the child; he was quite faint and ill, and he crept into a corner between the marble monuments, and went to sleep. Toward evening he was awakened by a tug at his sleeve; he started up, and the same citizen stood before him.

"Are you ill? Where do you live? Have you been here all day?" were three of the many questions the old man asked of him.

He answered, and the old man took him into his little house, close by, in a back street. They came into a glover's workshop, where a woman sat sewing busily. A little white Spitz dog, so closely shaven that his pink skin could be seen, frisked about on the table and gamboled before the boy.

"Innocent souls soon make acquaintance," said the woman.

And she caressed the boy and the dog. The good people gave the child food and drink, and said he should be permitted to stay the night with them; and next day Father Guiseppe would speak to his mother. A little single bed was assigned to him, but for him who had often slept on the hard stones it was a royal couch; and he slept sweetly, and dreamed of the splendid pictures and of the Metal Pig.

Father Guiseppe went out next morning; the poor child was not glad of this, for he knew that the object of the errand was to send him back to his mother. He wept, and kissed the merry little dog, and the woman nodded approvingly at both.

What news did Father Guiseppe bring home? He spoke a great deal with his wife, and she nodded and stroked the boy's cheek.

"He is a capital lad!" said she. "He may become an accomplished glove maker, like you; and look what delicate fingers he has! Madonna intended him for a glove maker."

And the boy stayed in the house, and the woman herself taught him to sew; he ate well, slept well, and became merry, and began to tease Bellissima, as the little dog was called; but the woman grew angry at this, and scolded and threatened him with her finger. This touched the boy's heart, and he sat thoughtful in his little chamber. This chamber looked upon the street in which skins were dried; there were thick bars of iron before his window. He could not sleep, for the Metal Pig was always present in his thoughts, and suddenly he heard outside a pit-pat. That must be the Pig! He sprang to the window, but nothing was to be seen—it had passed by already.

"Help the gentleman to carry his box of colors," said the woman next morning to the boy, when their young neighbor, the artist, passed by, carrying a paint box and a large, rolled canvas.

The boy took the box and followed the painter; they betook themselves to the gallery, and mounted the same staircase which he remembered well from the night when he had ridden on the Metal Pig. He recognized the statues and pictures, the beautiful marble Venus, and the Venus that

lived in the picture; and again he saw the Madonna, and the Savior, and St. John.

They stood still before the picture by Bronzino, in which Christ is descending into hell, and the children smiling around Him in the sweet expectation of heaven. The poor child smiled too, for he felt as if his heaven were here.

"Go home now," said the painter, when the boy had stood until the other had set up his easel.

"May I see you paint?" asked the boy. "May I see you put the picture upon this white canvas?"

"I am not going to paint yet," replied the man; and he brought out a piece of white chalk. His hand moved quickly; his eye measured the great picture, and though nothing appeared but a thin line, the figure of the Savior stood there, as in the colored picture.

"Why don't you go?" said the painter.

And the boy wandered home silently, and seated himself on the table and learned to sew gloves.

But all day long his thoughts were in the picture gallery; and so it came that he pricked his fingers, and was awkward; but he did not tease Bellissima. When the evening came, and when the house door stood open, he crept out; it was cold, but starlight; a bright, beautiful evening. Away he went through the already deserted streets, and soon came to the Metal Pig. He bent down on it, kissed its shining mouth, and seated himself on its back.

"You happy creature!" he said; "how I have longed for you! You must take a ride to-night."

The Metal Pig lay motionless, and the fresh stream gushed forth from its mouth. The little boy sat astride on its back; then something tugged at his clothes. He looked down, and there was Bellissima—little smooth-shaven Bellissima—barking as if she would have said, "Here am I, too; why are you sitting there!" A fiery dragon could not have terrified the boy so much as did the little dog in this place. Bellissima in the street, and not dressed, as the old lady called it! What would be the end of it? The dog never came out in winter, except attired in a little lamb-skin, which had been cut out and made into a coat for him; it was made to fasten with a red ribbon round the little dog's neck and body, and adorned with bows and with bells. The dog looked almost like a little kid, when in winter he got per-

mission to patter out with his mistress. Bellissima was outside and not dressed! what would be the end of it? All his fancies were put to flight; yet the boy kissed the Metal Pig once more, and then took Bellissima on his arm; the little thing trembled with cold, therefore the boy ran as fast as he could.

"What are you running away with there?" asked two police soldiers whom he met, and at whom Bellissima barked. "Where have you stolen that pretty dog?" they asked, and they took it away from him.

"Oh, give it back to me!" cried the boy despairingly.

"If you have not stolen him, you may say at home that the dog may be sent for from the watch house." And they told him where the watch house was, and went away with Bellissima.

Here was a terrible calamity! The boy did not know whether he should jump into the Arno, or go home and confess everything; they would certainly kill him, he thought.

"But I will gladly be killed; then I shall die and go to heaven," he reasoned. And he went home, principally with the idea of being killed.

The door was locked, and he could not reach the knocker; no one was in the street, but a stone lay there and with this he thundered at the door.

"Who is there?" cried somebody from within.

"It is I," said he. "The dog is gone. Open the door and then kill me!"

There was quite a panic. Madame was especially concerned for poor Bellissima. She immediately looked at the wall, where the dog's dress usually hung, and there was the little lamb-skin.

"Bellissima in the watch house!" she cried aloud. "You bad boy! How did you entice her out? She'll be frozen, the poor, delicate little thing! among those rough soldiers."

The father was at once dispatched—the woman lamented and the boy wept. All the inhabitants of the house came together, and among the rest the painter; he took the boy between his knees and questioned him; and in broken sentences he heard the whole story about the Metal Pig and the gallery, which was certainly rather incomprehensible.

The painter consoled the little fellow, and tried to calm

the old lady's anger; but she would not be pacified until the father came in with Bellissima, who had been among the soldiers; then there was great rejoicing; and the painter caressed the boy, and gave him a handful of pictures.

Oh, those were capital pieces—such funny heads!—and truly the Metal Pig was there among them, bodily. Oh, nothing could be more superb! By means of a few strokes it was made to stand there on the paper, and even the house that stood behind it was sketched in.

Oh, for the ability to draw and paint! He who could do this could conjure up the whole world around him!

On the first leisure moment of the following day, the little fellow seized the pencil, and on the back of one of the pictures he attempted to copy the drawing of the Metal Pig, and he succeeded!—it was certainly rather crooked, rather up and down, one leg thick and another thin; but still it was to be recognized, and he rejoiced himself at it. The pencil would not quite work as it should do, that he could well observe; but on the next day a second Metal Pig was drawn by the side of the first, and this looked a hundred times better; and the third was already so good that everyone could tell what it was meant for.

But the glove making prospered little, and the orders given in the town were executed but slowly; for the Metal Pig had taught him that all pictures may be drawn on paper; and Florence is a picture book for anyone who chooses to turn over its pages. On the Piazza del Trinitá stands a slender pillar, and upon it the Goddess of Justice, blindfolded and with her scales in her hand. Soon she was placed upon the paper, and it was the little glove maker's boy who placed her there. The collection of pictures increased, but as yet it only contained representations of lifeless objects, when one day Bellissima came gamboling before him.

"Stand still!" said he, "then you shall be made beautiful and put into my collection."

But Bellissima would not stand still, so she had to be bound fast; her head and tail were tied, and she barked and jumped, and the string had to be pulled tight; and then the signora came in.

"You wicked boy!—The poor creature!" was all she could utter.

And she put the boy aside, thrust him away with her foot,

forbade him to enter her house again, and called him a most ungrateful good-for-nothing and a wicked boy; and then, weeping, she kissed her little half-strangled Bellissima.

At this very moment the painter came downstairs, and here is the turning-point of the story.

In the year 1834 there was an exhibition in the Academy of Arts at Florence. Two pictures, placed side by side, collected a number of spectators. The smaller of the two represented a merry little boy who sat drawing, with a little white Spitz dog, curiously shorn, for his model; but the animal would not stand still, and was therefore bound by a string fastened to its head and its tail. There was a truth and life in this picture that interested everyone. The painter was said to be a young Florentine, who had been found in the streets in his childhood, had been brought up by an old glove maker, and had taught himself to draw. It was further said that a painter, now become famous, had discovered this talent just as the boy was to be sent away for tying up the favorite little dog of Madame, and using it as a model.

The glove maker's boy had become a great painter; the picture proved this, and still more the larger picture that stood beside it. Here was represented only one figure, a handsome boy, clad in rags, asleep in the street, and leaning against the Metal Pig in the Porta Rosa street. All the spectators knew the spot. The child's arms rested upon the head of the Pig; the little fellow was fast asleep, and the lamp before the picture of the Madonna threw a strong effective light on the pale, delicate face of the child—it was a beautiful picture! A great gilt frame surrounded it, and on one corner of the frame a laurel wreath had been hung; but a black band wound unseen among the green leaves, and a streamer of crape hung down from it. For within the last few days the young artist had—died!

THE SNOW QUEEN.

IN SEVEN STORIES.

THE FIRST STORY.

WHICH TREATS OF THE MIRROR AND FRAGMENTS.

Look you, now we're going to begin. When we are at the end of the story we shall know more than we do now, for he was a bad goblin. He was one of the very worst, for he was a demon. One day he was in very good spirits, for he had made a mirror which had this peculiarity, that everything good and beautiful that was reflected in it shrank together into almost nothing, but that whatever was worthless and looked ugly became prominent and looked worse than ever. The most lovely landscapes seen in this mirror looked like boiled spinach, and the best people became hideous, or stood on their heads and had no bodies; their faces were so distorted as to be unrecognizable, and a single freckle was shown spread out over nose and mouth. That was very amusing, the demon said. When a good, pious thought passed through any person's mind, these were again shown in the mirror, so that the demon chuckled at his artistic invention. Those who visited the goblin school—for he kept a goblin school—declared everywhere that a wonder had been wrought. For now, they asserted, one could see, for the first time, how the world and the people in it really looked. Now they wanted to fly up to heaven, to sneer and scoff at the angels themselves. The higher they flew with the mirror, the more it grinned; they could scarcely hold it fast. They flew higher and higher, and then the mirror trembled so terribly amid its grinning that it fell down out of their hands to the earth, where it was shattered into a hundred million and more fragments. And now this mirror occasioned much more unhappiness than before; for some of the fragments were scarcely so large as a barleycorn, and these flew about in the world, and whenever they flew into

anyone's eye they stuck there, and those people saw everything wrongly, or had only eyes for the bad side of a thing, for every little fragment of the mirror had retained the power which the whole glass possessed. A few persons even got a fragment of the mirror into their hearts, and that was terrible indeed, for such a heart became a block of ice. A few fragments of the mirror were so large that they were used as window panes, but it was a bad thing to look at one's friends through these panes; other pieces were made into spectacles, and then it went badly when people put on these spectacles to see rightly, and to be just; and then the demon laughed till his paunch shook, for it tickled him so. But without, some little fragments of glass still floated about in the air—and now we shall hear

THE SECOND STORY.

A LITTLE BOY AND A LITTLE GIRL.

In the great town, where there are many houses, and so many people that there is not room enough for everyone to have a little garden, and where consequently most persons are compelled to be content with some flowers in flower pots, were two poor children who possessed a garden somewhat larger than a flower pot. They were not brother and sister, but they loved each other quite as much as if they had been. Their parents lived just opposite each other in two garrets, there where the roof of one neighbor's house joined that of another; and where the water-pipe ran between the two houses was a little window; one had only to step across the pipe to get from one window to the other.

The parents of each child had a great box, in which grew kitchen herbs that they used, and a little rose bush; there was one in each box, and they grew famously. Now, it occurred to the parents to place the boxes across the pipe, so that they reached from one window to another, and looked quite like two embankments of flowers. Pea plants hung down over the boxes, and the rose bushes shot forth long twigs, which clustered round the windows and bent down toward each other; it was almost like a triumphal arch of flowers and leaves. As the boxes were very high, and the

children knew that they might not creep upon them, they often obtained permission to step out upon the roof behind the boxes, and to sit upon their little stools under the roses, and there they could play capitally.

In the winter time there was an end of this amusement. The windows were sometimes quite frozen all over. But then they warmed copper shillings on the stove, and held the warm coins against the frozen pane; and this made a capital peep-hole, so round! so round! and behind it gleamed a pretty mild eye at each window; and these eyes belonged to the little boy and the little girl. His name was Kay and the little girl's was Gerda.

In the summer they could get to one another at one bound; but in the winter they had to go down and up the long staircase, while the snow was pelting without.

"Those are the white bees swarming," said the old grandmother.

"Have they a Queen bee?" asked the little boy. For he knew that there is one among the real bees.

"Yes, they have one," replied grandmamma. "She always flies where they swarm thickest. She is the largest of them all, and never remains quiet upon the earth; she flies up again into the black cloud. Many a midnight she is flying through the streets of the town, and looks in at the windows, and then they freeze in such a strange way, and look like flowers."

"Yes, I've seen that!" cried both the children; and now they knew that it was true.

"Can the Snow Queen come in here?" asked the little girl.

"Only let her come," cried the boy; "I'll set her upon the warm stove, and then she'll melt."

But grandmother smoothed his hair, and told some other tales. In the evening, when little Kay was at home and half undressed, he clambered upon the chair by the window, and looked through the little hole. A few flakes of snow were falling outside, and one of them, the largest of them all, remained lying on the edge of one of the flower boxes. The snowflakes grew larger and larger, and at last became a maiden clothed in the finest white gauze, put together of millions of starry flakes. She was beautiful and delicate, but of ice—of shining glittering ice. Yet she was alive;

her eyes flashed like two clear stars, but there was no peace or rest in them. She nodded toward the window, and beckoned with her hand. The little boy was frightened, and sprang down from the chair; then it seemed as if a great bird flew by outside, in front of the window.

Next day there was a clear frost, and then the spring came; the sun shone, the green sprouted forth, the swallows built nests, the windows were opened, and the little children again sat in their garden high up in the roof, over all the floors.

How splendidly the roses bloomed this summer! The little girl had learned a psalm, in which mention was made of roses, and, in speaking of roses, she thought of her own; and she sang it to the little boy, and he sang, too:

"The roses will fade and pass away,
But we the Christ-child shall see one day."

And the little ones held each other by the hand, kissed the roses, looked at God's bright sunshine, and spoke to it, as if the Christ-child were there. What splendid summer days those were! How beautiful it was without, among the fresh rose bushes, which seemed as if they would never leave off blooming!

Kay and Gerda sat and looked at the picture-book of beasts and birds. Then it was, while the clock was just striking twelve on the church tower, that Kay said:

"Oh! something struck my heart and pricked me in the eye." The little girl fell upon his neck; he blinked his eyes. No, there was nothing at all to be seen.

"I think it is gone," said he; but it was not gone. It was just one of those glass fragments which sprang from the mirror—the magic mirror that we remember well, the ugly glass that made everything great and good which was mirrored in it to seem small and mean, but in which the mean and the wicked things were brought out in relief, and every fault was noticeable at once. Poor little Kay had also received a splinter just in his heart, and that will now soon become like a lump of ice. It did not hurt him now, but the splinter was still there.

"Why do you cry?" he asked. "You look ugly like that. There's nothing the matter with me. Oh, fie!" he suddenly

exclaimed, "that rose is worm-eaten, and this one is quite crooked. After all, they're ugly roses. They're like the box in which they stand.

And then he kicked the box with his foot, and tore both the roses off.

"Kay, what are you about?" cried the little girl.

And when he noticed her fright he tore off another rose, and then sprang in at his own window, away from pretty little Gerda.

When she afterward came with her picture-book, he said it was only fit for babies in arms; and when his grandmother told stories he always came in with a but; and when he could manage it, he would get behind her, put on a pair of spectacles, and talk just as she did; he could do that very cleverly, and the people laughed at him. Soon he could mimic the speech and gait of everybody in the street. Everything that was peculiar or ugly about him, Kay would imitate; and people said: "That boy must certainly have a remarkable genius." But it was the glass that struck deep in his heart; so it happened that he even teased little Gerda, who loved him with all her heart.

His games now became quite different from what they were before; they became quite sensible. One winter's day when it snowed he came out with a great burning-glass, held up the blue tail of his coat, and let the snowflakes fall upon it.

"Now look at the glass, Gerda," said he.

And every flake of snow was magnified, and looked like a splendid flower, or a star with ten points; it was beautiful to behold.

"See how clever that is," said Kay. "That's much more interesting than real flowers; and there's not a single fault in it—they're quite regular until they begin to melt."

Soon after Kay came in thick gloves, and with his sledge upon his back. He called up to Gerda, "I've got leave to go into the great square, where the other boys play," and he was gone.

In the great square the boldest among the boys often tied their sledges to the country people's carts, and thus rode with them a good way. They went capitally. When they were in the midst of their playing there came a great sledge. It was painted quite white, and in it sat somebody wrapped

in a rough white fur, and with a white, rough cap on his head. The sledge drove twice round the square, and Kay bound his little sledge to it, and so he drove on with it. It went faster and faster, straight into the next street. The man who drove turned round and nodded in a familiar way to Kay; it was as if they knew one another; each time when Kay wanted to cast loose his little sledge, the stranger nodded again, and then Kay remained where he was, and thus they drove out at the town gate. Then the snow began to fall so rapidly that the boy could not see a hand's breadth before him, but still he drove on. Now he hastily dropped the cord, so as to get loose from the great sledge, but that was no use, for his sledge was fast bound to the other, and they went on like the wind. Then he called out quite loudly, but nobody heard him; and the snow beat down, and the sledge flew onward; every now and then it gave a jump, and they seemed to be flying over hedges and ditches. The boy was quite frightened. He wanted to say his prayer, but could remember nothing but the multiplication table.

The snowflakes became larger and larger; at last they looked like white fowls. All at once they sprang aside and the great sledge stopped, and the person who had driven it rose up. The fur and the cap were made altogether of ice. It was a lady, tall and slender, and brilliantly white; it was the Snow Queen.

"We have driven well!" said she. "But why do you tremble with cold? Creep into my fur."

And she seated him beside her in her own sledge, and wrapped the fur round him, and he felt as if he sank into a snowdrift.

"Are you still cold?" asked she, and then she kissed him on the forehead.

Oh, that was colder than ice; it went quite through to his heart, half of which was already a lump of ice; he felt as if he were going to die; but only for a moment; for then he seemed quite well, and he did not notice the cold all about him.

"My sledge! don't forget my sledge."

That was the first thing he thought of; and it was bound fast to one of the white chickens, and this chicken flew behind him with the sledge upon its back. The Snow Queen

kissed Kay again, and then he had forgotten little Gerda, his grandmother, and all at home.

"Now you shall have no more kisses," said she, "for if you did I should kiss you to death."

Kay looked at her. She was so beautiful, he could not imagine a more sensible or lovely face; she did not appear to him to be made of ice now as before, when she sat at the window and beckoned to him. In his eyes she was perfect; he did not feel at all afraid. He told her that he could do mental arithmetic as far as fractions; that he knew the number of square miles and the number of inhabitants in the country. And she always smiled, and then it seemed to him that what he knew was not enough, and he looked up into the wide sky, and she flew with him high up upon the black cloud, and the storm blew and whistled; it seemed as though the wind sang old songs. They flew over woods and lakes, over sea and land; below them roared the cold wind, the wolves howled, the snow crackled; over them flew the black, screaming crows; but above all the moon shone bright and clear, and Kay looked at the long, long winter night; by day he slept at the feet of the Queen.

THE THIRD STORY.

THE FLOWER GARDEN OF THE WOMAN WHO COULD CONJURE.

But how did it fare with little Gerda when Kay did not return? What could have become of him? No one knew, no one could give information. The boys only told that they had seen him bind his sledge to another very large one, which had driven along the street and out at the town gate. Nobody knew what had become of him; many tears were shed, and little Gerda especially wept long and bitterly; then she said he was dead—he had been drowned in the river, which flowed close by their school. Oh, those were very dark, long wintry days! But now spring came, with warmer sunshine.

"Kay is dead and gone," said little Gerda.

"I don't believe it," said the Sunshine.

"He is dead and gone," said she to the Sparrows.

"We don't believe it," they replied; and at last little Gerda did not believe it herself.

"I will put on my new red shoes," she said one morning, "those that Kay has never seen; and then I will go down to the river, and ask for him."

It was still very early; she kissed the old grandmother, who was still asleep, put on her red shoes, and went quite alone out of the town gate toward the river.

"Is it true that you have taken my little playmate from me? I will give you my red shoes if you will give him back to me!"

And it seemed to her as if the waves nodded quite strangely; and then she took her red shoes, that she liked best of anything she possessed, and threw them both into the river; but they fell close to the shore, and the little wavelets carried them back to her, to the land. It seemed as if the river would not take from her the dearest things she possessed because he had not her little Kay; but she thought she had not thrown the shoes far enough out; so she crept into a boat that lay among the reeds, she went to the other end of the boat, and threw the shoes from thence into the water; but the boat was not bound fast, and at the movement she made it glided away from the shore. She noticed it, and hurried to get back, but before she reached the other end the boat was a yard from the bank, and it drifted away faster than before.

Then little Gerda was very much frightened, and began to cry; but no one heard her except the Sparrows, and they could not carry her to land; but they flew along by the shore, and sang, as if to console her, "Here we are! here we are!" The boat drove on with the stream, and little Gerda sat quite still, with only her stockings on her feet; her little red shoes floated along behind her, but they could not come up to the boat, for that made more way.

It was very pretty on both shores. There were beautiful flowers, old trees, and slopes with sheep and cows; but not one person was to be seen.

"Perhaps the river will carry me to little Kay," thought Gerda.

And then she became more cheerful, and rose up; and for many hours she watched the charming green banks; then she came to a great cherry orchard, in which stood a little

house with remarkable blue and red windows; it had a thatched roof, and without stood two wooden soldiers, who presented arms to those who sailed past.

Gerda called to them, for she thought they were alive, but of course they did not answer. She came quite close to them. The river carried the boat toward the shore.

Gerda called still louder, and then there came out of the house an old woman leaning on a crutch; she had on a great velvet hat, painted over with the finest flowers.

"You poor little child!" said the old woman, "how did you manage to come on the great rolling river, and to float thus far out into the world?"

And then the old woman went quite into the water, seized the boat with her crutch stick, drew it to land, and lifted little Gerda out. And Gerda was glad to be on dry land again, though she felt a little afraid of the strange old woman.

"Come and tell me who you are, and how you came here," said the old lady. And Gerda told her everything; and the old woman shook her head, and said, "Hem! hem!" And when Gerda had told everything, and asked if she had not seen little Kay, the woman said that he had not yet come by, but that he probably would soon come. Gerda was not to be sorrowful, but to look at the flowers and taste the cherries, for they were better than any picture-book, for each one of them could tell a story. Then she took Gerda by the hand and led her into the little house, and the old woman locked the door.

The windows were very high, and the panes were red, blue, and yellow; the daylight shone in a remarkable way, with different colors. On the table stood the finest cherries, and Gerda ate as many of them as she liked, for she had leave to do so. While she was eating them, the old lady combed her hair with a golden comb, and the hair hung in ringlets of pretty yellow round the friendly little face, which looked as blooming as a rose.

"I have long wished for such a dear little girl as you," said the old lady. "Now you shall see how well we shall live with one another."

And as the ancient dame combed her hair, Gerda forgot her adopted brother Kay more and more; for this old woman could conjure, but she was not a wicked witch. She

only practiced a little magic for her own amusement, and wanted to keep little Gerda. Therefore she went into the garden, stretched out her crutch toward all the rose bushes, and, beautiful as they were, they all sank into the earth, and one could not tell where they had stood. The old woman was afraid that, if the little girl saw roses, she would think of her own, and remember little Kay, and run away.

Now Gerda was led out into the flower garden. What fragrance was there, and what loveliness! Every conceivable flower was there in full bloom; there were some for every season; no picture book could be gayer and prettier. Gerda jumped high for joy, and played till the sun went down behind the high cherry trees; then she was put into a lovely bed, with red silk pillows stuffed with blue violets, and she slept there, and dreamed as glorious as a Queen on her wedding day.

One day she played again with the flowers in the warm sunshine; and thus many days went by. Gerda knew every flower; but, as many as there were of them, it still seemed to her as if one were wanting, but which one she did not know. One day she sat looking at the old lady's hat with the painted flowers, and the prettiest of them all was a rose. The old lady had forgotten to efface it from her hat when she caused the others to disappear. But so it always is when one does not keep one's wits about one.

"What, are there no roses here?" cried Gerda.

And she went among the beds, and searched and searched, but there was not one to be found. Then she sat down and wept; her tears fell just upon a spot where a rose-bud lay buried, and when the warm tears moistened the earth, the tree at once sprouted up as blooming as when it had sunk; and Gerda embraced it, and kissed the Roses, and thought of the beautiful roses at home, and also of little Kay.

"Oh, how I have been detained!" said the little girl. "I wanted to seek for little Kay! Do you not know where he is?" she asked the Roses. "Do you think he is dead?"

"He is not dead," the Roses answered. "We have been in the ground. All the dead people are there, but Kay is not there."

"Thank you," said little Gerda, and she went to the other

flowers, looked into their cups, and asked, "Do you know where little Kay is?"

But every flower stood in the sun thinking only of her own story or fancy tale. Gerda heard many, many of them; but not one knew anything of Kay.

And what did the Tiger-lily say?

"Do you hear the drum 'Rub-dub'? There are only two notes, always 'rub-dub!' Hear the mourning song of the women; hear the call of the priests. The Hindoo widow stands in her long red mantel on the funeral pile; the flames rise up around her and her dead husband; but the Hindoo woman is thinking of the living one here in the circle, of him whose eyes burn hotter than flames, whose fiery glances have burned in her soul more ardently than the flames themselves, which are soon to burn her body to ashes. Can the flame of heart die in the flame of the funeral pile?"

"I don't understand that at all!" said little Gerda.

"That's my story," said the lily.

What says the Convolvulus?

"Over the narrow road looms an old knightly castle; thickly the ivy grows over the crumbling red walls, leaf by leaf up to the balcony, and there stands a beautiful girl; she bends over the balustrade and glances up the road. No rose on its branch is fresher than she; no apple blossoms wafted onward by the wind floats more lightly along. How her costly silks rustle! 'Comes he not yet?'"

"Is it Kay whom you mean?" asked little Gerda.

"I'm only speaking of a story—my dream," replied the Convolvulus.

What said the little Snowdrop?

"Between the trees a long board hangs by ropes; that is a swing. Two pretty little girls, with clothes white as snow and long green silk ribbons on their hats, are sitting upon it, swinging; their brother, who is greater than they, stands in the swing, and has slung his arm round the rope to hold himself, for in one hand he has a little saucer, and in the other a clay pipe; he is blowing bubbles. The swing flies, and the bubbles rise with beautiful, changing colors; the last still hangs from the pipe bowl, swaying in the wind. The swing flies on; the little black dog, light as the bubbles, stands up on his hind legs, and wants to be taken into the swing; it flies on, and the dog falls, barks, and grows angry,

for he is teased, and the bubble bursts. A swinging board and a bursting bubble—that is my song.”

“It may be very pretty, what you’re telling, but you speak it so mournfully, and you don’t mention little Kay at all.”

What do the Hyacinths say?

“There were three beautiful sisters, transparent and delicate. The dress of one was red, that of the second blue, and that of the third quite white; hand in hand they danced by the calm lake in the bright moonlight. They were not elves; they were human beings. It was so sweet and fragrant there! The girls disappeared in the forest, and the sweet fragrance became stronger; three coffins, with three beautiful maidens lying in them, glided from the wood-thicket across the lake; the glow-worms flew gleaming about them like little hovering lights. Are the dancing girls sleeping, or are they dead? The flower scent says they are dead, and the evening bell tolls their knell.”

“You make me quite sorrowful,” said little Gerda. “You scent so strongly, I cannot help thinking of the dead maidens. Ah! is little Kay really dead? The Roses have been down in the earth, and they say no.”

“Kling! klang!” tolled the Hyacinth Bells. “We are not tolling for little Kay—we don’t know him; we only sing our song, the only one we know.”

And Gerda went to the Buttercup, gleaming forth from the green leaves.

“You are a little bright sun,” said Gerda. “Tell me, if you know, where I may find my companion.”

And the Buttercup shone so gayly, and looked back at Gerda. What song might the Buttercup sing? It was not about Kay.

“In a little courtyard the clear sun shone warm on the first day of spring. The sunbeams glided down the white wall of the neighboring house; close by grew the first yellow flower, glancing like gold in the bright sun’s ray. The old grandmother sat out of doors in her chair; her granddaughter, a poor, handsome maidservant, was coming home for a short visit; she kissed her grandmother. There was gold, heart’s gold, in that blessed kiss, gold in the mouth, gold in the south, gold in the morning hour. See, that’s my little story,” said the Buttercup.

“My poor old grandmother!” sighed Gerda. “Yes, she

is surely longing for me and grieving for me, just as she did for little Kay. But I shall soon go home and take Kay with me. There is no use of my asking the flowers, they only know their own song, and give me no information." And then she tied her little frock round her, that she might run the faster; but the Jonquil struck against her leg as she sprang over it, and she stopped to look at the tall yellow flower, and asked, "Do you, perhaps, know anything of little Kay?"

And she bent quite down to the flower, and what did it say?

"I can see myself! I can see myself!" said the Jonquil. "Oh! oh! how I smell! Up in the little room in the gable stands a little dancing girl; she stands sometimes on one foot, sometimes on both; she seems to tread on all the world. She's nothing but an ocular delusion; she pours water out of a tea pot on a bit of stuff—it is her bodice. 'Cleanliness is a fine thing,' she says; her white frock hangs on a hook; it has been washed in the tea pot, too, and dried on the roof; she puts it on and ties her saffron handkerchief round her neck, and the dress looks all the whiter. Point your toes! look how she seems to stand on a stalk. I can see myself! I can see myself!"

"I don't care at all about that," said Gerda. "You need not tell me that."

And then she ran to the end of the garden. The door was locked, but she pressed against the rusty lock, and it broke off, the door sprang open, and little Gerda ran with naked feet out into the wide world. She looked back three times, but no one was there to pursue her; at last she could run no longer, and seated herself on a great stone, and when she looked round the summer was over—it was late in autumn; one could not notice that in the beautiful garden, where there was always sunshine, and the flowers of every season always bloomed.

"Alas! how I have loitered!" said little Gerda. "Autumn has come. I may not rest again."

And she rose up to go on. Oh! how sore and tired her little feet were. All around it looked cold and bleak; the long willow leaves were quite yellow, and the dew fell down like water; one leaf after another dropped; only the sole-thorn still bore fruit, but the sloes were sour, and set the

teeth on edge. Oh! how gray and gloomy it looked, the wide world!

THE FOURTH STORY.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS.

Gerda was compelled to rest again; then there came hopping across the snow, just opposite the spot where she was sitting, a great Crow. This Crow stopped a long time to look at her, nodding its head—now it said, "Krah! krah! Good-day! good-day!" It could not pronounce better, but it felt friendly toward the little girl, and asked where she was going all alone in the wide world. The word "alone" Gerda understood very well, and felt how much it expressed; and she told the Crow the story of her whole life and fortunes, and asked if it had not seen Kay.

And the Crow nodded very gravely, and said:

"That may be! that may be!"

"What? do you think so?" cried the little girl, and nearly pressed the Crow to death, she kissed it so.

"Gently, gently!" said the Crow. "I think I know. I believe it may be little Kay; but he has certainly forgotten you, with the Princess."

"Does he live with a Princess?" asked Gerda.

"Yes; listen," said the Crow. "But it's so difficult for me to speak your language. If you know the crows' language, I can tell it much better."

"No, I never learned it," said Gerda; "but my grandmother understood it, and could speak the language, too. I only wish I had learned it."

"That doesn't matter," said the Crow. "But it will go badly."

And then the Crow told what it knew.

"In the country in which we now are lives a Princess who is quite wonderfully clever, but then she has read all the newspapers in the world, and has forgotten them again, she is so clever. Lately she was sitting on the throne—and that's not so pleasant as is generally supposed—and she began to sing a song, and it was just this: 'Why should I not marry yet?' You see, there was something in that," said the Crow. "And so she wanted to marry, but she

wished for a husband who could answer when he was spoken to, not one who only stood and looked handsome, for that was wearisome. And so she had all her maids of honor summoned, and when they heard her intention they were very glad. 'I like that,' said they; 'I thought the very same thing the other day.' You may be sure that every word I am telling you is true," added the Crow. "I have a tame sweetheart who goes about freely in the castle, and she told me everything."

Of course the sweetheart was a crow, for one crow always finds out another, and birds of a feather flock together.

"Newspapers were published directly, with a border of hearts and the Princess' initials. One could read in them that every young man who was good-looking might come to the castle and speak with the Princess, and him who spoke so that one could hear he was at home there, and who spoke best, the Princess would choose for her husband. Yes, yes," said the Crow, "you may believe me. It's as true as I sit here. Young men came flocking in; there was a great crowding and much running to and fro, but no one succeeded the first or second day. They could all speak well when they were out in the streets, but when they entered at the palace gates, and saw the guards standing in their silver lace, and went up the staircase, and saw the lackeys in their golden liveries, and the great lighted halls, they became confused. And when they stood before the throne itself, on which the Princess sat, they could do nothing but repeat the last word she had spoken, and she did not care to hear her own words again. It was just as if the people in there had taken some narcotic and fallen asleep, till they got into the street again, for not till then were they able to speak. There stood a whole row of them, from the town gate to the palace gate. I went out myself to see it," said the Crow. "They were hungry and thirsty, but in the palace they did not receive so much as a glass of lukewarm water. A few of the wisest had brought bread and butter with them, but they would not share with their neighbors, for they thought, 'Let him look hungry, and the Princess won't have him.'"

"But Kay, little Kay?" asked Gerda. "When did he come? Was he among the crowd?"

"Wait! wait! We're just coming to him. It was on the

third day that there came a little personage, without horse or carriage, walking quite merrily up to the castle; his eyes sparkled like yours; he had fine long hair, but his clothes were shabby."

"That was Kay!" cried Gerda, rejoicing. "Oh, then I have found him!" And she clapped her hands.

"He had a little knapsack on his back," observed the Crow.

"No, that must certainly have been his sledge," said Gerda, "for he went away with a sledge."

"That may well be," said the Crow, "for I did not look to it very closely. But this much I know from my tame sweetheart, that when he passed under the palace gate and saw the Life Guards in silver, and mounted the staircase and saw the lackeys in gold, he was not in the least embarrassed. He nodded and said to them, 'It must be tedious work standing on the stairs—I'd rather go in.' The halls shone full of light; privy councilors and Excellencies walked about with bare feet, and carried golden vessels; anyone might have become solemn; and his boots creaked most noisily, but he was not embarrassed."

"That is certainly Kay!" cried Gerda. "He had new boots on; I've heard them creak in grandmother's room."

"Yes, certainly they creaked," resumed the Crow. "And he went boldly in to the Princess herself, who sat on a pearl that was as big as a spinning-wheel, and all the maids of honor with their attendants, and all the cavaliers with their followers, and the followers of their followers, who themselves kept a page apiece, were standing round; and the nearer they stood to the door, the prouder they looked. The followers' followers' pages, who always went in slippers, could hardly be looked at, so proudly did they stand in the doorway!"

"That must be terrible!" faltered little Gerda. "And yet Kay won the Princess?"

"If I had not been a crow, I would have married her myself, notwithstanding that I am engaged. They say he spoke as well as I can when I speak the crows' language; I heard that from my tame sweetheart. He was merry and agreeable; he had not come to marry, only to hear the wisdom of the Princess; and he approved of her, and she of him."

"Yes, certainly that was Kay!" said Gerda. "He was so

clever; he could do mental arithmetic up to fractions. Oh! won't you lead me to the castle, too?"

"That's easily said," replied the Crow. "But how are we to manage it? I'll talk it over with my tame sweetheart; she can probably advise us; for this I must tell you—a little girl like yourself will never get leave to go completely in."

"Yes, I shall get leave," said Gerda. "When Kay hears that I'm there he'll come out directly, and bring me in."

"Wait for me yonder at the grating," said Crow; and it wagged its head and flew away.

It was already late in the evening when the Crow came back.

"Rax! rax!" it said. "I'm to greet you kindly from my sweetheart, and here's a little loaf for you. She took it from the kitchen. There's plenty of bread there, and you must be hungry. You can't possibly get into the palace, for you are barefooted, and the guards in silver and the lackeys in gold would not allow it. But don't cry; you shall go up. My sweetheart knows a little back staircase that leads up to the bedroom, and she knows where she can get the key."

And they went into the garden into the great avenue, where one leaf was falling down after another; and when the lights were extinguished in the palace one after the other, the Crow led Gerda to a back door, which stood ajar.

Oh, how Gerda's heart beat with fear and longing! It was just as if she had been going to do something wicked; and yet she only wanted to know if it was little Kay. Yes, it must be he. She thought so deeply of his clear eyes and his long hair; she could fancy she saw how he smiled as he had smiled at home when they sat among the roses. He would certainly be glad to see her; to hear what a long distance she had come for his sake; to know how sorry they had all been at home when he did not come back. Oh, what a fear and what a joy that was!

Now they were on the staircase. A little lamp was burning upon a cupboard, and in the middle of the floor stood the tame Crow turning her head on every side and looking at Gerda, who courtesied as her grandmother had taught her to do.

"My betrothed has spoken to me very favorably of you, my little lady," said the tame Crow. "Your history, as it may be called, is very moving. Will you take the lamp?"

then I will precede you. We will go the straight way, and then we shall meet nobody."

"I feel as if someone were coming after us," said Gerda, as something rushed by her; it seemed like a shadow on the wall; horses with flying manes and thin legs, hunters, and ladies and gentlemen on horseback.

"These are only dreams," said the Crow; "they are coming to carry the high masters' thoughts out hunting. That's all the better, for you may look at them the more closely, in bed. But I hope, when you are taken into favor and get promotion, you will show a grateful heart."

"Of that we may be sure!" observed the Crow from the wood.

Now they came into the first hall; it was hung with rose-colored satin, and artificial flowers were worked on the walls; and here the dream already came fitting by them, but they moved so quickly that Gerda could not see the high-born lords and ladies. Each hall was more splendid than the last; yes, one could almost become bewildered! Now they were in the bedchamber. Here the ceiling was like a great palm tree with leaves of glass, of costly glass, and in the middle of the floor two beds hung on a thick stalk of gold, and each of them looked like a lily. One of them was white, and in that lay the Princess; the other was red, and in that Gerda was to seek little Kay. She bent one of the red leaves aside, and then she saw a little brown neck. Oh, that was Kay! She called out his name quite loud, and held the lamp toward him. The dreams rushed into the room again on horseback—he awoke, turned his head, and—it was not little Kay!

The Prince was only like him in the neck, but he was young and good looking, and the Princess looked up, blinking, from the white lily, and asked who was there. Then little Gerda wept, and told her whole history, and all that the Crows had done for her.

"You poor child!" said the Prince and Princess.

And they praised the Crows, and said that they were not angry with them at all, but the Crows were not to do it again. However, they should be rewarded.

"Will you fly out free?" asked the Princess, "or will you have fixed positions as Court Crows, with the right to everything that is left in the kitchen?"

And the two Crows bowed, and begged for fixed positions, for they thought of their old age, and said, "It is so good to have some provisions for one's old days," as they called them.

And the Prince got up out of his bed, and let Gerda sleep in it, and he could not do more than that. She folded her little hands, and thought, "How good men and animals are!" and then she shut her eyes and went quietly to sleep. All the dreams came flying in again, looking like angels, and they drew a little sledge, on which Kay sat nodding; but all this was only a dream, and therefore it was gone again as soon as she awoke.

The next day she was clothed from head to foot in velvet; and an offer was made to her that she should stay in the castle and enjoy pleasant times, but she only begged for a little carriage, with a horse to draw it, and a pair of little boots; then she would drive out into the world and seek for Kay.

And she received not only boots, but a muff likewise, and was neatly dressed; and when she was ready to depart, a coach, made of pure gold, stopped before the door. Upon it shone like a star the coat of arms of the Prince and Princess; coachmen, footmen, and outriders—for there were outriders, too—sat on horseback, with gold crowns on their heads. The Prince and Princess themselves helped her into the carriage, and wished her all good fortune. The forest Crow, who was now married, accompanied her the first three miles; he sat by Gerda's side, for he could not bear riding backward; the other Crow stood in the doorway, flapping her wings; she did not go with them, for she suffered from headache, that had come on since she had obtained a fixed position and was allowed to eat too much. The coach was lined with sugar biscuits, and in the seat there were gingerbread, nuts, and fruit.

"Farewell, farewell!" cried the Prince and Princess; and little Gerda wept, and the Crow wept. So they went on for the first three miles, and then the Crow said good-bye, and that was the heaviest parting of all. The Crow flew up on a tree, and beat his black wings as long as he could see the coach, which glittered like the bright sunshine.

THE FIFTH STORY.

THE LITTLE ROBBER GIRL.

They drove on through the thick forest, but the coach gleamed like a torch, that dazzled the robbers' eyes, and they could not bear it.

"That is gold! that is gold!" cried they, and rushed forward, and seized the horses, killed the postilions, the coachman, and the footmen, and then pulled little Gerda out of the carriage.

"She is fat—she is pretty—she is fed with nut kernels!" said the old robber woman, who had a very long matted beard, and shaggy eyebrows that hung down over her eyes. "She's as good as a little pet lamb; how I shall relish her!"

And she drew out her shining knife, that gleamed in a horrible way.

"Oh!" screamed the old woman at the same moment; for her own daughter, who hung at her back, bit her ear in a very naughty and spiteful manner "You ugly brat!" screamed the old woman; and she had not time to kill Gerda.

"She shall play with me!" said the little robber girl. "She shall give me her muff and her pretty dress, and sleep with me in my bed!"

And then the girl gave another bite, so that the woman jumped high up, and turned right round, and all the robbers laughed, and said:

"Look how she dances with her calf."

"I want to go into the carriage," said the little robber girl.

And she would have her own way, for she was spoiled and very obstinate; and she and Gerda sat in the carriage, and drove over stock and stone deep into the forest. The little robber girl was as big as Gerda, but stronger and more broad shouldered, and she had a brown skin; her eyes were quite black, and they looked almost mournful. She clasped little Gerda round the waist, and said:

"They shall not kill you as long as I am not angry with you. I suppose you are a Princess?"

"No," replied Gerda. And she told all that had happened to her, and how fond she was of little Kay.

The robber girl looked at her seriously, nodded slightly, and said:

"They shall not kill you, even if I do get angry with you, for then I will do it myself."

And then she dried Gerda's eyes, and put her two hands into the beautiful muff that was so soft and warm.

Now the coach stopped, and they were in the courtyard of a robber castle. It had burst from the top to the ground; ravens and crows flew out of the great holes, and big bulldogs—each of which looked as if he could devour a man—jumped high up, but they did not bark, for that was forbidden.

In the great old, smoky hall, a bright fire burned upon the stone floor; the smoke passed along under the ceiling, and had to seek an exit for itself. A great cauldron of soup was boiling, and hares and rabbits were roasting on the spit.

"You shall sleep to-night with me and all my little animals," said the robber girl.

They got something to eat and drink, and then went to a corner, where straw and carpets were spread out. Above these sat on laths and perches more than a hundred pigeons, and all seemed asleep, but they turned a little when the two little girls came.

"All these belong to me," said the little robber girl; and she quickly seized one of the nearest, held it by the feet, and shook it so that it flapped its wings. "Kiss it!" she cried, and beat it in Gerda's face. "There sit the wood rascals," she continued, pointing to a number of laths that had been nailed in front of a hole in the wall. "Those are wood rascals, those two; they fly away directly if one does not keep them well locked up. And here's my old sweetheart 'Ba.'" And she pulled out by the horn a Reindeer, that was tied up, and had a polished copper ring round its neck. "We're obliged to keep him tight, too, or he'd run away from us. Every evening I tickle his neck with a sharp knife, and he's very frightened at that."

And the little girl drew a long knife from a cleft in the wall, and let it glide over the Reindeer's neck; the poor

creature kicked out its legs, and the little robber girl laughed, and drew Gerda into bed with her.

"Do you keep the knife while you're asleep?" asked Gerda, and looked at it in rather a frightened way.

"I always sleep with my knife," replied the robber girl. "One does not know what may happen. But now tell me again what you told me just now about little Kay, and why you came out into the wide world."

And Gerda told it again from the beginning; and the Wood Pigeons cooed above them in their cage, and the other pigeons slept. The little robber girl put her arm round Gerda's neck, held her knife in the other hand, and slept so that one could hear her; but Gerda could not close her eyes at all—she did not know whether she was to live or die.

The robbers sat round the fire, sang and drank, and the old robber woman tumbled about. It was quite terrible for a little girl to behold.

Then the Wood Pigeons said: "Coo! coo! we have seen little Kay. A white owl was carrying his sledge; he sat in the Snow Queen's carriage, which drove close by the forest as we lay in our nests. She blew upon us young pigeons and all died except us two. Coo! coo!"

"What are you saying there?" asked Gerda. "Whither was the Snow Queen traveling? Do you know anything about it?"

"She was probably journeying to Lapland, for there they have always ice and snow. Ask the reindeer that is tied to the cord."

"There is ice and snow yonder, and it is glorious and fine," said the Reindeer. "There one may run about free in great glittering plains. There the Snow Queen has her summer tent; but her strong castle is up toward the North Pole, on the island that's called Spitzbergen."

"O Kay, little Kay!" cried Gerda.

"You must lie still," exclaimed the robber girl, "or I shall thrust my knife into your body."

In the morning Gerda told her all that the Wood Pigeons had said, and the robber girl looked quite serious, and nodded her head and said, "That's all the same, that's all the same!"

"Do you know where Lapland is?" she asked the Reindeer.

"Who should know better than I?" the creature replied, and its eyes sparkled in its head. "I was born and bred there; I ran about there in the snow fields."

"Listen!" said the robber girl to Gerda. "You see all our men have gone away. Only mother is here still, and she'll stay; but toward noon she drinks out of the big bottle, and then she sleeps for a little while; then I'll do something for you."

Then she sprang out of bed, and clasped her mother round the neck and pulled her beard, crying:

"Good-morning, my own old nanny-goat." And her mother filliped her nose till it was red and blue; and it was all done for pure love.

When the mother had drunk out of her bottle and had gone to sleep upon it, the robber girl went to the Reindeer, and said:

"I should like very much to tickle you a few times more with the knife, for you are very funny then; but it's all the same. I'll loosen your cord and help you out, so that you may run to Lapland; but you must use your legs well, and carry this little girl to the palace of the Snow Queen, where her playfellow is. You've heard what she told me, for she spoke loud enough, and you were listening."

The Reindeer sprang up high for joy. The robber girl lifted little Gerda on its back, and had the forethought to tie her fast, and even to give her own little cushion as a saddle.

"There are your fur boots for you," she said, "for it's growing cold; but I shall keep the muff, for that's so very pretty. Still, you shall not be cold, for all that; here's my mother's big muffles—they'll just reach up to your elbows. Now you look just like my ugly mother."

And Gerda wept for joy.

"I can't bear to see you whimper," said the little robber girl. "No, you just ought to look very glad. And here are two loaves and a ham for you; now you won't be hungry."

These were tied on the Reindeer's back. The little robber girl opened the door, coaxed in all the big dogs, and then cut the rope with her sharp knife, and said to the Reindeer:

"Now run, but take good care of the little girl."

And Gerda stretched out her hands with the big muffles toward the little robber girl, and said, "Farewell."

And the Reindeer ran over stock and stone, away through the great forest, over marshes and steppes, as quick as it could go. The wolves howled and the ravens croaked. "Hiss! hiss!" it went in the air. It seemed as if the sky were flashing fire.

"Those are my old Northern Lights," said the Reindeer. "Look how they glow!" And then it ran on faster than ever, day and night.

THE SIXTH STORY.

THE LAPLAND WOMAN AND THE FINLAND WOMAN.

At a little hut they stopped. It was very humble; the roof sloped down almost to the ground, and the door was so low that the family had to creep on their stomachs when they wanted to go in or out. No one was in the house but an old Lapland woman, cooking fish by the light of a train-oil lamp; and the Reindeer told Gerda's whole history, but it related its own first, for this seemed to the Reindeer the more important of the two. Gerda was so exhausted by the cold that she could not speak.

"Oh, you poor things," said the Lapland woman, "you've a long way to run yet! You must go more than a hundred miles into Finmark, for the Snow Queen is there, staying in the country, and burning Bengal Lights every evening. I'll write a few words on a dried cod, for I have no paper, and I'll give you that as a letter to the Finland woman; she can give you better information than I."

And when Gerda had been warmed and refreshed with food and drink, the Lapland woman wrote a few words on a dried codfish, and telling Gerda to take care of these, tied her again on the Reindeer, and the Reindeer sprang away. Flash! flash! it went high in the air; the whole night long the most beautiful blue Northern Lights were burning.

And then they got to Finmark, and knocked at the chimney of the Finland woman, for she had not even a hut.

There was such a heat in the chimney that the woman

herself went about almost naked. She at once loosened little Gerda's dress and took off the child's muffles and boots; otherwise it would have been too hot for her to bear. Then she laid a piece of ice on the Reindeer's head, and read what was written on the codfish; she read it three times, and when she knew it by heart, she popped the fish into the soup-cauldron, for it was eatable, and she never wasted anything.

Now the Reindeer first told his own story, and then little Gerda's; and the Finland woman blinked with her clever eyes, but said nothing.

"You are very clever," said the Reindeer. "I know you can tie all the winds of the world together with a bit of twine; if the seaman unties one knot, he has a good wind; if he loosens the second, it blows hard; but if he unties the third and fourth, there comes such a tempest that the forests are thrown down. Won't you give the little girl a draught, so that she may get twelve men's power, and overcome the Snow Queen?"

"Twelve men's power!" repeated the Finland woman. "Great use that would be!"

And she went to a bed and brought out a great rolled-up fur, and unrolled it; wonderful characters were written upon it, and the Finland woman read until the perspiration ran down over her forehead.

But the Reindeer again begged so hard for little Gerda, and Gerda looked at the Finland woman with such beseeching eyes, full of tears, that she began to blink again with her own, and drew the Reindeer into a corner, and whispered to him, while she laid fresh ice upon his head.

"Little Kay is certainly at the Snow Queen's, and finds everything there to his taste and liking, and thinks it is the best place in the world; but that is because he has a splinter of glass in his eye, and a little fragment in his heart; but these must be got out, or he will never be a human being again, and the Snow Queen will keep her power over him."

"But cannot you give something to little Gerda, so as to give her power over all this?"

"I can give her no greater power than she possesses already; don't you see how great that is? Don't you see how men and animals are obliged to serve her, and how she gets on so well in the world, with her naked feet? She cannot

receive her power from us; it consists in this, that she is a dear, innocent child. If she herself cannot penetrate to the Snow Queen and get the glass out of little Kay, we can be of no use! Two miles from here the Snow Queen's garden begins; you can carry the little girl thither; set her down by the great bush that stands with its red berries in the snow. Don't stand gossiping, but make haste, and get back here!"

And then the Finland woman lifted little Gerda on the Reindeer, which ran as fast as it could.

"Oh, I haven't my boots! I haven't my muffles!" cried Gerda.

She soon noticed that in the cutting cold; but the Reindeer dare not stop; it ran till it came to the bush with the red berries; there it set Gerda down, and kissed her on the mouth, and great big tears ran down the creature's cheeks; and then it ran back, as fast as it could. There stood poor Gerda without shoes, without gloves, in the midst of the terrible cold Finmark.

She ran forward as fast as possible; then came a whole regiment of snow flakes; but they did not fall down from the sky, for that was quite bright, and shone with the Northern Light; the snow flakes ran along the ground, and the nearer they came the larger they grew. Gerda still remembered how large and beautiful the snow flakes had appeared when she had looked at them through the burning-glass. But here they were certainly far longer and much more terrible—they were alive. They were advanced posts of the Snow Queen, and had the strangest shapes. A few looked like ugly great porcupines; others like knots formed of snakes, which stretched forth their heads; and others like little fat bears, whose hair stood up on end; all were brilliantly white, all were living snow flakes.

Then little Gerda said her prayer; and the cold was so great that she could see her own breath, which went forth out of her mouth like smoke. The breath became thicker and thicker, and formed itself into little angels, who grew and grew whenever they touched the earth; and all had helmets on their heads and shields and spears in their hands; their number increased more and more, and when Gerda had finished her prayer a whole legion stood round about her, and struck with their spears at the terrible snow flakes, so that these were shattered into a thousand pieces; and

little Gerda could go forward afresh, with good courage. The angels stroked her hands and feet, and then she felt less how cold it was, and hastened on to see the Snow Queen's palace.

But now we must see what Kay is doing. He certainly was not thinking of little Gerda, and least of all that she was standing in front of the palace.

THE SEVENTH STORY.

OF THE SNOW QUEEN'S CASTLE, AND WHAT HAPPENED THERE AT LAST.

The walls of the palace were formed of the drifting snow, and the windows and doors of the cutting winds. There were more than a hundred halls, all blown together by the snow; the greatest of these extended for several miles; the strong Northern Light illumined them all, and how great and empty, how icily cold and shining they all were! Never was merriment there, not even a little bear's ball, at which the storm could have played the music, while the bears walked about on their hind legs and showed off their pretty manners; never any little sport of mouth-slapping or bars-touch; never any little coffee gossip among the young lady white foxes. Empty, vast, and cold were the halls of the Snow Queen. The Northern Lights flamed so brightly that one could count them where they stood highest and lowest. In the midst of this immense empty snow hall was a frozen lake, which had burst into a thousand pieces; but each piece was like the rest, so that it was a perfect work of art; and in the middle of the lake sat the Snow Queen, when she was at home, and then she said that she sat in the Mirror of Reason, and that this was the only one, and the best in the world.

Little Kay was quite blue with cold—indeed, almost black! but he did not notice it, for she had kissed the cold shudderings away from him, and his heart was like a lump of ice. He dragged a few sharp, flat pieces of ice to and fro, joining them together in all kinds of ways, for he wanted to achieve something with them. It was just like when we have little tablets of wood, and lay them together to form

figures—what we call the Chinese game. Kay also went and laid figures, and, indeed, very artistic ones. That was the icy game of Reason. In his eyes these figures were very remarkable and of the highest importance; that was because of the fragment of glass sticking in his eye. He laid out the figures so that they formed a word—but he could never manage to lay down the word as he wished to have it—the word “Eternity.” And the Snow Queen had said:

“If you can find out this figure, you shall be your own master, and I will give you the whole world and a new pair of skates.”

But he could not.

“Now I’ll hasten away to the warm lands,” said the Snow Queen. “I will go and look into the black spots;” these were the volcanoes, Etna and Vesuvius, as they are called. “I shall make them a little white! That’s necessary; that will do the grapes and lemons good.”

And the Snow Queen flew away, and Kay sat quite alone in the great icy hall that was miles in extent, and looked at his pieces of ice, and thought so deeply that cracks were heard inside him; one would have thought that he was frozen.

Then it happened that little Gerda stepped through the great gate into the wide hall. Here reigned cutting winds, but she prayed a prayer, and the winds lay down as if they would have gone to sleep; and she stepped into the great empty cold halls, and beheld Kay; she knew him, and flew to him, and embraced him, and held him fast, and called out:

“Kay, dear little Kay! at last I have found you!”

But he sat quite still, stiff and cold. Then little Gerda wept hot tears, that fell upon his breast; they penetrated into his heart, they thawed the lump of ice, and consumed the little piece of glass in it. He looked at her, and she sang:

“Roses bloom and roses decay,
But we the Christ-child shall see one day.”

Then Kay burst into tears; he wept so that the splinter of glass came out of his eye. Now he recognized her, and cried rejoicingly:

"Gerda, dear Gerda! where have you been all this time? And where have I been?" And he looked all around him. "How cold it is here! How large and void!"

And he clung to Gerda, and she laughed and wept for joy. It was so glorious that even the pieces of ice round about danced for joy; and when they were tired and lay down, they formed themselves just into the letters of which the Snow Queen had said that if he found them out he should be his own master, and she would give him the whole world and a new pair of skates.

And Gerda kissed his cheeks, and they became blooming; she kissed his eyes, and they shone like her own; she kissed his hands and feet, and he then became well and merry. The Snow Queen might now come home; his letter of release stood written in shining characters of ice.

And they took one another by the hand, and wandered forth from the great palace of ice. They spoke of the grandmother and of the roses on the roof; and where they went the winds rested and the sun burst forth; and when they came to the bush with the red berries, the Reindeer was standing there waiting; it had brought another young Reindeer, which gave the children warm milk, and kissed them on the mouth. Then they carried Kay and Gerda, first to the Finnish woman, where they warmed themselves thoroughly in the hot room, and received instructions for their journey home, and then to the Lapland woman, who had made their new clothes and put their sledge in order.

The Reindeer and the young one sprang at their side, and followed them as far as the boundary of the country. There the first green sprouted forth, and there they took leave of the two Reindeers and the Lapland woman. "Farewell!" said all. And the first little birds began to twitter, the forest was decked with green buds, and out of it, on a beautiful horse (which Gerda knew, for it was the same that had drawn her golden coach), a young girl came riding, with a shining red cap on her head and a pair of pistols in the holsters. This was the little robber girl, who had grown tired of staying at home, and wished to go first to the north, and if that did not suit her, to some other region. She knew Gerda at once, and Gerda knew her, too; and it was a right merry meeting.

"You are a fine fellow to gad about!" she said to little

Kay. "I should like to know if you deserve that one should run to the end of the world after you?"

But Gerda patted her cheeks, and asked after the Prince and Princess.

"They've gone to foreign countries," said the robber girl.

"But the Crow?" said Gerda.

"The Crow is dead," answered the other. "The tame one has become a widow, and goes about with an end of black worsted thread round her leg. She complains most lamentably, but it's all talk. But now tell me how you have fared, and how you caught him."

And Gerda and Kay told their story.

"Snipp-snapp-snurre-purre-basellurre!" said the robber girl.

And she took them both by the hand, and promised that if she ever came through their town, she would come up and pay them a visit. And then she rode away into the wide world. But Gerda and Kay went hand in hand, and as they went it became beautiful spring, with green and with flowers. The church bells sounded, and they recognized the high steeples and the great town; it was the one in which they lived, and they went to the grandmother's door, and up the stairs, and into the room, where everything remained in its usual place. The big clock was going "Tick! tack!" and the hands were turning; but as they went through the rooms they noticed that they had become grown-up people. The roses out on the roof gutter were blooming in at the open window, and there stood the children's chairs, and Kay and Gerda sat each upon their own, and held each other by the hand. They had forgotten the cold, empty splendor at the Snow Queen's like a heavy dream. The grandmother was sitting in God's bright sunshine, and read aloud out of the Bible, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God."

And Kay and Gerda looked into each other's eyes, and all at once they understood the old song:

"Roses bloom and roses decay,
But we the Christ-child shall see one day."

There they both sat, grown up, and yet children—children in heart—and it was summer; warm, delightful summer.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

In China, you must know, the Emperor is a Chinaman, and all whom he has about him are Chinamen, too. It happened a good many years ago, but that's just why it's worth while to hear the story, before it is forgotten. The Emperor's palace was the most splendid in the world; it was made entirely of porcelain, very costly, but so delicate and brittle that one had to take care how one touched it. In the garden were to be seen the most wonderful flowers, and to the costliest of them silver bells were tied, which sounded, so that nobody should pass by without noticing the flowers. Yes, everything in the Emperor's garden was admirably arranged. And it extended so far that the gardener himself did not know where the end was. If a man went on and on, he came into a glorious forest with high trees and deep lakes. The wood extended straight down to the sea, which was blue and deep; great ships could sail; too, beneath the branches of the trees; and in the trees lived a Nightingale, which sang so splendidly that even the poor fisherman, who had many other things to do, stopped still and listened, when he had gone out at night to throw out his nets, and heard the Nightingale.

"How beautiful that is!" he said; but he was obliged to attend to his property, and thus forgot the bird. But when the next night the bird sang again, and the fisherman heard it, he exclaimed again, "How beautiful that is!"

From all the countries of the world travelers came to the city of the Emperor, and admired it, and the palace and the garden, but when they heard the Nightingale, they said, "That is the best of all!"

And the travelers told of it when they came home; and the learned men wrote many books about the town, the palace, and the garden. But they did not forget the Nightingale; that was placed highest of all; and those who were poets wrote most magnificent poems about the Nightingale in the wood by the deep lake.

The books went through all the world, and a few of them once came to the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read, and read; every moment he nodded his head, for it pleased him to peruse the masterly descriptions of the city, the palace, and the garden. "But the Nightingale is the best of all," it stood written there.

"What's that?" exclaimed the Emperor. "I don't know the Nightingale at all! Is there such a bird in my empire, and even in my garden? I've never heard of that. To think that I should have to learn such a thing for the first time from books!"

And hereupon he called his cavalier. This cavalier was so grand that if anyone lower in rank than himself dared to speak to him, or to ask him any question, he answered nothing but "P!"—and that meant nothing.

"There is said to be a wonderful bird here called a Nightingale," said the Emperor. "They say it is the best thing in all my great empire. Why have I never heard anything about it?"

"I have never heard him named," replied the cavalier. "He has never been introduced at Court."

"I command that he shall appear this evening, and sing before me," said the Emperor. "All the world knows what I possess, and I do not know it myself!"

"I have never heard him mentioned," said the cavalier. "I will seek for him. I will find him."

But where was he to be found? The cavalier ran up and down all the staircases, through halls and passages, but no one among all those whom he met had heard talk of the Nightingale. And the cavalier ran back to the Emperor, and said that it must be a fable invented by the writers of books.

"Your Imperial Majesty cannot believe how much is written that is fiction, besides something that they call the black art."

"But the book in which I read this," said the Emperor, "was sent to me by the high and mighty Emperor of Japan, and therefore cannot be a falsehood. I will hear the Nightingale! It must be here this evening! It has my imperial favor; and if it does not come, all the Court shall be trampled upon after the Court has supped!"

"Tsing-pe!" said the cavalier; and again he ran up and

down all the staircases, and through all the halls and corridors; and half the Court ran with him, for the courtiers did not like being trampled upon.

Then there was a great inquiry after the wonderful Nightingale, which all the world knew excepting the people at Court.

At last they met with a poor little girl in the kitchen, who said:

"The Nightingale? I know it well; yes, it can sing gloriously. Every evening I get leave to carry my poor sick mother the scraps from the table. She lives down by the strand; and when I get back and am tired, and rest in the wood, then I hear the Nightingale sing. And then the water comes into my eyes, and it is just as if my mother kissed me."

"Little kitchen girl," said the cavalier, "I will get you a place in the kitchen, with permission to see the Emperor dine, if you will but lead us to the Nightingale, for it is announced for this evening."

So they all went out into the wood where the Nightingale was accustomed to sing; half the Court went forth. When they were in the midst of their journey a cow began to low.

"Oh!" cried the Court pages, "now we have it! That shows a wonderful power in so small a creature! I have certainly heard it before."

"No, those are cows lowing," said the little kitchen girl. "We are a long way from the place yet."

Now the frogs began to croak in the marsh.

"Glorious!" said the Chinese Court preacher. "Now I hear it—it sounds just like little church bells."

"No, those are frogs," said the little kitchen maid. "But now I think we shall soon hear it."

And then the Nightingale began to sing.

"That is it!" exclaimed the little girl. "Listen, listen! and yonder it sits."

And she pointed to a little gray bird in the boughs.

"Is it possible?" cried the cavalier. "I should never have thought it looked like that! How simple it looks! It must certainly have lost its color at seeing such grand people around."

"Little Nightingale!" called the little kitchen maid, quite

loudly, "our gracious Emperor wishes you to sing before him."

"With the greatest pleasure!" replied the Nightingale, and began to sing most delightfully.

"It sounds just like glass bells!" said the cavalier. "And look at its little throat, how it's working! It's wonderful that we should never have heard it before. That bird will be a great success at Court."

"Shall I sing once more before the Emperor?" inquired the Nightingale, for it thought the Emperor was present.

"My excellent little Nightingale," said the cavalier, "I have great pleasure in inviting you to a Court festival this evening, when you shall charm his Imperial Majesty with your beautiful singing."

"My song sounds best in the green wood," replied the Nightingale; still it came willingly when it heard what the Emperor wished.

The palace was festively adorned. The walls and the flooring, which were of porcelain, gleamed in the rays of thousands of golden lamps. The most glorious flowers, which could ring clearly, had been placed in the passages. There was a running to and fro, and a thorough draught, and all the bells rang so loudly that one could not hear one's self speak.

In the midst of the great hall, where the Emperor sat, a golden perch had been placed, on which the Nightingale was to sit. The whole Court was there, and the little cook-maid had got leave to stand behind the door, as she had now received the title of a real Court cook. All were in full dress, and all looked at the little gray bird, to which the Emperor nodded.

And the Nightingale sang so gloriously that the tears came into the Emperor's eyes, and the tears ran down over his cheeks; then the Nightingale sang still more sweetly, that went straight to the heart. The Emperor was so much pleased that he said the Nightingale should have his golden slipper to wear round its neck. But the Nightingale declined this with thanks, saying it had already received a sufficient reward.

"I have seen tears in the Emperor's eyes—that is the real treasure to me. An Emperor's tears have a peculiar power.

I am rewarded enough!" And then it sang again with a sweet, glorious voice.

"That's the most amiable coquetry I ever saw!" said the ladies who stood round about, and then they took water in their mouths to gurgle when anyone spoke to them. They thought they should be nightingales, too. And the lackeys and chambermaids reported that they were satisfied also; and that was saying a good deal, for they are the most difficult to please. In short, the Nightingale achieved a real success.

It was now to remain at Court, to have its own cage, with liberty to go out twice every day and once at night. Twelve servants were appointed when the Nightingale went out, each of whom had a silken string fastened to the bird's legs, which they held very tight. There was really no pleasure in an excursion of that kind.

The whole city spoke of the wonderful bird, and whenever two people met, one said nothing but "Nighthin," and the other said "gale;" and then they both sighed, and understood one another. Eleven pedlars' children were named after the bird, but not one of them could sing a note.

One day the Emperor received a large parcel, on which was written "The Nightingale."

"There we have a new book about this celebrated bird," said the Emperor.

But it was not a book, but a little work of art, contained in a box, an artificial nightingale, which was to sing like a natural one, and was brilliantly ornamented with diamonds, sapphires, and rubies. So soon as the artificial bird was wound up, he could sing one of the pieces that he really sang, and then his tail moved up and down, and shone with silver and gold. Round his neck hung a little ribbon, and on that was written, "The Emperor of China's nightingale is poor compared to that of the Emperor of Japan."

"That is capital!" said they all, and he who had brought the artificial bird immediately received the title, Imperial Head-Nightingale-Bringer.

"Now they must sing together; what a duet that will be!" cried the courtiers.

And so they had to sing together; but it did not sound very well, for the real Nightingale sang its own way, and the artificial bird sang waltzes.

"That's not his fault," said the playmaster; "he's quite perfect, and very much in my style."

Now the artificial bird was to sing alone. He had just as much success as the real one, and then it was much handsomer to look at—it shone like bracelets and breastpins.

Three and thirty times over did it sing the same piece, and yet was not tired. The people would gladly have heard it again, but the Emperor said that the living Nightingale ought to sing something now. But where was it? No one had noticed that it had flown away out of the open window, back to the green wood.

"But what has become of that?" asked the Emperor.

And all the courtiers abused the Nightingale, and declared that it was a very ungrateful creature.

"We have the best bird after all," said they.

And so the artificial bird had to sing again, and that was the thirty-fourth time that they listened to the same piece. For all that they did not know it quite by heart, for it was so very difficult. And the playmaster praised the bird particularly; yes, he declared that it was better than a nightingale, not only with regard to its plumage and the many beautiful diamonds, but inside as well.

"For you see, ladies and gentlemen, and above all, your Imperial Majesty, with a real nightingale one can never calculate what is coming, but in this artificial bird, everything is settled. One can explain it; one can open it and make people understand where the waltzes come from, how they go, and how one follows up another."

"Those are quite our own ideas," they all said.

And the speaker received permission to show the bird to the people on the next Sunday. The people were to hear it sing, too, the Emperor commanded; and they did hear it, and were as much pleased as if they had all got tipsy upon tea, for that's quite the Chinese fashion, and they all said, "Oh!" and held up their forefingers and nodded. But the poor fisherman, who had heard the real Nightingale, said:

"It sounds pretty enough, and the melodies resemble each other, but there's something wanting, though I know not what!"

The real Nightingale was banished from the country and empire. The artificial bird had its place on a silken cushion close to the Emperor's bed; all the presents it had received,

gold and precious stones, were ranged about it; in title it had advanced to be the High Imperial After-Dinner Singer, and in rank to Number One on the left hand; for the Emperor considered that side the most important on which the heart is placed, and even in an Emperor the heart is on the left side; and the playmaster wrote a work of five and twenty volumes about the artificial bird; it was very learned and very long, full of the most difficult Chinese words; but yet all the people declared that they had read it and understood it, for fear of being considered stupid, and having their bodies trampled on.

So a whole year went by. The Emperor, the Court, and all the other Chinese knew every little twitter in the artificial bird's song by heart. But just for that reason it pleased them best—they could sing with it themselves, and they did so. The street boys sang, "Tsi-tsi-tsi-glug-glug!" and the Emperor himself sang it, too. Yes, that was certainly famous.

But one evening, when the artificial bird was singing its best, and the Emperor lay in bed listening to it, something inside the bird said, "Whizz!" Something cracked. "Whirr-r!" All the wheels ran round, and then the music stopped.

The Emperor immediately sprang out of bed, and caused his body physician to be called; but what could he do? Then they sent for a watchmaker, and after a good deal of talking and investigation, the bird was put into something like order, but the watchmaker said that the bird must be carefully treated, for the barrels were worn, and it would be impossible to put new ones in in such a manner that the music would go. There was a great lamentation; only once in the year was it permitted to let the bird sing, and that was almost too much. But then the playmaster made a little speech, full of heavy words, and said this was just as good as before—and so of course it was as good as before.

Now five years had gone by, and a real grief came upon the whole nation. The Chinese were really fond of their Emperor, and now he was ill, and could not, it was said, live much longer. Already a new Emperor had been chosen, and the people stood out in the street and asked the cavalier how the Emperor did.

"P!" said he, and shook his head.

Cold and pale lay the Emperor in his great, gorgeous bed; the whole court thought him dead, and each one ran to pay homage to the new ruler. The chamberlains ran out to talk it over, and the ladies' maids had a great coffee party. All about, in all the halls and passages, cloth had been laid down so that no footstep could be heard, and therefore it was quiet there, quite quiet. But the Emperor was not dead yet; stiff and pale he lay on the gorgeous bed, with the long velvet curtains and the heavy gold tassels; high up, a window stood open, and the moon shone in upon the Emperor and the artificial bird.

The poor Emperor could scarcely breathe; it was just as if something lay upon his chest; he opened his eyes, and then he saw that it was Death who sat upon his chest, and had put on his golden crown, and held in one hand the Emperor's sword, in the other his beautiful banner. And all around, from among the folds of the splendid velvet curtains, strange heads peered forth; a few very ugly, the rest quite lovely and mild. These were all the Emperor's bad and good deeds, that stood before him now that Death sat upon his heart.

"Do you remember this?" whispered one to the other. "Do you remember that?" and then they told him so much that the perspiration ran from his forehead.

"I did not know that!" said the Emperor. "Music! music! the great Chinese drum!" he cried, "so that I need not hear all they say!"

And they continued speaking, and Death nodded like a Chinaman to all they said.

"Music! music!" cried the Emperor. "You little precious golden bird, sing, sing! I have given you gold and costly presents; I have even hung my golden slipper around your neck—sing now, sing!"

But the bird stood still; no one was there to wind him up, and he could not sing without that; but Death continued to stare at the Emperor with his great, hollow eyes, and it was quiet, fearfully quiet.

Then there sounded from the window, suddenly, the most lovely song. It was the little live Nightingale, that sat outside on a spray. It had heard of the Emperor's sad plight, and had come to sing to him of comfort and hope. As it sang the specters grew paler and paler; the blood ran quicker

and more quickly through the Emperor's weak limbs; and even Death listened, and said:

"Go on, little Nightingale, go on!"

"But will you give me that splendid golden sword? Will you give me that rich banner? Will you give me the Emperor's crown?"

And Death gave up each of these treasures for a song. And the Nightingale sang on and on; and it sang of the quiet churchyard where the white roses grow, where the elder blossoms smell sweet, and where the fresh grass is moistened by the tears of survivors. Then Death felt a longing to see his garden, and floated out at the window in the form of a cold white mist.

"Thanks! thanks!" said the Emperor. "You heavenly little bird; I know you well. I banished you from my country and empire, and yet you have charmed away the evil faces from my couch, and banished Death from my heart! How can I reward you?"

"You have rewarded me!" replied the Nightingale. "I have drawn tears from your eyes, when I sang the first time—I shall never forget that. Those are the jewels that rejoice a singer's heart. But now sleep, and grow fresh and strong again. I will sing you something."

And it sang, and the Emperor fell into a sweet slumber. Ah! how mild and refreshing that sleep was! The sun shone upon him through the windows, when he awoke refreshed and restored; not one of his servants had yet returned, for they all thought he was dead; only the Nightingale still sat beside him and sang.

"You must always stay with me," said the Emperor. "You shall sing as you please; and I'll break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces."

"Not so," replied the Nightingale. "It did well as long as it could; keep it as you have done till now. I cannot build my nest in the palace to dwell in it, but let me come when I feel the wish; then I will sit in the evening on the spray yonder by the window, and sing you something, so that you may be glad and thoughtful at once. I will sing of those who are happy and of those who suffer. I will sing of good and of evil that remains hidden round about you. The little singing bird flies far around, to the poor fisherman, to the peasant's roof, to everyone who dwells far away from

you and from your Court. I love your heart more than your crown, and yet the crown has an air of sanctity about it. I will come and sing to you—but one thing you must promise me.”

“Everything!” said the Emperor; and he stood there in his imperial robes, which he had put on himself, and pressed the sword which was heavy with gold to his heart.

“One thing I beg of you; tell no one that you have a little bird who tells you everything. Then it will go all the better.”

And the Nightingale flew away.

The servants came in to look at their dead Emperor, and—yes, there he stood, and the Emperor said “Good-morning!”

THE NEIGHBORING FAMILIES.

One would really have thought that something important was going on by the duck pond; but nothing was going on. All the ducks lying quietly on the water, or standing on their heads in it—for they could do that—swam suddenly to the shore. One could see the traces of their feet on the wet earth, and their quacking sounded far and wide. The water, lately clear and bright as a mirror, was quite in a commotion. Before, every tree, every neighboring bush, the old farmhouse with the holes in the roof and the swallow's nest, and especially the great rose bush covered with flowers, had been mirrored in it. This rose bush covered the wall and hung over the water, in which everything appeared as in a picture, only that everything stood on its head; but when the water was set in motion, everything swam away, and the picture was gone. Two feathers, which the fluttering ducks had lost, floated to and fro, and all at once they took a start, as if the wind were coming; but the wind did not come, so they had to be still, and the water became quiet and smooth again. The roses mirrored themselves in it again; they were beautiful, but they did not know it, for no one had told them. The sun shone among the delicate leaves; everything breathed in the sweet fragrance, and all felt as we feel when we are filled with the thought of our greatest happiness.

"How beautiful is life!" said each Rose. "Only one thing I wish, that I were able to kiss the sun, because it is so bright and so warm. The roses, too, in the water yonder, our images, I should like to kiss, and the pretty birds in the nests. There are some up yonder, too; they thrust out their heads and pipe quite feebly; they have no feathers like their father and mother. They are good neighbors, below and above. How beautiful is life!"

The young ones above and below; those below are certainly only shadows in the water—mere Sparrows; their parents were Sparrows, too; they had taken possession of the empty swallow's nest of last year, and kept house in it as if it had been their own.

"Are those ducks' children swimming yonder?" asked the young Sparrows, when they noticed the ducks' feathers upon the water.

"If you must ask questions, ask sensible ones," replied their mother. "Don't you see that they are feathers? living clothes, stuff like I wear and like you will wear; but ours is finer. I wish, by the way, we had those up here in our own nest, for they keep one warm. I wonder what the ducks were so frightened at. Not at us, certainly, though I said 'piep' to you rather loudly. The thick-headed roses ought to know it, but they know nothing; they only look at one another and smell. I'm very tired of those neighbors."

"Just listen to those darling birds up there," said the Roses. "They begin to want to sing, but are not able yet. But it will be managed in time. What a pleasure that must be! It's nice to have such merry neighbors."

Suddenly two horses came galloping up to water. A peasant boy rode on one, and he had taken off all his clothes, except his big, broad straw hat. The boy whistled like a bird, and rode into the pond where it was deepest, and when he came past the rose bush he plucked a rose, and put it upon his hat. And now he thought he looked very fine, and rode on. The other Roses looked after their sister, and said to each other: "Whither may she be journeying?" but they did not know.

"I should like to go out into the world," said one; "but it's beautiful, too, here at home among the green leaves. All day the sun shines warm and bright, and in the night-time

the sky is more beautiful still; we can see that through all the little holes in it."

They meant the stars, but they knew no better.

"We make it lively about a house," said the Mother Sparrow; "and 'the swallow's nest brings luck,' people say, so they're glad to see us. But the neighbors! Such a rose bush climbing up the wall causes damp. It will most likely be taken away; and then, at least, corn will perhaps grow here. The Roses are fit for nothing but to be looked at, or at most one may be stuck on a hat. Every year, I know from my mother, they fall off. The farmer's wife preserves them, and puts salt among them; then they get a French name that I neither can nor will pronounce, and are put upon the fire to make a good smell. You see, that's their life. They're only for the eye and the nose. Now you know it."

When the evening came, and the gnats played in the warm air and the red clouds, the Nightingale came and sang to the Roses, saying that the beautiful was like sunshine to the world, and that the beautiful lived forever. But the Roses thought the Nightingale was singing of itself, and indeed one might easily have thought so; they never imagined that the song was about them. But they rejoiced greatly in it, and wondered whether all the little Sparrows might become Nightingales.

"I understood the song of that bird very well," said the young Sparrows, "only one word was not clear. What is the beautiful?"

"That's nothing at all," replied the Mother Sparrow; that's only an outside affair. Yonder, at the nobleman's seat, where the pigeons have their own house, and have corn and peas strewn before them every day,—I've been there myself and dined with them; for tell me what company you keep and I'll tell you who you are,—yonder at the nobleman's seat there are two birds, with green necks and a crest upon their head; they can spread out their tails like a great shell, and then it plays with various colors, so that the sight makes one's eyes ache. These birds are called peacocks, and that's the beautiful. They should only be plucked a little, then they would look no better than all the rest of us. I should have plucked them myself if they had not been so large."

"I'll pluck them," piped the little Sparrow, who had no feathers yet.

In the farmhouse dwelt two young married people; they loved each other well, were industrious and active, and everything in their home looked very pretty. On Sunday morning the young wife came out, plucked a handful of the most beautiful roses, and put them into a glass of water, which she put upon the cupboard.

"Now I see that it is Sunday," said the husband, and he kissed his little wife.

They sat down, read their hymn book, and held each other by the hand; and the sun shone on the fresh roses and the young couple.

"This sight is really too wearisome," said the Mother Sparrow, who could look from the nest into the room; and she flew away.

The same thing happened the next Sunday, for every Sunday fresh roses were placed in the glass; but the rose bush bloomed as beautiful as ever.

The young Sparrows had feathers now, and wanted to fly out too, but the mother would not allow it, and they were obliged to stay at home. She flew alone; but, however it may have happened, before she was aware of it, she was entangled in a noose of horse-hair, which some boys had fastened to the branches. The horse-hair wound itself fast round her legs, as fast as if it would cut the leg through. What pain! what a fright she was in!

The boys came running up, and seized the bird; and indeed, roughly enough.

"It's only a Sparrow," said they; but they did not let her go, but took her home with them. And whenever she cried, they tapped her on the beak.

In the farmhouse stood an old man, who understood making soap for shaving and washing, in cakes as well as in balls. He was a merry, wandering old man. When he saw the Sparrow, which the boys had brought, and for which they said they did not care, he said:

"Shall we make it very beautiful?"

The Mother Sparrow felt an icy shudder pass through her.

Out of a box, in which were the most brilliant colors, the old man took a quantity of shining gold leaf, and the boys

were sent for some white of eggs, with which the Sparrow was completely smeared; the gold leaf was stuck upon that, and there was the Mother Sparrow gilded all over. She did not think of the adornment, but trembled all over. And the soap man tore off a fragment from the red lining of his old jacket, cut notches in it, so that it looked like a cock's comb, and stuck it on the bird's head.

"Now you shall see the gold-jacket fly," said the old man; and he released the Sparrow, which flew away in deadly fear, with the sunlight shining upon her.

How it glittered! All the Sparrows, and even a crow, a knowing old boy, were startled at the sight; but still they flew after her, to know what kind of strange bird this might be.

Driven by fear and horror, she flew homeward; she was nearly sinking powerless to the earth; the flock of pursuing birds increased, and some even tried to peck at her.

"Look at her! look at her!" they all cried.

"Look at her! look at her!" cried the young ones, when the Mother Sparrow approached the nest. "That must be a young peacock. He glitters with all colors. It quite hurts one's eyes, as Mother told us. Piep! that's the beautiful."

And now they pecked at the bird with their little beaks, so that she could not possibly get into the nest; she was so much exhausted that she could not even say "Piep!" much less "I am your mother!"

The other birds also fell upon the Sparrow, and plucked off feather after feather, until she fell bleeding into the rose bush.

"You poor creature!" said all the Roses; "be quiet, and we will hide you. Lean your head against us."

The Sparrow spread out her wings once more, then drew them tight to her body, and lay dead by the neighboring family, the beautiful fresh Roses.

"Piep!" sounded from the nest. "Where can our mother be? It's quite inexplicable. It cannot be a trick of hers, and mean that we're to shift for ourselves; she has left us the house as an inheritance, but to which of us shall it belong when we have families of our own?"

"Yes, it won't do for you to stay with me when I enlarge my establishment with a wife and children;" observed the smallest.

"I shall have more wives and children than you!" cried the second.

"But I am the oldest!" said the third.

Now they all became excited. They struck out with their wings, hacked with their beaks, and flump! one after another was thrust out of the nest. There they lay with their anger, holding their heads on one side, and blinking with the eye that looked upward. That was their way to look sulky.

They could fly a little; by practice they improved, and at last they fixed upon a sign by which they should know each other when they met later in the world. This sign was to be the cry of "Piep!" with a scratching of the left foot three times against the ground.

The Sparrow that had remained behind in the nest made itself as broad as it possibly could, for it was the proprietor. But the proprietorship did not last long. In the night the red fire burst through the window, the flames seized upon the roof, the dry straw blazed brightly up, and the whole house was burned, and the young Sparrow too; but the two others, who wanted to marry, managed to escape with their lives.

When the sun rose again, and everything looked as much refreshed as if nature had had a quiet sleep, there remained of the farmhouse nothing but a few charred beams, leaning against the chimney that was now its own master. Thick smoke still rose from among the fragments, but without stood the rose bush quite unharmed, and every flower, every twig immersed in the clear water.

"How beautiful those roses bloom before the ruined house!" cried a passer-by. "I cannot imagine a more agreeable picture. I must have that."

And the traveler took out of his portfolio a little book with white leaves; he was a painter, and with his pencil he drew the smoking house, the charred beams, and the overhanging chimney, which bent more and more; quite in the foreground appeared the blooming rose bush, which presented a charming sight, and indeed for its sake the whole picture had been made.

Later in the day, the two Sparrows that had been born here came by.

"Where is the house?" asked they. "Where is the nest?"

Piep! All is burned, and our strong brother is burned too. That's what he has got by keeping the nest to himself. The Roses have escaped well enough—there they stand yet, with their red cheeks. They certainly don't mourn at their neighbor's misfortune. I won't speak to them, it's so ugly here, that's my opinion." And they flew up and away.

On a beautiful sunny autumn day, when one could almost have believed it was the middle of summer, there hopped about in the clean, dry courtyard of the nobleman's seat, in front of the great steps, a number of Pigeons, black, white, and variegated, all shining in the sunlight. The old Mother Pigeons said to their young ones:

"Stand in groups, stand in groups, for that looks much better."

"What are those little gray creatures, that run about behind us?" asked an old Pigeon, with red and green in her eyes. "Little gray ones, little gray ones!" she cried. .

"They are Sparrows, good creatures. We have always had the reputation of being kind, so we will allow them to pick up the corn with us. They don't interrupt conversation, and they make such very pretty courtesies."

Yes they courtesied three times, each with the left leg, and said "Piep." By that they recognized each other as the Sparrows from the nest by the burned house.

"Here's very good eating," said the Sparrow.

The Pigeons strutted round one another, bulged out their chests mightily, and had their own secret views and opinions on things in general.

"Do you see that pouter Pigeon?" said one speaking to the others. "Do you see that one swallowing the peas? She takes too many, and the best, moreover. Curoo! curoo! How she lifts up her crest, the ugly, spiteful thing! Curoo! curoo!"

And all their eyes sparkled with spite.

"Stand in groups! stand in groups! Little gray ones! little gray ones! Curoo! curoo!"

So their beaks went on and on, and so they will go on when a thousand years are gone.

The Sparrows feasted bravely. They listened attentively, and even stood in the ranks of the Pigeons, but it did not suit them well. They were satisfied, and so they quitted the Pigeons, exchanged opinion concerning them, slipped un-

der the garden railings, and when they found the door of the garden open, one of them, who was over-fed, and consequently valorous, hopped on the threshold.

"Piep!" said he, "I may venture that."

"Piep!" said the other, "so can I, and something more too."

And he hopped right into the room. No one was present; the third Sparrow saw that, and hopped still farther into the room, and said, "Everything or nothing! By the way, this is a funny man's nest; and what have they put up there? What's that?"

Just in front of the Sparrows the roses were blooming; they were mirrored in the water, and the charred beams leaned against the toppling chimney.

"Why, what is that? How came this in the room of a nobleman's seat?"

And then these Sparrows wanted to fly over the chimney and roses, but flew against a flat wall. It was all a picture, a great beautiful picture, that the painter had completed from a sketch.

"Piep!" said the Sparrow, "it's nothing, it only looks like something. Piep! that's the beautiful. Can you understand it? I can't."

And they flew away, for some people came into the room.

Days and years went by. The Pigeons had often cooed, not to say growled, the spiteful things; the Sparrows had suffered cold in winter, and lived riotously in summer; they were all betrothed or married, or whatever you like to call it. They had little ones, and of course each thought his own the handsomest and the cleverest; one flew this way, another that, and when they met they knew each other by their "Piep!" and the three courtesies with the left leg. The eldest had remained a maiden Sparrow, with no nest and no young ones. Her great idea was to see a town, and therefore she flew to Copenhagen.

There was to be seen a great house painted with many colors, close by the castle and by the canal, in which latter swam many ships laden with apples and pottery. The windows were broader below than at the top, and when the Sparrows looked through, every room appeared to them like a tulip with the most beautiful colors and shades. But in the middle of the tulip were white people, made of mar-

ble; a few certainly were made of plaster, but in the eyes of a sparrow that's all the same. Upon the roof stood a metal carriage, with metal horses harnessed to it, and the Goddess of Victory, also of bronze, driving. It was Thorwaldsen's Museum.

"How it shines! how it shines!" said the little maiden Sparrow. "I suppose that's what they call the beautiful. Piep! But this is greater than the peacock!"

It still remembered what, in its days of childhood, the Mother Sparrow had declared to be the greatest among the beautiful. The Sparrow flew down into the courtyard. There everything was very splendid; upon the walls palms and branches were painted; in the midst of the court stood a great blooming rose tree, spreading out its fresh branches, covered with many roses, over a grave. Thither the maiden Sparrow flew, for there she saw many of her own kind. "Piep!" and three courtesies with the left leg—that salutation it had often made throughout the summer, and nobody had replied, for friends who are once parted don't meet every day; and now this form of greeting had become quite a habit with it. But to-day two old Sparrows and a young one replied "Piep!" and courtesied three times, each with the left leg.

"Ah! good-day! good-day!" They were two old ones from the nest, and a little one belonging to the family. "Do we meet here again? It's a grand place, but there's not much to eat. This is the beautiful! Piep!"

And many people came out of the side chambers, where the glorious marble statues stood, and approached the grave where slept the great master who had formed these marble images. All stood with radiant faces by Thorwaldsen's grave, and some gathered up the fallen rose leaves and kept them. They had come from afar; one from mighty England, others from Germany and France. The most beautiful among the ladies plucked one of the roses and hid it in her bosom. Then the Sparrows thought that the roses ruled here, and that the whole house had been built for their sake; that appeared to them to be too much; but as all the people showed their love for the roses, they would not be behind-hand. "Piep!" they said, and swept the ground with their tails, and glanced with one eye at the Roses; and they had not looked long at the flowers before they recognized them

as old neighbors. And so the Roses really were. The painter, who had sketched the rose bush by the ruined house, had afterward received permission to dig it up, and had given it to the architect, for nowhere could more beautiful roses be found. And the architect had planted it upon Thorwaldsen's grave, where it bloomed, an image of the beautiful, and gave its red, fragrant leaves to be carried into distant lands as mementoes.

"Have you found a situation here in the town?" asked the Sparrows.

And the Roses nodded; they recognized their brown neighbors, and were glad to see them again. "How glorious it is to live, and bloom, to see old faces again, and cheerful faces every day!"

"Piep!" said the Sparrows. "Yes, these are truly our old neighbors; we remember their origin by the pond. Piep! how they've got on! Yes, some people succeed while they're asleep. Why, yonder is a withered leaf—I see it quite plainly!"

And they picked at it till the leaf fell. But the tree stood there greener and fresher than ever; the sweet Roses bloomed in the sunshine by Thorwaldsen's grave, and were associated with his immortal name.

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL.

It was terribly cold; it snowed and was already almost dark, and evening came on, the last evening of the year. In the cold and gloom a poor little girl, bareheaded and barefoot, was walking through the streets. When she left her own house she certainly had had slippers on; but of what use were they? They were big slippers, and her mother had used them till then, so big were they. The little maid lost them as she slipped across the road, where two carriages were rattling by terribly fast. One slipper was not to be found again, and a boy had seized the other, and run away with it. He thought he could use it very well as a cradle, some day when he had children of his own. So now the little girl went with her little naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old apron she carried a num-

ber of matches, and a bundle of them in her hand. No one had bought of her all day, and no one had given her a farthing.

Shivering with cold and hunger, she crept along, a picture of misery, poor little girl! The snowflakes covered her long fair hair, which fell in pretty curls over her neck; but she did not think of that now. In all the windows lights were shining, and there was a glorious smell of roast goose, for it was New Year's Eve. Yes, she thought of that!

In a corner formed by two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sat down, cowering. She had drawn up her little feet, but she was still colder, and she did not dare to go home, for she had sold no matches, and did not bring a farthing of money. From her father she would certainly receive a beating, and besides it was cold at home, for they had nothing over them but a roof through which the wind whistled, though the largest rents had been stopped with straw and rags.

Her little hands were almost benumbed with the cold! Ah! a match might do her good, if she could only draw one from the bundle, and rub it against the wall, and warm her hands at it. She drew one out. R-r-atch! how it sputtered and burned! It was a warm, bright flame, like a little candle, when she held her hands over it; it was a wonderful little light! It really seemed to the little girl as if she sat before a great polished stove, with bright brass feet and a brass cover. How the fire burned! how comfortable it was! But the little flame went out, and the stove vanished, and she had only the remains of the burned match in her hand.

A second was rubbed against the wall. It burned up, and when the light fell upon the wall it became transparent, like a thin veil, and she could see through it into the room. On the table a snow-white cloth was spread; upon it stood a shining dinner service; the roast goose smoked gloriously, stuffed with apples and dried plums. And what was still more splendid to behold, the goose hopped down from the dish, and waddled along the floor, with a knife and fork in its breast, to the little girl. Then the match went out, and only the thick, damp, cold wall was before her. She lighted another match. Then she was sitting under a beautiful Christmas tree; it was greater and more ornamental than the

one she had seen through the glass door at the rich merchant's. Thousands of candles burned upon the green branches, and colored pictures like those in the print shops looked down upon them. The little girl stretched forth her hand toward them; then the match went out. The Christmas lights mounted higher. She saw them now as stars in the sky; one of them fell down, forming a long line of fire.

"Now someone is dying," thought the little girl, for her old grandmother, the only person who had loved her, and who was now dead, had told her when a star fell down a soul mounted up to God. She rubbed another match against the wall; it became bright again, and in the brightness the old grandmother stood clear and shining, mild and lovely.

"Grandmother!" cried the child, "oh! take me with you! I know you will go when the match is burned out. You will vanish like the warm fire, the warm food, and the great glorious Christmas tree!"

And she hastily rubbed the whole bundle of matches, for she wished to hold her grandmother fast. And the matches burned with such a glow that it became brighter than in the middle of the day; grandmother had never been so large or so beautiful. She took the little girl in her arms, and both flew with brightness and joy above the earth, very, very high, and up there was neither cold, nor hunger, nor care—they were with God!

But in the corner, leaning against the wall, sat the poor girl, with red cheeks and smiling mouth, frozen to death on the last evening of the Old Year. The New Year's sun rose upon a little corpse! The child sat there, stiff and cold, with the matches of which one bundle was burned. "She wanted to warm herself," the people said. No one imagined what a beautiful thing she had seen, and in what glory she had gone in with her grandmother to the New Year's Day.

THE ELF HILL.

A few great Lizards raced nimbly about in the clefts of an old tree; they could understand each other very well, for they spoke the Lizards' language.

"How it grumbles and growls in the old elf hill!" said one Lizard. "I've not been able to close my eyes for two nights, because of the noise; I might just as well lie and have the toothache, for then I can't sleep either."

"There's something wrong in there," said the other Lizard. "They let the hill stand on four red posts till the cock crows at morn. It is regularly aired, and the elf girls have learned new dances. There's something going on."

"Yes, I have spoken with an Earthworm of my acquaintance," said the third Lizard. "The Earthworm came straight out of the hill, where he had been grubbing in the ground night and day; he had heard much. He can't see, the miserable creature, but he understands how to toss about and listen. They expect some friends in the elf hill—grand strangers; but who they are the Earthworm would not tell, and perhaps, indeed, he did not know. All the Will-o'-the-wisps are ordered to hold a torch dance, as it is called; and silver and gold, of which there is enough in the elf hill, is being polished and put out in the moonshine."

"Who may these strangers be?" asked all the Lizards. "What can be going on there? Hark, how it hums! Hark, how it murmurs!"

At the same moment the elf hill opened, and an old elf maid,* hollow behind, came tripping out. She was the old Elf King's housekeeper. She was a distant relative of the royal family, and wore an amber heart on her forehead. Her legs moved so rapidly—trip, trip! Gracious! how she could trip! straight down to the sea, to the Night Raven.

"You are invited to the elf hill for this evening," said she; "but will you do me a great service and undertake the invitations? You must do something, as you don't keep any house yourself. We shall have some very distinguished friends, magicians who have something to say; and so the old Elf King wants to make a display."

"Who's to be invited?" asked the Night Raven.

"To the great ball the world may come, even men, if they can talk in their sleep, or do something that falls in our line. But at the first feast there's to be a strict selection; we will

* A prevailing superstition regarding the elf maid, or elle maid, is, that she is fair to look at in front, but behind she is hollow, like a mask.

have only the most distinguished. I have had a dispute with the Elf King, for I declared that we would not even admit ghosts. The merman and his daughters must be invited first. They may not be very well pleased to come on dry land, but they shall have a wet stone to sit upon, or something still better, and then I think they won't refuse for this time. All the old demons of the first class, with tails, and the wood demon and his gnomes, we must have; and then I think we may not leave out the grave pig, the death horse,* and the church twig; they certainly belong to the clergy, and are not reckoned among our people. But that's only their office; they are closely related to us, and visit us diligently."

"Croak!" said the Night Raven, and flew away to give the invitations.

The elf girls were already dancing on the elf hill, and they danced with shawls, which were woven of mist and moonshine; and that looks very pretty for those who like that sort of thing. In the mist, below the elf hill, the great hall was splendidly decorated; the floor had been washed with moonshine, and the walls rubbed with witches' salve, so that they glowed like tulips in the light. In the kitchen, plenty of frogs were turning on the spit, snail skins with children's fingers in them, and salads of mushroom, spawn, damp mouse muzzles, and hemlock; beer brewed by the marsh witch, gleaming saltpeter wine from grave cellars, everything very grand; and rusty nails and church windowglass among the sweets.

The old Elf King had one of his crowns polished with powdered slate pencil; it was slate pencil from the first form, and it's very difficult for the Elf King to get first-form slate pencil! In the bedroom curtains were hung up, and fastened with snail slime. Yes, there was a grumbling and murmuring there!

"Now we must burn horse hair and pigs' bristles as in-

*It is a popular superstition in Denmark, that under every church that is built, a living horse must be buried; the ghost of this horse is the death horse, that limps every night on three legs to the house where someone is to die. Under a few churches a living pig was buried, and the ghost of this was called the grave pig.

cense here," said the Elf King, "and then I think I shall have done my part."

"Father, dear," said the youngest of the daughters, "shall I hear now who the distinguished strangers are?"

"Well," said he, "I suppose I must tell it now. Two of my daughters must hold themselves prepared to be married; two will certainly be married. The old gnome from Norway yonder, he who lives in the Dovre mountains, and possesses many rock castles of field stones, and a gold mine which is better than one thinks, is coming with his two sons, who want each to select a wife. The old gnome is a true old honest Norwegian veteran, merry and straightforward. I know him from old days, when we drank brotherhood with one another. He was down here to fetch his wife; now she is dead—she was a daughter of the King of the Chalk-rocks of Moen. He took his wife upon chalk, as the saying is. Oh, how I long to see the old Norwegian gnome! The lads, they say, are rather rude, forward lads; but perhaps they are belied, and they'll be right enough when they grow older. Let me see that you can teach them manners."

"And when will they come?" asked the daughters.

"That depends on wind and weather," said the Elf King. "They travel economically; they come when there's a chance by a ship. I wanted them to go across Sweden, but the old one would not incline to that wish. He does not advance with the times, and I don't like that."

Then two Will-o'-the-wisps came hopping up, one quicker than the other, and so one of them arrived first.

"They're coming! they're coming!" they cried.

"Give me my crown, and let me stand in the moonshine," said the Elf King.

And the daughters lifted up their shawls and bowed down to the earth.

There stood the old gnome of Dovre, with the crown of hardened ice and polished fir cones; moreover, he wore a bear-skin and great warm boots. His sons, on the contrary, went bare-necked, and with trousers without braces, for they were strong men.

"Is that an acclivity?" asked the youngest of the lads; and he pointed to the elf hill. "In Norway yonder we should call it a hole."

"Boys!" said the old man, "holes go down, mounds go up. Have you no eyes in your heads?"

The only thing they wondered at down here, they said, was that they could understand the language without difficulty.

"Don't give yourselves airs," said the old man. "One would think you were home nurtured."

And then they went into the elf hill, where the really grand company were assembled, and that in such haste that one might almost say they had been blown together. But for each it was nicely and prettily arranged. The sea folks sat at table in great washing tubs; they said it was just as if they were at home. All observed the ceremonies of the table except the two young Northern gnomes, and they put their legs up on the table; but they thought all that suited them well.

"Your feet off the table cloth!" cried the old gnome.

And they obeyed, but not immediately. The ladies they tickled with pine cones that they had brought with them, and then took off their boots for their own convenience, and gave them to the ladies to hold. But the father, the old Dovre gnome, was quite different from them; he told such fine stories of the proud Norwegian rocks, and of the waterfalls, which rushed down with white foam and with a noise like thunder and the sound of organs; he told of the salmon that leaps up against the falling waters when the Reck plays upon the golden harp; he told of shining winter nights, when the sledge bells sound, and the lads run with burning torches over the ice, which is so transparent that they see the fishes start beneath their feet. Yes! he could tell it so finely that one saw what he described; it was just as if the sawmills were going, as if the servants and maids were singing songs and dancing the kalling dance. Hurrah! all at once the old gnome gave the old elf girl a kiss; that was a kiss! and yet they were nothing to each other.

Now the elf maidens had to dance nimbly, and also with stamping steps, and that suited them well; then came the artistic and solo dance. Wonderful how they could use their legs! one hardly knew where they began and where they ended, which were their arms and which their legs— they were all mingled together like wood shavings; and

then they whirled round till the death horse and the grave pig turned giddy, and were obliged to leave the table.

"Purr!" exclaimed the old gnome; "that's a strange fashion of using one's legs. But what can they do more than dance, stretch out their limbs, and make a whirlwind?"

"You shall soon know!" said the Elf King.

And then he called forth the youngest of his daughters. She was as light and graceful as moonshine; she was the most delicate of all the sisters. She took a white shaving in her mouth, and then she was quite gone; that was her art.

But the old gnome said he should not like his wife to possess this art, and he did not think that his boys cared for it.

The other could walk under herself, just as if she had a shadow, and the gnome people had none. The third daughter was of quite another kind; she had served in the brew-house of the moor witch, and knew how to stuff elder-tree knots with glow-worms.

"She will make a good housewife," said the old gnome; and then he winked a health with his eyes, for he did not want to drink too much.

Now came the fourth; she had a great harp to play upon, and when she struck the first chord all lifted up their left feet, for gnomes are left-legged; and when she struck the second chord all were compelled to do as she wished.

"That's a dangerous woman!" said the old gnome; but both the sons went out of the hill, for they had had enough of it.

"And what can the next daughter do?" asked the old gnome.

"I have learned to love what is Norwegian," said she, "and I will never marry unless I can go to Norway."

But the youngest sister whispered to the old King, "That's only because she has heard, in a Norwegian song, that when the world sinks down, the cliffs of Norway will remain standing like monuments, and so she wants to get up there, because she is afraid of sinking down."

"Ho! ho!" said the old gnome, "was it meant in that way? But what can the seventh and last do?"

"The sixth comes before the seventh!" said the Elf King, for he could count. But the sixth would not come out.

"I can only tell people the truth!" said she. "Nobody cares for me, and I have enough to do to sew my shroud."

Now came the seventh and last, and what could she do? Why, she could tell stories, as many as they wished.

"Here are all my fingers," said the old gnome, "tell me one for each."

And she took him by the wrist, and he laughed till it clucked within him; and when she came to the ring finger, which had a ring round its waist, just as if it knew there was to be a wedding, the old gnome said:

"Hold fast what you have; the hand is yours; I'll have you for my own wife."

And the elf girl said that the story of the ring finger and of little Peter Playman, the fifth, were still wanting.

"We'll hear those in winter," said the gnome, "and we'll hear about the pine tree, and about the birch, and about the spirits' gifts, and about the biting frost. You shall tell your tales, for no one up there knows how to do that well; and then we'll sit in the stone chamber, where the pine logs burn, and drink mead out of the horns of the old Norwegian Kings—Reck has given me a couple; and when we sit there, and the Nix comes on a visit, she'll sing you all the songs of the shepherds in the mountains. That will be merry. The salmon will spring in the waterfall, and beat against the stone walls, but he shall not come in."

"Yes, it's good living in Norway; but where are the lads?"

Yes, where were they? They were running about in the fields, and blowing out the Will-o'-the-wisps, which had come so good-naturedly for the torch dance.

"What romping about is this?" said the old gnome. "I have taken a mother for you, and now you may take one of the aunts."

But the lads said they would rather make a speech and drink brotherhood—they did not care to marry; so they made speeches, and drank brotherhood, and tipped up their glasses on their nails, to show they had emptied them. Afterward they took their coats off and lay down on the table to sleep, for they made no ceremony. But the old gnome danced about the room with his young bride, and he changed boots with her, for that's more fashionable than exchanging rings.

"Now the cock crows," said the old elf girl, who attended to the housekeeping. "Now we must shut the shutters, so that the sun may not burn us."

And the hill shut itself up. But outside, the Lizards ran up and down in the cleft-tree, and one said to the other:

"Oh, how I like that old Norwegian gnome!"

"I like the lads better," said the Earthworm. But he could not see, the miserable creature.

THE BUCKWHEAT.

Often, after a thunderstorm, when one passes a field in which buckwheat is growing, it appears quite blackened and singed. It is just as if a flame of fire had passed across it; and then the countryman says, "It got that from lightning." But whence has it received that? I will tell you what the Sparrow told me about it, and the Sparrow heard it from an old Willow Tree which stood by a Buckwheat field, and still stands there. It is quite a great venerable Willow Tree, but crippled and old; it is burst in the middle, and grass and brambles grow out of the cleft; the tree bends forward, and the branches hang quite down to the ground, as if they were long green hair.

On all the fields round about corn was growing, not only rye and barley, but also oats; yes, the most capital oats, which when ripe looks like a number of little yellow canary birds sitting upon a spray. The corn stood smiling, and the richer an ear was, the deeper did it bend in pious humility.

But there was also a field of Buckwheat, and this field was exactly opposite to the old Willow Tree. The Buckwheat did not bend at all, like the rest of the grain, but stood up proudly and stiffly.

"I'm as rich as any corn-ear," said he. Moreover, I'm very much handsomer; my flowers are beautiful as the blossoms of the apple tree; it's quite a delight to look upon me and mine. Do you know anything more splendid than we are, you old Willow Tree?"

And the Willow Tree nodded his head, just as if he would have said, "Yes, that's true enough!"

But the Buckwheat spread itself out in mere vainglory, and said:

"The stupid tree! he's so old that the grass grows in his body."

Now a terrible storm came on; all the field flowers folded their leaves together or bowed their little heads while the storm passed over them, but the Buckwheat stood erect in its pride.

"Bend your head like us," said the Flowers.

"I've not the slightest cause to do so," replied the Buckwheat.

"Bend your head as we do," cried the various Crops. "Now the storm comes flying on. He has wings that reach from the clouds down to the earth, and he'll beat you in halves before you can cry for mercy."

"Yes, but I won't bend," quoth the Buckwheat.

"Shut up your flowers and bend your leaves," said the old Willow Tree. "Don't look up at the lightning, when the cloud bursts; even men do not do that, for in the lightning one may look into heaven, but the light dazzles even men: and what would happen to us, if we dared to do so—we, the plants of the field, that are much less worthy than they?"

"Much less worthy!" cried the Buckwheat. "Now I'll just look straight up into heaven."

And it did so, in its pride and vainglory. It was as if the whole world were on fire, so vivid was the lightning.

When afterward the bad weather had passed by, the flowers and the crops stood in the still pure air, quite refreshed by the rain; but the Buckwheat was burned coal-black by the lightning, and it was now like a dead weed upon the field.

And the old Willow Tree waved its branches in the wind, and great drops of water fell down out of the green leaves just as if the tree wept.

And the Sparrows asked, "Why do you weep? Here everything is so cheerful; see how the sun shines, see how the clouds sail on. Do you not breathe the scent of flowers and bushes? Why do you weep, Willow Tree?"

And the Willow Tree told them of the pride of the Buckwheat, of its vainglory, and of the punishment which always follows such sin.

I, who tell you this tale, have heard it from the Sparrows. They told it me one evening when I begged them to give me a story.

THE OLD HOUSE.

Down yonder, in the street, stood an old, old house. It was almost three hundred years old, for one could read as much on the beam, on which was carved the date of its erection, surrounded by tulips and trailing hops. There one could read entire verses in the characters of olden times, and over each window a face had been carved in the beam, and these faces made all kinds of grimaces. One story projected a long way above the other, and close under the roof was a leaden gutter with a dragon's head. The rainwater was to run out of the dragon's mouth, but it ran out of the creature's body instead, for there was a hole in the pipe.

All the other houses in the street were still new and neat, with large window panes and smooth walls. One could easily see that they could have nothing to do with the old house. They thought, perhaps, "How long is that old rubbish heap to stand there, a scandal to the whole street? The parapet stands so far forward that no one can see out of our windows what is going on in that direction. The staircase is as broad as a castle staircase, and as steep as if it led to a church tower. The iron railing looks like the gate of a family vault, and there are brass bosses upon it. It's too ridiculous!"

Just opposite stood some more new, neat houses that thought exactly like the rest; but here at the window sat a little boy, with fresh, red cheeks, with clear, sparkling eyes, and he was particularly fond of the old house, in sunshine as well as by moonlight. And when he looked down at the wall where the plaster had fallen off, then he could sit and fancy all kinds of pictures—how the street must have appeared in old times, with parapets, open staircases, and pointed gables; he could see soldiers with halberds, and roof-gutters running about in the form of dragons and griffins. That was just a good house to look at; and in it lived an old man, who went about in leather knee smalls,

and wore a coat with great brass buttons, and a wig, which one could at once see was a real wig. Every morning an old man came to him to clean his rooms and run on his errands. With this exception the old man in the leather knee smalls was all alone in the old house. Sometimes he came to one of the windows and looked out, and the little boy nodded to him, and the old man nodded back, and thus they became acquainted and became friends, though they had never spoken to one another; but, indeed, that was not at all necessary.

The little boy heard his parents say, "The old man opposite is very well off, but he is terribly lonely."

Next Sunday the little boy wrapped something in a piece of paper, went with it to the house door, and said to the man who ran errands for the old gentleman:

"Harkye; will you take this to the old gentleman opposite for me? I have two tin soldiers; this is one of them, and he shall have it, because I know that he is terribly lonely."

And the old attendant looked quite pleased, and nodded, and carried the Tin Soldier into the old house. Afterward he was sent over, to ask if the little boy would not like to come himself and pay a visit. His parents gave him leave; and so it was that he came to the old house.

The brass bosses on the staircase shone much more brightly than usual; one would have thought they had been polished in honor of his visit. And it was just as if the carved trumpeters—for on the doors there were carved trumpeters, standing in tulips—were blowing with all their might; their cheeks looked much rounder than before. Yes, they blew "Tan-ta-ra-ra! the little boy's coming! tan-ta-ra-ra!" and then the door opened. The whole of the hall was hung with old portraits of knights in armor and ladies in silk gowns; and the armor rattled and the silk dresses rustled; and then came a staircase that went up a great way and down a little way, and then one came to a balcony which was certainly in a very rickety state, with long cracks and great holes; but out of all these grew grass and leaves, for the whole balcony, the courtyard, and the wall were overgrown with so much green that it looked like a garden, but it was only a balcony. Here stood old flower pots that had faces with asses' ears; but the flowers grew just

as they chose. In one pot pinks were growing over on all sides; that is to say, the green stalks, sprout upon sprout, and they said quite plainly, "The air has caressed me and the sun has kissed me, and promised me a little flower for next Sunday, a little flower next Sunday!"

And then they came to a room where the walls were covered with pig skin, and golden flowers had been stamped on the leather.

"Flowers fade fast.
But pig-skin will last,"

said the walls. And there stood chairs with quite high backs, with carved work and elbows on each side.

"Sit down!" said they. "Oh, how it cracks inside me! Now I shall be sure to have the gout, like the old cupboard. Gout in my back, ugh!"

And then the little boy came to the room where the old man sat.

"Thank you for the Tin Soldier, my little friend," said the old man, "and thank you for coming over to me."

"Thanks! thanks!" or "Crick! crack!" said all the furniture; there were so many pieces that they almost stood in each other's way to see the little boy.

And in the middle, on the wall, hung a picture, a beautiful lady, young and cheerful in appearance, but dressed just like people of the old times, with powder in her hair and skirts that stuck out stiffly. She said neither thanks nor crack, but looked down upon the little boy with her mild eyes; and he at once asked the old man:

"Where did you get her from?"

"From the dealer opposite," replied the old man. "Many pictures are always hanging there. No one knew them or troubled himself about them, for they are all buried. But many years ago I knew this lady, and now she's been dead and gone for half a century."

And under the picture hung, behind glass, a nosegay of withered flowers; they were certainly also half a century old—at least they looked it; and the pendulum of the great clock went to and fro, and the hands turned round and everything in the room grew older still, but no one noticed it.

"They say at home," said the little boy, "that you are always terribly solitary."

"Oh," answered the old man, "old thoughts come, with all that they bring, to visit me; and now you are coming, too, I'm very well off."

And then he took from a shelf a book with pictures; there were long processions of wonderful coaches, such as one never sees at the present day, soldiers like the knave of clubs, and citizens with waving flags. The tailors had a flag with shears on it held by two lions, and the shoemakers a flag without boots, but with an eagle that had two heads; for among the shoemakers everything must be so arranged that they can say, "There's a pair." Yes, that was a picture book! And the old man went into the other room, to fetch preserves, and apples, and nuts. It was really glorious in that old house.

"I can't stand it!" said the Tin Soldier, who stood upon the shelf. "It is terribly lonely and dull here. When a person has been accustomed to family life, one cannot get accustomed to their existence here. I cannot stand it! The day is long enough, but the evening is longer still! Here it is not at all like in your house opposite, where your father and mother were always conversing cheerfully together, and you and all the other dear children made a famous noise. How solitary it is here at the old man's! Do you think he gets any kisses? Do you think he gets friendly looks, or a Christmas tree? He'll get nothing but a grave! I cannot stand it!"

"You must not look at it from the sorrowful side," said the little boy. "To me all appears remarkably pretty, and all the old thoughts, with all they bring with them, come to visit here."

"Yes, but I don't see them, and don't know them," objected the Tin Soldier. "I can't bear it!"

"You must bear it," said the little boy.

And the old man came with the pleasantest face and with the best of preserved fruits and apples and nuts; and then the little boy thought no more of the Tin Soldier. Happy and delighted, the youngster went home; and days went by, weeks went by, and there was much nodding from the boy's home across to the old house and back; and then the little boy went over there again.

And the carved trumpeters blew, "Tan-ta-ra-ra! tan-ta-ra-ra! there's the little boy, tan-ta-ra-ra!" and the swords and armor on the old pictures rattled, and the silken dresses rustled, and the leather told tales, and the old chairs had the gout in their backs. Ugh! it was just like the first time, for over there one day or one hour was just like another.

"I can't stand it!" said the Tin Soldier. "I've wept tears of tin. It's too dreamy here. I had rather go to war and lose my arms and legs; at any rate, that's a change. I cannot stand it! Now I know what it means to have a visit from one's old thoughts, and all they bring with them. I've had visits from my own, and you may believe me, that's no pleasure in the long run. I was very nearly jumping down from the shelf. I could see you all in the house opposite as plainly as if you had been here. It was Sunday morning, and you children were all standing round the table singing the psalm you sing every morning. You were standing reverently, with folded hands, and your father and mother were just as piously disposed; then the door opened, and your little sister Maria, who is not two years old yet and who always dances when she hears music or singing, of whatever description they may be, was brought in. She was not to do it, but she immediately began to dance, though she could not get into right time, for the music was too slow, so she first stood on one leg and bent her head quite over in front, but it was not long enough. You all stood very quietly, though that was rather difficult; but I laughed inwardly, and so I fell down from the table and got a bruise, which I have still; for it was not right of one to laugh. But all this, and all the rest that I have experienced, now passes by my inward vision, and those must be the old thoughts with everything they bring with them. Tell me, do you still sing on Sunday? Tell me something about little Maria. And how is my comrade and brother Tin Soldier? Yes, he must be very happy. I can't stand it!"

"You have been given away," said the little boy. "You must stay where you are. Don't you see that?"

And the old man came with a box in which many things were to be seen; little rouge-pots and scent-boxes; and old cards so large and so richly gilt as one never sees them in these days; and many little boxes were opened; likewise the piano, and in this were painted landscapes, inside the

lid. But the piano was quite hoarse when the old man played upon it; and then he nodded to the picture that he had bought at the dealer's, and then the old man's eyes shone quite brightly.

"I'll go to the war! I'll go to the war!" cried the Tin Soldier as loud as he could; and he threw himself down on the floor.

Where had he gone? The old man searched, the little boy searched, but he was gone, and could not be found.

"I shall find him," said the old man.

But he never found him; the flooring was so open and full of holes, that the Tin Soldier had fallen through a crack, and there he lay, as in an open grave.

And the day passed away, and the little boy went home; and the week passed by, and many weeks passed by. The windows were quite frozen up, and the little boy had to sit and breathe upon the panes, to make a peep-hole to look at the old house; and snow had blown among all the carvings and the inscriptions, and covered the whole staircase, as if no one were in the house at all. And, indeed, there was no one in the house, for the old man had died!

In the evening a carriage stopped at the door, and in that he was laid, in his coffin; he was to rest in a family vault in the country. So he was carried away; but no one followed him on his last journey, for all his friends were dead. And the little boy kissed his hand after the coffin as it rolled away.

A few days later, and there was an auction in the old house; and the little boy saw from his window how the old knights and ladies, the flower pots with the long ears, the chairs and the cupboards were carried away. One was taken here, and then there; her portrait, that had been bought by the dealer, went back into his shop, and there it was hung, for no one cared for the old picture.

In the spring the house itself was pulled down, for the people said it was old rubbish. One could look from the street straight into the room with the leather wall-covering, which was taken down, ragged and torn; and the green of the balcony hung straggling over the beams, that threatened to fall in altogether. And now a clearance was made.

"That does good!" said a neighbor.

And a capital house was built, with large windows and

smooth white walls; but in front of the place, where the old house had really stood, a little garden was planted, and by the neighbor's wall tall vine shoots clambered up. In front of the garden was placed a great iron railing with an iron door; and it had a stately look. The people stepped in front, and looked through. And the sparrows sat down in dozens upon the vine branches, and chattered all at once as loud as they could; but not about the old house, for they could not remember that, for many years had gone by—so many, that the little boy had grown to be a man, a thorough man, whose parents rejoiced in him. And he had just married, and was come with his wife to live in the house, in front of which was the garden; and here he stood next to her while she planted a field flower which she considered very pretty; she planted it with her little hand, pressing the earth close round it with her fingers. "Ah, what was that?" She pricked herself. Out of the soft earth something pointed was sticking up. Only think! that was the Tin Soldier, the same that had been lost up in the old man's room, and had been hidden among old wood and rubbish for a long time, and had lain in the ground many a year. And the young wife first dried the Soldier in a green leaf, and then with her fine handkerchief, that smelt so deliciously. And the Tin Soldier felt as if he were waking from a fainting fit.

"Let me see him," said the young man. And then he smiled and shook his head. "Yes, it can scarcely be the same; but it reminds me of an affair with a Tin Soldier which I had when I was a little boy."

And then he told his wife about the old house, and the old man, and of the Tin Soldier he had sent across to the old man whom he had thought so lonely; and the tears came into the young wife's eyes for the old house and the old man.

"It is possible, after all, that it may be the same Tin Soldier," said she. "I will take care of him, and remember what you have told me; but you must show me the old man's grave."

"I don't know where that is," replied he, "and no one knows it. All his friends were dead; none tended his grave, and I was but a little boy."

"Ah, how terribly lonely he must have been!" said she.

"Yes, horribly lonely," said the Tin Soldier; "but it is glorious not to be forgotten."

"Glorious!" repeated a voice close to them.

But nobody except the Tin Soldier perceived that it came from a rag of the pig's leather hangings, which was now devoid of all gilding. It looked like wet earth, but yet it had an opinion, which it expressed thus:

"Gilding fades fast,
Pig-skin will last!"

But the Tin Soldier did not believe that.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

The biggest leaf here in the country is certainly the burdock leaf. Put one in front of your waist and it's just like an apron, and if you lay it upon your head it is almost as good as an umbrella, for it is quite remarkably large. A burdock never grows alone; where there is one tree there are several more. It's splendid to behold! and all this splendor is snail's meat; the great white snails, which the grand people in old times used to have made into fricassees, and when they had eaten them they would say, "H'm, how good that is!" for they had the idea that it tasted delicious. These snails lived on burdock leaves, and that's why burdocks were sown.

Now, there was an old estate, on which people ate snails no longer. The snails had died out, but the burdocks had not. These latter grew and grew in all the walks and on all the beds—there was no stopping them; the place became a complete forest of burdocks. Here and there stood an apple or plum tree; but for this, nobody would have thought a garden had been there. Everything was burdock, and among the burdocks lived the two last ancient Snails.

They did not know themselves how old they were, but they could very well remember that there had been a great many more of them, that they had descended from a foreign family, and that the whole forest had been planted for them and theirs. They had never been away from home, but it

was known to them that something existed in the world called the ducal palace, and that there one was boiled, and one became black, and was laid upon a silver dish; but what was done afterward they did not know. Moreover, they could not imagine what that might be, being boiled and laid upon a silver dish; but it was stated to be fine, and particularly grand! Neither the cockchafer, nor the toad, nor the earthworm, whom they questioned about it, could give them any information, for none of their own kind had ever been boiled and laid on silver dishes.

The old white Snails were the grandest in the world; they knew that! The forest was there for their sake, and the ducal palace, too, so that they might be boiled and laid on silver dishes.

They led a very retired and happy life, and as they themselves were childless, they had adopted a little common Snail, which they brought up as their own child. But the little thing would not grow, for it was only a common Snail, though the old people, and particularly the mother, declared one could easily see how he grew. And when the father could not see it, she requested him to feel the little Snail's shell, and he felt it, and acknowledged that she was right.

One day it rained very hard.

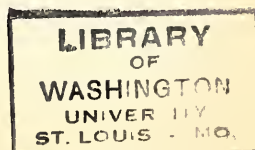
"Listen, how it's drumming on the burdock leaves, rum-dum-dum! rum-dum-dum!" said the Father Snail.

"That's what I call drops," said the mother. "It's coming straight down the stalks. "You'll see it will be wet here directly. I'm only glad that we have our good houses, and that the little one has his own. There has been more done for us than for any other creature; one can see very plainly that we are the grand folks of the world! We have houses from our birth, and the burdock forest has been planted for us; I should like to know how far it extends, and what lies beyond it."

"There's nothing," said the Father Snail, "that can be better than here at home; I have nothing at all to wish for."

"Yes," said the mother, "I should like to be taken to the ducal palace, and be boiled and laid upon a silver dish; that has been done to all our ancestors, and you may be sure it's quite a distinguished honor."

"The ducal palace has perhaps fallen in," said the Father Snail, "or the forest of burdocks may have grown over it, so



that the people can't get out at all. You need not be in a hurry—but you always hurry so, and the little one is beginning just the same way. Has he not been creeping up that stalk these three days? My head quite aches when I look up at him."

"You must not scold him," said the Mother Snail. "He crawls very deliberately. We shall have much joy in him; and we old people have nothing else to live for. But have you ever thought where we shall get a wife for him? Don't you think that farther in the wood there may be some more of our kind?"

"There may be black snails there, I think," said the old man, "black snails without houses! but they're too vulgar. And they're conceited, for all that. But we can give the commission to the Ants; they run to and fro, as if they had business; they're sure to know of a wife for our young gentleman."

"I certainly know the most beautiful of brides," said one of the Ants; "but I fear she would not do, for she is the Queen!"

"That does not matter," said the two old Snails. "Has she a house?"

"She has a castle!" replied the Ant. "The most beautiful ant's castle, with seven hundred passages."

"Thank you," said the Mother Snail; "our boy shall not go into an ant hill. If you know of nothing better, we'll give the commission to the white Gnats; they fly far about in rain and sunshine, and they know the burdock wood, inside and outside."

"We have a wife for him," said the Gnats. "A hundred man-steps from here a little Snail with a house is sitting on a gooseberry bush; she is quite alone, and old enough to marry. It's only a hundred man-steps from here."

"Yes, let her come to him," said the old people. "He has a whole burdock forest, and she has only a bush."

And so they brought the little maiden Snail. Eight days passed before she arrived, but that was the rare circumstance about it, for by this one could see that she was of the right kind.

And then they had a wedding. Six Glowworms lighted as well as they could; with this exception it went very quietly, for the old Snail people could not bear feasting and

dissipation. But a capital speech was made by the Mother Snail. The father could not speak, he was so much moved. Then they gave the young couple the whole burdock forest for an inheritance, and said, what they had always said, namely—that it was the best place in the world, and that the young people, if they lived honorably, and increased and multiplied, would some day be taken with their children to the ducal palace, and boiled black, and laid upon a silver dish. And when the speech was finished, the old people crept into their houses and never came out again, for they slept.

The young Snail pair now ruled in the forest, and had a numerous progeny. But as the young ones were never boiled and put into silver dishes, they concluded that the ducal palace had fallen in, and that all the people in the world had died out. And as nobody contradicted them, they must have been right. And the rain fell down upon the burdock leaves to play the drum for them, and the sun shone to color the burdock forest for them; and they were happy, very happy—the whole family was happy, uncommonly happy!

THE ROSE-ELF.

In the midst of the garden grew a rose bush, which was quite covered with roses; and in one of them, the most beautiful of all, there dwelt an elf. He was so tiny that no human eye could see him. Behind every leaf in the rose he had a bedroom. He was as well formed and beautiful as any child could be, and had wings that reached from his shoulders to his feet. Oh, what a fragrance there was in his room! And how clear and bright were the walls! They were made of the pale pink rose leaves.

The whole day he rejoiced in the warm sunshine, flew from flower to flower, danced on the wings of the flying butterfly, and measured how many steps he would have to take to pass along all the roads and cross roads that are marked out on a single hidden leaf. What we call veins on the leaf were to him high and cross roads. Yes, those were long roads for him! Before he had finished his journey the sun went down, for he had begun his work too late!

It became very cold, the dew fell, and the wind blew; now the best thing to be done was to come home. He made what haste he could, but the rose had shut itself up, and he could not get in; not a single rose stood open. The poor little elf was very much frightened. He had never been out at night before; he had always slumbered sweetly and comfortably behind the warm rose leaves. Oh, it certainly would be the death of him.

At the other end of the garden there was, he knew, an arbor of fine honeysuckle. The flowers looked like great painted horns, and he wished to go down into one of them to sleep till the next day.

He flew thither. Silence! Two people were in there—a handsome young man and a young girl. They sat side by side, and wished that they need never part. They loved each other better than a good child loves its father and mother.

“Yet we must part!” said the young man. “Your brother does not like us, therefore he sends me away on an errand so far over mountains and seas. Farewell, my sweet bride, for that you shall be!”

And they kissed each other, and the young girl wept, and gave him a rose. But, before she gave it him, she impressed a kiss so firmly and closely upon it that the flower opened. Then the little elf flew into it, and leaned his head against the delicate, fragrant walls. Here he could plainly hear them say “Farewell! farewell!” and he felt that the rose was placed on the young man’s heart. Oh, how that heart beat! The little elf could not go to sleep, it thumped so.

But not long did the rose rest undisturbed on that breast. The man took it out, and as he went lonely through the wood, he kissed the flower so often and so fervently that the little elf was almost crushed. He could feel through the leaf how the man’s lips burned, and the rose itself had opened, as if under the hottest noonday sun.

Then came another man, gloomy and wicked; he was the bad brother of the pretty maiden. He drew out a sharp knife, and while the other kissed the rose the bad man stabbed him to death, and then, cutting off his head, buried both head and body in the soft earth under the linden tree.

“Now he’s forgotten and gone!” thought the wicked brother; “he will never come back again. He was to have

taken a long journey over mountains and seas. One can easily lose one's life, and he has lost his. He cannot come back again, and my sister dare not ask news of him from me."

Then with his feet he shuffled dry leaves over the loose earth, and went home in the dark night. But he did not go alone, as he thought; the little elf accompanied him. The elf sat in a dry rolled-up linden leaf that had fallen on the wicked man's hair as he dug. The hat was now placed over the leaf, and it was very dark in the hat, and the elf trembled with fear and with anger at the evil deed.

In the morning hour the bad man got home; he took off his hat, and went into his sister's bedroom. There lay the beautiful, blooming girl, dreaming of him whom she loved from her heart, and of whom she now believed that he was going across the mountains and through the forests. And the wicked brother bent over her, and laughed hideously, as only a fiend can laugh. Then the dry leaf fell out of his hair upon the coverlet; but he did not remark it, and he went out to sleep a little himself in the morning hour. But the elf slipped forth from the withered leaf, placed himself in the ear of the sleeping girl, and told her, as in a dream, the dreadful history of the murder; described to her the place where her brother had slain her lover and buried his corpse; told her of the blooming linden tree close by it, and said:

"That you may not think it is only a dream that I have told you, you will find on your bed a withered leaf."

And she found it when she awoke. Oh, what bitter tears she wept! The window stood open the whole day; the little elf could easily get out to the roses and all the other flowers, but he could not find it in his heart to quit the afflicted maiden. In the window stood a plant, a monthly rose bush; he seated himself in one of the flowers, and looked at the poor girl. Her brother often came into the room, and, in spite of his wicked deed, he always seemed cheerful, but she dared not say a word of the grief that was in her heart.

As soon as the night came, she crept out of the house, went to the wood, to the place where the linden tree stood, removed the leaves from the ground, turned up the earth, and immediately found him who had been slain. Oh, how she wept, and prayed that she might die also!

Gladly would she have taken the corpse home with her, but that she could not do so. Then she took the pale head, with the closed eyes, kissed the cold mouth, and shook the earth out of the beautiful hair. "That I will keep," she said. And when she had laid earth upon the dead body she took the head, and a little sprig of the jasmine that bloomed in the wood where he was buried, home with her.

As soon as she came into her room, she brought the greatest flower pot she could find; in this she laid the dead man's head, strewed earth upon it, and then planted the jasmine twig in the pot.

"Farewell! farewell!" whispered the little elf; he could endure it no longer to see all this pain, and therefore flew out to his rose in the garden. But the rose was faded; only a few pale leaves clung to the wild bush.

"Alas! how soon everything good and beautiful passes away!" sighed the elf.

At last he found another rose, and this became his house; behind its delicate, fragrant leaves he could hide himself and dwell.

Every morning he flew to the window of the poor girl, and she was always standing weeping by the flower pot. The bitter tears fell upon the jasmine spray, and every day, as the girl became paler and paler, the twig stood there fresher and greener, and one shoot after another sprouted forth, little white buds burst out, and these she kissed. But the bad brother scolded his sister, and asked if she had gone mad. He could not bear it, and could not imagine why she was always weeping over the flower-pot. He did not know what closed eyes were there, what red lips had there faded into earth. And she bowed her head upon the flower pot, and the little elf of the rose bush found her slumbering there. Then he seated himself in her ear, told her of the evening in the arbor, of the fragrance of the rose, and the love of the elves. And she dreamed a marvelously sweet dream, and while she dreamed her life passed away. She had died a quiet death, and she was in heaven, with him whom she loved.

And the jasmine opened its great white bells. They smelt quite peculiarly sweet; it could not weep in any other way over the dead one.

But the wicked brother looked at the beautiful blooming plant, and took it for himself as an inheritance, and put it in his sleeping room, close by his bed, for it was glorious to look upon, and its fragrance was sweet and lovely. The little Rose-elf followed, and went from flower to flower—for in each dwelt a little soul—and told of the murdered young man, whose head was now earth beneath the earth, and told of the evil brother and of the poor sister.

“We know it!” said each soul in the flowers, “we know it! have we not sprung from the eyes and lips of the murdered man? We know it! we know it!”

And then they nodded in a strange fashion with their heads.

The Rose-elf could not at all understand how they could be so quiet, and he flew out to the bees that were gathering honey, and told them the story of the wicked brother. And the bees told it to their Queen, and the Queen commanded that they should all kill the murderer next morning. But in the night—it was the first night that followed upon the sister's death—when the brother was sleeping in his bed, close to the fragrant jasmine, each flower opened, and invisible, but armed with poisonous spears, the flower-souls came out and seated themselves in his ear, and told him bad dreams, and then flew across his lips and pricked his tongue with the poisonous spears.

“Now we have avenged the dead man!” they said, and flew back into the jasmine's white bells.

When the morning came and the windows of the bed-chamber were opened, the Rose-elf and the Queen Bee and the whole swarm of bees rushed in to kill him.

But he was dead already. People stood around his bed, and said, “The scent of the jasmine has killed him!” Then the Rose-elf understood the revenge of the flowers, and told it to the Queen and to the bees, and the Queen hummed with the whole swarm around the flower pot. The bees were not to be driven away. Then a man carried away the flower pot, and one of the bees stung him in the hand, so that he let the pot fall, and it broke in pieces.

Then they beheld the whitened skull, and knew that the dead man on the bed was a murderer.

And the Queen Bee hummed in the air, and sang of the

revenge of the bees, and of the Rose-elf, and said that behind the smallest leaf there dwells One who can bring the evil to light, and repay it.

THE SHADOW.

In the hot countries the sun burns very strongly; there the people become quite mahogany brown, and in the very hottest countries they are even burned into negroes. But this time it was only to the hot countries that a learned man out of the cold regions had come. He thought he could roam about there just as he had been accustomed to do at home; but he soon altered his opinion. He and all sensible people had to remain at home, where the window shutters and doors were shut all day long, and it looked as if all the inmates were asleep or had gone out. The narrow street, with the high houses, in which he lived, was, however, built in such a way that the sun shone upon it from morning till evening; it was really quite unbearable! The learned man from the cold regions was a young man and a clever man; it seemed to him as if he was sitting in a glowing oven that exhausted him greatly, and he became quite thin; even his Shadow shriveled up and became much smaller than it had been at home; the sun even took the Shadow away, and it did not return till the evening when the sun went down. It was really a pleasure to see this. So soon as a light was brought into the room the Shadow stretched itself quite up the wall, farther even than the ceiling, so tall did it make itself; it was obliged to stretch to get strength again. The learned man went out into the balcony to stretch himself, and so soon as the stars came out in the beautiful blue sky, he felt himself reviving. On all the balconies in the streets—and in the hot countries there is a balcony to every window—young people now appeared, for one must breathe fresh air, even if one has got used to becoming mahogany brown; then it became lively above and below; the tinkers and tailors—by which we mean all kinds of people—sat below in the street; then tables and chairs were brought out, and candles burned, yes, more than a thousand candles; one talked and then sang, and the people walked to and fro;

carriages drove past, mules trotted, "Kling-ling-ling!" for they had bells on their harness; dead people were buried with solemn songs; the church bells rang, and it was indeed very lively in the street. Only in one house, just opposite to that in which the learned man dwelt, it was quite quiet, and yet somebody lived there, for there were flowers upon the balcony, blooming beautifully in the hot sun, and they could not have done this if they had not been watered, so that someone must have watered them; therefore, there must be people in that house. Toward evening the door was half opened, but it was dark, at least in the front room; farther back, in the interior, music was heard. The strange learned man thought this music very lovely, but it was quite possible that he only imagined this, for out there in the hot countries he found everything exquisite, if only there had been no sun. The stranger's landlord said that he did not know who had taken the opposite house—one saw nobody there, and so far as the music was concerned, it seemed very monotonous to him.

"It was just," he said, "as if someone sat there, always practicing a piece that he could not manage—always the same piece. He seemed to say, 'I shall manage it, after all!' but he did not manage it, however long he played."

Will the stranger awake at night? He slept with the balcony door open; the wind lifted up the curtain before it, and he fancied that a wonderful radiance came from the balcony of the house opposite; all the flowers appeared like flames of the most gorgeous colors, and in the midst, among the flowers, stood a beautiful slender maiden; it seemed as if a radiance came from her also. His eyes were quite dazzled; but he had only opened them too wide just when he awoke out of his sleep. With one leap he was out of bed; quite quietly he crept behind the curtain; but the maiden was gone, the splendor was gone, the flowers gleamed no longer, but stood there as beautiful as ever. The door was ajar, and from within sounded music, so lovely, so charming, that one fell into sweet thought at the sound. It was just like magic work.

But who lived there? Where was the real entrance? for toward the street and toward the lane at the side the whole ground floor was shop by shop, and the people could not always run through there.

One evening the stranger sat upon his balcony; in the room just behind him a light was burning, and so it was quite natural that his Shadow fell upon the wall of the opposite house; yes, it sat just among the flowers on the balcony, and when the stranger moved his Shadow moved, too.

"I think my Shadow is the only living thing we see yonder," said the learned man. "Look how gracefully it sits among the flowers. The door is only ajar, but the Shadow ought to be sensible enough to walk in and look round, and then come back and tell me what it has seen."

"Yes, you would thus make yourself very useful," said he, as if in sport. "Be so good as to slip in. Now, will you go?" And then he nodded at the Shadow, and the Shadow nodded back at him. "Now go, but don't stay away altogether."

And the stranger stood up, and the Shadow on the balcony opposite stood up, too, and the stranger moved round, and if anyone had noticed closely he would have remarked how the Shadow went away in the same moment, straight through the half-opened door of the opposite house, as the stranger returned to his room and let the curtain fall.

Next morning the learned man went out to drink coffee and read the papers.

"What is this?" said he, when he came out into the sunshine. "I have no Shadow! So it really went away yesterday evening, and did not come back; that's very tiresome."

And that fretted him, but not so much because the Shadow was gone as because he knew that there was a story of a man without a shadow. All the people in the house knew this story, and if the learned man came home and told his own history, they would say that it was only an imitation, and he did not choose them to say that of him. So he would not speak of it at all, and that was a very sensible idea of his.

In the evening he again went out on his balcony; he had placed the light behind him, for he knew that a shadow always wants its master for a screen, but he could not coax it forth. He made himself little, he made himself long, but there was no shadow, and no shadow came. He said, "Here, here!" but that did no good.

That was vexatious, but in the warm countries all things

grow very quickly, and after the lapse of a week he remarked to his great joy that a new shadow was growing out of his legs when he went into the sunshine, so that the root must have remained behind. After three weeks he had quite a respectable shadow, which, when he started on his return to the North, grew more and more, so that at last it was so long and great that he could very well have parted with half of it.

When the learned man got home he wrote books about what is true in the world, and what is good, and what is pretty; and days went by, and years went by, many years.

He was one evening sitting in his room when there came a little quiet knock at the door. "Come in!" said he; but nobody came. Then he opened the door, and there stood before him such a remarkably thin man that he felt quite uncomfortable. This man was, however, very respectably dressed; he looked like a man of standing.

"Whom have I the honor to address?" asked the professor.

"Ah!" replied the genteel man, "I thought you would not know me; I have become so much a body that I have got real flesh and clothes. You never thought to see me in such a condition. Don't you know your old Shadow? You certainly never thought I would come again. Things have gone remarkably well with me since I was with you last. I've become rich in every respect; if I want to buy myself free from servitude, I can do it!"

And he rattled a number of valuable charms, which hung by his watch, and put his hand upon the thick gold chain which he wore round his neck; and how the diamond rings glittered on his fingers! and everything was real!

"No, I cannot regain my self-possession at all!" said the learned man. "What's the meaning of all this?"

"Nothing common," said the Shadow. "But you yourself don't belong to common folks; and I have, as you very well know, trodden in your footsteps from my childhood upward. So soon as I found that I was experienced enough to find my way through the world alone, I went away. I am in the most brilliant circumstances; but I was seized with a kind of longing to see you once more before you die, and I wanted to see these regions once more, for one always holds by one's fatherland. I know that you have got another

shadow; have I anything to pay to it, or to you? You have only to tell me."

"Is it really you?" said the learned man. "Why, this is wonderful! I should never have thought that I should ever meet my old shadow as a man!"

"Only tell me what I have to pay," said the Shadow, "for I don't like to be in anyone's debt."

"How can you talk in that way?" said the learned man. "Of what debt can there be a question here? You are as free as anyone. I am exceedingly pleased at your good fortune. Sit down, old friend, and tell me a little how it has happened, and what you saw in the warm countries, and in the house opposite ours."

"Yes, that I will tell you," said the Shadow; and it sat down. "But then you must promise me never to tell anyone in this town, when you meet me, that I have been your shadow. I have the intention of engaging myself to be married; I can do more than support a family."

"Be quite easy," replied the learned man; "I will tell nobody who you really are. Here's my hand. I promise it, and my word's as good as my bond."

"A Shadow's word in return!" said the Shadow, for he was obliged to talk in that way. But, by the way, it was quite wonderful how complete a man he had become. He was dressed all in black, and wore the very finest black cloth, polished boots, and a hat that could be crushed together till it was nothing but crown and rim, besides what we have already noticed of him, namely, the charms, the gold neck-chain, and the diamond rings. The Shadow was indeed wonderfully well clothed; and it was just this that made a complete man of him.

"Now I will tell you," said the Shadow; and then he put down his polished boots as firmly as he could on the arm of the learned man's new shadow, that lay like a poodle dog at his feet. This was done perhaps from pride, perhaps so that the new shadow might stick to his feet; but the prostrate shadow remained quite quiet, so that it might listen well, for it wanted to know how one could get free and work up to be one's own master.

"Do you know who lived in the house opposite to us?" asked the Shadow. "That was the most glorious of all; it was Poetry! I was there for three weeks, and that was just

as if one had lived there a thousand years, and could read all that has been written and composed. For this I say, and it is truth, I have seen everything, and I know everything!"

"Poetry!" cried the learned man. "Yes, she often lives as a hermit in great cities. Poetry? Yes, I myself saw her for one single brief moment, but sleep was heavy on my eyes; she stood on the balcony, gleaming as the Northern Light gleams, flowers with living flames. Tell me! tell me! You were upon the balcony. You went through the door, and then——"

"Then I was in the anteroom," said the Shadow. "You sat opposite, and were always looking across at the anteroom. There was no light; a kind of semi-obscurity reigned there; but one door after another in a whole row of halls and rooms stood open, and there it was light; and the mass of light would have killed me if I had got as far as to where the maiden sat. But I was deliberate, I took my time; and that's what one must do."

"And what didst thou see then?" asked the learned man.

"I saw everything, and I will tell you what; but—it is really not pride on my part—as a free man, and with the acquirements I possess, besides my good position and my remarkable fortune, I wish you would say you to me."

"I beg your pardon," said the learned man. "This thou is an old habit, and old habits are difficult to alter. You are perfectly right, and I will remember it. But now tell me everything you saw."

"Everything," said the Shadow; "for I saw everything, and I know everything."

"How did things look in the inner room?" asked the learned man. "Was it there as in a cool grave? Was it there like as in a holy temple? Were the chambers like the starry sky, when one stands on the high mountains?"

"Everything was there," said the Shadow. "I was certainly not quite inside; I remained in the front room, in the half-darkness; but I stood there remarkably well. I saw everything and know everything. I have been in the anteroom at the Court of Poetry."

"But what did you see? Did all the gods of antiquity march through the halls? Did the old heroes fight there? Did lovely children play there, and relate their dreams?"

"I tell you that I have been there, and so you will easily understand that I saw everything that was to be seen. If you had got there you would not have remained a man; but I became one, and at the same time I learned to understand my inner being and the relation in which I stood to Poetry. Yes, when I was with you I did not think of these things; but you know that whenever the sun rises or sets I am wonderfully great. In the moonshine I was almost more noticeable than you yourself. I did not then understand my inward being; in the anteroom it was revealed to me. I became a man! I came out ripe. But you were no longer in the warm countries. I was ashamed to go about as a man in the state I was then in; I required boots, clothes, and all the human varnish by which a man is known. I hid myself; yes, I can confide a secret to you—you will not put it into a book. I hid myself under the cake-woman's gown; the woman had no idea how much she concealed. Only in the evening did I go out; I ran about the streets by moonlight; I stretched myself quite long up the wall; that tickled my back quite agreeably. I ran up and down, looked through the highest windows into the halls and through the roof, where nobody could see, and I saw what nobody saw and what nobody ought to see. On the whole it is a bad world; I should not like to be a man if I were not allowed to be of some consequence. I saw the most incomprehensible things going on among men, and women, and parents, and 'dear incomparable children.' I saw what no one else knows, but what they all would be very glad to know, namely, bad goings-on at their neighbors'. If I had written a newspaper, how it would have been read! But I wrote directly to the persons interested, and there was terror in every town to which I came. They were so afraid of me that they were remarkably fond of me. The professor made me a professor; the tailor gave me new clothes (I am well provided); the coining superintendent coined money for me; the women declared I was handsome, and thus I became the man I am. And now, farewell! Here is my card; I live on the sunny side, and am always at home in rainy weather."

And the shadow went away.

"That was very remarkable," said the learned man.

Years and days passed by and the shadow came again.

"How goes it?" he asked.

"Ah!" said the learned man, "I'm writing about the true, the good, and the beautiful; but nobody cares to hear of anything of the kind; I am quite in despair, for I take that to heart."

"That I do not," said the Shadow. "I'm becoming fat and hearty, and that's what one must try to become. You don't understand the world, and you're getting ill. You must travel. I'll make a journey this summer; will you go too? I should like to have a traveling companion; will you go with me as my shadow? I shall be very happy to take you, and I'll pay the expenses."

"I suppose you travel very far?" said the learned man.

"As you take it," replied the Shadow. "A journey will do you a great deal of good. Will you be my shadow?—then you shall have everything on the journey for nothing."

"That's too strong!" said the learned man.

"But it's the way of the world," said the Shadow, "and so it will remain." And he went away.

The learned man was not at all fortunate. Sorrow and care pursued him, and what he said of the true and the good and the beautiful was as little valued by most people as a nutmeg would be by a cow. At last he became quite ill.

"You really look like a shadow!" people said; and a shudder ran through him at these words, for he attached a peculiar meaning to them.

"You must go to a watering-place!" said the Shadow, who came to pay him a visit. "There's no other help for you. I'll take you with me for the sake of old acquaintance. I'll pay the expenses of the journey, and you shall make a description of it, and shorten time for me on the way. I want to visit a watering-place. My beard doesn't grow quite as it should, and that is a kind of illness; and a beard I must have. Now be reasonable and accept my proposal; we shall travel like comrades."

And they traveled. The Shadow was master now, and the master was shadow; they drove together, they rode together, and walked side by side, and before and behind each other just as the sun happened to stand. The Shadow always knew when to take the place of honor. The learned man did not particularly notice this, for he had a very good heart, and was moreover particularly mild and friendly. Then one day the master said to the Shadow:

"As we have in this way become traveling companions, and have also from childhood's days grown up with one another, shall we not drink brotherhood? That sounds more confidential."

"You're saying a thing there," said the Shadow, who was now really the master, "that is said in a very kind and straightforward way. I will be just as kind and straightforward. You who are a learned gentleman, know very well how wonderful nature is. There are some men who cannot bear to smell brown paper, they become sick at it; others shudder to the marrow of the bones if one scratches with a nail upon a pane of glass; and I for my part have a similar feeling when anyone says 'thou' to me; I feel myself, as I did in my first position with you, oppressed by it. You see that this is a feeling, not pride. I cannot let you say 'thou'* to me, but I will gladly say 'thou' to you; and thus your wish will be at any rate partly fulfilled."

And now the Shadow addressed his former master as "thou."

"That's rather strong," said the latter, "that I am to say 'you,' while he says 'thou.'" But he was obliged to submit to it.

They came to a bathing-place, where many strangers were, and among them a beautiful young Princess, who had this disease, that she saw too sharply, which was very disquieting. She at once saw that the new arrival was a very different personage from all the rest.

"They say he is here to get his beard to grow; but I see the real reason—he can't throw a shadow."

She had now become inquisitive, and therefore she at once began a conversation with the strange gentleman on the promenade. As a Princess, she was not obliged to use much ceremony, therefore she said outright to him at once:

"Your illness consists in this, that you can't throw a shadow."

"Your Royal Highness must be much better," replied the Shadow. "I know your illness consists in this, that you see too sharply; but you have got the better of that. I have a

*On the Continent, people who have drunk "brotherhood" address each other as "thou," in preference to the more ceremonious "you."

very unusual shadow; don't you see the person who always accompanies me? Other people have a common shadow, but I don't love what is common. One often gives one's servants finer cloth for their liveries than one wears oneself, and so I have let my shadow deck himself out like a separate person; yes, you see I have often given him a shadow of his own. That costs very much, but I like to have something peculiar."

"How!" said the Princess, "can I really have been cured? This is the best bathing-place in existence; water has wonderful power nowadays. But I'm not going away from here yet, for now it begins to be amusing. The foreign Prince—for he must be a Prince—pleases me remarkably well. I only hope his beard won't grow, for if it does he'll go away."

That evening the Princess and the Shadow danced together in the great ball-room. She was light, but he was still lighter; never had she seen such a dancer. She told him from what country she came, and he knew the country—he had been there, but just when she had been absent. He had looked through the windows of her castle, from below as well as from above; he had learned many circumstances, and could therefore make allusions, and give replies to the Princess, at which she marveled greatly. She thought he must be the cleverest man in all the world, and was inspired with great respect for all his knowledge. And when she danced with him again, she fell in love with him, and the Shadow noticed that particularly, for she looked him almost through and through with her eyes. They danced together once more, and she was nearly telling him, but she was discreet; she thought of her country, and her kingdom, and of the many people over whom she was to rule.

"He is a clever man," she said to herself, "and that is well, and he dances capitally, and that is well, too; but has he well-grounded knowledge? That is just as important, and he must be examined."

And she immediately put such a difficult question to him, that she could not have answered it herself; and the Shadow made a wry face.

"You cannot answer me that," said the Princess.

"I learned that in my childhood," replied the Shadow,

"and I believe my very shadow, standing yonder by the door, could answer it."

"Your shadow!" cried the Princess; "that would be very remarkable."

"I do not assert as quite certain that he can do so," said the Shadow, "but I am almost inclined to believe it. But your Royal Highness will allow me to remind you that he is so proud of passing for a man, that, if he is in a good humor, and he should be able to answer rightly, he must be treated just like a man."

"I like that," said the Princess.

And now she went to the learned man at the door; and she spoke with him of sun and moon, of the green forests, and of people near and far off; and the learned man answered very cleverly and very well.

"What a man that must be, who has such a clever shadow!" she thought. "It would be a real blessing for my country and for my people if I chose him; and I'll do it!"

And they soon struck a bargain—the Princess and the Shadow; but no one was to know anything of it till she had returned to her kingdom.

"No one—not even my shadow," said the Shadow; and for this he had especial reasons.

And they came to the country where the Princess ruled, and where was her home.

"Listen, my friend," said the Shadow to the learned man. "Now I am as lucky and powerful as anyone can become. I'll do something particular for you. You shall live with me in my palace, drive with me in the royal carriage, and have a hundred thousand dollars a year; but you must let yourself be called a shadow by everyone, and may never say that you were once a man; and once a year, when I sit on the balcony and show myself, you must lie at my feet as it becomes my shadow to do. For I tell you I'm going to marry the Princess, and this evening the wedding will be held."

"Now, that's too strong!" said the learned man. "I won't do it; I won't have it. That would be cheating the whole country and the Princess too. I'll tell everything—that I'm the man and you are the Shadow, and that you only wear men's clothes."

"No one would believe that," said the Shadow. "Be reasonable, or I'll call the watch."

"I'll go straight to the Princess," said the learned man.

"But I'll go first," said the Shadow; "and you shall go to prison."

And that was so; for the sentinels obeyed him of whom they knew that he was to marry the Princess.

"You tremble," said the Princess, when the Shadow came to her. "Has anything happened? You must not be ill to-day, when we are to have a wedding."

"I have experienced the most terrible thing that can happen," said the Shadow. "Only think!—such a poor shallow brain cannot bear much—only think!—my shadow has gone mad; he fancies he has become a man, and—only think!—that I am his shadow."

"This is terrible!" said the Princess. "He's locked up, I hope?"

"Certainly. I'm afraid he will never recover."

"Poor shadow!" cried the Princess, "he's very unfortunate. It would really be a good action to deliver him from his little bit of life. And when I think how prone the people are, nowadays, to take the part of the low against the high, it seems to me quite necessary to put him quietly out of the way."

"That's certainly very hard, for he was a faithful servant," said the Shadow; and he pretended to sigh.

"You're a noble character," said the Princess, and she bowed before him.

In the evening the whole town was illuminated, and cannon were fired—bang!—and the soldiers presented arms. That was a wedding! The Princess and the Shadow stepped out on the balcony to show themselves and receive another cheer.

The learned man heard nothing of all this festivity, for he had already been executed.

THE ANGEL.

Whenever a good child dies, an angel from heaven comes down to earth, and takes the dead child in his arms, spreads out his great white wings, and flies away over all the places the child has loved, and picks quite a hand-full of flowers, which he carries up to the Almighty, that they may bloom in heaven more brightly than on earth. And the Father presses all the flowers to His heart; but He kisses the flower that pleases Him best, and the flower is then endowed with a voice, and can join in the great chorus of praise!

"See"—this is what an angel said, as he carried a dead child up to heaven, and the child heard, as if in a dream, and they went on over the regions of home where the little child had played, and they came through gardens with beautiful flowers—"which of these shall we take with us to plant in heaven?" asked the angel.

Now there stood near them a slender, beautiful rose bush; but a wicked hand had broken the stem, so that all the branches, covered with half-opened buds, were hanging drooping around, quite withered.

"The poor rose bush!" said the child. "Take it, that it may bloom up yonder."

And the angel took it, and kissed the child, and the little one half opened his eyes. They plucked some of the rich flowers, but also took with them the despised buttercup and the wild pansy.

"Now we have flowers," said the child.

And the angel nodded, but he did not yet fly upward to heaven. It was night and quite silent. They remained in the great city; they floated about there in a small street, where lay whole heaps of straw, ashes, and sweepings, for it had been removal-day. There lay fragments of plates, bits of plaster, rags, and old hats, and all this did not look well. And the angel pointed amid all this confusion to a few fragments of a flower-pot, and to a lump of earth which had fallen out, and which was kept together by the roots of a great dried field flower, which was of no use, and had therefore been thrown out into the street.

"We will take that with us," said the angel. "I will tell you why, as we fly onward."

"Down yonder in the narrow lane, in the low cellar, lived a poor sick boy; from his childhood he had been bedridden. When he was at his best he could go up and down the room a few times, leaning on crutches; that was the utmost he could do. For a few days in summer the sunbeams would penetrate for a few hours to the ground of the cellar, and when the poor boy sat there and the sun shone on him, and he looked at the red blood in his three fingers, as he held them up before his face, he would say, 'Yes, to-day he has been out.' He knew the forest with its beautiful vernal green only from the fact that the neighbor's son brought him the first green branch of a beech tree, and he held that up over his head, and dreamed he was in the beech wood where the sun shone and the birds sang. On a spring day the neighbor's boy also brought him field flowers, and among these was, by chance, one to which the root was hanging; and so it was planted in a flower-pot, and placed by the bed, close to the window. And the flower had been planted by a fortunate hand; and it grew, threw out new shoots, and bore flowers every year. It became as a splendid flower garden to the sickly boy—his little treasure here on earth. He watered it, and tended it, and took care that it had the benefit of every ray of sunlight, down to the last that struggled in through the narrow window; and the flower itself was woven into his dreams, for it grew for him and gladdened his eyes, and spread its fragrance about him; and toward it he turned in death when the Father called him. He has now been with the Almighty for a year; for a year the flower has stood forgotten in the window, and is withered; and thus, at the removal, it has been thrown out into the dust of the street. And this is the flower, the poor withered flower, which we have taken into our nosegay; for this flower has given more joy than the richest flower in a Queen's garden."

"But how do you know all this?" asked the child which the angel was carrying to heaven.

"I know it," said the angel, "for I myself was that little boy who walked on crutches! I know my flower well!"

And the child opened his eyes and looked into the glorious, happy face of the angel; and at the same moment they entered the regions where there is peace and joy. And the

Father pressed the dead child to His bosom, and then it received wings like the angel, and flew hand in hand with him. And the Almighty pressed all the flowers to His heart; but He kissed the dry withered field flower, and it received a voice and sang with all the angels hovering around—some near, and some in wider circles, and some in infinite distance, but all equally happy. And they all sang, little and great, the good, happy child, and the poor field flower that had lain there withered, thrown among the dust, in the rubbish of the removal-day, in the narrow dark lane.

TWELVE BY THE MAIL

It was bitterly cold! the sky gleamed with stars, and not a breeze was stirring.

Bump! an old pot was thrown at the neighbor's house door. Bang! bang went the gun, for they were welcoming the New Year. It was New Year's Eve! The church clock was striking twelve.

Tan-ta-ra-ra! the mail came lumbering up. The great carriage stopped at the gate of the town. There were twelve persons in it; all the places were taken.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" sang the people in the houses of the town, for the New Year was being welcomed, and as the clock struck they stood up with the filled glass in their hand, to drink success to the new comer.

"Happy New Year!" was the cry. "A pretty wife, plenty of money, and no sorrow or care!"

This wish was passed round, and then glasses were clashed together till they rang again, and in front of the town gate the post-carriage stopped with the strange guests, the twelve travelers.

And who were these strangers? Each of them had his passport and his luggage with him; they even brought presents for me and for you, and for all the people of the little town. Who are they? What did they want? and what did they bring with them?

"Good-morning!" they cried to the sentry at the town gate.

"Good-morning!" replied the sentry, for the clock struck

twelve. "Your name and profession?" the sentry inquired of the one who alighted first from the carriage.

"See yourself, in the passport," replied the man. "I am myself!" And a capital fellow he looked, arrayed in a bear skin and fur boots. "I am the man on whom many persons fix their hopes. Come to me to-morrow, and I'll give you a New Year's present. I throw pence and dollars among the people, I even give balls, thirty-one balls; but I cannot devote more than thirty-one nights to this. My ships are frozen in, but in my office it is warm and comfortable. I'm a merchant. My name is January, and I only carry accounts with me."

Now the second alighted. He was a merry companion; he was a theater director, manager of masque balls, and all the amusements one can imagine. His luggage consisted of a great tub.

"We'll dance the cat out of the tub at carnival time," said he. "I'll prepare a merry tune for you and for myself, too. I have not a very long time to live—the shortest, in fact, of my whole family, for I only become twenty-eight days old. Sometimes they pop me in an extra day, but I trouble myself very little about that. Hurrah!"

"You must not shout so!" said the sentry.

"Certainly, I may shout!" retorted the man. "I'm Prince Carnival, traveling under the name of February."

The third now got out. He looked like Fasting itself, but carried his nose very high, for he was related to the "Forty Knights," and was a weather prophet. But that's not a profitable office, and that's why he praised fasting. In his buttonhole he had a little bunch of violets, but they were very small.

"March! March!" the fourth called after him, and slapped him on the shoulder. "Do you smell nothing? Go quickly into the guard room; there they're drinking punch, your favorite drink! I can smell it already out here. Forward, Master March!"

But it was not true; the speaker only wanted to let him feel the influence of his own name, and make an April fool of him; for with that the fourth began his career in the town. He looked very jovial, did little work, but had the more holidays.

"If it were only a little more steady in the world!" said

he; "but sometimes one is in a good humor, sometimes in a bad one, according to circumstances; now rain, now sunshine. I am a kind of house and office-letting agent, also a manager of funerals. I can laugh or cry, according to circumstances. Here in this box I have my summer wardrobe, but it would be very foolish to put it on. Here I am now! On Sundays I go out walking in shoes and silk stockings, and with a muff!"

After him a lady came out of the carriage. She called herself Miss May. She wore a summer costume and overshoes, a light green dress, and anemones in her hair, and she was so scented with wild thyme that the sentry had to sneeze.

"God bless you! God bless you!" she said, and that was her salutation.

How pretty she was! and she was a singer, not a theater singer nor a ballad singer, but a singer of the woods, as she roamed through the gay green forest, and sang there for her own amusement.

"Now comes the young dame!" said those who were still in the carriage.

And the young dame stepped out, delicate, proud, and pretty. It was easy to see that she was Mistress June, accustomed to be served by drowsy marmots. She gave a great feast on the longest day of the year, that the guests might have time to partake of the many dishes at her table. She, indeed, kept her own carriage; but still she traveled in the mail with the rest, because she wanted to show that she was not high-minded. But she was not without protection; her elder brother July was with her.

He was a plump young fellow, clad in summer garments, with a Panama hat. He had but little baggage with him, because it was cumbersome in the great heat; therefore he had only provided himself with swimming trousers, and those are not much.

Then came the mother herself, Madam August, wholesale dealer in fruit, proprietress of a large number of fishponds, and land cultivator, in a great crinoline; she was fat and hot, could use her hands well, and would herself carry out beer to the workmen in the fields.

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," she said; "that is written in the Book. Afterward come the excur-

sions, dance and playing in the greenwood, and the harvest feasts!"

She was a thorough housewife.

After her, a man came out of the coach, a painter, Mr. Master-colorer September. The forest had to receive him; the leaves were to change their colors, but how beautifully! when he wished it; soon the wood gleamed with red, yellow, and brown. The master whistled like the black magpie, was a quick workman, and wound the brown-green hop plants round his beer-jug. That was an ornament for the jug, and he had a good idea of ornament. There he stood with his color-pot, and that was his whole luggage.

A landed proprietor followed him, one who cared for the plowing and preparing of the land, and also for field sports. Squire October brought his dog and his gun with him, and had nuts in his game-bag. "Crack! crack!" He had much baggage, even an English plow; and he spoke of farming, but one could scarcely hear what he said, for the coughing and gasping of his neighbor.

It was November who coughed so violently as he got out. He was very much plagued by a cold; he was continually having recourse to his pocket-handkerchief, and yet, he said, he was obliged to accompany the servant-girls, and initiate them into their new winter service. He said he should get rid of his cold when he went out wood-cutting, and had to saw and split wood, for he was sawyer-master to the fire-wood guild. He spent his evenings cutting the wooden soles for skates, for he knew, he said, that in a few weeks there would be occasion to use these amusing shoes.

At length appeared the last passenger, old Mother December, with her fire-stool. The old lady was cold, but her eyes glistened like two bright stars. She carried on her arm a flower-pot, in which a little fir tree was growing.

"This tree I will guard and cherish, that it may grow large by Christmas Eve, and may reach from the ground to the ceiling, and may rear itself upward with flaming candles, golden apples, and little carved figures. The fire-stool warms like a stove. I bring the story book out of my pocket and read aloud, so that all the children in the room become quite quiet; but the little figures on the trees become lively, and the little waxen angel on the top spreads out his wings of gold leaf, flies down from his green perch, and kisses

great and small in the room, yes, even the poor children who stand out in the passage and in the street, singing the carol about the Star of Bethlehem."

"Well, now the coach may drive away," said the sentry; "we have the whole twelve. Let the chaise drive up."

"First let all the twelve come in to me," said the captain on duty, "one after the other. The passports I will keep here. Each of them is available for a month; when that has passed, I shall write their behavior on each passport. Mr. January, have the goodness to come here."

And Mr. January stepped forward.

"When a year is passed I think I shall be able to tell you what the twelve have brought to me, and to you, and to all of us. Now I do not know it, and they don't know it themselves, probably, for we live in strange times."

WHAT THE MOON SAW.

INTRODUCTION.

It is a strange thing, that when I feel most fervently and most deeply, my hands and my tongue seem alike tired, so that I cannot rightly describe or accurately portray the thoughts that are rising within me; and yet I am a painter; my eye tells me as much as that, and all my friends who have seen my sketches and fancies say the same.

I am a poor lad, and live in one of the narrowest of lanes; but I do not want for light, as my room is high up in the house, with an extensive prospect over the neighboring roofs. During the first few days I went to live in the town, I felt low spirited and solitary enough. Instead of the forest and the green hills of former days, I had here only a forest of chimney-pots to look out upon. And then I had not a single friend; not one familiar face greeted me.

So one evening I sat at the window, in a desponding mood; and presently I opened the casement and looked out. Oh, how my heart leaped up with joy! Here was a well-known face at last—a round, friendly countenance, the face of a good friend I had known at home. In fact, it was the Moon that looked in upon me. He was quite unchanged,

the dear old Moon, and had the same face exactly that he used to show when he peered down upon me through the willow trees on the moor. I kissed my hand to him over and over again, as he shone far into my little room; and he, for his part, promised me that every evening, when he came abroad, he would look in upon me for a few moments. This promise he has faithfully kept. It is a pity that he can only stay such a short time when he comes. Whenever he appears, he tells me of one thing or another that he has seen on the previous night or on that same evening.

"Just paint the scenes I describe to you"—that is what he said to me—"and you will have a very pretty picture-book."

I have followed his injunction for many evenings. I could make up a new "Thousand and One Nights" in my own way out of these pictures, but the number might be too great, after all. The pictures I have here given have not been chosen at random, but follow in their proper order, just as they were described to me. Some great gifted painter, or some poet or musician, may make something more of them if he likes; what I have given here are only hasty sketches, hurriedly put upon the paper, with some of my own thoughts interspersed; for the Moon did not come to me every evening—a cloud sometimes hid his face from me.

FIRST EVENING.

"Last night"—I am quoting the Moon's own words—"last night I was gliding through the cloudless Indian sky. My face was mirrored in the waters of the Ganges, and my beams strove to pierce through the thick intertwining boughs of the bananas, arching beneath me like the tortoise's shell. Forth from the thicket tripped a Hindoo maid, light as a gazelle, beautiful as Eve. Airy and ethereal as a vision, and yet sharply defined amid the surrounding shadows, stood this daughter of Hindostan; I could read on her delicate brow the thought that had brought her thither. The thorny creeping plants tore her sandals, but for all that she came rapidly forward. The deer that had come down to the river to quench her thirst, sprang by with a startled bound, for in her hand the maiden bore a lighted lamp. I could see

the blood in her delicate finger-tips, as she spread them for a screen before the dancing flame. She came down to the stream, and set the lamp upon the water, and let it float away. The flame flickered to and fro, and seemed ready to expire; but still the lamp burned on, and the girl's black sparkling eyes, half veiled behind their long silken lashes, followed it with a gaze of earnest intensity. She well knew that if the lamp continued to burn so long as she could keep it in sight, her betrothed was still alive; but if the lamp was suddenly extinguished, he was dead. And the lamp burned bravely on, and she fell on her knees and prayed. Near her in the grass lay a speckled snake, but she heeded it not—she thought only of Bramah and of her betrothed.

“‘He lives!’ she shouted joyfully, ‘he lives!’ And from the mountains the echo came back upon her, ‘He lives!’”

SECOND EVENING.

“Yesterday,” said the Moon to me, “I looked down upon a small courtyard surrounded on all sides by houses. In the courtyard sat a clucking hen with eleven chickens; and a pretty little girl was running and jumping around them. The hen was frightened, and screamed, and spread out her wings over the little brood. Then the girl's father came out and scolded her; and I glided away and thought no more of the matter.

“But this evening, only a few minutes ago, I looked down into the same courtyard. Everything was quiet. But presently the little girl came forth again, crept quietly to the hen-house, pushed back the bolt, and slipped into the apartment of the hen and chickens. They cried out loudly, and came fluttering down from their perches, and ran about in dismay, and the little girl ran after them. I saw it quite plainly, for I looked through a hole in the hen-house wall. I was angry with the willful child, and felt glad when her father came out and scolded her more violently than yesterday, holding her roughly by the arm; she held down her head, and her blue eyes were full of large tears. ‘What are you about here?’ he asked. She wept and said, ‘I wanted to kiss the hen and beg her pardon for frightening her yesterday; but I was afraid to tell you.’

"And the father kissed the innocent child's forehead, and I kissed her on the mouth and eyes."

THIRD EVENING.

"In the narrow street round the corner yonder—it is so narrow that my beams can only glide for a minute along the walls of the house, but in that minute I see enough to learn what the world is made of—in that narrow street I saw a woman. Sixteen years ago that woman was a child, playing in the garden of the old parsonage in the country! The hedges of rose bushes were old, and the flowers were faded. They straggled wild over the paths, and the ragged branches grew up among the boughs of the apple trees; here and there were a few roses still in bloom—not so fair as the queen of flowers generally appears, but still they had color and scent, too. The clergyman's little daughter appeared to me a far lovelier rose, as she sat on her stool under the straggling hedge, hugging and caressing her doll with the battered pasteboard cheeks.

"Ten years afterward I saw her again. I beheld her in a splendid ball-room; she was the beautiful bride of a rich merchant. I rejoiced at her happiness, and sought her on calm, quiet evenings—ah, nobody thinks of my clear eye and silent glance! Alas! my rose ran wild, like the rose bushes in the garden of the parsonage. There are tragedies in everyday life, and to-night I saw the last act of one.

"She was lying in bed in a house in that narrow street; she was sick unto death, and the cruel landlord came up, and tore away the thin coverlet, her only protection against the cold. 'Get up!' said he, 'your face is enough to frighten one. Get up and dress yourself. Give me money, or I'll turn you out into the street! Quick—get up!' She answered, 'Alas! death is gnawing at my heart. Let me rest.' But he forced her to get up and bathe her face, and he put a wreath of roses in her hair; and he placed her in a chair at the window, with a candle burning beside her, and went away.

"I looked at her, and she was sitting motionless, with her hands in her lap. The wind caught the open window and shut it with a crash, so that a pane came clattering down in

fragments; but still she never moved. The curtain caught fire, and the flames played about her face; and then I saw that she was dead. There at the window sat the dead woman, preaching a sermon against sin—my poor faded rose out of the parsonage garden!”

FOURTH EVENING.

“This evening I saw a German play acted,” said the Moon. “It was in a little town. A stable had been turned into a theater; that is to say, the stable had been left standing, and had been turned into private boxes, and all the timber work had been covered with colored paper. A little iron chandelier hung beneath the ceiling, and that it might be made to disappear into the ceiling, as it does in great theaters, when the ting-ting of the prompter’s bell is heard, a great inverted tub had been placed just above it.

“‘Ting-ting!’ and the little iron chandelier suddenly rose at least half a yard and disappeared in the tub; and that was the sign that the play was going to begin. A young nobleman and his lady, who happened to be passing through the little town, were present at the performance, and consequently the house was crowded. But under the chandelier was a vacant space like a little crater; not a single soul sat there, for the tallow was dropping, drip, drip! I saw everything, for it was so warm in there that every loophole had been opened. The male and female servants stood outside, peeping through the chinks, although a real policeman was inside, threatening them with a stick. Close by the orchestra could be seen the noble young couple in two old arm-chairs, which were usually occupied by his worship, the mayor, and his lady; but these latter were obliged to-day to content themselves with wooden forms, just as if they had been ordinary citizens; and the lady observed quietly to herself, ‘One sees, now, that there is rank above rank;’ and this incident gave an air of extra festivity to the whole proceedings. The chandelier gave little leaps, the crowd got their knuckles rapped, and I, the Moon, was present at the performance from beginning to end.”

FIFTH EVENING.

"Yesterday," began the Moon, "I looked down upon the turmoil of Paris. My eye penetrated into an apartment of the Louvre. An old grandmother, poorly clad—she belonged to the working class—was following one of the under-servants into the great empty throne room, for this was the apartment she wanted to see—that she was resolved to see; it had cost her many a little sacrifice and many a coaxing word to penetrate thus far. She folded her thin hands, and looked round with an air of reverence, as if she had been in a church.

"'Here it was!' she said, 'here!' And she approached the throne, from which hung the rich velvet, fringed with gold lace. 'There,' she exclaimed, 'there!' and she knelt and kissed the purple carpet. I think she was actually weeping.

"'But it was not this very velvet!' observed the footman, and a smile played about his mouth.

"'True, but it was this very place,' replied the woman, 'and it must have looked just like this.'

"'It looked so, and yet it did not,' observed the man; 'the windows were beaten in, and the doors were off their hinges, and there was blood upon the floor.'

"'But for all that you can say, my grandson died upon the throne of France. Died!' mournfully repeated the old woman.

"I do not think another word was spoken, and they soon quitted the hall. The evening twilight faded, and my light shone vividly upon the rich velvet that covered the throne of France.

"Now, who do you think this poor woman was? Listen, I will tell you a story.

"It happened in the Revolution of July, on the evening of the most brilliantly victorious day, when every house was a fortress, every window a breastwork. The people stormed the Tuileries. Even women and children were found among the combatants. They penetrated into the apartments and halls of the palace. A poor half-grown boy in a ragged blouse fought among the older insurgents. Mortally wounded with several bayonet thrusts, he sank down. This hap-

pened in the throne room. They laid the bleeding youth upon the throne of France, wrapped the velvet round his wounds, and his blood streamed forth on the imperial purple. There was a picture!—the splendid hall, the fighting groups! A torn flag lay upon the ground, the tricolor was waving above the bayonets, and on the throne lay the poor lad with the pale, glorified countenance, his eyes turned toward the sky, his limbs writhing in the death agony, his breast bare, and his poor tattered clothing half hidden by the rich velvet embroidered with silver lilies. At the boy's cradle a prophecy had been spoken: 'He will die on the throne of France!' The mother's heart had fondly imagined a second Napoleon.

"My beams have kissed the wreath of immortelles on his grave, and this night they kissed the forehead of the old grandame, while in a dream the picture floated before her which thou mayst draw—the poor boy on the throne of France."

SIXTH EVENING.

"I've been in Upsala," said the Moon; "I looked down upon the great plain covered with coarse grass, and upon the barren fields. I mirrored my face in the Tyris river, while the steamboat drove the fish into the rushes. Beneath me floated the waves, throwing long shadows on the so-called graves of Odin, Thor, and Friga. In the scanty turf that covers the hillside, names have been cut.* There is no monument here, no memorial on which the traveler can have his name carved, no rocky wall on whose surface he can get it painted; so visitors have the turf cut away for that purpose. The naked earth peers through in the form of great letters and names; these form a network over the whole hill. Here is an immortality, which lasts till the fresh turf grows!

"Up on the hill, stood a man, a poet. He emptied the mead horn with the broad silver rim, and murmured a name.

*Travelers on the Continent have frequent opportunities of seeing how universally this custom prevails among travelers. In some places on the Rhine, pots of paint and brushes are offered by the natives to the traveler desirous of "immortalizing" himself.

He begged the winds not to betray him, but I heard the name. I knew it. A count's coronet sparkles above it, and therefore he did not speak it out. I smiled, for I knew that a poet's crown adorned his own name. The nobility of Eleanora d'Este is attached to the name of Tasso. And I also know where the Rose of Beauty blooms!"

Thus spake the Moon, and a cloud came between us. May no cloud separate the poet from the rose!

SEVENTH EVENING.

"Along the margin of the shore stretches a forest of firs and beeches, and sweet, fresh, and fragrant is this wood; hundreds of nightingales visit it every spring. Close beside it is the sea, the ever-changing sea, and between the two is placed the broad high road. One carriage after another rolls over it; but I did not follow them, for my eyes love best to rest upon one point. A Hun's Grave* lies there, and the sloe and blackthorn grow luxuriantly among the stones. Here is true poetry in nature.

"And how do you think men appreciate this poetry? I will tell you what I heard there last evening and during the night.

"First, two rich landed proprietors came driving by. 'Those are glorious trees!' said the first. 'Certainly; there are ten loads of firewood in each,' observed the other; 'it will be a hard winter, and last year we got fourteen dollars a load'—and they were gone. 'The road here is wretched,' observed another man who drove past. 'That's the fault of those horrible trees,' replied his neighbor; 'there is no free current of air; the wind can only come from the sea'—and they were gone. The stage coach went rattling past. All the passengers were asleep at this beautiful spot. The postilion blew his horn, but he only thought, 'I can play capitally. It sounds well here. I wonder if those in there like it?'—and the stage coach vanished. Then two young fellows came galloping up on horseback. There's youth and spirit in the blood here! thought I; and, indeed, they

*Large mounds, similar to the "barrows" found in Britain, are thus designated in Germany and the North.

looked with a smile at the moss-grown hill and thick forest. 'I should not dislike a walk here with the miller's Christine,' said one—and they flew past. The flowers scented the air; every breath was hushed; it seemed as if the sea was a part of the sky that stretched above the deep valley. A carriage rolled by. Six people were sitting in it. Four of them were asleep; the fifth was thinking of his new summer coat, which would suit him admirably; the sixth turned to the coachman and asked him if there were anything remarkable connected with yonder heap of stones. 'No,' replied the coachman, 'it is only a heap of stones; but the trees are remarkable. 'How so?' 'Why, I'll tell you how they are very remarkable. You see, in winter, when the snow lies very deep, and has hidden the whole road so that nothing is to be seen, those trees serve me for a landmark. I steer by them, so as not to drive into the sea; and, you see, that is why the trees are remarkable.'

"Now came a painter. He spoke not a word, but his eyes sparkled. He began to whistle. At this the nightingales sang louder than ever. 'Hold your tongues!' he cried, testily; and he made accurate notes of all the colors and transitions—blue, and lilac, and dark brown. 'That will make a beautiful picture,' he said. He took it in just as a mirror takes in a view; and as he worked he whistled a march of Rossini. And last of all came a poor girl. She laid aside the burden she carried and sat down to rest upon the Hun's Grave. Her pale, handsome face was bent in a listening attitude toward the forest. Her eyes brightened, she gazed earnestly at the sea and the sky, her hands were folded, and I think she prayed, 'Our Father.' She herself could not understand the feeling that swept through her, but I know that this minute, and the beautiful natural scene, will live within her memory for years, far more vividly and more truly than the painter could portray it with his colors on paper. My rays followed her till the morning dawn kissed her brow."

EIGHTH EVENING.

Heavy clouds obscured the sky, and the Moon did not make his appearance at all. I stood in my little room, more lonely than ever, and looked up at the sky where he ought

to have shown himself. My thoughts flew far away, up to my great friend, who every evening told me such pretty tales, and showed me pictures. Yes, he has had an experience indeed. He glided over the waters of the Deluge, and smiled on Noah's ark just as he lately glanced down upon me, and brought comfort and promise of a new world that was to spring forth from the old. When the Children of Israel sat weeping by the waters of Babylon, he glanced mournfully upon the willows where hung the silent harps. When Romeo climbed the balcony, and the promise of true love fluttered like a cherub toward heaven, the round Moon hung, half hidden among the dark cypresses, in the lucid air. He saw the captive giant at St. Helena, looking from the lonely rock across the wide ocean, while great thoughts swept through his soul. Ah! what tales the Moon can tell. Human life is like a story to him. To-night I shall not see thee again, old friend. To-night I can draw no picture of the memories of thy visit. And, as I looked dreamily toward the clouds, the sky became bright. There was a glancing light, and a beam from the Moon fell upon me. It vanished again, and dark clouds flew past; but still it was a greeting, a friendly good-night offered to me by the Moon.

NINTH EVENING.

The air was clear again. Several evenings had passed, and the Moon was in the first quarter. Again he gave me an outline for a sketch. Listen to what he told me.

"I have followed the polar bird and the swimming whale to the eastern coast of Greenland. Gaunt ice-covered rocks and dark clouds hung over a valley, where dwarf willows and barberry bushes stood clothed in green. The blooming lychnis exhaled sweet odors. My light was faint, my face pale as the water lily that, torn from its stem, had been drifting for weeks with the tide. The crown-shaped Northern Light burned fiercely in the sky. Its ring was broad, and from its circumference the rays shot like whirling shafts of fire across the whole sky, flashing in changing radiance from green to red. The inhabitants of that icy region were assembling for dance and festivity; but accustomed to this glorious spectacle, they scarcely deigned to glance at it.

'Let us leave the souls of the dead to their ball play with the heads of the walruses,' they thought in their superstition, and they turned their whole attention to the song and dance. In the midst of the circle, and divested of his furry cloak, stood a Greenlander, with a small pipe, and he played and sang a song about catching the seal, and the chorus around chimed in with 'Eia, Eia, Ah.' And in their white furs they danced about in the circle, till you might fancy it was a polar bear's ball.

"And now a Court of Judgment was opened. Those Greenlanders who had quarreled stepped forward, and the offended person chanted forth the faults of his adversary in an extempore song, turning them sharply into ridicule, to the sound of the pipe and the measure of the dance. The defendant replied with satire as keen, while the audience laughed and gave their verdict.

"The rocks heaved, the glaciers melted, and great masses of ice and snow came crashing down, shivering to fragments as they fell; it was a glorious Greenland summer night. A hundred paces away, under the open tent of hides, lay a sick man. Life still flowed through his warm blood, but still he was to die; he himself felt it, and all who stood round him knew it also; therefore his wife was already sewing round him the shroud of furs, that she might not afterward be obliged to touch the dead body. And she asked, 'Wilt thou be buried on the rock, in the firm snow? I will deck the spot with thy kayak, and thy arrows, and the angekokk shall dance over it. Or wouldst thou rather be buried in the sea?' 'In the sea,' he whispered, and nodded with a mournful smile. 'Yes, it is a pleasant summer tent, the sea,' observed the wife. 'Thousands of seals sport there, the walrus shall lie at thy feet, and the hunt will be safe and merry!' And the yelling children tore the outspread hide from the window hole, that the dead man might be carried to the ocean, the billowy ocean, that had given him food in life, and that now, in death, was to afford him a place of rest. For his monument he had the floating, ever-changing icebergs, whereon the seal sleeps, while the stormbird flies round their gleaming summits."

TENTH EVENING.

"I knew an old maid," said the Moon. "Every winter she wore a wrapper of yellow satin, and it always remained new, and was the only fashion she followed. In summer she always wore the same straw hat, and I verily believe the very same gray-blue dress.

"She never went out, except across the street to an old female friend; and in later years she did not even take this walk, for the old friend was dead. In her solitude my old maid was always busy at the window, which was adorned in summer with pretty flowers, and in winter with cress, grown upon felt. During the last months I saw her no more at the window, but she was still alive. I knew that, for I had not yet seen her begin the 'long journey,' of which she often spoke with her friend. 'Yes, yes,' she was in the habit of saying, 'when I come to die, I shall take a longer journey than I have made my whole life long. Our family vault is six miles from here. I shall be carried there, and shall sleep there among my family and relatives.' Last night a van stopped at the house. A coffin was carried out, and then I knew that she was dead. They placed straw round the coffin, and the van drove away. There slept the quiet old lady, who had not gone out of her house once for the last year. The van rolled out through the town gate as briskly as if it were going for a pleasant excursion. On the high road the pace was quicker yet. The coachman looked nervously round every now and then—I fancy he half expected to see her sitting on the coffin, in her yellow satin wrapper. And because he was startled, he foolishly lashed his horses, while he held the reins so tightly that the poor beasts were in a foam; they were young and fiery. A little hare jumped across the road and startled them, and they fairly ran away. The old, sober maiden, who had for years and years moved quietly round and round in a dull circle, was now, in death, rattled over stock and stone on the public highway. The coffin, in its covering of straw, tumbled out of the van, and was left on the high road, while horses, coachman, and carriage flew past in wild career. The lark rose up caroling from the field, twittering her morning lay over the coffin, and presently perched upon it, picking with

her beak at the straw covering, as though she would tear it up. The lark rose up again, singing gayly, and I withdrew behind the red morning clouds."

ELEVENTH EVENING.

"I will give you a picture of Pompeii," said the Moon. "I was in the suburb in the Street of Tombs, as they call it, where the fair monuments stand, in the spot where, ages ago, the merry youths, their temples bound with rosy wreaths, danced with the fair sisters of Laïs. Now the stillness of death reigned around. German mercenaries, in the Neapolitan service, kept guard, and played cards and dice; and a troop of strangers from beyond the mountains came into the town, accompanied by a sentry. They wanted to see the city that had risen from the grave illumined by my beams; and I showed them the wheel ruts in the streets paved with broad lava slabs; I showed them the names on the doors, and the signs that hung there yet; they saw in the little courtyard the basins of the fountains, ornamented with shells; but no jet of water gushed upward, no songs sounded forth from the richly painted chambers, where the bronze dog kept the door.

"It was the City of the Dead; only Vesuvius thundered forth his everlasting hymn, each separate verse of which is called by men an eruption. We went to the temple of Venus, built of snow-white marble, with its high altar in front of the broad steps, and the weeping willows sprouting freshly forth among the pillars. The air was transparent and blue, and black Vesuvius formed the background, with fire ever shooting forth from it, like the stem of the pine tree. Above it stretched the smoky cloud in the silence of the night, like the crown of the pine, but in a blood-red illumination. Among the company was a lady singer, a real and great singer. I have witnessed the homage paid to her in the greatest cities of Europe. When they came to the tragic theater, they all sat down on the amphitheater steps, and thus a small part of the house was occupied by an audience, as it had been many centuries ago. The stage still stood unchanged, and its walled sidescenes, and the two

arches in the background, through which the beholders saw the same scene that had been exhibited in the old times—a scene painted by Nature herself, namely, the mountains between Sorrento and Amalfi. The singer gayly mounted the ancient stage, and sang. The place inspired her, and she reminded me of a wild Arab horse, that rushes headlong on with snorting nostrils and flying mane—her song was so light and yet so firm. Anon I thought of the mourning mother beneath the cross at Golgotha, so deep was the expression of pain. And, just as it had done thousands of years ago, the sound of applause and delight now filled the theater. 'Happy, gifted creature!' all the hearers exclaimed. Five minutes more, and the stage was empty, the company had vanished, and not a sound more was heard—all were gone. But the ruins stood unchanged, as they will stand when centuries shall have gone by, and when none shall know of the momentary applause and of the triumph of the fair songstress; when all will be forgotten and gone, and even for me this hour will be but a dream of the past."

TWELFTH EVENING.

"I looked through the windows of an editor's house," said the Moon. "It was somewhere in Germany. I saw handsome furniture, many books, and a chaos of newspapers. Several young men were present; the editor himself stood at his desk, and two little books, both by young authors, were to be noticed. 'This one has been sent to me,' said he. 'I have not read it yet; what think you of the contents?' 'Oh,' said the person addressed—he was a poet himself—'it is good enough; a little broad, certainly; but, you see the author is still young. The verses might be better, to be sure; the thoughts are sound, though there is certainly a good deal of commonplace among them. But what will you have? You can't be always getting something new. That he'll turn out anything great I don't believe, but you may safely praise him. He is well read, a remarkable Oriental scholar, and has a good judgment. It was he who wrote that nice review of my "Reflections on Domestic Life." We must be lenient toward the young man.'

“‘But he is a complete hack!’ objected another of the gentlemen. ‘Nothing is worse in poetry than mediocrity, and he certainly does not go beyond that.’

“‘Poor fellow!’ observed a third, ‘and his aunt is so happy about him. It was she, Mr. Editor, who got together so many subscribers for your last translation.’

“‘Ah, the good woman! Well, I have noticed the book briefly. Undoubted talent—a welcome offering—a flower in the garden of poetry—prettily brought out, and so on. But this other book—I suppose the author expects me to purchase it? I hear it is praised. He has genius, certainly; don’t you think so?’

“‘Yes, all the world declares as much,’ replied the poet, ‘but it has turned out rather wildly. The punctuation of the book, in particular, is very eccentric.’

“‘It will be good for him if we pull him to pieces, and anger him a little, otherwise he will get too good an opinion of himself.’

“‘But that would be unfair,’ objected the fourth. ‘Let us not carp at little faults, but rejoice over the real and abundant good that we find here; he surpasses all the rest.’

“‘Not so. If he be a true genius, he can bear the sharp voice of censure. There are people enough to praise him. Don’t let us quite turn his head.’

“‘Decided talent,’ wrote the editor, ‘with the usual carelessness. That he can write incorrect verses may be seen in page 25, where there are two false quantities. We recommend him to study the ancients,’ etc.

“‘I went away,’ continued the Moon, “and looked through the window in the aunt’s house. There sat the bepraised poet, the tame one; all the guests paid homage to him, and he was happy.

“‘I sought the other poet out, the wild one; him also I found in a great assembly at his patron’s where the tame poet’s book was being discussed.

“‘I shall read yours also,’ said Maecenas; ‘but to speak honestly—you know I never hide my opinions from you—I don’t expect much from it, for you are much too wild, too fantastic. But it must assuredly be allowed that, as a man, you are highly respectable.’

"A young girl sat in a corner; and she read in a book these words:

"In the dust lies genius and glory,
But ev'ry-day talent will pay.
It's only the old, old story,
But the piece is repeated each day."

THIRTEENTH EVENING.

The Moon said, "Beside the woodland path there are two small farm-houses. The doors are low, and some of the windows are placed quite high, and others close to the ground; and whitethorn and barberry bushes grow around them. The roof of each house is overgrown with moss and with yellow flowers and houseleek. Cabbage and potatoes are the only plants cultivated in the gardens, but out of the hedge there grows a willow tree, and under this willow tree sat a little girl, and she sat with her eyes fixed upon the old oak tree between the two huts.

"It was an old withered stem. It had been sawn off at the top, and a stork had built his nest upon it; and he stood in this nest clapping with his beak. A little boy came and stood by the girl's side; they were brother and sister.

"What are you looking at?" he asked.

"I'm watching the stork," she replied; "our neighbor told me that he would bring us a little brother or sister to-day; let us watch to see it come!"

"The stork brings no such things," the boy declared, "you may be sure of that. Our neighbor told me the same thing, but she laughed when she said it, and so I asked her if she could say 'On my honor,' and she could not; and I know by that that the story about the storks is not true, and that they only tell it to us children for fun."

"But where do the babies come from, then?" asked the girl.

"Why, an angel from heaven brings them under his cloak, but no man can see him; and that's why we never know when he brings them."

"At that moment there was a rustling in the branches of the willow tree, and the children folded their hands and looked at one another; it was certainly the angel coming

with the baby. They took each other's hand, and at that moment the door of one of the houses opened, and the neighbor appeared.

"'Come in, you two,' she said. 'See what the stork has brought. It is a little brother.'

"And the children nodded gravely at one another, for they had felt quite sure already that the baby was come."

FOURTEENTH EVENING.

"I was gliding over the Lüneburg Heath," the Moon said. "A lonely hut stood by the wayside, a few scanty bushes grew near it, and a nightingale who had lost his way sang sweetly. He died in the coldness of the night; it was his farewell song that I heard.

"The morning dawn came glimmering red. I saw a caravan of emigrant peasant families who were bound to Ham-
burgh, there to take ship for America, where fancied prosperity would bloom for them. The mothers carried their little children at their backs, the elder ones trotted by their sides, and a poor starved horse tugged at a cart that bore their scanty effects. The cold wind whistled, and therefore the little girl nestled closer to the mother, who, looking up at my decreasing disk, thought of the bitter want at home, and spoke of the heavy taxes they had not been able to raise. The whole caravan thought of the same thing; therefore the rising dawn seemed to them a message from the sun, of fortune that was to gleam brightly upon them. They heard the dying nightingale sing; it was no false prophet, but a harbinger of fortune. The wind whistled, therefore they did not understand that the nightingale sang, 'Far away over the sea! Thou hast paid the long passage with all that was thine, and poor and helpless shalt thou enter Canaan. Thou must sell thyself, thy wife, and thy children. But your griefs shall not last long. Behind the broad fragrant leaves lurks the Goddess of Death, and her welcome kiss shall breathe fever into thy blood. Fare away, fare away, over the heaving billows.' And the caravan listened well pleased to the song of the nightingale, which seemed to promise good fortune. The day broke through the light clouds; country people went across the heath to the church;

the black-gowned women with their white head-dresses looked like ghosts that had stepped forth from the church pictures. All around lay a wide dead plain, covered with faded brown heath, and black charred spaces between the white sand hills. The women carried hymn-books, and walked into the church. Oh, pray, pray for those who are wandering to find graves beyond the foaming billows."

FIFTEENTH EVENING.

"I know a Pulcinella,"* the Moon told me. "The public applaud vociferously directly they see him. Everyone of his movements is comic, and is sure to throw the house into convulsions of laughter; and yet there is no art in it at all—it is complete nature. When he was yet a little boy, playing with other boys, he was already Punch. Nature had intended him for it, and had provided him with a hump on his back, and another on his breast; but his inward man, his mind, on the contrary, was richly furnished. No one could surpass him in depth of feeling or in readiness of intellect. The theater was his ideal world. If he had possessed a slender, well-shaped figure, he might have been the first tragedian on any stage; the heroic, the great, filled his soul; and yet he had become a Pulcinella. His very sorrow and melancholy did but increase the comic dryness of his sharply-cut features, and increased the laughter of the audience, who showered plaudits on their favorite. The lovely Columbine was indeed kind and cordial to him; but she preferred to marry the Harlequin. It would have been too ridiculous if beauty and ugliness had in reality paired together.

"When Pulcinella was in very bad spirits, she was the only one who could force a hearty burst of laughter, or even a smile from him; first she would be melancholy with him, then quieter, and at last quite cheerful and happy. 'I know very well what is the matter with you,' she said; 'yes, you're in love!' And he could not help laughing. 'I in love!' he cried, 'that would have an absurd look. How the public would shout!' 'Certainly, you are in love,' she continued;

*The comic or grotesque character of the Italian ballet, from which the English "Punch" takes its origin.

and added with a comic pathos, 'and I am the person you are in love with.' You see, such a thing may be said when it is quite out of the question—and, indeed, Pulcinella burst out laughing, and gave a leap into the air, and his melancholy was forgotten.

"And yet she had only spoken the truth. He did love her, love her adoringly, as he loved what was great and lofty in art. At her wedding he was the merriest among the guests, but in the stillness of night he wept; if the public had seen the distorted face, then, they would have applauded rapturously.

"And a few days ago Columbine died. On the day of the funeral, Harlequin was not required to show himself on the boards, for he was a disconsolate widower. The director had to give a very merry piece, that the public might not too painfully miss the pretty Columbine and the agile Harlequin. Therefore Pulcinella had to be more boisterous and extravagant than ever; and he danced and capered, with despair in his heart; and the audience yelled, and shouted, 'Bravo! bravissimo!' Pulcinella was actually called before the curtain. He was pronounced inimitable.

"But last night the hideous little fellow went out of the town, quite alone, to the deserted churchyard. The wreath of flowers on Columbine's grave was already faded, and he sat down there. It was a study for a painter. As he sat with his chin on his hands, his eyes turned up toward me, he looked like a grotesque monument—a Punch on a grave—very peculiar and whimsical. If the people could have seen their favorite, they would have cried as usual, 'Bravo! Pulcinella! bravo, bravissimo!'"

SIXTEENTH EVENING.

Hear what the Moon told me: "I have seen the cadet who had just been made an officer, put on his handsome uniform for the first time; I have seen the young bride in her wedding dress, and the Princess girl-wife happy in her gorgeous robes; but never have I seen a felicity equal to that of a little girl of four years old, whom I watched this evening. She had received a new blue dress and a new pink hat; the splendid attire had just been put on, and all were

calling for a candle, for my rays, shining in through the windows of the room, were not bright enough for the occasion, and further illumination was required. There stood the little maid, stiff and upright as a doll, her arms stretched painfully straight out away from her dress, and her fingers apart; and, oh, what happiness beamed from her eyes and from her whole countenance! 'To-morrow you shall go out in your new clothes,' said her mother; and the little one looked up at her hat and down at her frock, and smiled brightly. 'Mother,' she cried, 'what will the little dogs think when they see me in these splendid new things?'

SEVENTEENTH EVENING.

"I have spoken to you of Pompeii," said the Moon; "that corpse of a city, exposed in the view of living towns; I know another sight still more strange, and this is not the corpse, but the specter of a city. Whenever the jetty fountains splash into the marble basins, they seem to me to be telling the story of the floating city. Yes, the sprouting water may tell of her, the waves of the sea may sing of her fame! On the surface of the ocean a mist often rests, and this is her widow's veil. The Bridegroom of the Sea is dead, his palace and his city are his mausoleum! Dost thou know this city? She has never heard the rolling of wheels or the hoof-tread of horses in her streets, through which the fish swim, while the black gondola glides spectrally over the green water. I will show you the place," continued the Moon, "the largest square in it, and you will fancy yourself transported into the city of a fairy tale. The grass grows rank among the broad flagstones, and in the morning twilight thousands of tame pigeons flutter around the solitary, lofty tower. On three sides you find yourself surrounded by cloistered walks. In these the silent Turk sits smoking his long pipe; the handsome Greek leans against the pillar, and gazes at the upraised trophies and lofty masts, memorials of power that is gone. The flags hang down like morning scarves. A girl rests there; she has put down her heavy pails filled with water, the yoke with which she has carried them rests on one of her shoulders, and she leans against the mast of victory. This is not a fairy palace you



see before you yonder, but a church; the gilded domes and shining orbs flash back my beams; the glorious bronze horses up yonder have made journeys, like the bronze horses in the fairy tale; they have come hither, and gone hence, and have returned again. Do you notice the variegated splendor of the walls and windows? It looks as if Genius had followed the caprices of a child, in the adornment of these singular temples. Do you see the winged lion on the pillar? The gold glitters still, but his wings are tied—the lion is dead, for the King of the Sea is dead; the great halls stand desolate, and where gorgeous painting hung of yore, the naked wall now peers through. The lazzaroni sleep under the arcade, whose pavement in old times was to be trodden only by the feet of the high nobility. From the deep wells, and perhaps from the prisons by the Bridge of Sighs, rise the accents of woe, as at the time when the tambourine was heard in the gay gondolas, and the golden ring was cast from Bucentaur to Adria, the Queen of the Seas. Adria! shroud thyself in mists; let the veil of thy widowhood shroud thy form, and clothe in the weeds of woe the mausoleum of thy bridegroom—the marble, spectral Venice!”

EIGHTEENTH EVENING.

“I looked down upon a great theater,” said the Moon. “The house was crowded, for a new actor was to make his first appearance that night. My rays glided over a little window in the wall, and I saw a painted face with the forehead pressed against the panes. It was the hero of the evening. The knightly beard curled crisply about the chin; but there were tears in the man’s eyes, for he had been hissed off, and indeed with reason. The poor Incapable! But Incapables cannot be admitted into the empire of Art. He had deep feelings, and loved his art enthusiastically, but the art loved not him. The prompter’s bell sounded; ‘the hero enters with a determined air,’ so ran the stage direction in his part, and he had to appear before an audience who turned him into ridicule. When the piece was over, I saw a form wrapped in a mantle creeping down the steps; it was the vanquished knight of the evening. The scene shifters whispered to one another, and I followed the poor fellow

home to his room. To hang one's self is to die a mean death, and poison is not always at hand, I know; but he thought of both. I saw how he looked at his pale face in the glass, with eyes half closed, to see if he should look well as a corpse. A man may be very unhappy, and yet exceedingly affected. He thought of death, of suicide; I believe he pitied himself, for he wept bitterly; and when a man has had his cry out he doesn't kill himself.

"Since that time a year had rolled by. Again a play was to be acted, but in a little theater, and by a poor strolling company. Again I saw the well remembered face, with the painted cheeks and the crisp beard. He looked up at me and smiled; and yet he had been hissed off only a minute before—hissed off from a wretched theater by a miserable audience. And to-night a shabby hearse rolled out of the town gate. It was a suicide—our painted, despised hero. The driver of the hearse was the only person present, for no one followed except my beams. In a corner of the churchyard the corpse of the suicide was shoveled into the earth, and nettles will soon be rankly growing over his grave, and the sexton will throw thorns and weeds from the other graves upon it."

NINETEENTH EVENING.

"I come from Rome," said the Moon. "In the midst of the city, upon one of the seven hills, lie the ruins of the imperial palace. The wild fig tree grows in the clefts of the wall, and covers the nakedness thereof with its broad, gray-green leaves; trampling among heaps of rubbish, the ass treads upon green laurels, and rejoices over the rank thistles. From this spot, whence the eagles of Rome once flew abroad, whence they 'came, saw and conquered,' one door leads into a little, mean house, built of clay between two pillars; the wild vine hangs like a mourning garland over the crooked window. An old woman and her little granddaughter live there; they rule now in the palace of the Caesars, and show to strangers the remains of its past glories. Of the splendid throne-hall only a naked wall yet stands, and a black cypress throws it dark shadow on the spot where the throne once stood. The dust lies several feet deep on the broken pavement; and the little maiden,

now the daughter of the imperial palace, often sits there on her stool when the evening bells ring. The keyhole of the door close by she calls her turret-window; through this she can see half Rome, as far as the mighty cupola of St. Peter's.

"On this evening, as usual, stillness reigned around; and in the full beam of my light came the little granddaughter. On her head she carried an earthen pitcher of antique shape filled with water. Her feet were bare, her short frock and her white sleeves were torn. I kissed her pretty, round shoulders, her dark eyes, and black, shining hair. She mounted the stairs; they were steep, having been made up of rough blocks of broken marble and the capital of a fallen pillar. The colored lizards slipped away, startled, from before her feet, but she was not frightened at them. Already she lifted her hand to pull the doorbell—a hare's foot fastened to a string formed the bellhandle of the imperial palace. She paused for a moment—of what might she be thinking? Perhaps of the beautiful Christ-child, dressed in gold and silver, which was down below in the chapel, where the silver candlesticks gleamed so bright, and where her little friends sang the hymns in which she also could join. I know not. Presently she moved again—she stumbled; the earthen vessel fell from her head, and broke on the marble steps. She burst into tears. The beautiful daughter of the imperial palace wept over the worthless, broken pitcher; with her bare feet she stood there weeping, and dared not pull the string, the bell-rope of the imperial palace."

TWENTIETH EVENING.

It was more than a fortnight since the Moon had shone. Now he stood once more, round and bright, above the clouds, moving slowly onward. Hear what the Moon told me.

"From a town in Fezzan I followed a caravan. On the margin of the sandy desert, in a salt plain, that shone like a frozen lake, and was only covered in spots with light drifting sand, a halt was made. The eldest of the company—the water-gourd hung at his girdle, and on his head was a little

bag of unleavened bread—drew a square in the sand with his staff, and wrote in it a few words out of the Koran, and then the whole caravan passed over the consecrated spot. A young merchant, a child of the East, as I could tell by his eye and his figure, rode pensively forward on his white, snorting steed. Was he thinking, perchance, of his fair young wife? It was only two days ago that the camel, adorned with furs and with costly shawls, had carried her, the beauteous bride, round the walls of the city, while drums and cymbals had sounded, the women sang, and festive shots, of which the bridegroom fired the greatest number, resounded round the camel; and now he was journeying with the caravan across the desert.

“For many nights I followed the train. I saw them rest by the wellside among the stunted palms; they thrust the knife into the breast of the camel that had fallen, and roasted its flesh by the fire. My beams cooled the glowing sands, and showed them the black rocks, dead islands in the immense ocean of sand. No hostile tribes met them in their pathless route, no storms arose, no columns of sand whirled destruction over the journeying caravan. At home the beautiful wife prayed for her husband and her father. ‘Are they dead?’ she asked of my golden crescent; ‘Are they dead?’ she cried to my full disk. Now the desert lies behind them. This evening they sit beneath the lofty palm trees where the crane flutters round them with its long wings, and the pelican watches them from the branches of the mimosa. The luxuriant herbage is trampled down, crushed by the feet of elephants. A troop of negroes are returning from a market in the interior of the land; the women, with copper buttons in their black train, and decked out in clothes dyed with indigo, drive the heavily-laden oxen, on whose backs slumber the naked black children. A negro leads a young lion, which he has bought, by a string. They approach the caravan; the young merchant sits pensive and motionless, thinking of his beautiful wife, dreaming, in the land of the blacks, of his white, fragrant lily beyond the desert. He raises his head, and—”

But at this moment a cloud passed before the Moon, and then another. I heard nothing more from him this evening.

TWENTY-FIRST EVENING.

"I looked down on Tyrol," said the Moon, "and my beams caused the dark pines to throw long shadows upon the rocks. I looked at the pictures of St. Christopher carrying the Infant Jesus that are painted there upon the walls of the houses, colossal figures reaching from the ground to the roof. St. Florian was represented pouring water on the burning house, and the Lord hung bleeding on the great cross by the wayside. To the present generation these are old pictures, but I saw when they were put up, and marked how one followed the other. On the brow of the mountain yonder is perched, like a swallow's nest, a lonely convent of nuns. Two of the sisters stood up in the tower tolling the bell; they were both young, and therefore their glances flew over the mountain out into the world. A traveling coach passed by below, the postilion wound his horn, and the poor nuns looked after the carriage for a moment with a mournful glance, and a tear gleamed in the eyes of the younger one. And the horn sounded faintly and more faint, and the convent bell drowned its expiring echoes."

TWENTY-SECOND EVENING.

"I saw a little girl weeping," said the Moon; "she was weeping over the depravity of the world. She had received a most beautiful doll as a present. Oh, that was a glorious doll, so fair and delicate! She did not seem created for the sorrows of this world. But the brothers of the little girl, those great, naughty boys, had set the doll high up in the branches of a tree, and had run away.

"The little girl could not reach up to the doll, and could not help her down, and that is why she was crying. The doll must certainly have been crying, too, for she stretched out her arms among the green branches, and looked quite mournful. Yes, these are the troubles of life of which the little girl had often heard tell. Alas, poor doll! it began to grow dark already; and suppose night were to come on completely! Was she to be left sitting there alone on the bough all night long? No, the little maid could not make

up her mind to that. 'I'll stay with you,' she said, although she felt anything but happy in her mind. She could almost fancy she distinctly saw little gnomes, with their high-crowned hats, sitting in the bushes; and farther back in the long walk, tall specters appeared to be dancing. They came nearer and nearer, and stretched out their hands toward the tree on which the doll sat; they laughed scornfully, and pointed at her with their fingers. Oh, how frightened the little maid was! 'But if one has not done anything wrong,' she thought, 'nothing evil can harm one. I wonder if I have done anything wrong?' And she considered. 'Oh, yes! I laughed at the poor duck with the red rag on her leg; she limped along so funnily, I could not help laughing; but it's a sin to laugh at animals.' And she looked up at the doll. 'Did you laugh at the duck, too?' she asked; and it seemed as if the doll shook her head."

TWENTY-THIRD EVENING.

Hear what the Moon told me: "Some years ago, here in Copenhagen, I looked through the window of a mean little room. The father and mother slept, but the little son was not asleep. I saw the flowered cotton curtains of the bed move, and the child peep forth. At first I thought he was looking at the great clock, which was gayly painted in red and green. At the top sat a cuckoo, below hung the heavy leaden weights, and the pendulum with the polished disk of metal went to and fro, and said 'tick, tick.' But no, he was not looking at the clock, but at his mother's spinning wheel, that stood just underneath it. That was the boy's favorite piece of furniture, but he dared not touch it, for if he meddled with it he got a rap on the knuckles. For hours together, when his mother was spinning, he would sit quietly by her side, watching the murmuring spindle and the revolving wheel, and as he sat he thought of many things. Oh, if he might only turn the wheel himself. Father and mother were asleep; he looked at them, and looked at the spinning wheel, and presently a little naked foot peered out of the bed, and then a second foot, and then two little white legs. There he stood. He looked round once more, to see if father and mother were still asleep—yes, they slept;

and now he crept softly, softly, in his short little nightgown, to the spinning wheel, and began to spin. The thread flew from the wheel, and the wheel whirled faster and faster. I kissed his fair hair and his blue eyes. It was such a pretty picture.

“At that moment the mother awoke. The curtain shook; she looked forth, and fancied she saw a gnome or some other kind of little specter. ‘In Heaven’s name!’ she cried, and aroused her husband in a frightened way. He opened his eyes, rubbed them with his hands, and looked at the brisk little lad. ‘Why, that is Bertel,’ said he. And my eyes quitted the poor room, for I have so much to see. At the same moment I looked at the halls of the Vatican, where the marble gods are enthroned. I shone upon the group of the Lacon; the stone seemed to sigh. I pressed a silent kiss on the lips of the Muses, and they seemed to stir and move. But my rays lingered longest about the Nile group, with the colossal god. Leaning against the Sphinx, he lies there thoughtful and meditative, as if he were thinking on the rolling centuries; and little love-gods sport with him and with the crocodiles. In the horn of plenty sits with folded arms a little, tiny love-god contemplating the great solemn river-god, a true picture of the boy at the spinning wheel—the features were exactly the same. Charming and lifelike stood the little marble form, and yet the wheel of the years had turned more than a thousand times since the time when it sprang from the stone. Just as often as the boy in the little room turned the spinning wheel had the great wheel murmured, before the age could again call forth marble gods equal to those he afterward formed.

“Years have passed since all this happened,” the Moon went on to say. “Yesterday I looked upon a bay on the eastern coast of Denmark. Glorious woods are there, and high trees, an old knightly castle with red walls, swans floating in the ponds, and in the background appears, among orchards, a little town with a church. Many boats, the crews all furnished with torches, glided over the silent expanse—but these fires had not been kindled for catching fish, for everything had a festive look. Music sounded, a song was sung, and in one of the boats a man stood erect, to whom homage was paid by the rest, a tall, sturdy man, wrapped in a cloak. He had blue eyes and long white hair.

I knew him, and thought of the Vatican, and of the group of the Nile, and the old marble gods. I thought of the simple little room where little Bertel sat in his nightshirt by the spinning wheel. The wheel of time has turned, and new gods have come forth from the stone. From the boats there arose a shout: 'Hurrah! hurrah for Bertel Thorwaldsen!'

TWENTY-FOURTH EVENING.

"I will now give you a picture from Frankfort," said the Moon. "I especially noticed one building there. It was not the house in which Goethe was born, nor the old council house, through whose grated windows peered the horns of the oxen that were roasted and given to the people when the Emperors were crowned. No, it was a private house, plain in appearance, and painted green. It stood near the old Jews' Street. It was Rothschild's house.

"I looked through the open door. The staircase was brilliantly lighted; servants carrying wax candles in massive silver candlesticks stood there, and bowed low before an aged woman, who was being brought downstairs in a litter. The proprietor of the house stood bareheaded, and respectfully imprinted a kiss on the hand of the old woman. She was his mother. She nodded in a friendly manner to him and to the servants, and they carried her into the dark, narrow street, into a little house, that was her dwelling. Here her children had been born, from hence the fortune of the family had arisen. If she deserted the despised street and the little house, fortune would also desert her children. That was her firm belief."

The Moon told me no more; his visit this evening was far too short. But I thought of the old woman in the narrow, despised street. It would have cost her but a word, and a brilliant house would have arisen for her on the banks of the Thames—a word, and a villa would have been prepared in the Bay of Naples.

"If I deserted the lowly house, where the fortunes of my sons first began to bloom, fortune would desert them!" It was a superstition, but a superstition of such a class, that he who knows the story and has seen this picture, need have

only two words placed under the picture to make him understand it; and these two words are: "A mother."

TWENTY-FIFTH EVENING.

"It was yesterday, in the morning twilight"—these are the words the Moon told me—"in the great city no chimney was yet smoking—and it was just at the chimneys that I was looking. Suddenly a little head emerged from one of them, and then half a body, the arms resting on the rim of the chimneypot. 'Ya-hip!' cried a voice. It was the little chimney sweeper, who had for the first time in his life crept through a chimney and stuck out his head at the top. 'Ya-hip! ya-hip!' Yes, certainly that was a very different thing from creeping about in the dark, narrow chimneys! the air blows so fresh, and he could look over the whole city toward the green wood. The sun was just rising. It shone round and great, just in his face, that beamed with triumph, though it was very prettily blacked with soot.

"'The whole town can see me now,' he exclaimed, 'and the moon can see me now, and the sun, too. Ya-hip! ya-hip!' And he flourished his broom in triumph."

TWENTY-SIXTH EVENING.

"Last night I looked down upon a town in China," said the Moon. "My beams irradiated the naked walls that form the streets there. Now and then, certainly, a door is seen, but it is locked, for what does the Chinaman care about the outer world? Close wooden shutters covered the windows behind the walls of the houses; but through the windows of the temple a faint light glimmered. I looked in, and saw the quaint decorations within. From the floor to the ceiling pictures are painted in the most glaring colors and richly gilt—pictures representing the deeds of the gods here on earth. In each nine statues are placed, but they are almost entirely hidden by the colored drapery and the banners that hang down. Before each idol (and they are all made of tin) stood a little altar of holy water, with flowers and burning wax lights on it. Above all the rest stood Fo, the chief

deity, clad in a garment of yellow silk, for yellow is here the sacred color. At the foot of the altar sat a living being, a young priest. He appeared to be praying, but in the midst of his prayer he seemed to fall into deep thought, and this must have been wrong, for his cheeks glowed and he held down his head. Poor Soui-hong! Was he, perhaps, dreaming of working in the little flower garden behind the high street wall? And did that occupation seem more agreeable to him than watching the wax lights in the temple? Or did he wish to sit at the rich feast, wiping his mouth with silver paper between each course? Or was his sin so great that, if he dared to utter it, the Celestial Empire would punish it with death? Had his thoughts ventured to fly with the ships of the barbarians, to their homes in far-distant England? No, his thoughts did not fly so far, and yet they were sinful, sinful, as thoughts born of young hearts, sinful here in the temple, in the presence of Fo and the other holy gods.

"I know whither his thoughts had strayed. At the farther end of the city, on the flat roof paved with porcelain, on which stood the handsome vases covered with painted flowers, sat the beauteous Pu, of the little roguish eyes, of the full lips, and of the tiny feet. The tight shoe pained her, but her heart pained her still more. She lifted her graceful, round arm, and her satin dress rustled. Before her stood a glass bowl containing four goldfish. She stirred the bowl carefully with a slender lacquered stick, very slowly, for she, too, was lost in thought. Was she thinking, perchance, how the fishes were richly clothed in gold, how they lived calmly and peacefully in their crystal world, how they were regularly fed, and yet how much happier they might be if they were free? Yes, that she could well understand, the beautiful Pu. Her thoughts wandered away from her home, wandered to the temple, but not for the sake of holy things. Poor Pu! Poor Soui-hong!

"Their earthly thoughts met, but my cold beam lay between the two like the sword of the cherub."

TWENTY-SEVENTH EVENING.

"The air was calm," said the Moon; "the water was as transparent as the pure ether through which I was gliding,

and deep below the surface I could see the strange plants that stretched up their long arms toward me like the gigantic trees of the forests. The fishes swam to and fro above their tops. High in the air a flight of wild swans were winging their way, one of which sank lower and lower, with wearied pinions, his eyes following the airy caravan, that melted farther and farther into the distance. With outspread wings he sank slowly as a soap bubble sinks in the still air, till he touched the water. At length his head lay back between his wings, and silently he lay there, like a white lotus flower upon the quiet lake. And a gentle wind arose, and crisped the quiet surface which gleamed like the clouds that poured along in great, broad waves; and the swan raised his head, and the glowing water splashed like blue fire over his breast and back. The morning dawn illuminated the red clouds, the swan rose strengthened, and flew toward the rising sun, toward the bluish coast whither the caravan had gone; but he flew all alone, with a longing in his breast. Lonely he flew over the blue, swelling billows."

TWENTY-EIGHTH EVENING.

"I will give you another picture of Sweden," said the Moon. "Among dark pine woods, near the melancholy banks of the Stoxen, lies the old convent church of Wreta. My rays glided through the grating into the roomy vaults, where Kings sleep tranquilly in great stone coffins. On the wall, above the grave of each, is placed the emblem of earthly grandeur, a kingly crown; but it is made only of wood, painted and gilt, and is hung on a wooden peg driven into the wall. The worms have gnawn the gilded wood, the spider has spun her web from the crown down to the sand, like a mourning banner, frail and transient as the grief of mortals. How quietly they sleep! I can remember them quite plainly. I still see the bold smile on their lips, that so strongly and plainly expressed joy or grief. When the steamboat winds along like a magic snail over the lakes, a stranger often comes to the church, and visits the burial vault; he asks the names of the Kings, and they have a dead and forgotten sound. He glances with a smile at the worm-eaten crowns, and if he happens to be a pious,

thoughtful man, something of melancholy mingles with the smile. Slumber on, ye dead ones! The Moon thinks of you, the Moon at night sends down her rays into your silent kingdom, over which hangs the crown of pine wood."

TWENTY-NINTH EVENING.

"Close by the high road," said the Moon, "is an inn, and opposite to it is a great wagon shed, whose straw roof was just being re-thatched. I looked down between the bare rafters and through the open loft into the comfortless space below. The turkey-cock slept on the beam, and the saddle rested in the empty crib. In the middle of the shed stood a traveling carriage; the proprietor was inside, fast asleep, while the horses were being watered. The coachman stretched himself, though I am very sure that he had been most comfortably asleep half the last stage. The door of the servants' room stood open, and the bed looked as if it had been turned over and over; the candle stood on the floor, and had been burned deep down into the socket. The wind blew cold through the shed; it was nearer to the dawn than to midnight. In the wooden frame on the ground slept a wonderful family of musicians. The father and mother seemed to be dreaming of the burning liquor that remained in the bottle. The little pale daughter was dreaming, too, for her eyes were wet with tears. The harp stood at their heads, and the dog lay stretched at their feet."

THIRTIETH EVENING.

"It was in a little provincial town," the Moon said; "it certainly happened last year, but that has nothing to do with the matter. I saw it quite plainly. To-day I read about it in the papers, but there it is not half so clearly expressed. In the tap-room of the little inn sat the bear leader, eating his supper; the bear was tied up outside, behind the wood pile—poor Bruin, who did nobody any harm, though he looked grim enough. Up in the garret three little children were playing by the light of my beams; the eldest was perhaps six years old, the youngest certainly not more than

two. Tramp! tramp!—somebody was coming upstairs; who might it be? The door was thrust open—it was Bruin, the great, shaggy Bruin! He had got tired of waiting down in the courtyard, and had found his way to the stairs. I saw it all,” said the Moon. “The children were very much frightened at first at the great, shaggy animal; each of them crept into a corner, and he found them all out, and smelt at them, but did them no harm. ‘This must be a great dog,’ they said, and began to stroke him. He lay down upon the ground, the youngest boy clambered on his back, and, bending down a little head of golden curls, played at hiding in the beast’s shaggy skin. Presently the eldest boy took his drum, and beat it till it rattled again; the bear rose up on its hind legs and began to dance. It was a charming sight to behold. Each boy now took his gun, and the bear was obliged to have one, too, and he held it up quite properly. Here was a capital playmate they had found! and they began marching—one, two; one, two.

“Suddenly someone came to the door, which opened, and the mother of the children appeared. You should have seen her in her dumb terror, with her face as white as chalk, her mouth half open, and her eyes fixed in a horrified stare. But the youngest boy nodded to her in great glee, and called out in his infantile prattle, ‘We’re playing at soldiers.’ And then the bear leader came running up.”

THIRTY-FIRST EVENING.

The wind blew stormy and cold, the clouds flew hurriedly past; only for a moment now and then did the Moon become visible. He said, “I looked down from the silent sky upon the driving clouds, and saw the great shadows chasing each other across the earth. I looked upon a prison. A closed carriage stood before it; a prisoner was to be carried away. My rays pierced through the grated window toward the wall; the prisoner was scratching a few lines upon it, as a parting token; but he did not write words, but a melody, the outpouring of his heart. The door was opened, and he was led forth, and fixed his eyes upon my round disk. Clouds passed between us, as if he were not to see my face, nor I his. He stepped into the carriage, the

door was closed, the whip cracked, and the horses galloped off into the thick forest, whither my rays were not able to follow him; but as I glanced through the grated window, my rays glided over the notes, his last farewell engraved on the prison wall—where words fail, sounds can often speak. My rays could only light up isolated notes, so the greater part of what was written there will ever remain dark to me. Was it the death hymn he wrote there? Were these the glad notes of joy? Did he drive away to meet his death, or hasten to the embraces of his beloved? The rays of the Moon do not read all that is written by mortals.”

THIRTY-SECOND EVENING.

“I love the children,” said the Moon, “especially the quite little ones—they are so droll. Sometimes I peep into the room, between the curtain and the window frame, when they are not thinking of me. It gives me pleasure to see them dressing and undressing. First, the little round, naked shoulder comes creeping out of the frock, then the arm; or I see how the stocking is drawn off, and a plump little white leg makes its appearance, and a little white foot that is fit to be kissed, and I kiss it, too.

“But about what I was going to tell you. This evening I looked through a window, before which no curtain was drawn, for nobody lives opposite. I saw a whole troop of little ones, all of one family, and among them was a little sister. She is only four years old, but can say her prayers as well as any of the rest. The mother sits by her bed every evening, and hears her say her prayers; and then she has a kiss, and the mother sits by the bed till the little one has gone to sleep, which generally happens as soon as ever she can close her eyes.

“This evening the two elder children were a little boisterous. One of them hopped about on one leg in his long night-gown, and the other stood on a chair surrounded by the clothes of all the children, and declared he was acting Grecian statues. The third and fourth laid the clean linen carefully in the box, for that is a thing that has to be done; and the mother sat by the bed of the youngest, and an-

nounced to all the rest that they were to be quiet, for little sister was going to say her prayers.

"I looked in, over the lamp, into the little maiden's bed, where she lay under the neat white coverlet, her hands folded demurely and her little face quite grave and serious. She was praying the Lord's Prayer aloud. But her mother interrupted in the middle of her prayer. 'How is it,' she asked, 'that when you have prayed for daily bread, you always add something I cannot understand? You must tell me what that is.' The little one lay silent, and looked at her mother in embarrassment. 'What is it you say after our daily bread?' 'Dear mother, don't be angry; I only said, *and plenty of butter on it.*'"

THE END.

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