

The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Land of Lost Toys, by Juliana Horatia Ewing

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: The Land of Lost Toys

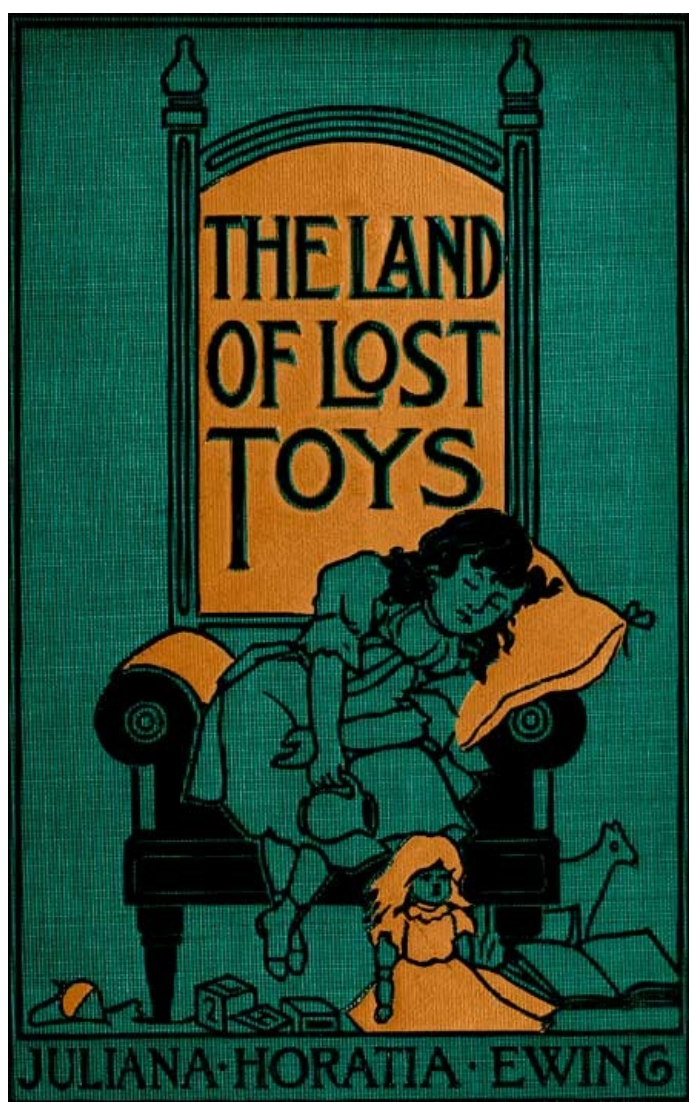
Author: Juliana Horatia Ewing

Release Date: October 24, 2010 [EBook #33880]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Sankar Viswanathan, Chris Curnow, and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net> (This file was produced from images generously made available by The Internet Archive)

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE LAND OF LOST TOYS ***





"Aunt Penelope's stories were charming."—Frontispiece.

THE LAND OF LOST TOYS

BY

JULIANA HORATIA EWING

AUTHOR OF "JACKANAPES," "DADDY DARWIN'S DOVECOT,"
"THE STORY OF A SHORT LIFE," "MARY'S MEADOW," ETC

Illustrated

BOSTON

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

Copyright, 1900,
BY LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

AN EARTHQUAKE IN THE NURSERY.

It was certainly an aggravated offence. It is generally understood in families that "boys will be boys," but there is a limit to the forbearance implied in the extenuating axiom. Master Sam was condemned to the back nursery for the rest of the day.

He always had had the knack of breaking his own toys,—he not unfrequently broke other people's; but accidents will happen, and his twin sister and factotum, Dot, was long-suffering.

Dot was fat, resolute, hasty, and devotedly unselfish. When Sam scalped her new doll, and fastened the glossy black curls to a wigwam improvised with the curtains of the four-post bed in the best bedroom, Dot was sorely tried. As her eyes passed from the crownless doll on the floor to the floss-silk ringlets hanging from the bed-furniture, her round rosy face grew rounder and rosier, and tears burst from her eyes. But in a moment more she clenched her little fists, forced back the tears, and gave vent to her favorite saying, "I don't care."

That sentence was Dot's bane and antidote; it was her vice and her virtue. It was her standing consolation, and it brought her into all her scrapes. It was her one panacea for all the ups and downs of her life (and in the nursery where Sam developed his organ of destructiveness there were ups and downs not a few); and it was the form her naughtiness took when she was naughty.

[2]

"Don't care fell into a goose-pond, Miss Dot," said nurse, on one occasion of the kind.

"I don't care if he did," said Miss Dot; and as nurse knew no further feature of the goose-pond adventure which met this view of it, she closed the subject by putting Dot into the corner.

In the strength of *Don't care*, and her love for Sam, Dot bore much and long. Her dolls perished by ingenious but untimely deaths. Her toys were put to purposes for which they were never intended, and suffered accordingly. But Sam was penitent, and Dot was heroic. Fiorinda's scalp was mended with a hot knitting-needle and a perpetual bonnet, and Dot rescued her paint-brushes from the glue-pot, and smelt her india-rubber as it boiled down in Sam's waterproof manufactory, with long-suffering forbearance.

There are, however, as we have said, limits to everything. An earthquake celebrated with the whole contents of the toy cupboard is not to be borne.

The matter was this. Early one morning Sam announced that he had a glorious project on hand. He was going to give a grand show and entertainment, far surpassing all the nursery imitations of circuses, conjurers, lectures on chemistry, and so forth, with which they had ever amused themselves. He refused to confide his plans to the faithful Dot; but he begged her to lend him all the toys she possessed, in return for which she was to be the sole spectator of the fun. He let out that the idea had suggested itself to him after the sight of a Diorama to which they had been taken, but he would not allow that it was anything of the same kind; in proof of which she was at liberty to keep back her paint-box. Dot tried hard to penetrate the secret, and to reserve some of her things from the general conscription. But Sam was obstinate. He would tell nothing, and he wanted everything. The dolls, the bricks (especially the bricks), the tea-things, the German farm, the Swiss cottages, the animals, and all the dolls' furniture. Dot gave them with a doubtful mind, and consoled herself as she watched Sam carrying pieces of board and a green table cover into the back nursery, with the prospect of a show. At last, Sam threw open the door and ushered her into the nursery rocking-chair.

[3]

The boy had certainly some constructive as well as destructive talent. Upon a sort of impromptu table covered with green cloth he had arranged all the toys in rough imitation of a town, with its streets and buildings. The relative proportion of the parts was certainly not good; but it was not Sam's fault that the doll's house and the German farm, his own brick buildings, and the Swiss cottages, were all on totally different scales of size. He had ingeniously put the larger things in the foreground, keeping the small farm-buildings from the German box at the far end of the streets, yet after all the perspective was extreme. The effect of three large horses from the toy stables in front, with the cows from the small Noah's Ark in the distance, was admirable; but the big dolls seated in an unroofed building, made with the wooden bricks on no architectural principle but that of a pound, and taking tea out of the new china tea things, looked simply ridiculous.

Dot's eyes, however, saw no defects, and she clapped vehemently.

[4]

"Here, ladies and gentlemen," said Sam, waving his hand politely towards the rocking-chair, "you see the great city of Lisbon, the capital of Portugal—"

At this display of geographical accuracy Dot fairly cheered, and rocked herself to and fro in unmitigated enjoyment.

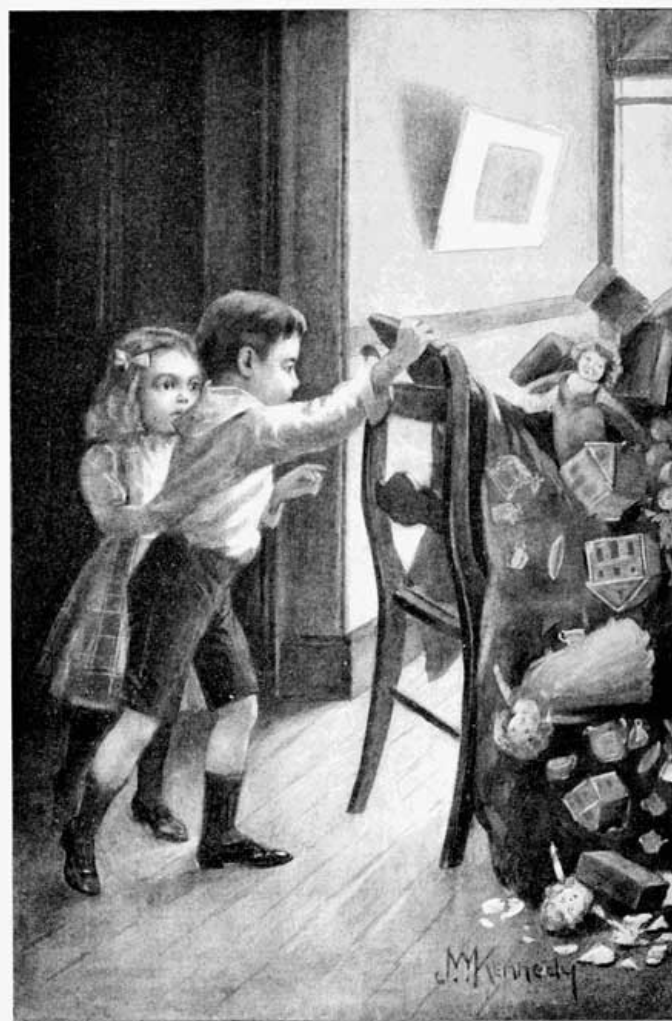
"—as it appeared," continued the showman, "on the morning of November 1st, 1755."

Never having had occasion to apply Mangnall's Questions to the exigencies of every-day life, this date in no way disturbed Dot's comfort.

"In this house," Sam proceeded, "a party of Portuguese ladies of rank may be seen taking tea

together."

"*Breakfast*, you mean," said Dot; "you said it was in the morning, you know."



"Suddenly the ground split and opened with a fearful yawn."—Page 5.

"Well, they took tea to their breakfast," said Sam. "Don't interrupt me, Dot. You are the audience, and you mustn't speak. Here you see the horses of the English ambassador out airing with his groom. There you see two peasants—no! they are *not* Noah and his wife, Dot, and if you go on talking I shall shut up. I say they are peasants peacefully driving cattle. At this moment a rumbling sound startles every one in the city"—here Sam rolled some croquet balls up and down in a box, but the dolls sat as quiet as before, and Dot alone was startled,—"this was succeeded by a slight shock"—here he shook the table, which upset some of the buildings belonging to the German farm.—"Some houses fell."—Dot began to look anxious.—"This shock was followed by several others.—" "Take care," she begged—"of increasing magnitude—" "Oh, Sam!" Dot shrieked, jumping up, "you're breaking the china!"—"The largest buildings shook to their foundations,—" "Sam! Sam! the doll's house is falling," Dot cried, making wild efforts to save it: but Sam held her back with one arm, whilst with the other he began to pull at the boards which formed his table—"Suddenly the ground split and opened with a fearful yawn"—Dot's shrieks shamed the impassive dolls, as Sam jerked out the boards by a dexterous movement, and doll's house, brick buildings, the farm, the Swiss cottages, and the whole toy-stock of the nursery, sank together in ruins. Quite unabashed by the evident damage, Sam continued—"and in a moment the whole magnificent city of Lisbon was swallowed up. Dot! Dot! don't be a muff! What's the matter? It's splendid fun. Things must be broken sometime, and I'm sure it was exactly like the real thing. Dot! why don't you speak? Dot! my dear Dot! You don't care, do you? I didn't think you'd mind it so. It was such a splendid earthquake. Oh! try not to go on like that!"

[5]

But Dot's feelings were far beyond her own control, much more that of Master Sam, at this moment. She was gasping and choking, and when at last she found breath it was only to throw herself on her face upon the floor with bitter and uncontrollable sobbing.

It was certainly a mild punishment that condemned Master Sam to the back nursery for the rest of the day. It had, however, this additional severity, that during the afternoon Aunt Penelope was expected to arrive.

AUNT PENELOPE.

Aunt Penelope was one of those dear, good souls, who, single themselves, have, as real or adopted relatives, the interests of a dozen families, instead of one, at heart. There are few people whose youth has not owned the influence of at least one such friend. It may be a good habit, the

[6]

first interest in some life-loved pursuit or favorite author, some pretty feminine art, or delicate womanly counsel enforced by those narratives of real life that are more interesting than any fiction: it may be only the periodical return of gifts and kindness, and the store of family histories that no one else can tell; but we all owe something to such an aunt or uncle—the fairy godmothers of real life.

The benefits which Sam and Dot reaped from Aunt Penelope's visits, may be summed up under the heads of presents and stories, with a general leaning to indulgence in the matters of punishment, lessons, and going to bed, which perhaps is natural to aunts and uncles who have no positive responsibilities in the young people's education, and are not the daily sufferers by the lack of due discipline.

Aunt Penelope's presents were lovely. Aunt Penelope's stories were charming. There was generally a moral wrapped up in them, like the motto in a cracker-bonbon; but it was quite in the inside, so to speak, and there was abundance of smart paper and sugar-plums.

All things considered, it was certainly most proper that the much-injured Dot should be dressed out in her best, and have access to dessert, the dining-room, and Aunt Penelope, whilst Sam was kept upstairs. And yet it was Dot who (her first burst of grief being over), fought stoutly for his pardon all the time she was being dressed, and was afterwards detected in the act of endeavoring to push fragments of raspberry tart through the nursery key-hole.

"You GOOD thing!" Sam emphatically exclaimed, as he heard her in fierce conflict on the other side of the door with the nurse who found her—"You GOOD thing! leave me alone, for I deserve it." [7]

He really was very penitent. He was too fond of Dot not to regret the unexpected degree of distress he had caused her; and Dot made much of his penitence in her intercessions in the drawing-room.

"Sam is so very sorry," she said, "he says he knows he deserves it. I think he ought to come down. He is so *very* sorry!"

Aunt Penelope, as usual, took the lenient side, joining her entreaties to Dot's, and it ended in Master Sam's being hurriedly scrubbed and brushed, and shoved into his black velvet suit, and sent down-stairs, rather red about the eyelids, and looking very sheepish.

"Oh, Dot!" he exclaimed, as soon as he could get her into a corner, "I am so very, very sorry! particularly about the tea-things."

"Never mind," said Dot, "I don't care; and I've asked for a story, and we're going into the library." As Dot said this, she jerked her head expressively in the direction of the sofa, where Aunt Penelope was just casting on stitches preparatory to beginning a pair of her famous ribbed socks for Papa, whilst she gave to Mamma's conversation that sympathy, which (like her knitting-needles) was always at the service of her large circle of friends. Dot anxiously watched the bow on the top of her cap as it danced and nodded with the force of Mamma's observations. At last it gave a little chorus of jerks, as one should say, "Certainly, undoubtedly." And then the story came to an end, and Dot, who had been slowly creeping nearer, fairly took Aunt Penelope by the hand, and carried her off, knitting and all, to the library. [8]

"Now, please," said Dot, when she had struggled into a chair that was too tall for her.

"Stop a minute!" cried Sam, who was perched in the opposite one, "the horsehair tickles my legs."

"Put your pocket-handkerchief under them, as I do," said Dot. "*Now*, Aunt Penelope."

"No, wait," groaned Sam; "it isn't big enough; it only covers one leg."

Dot slid down again, and ran to Sam.

"Take my handkerchief for the other."

"But what will you do?" said Sam.

"Oh, I don't care," said Dot, scrambling back into her place. "*Now*, Aunty, please."

And Aunt Penelope began.

THE LAND OF LOST TOYS.

"I suppose people who have children transfer their childish follies and fancies to them, and become properly sedate and grown-up. Perhaps it is because I am an old maid, and have none, that some of my nursery whims stick to me, and I find myself liking things, and wanting things, quite out of keeping with my cap and time of life. For instance. Anything in the shape of a toy-shop (from a London bazaar to a village window, with Dutch dolls, leather balls, and wooden battledores) quite unnerves me, so to speak. When I see one of those boxes containing a jar, a churn, a kettle, a pan, a coffee-pot, a cauldron on three legs, and sundry dishes, all of the smoothest wood, and with the immemorial red flower on one side of each vessel, I fairly long for an excuse for playing with them, and for trying (positively for the last time) if the lids *do* come off, and whether the kettle will (literally, as well as metaphorically) hold water. Then if, by good or ill luck, there is a child flattening its little nose against the window with longing eyes, my [9]

purse is soon empty; and as it toddles off with a square parcel under one arm, and a lovely being in black ringlets and white tissue paper in the other, I wish that I were worthy of being asked to join the ensuing play. Don't suppose there is any generosity in this. I have only done what we are all glad to do. I have found an excuse for indulging a pet weakness. As I said, it is not merely the new and expensive toys that attract me; I think my weakest corner is where the penny boxes lie, the wooden tea-things (with the above-named flower in miniature), the soldiers on their lazy tongs, the nine-pins, and the tiny farm.

"I need hardly say that the toy booth in a village fair tries me very hard. It tried me in childhood, when I was often short of pence, and when 'the Feast' came once a year. It never tried me more than on one occasion, lately, when I was revisiting my old home.

"It was deep Midsummer, and the Feast. I had children with me of course (I find children, somehow, wherever I go), and when we got into the fair, there were children of people whom I had known as children, with just the same love for a monkey going up one side of a yellow stick and coming down the other, and just as strong heads for a giddy-go-round on a hot day and a diet of peppermint lozenges, as their fathers and mothers before them. There were the very same names—and here and there it seemed the very same faces—I knew so long ago. A few shillings were indeed well expended in brightening those familiar eyes: and then there were the children with me.... Besides, there really did seem to be an unusually nice assortment of things, and the man was very intelligent (in reference to his wares:)... Well, well! It was two o'clock P. M. when we went in at one end of that glittering avenue of drums, dolls, trumpets, accordions, work-boxes and what not; but what o'clock it was when I came out at the other end, with a shilling and some coppers in my pocket, and was cheered, I can't say, though I should like to have been able to be accurate about the time, because of what followed.

[10]

"I thought the best thing I could do was to get out of the fair at once, so I went up the village and struck off across some fields into a little wood that lay near. (A favorite walk in old times.) As I turned out of the booth, my foot struck against one of the yellow sticks of the climbing monkeys. The monkey was gone, and the stick broken. It set me thinking as I walked along.

"What an untold number of pretty and ingenious things one does (not wear out in honorable wear and tear, but) utterly lose, and wilfully destroy, in one's young days—things that would have given pleasure to so many more young eyes, if they had been kept a little longer—things that one would so value in later years, if some of them had survived the dissipating and destructive days of Nurserydom. I recalled a young lady I knew, whose room was adorned with knick-knacks of a kind I had often envied. They were not plaster figures, old china, wax-work flowers under glass, or ordinary ornaments of any kind. They were her old toys. Perhaps she had not had many of them, and had been the more careful of those she had. She had certainly been very fond of them, and had kept more of them than any one I ever knew. A faded doll slept in its cradle at the foot of her bed. A wooden elephant stood on the dressing-table, and a poodle that had lost his bark put out a red-flannel tongue with quixotic violence at a windmill on the opposite corner of the mantelpiece. Everything had a story of its own. Indeed the whole room must have been redolent with the sweet story of childhood, of which the toys were the illustrations, or like a poem of which the toys were the verses. She used to have children to play with them sometimes, and this was a high honor. She is married now, and has children of her own, who on birthdays and holidays will forsake the newest of their own possessions to play with 'mamma's toys.'

[11]

"I was roused from these recollections by the pleasure of getting into the wood.

"If I have a stronger predilection than my love for toys, it is my love for woods, and, like the other, it dates from childhood. It was born and bred with me, and I fancy will stay with me till I die. The soothing scents of leaf mould, moss, and fern (not to speak of flowers)—the pale green veil in spring, the rich shade in summer, the rustle of the dry leaves in autumn, I suppose an old woman may enjoy all these, my dears, as well as you. But I think I could make 'fairy jam' of hips and haws in acorn cups now, if any child would be condescending enough to play with me.

"*This* wood, too, had associations.

"I strolled on in leisurely enjoyment, and at last seated myself at the foot of a tree to rest. I was hot and tired; partly with the mid-day heat and the atmosphere of the fair, partly with the exertion of calculating change in the purchase of articles ranging in price from three farthings upwards. The tree under which I sat was an old friend. There was a hole at its base that I knew well. Two roots covered with exquisite moss ran out from each side, like the arms of a chair, and between them there accumulated year after year a rich, though tiny store of dark leaf-mould. We always used to say that fairies lived within, though I never saw anything go in myself but wood beetles. There was one going in at that moment.

[12]

"How little the wood was changed! I bent my head for a few seconds, and, closing my eyes, drank in the delicious and suggestive scents of earth and moss about the dear old tree. I had been so long parted from the place that I could hardly believe that I was in the old familiar spot. Surely it was only one of the many dreams in which I had played again beneath those trees! But when I reopened my eyes there was the same hole, and, oddly enough, the same beetle or one just like it. I had not noticed till that moment how much larger the hole was than it used to be in my young days.

"I suppose the rain and so forth wears them away in time,' I said vaguely.

"Suppose it does,' said the beetle politely; 'will you walk in?'

"I don't know why I was not so overpoweringly astonished as you would imagine. I think I was a good deal absorbed in considering the size of the hole, and the very foolish wish that seized me to do what I had often longed to do in childhood, and creep in. I *had* so much regard for propriety as to see that there was no one to witness the escapade. Then I tucked my skirts round me, put my spectacles into my pocket for fear they should get broken, and in I went.

"I must say one thing. A wood is charming enough (no one appreciates it more than myself), but, if you have never been there, you have no idea how much nicer it is inside than on the surface. Oh, the mosses—the gorgeous mosses! The fretted lichens! The fungi like flowers for beauty, and the flowers like nothing you have ever seen!

[13]

"Where the beetle went to I don't know. I could stand up now quite well, and I wandered on till dusk in unwearied admiration. I was among some large beeches as it grew dark, and was beginning to wonder how I should find my way (not that I had lost it, having none to lose), when suddenly lights burst from every tree, and the whole place was illuminated. The nearest approach to this scene that I ever witnessed above ground was in a wood near the Hague in Holland. There, what look like tiny glass tumblers holding floating wicks, are fastened to the trunks of the fine old trees, at intervals of sufficient distance to make the light and shade mysterious, and to give effect to the full blaze when you reach the spot where hanging chains of lamps illuminate the 'Pavilion' and the open space where the band plays, and where the townsfolk assemble by hundreds to drink coffee and enjoy the music. I was the more reminded of the Dutch 'bosch' because, after wandering some time among the lighted trees, I heard distant sounds of music, and came at last upon a glade lit up in a similar manner, except that the whole effect was incomparably more brilliant.

"As I stood for a moment doubting whether I should proceed, and a good deal puzzled about the whole affair, I caught sight of a large spider crouched up in a corner with his stomach on the ground and his knees above his head, as some spiders do sit, and looking at me, as I fancied, through a pair of spectacles. (About the spectacles I do not feel sure. It may have been two of his bent legs in apparent connection with his prominent eyes.) I thought of the beetle, and said civilly, 'Can you tell me, sir, if this is Fairyland?' The spider took off his spectacles (or untucked his legs), and took a sideways run out of his corner.

[14]

"'Well,' he said, 'it's a Province. The fact is, it's the Land of Lost Toys. You haven't such a thing as a fly anywhere about you, have you?'

"'No,' I said, 'I'm sorry to say I have not.' This was not strictly true, for I was not at all sorry; but I wished to be civil to the old gentleman, for he projected his eyes at me with such an intense (I had almost said greedy) gaze, that I felt quite frightened.

"'How did you pass the sentries?' he inquired.

"'I never saw any,' I answered.

"'You couldn't have seen anything if you didn't see them,' he said; 'but perhaps you don't know. They're the glow-worms. Six to each tree, so they light the road, and challenge the passers-by. Why didn't they challenge you?'

"'I don't know,' I began, 'unless the beetle——'

"'I don't like beetles,' interrupted the spider, stretching each leg in turn by sticking it up above him, 'all shell, and no flavor. You never tried walking on anything of that sort, did you?' and he pointed with one leg to a long thread that fastened a web above his head.

"'Certainly not,' said I.

"'I'm afraid it wouldn't bear you,' he observed slowly.

"'I'm quite sure it wouldn't,' I hastened to reply. 'I wouldn't try for worlds. It would spoil your pretty work in a moment. Good-evening.'

"And I hurried forward. Once I looked back, but the spider was not following me. He was in his hole again, on his stomach, with his knees above his head, and looking (apparently through his spectacles) down the road up which I came.

[15]

"I soon forgot him in the sight before me. I had reached the open place with the lights and the music; but how shall I describe the spectacle that I beheld?

"I have spoken of the effect of a toy-shop on my feelings. Now imagine a toy-fair, brighter and gayer than the brightest bazaar ever seen, held in an open glade, where forest-trees stood majestically behind the glittering stalls, and stretched their gigantic arms above our heads, brilliant with a thousand hanging lamps. At the moment of my entrance all was silent and quiet. The toys lay in their places looking so incredibly attractive that I reflected with disgust that all my ready cash, except one shilling and some coppers, had melted away amid the tawdry fascinations of a village booth. I was counting the coppers (sevenpence halfpenny), when all in a moment a dozen sixpenny fiddles leaped from their places and began to play, accordions of all sizes joined them, the drumsticks beat upon the drums, the penny trumpets sounded, and the yellow flutes took up the melody on high notes, and bore it away through the trees. It was weird fairy-music, but quite delightful. The nearest approach to it that I know of above ground is to hear a wild dreamy air very well whistled to a pianoforte accompaniment.

"When the music began, all the toys rose. The dolls jumped down and began to dance. The poodles barked, the pannier donkeys wagged their ears, the windmills turned, the puzzles put themselves together, the bricks built houses, the balls flew from side to side, the battle-doors and shuttlecocks kept it up among themselves, and the skipping-ropes went round, the hoops ran off, and the sticks went after them, the cobbler's wax at the tails of all the green frogs gave way, and they jumped at the same moment, whilst an old-fashioned go-cart ran madly about with nobody inside. It was most exhilarating.

[16]

"I soon became aware that the beetle was once more at my elbow.

"'There are some beautiful toys here,' I said.

"'Well, yes,' he replied, 'and some odd-looking ones, too. You see, whatever has been really used by any child as a plaything gets a right to come down here in the end; and there is some very queer company, I assure you. Look there.'

"I looked, and said, 'It seems to be a potato.'

"'So it is,' said the beetle. 'It belonged to an Irish child in one of your great cities. But to whom the child belonged I don't know, and I don't think he knew himself. He lived in a corner of a dirty, over-crowded room, and into this corner, one day, the potato rolled. It was the only plaything he ever had. He stuck two cinders into it for eyes, scraped a nose and mouth, and loved it. He sat upon it during the day, for fear it should be taken from him, but in the dark he took it out and played with it. He was often hungry, but he never ate that potato. When he died it rolled out of the corner, and was swept into the ashes. Then it came down here.'

"'What a sad story!' I exclaimed.

"The beetle seemed in no way affected.

"'It is a curious thing,' he rambled on, 'that potato takes quite a good place among the toys. You see, rank and precedence down here is entirely a question of age; that is, of the length of time that any plaything has been in the possession of a child; and all kinds of ugly old things hold the first rank; whereas the most costly and beautiful works of art have often been smashed or lost, by the spoilt children of rich people, in two or three days. If you care for sad stories, there is another queer thing belonging to a child who died.'

[17]

"It appeared to be a large sheet of canvas with some strange kind of needlework upon it.

"'It belonged to a little girl in a rich household,' the beetle continued; 'she was an invalid, and difficult to amuse. We have lots of her toys, and very pretty ones too. At last some one taught her to make caterpillars in wool-work. A bit of work was to be done in a certain stitch and then cut with scissors, which made it look like a hairy caterpillar. The child took to this, and cared for nothing else. Wool of every shade was procured for her, and she made caterpillars of all colors. Her only complaint was that they did not turn into butterflies. However, she was a sweet, gentle-tempered child, and she went on, hoping that they would do so, and making new ones. One day she was heard talking and laughing in her bed for joy. She said that all the caterpillars had become butterflies of many colors, and that the room was full of them. In that happy fancy she died.'

"'And the caterpillars came down here?'

"'Not for a long time,' said the beetle; 'her mother kept them while *she* lived, and then they were lost and came down. No toys come down here till they are broken or lost.'

"'What are those sticks doing here?' I asked.

[18]

"The music had ceased, and all the toys were lying quiet. Up in a corner leaned a large bundle of walking-sticks. They are often sold in toy-shops, but I wondered on what grounds they came here.

"'Did you ever meet with a too benevolent old gentleman wondering where on earth his sticks go to?' said the beetle. 'Why do they lend them to their grandchildren? The young rogues use them as hobby-horses and lose them, and down they come, and the sentinels cannot stop them. The real hobby-horses won't allow them to ride with them, however. There was a meeting on the subject. Every stick was put through an examination. 'Where is your nose? Where is your mane? Where are your wheels?' The last was a poser. Some of them had got noses, but none of them had got wheels. So they were not true hobby-horses. Something of the kind occurred with the elder whistles.'

"'The what?' I asked.

"'Whistles that boys make of elder sticks with the pith scooped out,' said the beetle. 'The real instruments would not allow them to play with them. The elder-whistles said they would not have joined had they been asked. They were amateurs, and never played with professionals. So they have private concerts with the combs and curl-papers. But, bless you, toys of this kind are endless here! Teetotums made of old cotton reels, tea-sets of acorn cups, dinner-sets of old shells, monkeys made of bits of sponge, all sorts of things made of breastbones and merrythoughts, old packs of cards that are always building themselves into houses and getting knocked down when the band begins to play, feathers, rabbits' tails—'

[19]

"'Ah! I have heard about rabbits' tails,' I said.

"There they are,' the beetle continued; 'and when the band plays you will see how they skip and run. I don't believe you would find out that they had no bodies, for my experience of a warren is, that when rabbits skip and run it is the tails chiefly that you do see. But of all the amateur toys the most successful are the boats. We have a lake for our craft, you know, and there's quite a fleet of boats made out of old cork floats in fishing villages. Then, you see, the old bits of cork have really been to sea, and seen a good deal of service on the herring nets, and so they quite take the lead of the smart shop ships, that have never been beyond a pond or a tub of water. But that's an exception. Amateur toys are mostly very dowdy. Look at that box.'

"I looked, thought I must have seen it before, and wondered why a very common-looking box without a lid should affect me so strangely, and why my memory should seem struggling to bring it back out of the past. Suddenly it came to me—it was our old Toy Box.

"I had completely forgotten that nursery institution till recalled by the familiar aspect of the inside, which was papered with proof-sheets of some old novel on which black stars had been stamped by way of ornament. Dim memories of how these stars, and the angles of the box, and certain projecting nails interfered with the letter-press and defeated all attempts to trace the thread of the nameless narrative, stole back over my brain; and I seemed once more, with my head in the Toy Box, to beguile a wet afternoon by apoplectic endeavors to follow the fortunes of Sir Charles and Lady Belinda, as they took a favorable turn in the left-hand corner at the bottom of the trunk.

[20]

"What are you staring at?' said the beetle.

"It's my old Toy Box!' I exclaimed.

"The beetle rolled on to his back, and struggled helplessly with his legs: I turned him over. (Neither the first nor the last time of my showing that attention to beetles.)

"That's right,' he said, 'set me on my legs. What a turn you gave me! You don't mean to say you have any toys here? If you have, the sooner you make your way home the better.'

"Why?' I inquired.

"Well,' he said, 'there's a very strong feeling in the place. The toys think that they are ill-treated, and not taken care of by children in general. And there is some truth in it. Toys come down here by scores that have been broken the first day. And they are all quite resolved that if any of their old masters or mistresses come this way they shall be punished.'

"How will they be punished?' I inquired.

"Exactly as they did to their toys, their toys will do to them. All is perfectly fair and regular.'

"I don't know that I treated mine particularly badly,' I said; 'but I think I would rather go.'

"I think you'd better,' said the beetle. 'Good-evening!' and I saw him no more.

"I turned to go, but somehow I lost the road. At last, as I thought, I found it, and had gone a few steps when I came on a detachment of wooden soldiers, drawn up on their lazy tongs. I thought it better to wait till they got out of the way, so I turned back, and sat down in a corner in some alarm. As I did so, I heard a click, and the lid of a small box covered with mottled paper burst open, and up jumped a figure in a blue striped shirt and a rabbit-skin beard, whose eyes were intently fixed on me. He was very like my old Jack-in-a-box. My back began to creep, and I wildly meditated escape, frantically trying at the same time to recall whether it were I or my brother who originated the idea of making a small bonfire of our own one 5th of November, and burning the old Jack-in-a-box for Guy Fawkes, till nothing was left of him but a twirling bit of red-hot wire and a strong smell of frizzled fur. At this moment, he nodded to me and spoke.

[21]

"Oh! that's you, is it?' he said.

"No, it is not,' I answered, hastily; for I was quite demoralized by fear and the strangeness of the situation.

"Who is it, then?' he inquired.

"I'm sure I don't know,' I said; and really I was so confused that I hardly did.

"Well, we know,' said the Jack-in-a-box, 'and that's all that's needed. 'Now, my friends,' he continued, addressing the toys who had begun to crowd round us, 'whoever recognizes a mistress and remembers a grudge—the hour of our revenge has come. Can we any of us forget the treatment we received at her hands? No! When we think of the ingenious fancy, the patient skill, that went to our manufacture; that fitted the delicate joints and springs, laid on the paint and varnish, and gave back-hair combs, and ear-rings to our smallest dolls, we feel that we deserved more care than we received. When we reflect upon the kind friends who bought us with their money, and gave us away in the benevolence of their hearts, we know that for their sakes we ought to have been longer kept and better valued. And when we remember that the sole object of our own existence was to give pleasure and amusement to our possessors, we have no hesitation in believing that we deserved a handsomer return than to have had our springs broken, our paint dirtied, and our earthly careers so untimely shortened by wilful mischief or fickle neglect. My friends, the prisoner is at the bar.'

[22]

"I am not, I said; for I was determined not to give in as long as resistance was possible. But as I

said it I became aware, to my unutterable amazement, that I was inside the go-cart. How I got there is to this moment a mystery to me—but there I was.

"There was a great deal of excitement about the Jack-in-a-box's speech. It was evident that he was considered an orator, and, indeed, I have seen counsel in a real court look wonderfully like him. Meanwhile, my old toys appeared to be getting together. I had no idea that I had had so many. I had really been very fond of most of them, and my heart beat as the sight of them recalled scenes long forgotten, and took me back to childhood and home. There were my little gardening tools, and my slate, and there was the big doll's bedstead, that had a real mattress, and real sheets and blankets, all marked with the letter D, and a work-basket made in the blind school, and a shilling School of Art paint box, and a wooden doll we used to call the Dowager, and innumerable other toys which I had forgotten till the sight of them recalled them to my memory, but which have again passed from my mind. Exactly opposite to me stood the Chinese mandarin, nodding as I had never seen him nod since the day when I finally stopped his performances by ill-directed efforts to discover how he did it.

"And what was that familiar figure among the rest, in a yellow silk dress and maroon velvet cloak and hood trimmed with black lace? How those clothes recalled the friends who gave them to me! And surely this was no other than my dear doll Rosa—the beloved companion of five years of my youth, whose hair I wore in a locket after I was grown up. No one could say I had ill-treated *her*. Indeed, she fixed her eyes on me with a most encouraging smile—but then she always smiled, her mouth was painted so.

[23]

"All whom it may concern, take notice," shouted the Jack-in-a-box, at this point, "that the rule of this honorable court is tit for tat."

"Tit, tat, tumble two," muttered the slate in a cracked voice. (How well I remembered the fall that cracked it, and the sly games of tit tat that varied the monotony of our long multiplication sums!)

"What are you talking about?" said the Jack-in-a-box, sharply; "if you have grievances, state them, and you shall have satisfaction, as I told you before."

"—and five make nine," added the slate promptly, "and six are fifteen, and eight are twenty-seven—there we go again! I wonder why I never get up to the top of a line of figures right. It will never prove at this rate."

"His mind is lost in calculations," said the Jack-in-a-box, "besides—between ourselves—he has been "cracky" for some time. Let some one else speak, and observe that no one is at liberty to pass a sentence on the prisoner heavier than what he has suffered from her. I reserve *my* judgment to the last."

"I know what that will be," thought I; "oh dear! oh dear! that a respectable maiden lady should live to be burnt as a Guy Fawkes!"

"Let the prisoner drink a gallon of iced water at once, and then be left to die of thirst."

[24]

"The horrible idea that the speaker might possibly have the power to enforce his sentence diverted my attention from the slate, and I looked round. In front of the Jack-in-a-box stood a tiny red flower-pot and saucer, in which was a miniature cactus. My thoughts flew back to a bazaar in London where, years ago, a stand of these fairy plants had excited my warmest longings, and where a benevolent old gentleman whom I had not seen before, and never saw again, bought this one and gave it to me. Vague memories of his directions for re-potting and tending it reproached me from the past. My mind misgave me that after all it had died a dusty death for lack of water. True, the cactus tribe being succulent plants do not demand much moisture, but I had reason to fear that, in this instance, the principle had been applied too far, and that after copious baths of cold spring water in the first days of its popularity it had eventually perished by drought. I suppose I looked guilty, for it nodded its prickly head towards me, and said, 'Ah! you know me. You remember what I was, do you? Did you ever think of what I might have been? There was a fairy rose which came down here not long ago—a common rose enough, in a broken pot patched with string and white paint. It had lived in a street where it was the only pure beautiful thing your eyes could see. When the girl who kept it died there were eighteen roses upon it. She was eighteen years old, and they put the roses in the coffin with her when she was buried. That was worth living for. Who knows what I might have done? And what right had you to cut short a life that might have been useful?'

"Before I could think of a reply to these too just reproaches, the flower-pot enlarged, the plant shot up, putting forth new branches as it grew; then buds burst from the prickly limbs, and in a few moments there hung about it great drooping blossoms of lovely pink, with long white tassels in their throats. I had been gazing at it some time in silent and self-reproachful admiration when I became aware that the business of this strange court was proceeding, and that the other toys were pronouncing sentence against me.

[25]

"Tie a string round her neck and take her out bathing in the brooks," I heard an elderly voice say in severe tones. It was the Dowager Doll. She was inflexibly wooden, and had been in the family for more than one generation.

"It's not fair," I exclaimed, "the string was only to keep you from being carried away by the stream. The current is strong, and the bank steep by the Hollow Oak Pool, and you had no arms or legs. You were old and ugly, but you would wash, and we loved you better than many waxen

beauties.'

"'Old and ugly!' shrieked the Dowager. 'Tear her wig off! Scrub the paint off her face! Flatten her nose on the pavement! Saw off her legs and give her no crinoline! Take her out bathing, I say, and bring her home in a wheelbarrow with fern roots on the top of her.'

"I was about to protest again, when the paint-box came forward, and balancing itself in an artistic, undecided kind of way on two camel's-hair brushes which seemed to serve it for feet, addressed the Jack-in-a-box.

"'Never dip your paint into the water. Never put your brush into your mouth——'

"'That's not evidence,' said the Jack-in-a-box.

"'Your notions are crude,' said the paint-box loftily; 'it's in print, and here, all of it, or words to that effect; with which he touched the lid, as a gentleman might lay his hand upon his heart. [26]

"'It's not evidence,' repeated the Jack-in-a-box. 'Let us proceed.'

"'Take her to pieces and see what she's made of, if you please,' tittered a pretty German toy that moved to a tinkling musical accompaniment. 'If her works are available after that it will be an era in natural science.'

"The idea tickled me, and I laughed.

"'Hard-hearted wretch!' growled the Dowager Doll.

"'Dip her in water and leave her to soak on a white soup plate,' said the paint-box; 'if that doesn't soften her feelings, deprive me of my medal from the School of Art!'

"'Give her a stiff neck!' muttered the mandarin. 'Ching Fo! give her a stiff neck.'

"'Knock her teeth out,' growled the rake in a scratchy voice; and then the tools joined in chorus.

"'Take her out when its fine and leave her out when it's wet, and lose her in——

"'The coal hole,' said the spade.

"'The hay field,' said the rake.

"'The shrubbery,' said the hoe.

"This difference of opinion produced a quarrel, which in turn seemed to affect the general behavior of the toys, for a disturbance arose which the Jack-in-a-box vainly endeavored to quell. A dozen voices shouted for a dozen different punishments and (happily for me) each toy insisted upon its own wrongs being the first to be avenged, and no one would hear of the claims of any one else being attended to for an instant. Terrible sentences were passed, which I either failed to hear through the clamor then, or have forgotten now. I have a vague idea that several voices cried that I was to be sent to wash in somebody's pocket; that the work-basket wished to cram my mouth with unfinished needlework; and that through all the din the thick voice of my old leather ball monotonously repeated: [27]

"'Throw her into the dust-hole.'

"Suddenly a clear voice pierced the confusion, and Rosa tripped up.

"'My dears,' she began, 'the only chance of restoring order is to observe method. Let us follow our usual rule of precedence. I claim the first turn as the prisoner's oldest toy.'

"'That you are not, Miss,' snapped the dowager; 'I was in the family for fifty years.'

"'In the family. Yes, ma'am; but you were never her doll in particular. I was her very own, and she kept me longer than any other plaything. My judgment must be first.'

"'She is right,' said the Jack-in-a-box, 'and now let us get on. The prisoner is delivered unreservedly into the hands of our trusty and well-beloved Rosa—doll of the first class—for punishment according to the strict law of tit for tat.'

"'I shall request the assistance of the pewter tea-things,' said Rosa, with her usual smile. 'And now, my love,' she added, turning to me, 'we will come and sit down.'

"Where the go-cart vanished to I cannot remember, nor how I got out of it; I only know that I suddenly found myself free, and walking away with my hand in Rosa's. I remember vacantly feeling the rough edge of the stitches on her flat kid fingers, and wondering what would come next. [28]

"'How very oddly you hold your feet, my dear,' she said; 'you stick out your toes in such an eccentric fashion, and you lean on your legs as if they were table legs, instead of supporting yourself by my hand. Turn your heels well out, and bring your toes together. You may even let them fold over each other a little; it is considered to have a pretty effect among dolls.'

"Under one of the big trees Miss Rosa made me sit down, propping me against the trunk as if I should otherwise have fallen; and in a moment more a square box of pewter tea-things came tumbling up to our feet, where the lid burst open, and all the tea-things fell out in perfect order; the cups on the saucers, the lid on the teapot and so on.

"Take a little tea my love?" said Miss Rosa pressing a pewter teacup to my lips.

"I made believe to drink, but was only conscious of inhaling a draught of air with a slight flavor of tin. In taking my second cup I was nearly choked with the teaspoon, which got into my throat.

"What are you doing?" roared the Jack-in-a-box at this moment; 'you are not punishing her.'

"I am treating her as she treated me,' answered Rosa, looking as severe as her smile would allow. 'I believe that tit for tat is the rule, and that at present it is my turn.'

"It will be mine soon,' growled the Jack-in-a-box, and I thought of the bonfire with a shudder. However, there was no knowing what might happen before his turn did come, and meanwhile I was in friendly hands. It was not the first time my dolly and I had set together under a tree, and, truth to say, I do not think she had any injuries to avenge. [29]

"When your wig comes off,' murmured Rosa, as she stole a pink kid arm tenderly round my neck, 'I'll make you a cap with blue and white rosettes, and pretend that you have had a fever.'

"I thanked her gratefully, and was glad to reflect that I was not yet in need of an attention which I distinctly remember having shown to her in the days of her dollhood. Presently she jumped up.

"I think you shall go to bed now, dear,' she said, and, taking my hand once more, she led me to the big doll's bedstead, which, with its pretty bedclothes and white dimity furniture, looked tempting enough to a sleeper of suitable size. It could not have supported one quarter of my weight.

"I have not made you a night-dress, my love,' Rosa continued; 'I am not fond of my needle you know. *You* were not fond of your needle, I think. I fear you must go to bed in your clothes, my dear.'

"You are very kind,' I said, 'but I am not tired, and—it would not bear my weight.'

"Pooh! pooh!' said Rosa. 'My love! I remember passing one Sunday in it with the rag-doll, and the Dowager, and the Punch and Judy (the amount of pillow their two noses took up I shall never forget!), and the old doll that had nothing on, because her clothes were in the dolls' wash and did not get ironed on Saturday night, and the Highlander, whose things wouldn't come off, and who slept in his kilt. Not bear you? Nonsense! You must go to bed, my dear. I've got other things to do, and I can't leave you lying about.'

"The whole lot of you did not weigh one quarter of what I do,' I cried desperately. 'I cannot, and will not get into that bed; I should break it all to pieces, and hurt myself into the bargain.' [30]

"Well, if you will not go to bed, I must put you there,' said Rosa, and without more ado, she snatched me up in her kid arms, and laid me down.

"Of course it was just as I expected. I had hardly touched the two little pillows (they had a meal-baggy smell from being stuffed with bran), when the woodwork gave way with a crash, and I fell—fell—

"Though I fully believed every bone in my body to be broken, it was really a relief to get to the ground. As soon as I could, I sat up, and felt myself all over. A little stiff, but, as it seemed, unhurt. Oddly enough, I found that I was back again under the tree; and more strange still, it was not the tree where I sat with Rosa, but the old oak-tree in the little wood. Was it all a dream? The toys had vanished, the lights were out, the mosses looked dull in the growing dusk, the evening was chilly, the hole no larger than it was thirty years ago, and when I felt in my pocket for my spectacles I found that they were on my nose.

"I have returned to the spot many times since, but I never could induce a beetle to enter into conversation on the subject, the hole remains obstinately impassable, and I have not been able to repeat my visit to the Land of Lost Toys.

"When I recall my many sins against the playthings of my childhood, I am constrained humbly to acknowledge that perhaps this is just as well."

SAM SETS UP SHOP.

"I think you might help me, Dot," cried Sam in dismal and rather injured tones.

It was the morning following the day of the earthquake, and of Aunt Penelope's arrival. Sam had his back to Dot, and his face to the fire, over which indeed he had bent for so long that he appeared to be half roasted. [31]

"What do you want?" asked Dot, who was working at a doll's night-dress that had for long been partly finished, and now seemed in a fair way to completion.

"It's the glue-pot," Sam continued. "It does take so long to boil. And I have been stirring at the glue with a stick for ever so long to get it to melt. It is very hot work. I wish you would take it for a bit. It's as much for your good as for mine."

"Is it?" said Dot.

"Yes it is, Miss," cried Sam. "You must know I've got a splendid idea."

"Not another earthquake, I hope?" said Dot, smiling.

"Now, Dot, that's truly unkind of you. I thought it was to be forgotten."

"So it is," said Dot, getting up. "I was only joking. What is the idea?"

"I don't think I shall tell you till I have finished my shop. I want to get to it now, and I wish you would take a turn at the glue-pot."

Sam was apt to want a change of occupation. Dot, on the other hand, was equally averse from leaving what she was about till it was finished, so they suited each other like Jack Sprat and his wife. It had been an effort to Dot to leave the night-dress which she had hoped to finish at a sitting; but when she was fairly set to work on the glue business she never moved till the glue was in working order, and her face as red as a ripe tomato.

By this time Sam had set up business in the window-seat, and was fastening a large paper inscription over his shop. It ran thus:— [32]

MR. SAM,

*Dolls Doctor and Toymender to Her Majesty the
Queen, and all other Potentates.*

"Splendid!" shouted Dot, who was serving up the glue as if it had been a kettle of soup, and who looked herself very like an overtoasted cook.

Sam took the glue, and began to bustle about.

"Now, Dot, get me all the broken toys, and we'll see what we can do. And here's a second splendid idea. Do you see that box? Into that we shall put all the toys that are quite spoiled and cannot possibly be mended. It is to be called the Hospital for Incurables. I've got a placard for that. At least it's not written yet, but here's the paper, and perhaps you would write it, Dot, for I am tired of writing and I want to begin the mending."

"For the future," he presently resumed, "when I want a doll to scalp or behead, I shall apply to the Hospital for Incurables, and the same with any other toy that I want to destroy. And you will see, my dear Dot, that I shall be quite a blessing to the nursery; for I shall attend the dolls gratis, and keep all the furniture in repair."

Sam really kept his word. He had a natural turn for mechanical work, and, backed by Dot's more methodical genius, he prolonged the days of the broken toys by skillful mending, and so acquired an interest in them which was still more favorable to their preservation. When his birthday came round, which was some months after these events, Dot (assisted by Mamma and Aunt Penelope), had prepared for him a surprise that was more than equal to any of his own "splendid ideas." The whole force of the toy cupboard was assembled on the nursery table, to present Sam with a fine box of joiner's tools as a reward for his services, Papa kindly acting as spokesman on the occasion. [33]

And certain gaps in the china tea-set, some scars on the dolls' faces, and a good many new legs, both amongst the furniture and the animals, are now the only remaining traces of Sam's earthquake.

THE BROWNIES.

[34]

A little girl sat sewing and crying on a garden seat. She had fair floating hair, which the breeze blew into her eyes; and between the cloud of hair, and the mist of tears, she could not see her work very clearly. She neither tied up her locks, nor dried her eyes, however; for when one is miserable, one may as well be completely so.

"What is the matter?" said the Doctor, who was a friend of the Rector's, and came into the garden whenever he pleased.

The Doctor was a tall stout man, with hair as black as crows' feathers on the top, and gray underneath, and a bushy beard. When young, he had been slim and handsome, with wonderful eyes, which were wonderful still; but that was many years past. He had a great love for children, and this one was a particular friend of his.

"What is the matter?" said he.

"I'm in a row," murmured the young lady through her veil; and the needle went in damp, and came out with a jerk, which is apt to result in what ladies called "puckering."

"You are like London in a yellow fog," said the Doctor, throwing himself on to the grass, "and it is very depressing to my feelings. What is the row about, and how came you to get into it?"



The Brownies.—Page 34.

"We're all in it," was the reply; and apparently the fog was thickening, for the voice grew less and less distinct—"the boys and everybody. It's all about forgetting, and not putting away, and leaving about, and borrowing, and breaking, and that sort of thing. I've had father's new pocket-handkerchiefs to hem, and I've been out climbing with the boys, and kept forgetting and forgetting, and mother says I always forget; and I can't help it. I forget to tidy his newspapers for him, and I forget to feed Puss, and I forgot these; besides, they're a great bore, and mother gave them to Nurse to do, and this one was lost, and we found it this morning tossing about in the toy-cupboard." [35]

"It looks as if it had been taking violent exercise," said the Doctor. "But what have the boys to do with it?"

"Why, then there was a regular turn out of the toys," she explained, "and they're all in a regular mess. You know, we always go on till the last minute, and then things get crammed in anyhow. Mary and I did tidy them once or twice; but the boys never put anything away, you know, so what's the good?"

"What, indeed!" said the Doctor. "And so you have complained of them?"

"Oh! no!" answered she. "We don't get them into rows, unless they are very provoking; but some of the things were theirs, so everybody was sent for, and I was sent out to finish this, and they are all tidying. I don't know when it will be done, for I have all this side to hem: and the soldier's box is broken, and Noah is lost out of the Noah's Ark, and so is one of the elephants and a guinea-pig, and so is the rocking-horse's nose: and nobody knows what has become of Rutlandshire and the Wash, but they're so small, I don't wonder; only North America and Europe are gone too." [36]

The Doctor started up in affected horror. "Europe gone, did you say? Bless me! what will become of us!"

"Don't!" said the young lady, kicking petulantly with her dangling feet, and trying not to laugh. "You know I mean the puzzles; and if they were yours, you wouldn't like it."

"I don't half like it as it is," said the Doctor. "I am seriously alarmed. An earthquake is one thing: you have a good shaking, and settle down again. But Europe gone—lost—Why, here comes Deordie, I declare, looking much more cheerful than we do; let us humbly hope that Europe has been found. At present I feel like Aladdin when his palace had been transported by the magician; I don't know where I am."

"You're here, Doctor; aren't you?" asked the slow curly-wigged brother, squatting himself on the grass.

"Is Europe found?" said the Doctor tragically.

"Yes," laughed Deordie. "I found it."

"You will be a great man," said the Doctor. "And—it is only common charity to ask—how about North America?"

"Found too," said Deordie. "But the Wash is completely lost."

"And my six shirts in it!" said the Doctor. "I sent them last Saturday as ever was. What a world we live in! Any more news? Poor Tiny here has been crying her eyes out."

"I'm so sorry, Tiny," said the brother. "But don't bother about it. It's all square now, and we're going to have a new shelf put up."

"Have you found everything?" asked Tiny.

[37]

"Well, not the Wash, you know. And the elephant and the guinea-pig are gone for good; so the other elephant and the other guinea-pig must walk together as a pair now. Noah was among the soldiers, and we have put the cavalry into a night-light box. Europe and North America were behind the book-case; and, would you believe it? the rocking-horse's nose has turned up in the nursery oven."

"I can't believe it," said the Doctor. "The rocking-horse's nose couldn't turn up, it was the purest Grecian, modelled from the Elgin marbles. Perhaps it was the heat that did it, though. However, you seem to have got through your troubles very well, Master Deordie. I wish poor Tiny were at the end of her task."

"So do I," said Deordie ruefully. "But I tell you what I've been thinking, Doctor. Nurse is always knagging at us, and we're always in rows of one sort or another, for doing this, and not doing that, and leaving our things about. But, you know, it's a horrid shame, for there are plenty of servants, and I don't see why we should be always bothering to do little things, and—"

"Oh! come to the point, please," said the Doctor; "you do go round the square so, in telling your stories, Deordie. What have you been thinking of?"

"Well," said Deordie, who was as good tempered as he was slow, "the other day Nurse shut me up in the back nursery for borrowing her scissors and losing them; but I'd got 'Grimm' inside one of my knickerbockers, so when she locked the door, I sat down to read. And I read the story of the Shoemaker and the little Elves who came and did his work for him before he got up; and I thought it would be so jolly if we had some little Elves to do things instead of us."

[38]

"That's what Tommy Trout said," observed the Doctor.

"Who's Tommy Trout?" asked Deordie.

"Don't you know, Deor?" said Tiny. "It's the good boy who pulled the cat out of the what's-his-name."

'Who pulled her out?
Little Tommy Trout.'

"Is it the same Tommy Trout, Doctor? I never heard anything else about him except his pulling the cat out; and I can't think how he did that."

"Let down the bucket for her, of course," said the Doctor. "But listen to me. If you will get that handkerchief done, and take it to your mother with a kiss, and not keep me waiting, I'll have you all to tea, and tell you the story of Tommy Trout."

"This very night?" shouted Deordie.

"This very night."

"Every one of us?" inquired the young gentleman with rapturous incredulity.

"Every one of you.—Now Tiny, how about that work?"

"It's just done," said Tiny.—"Oh! Deordie, climb up behind, and hold back my hair, there's a darling, while I fasten off. Oh! Deor, you're pulling my hair out. Don't."

"I want to make a pig-tail," said Deor.

"You can't," said Tiny, with feminine contempt. "You can't plait. What's the good of asking boys to do anything? There! it's done at last. Now go and ask mother if we may go.—Will you let me come, doctor," she inquired, "if I do as you said?"

"To be sure I will," he answered. "Let me look at you. Your eyes are swollen with crying. How can you be such a silly little goose?"

[39]

"Did you never cry?" asked Tiny.

"When I was your age? Well, perhaps so."

"You've never cried since, surely," said Tiny.

The Doctor absolutely blushed.

"What do you think?" said he.

"Oh, of course not," she answered. "You've nothing to cry about. You're grown up, and you live all alone in a beautiful house, and you do as you like, and never get into rows, or have anybody but yourself to think about; and no nasty pocket-handkerchiefs to hem."

"Very nice; eh, Deordie?" said the Doctor.

"Awfully jolly," said Deordie.

"Nothing else to wish for, eh?"

"I should keep harriers, and not a poodle, if I were a man," said Deordie; "but I suppose you could, if you wanted to."

"Nothing to cry about, at any rate?"

"I should think not!" said Deordie.—"There's mother, though; let's go and ask her about the tea;" and off they ran.

The Doctor stretched his six feet of length upon the sward, dropped his gray head on a little heap of newly-mown grass, and looked up into the sky.

"Awfully jolly—no nasty pocket-handkerchiefs to hem," said he, laughing to himself. "Nothing else to wish for; nothing to cry about."

Nevertheless, he lay still, staring at the sky, till the smile died away, and tears came into his eyes. Fortunately, no one was there to see.

What could this "awfully jolly" Doctor be thinking of to make him cry? He was thinking of a grave-stone in the churchyard close by, and of a story connected with this grave-stone which was known to everybody in the place who was old enough to remember it. This story has nothing to do with the present story, so it ought not to be told. [40]

And yet it has to do with the Doctor, and is very short, so it shall be put in, after all.

THE STORY OF A GRAVE-STONE.

One early spring morning, about twenty years before, a man, going to his work at sunrise through the churchyard, stopped by a flat stone which he had lately helped to lay down. The day before, a name had been cut on it, which he stayed to read; and below the name some one had scrawled a few words in pencil, which he read also—*Pitifully behold the sorrows of our hearts*. On the stone lay a pencil, and a few feet from it lay the Doctor, face downwards, as he had lain all night, with the hoar frost on his black hair.

Ah! these grave-stones (they were ugly things in those days; not the light, hopeful, pretty crosses we set up now), how they seem remorselessly to imprison and keep our dear dead friends away from us! And yet they do not lie with a feather's weight upon the souls that are gone, while God only knows how heavily they press upon the souls that are left behind. Did the spirit whose body was with the dead, stand that morning by the body whose spirit was with the dead, and pity him? Let us only talk about what we know.

After this it was said that the Doctor had got a fever, and was dying, but he got better of it; and then that he was out of his mind, but he got better of that, and came out looking much as usual, except that his hair never seemed quite so black again, as if a little of that night's hoar frost still remained. And no further misfortune happened to him that I ever heard of; and as time went on he grew a beard, and got stout, and kept a German poodle, and gave tea parties to other people's children. As to the grave-stone story, whatever it was to him at the end of twenty years, it was a great convenience to his friends; for when he said anything they didn't agree with, or did anything they couldn't understand, or didn't say or do what was expected of him, what could be easier or more conclusive than to shake one's head and say, [41]

"The fact is, our Doctor has been a little odd, *ever since*—!"

THE DOCTOR'S TEA PARTY.

There is one great advantage attendant upon invitations to tea with a doctor. No objections can be raised on the score of health. It is obvious that it must be fine enough to go out when the doctor asks you, and that his tea-cakes may be eaten with perfect impunity.

Those tea-cakes were always good; to-night they were utterly delicious; there was a perfect *abandon* of currants, and the amount of citron peel was enervating to behold. Then the housekeeper waited in awful splendor, and yet the Doctor's authority over her seemed as absolute as if he were an Eastern despot. Deordie must be excused for believing in the charms of living alone. It certainly has its advantages. The limited sphere of duty conduces to discipline in the household, demand does not exceed supply in the article of waiting, and there is not that general scrimmage of conflicting interests which besets a large family in the most favored circumstances. The housekeeper waits in black silk and looks as if she had no meaner occupation than to sit in a rocking chair, and dream of damson cheese. [42]

Rustling, hospitable, and subservient, this one retired at last, and—

"Now," said the Doctor, "for the verandah; and to look at the moon."

The company adjourned with a rush, the rear being brought up by the poodle, who seemed quite used to the proceedings; and there under the verandah, framed with passion flowers and geraniums, the Doctor had gathered mats, rugs, cushions, and arm-chairs, for the party; while far up in the sky, a yellow-faced harvest moon looked down in awful benignity.

"Now!" said the Doctor. "Take your seats. Ladies first, and gentlemen afterwards. Mary and Tiny race for the American rocking-chair. Well done! Of course it will hold both. Now boys, shake down. No one is to sit on the stone, or put their feet on the grass; and when you're ready, I'll begin."

"We're ready," said the girls.

The boys shook down in a few minutes more, and the Doctor began the story of

"THE BROWNIES."

"Bairns are a burden," said the Tailor to himself as he sat at work. He lived in a village on some of the glorious moors of the north of England; and by bairns he meant children, as every Northman knows.

"Bairns are a burden," and he sighed.

"Bairns are a blessing," said the old lady in the window. "It is the family motto. The Trouts have had large families and good luck for generations; that is, till you're grandfather's time. He had one only son. I married him. He was a good husband, but he had been a spoilt child. He had always been used to be waited upon, and he couldn't fash to look after the farm when it was his own. We had six children. They are all dead but you, who were the youngest. You were bound to a tailor. When the farm came into your hands, your wife died, and you have never looked up since. The land is sold now, but not the house. No! no! you're right enough there; but you've had your troubles, son Thomas, and the lads *are* idle!"

[43]

It was the Tailor's mother who spoke. She was a very old woman, and helpless. She was not quite so bright in her intellect as she had been, and got muddled over things that had lately happened; but she had a clear memory for what was long past, and was very pertinacious in her opinions. She knew the private history of almost every family in the place, and who of the Trouts were buried under which old stones in the churchyard; and had more tales of ghosts, doubles, warnings, fairies, witches, hobgoblins, and such like, than even her grandchildren had ever come to the end of. Her hands trembled with age, and she regretted this for nothing more than for the danger it brought her into of spilling the salt. She was past house-work, but all day she sat knitting hearth-rugs out of the bits and scraps of cloth that were shred in the tailoring. How far she believed in the wonderful tales she told, and the odd little charms she practised, no one exactly knew; but the older she grew, the stranger were the things she remembered, and the more testy she was if any one doubted their truth.

"Bairns are a blessing!" said she. "It is the family motto."

[44]

"*Are they?*" said the Tailor emphatically.

He had a high respect for his mother, and did not like to contradict her, but he held his own opinion, based upon personal experience; and not being a metaphysician, did not understand that it is safer to found opinions on principles than on experience, since experience may alter, but principles cannot.

"Look at Tommy," he broke out suddenly. "That boy does nothing but whittle sticks from morning till night. I have almost to lug him out of bed o' mornings. If I send him an errand, he loiters; I'd better have gone myself. If I set him to do anything, I have to tell him everything; I could sooner do it myself. And if he does work, it's done so unwillingly, with such a poor grace; better, far better, to do it myself. What house-work do the boys ever do but looking after the baby? And this afternoon she was asleep in the cradle, and off they went, and when she awoke, *I* must leave my work to take her. *I* gave her her supper, and put her to bed. And what with what they want and I have to get, and what they take out to play with and lose, and what they bring in to play with and leave about, bairns give some trouble, Mother, and I've not an easy life of it. The pay is poor enough when one can get the work, and the work is hard enough when one has a clear day to do it in; but housekeeping and bairn-minding don't leave a man much time for his trade. No! no! Ma'am, the luck of the Trouts is gone, and 'Bairns are a burden,' is the motto now. Though they are one's own," he muttered to himself, "and not bad ones, and I did hope once would have been a blessing."

"There's Johnnie," murmured the old lady, dreamily, "He has a face like an apple."

[45]

"And is about as useful," said the Tailor. "He might have been different, but his brother leads him by the nose."

His brother led him in as the Tailor spoke, not literally by his snub, though, but by the hand. They were a handsome pair, this lazy couple. Johnnie especially had the largest and roundest of foreheads, the reddest of cheeks, the brightest of eyes, the quaintest and most twitchy of chins, and looked altogether like a gutta percha cherub in a chronic state of longitudinal squeeze. They were locked together by two grubby paws, and had each an armful of moss, which they deposited

on the floor as they came in.

"I've swept this floor once to-day," said the father, "and I'm not going to do it again. Put that rubbish outside."

"Move it Johnnie!" said his brother, seating himself on a stool, and taking out his knife and a piece of wood, at which he cut and sliced; while the apple-cheeked Johnnie stumbled and stamped over the moss, and scraped it out on to the door-step, leaving long trails of earth behind him, and then sat down also.

"And those chips the same," added the Tailor; "I will *not* clear up the litter you lads make."

"Pick 'em up, Johnnie," said Thomas Trout, junior, with an exasperated sigh; and the apple tumbled up, rolled after the flying chips, and tumbled down again.

"Is there any supper, Father?" asked Tommy.

"No, there is not, Sir, unless you know how to get it," said the Tailor; and taking his pipe, he went out of the house.

"Is there really nothing to eat Granny?" asked the boy.

[46]

"No, my bairn, only some bread for breakfast to-morrow."

"What makes Father so cross, Granny?"

"He's wearied, and you don't help him, my dear."

"What could I do, Grandmother?"

"Many little things, if you tried," said the old lady. "He spent half-an-hour to-day while you were on the moor, getting turf for the fire, and you could have got it just as well, and he been at his work."

"He never told me," said Tommy.

"You might help me a bit just now, if you would, my laddie," said the old lady coaxingly; "these bits of cloth want tearing into lengths, and if you get 'em ready, I can go on knitting. There'll be some food when this mat is done and sold."

"I'll try," said Tommy, lounging up with desperate resignation. "Hold my knife, Johnnie. Father's been cross, and everything has been miserable, ever since the farm was sold. I wish I were a big man, and could make a fortune.—Will that do, Granny?"

The old lady put down her knitting and looked. "My dear, that's too short. Bless me! I gave the lad a piece to measure by."

"I thought it was the same length. Oh, dear! I am so tired;" and he propped himself against the old lady's chair.

"My dear! don't lean so! you'll tittle me over!" she shrieked.

"I beg your pardon, Grandmother. Will *that* do?"

"It's that much too long."

"Tear that bit off. Now it's all right."

"But, my dear, that wastes it. Now that bit is of no use. There goes my knitting, you awkward lad!"

[47]

"Johnnie, pick it up!—Oh! Grandmother, I *am* so hungry."

The boy's eyes filled with tears, and the old lady was melted in an instant.

"What can I do for you, my poor bairns?" said she. "There, never mind the scraps, Tommy."

"Tell us a tale, Granny. If you told us a new one, I shouldn't keep thinking of that bread in the cupboard.—Come Johnny, and sit against me. Now then!"

"I doubt if there's one of my old-world cracks I haven't told you," said the old lady, "unless it's a queer ghost story was told me years ago of that house in the hollow with the blocked-up windows."

"Oh! not ghosts!" Tommy broke in; "we've had so many. I know it was a rattling, or a scratching, or a knocking, or a figure in white; and if it turns out a tombstone or a white petticoat, I hate it."

"It was nothing of the sort as a tombstone," said the old lady with dignity. "It's a good half-mile from the churchyard. And as to white petticoats, there wasn't a female in the house; he wouldn't have one; and his victuals came in by the pantry window. But never mind! Though it's as true as a sermon."

Johnnie lifted his head from his brother's knee.

"Let Granny tell what she likes, Tommy. It's a new ghost, and I should like to know who he was, and why his victuals came in by the window."

"I don't like a story about victuals," sulked Tommy. "It makes me think of the bread. O Granny dear! do tell us a fairy story. You never will tell us about the Fairies, and I know you know."

"Hush! hush!" said the old lady. "There's Miss Surbiton's Love Letter, and her Dreadful End." [48]

"I know Miss Surbiton, Granny. I think she was a goose. Why won't you tell us about the Fairies?"

"Hush! hush! my dears. There's the Clerk and the Corpse-candles."

"I know the Corpse-candles, Granny. Besides, they make Johnnie dream and he wakes me to keep him company. *Why* won't you tell us about the Fairies?"

"My dear, they don't like it," said the old lady.

"O Granny dear, why don't they? Do tell! I shouldn't think of the bread a bit, if you told us about the Fairies. I know nothing about them."

"He lived in this house long enough," said the old lady. "But it's not lucky to name him."

"Oh Granny, we are so hungry and miserable, what can it matter?"

"Well, that's true enough," she sighed. "Trouts' luck is gone; it went with the Brownie, I believe."

"Was that *he*, Granny?"

"Yes, my dear, he lived with the Trouts for several generations."

"What was he like, Granny?"

"Like a little man, they say, my dear."

"What did he do?"

"He came in before the family were up, and swept up the hearth, and lighted the fire, and set out the breakfast, and tidied the room, and did all sorts of house-work. But he never would be seen, and was off before they could catch him. But they could hear him laughing and playing about the house sometimes."

"What a darling! Did they give him any wages, Granny?"

"No! my dear. He did it for love. They set a pancheon of clear water for him over night, and now and then a bowl of bread and milk, or cream. He liked that, for he was very dainty. Sometimes he left a bit of money in the water. Sometimes he weeded the garden or threshed the corn. He saved endless trouble, both to men and maids." [49]

"O Granny! why did he go?"

"The maids caught sight of him one night, my dear, and his coat was so ragged, that they got a new suit, and a linen shirt for him, and laid them by the bread and milk bowl. But when Brownie saw the things, he put them on, and dancing round the kitchen, sang,

'What have we here? Hemten hamten!
Here will I never more tread nor stampen,'

and so danced through the door and never came back again."

"O Grandmother! But why not? Didn't he like the new clothes?"

"The Old Owl knows, my dear; I don't."

"Who's the Old Owl, Granny?"

"I don't exactly know, my dear. It's what my mother used to say when we asked anything that puzzled her. It was said that the Old Owl was Nanny Besom, (a witch, my dear!) who took the shape of a bird, but couldn't change her voice, and that that's why the owl sits silent all day for fear she should betray herself by speaking, and has no singing voice like other birds. Many people used to go and consult the Old Owl at moon-rise, in my young days."

"Did you ever go, Granny?"

"Once, very nearly, my dear."

"Oh! tell us, Granny dear.—There are no Corpse-candles, Johnnie; it's only moonlight," he added consolingly, as Johnnie crept closer to his knee and pricked his little red ears. [50]

"It was when your grandfather was courting me, my dears," said the old lady, "and I couldn't quite make up my mind. So I went to my mother, and said, 'He's this on the one side, but then he's that on the other, and so on. Shall I say yes or no?' And my mother said, 'The Old Owl knows;' for she was fairly puzzled. So says I, 'I'll go and ask her to-night, as sure as the moon rises.'

"So at moon-rise I went, and there in the white light by the gate stood your grandfather. 'What are you doing here at this time o' night?' says I. 'Watching your window,' says he. 'What are *you* doing here at this time o' night?' 'The Old Owl knows,' said I, and burst out crying."

"What for?" said Johnnie.

"I can't rightly tell you, my dear," said the old lady, "but it gave me such a turn to see him. And without more ado your grandfather kissed me. 'How dare you?' said I. 'What do you mean?' 'The Old Owl knows,' said he. So we never went."

"How stupid!" said Tommy.

"Tell us more about Brownie, please," said Johnnie. "Did he ever live with anybody else?"

"There are plenty of Brownies," said the old lady, "or used to be in my mother's young days. Some houses had several."

"Oh! I wish ours would come back!" cried both the boys in chorus. "He'd—

"tidy the room," said Johnnie;

"fetch the turf," said Tommy;

"pick up the chips," said Johnnie;

"sort your scraps," said Tommy;

"and do everything. Oh! I wish he hadn't gone away."

[51]

"What's that?" said the Tailor coming in at this moment.

"It's the Brownie, Father," said Tommy. "We are so sorry he went, and do so wish we had one."

"What nonsense have you been telling them, Mother?" asked the Tailor.

"Heighty teighty," said the old lady, bristling. "Nonsense, indeed! As good men as you, Son Thomas, would as soon have jumped off the crags, as spoken lightly of *them*, in my mother's young days."

"Well, well," said the Tailor, "I beg their pardon. They never did aught for me, whatever they did for my forbears; but they're as welcome to the old place as ever, if they choose to come. There's plenty to do."

"Would you mind our setting a pan of water, Father?" asked Tommy very gently. "There's no bread and milk."

"You may set what you like, my lad," said the Tailor; "and I wish there were bread and milk for your sakes, Bairns. You should have it, had I got it. But go to bed now."

They lugged out a pancheon, and filled it with more dexterity than usual, and then went off to bed, leaving the knife in one corner, the wood in another, and a few splashes of water in their track.

There was more room than comfort in the ruined old farm-house, and the two boys slept on a bed of cut heather, in what had been the old malt loft. Johnnie was soon in the land of dreams, growing rosier and rosier as he slept, a tumbled apple among the gray heather. But not so lazy Tommy. The idea of a domesticated Brownie had taken full possession of his mind; and whither Brownie had gone, where he might be found, and what would induce him to return, were mysteries he longed to solve. "There's an owl living in the old shed by the mere," he thought. "It may be the Old Owl herself, and she knows, Granny says. When father's gone to bed, and the moon rises. I'll go." Meanwhile he lay down.

[52]

The moon rose like gold, and went up into the heavens like silver, flooding the moors with a pale ghostly light, taking the color out of the heather, and painting black shadows under the stone walls. Tommy opened his eyes, and ran to the window. "The moon has risen," said he, and crept softly down the ladder, through the kitchen, where was the pan of water, but no Brownie, and so out on to the moor. The air was fresh, not to say chilly; but it was a glorious night, though everything but the wind and Tommy seemed asleep. The stones, the walls, the gleaming lanes, were so intensely still; the church tower in the valley seemed awake and watching, but silent; the houses in the village round it all had their eyes shut, that is, their window blinds down; and it seemed to Tommy as if the very moors had drawn white sheets over them, and lay sleeping also.

"Hoot! hoot!" said a voice from the fir plantation behind him. Somebody else was awake, then. "It's the Old Owl," said Tommy; and there she came, swinging heavily across the moor with a flapping stately flight, and sailed into the shed by the mere. The old lady moved faster than she seemed to do, and though Tommy ran hard she was in the shed some time before him. When he got in, no bird was to be seen, but he heard a crunching sound from above, and looking up, there sat the Old Owl, pecking and tearing and munching at some shapeless black object, and blinking at him—Tommy—with yellow eyes.

[53]

"Oh dear!" said Tommy, for he didn't much like it.

The Old Owl dropped the black mass on to the floor; and Tommy did not care somehow to examine it.

"Come up! come up!" said she, hoarsely.

She could speak, then! Beyond all doubt it was *the* Old Owl and none other. Tommy shuddered.

"Come up here! come up here!" said the Old Owl.

The Old Owl sat on a beam that ran across the shed. Tommy had often climbed up for fun; and he climbed up now, and sat face to face with her, and thought her eyes looked as if they were made of flame.

"Kiss my fluffy face," said the Owl.

Her eyes were going round like flaming catherine wheels, but there are certain requests which one has not the option of refusing. Tommy crept nearer, and put his lips to the round face out of which the eyes shone. Oh! it was so downy and warm, so soft, so indescribably soft. Tommy's lips sank into it, and couldn't get to the bottom. It was unfathomable feathers and fluffiness.

"Now, what do you want?" said the Owl.

"Please," said Tommy, who felt rather re-assured, "can you tell me where to find the Brownies, and how to get one to come and live with us?"

"Oohoo!" said the Owl, "that's it, is it? I know of three Brownies."

"Hurrah!" said Tommy. "Where do they live?"

"In your house," said the Owl.

[54]

Tommy was aghast.

"In our house!" he exclaimed. "Whereabouts? Let me rummage them out. Why do they do nothing?"

"One of them is too young," said the Owl.

"But why don't the others work?" asked Tommy.

"They are idle, they are idle," said the Old Owl, and she gave herself such a shake as she said it, that the fluff went flying through the shed, and Tommy nearly tumbled off the beam in his fright.

"Then we don't want them," said he. "What is the use of having Brownies if they do nothing to help us?"

"Perhaps they don't know how, as no one has told them," said the Owl.

"I wish you would tell me where to find them," said Tommy; "I could tell them."

"Could you?" said the Owl. "Oohoo! Oohoo!" and Tommy couldn't tell whether she were hooting or laughing.

"Of course I could," he said. "They might be up and sweep the house, and light the fire, and spread the table, and that sort of thing, before father came down. Besides, they could *see* what was wanted. The Brownies did all that in Granny's mother's young days. And then they could tidy the room, and fetch the turf, and pick up my chips, and sort Granny's scraps. Oh! there's lots to do."

"So there is," said the Owl. "Oohoo! Well, I can tell you where to find one of the Brownies; and if you find him, he will tell you where his brother is. But all this depends upon whether you feel equal to undertaking it, and whether you will follow my directions."

"I am quite ready to go," said Tommy, "and I will do as you shall tell me. I feel sure I could persuade them. If they only knew how every one would love them if they made themselves useful!"

[55]

"Oohoo! oohoo!" said the Owl. "Now pay attention. You must go to the north side of the mere when the moon is shining—('I know Brownies like water,' muttered Tommy)—and turn yourself round three times, saying this charm:

'Twist me, and turn me, and show me the Elf—
I looked in the water, and saw—'

When you have got so far, look into the water, and at the same moment you will see the Brownie, and think of a word that will fill up the couplet, and rhyme with the first line. If either you do not see the Brownie, or fail to think of the word, it will be of no use."

"Is the Brownie a merman," said Tommy, wriggling himself along the beam, "that he lives under water?"

"That depends on whether he has a fish's tail," said the Owl, "and this you can discover for yourself."

"Well, the moon is shining, so I shall go," said Tommy. "Good-bye, and thank you, Ma'am;" and he jumped down and went, saying to himself as he ran, "I believe he is a merman all the same, or else how could he live in the mere? I know more about Brownies than Granny does, and I shall tell her so;" for Tommy was somewhat opinionated, like other young people.

The moon shone very brightly on the centre of the mere. Tommy knew the place well for there was a fine echo there. Round the edge grew rushes and water plants, which cast a border of

shadow. Tommy went to the north side, and turning himself three times, as the Old Owl had told him, he repeated the charm—

[56]

"Twist me and turn me, and show me the Elf—
I looked in the water, and saw—"

Now for it! He looked in, and saw—the reflection of his own face.

"Why, there's no one but myself!" said Tommy. "And what can the word be? I must have done it wrong."

"Wrong!" said the Echo.

Tommy was almost surprised to find the echo awake at this time of night.

"Hold your tongue!" said he. "Matters are provoking enough of themselves. Belf! Celf! Delf! Felf! Gelf! Helf! Jelf! What rubbish! There can't be a word to fit it. And then to look for a Brownie, and see nothing but myself!"

"Myself," said the Echo.

"Will you be quiet?" said Tommy. "If you would tell me the word there would be some sense in your interference; but to roar 'Myself!' at me, which neither rhymes nor runs—it does rhyme though, as it happens," he added; "and how very odd! it runs too—"

'Twist me, and turn me, and show me the Elf;
I looked in the water, and saw myself,'

which I certainly did. What can it mean? The Old Owl knows, as Granny would say; so I shall go back and ask her."

"Ask her!" said the Echo.

"Didn't I say I should?" said Tommy. "How exasperating you are! It is very strange. *Myself* certainly does rhyme, and I wonder I did not think of it long ago."

"Go," said the Echo.

[57]

"Will you mind your own business, and go to sleep?" said Tommy. "I am going; I said I should."

And back he went. There sat the Old Owl as before.

"Oohoo!" said she, as Tommy climbed up. "What did you see in the mere?"

"I saw nothing but myself," said Tommy indignantly.

"And what did you expect to see?" asked the Owl.

"I expected to see a Brownie," said Tommy; "you told me so."

"And what are Brownies like, pray?" inquired the Owl.

"The one Granny knew was a useful little fellow, something like a little man," said Tommy.

"Ah!" said the Owl, "but you know at present this one is an idle little fellow, something like a little man. Oohoo! oohoo! Are you quite sure you didn't see him?"

"Quite," answered Tommy sharply. "I saw no one but myself."

"Hoot! toot! How touchy we are! And who are you, pray?"

"I am not a Brownie," said Tommy.

"Don't be too sure," said the Owl. "Did you find out the word?"

"No," said Tommy. "I could find no word with any meaning that would rhyme but 'myself.'"

"Well, that runs and rhymes," said the Owl. "What do you want? Where's your brother now?"

"In bed in the malt-loft," said Tommy.

"Then now all your questions are answered," said the Owl, "and you know what wants doing, so go and do it. Good-night, or rather good-morning, for it is long past midnight;" and the old lady began to shake her feathers for a start.

[58]

"Don't go yet, please," said Tommy humbly. "I don't understand it. You know I'm not a Brownie, am I?"

"Yes, you are," said the Owl, "and a very idle one too. All children are Brownies."

"But I couldn't do work like a Brownie," said Tommy.

"Why not?" inquired the Owl. "Couldn't you sweep the floor, light the fire, spread the table, tidy the room, fetch the turf, pick up your own chips, and sort your grandmother's scraps? You know there's lots to do."

"But I don't think I should like it," said Tommy. "I'd much rather have a Brownie to do it for me."

"And what would you do meanwhile?" asked the Owl. "Be idle, I suppose; and what do you suppose is the use of a man's having children if they do nothing to help him? Ah! if they only knew how every one would love them if they made themselves useful!"

"But is it really and truly so?" asked Tommy, in a dismal voice. "Are there no Brownies but children?"

"No, there are not," said the owl. "And pray do you think that the Brownies, whoever they may be, come into a house to save trouble for the idle healthy little boys who live in it? Listen to me, Tommy," said the old lady, her eyes shooting rays of fire in the dark corner where she sat. "Listen to me, you are a clever boy, and can understand when one speaks; so I will tell you the whole history of the Brownies, as it has been handed down in our family from my grandmother's great-grandmother, who lived in the Druid's Oak, and was intimate with the fairies. And when I have done you shall tell me what you think they are, if they are not children. It's the opinion I have come to at any rate, and I don't think that wisdom died with our great-grandmothers." [59]

"I should like to hear if you please," said Tommy.

The Old Owl shook out a tuft or two of fluff, and set her eyes a-going, and began:

"The Brownies, or as they are sometimes called, the Small Folk, the Little People, or the Good People, are a race of tiny beings who domesticate themselves in a house of which some grown-up human being pays the rent and taxes. They are like small editions of men and women, they are too small and fragile for heavy work; they have not the strength of a man, but are a thousand times more fresh and nimble. They can run and jump, and roll and tumble, with marvellous agility and endurance, and of many of the aches and pains which men and women groan under, they do not even know the names. They have no trade or profession, and as they live entirely upon other people, they know nothing of domestic cares; in fact, they know very little upon any subject, though they are often intelligent and highly inquisitive. They love dainties, play, and mischief. They are apt to be greatly beloved, and are themselves capriciously affectionate. They are little people, and can only do little things. When they are idle and mischievous, they are called Boggarts, and are a curse to the house they live in. When they are useful and considerate, they are Brownies, and are a much-coveted blessing. Sometimes the Blessed Brownies will take up their abode with some worthy couple, cheer them with their romps and merry laughter, tidy the house, find things that have been lost, and take little troubles out of hands full of great anxieties. Then in time these Little People are Brownies no longer. They grow up into men and women. They do not care so much for dainties, play, or mischief. They cease to jump and tumble, and roll about the house. They know more, and laugh less. Then, when their heads begin to ache with anxiety, and they have to labor for their own living, and the great cares of life come on, other Brownies come and live with them, and take up their little cares, and supply their little comforts, and make the house merry once more." [60]

"How nice!" said Tommy.

"Very nice," said the Old Owl. "But what"—and she shook herself more fiercely than ever, and glared so that Tommy expected nothing less than her eyes would set fire to her feathers and she would be burnt alive. "But what must I say of the Boggarts? Those idle urchins who eat the bread and milk, and don't do the work, who lie in bed without an ache or pain to excuse them, who untidy instead of tidying, cause work instead of doing it, and leave little cares to heap on big cares, till the old people who support them are worn out altogether."

"Don't!" said Tommy. "I can't bear it."

"I hope when Boggarts grow into men," said the Old Owl, "that their children will be Boggarts too, and then they'll know what it is!"

"Don't!" roared Tommy. "I won't be a Boggart. I'll be a Brownie."

"That's right," nodded the Old Owl. "I said you were a boy who could understand when one spoke. And remember that the Brownies never are seen at their work. They get up before the household, and get away before any one can see them. I can't tell you why. I don't think my grandmother's great-grandmother knew. Perhaps because all good deeds are better done in secret." [61]

"Please," said Tommy, "I should like to go home now, and tell Johnnie. It's getting cold, and I am so tired!"

"Very true," said the Old Owl, "and then you will have to be up early to-morrow. I think I had better take you home."

"I know the way, thank you," said Tommy.

"I didn't say *shew* you the way, I said *take* you—carry you," said the Owl. "Lean against me."

"I'd rather not, thank you," said Tommy.

"Lean against me," screamed the Owl. "Oohoo! how obstinate boys are to be sure!"

Tommy crept up, very unwillingly.

"Lean your full weight, and shut your eyes," said the Owl.

Tommy laid his head against the Old Owl's feathers, had a vague idea that she smelt of heather,

and thought it must be from living on the moor, shut his eyes, and leant his full weight, expecting that he and the Owl would certainly fall off the beam together. Down—feathers—fluff—he sank and sank, could feel nothing solid, jumped up with a start to save himself, opened his eyes, and found that he was sitting among the heather in the malt-loft, with Johnnie sleeping by his side.

"How quickly we came!" said he; "that is certainly a very clever Old Owl. I couldn't have counted ten whilst my eyes were shut. How very odd!"

But what was odder still was, that it was no longer moonlight but early dawn.

"Get up, Johnnie," said his brother, "I've got a story to tell you."

[62]

And while Johnnie sat up, and rubbed his eyes open, he related his adventures on the moor.

"Is all that true?" said Johnnie. "I mean, did it really happen?"

"Of course it did," said his brother; "don't you believe it?"

"Oh yes," said Johnnie. "But I thought it was perhaps only a true story, like Granny's true stories. I believe all those, you know. But if you were there, you know, it is different—"

"I was there," said Tommy, "and it's all just as I tell you: and I tell you what, if we mean to do anything we must get up: though, oh dear! I should like to stay in bed. I say," he added, after a pause, "suppose we do. It can't matter being Boggarts for one night more. I mean to be a Brownie before I grow up, though. I couldn't stand boggarty children."

"I won't be a Boggart at all," said Johnnie, "It's horrid. But I don't see how we can be Brownies, for I'm afraid we can't do the things. I wish I were bigger!"

"I can do it well enough," said Tommy, following his brother's example and getting up. "Don't you suppose I can light a fire? Think of all the bonfires we have made! And I don't think I should mind having a regular good tidy-up either. It's that stupid putting-away-things-when-you've-done-with-them that I hate so!"

The Brownies crept softly down the ladder and into the kitchen. There was the blank hearth, the dirty floor, and all the odds and ends lying about, looking cheerless enough in the dim light, Tommy felt quite important as he looked round. There is no such cure for untidiness as clearing up after other people; one sees so clearly where the fault lies.

[63]

"Look at that door-step, Johnnie," said the Brownie-elect, "what a mess you made of it! If you had lifted the moss carefully, instead of stamping and struggling with it, it would have saved us ten minutes' work this morning."

This wisdom could not be gainsaid, and Johnnie only looked meek and rueful.

"I am going to light the fire," pursued his brother;—"the next turfs, you know, *we* must get—you can tidy a bit. Look at that knife I gave you to hold last night, and that wood—that's my fault though, and so are those scraps by Granny's chair. What are you grubbing at that rat-hole for?"

Johnnie raised his head somewhat flushed and tumbled.

"What do you think I have found?" said he triumphantly. "Father's measure that has been lost for a week!"

"Hurrah!" said Tommy, "put it by his things. That's just a sort of thing for a Brownie to have done. What will he say? And I say, Johnnie, when you've tidied, just go and grub up a potato or two in the garden, and I'll put them to roast for breakfast. I'm lighting such a bonfire!"

The fire was very successful. Johnnie went after the potatoes, and Tommy cleaned the door-step, swept the room, dusted the chairs and the old chest, and set out the table. There was no doubt he could be handy when he chose.

"I'll tell you what I have thought of, if we have time," said Johnnie, as he washed the potatoes in the water that had been set for Brownie. "We might run down to the South Pasture for some mushrooms. Father said the reason we found so few was that people go by sunrise for them to take to market. The sun's only just rising, we should be sure to find some, and they would do for breakfast."

[64]

"There's plenty of time," said Tommy; so they went. The dew lay heavy and thick upon the grass by the road side, and over the miles of network that the spiders had woven from blossom to blossom of the heather. The dew is the Sun's breakfast; but he was barely up yet, and had not eaten it, and the world felt anything but warm. Nevertheless, it was so sweet and fresh as it is at no later hour of the day, and every sound was like the returning voice of a long absent friend. Down to the pastures, where was more network and more dew, but when one has nothing to speak of in the way of boots, the state of the ground is of the less consequence.

The Tailor had been right, there was no lack of mushrooms at this time of the morning. All over the pasture they stood, of all sizes, some like buttons, some like tables; and in the distance one or two ragged women, stooping over them with baskets, looked like huge fungi also.

"This is where the fairies feast," said Tommy. "They had a large party last night. When they go, they take away the dishes and cups, for they are made of gold; but they leave their tables, and we eat them."

"I wonder whether giants would like to eat our tables," said Johnnie.

This was beyond Tommy's capabilities of surmise; so they filled a handkerchief, and hurried back again for fear the Tailor should have come down-stairs.

[65]

They were depositing the last mushroom in a dish on the table, when his footsteps were heard descending.

"There he is!" exclaimed Tommy. "Remember, we musn't be caught. Run back to bed."

Johnnie caught up the handkerchief, and smothering their laughter, the two scrambled back up the ladder, and dashed straight into the heather.

Meanwhile the poor Tailor came wearily down-stairs. Day after day, since his wife's death, he had come down every morning to the same desolate sight—yesterday's refuse and an empty hearth. This morning task of tidying was always a sad and ungrateful one to the widowed father. His awkward struggles with the house-work in which *she* had been so notable, chafed him. The dirty kitchen was dreary, the labor lonely, and it was an hour's time lost to his trade. But life does not stand still while one is wishing, and so the Tailor did that for which there was neither remedy nor substitute; and came down this morning as other mornings to the pail and broom. When he came in he looked round, and started, and rubbed his eyes; looked round again, and rubbed them harder; then went up to the fire and held out his hand, (warm certainly)—then up to the table and smelt the mushrooms, (esculent fungi beyond a doubt)—handled the loaf, stared at the open door and window, the swept floor, and the sunshine pouring in, and finally sat down in stunned admiration. Then he jumped up and ran to the foot of the stairs, shouting,—

"Mother! Mother! Trout's luck has come again." "And yet, no!" he thought, "the old lady's asleep, it's a shame to wake her, I'll tell those idle rascally lads, they'll be more pleased than they deserve. It was Tommy after all that set the water and caught him." "Boys! boys!" he shouted at the foot of the ladder, "the Brownie has come!—and if he hasn't found my measure!" he added on returning to the kitchen, "this is as good as a day's work to me."

[66]

There was great excitement in the small household that day. The boys kept their own counsel. The old Grandmother was triumphant, and tried not to seem surprised. The Tailor made no such vain effort, and remained till bed-time in a state of fresh and unconcealed amazement.

"I've often heard of the Good People," he broke out towards the end of the evening. "And I've heard folk say they've known those that have seen them capering round the gray rocks on the moor at midnight: but this is wonderful! To come and do the work for a pan of cold water! Who could have believed it?"

"You might have believed it if you'd believed me, Son Thomas," said the old lady tossily. "I told you so. But young people always know better than their elders!"

"I didn't see him," said the Tailor, beginning his story afresh; "but I thought as I came in I heard a sort of laughing and rustling."

"My mother said they often heard him playing and laughing about the house," said the old lady. "I told you so."

"Well, he shan't want for a bowl of bread and milk to-morrow, anyhow," said the Tailor, "if I have to stick to Farmer Swede's waistcoat till midnight."

But the waistcoat was finished by bed-time, and the Tailor set the bread and milk himself, and went to rest.

"I say," said Tommy, when both the boys were in bed, "the Old Owl was right, and we must stick to it. But I'll tell you what I don't like, and that is, father thinking we're idle still. I wish he knew we were the Brownies."

[67]

"So do I," said Johnnie; and he sighed.

"I tell you what," said Tommy, with the decisiveness of elder brotherhood, "we'll keep quiet for a bit for fear we should leave off; but when we've gone on a good while, I shall tell him. It was only the Old Owl's grandmother's great-grandmother who said it was to be kept secret, and the Old Owl herself said grandmothers were not always in the right."

"No more they are," said Johnnie; "look at Granny about this."

"I know," said Tommy. "She's in a regular muddle."

"So she is," said Johnnie. "But that's rather fun, I think."

And they went to sleep.

Day after day went by, and still the Brownies "stuck to it," and did their work. It is no such very hard matter after all to get up early when one is young and light-hearted, and sleeps upon heather in a loft without window-blind, and with so many broken window-panes that the air comes freely in. In old times the boys used to play at tents among the heather, while the Tailor did the house-work; now they came down and did it for him.

Size is not everything, even in this material existence. One has heard of dwarfs who were quite as clever, (not to say as powerful,) as giants, and I do not fancy that Fairy Godmothers are ever very

large. It is wonderful what a comfort Brownies may be in the house that is fortunate enough to hold them! The Tailor's Brownies were the joy of his life; and day after day they seemed to grow more and more ingenious in finding little things to do for his good. [68]

Now-a-days Granny never picked a scrap for herself. One day's shearings were all neatly arranged the next morning, and laid by her knitting-pins; and the Tailor's tape and shears were no more absent without leave.

One day a message came to him to offer him two or three days' tailoring in a farm-house some miles up the valley. This was pleasant and advantageous sort of work; good food, sure pay, and a cheerful change; but he did not know how he could leave his family, unless, indeed, the Brownie might be relied upon to "keep the house together," as they say. The boys were sure that he would, and they promised to set his water, and to give as little trouble as possible; so, finally, the Tailor took up his shears and went up the valley, where the green banks sloped up into purple moor, or broke into sandy rocks, crowned with nodding oak fern. On to the prosperous old farm, where he spent a very pleasant time, sitting level with the window geraniums on a table set apart for him, stitching and gossiping, gossiping and stitching, and feeling secure of honest payment when his work was done. The mistress of the house was a kind good creature, and loved a chat; and though the Tailor kept his own secret as to the Brownies, he felt rather curious to know if the Good People had any hand in the comfort of this flourishing household, and watched his opportunity to make a few careless inquiries on the subject.

"Brownies?" laughed the dame. "Ay, Master, I have heard of them. When I was a girl, in service at the old hall, on Cowberry Edge, I heard a good deal of one they said had lived there in former times. He did house-work as well as a woman, and a good deal quicker, they said. One night one of the young ladies (that were then, they're all dead now,) hid herself in a cupboard, to see what he was like." [69]

"And what was he like?" inquired the Tailor, as composedly as he was able.

"A little fellow, they said;" answered the Farmer's wife, knitting calmly on. "Like a dwarf, you know, with a largish head for his body. Not taller than—why, my Bill, or your eldest boy, perhaps. And he was dressed in rags, with an old cloak on, and stamping with passion at a cobweb he couldn't get at with his broom. They've very uncertain tempers, they say. Tears one minute, and laughing the next."

"You never had one here, I suppose?" said the Tailor.

"Not we," she answered; "and I think I'd rather not. They're not canny after all; and my master and me have always been used to work, and we've sons and daughters to help us, and that's better than meddling with the Fairies, to my mind. No! no!" she added, laughing, "If we had had one you'd have heard of it, whoever didn't, for I should have had some decent clothes made for him. I couldn't stand rags and old cloaks, messing and moth-catching in my house."

"They say it's not lucky to give them clothes, though," said the Tailor; "they don't like it."

"Tell me!" said the dame, "as if any one that liked a tidy room, wouldn't like tidy clothes, if they could get them. No! no! when we have one, you shall take his measure, I promise you."

And this was all the Tailor got out of her on the subject. When his work was finished, the Farmer paid him at once; and the good dame added half a cheese, and a bottle-green coat. [70]

"That has been laid by for being too small for the master now he's so stout," she said; "but except for a stain or two it's good enough, and will cut up like new for one of the lads."

The Tailor thanked them, and said farewell, and went home. Down the valley, where the river, wandering between the green banks and the sandy rocks, was caught by giant mosses, and bands of fairy fern, and there choked and struggled, and at last barely escaped with an existence, and ran away in a diminished stream. On up the purple hills to the old ruined house. As he came in at the gate he was struck by some idea of change, and looking again, he saw that the garden had been weeded, and was comparatively tidy. The truth is, that Tommy and Johnnie had taken advantage of the Tailor's absence to do some Brownie's work in the day-time.

"It's that Blessed Brownie!" said the Tailor. "Has he been as usual?" he asked, when he was in the house.

"To be sure," said the old lady; "all has been well, Son Thomas."

"I'll tell you what it is," said the Tailor, after a pause. "I'm a needy man, but I hope I'm not ungrateful. I can never repay the Brownie for what he has done for me and mine; but the mistress up yonder has given me a bottle-green coat that will cut up as good as new; and as sure as there's a Brownie in this house, I'll make him a suit of it."

"You'll *what?*" shrieked the old lady. "Son Thomas, Son Thomas, you're mad! Do what you please for the Brownies, but never make them clothes." [71]

"There's nothing they want more," said the Tailor, "by all accounts. They're all in rags, as well they may be, doing so much work."

"If you make clothes for this Brownie, he'll go for good," said the Grandmother, in a voice of awful warning.

"Well, I don't know," said her son. "The mistress up at the farm is clever enough, I can tell you; and as she said to me, fancy any one that likes a tidy room, not liking a tidy coat!" For the Tailor, like most men, was apt to think well of the wisdom of woman-kind in other houses.

"Well, well," said the old lady, "go your own way. I'm an old woman, and my time is not long. It doesn't matter much to me. But it was new clothes that drove the Brownie out before, and Trout's luck went with him."

"I know, Mother," said the Tailor, "and I've been thinking of it all the way home; and I can tell you why it was. Depend upon it, *the clothes didn't fit*. But I'll tell you what I mean to do. I shall measure them by Tommy—they say the Brownies are about his size—and if ever I turned out a well-made coat and waistcoat, they shall be his."

"Please yourself," said the old lady, and she would say no more.

"I think you're quite right, Father," said Tommy, "and if I can, I'll help you to make them."

Next day the father and son set to work, and Tommy contrived to make himself so useful, that the Tailor hardly knew how he got through so much work.

"It's not like the same thing," he broke out at last, "to have some one a bit helpful about you; both for the tailoring and for company's sake. I've not done such a pleasant morning's work since your poor mother died. I'll tell you what it is, Tommy," he added, "if you were always like this, I shouldn't much care whether Brownie stayed or went. I'd give up his help to have yours." [72]

"I'll be back directly," said Tommy, who burst out of the room in search of his brother.

"I've come away," he said squatting down, "because I can't bear it. I very nearly let it all out, and I shall soon. I wish the things weren't going to come to me," he added, kicking a stone in front of him. "I wish he'd measured you, Johnnie."

"I'm very glad he didn't," said Johnnie. "I wish he'd kept them himself."

"Bottle-green, with brass buttons," murmured Tommy, and therewith fell into a reverie.

The next night the suit was finished, and laid by the bread and milk.

"We shall see," said the old lady, in a withering tone. There is not much real prophetic wisdom in this truism, but it sounds very awful, and the Tailor went to bed somewhat depressed.

Next morning the Brownies came down as usual.

"Don't they look splendid?" said Tommy, feeling the cloth. "When we've tidied the place I shall put them on."

But long before the place was tidy, he could wait no longer, and dressed up.

"Look at me!" he shouted; "bottle-green and brass buttons! Oh, Johnnie, I wish you had some."

"It's a good thing there are two Brownies," said Johnnie, laughing, "and one of them in rags still. I shall do the work this morning." And he went flourishing round with a broom, while Tommy jumped madly about in his new suit. "Hurrah!" he shouted, "I feel just like the Brownie. What was it Grannie said he sang when he got his clothes? Oh, I know—" [73]

"What have we here? Hemten hamten,
Here will I never more tread nor stampen."

And on he danced, regardless of the clouds of dust raised by Johnnie, as he drove the broom indiscriminately over the floor, to the tune of his own laughter.

It was laughter which roused the Tailor that morning, laughter coming through the floor from the kitchen below. He scrambled on his things and stole down-stairs.

"It's the Brownie," he thought; "I must look, if it's for the last time."

At the door he paused and listened. The laughter was mixed with singing, and he heard the words

"What have we here? Hemten hamten,
Here will I never more tread nor stampen."

He pushed in, and this was the sight that met his eyes:

The kitchen in its primeval condition of chaos, the untidy particulars of which were the less apparent, as everything was more or less obscured by the clouds of dust, where Johnnie reigned triumphant, like a witch with her broomstick; and, to crown all, Tommy capering and singing in the Brownie's bottle-green suit, brass buttons and all.

"What's this?" shouted the astonished Tailor, when he could find breath to speak.

"It's the Brownies," sang the boys; and on they danced, for they had worked themselves up into a state of excitement from which it was not easy to settle down. [74]

"Where *is* Brownie?" shouted the father.

"He's here," said Tommy; "we are the Brownies."

"Can't you stop that fooling?" cried the Tailor, angrily. "This is past a joke. Where is the real Brownie, I say?"

"We are the only Brownies, really, father," said Tommy, coming to a full stop, and feeling strongly tempted to run down from laughing to crying. "Ask the Old Owl. It's true, really."

The Tailor saw the boy was in earnest, and passed his hand over his forehead.

"I suppose I'm getting old," he said; "I can't see daylight through this. If you are the Brownie, who has been tidying the kitchen lately?"

"We have," said they.

"But who found my measure?"

"I did," said Johnnie.

"And who sorts your grandmother's scraps?"

"We do," said they.

"And who sets breakfast, and puts my things in order?"

"We do," said they.

"But when do you do it?" asked the Tailor.

"Before you come down," said they.

"But I always have to call you," said the Tailor.

"We get back to bed again," said the boys.

"But how was it you never did it before?" asked the Tailor doubtfully.

"We were idle, we were idle," said Tommy.

The Tailor's voice rose to a pitch of desperation—

"But if you do the work," he shouted, "*Where is the Brownie?*"

[75]

"Here!" cried the boys, "and we are very sorry we were Boggarts so long."

With which the father and sons fell into each other's arms and fairly wept.

It will be believed that to explain all this to the Grandmother was not the work of a moment. She understood it all at last, however, and the Tailor could not restrain a little good-humored triumph on the subject. Before he went to work he settled her down in the window with her knitting, and kissed her.

"What do you think of it all, Mother?" he inquired.

"Bairns are a blessing," said the old lady tartly, "*I told you so.*"

"That's not the end, is it?" asked one of the boys in a tone of dismay, for the Doctor had paused here.

"Yes it is," said he.

"But couldn't you make a little more end?" asked Deordie, "to tell us what became of them all?"

"I don't see what there is to tell," said the Doctor.

"Why, there's whether they ever saw the Old Owl again, and whether Tommy and Johnnie went on being Brownies," said the children.

The Doctor laughed.

"Well, be quiet for five minutes," he said.

"We'll be as quiet as mice," said the children.

And as quiet as mice they were. Very like mice, indeed. Very like mice behind a wainscot at night, when you have just thrown something to frighten them away. Death-like stillness for a few seconds, and then all the rustling and scuffling you please. So the children sat holding their breath for a moment or two, and then shuffling feet and smothered bursts of laughter testified to their impatience, and to the difficulty of understanding the process of story-making as displayed by the Doctor, who sat pulling his beard, and staring at his boots, as he made up "a little more end."

[76]

"Well," he said, sitting up suddenly, "the Brownies went on with their work in spite of the bottle-

green suit, and Trout's luck returned to the old house once more. Before long Tommy began to work for the farmers, and Baby grew up into a Brownie, and made (as girls are apt to make) the best house-sprite of all. For, in the Brownie habits of self-denial, thoughtfulness, consideration, and the art of little kindnesses, boys are, I am afraid, as a general rule, somewhat behindhand with their sisters. Whether this altogether proceeds from constitutional deficiency on these points in the masculine character, or is one result among many of the code of by-laws which obtains in men's moral education from the cradle, is a question on which everybody has their own opinion. For the present the young gentlemen may appropriate whichever theory they prefer, and we will go back to the story. The Tailor lived to see his boy-Brownies become men, with all the cares of a prosperous farm on their hands, and his girl-Brownie carry her fairy talents into another home. For these Brownies—young ladies!—are much desired as wives, whereas a man might as well marry an old witch as a young Boggartess."

"And about the Owl?" clamored the children, rather resentful of the Doctor's pausing to take breath.

"Of course," he continued, "the Tailor heard the whole story, and being both anxious to thank the Old Owl for her friendly offices, and also rather curious to see and hear her, he went with the boys one night at moon-rise to the shed by the mere. It was earlier in the evening than when Tommy went, for before daylight had vanished—and at the first appearance of the moon, the impatient Tailor was at the place. There they found the Owl, looking very solemn and stately on the beam. She was sitting among the shadows with her shoulders up, and she fixed her eyes so steadily on the Tailor, that he felt quite overpowered. He made her a civil bow, however, and said —

[77]

"I'm much obliged to you, Ma'am, for your good advice to my Tommy."

The Owl blinked sharply, as if she grudged shutting her eyes for an instant, and then stared on, but not a word spoke she.

"I don't mean to intrude, Ma'am," said the Tailor; "but I was wishful to pay my respects and gratitude."

Still the Owl gazed in determined silence.

"Don't you remember me?" said Tommy pitifully. "I did everything you told me. Won't you even say good-bye?" and he went up towards her.

The Owl's eyes contracted, she shuddered a few tufts of fluff into the shed, shook her wings, and shouting "Oohoo!" at the top of her voice, flew out upon the moor. The Tailor and his sons rushed out to watch her. They could see her clearly against the green twilight sky, flapping rapidly away with her round face to the pale moon. "Good-bye!" they shouted as she disappeared; first the departing owl, then a shadowy body with flapping sails, then two wings beating the same measured time, then two moving lines still to the old tune, then a stroke, a fancy, and then—the green sky and the pale moon, but the Old Owl was gone.

[78]

"Did she never come back?" asked Tiny in subdued tones, for the Doctor had paused again.

"No," said he; "at least not to the shed by the mere. Tommy saw many owls after this in the course of his life; but as none of them would speak, and as most of them were addicted to the unconventional customs of staring and winking, he could not distinguish his friend, if she were among them. And now I think that is all."

"Is that the very very end?" asked Tiny.

"The very very end," said the Doctor.

"I suppose there might be more and more ends," speculated Deordie—"about whether the Brownies had any children when they grew into farmers, and whether the children were Brownies, and whether *they* had other Brownies, and so on and on." And Deordie rocked himself among the geraniums, in the luxurious imagining of an endless fairy tale.

"You insatiable rascal!" said the Doctor. "Not another word. Jump up, for I'm going to see you home. I have to be off early to-morrow."

"Where?" said Deordie.

"Never mind. I shall be away all day, and I want to be at home in good time in the evening, for I mean to attack that crop of groundsel between the sweet-pea hedges. You know, no Brownies come to my homestead!"

And the Doctor's mouth twitched a little till he fixed it into a stiff smile.

The children tried hard to extract some more ends out of him on the way to the Rectory; but he declined to pursue the history of the Trout family through indefinite generations. It was decided on all hands, however, that Tommy Trout was evidently one and the same with the Tommy Trout who pulled the cat out of the well, because "it was just a sort of thing for a Brownie to do, you know!" and that Johnnie Green (who, of course, was not Johnnie Trout,) was some unworthy village acquaintance, and "a thorough Boggart."

[79]

"Doctor!" said Tiny, as they stood by the garden-gate, "how long do you think gentlemen's pocket handkerchiefs take to wear out?"

"That, my dear Madam," said the Doctor, "must depend, like other terrestrial matters, upon circumstances; whether the gentleman bought fine cambric, or coarse cotton with pink portraits of the reigning Sovereign, to commence with; whether he catches many colds, has his pocket picked, takes snuff, or allows his washerwoman to use washing powders. But why do you want to know?"

"I shan't tell you that," said Tiny, who was spoilt by the Doctor, and consequently tyrannized in proportion; "but I will tell you what I mean to do. I mean to tell Mother that when Father wants any more pocket handkerchiefs hemmed, she had better put them by the bath in the nursery, and perhaps some Brownie will come and do them."

"Kiss my fluffy face!" said the Doctor in sepulchral tones.

"The owl is too high up," said Tiny, tossing her head.

The Doctor lifted her four feet or so, obtained his kiss, and set her down again.

"You're not fluffy at all," said she in a tone of the utmost contempt; "you're tickly and bristly. Puss is more fluffy, and Father is scrubby and scratchy, because he shaves." [80]

"And which of the three styles do you prefer?" said the Doctor.

"Not tickly and bristly," said Tiny with firmness; and she strutted up the walk for a pace or two, and then turned round to laugh over her shoulder.

"Good-night!" shouted her victim, shaking his fist after her.

The other children took a noisy farewell, and they all raced into the house, to give joint versions of the fairy tale, first to the parents in the drawing-room, and then to nurse in the nursery.

The Doctor went home also, with his poodle at his heels, but not by the way he came. He went out of his way, which was odd; but then the Doctor was "a little odd," and moreover this was always the end of his evening walk. Through the churchyard, where spreading cedars and stiff yews rose from the velvet grass, and where among tombstones and crosses of various devices lay one of older and uglier date, by which he stayed. It was framed by a border of the most brilliant flowers, and it would seem as if the Doctor must have been the gardener, for he picked off some dead ones, and put them absently in his pocket. Then he looked round, as if to see that he was alone. Not a soul was to be seen, and the moonlight and shadow lay quietly side by side, as the dead do in their graves. The Doctor stooped down and took off his hat.

"Good-night, Marcia," he said, in a low quiet voice. "Good-night, my darling!" The dog licked his hand, but there was no voice to answer, nor any that regarded.

Poor foolish Doctor! Most foolish to speak to the departed with his face earthwards. But we are weak mortals, the best of us; and this man (one of the very best) raised his head at last, and went home like a lonely owl with his face to the moon and the sky. [81]

A BORROWED BROWNIE.

"I can't imagine," said the Rector, walking into the drawing-room the following afternoon, "I can't imagine where Tiny is. I want her to drive to the other end of the parish with me."

"There she comes," said his wife, looking out of the window, "by the garden-gate, with a great basket; what has she been after?"

The Rector went out to discover, and met his daughter looking decidedly earthy, and seemingly much exhausted by the weight of a basketful of groundsel plants.

"Where have you been?" said he.

"In the Doctor's garden," said Tiny triumphantly, "and look what I have done! I've weeded his sweet-peas, and brought away the groundsel; so when he gets home to-night he'll think a Brownie has been in the garden, for Mrs. Pickles has promised not to tell him."

"But look here!" said the Rector, affecting a great appearance of severity, "you're my Brownie, not his. Supposing Tommy Trout had gone and weeded Farmer Swede's garden, and brought back his weeds to go to seed on the Tailor's flower-beds, how do you think he would have liked it?"

Tiny looked rather crestfallen. When one has fairly carried through a splendid benevolence of this kind, it is trying to find oneself in the wrong. She crept up to the Rector, however, and put her golden head upon his arm.

"But, Father dear," she pleaded, "I didn't mean not to be your Brownie; only, you know, you had got five left at home, and it was only for a short time, and the Doctor hasn't any Brownie at all. Don't you pity him?" [82]

And the Rector, who was old enough to remember that grave-stone story we wot of, hugged his Brownie in his arms, and answered—

"My Darling, I do pity him!"

**Handy Illustrated Volumes by popular authors, including LOUISA M. ALCOTT,
 SUSAN COOLIDGE, *Nora Perry*, HELEN HUNT JACKSON,
 LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON, JULIANA H. EWING, LAURA E. RICHARDS, A. G. PLYMPTON,
 EDWARD EVERETT HALE, etc.
 Choicely printed and attractively bound in cloth, with gold and ink stamp
 on side.
 Issued at the popular price of 50 cents per volume.**



- Against Wind and Tide.** By LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON, author of "Bed-Time Stories," etc.
- A Hole in the Wall.** By LOUISA M. ALCOTT, author of "Little Women," etc.
- A Little Knight of Labor.** By SUSAN COOLIDGE, author of "What Katy Did," etc.
- Children's Hour.** By MARY W. TILESTON, author of "Daily Strength for Daily Needs," etc.
- Chop Chin and the Golden Dragon.** By LAURA E. RICHARDS, author of "The Joyous Story of Toto," etc.
- Cottage Neighbors.** NORA PERRY, author of "Hope Benham," etc.
- Curly Locks.** By SUSAN COOLIDGE.
- Daddy Darwin's Dovecot.** By JULIANA H. EWING, author of "Jackanapes," etc.
- Four of Them.** By LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.
- Golden-Breasted Kootoo.** By LAURA E. RICHARDS.
- Goostie.** MARY CAROLINE HYDE, author of "Holly-Berry and Mistletoe."
- Hunter Cats of Connorloa.** By HELEN HUNT JACKSON, author of "Nelly's Silver Mine," etc.
- Jackanapes.** JULIANA H. EWING.
- Little Olive the Heiress.** By A. G. PLYMPTON, author of "Dear Daughter Dorothy," etc.
- Man Without a Country.** By EDWARD EVERETT HALE.
- Marjorie's Three Gifts.** By LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
- May Flowers.** LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
- Miss Toosey's Mission.**
- Nonsense Songs.** EDWARD LEAR.
- Rags and Velvet Gowns.** By A. G. PLYMPTON.
- Story of a Short Life.** By JULIANA H. EWING.
- Sundown Songs.** By LAURA E. RICHARDS.
- That Little Smith Girl.** By NORA PERRY.
- Under the Stable Floor.** By MARY CAROLINE HYDE.
- Christmas at Tappan Sea.** By MARY CAROLINE HYDE.

May Bartlett's Stepmother. By NORA PERRY.
Two Dogs and a Donkey. By A. G. PLYMPTON.
Mary's Meadow. By JULIANA H. EWING.
Book of Heroic Ballads. By MARY W. TILESTON.
Golden Opportunity. By JEAN INGELOW, author of "Stories Told to a Child," etc.
Land of Lost Toys. By JULIANA H. EWING.
Great Emergency. By JULIANA H. EWING.
Two Girls. By SUSAN COOLIDGE.
Little Tommy Tucker. By SUSAN COOLIDGE.
Poppies and Wheat. By LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
Candy Country. By LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
Jessie's Neighbors. By LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.
A Brave Coward. A. G. PLYMPTON.
A Christmas Dream. By LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
A Lost Hero. ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS and HERBERT D. WARD.
Benjy in Beastland. By JULIANA H. EWING.
Bruno. BYRD SPILMAN DEWEY.
Fairy Favorites. By PERRAULT and MME. D'AULNOY.
Her Baby Brother. By LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.
Ivanhoe and Rob Roy Retold for Children. Condensed from Scott, by SIR EDWARD SULLIVAN.
Ju Ju's Christmas Party. By NORA PERRY.
Little Bo-Peep and Queen Blossom. By SUSAN COOLIDGE.
Little Button Rose. By LOUISA M. ALCOTT.
Once Upon a Time. By MME. D'AULNOY and PERRAULT.
The Kingdom of Coins. By BRADLEY GILMAN.
Uncle and Aunt. SUSAN COOLIDGE.

IN BOXED SETS BY AUTHORS

The Louisa M. Alcott Library for Little People. 7 vols. \$3.50.
The Susan Coolidge Library for Little People. 6 vols. \$3.00.
The Juliana H. Ewing Library for Little People. 7 vols. \$3.50.
The Louise Chandler Moulton Library for Little People. 4 vols. \$2.00.
The Nora Perry Library for Little People. 4 vols. \$2.00.
The Laura E. Richards Library for Little People. 3 vols. \$1.50.
The A. G. Plympton Library for Little People. 4 vols. \$2.00.
Mary Caroline Hyde's Christmas Library. 3 vols. \$1.50.

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO.

Publishers, 254 Washington Street, Boston

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE LAND OF LOST TOYS ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying

royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either

with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH

DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.