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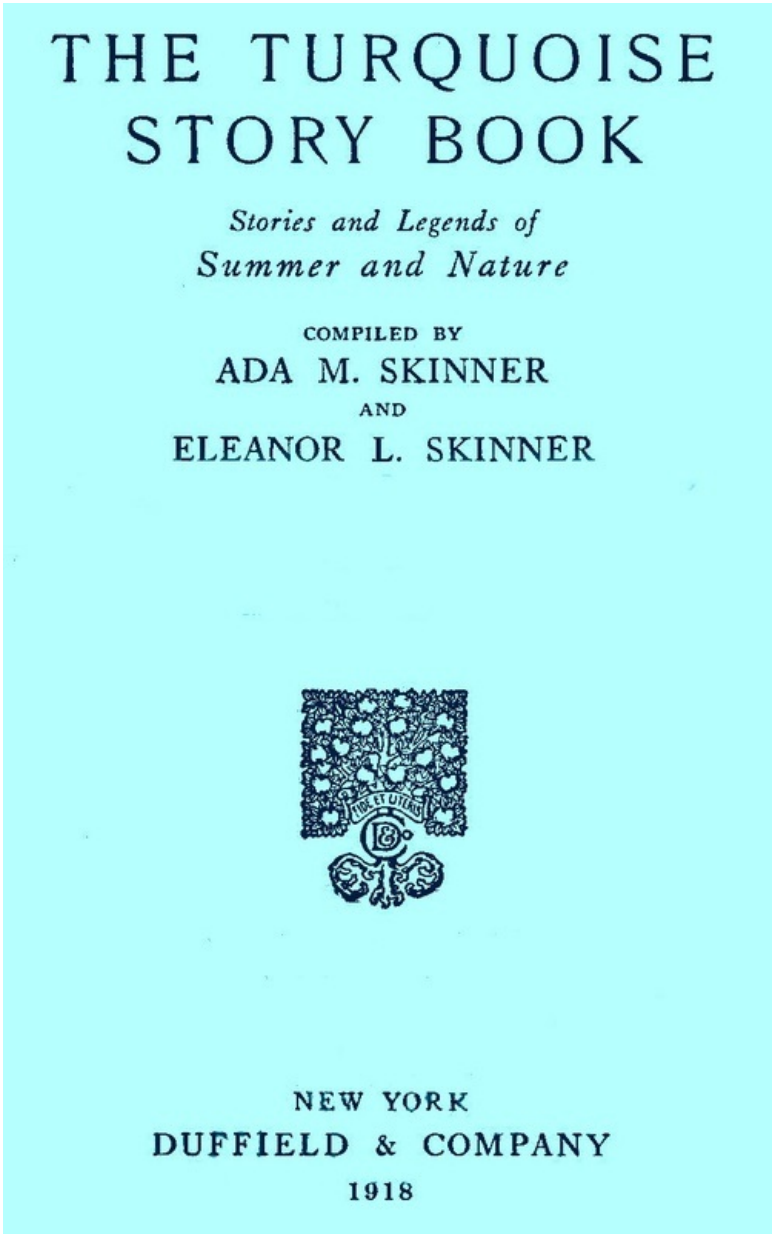

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THE TURQUOISE

STORY BOOK

Stories and Legends of
Summer and Nature

COMPILED BY

ADA M. SKINNER

AND

ELEANOR L. SKINNER

Editors of "The Emerald Story Book," "Merry Tales," "Nursery Tales from Many Lands" and "The Topaz Story Book"

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1918

INTRODUCTION

The beauty of the world gradually reveals itself to the child who forms the habit of observation. Through companionship with Nature, supplemented by the reading of books which foster an interest in the ever-varying charm of the seasons, the young reader enriches his experience by learning to interpret "the open pages of the world about him."

Some of the stories, legends, and poems in the present volume point out facts in Nature; others stimulate interest because they appeal to the young reader's fancy, quicken his sense of humour, or attract his attention to some spiritual significance. Also, large use has been made of myths and wonder stories. They evolved in the childhood of the race when the mystery of the physical world made a deep and serious impression upon primitive men. In terms of their own experiences, they explained and symbolized the beauty, order, and power which they beheld.

"The Turquoise Story Book" is the third volume in a series of nature books, each of which emphasizes the interest and beauty characteristic of a particular season. The central theme of this volume is the loveliness of summer and its manifold blessings.

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The selections from John Burroughs, Edith M. Thomas and John Townsend Trowbridge are used by permission of and by special arrangement with Houghton, Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers of their works.

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SUMMER SKIES

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ON A MIDSUMMER DAY

Hang out your loveliest star, O Night! O Night!
  Your richest rose, O Dawn!
To greet sweet Summer, her who clothed in Light
  Leads Earth's best hours on.
Hark! how the wild birds of the woods
  Throat it within the dewy solitudes;
    The brook sings low and soft,
      The trees make song,
As from her heaven aloft
Comes blue-eyed Summer like a girl along.

MADISON CAWEIN.

HOW SUMMER CONQUERED WINTER

(IROQUOIS LEGEND)

Once upon a time the Great Chief, Glooscap, who brought many blessings to the Red Men, made a journey far into the Northland. For days he traveled over frozen wastes of ice and snow, where the keen wind blew without ceasing.

At last he came to a lodge hollowed out of the icebergs, where Winter, the Giant of the Northland, dwelt. Quietly, Glooscap stalked into the glittering lodge and sat down. There was silence for several moments, then the Winter Manito laid aside his scepter of ice, filled a pipe, and, offering it to his guest, said, "Thou art welcome. Tell me, why comest thou to the Northland?"

"To learn about the power of the Winter Giant," answered Glooscap.

"Who can measure the strength of the Winter King?" said the giant, shaking his white locks, on which rested a crown of icicles.

For a long while the King and his guest sat smoking in silence. Then the Winter Giant began the story of his mighty deeds.

"I cover the Northland with ice, and pile up great snowdrifts which look like mountains. I send forth the Storm Blast, which fills the air with sleet and snow, and makes the white bear creep into a cave for shelter. I build the glittering icebergs, out of which my chieftains make their lodges."

The enchantment of the frost was in Giant Winter's words, and his guest sat spellbound. After Glooscap had listened to many works of wonder, he nodded his head and fell into a deep sleep. Like an image of death he lay in Winter's lodge for six months.

Then one morning the charm of the frost spirit was broken, and Glooscap, who awoke with renewed vigor, left the Winter King's lodge and journeyed toward the Southland. After a few days of travel he was beyond the reach of the Storm Blast. The air grew wondrously mild and warm; instead of frozen wastes, he saw stretches of meadowlands and green forests, where the birds were nesting. He walked deep into the woodland until he came to a dell, which was thick with flowers and bright butterflies. On soft green moss the Sun-Fays, led by the Fairy Queen of Summer, were dancing gaily. For a few moments Glooscap stood and marveled at the beauty of the scene.

Suddenly he sprang into the midst of the dancers, seized the Fairy Queen of Summer, and slipped her under his blanket. Then away he fled with her. As he ran, Glooscap, by magic power, dropped one end of a slender cord, made from a moose-hide, and let it trail behind him. When the Sun-Fays saw what had happened, they uttered a great cry, and darted after the intruder. They seized the end of the cord, and tugged at it with all their fairy might, hoping to hold fast Glooscap and rescue their Fairy Queen. But the magic cord had no end, and the Sun-Fays were left in the valley, while Glooscap fled through the forest and retraced his steps to the frozen Northland.

Again he silently entered the giant's lodge hollowed out of the icebergs. The Winter Manito laid aside his ice scepter, filled a pipe, and offered it to his guest, saying, "Thou art welcome. Hast thou returned to the Northland to hear more about the strength of the Winter Manito?"

"The Frost King's might is great," said Glooscap, "but I have seen a power which is greater than his!"

The Winter Giant looked scornfully at his guest and said nothing.

"I have seen the wonder and beauty of the Summer Queen's land," said Glooscap. "There the quickening dews and gentle showers soften the brown earth, and the grass leaps forth. Myriad sunbeams touch the flower buds, and unfold them into full blossoms. Birds build their nests and rear their young in the branches of the sheltering forests. Light and warmth abound, and the earth is filled with gladness."

By magic power Glooscap cast a spell over Giant Winter. He could neither speak nor move. As the Great Chief talked, the iceberg lodge grew warm and big ice drops ran down the giant's cheeks. Gradually the air grew warmer and warmer. Winter's icy figure and his wigwam melted and, in a great flood, flowed away to the sea.

Then, from her hiding place under Glooscap's blanket, stepped forth the Summer Queen. At her command the Sun Fairies joined her, and together they began the marvelous work of making the grasses grow and the flowers bloom. Brooks and rivers flowed through the green meadows. Birds hastened back from the Southland and built their nests in the forests. Soon the whole land was filled with the joys and blessings of summer.

A LEGEND OF THE FLOWERS

(AUSTRALIAN)

Long, long ago the great Byamee left the earth and went to dwell in the far-away land of rest, which was beyond the tops of the Oobi Oobi mountain. The earth became a dull and desolate place after he left it, for all the flowers that brightened the plains and hillsides ceased to bloom.

And since there were no blossoms the bees could no longer make honey for the earth children. In all the land there were but three trees where the bees lived and worked; and no one ever touched these sacred trees, because they belonged to Byamee.

The children cried for honey, and the mothers took little bark baskets into the woods to search for the sweet food. But they returned with empty baskets and said, "There is no honey except on the sacred trees. We will never touch Byamee's honey."

This obedience pleased the Great Spirit very much and he said, "I'll send the earth children a food as sweet as the honey for which they hunger. It shall flow from the Bilbil and Goolabah trees."

Soon were seen white, sugary specks on the shining leaves of these trees, and then came the clear manna, which ran along the branches and down the trunks, and hardened into sugar. The children were delighted with the sweet food, and all the people were thankful for Byamee's gift.

But they were not satisfied, for they still wished to see the plains and hillsides covered with blossoms. So deeply did they long for the beautiful flowers, which had left the earth, that the wise men finally said, "We will travel to the land of Byamee, and ask him to brighten the earth again with flowers."

They kept the plan and purpose of their journey a secret from the tribes, and sped away to the northeast. On and on they journeyed until they came to the foot of the great Oobi Oobi mountain, whose summit was lost in the clouds of the sky. They walked along the base of its rocky sides, wondering how they could scale the steep ascent when suddenly they spied a foothold cut in a rock, and then they noticed another step and still another. Looking carefully upward, they saw a pathway of steps cut as far as they could see up the mountain side. Up this ladder of stone they determined to climb. On and on they went, and when the first day's ascent was ended the top of the mountain still seemed high above them. They noticed, too, that they were climbing a spiral path, which wound round and round the mountain. Not until the end of the fourth day's climb did they reach the summit of this mighty mountain.

And from a basin in the marble there bubbled forth a spring of clear, sweet water, which the wise men drank eagerly. Their hard journey had almost exhausted them, but the cooling draught filled them again with new life. At a little distance from the spring they saw a circle of piled-up stones. They walked to the center of it, and a voice spoke to them. It came from a fairy messenger of the Great Spirit.

"Why have the wise men of the earth ventured so near to the dwelling of Byamee?" asked the spirit voice.

And the men answered, "Since the great Byamee left the earth no flowers have bloomed there. We have come to ask for the gift of flowers, because the earth is very dreary without their gay colors."

Then the fairy messenger's voice said, "Attendant spirits of the mountain, lift the wise men into the abode of Byamee, where fadeless flowers never cease to bloom. Of these blossoms, wise men, you may gather as many as you can hold in your hands. After you have gathered the flowers the attendant spirits will lift you back into the magic circle on the summit of Oobi Oobi. From this place you must return as quickly as possible to your tribes."

As the voice stopped speaking, the men were lifted up through an opening in the sky and set down in a land of wondrous beauty. Everywhere brilliant flowers were blooming, and they were massed together in lines of exquisite colors, which looked like hundreds of rainbows lying on the grass. The wise men were overcome by the marvelous sight, and they wept tears of joy.

Remembering what they had come for, they stooped down and gathered quickly as many blossoms as they could hold. The spirits then lifted them down again into the magic circle on the top of Oobi Oobi.

There they heard again the voice of the fairy messenger who said, "Tell your people when you take them these flowers that never again shall the earth be bare and dreary. All through the seasons certain blossoms shall be brought by the different winds, but the east wind shall bring them in abundance to the trees and shrubs. Among the grasses, on plains and hillsides, flowers shall bloom as thick as hairs on an opossom's skin. When the sweet-breathed wind does not blow,—first to bring the showers and then the flowers,—the bees can make only enough honey for themselves. During this time manna shall again drop from the trees, and it shall take the place of honey until the east wind once more blows the rain down the mountains and opens the blossoms for the bees. Then there will be honey enough for all. Now make haste and take this promise and the fadeless flowers, which are a sign of it to your people."

The voice ceased and the wise men, carrying the fadeless blossoms, began the journey back to their people. Down the stone ladder, cut by the spirits of the mountain, they went,—across the plains, over the moors,—back to the camp of the tribes. Their people flocked around them, gazing with wide-eyed wonder at the blossoms. The air was filled with a delicious fragrance, and the flowers were as fresh as when they were plucked in the land of Byamee.

When the people had gazed for some time at the beautiful flowers and had heard the promise sent

to them by Byamee, the wise men scattered their precious gift far and wide. Some of the lovely blossoms fell on the treetops, some on the plains and hillsides, and ever since that far-off day the earth has been blessed with the gift of flowers. (Adapted.)

And what is so rare as a day in June?
  Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
  And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
  An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
  Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.

James Russell Lowell.

THE SUN-GODDESS

FRANK RINDER

Ama-Terasu, the sun-goddess, was seated in the Blue Plain of Heaven. Her light came as a message of joy to the celestial deities. The orchid and the iris, the cherry and the plum blossom, the rice and the hemp fields answered to her smile. The Inland Sea was veiled in soft, rich colors.

Susa-no-o, the brother of Ama-Terasu, who had resigned his ocean scepter, and now reigned as the moon-god, was jealous of his sister's glory and world-wide sway. The Heaven Illuminating Spirit had but to whisper and she was heard throughout her kingdom, even in the depths of the clear pool in the heart of the crystal. Her rice-fields, whether situated on hillside, in sheltered valley or by running stream, yielded abundant harvests, and her groves were laden with fruit. But the voice of 16
Susa-no-o was not so clear, his smile was not so radiant. The undulating fields which lay around his palace were now flooded, now parched, and his rice crops were often destroyed. The wrath and jealousy of the moon-god knew no bounds, yet Ama-Terasu was infinitely patient and forgave him all things.

Once, as was her wont, the sun-goddess sat in the central court of her flower home. She plied the shuttle. Celestial weaving maidens surrounded a fountain whose waters were fragrant with the heavenly lotus-bloom; they sang softly of the clouds and the wind, and the light of the sky. Suddenly, the body of a piebald horse fell through the vast dome at their feet; the "Beloved of the gods" had been flayed with a backward flaying by the envious Susa-no-o. Ama-Terasu, trembling at the sight, pricked her finger with the weaving shuttle and, profoundly indignant at the cruelty of her brother, withdrew into a cave, and closed behind her the door of the Heavenly Rich Dwelling.

The universe was plunged in darkness. Joy and goodwill, serenity and peace, hope and love waned 17
with the waning light. Evil Spirits who heretofore had crouched in dim corners came forth and roamed abroad. Then grim laughter and discordant tones struck terror into all hearts.

Then it was that the gods, fearful for their safety and for the life of every beautiful thing, assembled on the bed of the tranquil River of Heaven whose waters had been dried up. One and all knew that Ama-Terasu alone could help them. But how allure the Heaven-Illuminating Spirit to set foot in this world of darkness and strife. Each god was eager to aid and a plan was finally devised to entice her from her hiding place.

Ame-no-ko uprooted the holy sakaki trees which grew on the mountain of Heaven, and planted them around the entrance of the cave. High on the upper branches were hung the precious string of curved jewels which Izanagi had bestowed upon the sun-goddess. From the middle branches drooped a mirror wrought of the rare metals of the celestial mine. Its polished surface was as the dazzling brilliancy of the sun. Other gods wove fine threads of hemp and paper mulberry on an 18
imperial robe of white and blue which was placed as an offering to the goddess, on the lower branches of the Sakaki.

A palace was also built surrounded by a garden in which the blossom-god called forth many delicate plants and flowers.

Now all was ready. Ame-no-ko stepped forward and in a loud voice entreated Ama-Terasu to show herself. His appeal was in vain. The great festival began. Uzume, the goddess of mirth, led the dance and song. Leaves of the spindle tree crowned her head; club moss from the heavenly mount of Kagu formed her sash; her flowing sleeves were bound with the creeper-vine; and in her hand she carried leaves of the wild bamboo and waved a wand of sun-grass hung with tiny melodious bells. Uzume blew on a bamboo flute while eight hundred myriad deities, accompanied her on wooden clappers and instruments formed of bow-strings across which were rapidly drawn stalks of reed and grass. Great fires were lighted around the cave and as these were reflected in the face of 19
the mirror the long singing birds of eternal night began to crow as if day had dawned. The merriment increased. The dance grew wilder and wilder and the gods laughed until the heavens shook as if with thunder.

Ama-Terasu in her quiet retreat heard unmoved the crowing of cocks and the sounds of music and dancing; but when the heavens shook with the laughter of the gods she peeped from her cave and said, "What means this? I thought heaven and earth were dark but now there is light. Uzume dances and all the gods laugh." Uzume answered, "It is true that I dance and that the gods laugh because in our midst is a goddess whose splendour equals your own!" Ama-Terasu gazed into the mirror and wondered greatly when she saw therein a goddess of exceeding beauty—her own lovely image. She stepped from her cave and forthwith a cord of rice-straw was drawn across the entrance. Darkness fled from the land and there was light. Then the eight hundred myriad deities cried, "O, may the sun-goddess never leave us again." (Adapted slightly.)

THE SUMMER MAKER

(Ojibway Legend)

Once upon a time the winter season lasted for so many many months that the people began to wonder if the frozen rivers and deep snows would ever melt. "Will the keen north wind never leave us?" they asked each other anxiously. "What has become of the beautiful warm summer?"

The only person who seemed happy during this long, cold season was Ojeeb, a mighty hunter. He enjoyed the adventure of searching for the big winter game and his eye was so keen and his hand so steady that he never failed to bring abundance of food to his wigwam.

Ojeeb's little son liked to hunt with his father but the lad suffered much from the bitter cold. Often his fingers became so numb that he could not speed his small arrow skilfully and he would fail in his aim. This always vexed him very much and he would wish for the summer days to come.

One day, when Ojeeb and his son were hunting, the lad became so cold that he was obliged to leave his father and return to the wigwam. When he was hurrying through the woods he heard a squirrel chattering very loud on a pine tree. He stopped for a moment and the squirrel said, "Don't shoot me. I'm going to tell you a secret. I've often heard you wish for summer. The mighty hunter, who is your father, knows how to bring summer back to the earth. When he comes home beg him to send away this bitter cold weather and bring us the warm sunny days." Off scampered the chattering squirrel, and the lad ran on to his wigwam.

In the evening Ojeeb came home with some excellent game which he showed with pride, but his son took little interest in it. He began to talk about the cruel cold weather. Finally he said, "Father, drive away the keen winds, the frost, and the snow, and bring summer back to the earth. For many months the Red Men have borne the trials of winter. It is hard for some of them to get enough food, for few are as skilful with the bow and arrow as Ojeeb. Send away the cold days and bring us the bright, warm summer again."

"You are asking me to perform a mighty task," said Ojeeb, "but I'll do my best to grant your request. It is true that I know the secret of bringing summer back to the earth."

The next morning Ojeeb prepared a feast, and invited a number of his animal friends to dine with him. At the appointed time, Otter, Beaver, Lynx, Badger, and Wolverine all came to Ojeeb's lodge. There they feasted and listened with interest to the mighty hunter's plan to bring summer back to the earth.

"We shall have to take a long and dangerous journey and perhaps we shall never return to our homes," he said. "Are you brave enough to help me in this mighty task?"

The animals all said they were willing to follow and help Ojeeb, and begged him to tell them his plan. To their astonishment the hunter said the only way to bring back the summer was to break through the great dome of Sky-Land, and free the summer birds which were imprisoned there.

"But how shall we reach Sky-Land?" asked the animals in one voice.

"I'll lead the way," said the hunter.

The next day they started on the journey to Sky-Land. Ojeeb led the way up a steep, smooth mountain-side. For twenty days they traveled and finally they came to a curious lodge in a hollow. The Mountain Manito lived there. He gave Ojeeb and his animal friends food, and sheltered them until they were refreshed. The hunter told him the object of their coming and the Manito pointed out to them a certain pathway which led to the summit of the mountain. For twenty days more they traveled. They were now high up above the clouds. The blue dome of the sky seemed but a short distance above their heads. They rested for awhile and gazed in silent wonder at the beautiful canopy which separated them from Sky-Land.

Finally Ojeeb said, "Our difficult task is only half done. We must leap up and break through the dome of the Sky and set free the summer birds. This is a mighty task I assure you. The Mountain Manito directed me to say that you, Otter, are to make the first trial."

Otter was delighted to be chosen first. Without taking due consideration of the great height, he immediately made a bound upward. But, alas! He fell headlong through the air to the mountain-side and rolled down, down to the plain below. The Beaver made the next effort, but he too missed the sky dome and fell with a thud to the earth. Lynx made a great leap and so did Badger but each failed to touch the great dome of the sky.

Ojeeb was growing very anxious, indeed. "Wolverine," he said, "measure the height carefully. You have great skill in leaping. Do not fail me."

Wolverine made a wonderful leap. His ears grazed the dome. Again he sprang upward with a mighty bound and lo! he made a dent in the sky. A third time he tried and such a prodigious leap he made that a great rent was torn in the blue dome. And Wolverine passed through into Sky-Land. Ojeeb immediately sprang after him.

They found themselves in a land of wondrous beauty. The air was soft and warm and a delicious fragrance rose from rich, green meadows thick with brilliant flowers. Ojeeb and Wolverine walked toward a group of tepees which stood near a lake of crystal-clear water bordered by cool stretches of woodland. Evidently the people were away on a hunting adventure for the tepees were vacant. Presently Ojeeb saw a great cage made from the finest of willow withes and enclosed therein were the beautiful summer birds. Robins, orioles, bluebirds, thrushes, jays, swallows, woodpeckers, veeries, and redbirds, all were flitting silently about in their prison.

"Let us free the summer birds quickly," whispered the hunter.

With Wolverine's help the cage was broken in a very short time. Out flew the bright-feathered prisoners. As soon as they were free they began to sing rapturous songs of happiness. Away they darted toward the opening in the sky-dome and many of them passed through, carrying with them the warm, summer air.

But alas! the sweet singing reached the ears of the Sky-People who were in the neighbouring forests. They hurried toward their tepees to see what had happened. They soon discovered that the summer birds had been freed and were flying toward the earth through a great rent in the sky-dome. Many of the Sky-People, shouting at the top of their voices, rushed to the opening and prevented some of the birds from escaping. Others searched for the intruders who had caused the confusion.

Wolverine's quick ears heard the Sky-People running from the forest and with great leaps he reached the hole in the sky-dome and plunged through. Ojeeb followed as quickly as he could but before he reached the opening it was surrounded by some of the Sky-People. He turned and fled in another direction, but there was no other way of escaping to the earth. On and on he ran until finally he came to the land of the stars and he has dwelt there ever since.

Among the Earth-People there was great rejoicing. The warm air from Sky-Land melted the frost and snow which had covered the land for many, many months. In the brown meadows the grass sprang forth and flowers bloomed. The summer birds built their nests in the leafy branches of the forest and cheered the Earth-People with happy songs.

The mighty hunter is not forgotten. Often the Indians point to Sky-Land and say:

"It was brave Ojeeb who journeyed to Sky-Land and freed the summer birds. He gave us the precious gift of summer and that is why we call him 'The Summer Maker.'"

SUMMER

Then came the jolly Summer, being dight
In a thin, silken cassock, colour'd green,
That was unlinèd all, to be more light;
And on his head a garland well beseen
He wore.

EDMUND SPENSER.

IN THE KITCHEN-GARDEN

Mrs. Alfred Gatty

One—two—three—four—five; five neatly-raked kitchen-garden beds, four of them side by side, with a pathway between; the fifth a narrow slip, heading the others, and close to the gravel walk, as it was for succession-crops of mustard and cress, which are often wanted in a hurry for breakfast or tea.

Most people have stood by such beds in their own kitchen-garden on soft spring mornings and evenings, and looked for the coming up of the seed which either they or the gardener had sown.

Radishes in one, for instance, and of all three sorts—white-turnip, red-turnip, and long-tailed. Carrots in another; and this bed had been dug very deep indeed that the roots might strike freely down. Onions in another. Beets in the fourth, both the golden and red varieties, while the narrow slip was half mustard and half cress.

Such was the plan here, at least, and here, for a time, all the seeds lay sleeping, as it seemed. For, as the long smooth-raked beds stretched out dark and bare under the stars, they betrayed no symptoms of anything going on within.

Nevertheless, there was no sleeping in the case. The little seed-grains were fulfilling the law of their being, each after its kind; the grains, all but their inner germs, decaying; the germs swelling and growing, till they rose out of their cradles, and made their way, through their earthen coverlid, to the light of day.

They did not all come up quite together, of course, nor all quite alike. But as to the time, the gardener had made his arrangements so cleverly, that none was very far behind his neighbour. And as to the difference of shape in the first young leaves, what could it signify? It is true the young Mustards were round and thick; the Cresses oval and pointed; the Carrots mere green threads; the Onions sharp little blades, while the Beets had an odd, stainy look. But they all woke up to the same life and enjoyment, and were all greeted with friendly welcome as they appeared, by the dew and light, and sunshine, and breezes.

"I find I get deeper and deeper into the soil every day," remarked the Carrot. "I shall be I don't know how long, at last. I have been going down regularly, quite straight, for weeks. Then I am tapering off to a long point at the end, in the most beautiful proportions possible. A traveller told me, the other day, this was perfection, and I believe he was right."

"I knew what it was to live near the surface in my young days," the Carrot went on; "but never felt solid enjoyment till I struck deeply down, where all is so rich and warm. Pray tell me, neighbours," added he, good-naturedly enough, "I should like to know that your roots are as long, and slim, and orange-coloured as mine; doing as well, in fact, and sinking as far down. I wish us to be all perfect alike. Perfection is the great thing to try for."

"When you are sure you are trying in the right way," sneered a voice from the neighbouring radish bed. "But if the long, slim, orange-roots striking deep into the earth are your idea of perfection, I advise you to begin life over again. Dear me! I wish you had consulted us before. Why, we stopped going down long ago, and have been spreading out sideways and all ways, into stout, round solid balls ever since, close white flesh throughout, inside; and not orange but red, without."

"White, he means," shouted another.

"Red, I call it," repeated the first.

"But no matter; certainly not orange!"

And "certainly not orange!" cried they all.

"So," continued the Radish, "we are quite concerned to hear you ramble on about growing longer and longer, and strongly advise you to keep your own counsel, and not mention it to any one else. We are friendly, you know, and can be trusted; but you really must leave off wasting your powers and energy in the dark inside of the ground, out of everybody's sight and knowledge. Come to the surface, and make the most of it, as we do, and then you'll be a credit to your friends. Never mind what travellers say. They've nothing else to do but to walk about and talk, and they tell us we are perfection, too. Don't trust to them, but to what we tell you now, and alter your course at once. Roll yourself up into a firm round ball as fast as you can. You won't find it hard if you once begin. You have only to——"

"Let me put in a word first," interrupted one of the long-tailed Radishes in the same bed; "for it is of no use to go out of one extreme into another, which you are on the high road to do if you are disposed to take Mr. Roundhead's advice; who, by the way, ought to be ashamed of forcing his very peculiar views upon his neighbours. Just look at us. We always strike moderately down, so we know it's the right thing to do. Solid round balls are the most unnatural and useless things in the world. But, on the other hand, my dear friend, we have learnt where to stop, and a great secret it is, but one I fear you know nothing about at present; and as to the soil's being better so very far down, nobody can believe it, for why should it be? The great art is to make the most of what is at hand, as we do. Time enough to go into the depths when you have used up what is so much easier got at. The man who gathered some of us yesterday, called out, 'These are just right.' So I leave you to judge whether some other people we know of must not be wrong."

"You rather overwhelm me," mused the Carrot, "though it's remarkable you counsellors should not agree among yourselves. Is it possible, however, that I have been making a great mistake all my life? What lost time to look back upon! Yet a ball;—no, no, not a ball! I don't think I could grow into a solid round ball were I to try forever!"

"Not having tried, how can you tell?" whispered the Turnip-Radish persuasively.

"But you never will, if you listen to our old-fashioned friend next door, who has been halting between two opinions all his life;—will neither make an honest fat lump of it, as I do, nor plunge down and taper with you. But nothing can be done without an effort."

"That is true," murmured the Carrot, rather sadly; "but I am too old for further efforts myself. Mistake or no mistake, my fate is fixed. I am too far down to get up again, that's certain; but some of the young ones may try. Do you hear, dears? Some of you stop short, if you can, and grow out sideways and all ways, into stout, round, solid balls."

"Oh, nonsense about round balls!" cried the long-tailed Radish in disgust; "what will the world come to, if this folly goes on! Listen to me, youngsters, I beg. Go to a moderate depth, and be content; and if you want something to do, throw out a few fibres for amusement. You're firm enough without them, I know, but the employment will pass away time."

"There are strange delusions abroad just now," remarked the Onions to each other; "do you hear all this talk about shape and way of growth? and everybody in the dark on the subject, though they seem to be quite unconscious of the fact themselves. That fellow chattered about solid balls, as if there was no such thing as bulbs, growing layer upon layer, and coat over coat. Of course the very long orange gentleman, with his tapering root, is the most wrong of the whole party; but I doubt if Mr. Roundhead is much wiser when he speaks of close, white flesh inside, and red (of all ridiculous nonsense!) without. Where are their flaky skins, I should like to know? Who is ever to peel them, I wonder? Poor things! I can't think how they got into such ways. How tough and obstinate they must be! I wish we lived nearer. We would teach them a little better than that, and show them what to do."

"I have lived near you long enough," grumbled a deep-red Beet in the next bed; "and you have never taught me; neither shall you, if I can help it. A pretty instructor you would be, who think it ridiculous to be red! I suppose you can't grow red yourself, and so abuse the colour out of spite. Now I flatter myself I am red inside as well as out, so I suppose I am more ridiculous than your friend who contrives to keep himself white within, according to his own account; but I doubt the fact. There, there! it is a folly to be angry, so I say no more, except this! get red as fast as you can. You live in the same soil as I do, and ought to be able to do so."

"Oh, don't call it red!" exclaimed a golden Beet, who was of a gentle turn of mind; "it is but a pale tint after all, and surely rather amber than red; and perhaps that was what the long-tailed orange gentleman meant."

"Perhaps it was; for perhaps he calls red orange, as you call it amber," answered the redder Beet; "anyhow he has rather more sense than our neighbor here, with his layer upon layer, and coat over coat, and flaky skin over all. Think of wasting time in such fiddle-faddle proceedings! Grow a good honest fleshy substance, and have done with it, and let people see you know what life is capable of. I always look at results. It is something to get such a body as I do out of the surrounding soil. That is living to some purpose, I consider. Nobody makes more of opportunities than I do."

"Do you hear them? oh! do you hear them?" whispered the Cress to her neighbour the Mustard. "Do you hear how they all talk together of their growth, and their roots, and their bulbs, and size, and colour, and shape? It makes me quite unhappy, for I am doing nothing like that myself—nothing, nothing, though I live in the same soil! What is to be done? What do you do? Do you grow great white solid balls, or long orange tapering roots, or thick red flesh, or bulbs with layer upon layer, and coat over coat? Some of them talked of just throwing out a few fibres as a mere amusement to pass away time; and this is all I ever do for business. Do speak to me, but whisper what you say, for I shame to be heard or thought of."

"I grow only fibres too," groaned the Mustard in reply; "but I would spread every way and all ways if I could—downwards and upwards, and sideways and all ways, like the rest. I wish I had never been sown. Better never be sown and grown, than sown and grown to such trifling purpose! The soil must give them what it refuses to us."

"Or we are weak and helpless, and cannot take in what it offers," suggested the Cress. "Alas! that we should have been sown only to be useless and unhappy!"

And they wept the evening through. But they alone were not unhappy. The Carrot had become uneasy, and could follow his natural tastes no longer in comfort, for thinking that he ought to be a solid round ball, white inside, and red without. The Onion had sore misgivings that the Beet might be right after all, and a good honest mass of red flesh be more worth labouring for, than the pale coat-within-coat growth in which he had indulged. It did seem a waste of trouble, a fiddle-faddle plan of life, he feared. Perhaps he had not gone down far enough in soil. Some one talked of growing fibres for amusement—he had certainly not come to that; they were necessary to his support; he couldn't hold fast without them. Other people were more independent than he was, then; perhaps wiser,—alas!

And yet the Beet himself was not quite easy; for talk as he would, what he had called fiddle-faddle seemed ingenious when he thought it over, and he would like to have persuaded himself that he grew layer upon layer, too. But it wouldn't do.

Perhaps, in fact, the bold little Turnip-Radishes alone, were the only ones free from misgivings, and believed that everybody ought to do as they did themselves.

What a disturbance there was, to be sure! And it got worse and worse, and they called on the winds and fleeting clouds, the sun, and moon, and stars above their heads, to stay their course awhile, and declare who was right and who was wrong.

But they called and asked in vain; till one evening, the clouds which had been gathering over the garden for days began to come down in rain, and sank swiftly into the ground, where it had been

needed for long. Whereupon there was a general cry, "Here comes a messenger; now we shall hear!"

So out came the old inquiries again:—who was right—who was wrong—who had got hold of the true secret? But the Cress made no inquiry at all, only shook with fright under the rain; "for," thought she, "the hour of my shame and degradation is come: poor useless creature that I am, I shall never more hold up my head."

As to the Carrot, into whose well-dug bed the rain found easiest entrance, and sank deepest, he held forth in most eloquent style upon the whole affair; how it was started, and what he had said; how much he had once hoped; how much he now feared. 40

Now, the Rain-drops did not care to answer in a hurry; but as they came dropping down, they murmured, "Peace, peace, peace!" all over the beds. And truly they seemed to bring peace with them as they fell, so that a calm sank all around, and then the murmur proceeded:—"Poor little atoms in a boundless kingdom,—each one of you good after its kind—how came these cruel misgivings and heart-burnings among you? Are the tops of the mountains wrong because they cannot grow corn like the valleys? Are the valleys wrong because they cannot soar into the sky? Does the brook flow in vain because it cannot spread out like the sea? Each is good after its kind. Peace, peace, peace. Upon one, then, upon all—each wanted, each useful, each good after its kind—peace, peace, peace, peace, peace!"

The murmur subsided to a whisper, the whisper into silence; and by the time the moon-shadows lay upon the garden there was peace everywhere. 41

Nor was it broken again; for henceforth even the Cress held up her head—she, also, was good after her kind.

Only once or twice, that year, when the Carrots were gathered, there came up the strangest growths—thick, distorted lumps, that had never struck properly down.

The gardener wondered, and was vexed, for he prided himself on the digging of the carrot-bed. "Anything that had had any sense might have gone down into it, I am sure," he said. And he was not far wrong; but you see the Carrot had had no sense when he began to speculate, and tried to be something he was not intended to be.

Yet the poor clumsy thing was not quite useless after all. For, just as the gardener was about to fling it angrily away, he recollected that the cook might use it for soup, though it could not be served up at table—such a shape as it was!

And this was exactly what she did. (Abridged.)

Here's another day, dear,
Here's the sun again
Peeping in his pleasant way
Through the window pane.
Rise and let him in, dear,
Hail him, "Hip hurray!"
Now the fun will all begin,
Here's another day!

Down the coppice path, dear,
Through the dewy glade,
(When the Morning took her bath
What a splash she made!)
Up the wet wood-way, dear,
Under dripping green,
Run and meet another day
Brightest ever seen.

Mushrooms in the field, dear,
Show their silver gleam,
What a dainty crop they yield
Firm as clouted cream,
Cool as balls of snow, dear,
Sweet and fresh and round!
Ere the early dews can go
We must clear the ground.

Such a lot to do, dear,
Such a lot to see!
How we ever can get through
Fairly puzzles me.
Hurry up and out, dear,
Then—away! away!
In and out and round about,
Here's another day!

W. Graham Robertson.

THE SUMMER PRINCESS

MRS. MOLESWORTH

Once upon a time, in a country far to the north of the world, lived a King and a Queen who had everything they could wish for except an heir to their throne. That does not mean that they had no troubles at all. The Queen thought she had a good many and the King had one which was more real than any of her fancied ones. His Queen was a terrible grumbler. She was a grumbler by nature, and besides this she had been a spoiled child.

As she was very beautiful and could be very sweet and charming when in a contented mood, the King had fallen deeply in love with her when he was on his travels round the world, and had persuaded her to leave her own home in the sunny South to accompany him to his northern kingdom.

There she had much to make her happy. While the first summer lasted she almost forgot to grumble, but when the winter came fierce and boisterous as it always is in those lands, she grew very miserable. She shivered with cold and, instead of bracing herself to bear it, she wrapped herself in her furs and sat from morning till night cowering over a huge fire. Although she brightened up as each summer came around, with the return of each winter it was again the same sad story.

However, one day late in the autumn she actually forgot her terror of the cold so far as to remain out walking in the grounds of the palace, though the snow clouds were gathering thick and heavy overhead.

She was alone. For sometimes in her saddest moods she could bear no one, not even the most faithful of her ladies, near her.

"If only I had a child of my own I would never complain of anything again."

As the Queen uttered her wish, she raised her eyes upwards and was startled to see some snowflakes already falling; she turned to hasten indoors, exclaiming as she went, "To think that winter is upon us already; I shall no longer have even the small pleasure of a stroll in the garden. But if I had a child to play with and care for, even the dreary winter would not seem so long. Everything would be bright and sunshiny to me."

"Are you sure of that?" said a voice beside her, and, glancing up, the Queen saw a lovely figure. It was that of a beautiful woman with golden hair wreathed with flowers. But her face was somewhat pale and she drew round her a mantle of russet brown as if to protect her from the cold.

"I am the Spirit of the Summer," she said. "I knew you well in your childhood in the South and here, too, I have watched you, though you did not know it. Your wish shall be fulfilled. I will bring you the child you are longing for. But remember, the gift will lead to no lasting happiness unless you overcome your heart of discontent. For I can do only my part. My brother, the powerful Spirit of Winter is stern and severe. He has heard your murmurings already, and if, when your wish is granted you still continue them, I tremble for the fate of your child."

"Thank you, oh, thank you, sweet Spirit," said the Queen. "I will indeed take heed for the future and never murmur again."

"I trust so," said the fairy, "for listen what will happen if you forget your resolution. The slightest touch of snow would, in that case, put the child into my stern brother's power and you would find yourself terribly punished. Beware, therefore. I must hasten away."

As she said this the gracious figure seemed to disappear in a rosy haze and almost at the same moment a cold blast driving the snowflakes before it, came with a rush from behind where the young Queen stood, almost lifting her from her feet.

"That must surely be the Spirit of the Winter himself," she thought as she hurried indoors.

The Summer Spirit was true to her promise. On the loveliest morning of all that year was born a baby Princess, the prettiest baby that ever was seen.

"A true child of the summer," said the happy Queen.

"And strong to brave and enjoy the winter, too, I trust," added the King. "She must be a true Princess of the North, as her mother is fast becoming, I hope," he went on with a smile.

But his words did not please the Queen, though they were so kindly meant.

With the possession of the child, though she was so overjoyed to have her, the young Queen's wayward and dissatisfied spirit began to return. She seemed to think the Princess was to be only hers, that the nation and even the King, must give way, in everything that concerned the child, to its mother's will. She was even displeased one day when she overheard some of her ladies admiring the beautiful color of the child's hair and saying that it showed her a true daughter of the North.

"No such thing," said the Queen. "It shows her a child of the sunshine and the summer. My sweet Rose!" for so, to please the Queen, the baby had been named.

On the whole, however, while the summer lasted, the Queen was too happy with the child to give way to any real murmurings and once or twice, when she might perhaps have done so, there was wafted to her by the breeze the sound of a gentle, "Beware!" and she knew the Summer Fairy was near.

So for the first winter of the child's life the Queen was on her guard and nothing went wrong, except now and then when the King reproached his wife with overcare of the child when the weather was at all severe.

"I wish to make her brave and hardy," said the King.

In some strange way, however, the princess, child though she was, seemed to understand what her father felt about her. It was noticed that before she could speak at all, she would dance in her nurse's arms and stretch out her little hands with glee at the sight of the snowflakes falling steadily. And once or twice when a draught of frosty air blew upon her she laughed with delight instead of shrinking or shivering.

But so well were the Queen's feelings understood that no one ventured to tell her of these clear signs that Rose felt herself at home in the land of snow.

The winter passed and the summer came again—the second summer of the child's life.

She had grown like the flowers and was as happy as the butterflies. Never was a sweeter or merrier child. The Queen idolized her and the King loved her quite as dearly, though in a wiser way. And that summer passed very happily.

Unfortunately, however, the warm fine days came to an end unusually early that year. Many of the birds took flight for the South sooner than was their wont, and the flowers drooped and withered as if afraid of what was coming.

The Queen noticed these signs with a sinking heart. Standing one chilly morning at the palace windows she watched the gray autumn sky and sighed deeply.

"Alas, alas!" she said. "All the beauty and brightness are going again."

She did not know that the King had entered the room and was standing behind her.

"Nay," he said cheerfully. "You have no reason to feel so sad. If you have no other flower you have our Rose, blooming as brightly in the winter as in the warmth."

He meant it well, but it would have been wiser if he had said nothing. The Queen turned toward him impatiently.

"It is so," she said angrily. "Rose is like me. She loves the summer and the sunshine. I do not believe she would live through your wretched northern winters but for my care. And the anxiety is too much for me. The life in this country is but half a life. Would that I had known it before I ever came hither."

The King was deeply hurt and disappointed and he left the room without speaking. He was generally so kind and patient that this startled her, and brought her to her senses.

"How wrong of me to grieve him so by my wild words," she thought penitently. "And——" A sudden horror came over her.

The Princess's nurse picked up some fir cones and gave them to the little girl, who threw them about with glee and called out for more. They were all so busy playing with her that they did not notice how, above the heads of the tall fir-trees, the sky was growing dark and overcast, till suddenly a strange chill blast made the Queen gather her mantle round her and gaze up in alarm.

"We must hasten home," she said: "it is growing cold."

"Yes, indeed," said one of the ladies; "it almost looks like——" But the Queen interrupted her. She could not bear even the mention of the fatal word.

"Wrap up the Princess!" she exclaimed. "Cover her over, face and all! Never mind if she cries! My darling, we shall be home directly. The cold wind would hurt you," she added.

Then they hurried back to the palace as quickly as the goats could be persuaded to go, even the Queen herself running fast to keep up with the little carriage.

They were within a short distance of the palace before any snow fell, though it was clear to be seen that it was not far off; and the Queen was beginning to breathe again more freely when suddenly Princess Rose, with a cry of baby mischief, pushed away the shawl that was over her face, shouting with glee. At that moment the first fluttering snowflakes began to fall. The little Princess opened wide her eyes as she caught sight of them, and smiled as if in greeting; and alas! before the terrified Queen had time to replace the covering the child had thrown off, one solitary flake alighted on her cheek, melting there into a tiny drop which looked like a tear, though still the little Princess smiled.

The Queen seized the child in her arms, rushed up the long flight of steps, all through the great halls and corridors like a mad creature, nor stopped even to draw breath till she had reached the Princess's apartments, and had her safe in the rooms specially prepared for her during the winter.

But was she safe? Was it not already too late? With trembling dread the Queen drew away the furs and shawls wrapped round the baby, almost expecting to find her changed in some strange way; and it was with thankfulness she saw that little Rose was still herself—sweet and smiling in her sleep. For she was fast asleep.

"The darling, the precious angel," thought the poor mother as she laid her in her little cot just as the ladies and nurses and attendants came trooping into the room.

"She is only asleep," said the Queen in a whisper. "Nothing has happened to her. She is sleeping sweetly."

The ladies stared. The Queen's behavior had been so strange that they could not understand her.

"It is a pity to be so anxious about the child," they said to one another. "It will bring no blessing," for they thought it all came from the Queen's foolish terror lest the little Princess should catch cold, and they shook their heads.

But the Queen seemed full of thankfulness. She was very gentle and subdued. Many times that afternoon she came back to see if little Rose was well, but she was still sleeping.

"The fresh keen air has made her drowsy, I suppose," said the head nurse, late in the evening when the Queen returned again.

"And she has had nothing to eat since the middle of the day," said the mother anxiously. "I almost

think if she does not wake herself in an hour or so you will have to rouse her."

To this the nurse agreed. But two hours later in the Queen's next visit to the nursery, there was a strange report to give her. The nurse had tried to wake the baby, but it was all in vain. Little Rose just smiled sweetly and rolled over on her other side, without attempting in the least to open her eyes. It seemed cruel to disturb her. She seemed so very sleepy.

"I think we must let the Princess have her sleep out—children are like that sometimes," said the nurse.

And the Queen was forced to agree to it, though she had a strange sinking at the heart, and even the King when he came to look at his little daughter felt uneasy, though he tried to speak cheerfully.

"No doubt she will wake in the morning quite bright and merry," he said, "all the brighter and merrier for sleeping a good round and a half of the clock." 56

The morning dawned—the slow coming winter daylight of the North found its way into the Princess's nursery—a tiny gleam of ruddy sunshine even managed to creep in to kiss her dimpled cheek, but still the baby slept as soundly as if the night was only beginning. And matters grew serious.

It was no use trying to wake her. They all did their best—King, Queen, ladies, nurses; and after them the great court physicians and learned men of every kind. All were summoned and all consulted and, as the days went on, a hundred different things were tried—but all to no purpose. "She is bewitched," said the cleverest of all the doctors, and as time went on, everybody began to agree with him. Even the King himself was obliged to think something of the kind was at the bottom of it, and at last one day the Queen, unable to endure her remorse any longer, told him the whole story, entreating him to forgive her for having by her discontent and murmuring brought upon him so great a sorrow. 57

The King was very kind but very grave.

"I understand it now," he said. "The Summer Fairy told you true. Our northern Winter Spirit is indeed stern; we must submit. If we are patient and resigned it is possible that in the future even his cold heart may be melted by the sight of our suffering."

"It is only I who deserve it," wept the poor Queen. "The worst part of it all is to know that I have brought this sorrow upon you, my dear husband."

And so repentant she was that she almost forgot to think of herself. Never had she been so sweet and loving a wife. She did everything she possibly could to please and cheer the King, concealing from him the many bitter tears she shed as she sat for hours together beside the sleeping child.

The winter was terribly severe—never had the snow lain so thickly, never had the wind-blasts raged and howled more furiously. Often did the Queen think to herself that the spirit must be infuriated at her very presence, in his special domain. 58

"They might pity me now—now that I am so punished." She bore all the winter cold and terrors uncomplainingly, nay, even cheerfully, nerving herself to go out alone in the bitterest weather with a sort of hope of pleasing the Winter Fairy; possibly, if she could but see him, of making an appeal to him. But for many months he held his icy sway. Often indeed it seemed as if gentler times were never to return.

Then suddenly one night the frost went; a mild, soft breeze replaced the fierce blast; spring had come. And wonderful to relate, the very next morning the Queen was roused by loud knocking and voices at her door; trembling, she knew not why, she opened it, and the head nurse fell at her feet laughing and crying at once. The Princess had awakened.

Yes; there she was, chattering in her baby way, smiling and rosy as if nothing had been the matter. Oh, the joy of her parents and the jubilation all through the palace!

And all through the summer little Rose was wide awake in the daytime just like other children. She was as well and strong and happy as a baby could be. But—the summer will not last for ever; again returned the autumn, bringing with it the signs of the approaching winter and one morning when her nurse went to awaken the Princess, she found it was no use—Rose was sleeping again, with a smile on her face, calm and content, but alas! not to be awakened! And then it was remembered that the first snow had fallen in the night. 59

Gradually the child's distressed parents resigned themselves to the sad truth: their daughter was to be theirs only for half her life; for full six months out of every twelve, she was to be in a sense as far away from them as if the Winter Monarch had carried her off to his palace of ice altogether.

But no; it was not quite so bad as that would have been. And the Queen, who was fast learning to count her blessings instead of her troubles, smiled through her tears as she said to the King, what a mercy it was that they were still able to watch beside their precious child—to kiss her soft warm cheek every night. 60

And so it went on. In the spring the Princess woke up again, bright and well and lively, and in every way six months older than when she had fallen asleep; so that, to see her in the summer time no one could have guessed the strange spell that was over her. She became the sweetest and most charming girl in the world; only one thing ever saddened her, and that was any mention of winter, especially snow.

"What does it mean?" she would ask sometimes. "What are they talking of? Show me this wonderful thing! Where does it grow? I want to see it."

But no one could make her understand; and at these times a very strange look would come into her blue eyes.

"I must see it," she said. "Some day I shall go away and travel far, far, till I find it."

These words used to distress her mother more than she could say; and she would shower presents

on her daughter, of flowers, and singing birds—all to make her think of the sunshine and the summer. And for a time they would please the girl, till again she shook her head and murmured, "I want the snow." 61

So the years followed each other till the Princess was sixteen. Every winter the Queen had a faint hope, which, however, grew even fainter and fainter, that the spell was perhaps to be broken. But it was not so. And strange stories got about concerning the Princess—some saying she was a witch in disguise; others, that she had no heart or understanding; others, that she turned into a bird or some animal during half her life—so that the neighboring Princes, in spite of her beauty and sweetness, were afraid to ask her in marriage, and this brought new sorrow to her parents. "What will become of her after we are dead and gone?" they said. "Who will care for and protect our darling? Who will help her to rule over our nation? No people will remain faithful to a sovereign who is only awake half of the year. There will be revolts and rebellion, and our angel Princess may perhaps be put to death, or driven away."

And they fretted so over this that the hair of both the King and Queen grew white long before its time. But Rose only loved them the more on this account for she had heard some one say that white hair was like snow; though she kept the fancy to herself, for she knew it troubled the Queen if ever she mentioned the strange, mysterious word. 62

She was so lovely that painters came from many countries just to see her face, and, if possible, be allowed to make a picture of her. And one of these portraits made its way to the court of a King who was a distant cousin of her father, and who had heard the strange things said of the Princess. He was very angry about it for he had two sons, and he was afraid of their falling in love with the beautiful face. So he ordered the picture to be destroyed before the elder Prince, who was away on a visit, came home.

But the servant who was to burn the picture thought it such a pity to do so, that he only hid it away in a lumber-room; and thither, as fate would have it, came the younger Prince one day in search of a pet kitten belonging to his sister, which had strayed away; for he was a Prince of a most kind and amiable nature. 63

The moment he saw the picture he fell in love with it. He made inquiry, and heard all there was to tell, then he arranged himself for a journey and came to bid his father farewell.

"I go," he said, "to woo the Princess Rose for my bride." And in spite of all the King could say he kept firm.

"If she is a witch," he said, "I would rather perish by her hands than live with any other."

And amidst tears and lamentations he set out.

He was received with great delight at the court of Princess Rose's parents—though he came without any pomp or display; for he lost no time in telling the King and Queen the reason of his visit. Knowing him to be a Prince of most estimable character they were overjoyed to hear of his resolve.

"I only trust," said the Queen, "that all may be well. But, as you have doubtless heard, our darling child, despite her beauty and goodness, is under a spell."

She then proceeded to tell him the whole matter of which he had already heard garbled accounts. 64

He was relieved to find that the enchantment was of no worse a nature, and declared that it made no difference in his intentions, but rather increased his love for the Princess.

And when he first set eyes on her (more beautiful by far than even the beautiful portrait) he felt that his whole life would not be too much to devote to her even considering her strange affliction.

"And who knows," he said to himself, "but that such love as mine may find out a way to release her from the spell?"

The Princess quickly learned to like him. She had never before had a companion so near her own age and the last days of the summer passed most happily till the time came when the Prince thought he might venture to ask her to be his wife.

They were walking in the terrace in front of the castle when he did so. It had been a lovely day, but the afternoon had grown chilly, and as the Princess listened to his words a cold breath of wind passed near them. 65

The Princess started; and, aware of the Queen's anxiety about her, the Prince hastily proposed that they should return to the house; but Rose looked at him with a light in her eyes which he had never before seen and a strange smile broke over her face.

"It is a new life to me," she said. "Can you not understand, you who are yourself a child of the North? Yes, Prince, I will marry you on one condition, that you will show me the snow—but on no other."

Then she turned and without another word walked slowly back to the palace.

Prince Orso, for so he was called, felt terribly distressed.

"The spell is upon her," he thought to himself. "She asks me to do what would probably kill her or separate her forever from all who love her."

And the King and Queen when they heard this story were nearly as disappointed as he.

But that very night the Prince had a strange dream. He thought he was walking in the wood near the castle, when again a chill blast but still more icy swept past him, and he heard a voice speaking to him. It sounded hoarse and stern. 66

"Orso," it said, "you're as foolish as the rest. Have you no trust? See what came of rebellion against me, who, after all, love my children as does my sister of the summer. Leave the Princess to the leadings of her own heart."

Then with a crash of thunder the spirit went on its way. And the Prince awoke to find that the window of his room had been dashed in by the force of a sudden gale which had arisen.

But the next morning all was again calm. It almost seemed as if milder weather was returning again; and the Queen looked brighter; but it was not so with the Princess, who was silent and almost sad. And so things continued for some days.

At last the Prince could bear it no longer. One afternoon when he found himself alone with the Princess, he turned to her suddenly.

"Princess," he said, "can you not give me another answer? You must know that I would fain promise anything you wish; but I dare not bind myself to what might perhaps do you some injury." 67

Rose turned toward him impatiently.

"That is just it," she said. "I am always met by excuses when I ask for the one thing I really desire. What is there about me really different from others? Why should I so often hear of what others seem to understand, and not have it explained to me? I am no longer a child; in my dreams I see things I cannot put in words; and beautiful as the world is I feel that I only half know it. I long for what they call the winter, and what they call the snow and they never come. Only the cold wind, which I have felt once or twice, brings new life to me, and fills me with strange joy."

The Prince hesitated. He understood her perfectly for he was of the same brave and hardy race. Yet the Queen's forebodings made him tremble. The Princess's words reminded him of his own dream; and again he felt as if he heard the voice of the stern Winter Spirit. And as if in answer to his uncertainty, at that moment the howl of the cold blast sounded near them among the trees and lurid clouds began to gather overhead. 68

The Princess's face lighted up.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "it is coming again!"

"I fear so, indeed," said Orso; and in his terror for her he caught her hand and would have hurried her back to the palace.

But at that moment a shrill little cry was heard overhead not far from where they stood, and, glancing up, they saw a bird of prey clutching a smaller one in his claws. With a terrible effort the captive managed to free himself, but he was sadly wounded; and as Rose gazed upwards in great concern she saw him fall fluttering feebly to the ground. All else was forgotten in the sight.

"Poor bird!" she cried. "Let me go, Prince. I must find him where he has fallen, or a cruel death of slow suffering will be his."

The Prince let her go; he dared not hold her back, though he could have done so.

"Leave her to the guidings of her own heart," resounded in his ears.

Almost at once she was lost to his sight among the trees which grew very closely; almost at the same moment, to his horror, something cold and soft touched his face, and snowflakes were falling thickly. If harm was to betide, it was too late to save her; but he pressed forward in unspeakable anxiety. 69

It was some little time before he found her; and no reply came to his calls; but at last he caught sight of something blue on the ground. It was the Princess's robe; and there, indeed, she lay, motionless, her eyes closed, a sweet smile on her face, the little wounded bird tenderly clasped in her hands.

Orso threw himself on the ground beside the Princess.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "My carelessness has killed her. How can I ever dare to face the King and Queen? Oh, Winter Spirit! you have indeed deceived me."

But as he said the words the Princess opened her eyes.

"No, Prince," she said, "I am not dead; I am not even asleep. It was the strange gladness that seemed to take away my breath for a moment, and I must have sunk down without knowing. But now I feel stronger and happier than ever in my life before, now that I have seen and felt the beautiful snow of my own country; now that I have breathed the winter air I have been longing for always." And she sprang to her feet, her blue eyes sparkling with delight, looking lovelier than he had ever seen her. 70

"Orso," she went on half shyly, "you have done what I asked you; through you I have seen the snow," and she held out her hand, which, white though it was, looked pink in comparison with the little flakes which were fluttering down on it.

The Prince was overjoyed but he hesitated.

"I fear," he said, "that in reality you should rather thank the poor little bird, or most of all your own kind heart."

"Poor little bird," she replied, looking at it as it lay in her other hand.

"It is not dead. I will do all I can for it. Let us hasten home, Prince, so that I may bind up its poor wing. My father and mother will be too anxious about me."

And together they returned to the palace. One glance at the Princess as she came in sprinkled over with snow showed the Queen that the spell was at last broken and her joy was past all words. 71

The little bird spent all the winter in the palace, tenderly cared for by the Princess Rose, only flying away when the warm sunny days returned. He pays them a visit still every summer to show his gratitude, and in all his travels he seldom sees a happier family than his friends in the old palace away up in the far, far, northern land.

Around this lovely valley rise
The purple hills of Paradise.

Oh, softly on yon banks of haze,
Her rosy face the Summer lays!

Becalmed along the azure sky
The argosies of cloudland lie,
Whose shores, with many a shining rift,
Far off their pearl-white peaks uplift.
Through all the long midsummer day
The meadow-sides are sweet with hay.

JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE.

74

There comes the morning with the golden basket in her right hand
Bearing the wreath of beauty silently to crown the earth.
And there comes the evening over the lonely meadows
Deserted by herds, through trackless paths
Carrying cool draughts of peace in her golden pitcher
From the Western ocean of rest.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

Day!
Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim day boils at last;
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim
Where spurting and suppressed it lay;
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then
Overflowed the world.

ROBERT BROWNING.

HOW THE SUN WAS CAUGHT AND FREED

Once upon a time there lived a little Indian boy who was very proud of his beautiful coat. His sister had made it for him out of the skins of ten snow-birds. Carefully she had dried these skins, stretched them, and pieced them into a soft, warm garment. The lad was so fond of his coat that he wore it whenever he left the wigwam, no matter how warm the sun shone.

One morning the Indian lad took a long walk and becoming very tired he threw himself down on a grassy hillside to rest, and fell sound asleep.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Sun when he saw the boy wrapped in a bird-skin coat in summer time. "I must give this lad a hint that the snow and ice are gone and it is time to lay aside winter coverings."

With all his warm might the Sun shone on the sleeping lad. Gradually the feathers of his coat curled up and became singed and brown, and the garment shrank to a very small size.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Sun.

When the Indian lad awoke he wondered what had happened to him for he felt as if he were caught in a trap. He sprang to his feet and discovered that his beautiful coat had shrunk until it was entirely too small for him.

"It is ruined," he cried aloud. "Ruined by that monster Sun. He shall not play such tricks on me and escape without punishment." Then, shaking his fist in the Sun's face, he shouted, "I'll make you pay for ruining my beautiful bird-skin coat."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Sun.

The Indian lad ran back to the wigwam as fast as he could, carrying the garment in his hands.

"See what has happened!" he cried to his sister. "That vicious Sun shrank my beautiful coat while I was asleep on the hillside. I can never wear it again."

"Perhaps I can stretch it for you," said his sister.

"No, no! See, the feathers are singed and brown. It is ruined!"

He was so sorely vexed that he could neither eat nor sleep. For twenty days he fasted in the wigwam and wondered how he could call the mischievous Sun to account for spoiling the bird-skin coat.

One morning he sprang up and said to his sister, "I have thought out a way to punish the Sun. In his high path across the sky he thinks he is safe from a little lad like me, but I'll show him what I can do if you will help me."

"Tell me your plan," said the sister, wondering how any mortal could punish the mighty Sun.

"I'll set a snare for him and catch him!" cried her brother excitedly. "I want the strongest cord you can find."

"I've plenty of dried moose-hide; will that be strong enough?" she asked.

"No, no! That would never hold the Sun," said the boy.

His sister thought a while and then said, "I have dried sinew of deer."

But still her brother shook his head. "The Sun is a mighty quarry. I must have something stronger than the sinew of the deer."

"Then I must search in the deep woods," said his sister.

She left the wigwam and for nine days she searched through the forest. At last she returned with a twisted cord which she had made from the strongest wood fiber. As soon as her brother saw it he knew what to do. He drew the twisted fiber through his lips and immediately it became so fine and strong that he believed nothing could break it. Round and round his body the lad wound this cord; at one end of it he fashioned a noose.

Confident that he was now prepared to snare the Sun, the lad left the wigwam long before daybreak. He walked to the spot where the Sun first peeps over the rim of the earth, and there he securely fixed the noose. Then as he walked back to the lodge he unwound from his body the cord, and held fast to the end of it.

The Sun was caught in this snare! His shining head was held tight in the noose and he could not travel across his Sky-Path. A strange dull light filled the air.

In his wigwam the Indian lad was delighted. He danced about joyously and said, "The mighty Sun will learn that he cannot play a trick on me and escape without punishment."

But while the Indian lad laughed and sang because he had caught the Sun in his noose the Animals were in deep trouble for there was no daylight in the world. They walked cautiously about, filled with fear and wonder.

"What has happened to the Sun? Has he strayed from his Sky-Path?" they whispered to each other.

After a while they discovered that the Sun was caught in a great noose and they called a Council in order to decide what to do.

"Of course we must free the Sun," said all the Animals, but when one of them asked how this could be done there was silence in the Council for a long time, because all the Animals knew about the Sun's great heat and feared to go near enough to break the cord.

At last the mole said, "I'll free the Sun. I'm not afraid. My teeth are very sharp and I'm sure they can gnaw through the cord of the noose."

Accordingly she crept near to the edge of the earth where the Sun was held fast. The heat was intense but the mole was determined not to give up her undertaking. She gnawed and gnawed, until the cord was cut in two. Then up into the sky sprang the Sun with a mighty bound. Before the Mole could run away, however, the Sun's white light shone full in her eyes, and from that day she has not been able to see very well. Her eyes are extremely small and are almost hidden by fur. That is why she lives in dark places and seldom comes out into the sunlight. But the Animals are all grateful to her and they often say, "It was the brave Mole who cut the Indian boy's noose which held the Sun."

O gift of God! O perfect day!
Whereon shall no man work, but play;
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be.

I hear the wind among the trees
Playing celestial symphonies;
I see the branches downward bent,
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
The splendid scenery of the sky,
Where through a sapphire sea the sun
Sails like a golden galleon.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

PHAETON'S DRIVE IN THE SUN-CHARIOT

Once upon a time there lived in sunny Greece a lad named Phaeton. He was a son of Clymene, an ocean nymph, and Apollo, the god of the sun.

One morning when the lad was playing with some of his companions he said, "It is my father who drives the glorious sun-car across the sky, and brings daylight into the world. I am the son of bright Apollo."

Now this was by no means the first time that Phaeton had boasted about his high lineage, for he was indeed very proud of his father. He was much surprised, however, to hear his playmates laugh. One of them looked scornfully at him and said, "You are telling us an idle tale. We do not believe that you are a child of the mighty Sun."

Another added quickly, "Why don't you prove your boast? If you are the son of Apollo give some sign of your heavenly birth."

Indignant at these taunts Phaeton sought his mother and told her about the jeering insults he had been obliged to bear.

"They refuse to believe what I say until I offer proof," he cried. "Let me go to the palace of the sun and speak to my father. He will advise me how to prove my claim."

Clymene hesitated to grant this request because she knew the proposed journey was attended by many dangers; but finally she gave consent and carefully directed Phaeton to the abode of Apollo.

In the far east stood the shining sun palace wrought from burnished gold, bright silver, and polished ivory. The walls, marvellously designed, were thickly set in emeralds, rubies, sapphires and diamonds; the slender jewelled pinnacles shone with dazzling light.

Phaeton was awed by the splendour which he saw but he entered the palace and approached the sun god who sat on a glittering throne. Immediately Apollo greeted his son and asked what favour he sought. Encouraged by the question Phaeton lost all trace of fear and said, "O, Light of the World, the children of men declare that I am not the son of Apollo. They sneer at me and say that my claim is nothing but an idle boast. Grant me some means of proving to them that I am indeed a child of the mighty Sun."

Apollo laid aside the beams that shone on his brow, bade Phaeton come nearer to him, and said, "Thou art indeed my son. By the mighty river Styx I promise to grant thee any boon thou shalt ask."

Eagerly Phaeton replied, "For one day let me drive the sun-chariot across the sky. No one will ever again deny my high lineage if Apollo grant me this boon."

The sun-god immediately saw what a rash promise he had made. Three times he shook his bright head and then replied, "I beg thee, Phaeton, choose another boon for none but Phoebus Apollo can drive the horses of the sun-chariot. The path through high heaven is beset with dangers. First the steeds must climb the steep ascent of the eastern sky; then they must be guided through the middle way which is a dizzy height above earth and sea; and last of all, their path lies down the dangerous slope of the west. Also frightful monsters must be passed on the road through the sky. I beg thee choose another boon. This one may bring thee punishment instead of glory."

But Phaeton was not dissuaded, and finally Apollo led the headstrong youth to the place where the fire-breathing horses and brilliant chariot stood. The axle-tree, poles, and wheel-rims were gold; the spokes, silver. The body of the car was thickly set with chrysolites and diamonds which reflected the sun's brilliance. While Phaeton gazed admiringly at all this beauty, Aurora the goddess of the Dawn threw open the purple doors of the East and pointed to the pathway strewn with roses. The Stars quickly withdrew and when the sun god saw the Moon make ready to depart he swiftly ordered the Hours to harness up the horses. Then Apollo quickly bound the Sun's rays on the impatient lad's brow and anointed his face with a cooling essence to protect his skin from the burning flames.

Phaeton leaped into the car, seized the reins, stood erect, and thanked Apollo for the great privilege of driving the chariot. In his eager haste to start the youth failed to note his father's words of warning. "Hold the reins firmly and be sparing of the whip. The steeds need no urging; the labour is to hold them in check. Do not drive too high for fear of burning the heavens; nor too low, or the earth will be set on fire. Keep in the well-worn ruts of the middle path. The time to start has come, for Night is passing out of the Western gates. Heed carefully my words in this hazardous journey."

With an impatient bound the fire-breathing steeds sprang forth. They dashed lightly over the clouds and outran the morning breezes in their eagerness to mount the eastern slope of the sky. In a little while they discovered that the car was lighter than usual, and that the sun-god was not holding the reins. Then they plunged madly forward and turned aside from the middle track. This headlong speed of the horses filled Phaeton's heart with terror, especially when he realized he had no power to guide them. He forgot the names of the horses; in despair he was obliged to let them take their own course. Nearer and nearer to the earth's broad plains dashed the chariot of the sun. The fountains and rivers were dried up by the scorching heat; the forest trees became withered and burned; the grassy hillsides, parched and brown; the harvest fields were set on fire, even the people of the land over which the sun chariot passed were blackened by the extreme heat, and to this day their descendants have dark skins.

In a loud cry of agony the people called on Jupiter, king of the gods, to save them from destruction. The all-powerful one aroused himself from a deep sleep and saw, at a glance, the cause of this terrible suffering. Angered at the thought that a youth should dare drive the horses of the sun, Jupiter hurled one of his deadliest thunderbolts at the unfortunate Phaeton, who fell from the chariot like a shooting star and sank into the depths of the river Eradinus.

Clymene deeply mourned her son's death, and Phaeton's three sisters bewailed his loss for many days. Finally the gods, in pity, changed them into poplar trees, in order that they might always be near the river into which Phaeton fell.

SONG

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
  And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
  On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
  To ope their golden eyes:
With everything that pretty is,
  My lady sweet, arise.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

SUMMER SUN

Great is the sun, and wide he goes
Through empty heaven without repose,
And in the blue and glowing days
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull
To keep the shady parlour cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic, spider-clad,
He, through the keyhole maketh glad;
And through the broken edge of tiles,
Into the laddered hayloft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around
He bares to all the garden ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,
The gardener of the World, he goes.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

THE CLOUD

ROBERT REINECK

One hot summer morning a little cloud rose out of the sea, and floated playfully across the blue sky. The dreary brown earth, parched with a long drouth, lay far below. The little cloud looked down and saw the poor people toiling away with heavy hearts, while she, carefree and happy, floated along on the fresh morning breeze.

She said to herself, "Oh, how much I wish I could help the poor people down there. If I could but lighten their work, or refresh them with food and drink!"

As the day passed and the cloud grew larger, the wish to help the suffering people filled her heart.

On earth it grew hotter and hotter, and the people were fainting with heat, but they could not stop their work, for they were very poor. Sometimes they looked pleadingly up into the sky. It seemed as if they were saying to the cloud: "Oh, if you could but help us!"

"I will help you! I will, indeed!" said the cloud, and she began immediately to sink softly toward the earth.

As she floated down she suddenly remembered something which she had heard when she was a tiny child, rocked in the lap of Mother Ocean. Someone had told her that clouds die if they float too near the earth.

For a moment she wavered in her thought and drifted to and fro. But at last she stood still and spoke bravely and cheerfully, "Men of the earth, I will help you, come what may."

Suddenly she grew large, and strong and powerful. Never before had she dreamed herself capable of such strength. Like an angel of blessing she stood above the earth, lifted her head, and spread her wings far over the broad fields.

So great and mighty she appeared that men and beasts marvelled at the sight; the trees, grass, and flowers bowed their heads before her, but in their hearts they knew she would help them.

"Yes, I will help you," cried the cloud once more. "Take me to yourselves! I die for you!"

A mighty purpose filled the cloud's heart, and a holy light shone from her face. She sank nearer to the earth. The next moment a blessed shower of rain refreshed the hills and valleys.

The rain was the cloud's deed; the rain was the cloud's death; but through her death she was glorified.

After the shower was over, a lovely rainbow, made of the purest rays of heavenly light, arched across the sky. It was the last greeting of a love so great that it could serve.

Soon the rainbow, too, disappeared, but the memory of the blessing which the shower had brought to the earth was kept in the hearts of men for many years to come.

UNDINE

Edward Abbott Parry

Once upon a time there was a child wave named Undine. "Undine the Beautiful," they called her, because, when she was quite a little ripple, she sparkled more brilliantly than any of her thousand brothers and sisters, and not one of them was so crystal clear or dressed in such wonderful shades of sapphire blue and emerald green. She was born at the mouth of a white limestone rock cave on the coast of Devonshire. The fourteenth of August was her birthday. Never had there been such a lovely little ripple as Undine. The old Tide let her run up and down on his back when he came into the bay where she lived. She kept close by the cave for a time, and grew big and strong, and became first a billow and then a wavelet; but when a month had passed she was a full-grown wave —only a small one, of course, but still a wave.

Her father was a well known Devonshire coast wave, a jolly compact old sea salt roller, with a great thatch of creamy foam on his head. He ran up and down the coast and out to sea in a lazy, aimless kind of way, playing with the fishing smacks and rolling over the porpoises.

He had a kindly look and was a friendly fellow as a rule, but could be as cruel and fierce as the worst of them, when he was roused. Old Lobster-Pot they called him, because he loved, when he could, to dive down and wash the lobsters out of their baskets, and then come and dance round the fishermen's boats in the morning when they pulled them up, and laugh at them when they found all their hard work had been for nothing.

Undine's mother was a tall, graceful wave with a beautiful green breast, on which she rested her white surge head proudly like a royal swan. Her name was Mora. She thought it vulgar to play with the lobster-pots, and when her children were old enough she took them across the sea to stay at the French seaside towns for the bathing season. She liked to hear the people on the pier cry out, "Oh! look at that lovely wave!" as she held back her glorious head and rushed through the girders of the pier, splashing and sparkling in the sun, and followed by her merry family tumbling headlong after her.

Little Undine saw nothing of her mother and father during the first months of her life. She never went outside the bay, but rippled up and down in front of a large cave, diving under the ruddy golden seaweed to look at the quiet sea anemones. They were wonderful fellows, she thought. Even the youngest of them could sit still for hours. You never saw sea anemones fidgeting about, and as for turning head over heels, they do not even think of it. But Undine was a restless young thing, full of life and spirits, never still for a moment; and the sea anemones loved her, for she was always gentle and kind to them. Ah! those were happy times!

The old waves like to go voyaging about and to see something of the wide world, so they are sensible enough to pack their children off to school as soon as they are born. The ripples have a class to themselves. They are taught to walk in rows, and each one learns to keep his place. You cannot teach a ripple much more than that, but that is something. There was a wave school in the bay in which Undine lived. The Zephyr taught the ripple class. They went every morning at sunrise, and had drill in a pool behind the rocks. It was a pretty sight. The sea anemones, red and white, opened out on the rocks to look on, lazy star-fishes stretched themselves upon the sands and laughed when the little ripples tried to move them higher up the beach, even those snarly little periwinkles peeped out of their black shells to see what was going on, and the old hermit crab, grumbling all the while at being roused up so early, sat at the door of his shell, and beat time to the marching with one of his claws.

"One, two, three, four," said the gentle Zephyr. "Heads up! Keep your place! Let the little ripples have plenty of room. Now, Undine, dear, throw your shadow well forward."

When the morning drill was done, the Zephyr used to say to the ripples, "Now you shall have a holiday; go and play together. Love one another. Be as good as you can. Be kind to all the world, and you will be happy." Then she kissed them all lightly, and flew away across the yellow sand and the heather-covered rocks, and they saw her no more until next morning. But they could hear her singing on the cliff one of those songs about the waves she loved so well, and when the chorus came they would join in, for she had taught it to them in the class, and it went this way:

Oh, children may be naughty
And monkeys may be bad,
Young fishes, too, will often do
What makes their teacher sad.
Did we expect them to behave,
We should expect too much,
But a ripple is a little wave
And should behave as such,
Yes, must behave as such.

Ah! the Zephyr was a kind teacher, and took such pains with the little ripples in her class, that in a week they were ready to go into the Upper School.

They had good playtimes, too. The old Tide let them play sea-horses on his back. Then there was "Hide and Seek" round the rocks, "Hunt the Cockle," and "Ripple-Chivy." It is no use telling you how to play those games, for children cannot play them.

One of their favourite sports was to race up the sand and see who could get farthest; Undine was very clever at that game. One day when they were doing this, a little boy and his elder sister were

paddling in the water, sailing a boat. He was a bonny, little fellow, about four years old, and when Undine came running up the sand, rocking his toy boat and splashing the sails, he clapped his hands and cried out, "Look at that great, big, lovely wave!"

Undine could not help laughing at the little fellow's glee, but she liked to be called a big wave.

At that moment a nasty, rough ripple who was quite big enough for the billow class—came rushing along, and the little boy got in his way and spoiled his run up the sand. 99

"Knock him over!" shouted a lot of the bigger ripples. "He is spoiling the game!"

"Leave him alone," cried Undine, as she floated gracefully back again.

But several of the bigger ripples rushed up at the same time, and, knocking over the little fellow, rolled him in the wet.

"Undine! Undine!" he called out in his terror, as they tumbled over him.

Undine rushed back to help him, but she was not strong enough. He knew nothing of Undine, the ripple. It was his sister, who was also named Undine, for whom he was calling; and she had run into the water at his first cry, and, picking him up in her arms, had carried him out onto the dry sand. But the nasty, little ripples had now caught hold of his boat, and were pushing it out to sea.

"Undine, Undine," sobbed the little chap; "I want my boat, I want my boat!"

His sister could not reach it, and the two stood, hand-in-hand, helpless on the beach, while the little boat drifted away. Bravely did our Undine, when she heard the call, dash forward to do battle with the naughty little ripples, who called out angrily, "Shut up! Wash it out to sea! Swamp it! He was spoiling our game." 100

They were too strong for poor Undine, and would have destroyed the little boat, or washed it away, had not the kind Zephyr, hearing all the noise, swept down from the cliffs, filled the sails of the toy boat and wafted it to shore. After this she blew the naughty little ripples away, and they went into rock pools and sulked by themselves.

When the Zephyr had returned to the cliffs the big, rough ripple who had knocked over the little boy cried out fiercely: "When I am a wave I shall kill all the boys I can and swamp their boats. That is what my big brother is taught to do, and he is a wave and goes out to sea."

The Zephyr often heard this sort of talk among the ripples, and when Undine asked her why they said these things, she kissed her gently and told her not to be angry even with the ripples, who did not know what they were saying, and begged her when she grew up to be kind and good to everyone, for then she would be happy. 101

However, she was not altogether happy just at first, for the other ripples were not at all pleased with her, and would not speak to her. The little boy was carried off the beach by his sister, so Undine was left all alone, and hid herself under some dark brown seaweed in the cleft of a rock and cried herself to sleep, when she dreamed that the pretty little boy was a beautiful wave, and was dancing with her, hand-in-hand, over the wide ocean.

The next day she was moved into the billow class. The Master was the South Wind. He had just come home from college. He taught them cresting and breaking on rocks. He was a bright, clever fellow, but he told them nothing about being good and kind as the Zephyr had done. After a week in the billow class, Undine and several of her young friends were moved up into the wavelet class. This was taught by a young wave, and here they learned rushing, leaping, rolling, and marching in open order. The young wave told them exciting stories of wrecks and drowning men, and repeated to them all that nonsense about Britannia wanting to rule the waves, and insisted on the duty of all good waves to go about fighting men, and killing as many as possible. This he called "Patriotism," and Undine listened to his eloquent stories until she had nearly forgotten all that the kind Zephyr had tried to teach her. But the fierce young wave could not change Undine's real nature, and she remained, at heart, a kind and gentle wave. Outwardly she grew tall and strong, and her mother and father and all her brothers and sisters still called her "Undine The Beautiful." 102

At the end of a month she passed all her examinations, and was a first-class wave ready to go to sea. That was a great day when they all left school. Old Lobster Pot and his good wife Mora came to fetch them away. The South Wind made an oration in Latin about the duty of waves to fight for their country.

It began, *Anna virumque cano*, and old Lobster Pot said it was very original and clever. The Zephyr sighed to see all these young waves, full of bright hope and eager fancies, passing out of the quiet bay into the open Channel and the wide world. 103

They sailed along in open order among the fishing boats, and yachts, and steamers. The nasty, rough ripple that had knocked down the little boy, and tried to steal his boat, had grown into a handsome big wave. Surger, they called him, because of his handsome head and fine flowing surge when he broke over the sand banks. He was very fond of Undine now, and kept close to her, as they sailed up the channel. It was a glorious day. The sun shone brightly, the gulls swooped down and floated for a few moments on Undine's shoulders, and then soared away down the breeze. The boats leaped merrily in front of them.

"Shall we see any wrecks to-day?" asked Undine.

"I hope so," shouted Surger; and he shook his curly white head, and shot in front of Undine, who could not help admiring his handsome presence.

"Wrecks! Nonsense!" growled out old Lobster Pot from behind. "These are the holidays, and we are going to picnic up the river." 104

Then they turned aside from the channel and went past a castle on a high rock, underneath steep cliffs, across wide mudbanks, lifting up the boats which were lying asleep among the damp seaweed. Some of the waves—lazy old fellows these—went off into the harbour for a quiet snooze,

others ran up the river into long creeks, forcing their way roughly among the quiet country streams. Old Lobster Pot and his wife went straight along the big river. There Undine saw many strange sights. Trees and flowers, horses and carts, men, women, and children; but not one among them so beautiful, to her thinking, as the little blue-eyed boy she had tried to rescue from the naughty ripples. There, too, along the banks of the river, she saw wide, waving fields of green turning to gold, which rustled in the breeze, and she shouted to them to join her; for she felt so happy herself she wanted everyone else to be happy, too. But they did not understand her language, so they made 105
no answer; for they were only wheatfields.

At last they came to a big city, and ran between high walls of white stone, and saw tall buildings and the big towers of the cathedral, and here and there were crowds of people. "Oh! oh!" cried Undine and Surger together, "this is beautiful." The cathedral clock chimed four. Old Lobster Pot shook his head and called out the order for return.

"Time is up," he said; "we must be moving down again now, or the river will be on to us."

Surger laughed and cried out, "I will run another mile before I return, anyhow;" and he rushed up through the city with new force.

Undine followed him, but now she felt a faint, weary feeling coming over her. Her beauty was going, and her lovely colours changing to a gray, inky hue. The river was forcing its way down against them, and she and Surger were soon glad to follow old Lobster Pot down the river again. Back they went, past the fields, and soon they felt the pure sea breeze, and lent a hand to swing the huge ships round at their moorings under the cliffs. They were glad enough to escape from the dull, 106
cold river that was rushing after them, and sweep round the headland into the good salt sea, where they could feel alive again, free and joyous, and afraid of no one in their own country.

Many a time did they run up rivers like that, and Undine looked out for the little blue-eyed boy; but she never saw him. Sometimes they went out to the wide ocean, or visited the coast towns with Mora, and splashed the ladies bathing, and made them scream and laugh. Always Undine was looking for her little friend, but she never saw him. Many were the journeys she made, and wonderful were the sights she saw; indeed, one could fill a book with all that Undine did and saw when she grew up and became a wave.

It was now October, and had been wonderfully warm, close weather for the time of the year. The waves were rolling lazily about out at sea some three miles from the land. They arched their huge backs and pressed silently after each other, doing "Serpent drill," as they called it, and weary work 107
it was. The little waves were slapping at each other angrily, for no better reason than that they had been told not to, but had nothing else to do. They all seemed uneasy and troubled, yet Undine could not have told you why she felt in such a strange condition of pent-up excitement. A rumour ran round that there was to be a Storm War that evening, and almost before they had begun to discuss whether this was likely to be true, the clouds lowered, the sky grew black and dismal, the wind trumpeted out shouts of battle, huge waves bigger than old Lobster Pot rushed up the channel in answer to the summons, and the whole sea was one seething angry mass of cruel waves bent on destruction.

Now the great battalions of the Sea Wolves, as they call their fiercest fighting waves, came thundering up from the Atlantic, breaking all before them. Undine had never seen such wild, handsome fellows before. Everyone joined them, and soon the sea was nothing but a reckless mob of madly enraged waves, moaning and wailing horribly in a frenzy of rage. Down came the sleet and 108
hail in sharp volleys, as though from a battery of artillery, which had taken up its position behind the thick clouds. A solitary storm bird was driven before the wet rushing wind, with stiff wings and bent claws, squealing miserably, as though to warn the vessels of their doom.

If you have not been a wave, you cannot understand the wild feeling that seizes you when the Storm War begins. Even gentle Undine quivered with rage, and sought about for something to destroy. As for Surger, he was leaping about and yelling like a mad thing.

The fishing smacks had hauled up their nets, or cut them adrift, and were speeding for the shore. Some few smaller boats had made for the beach earlier, suspecting danger. Old Lobster Pot hurried round among his family, giving orders in loud tones of command.

"There's for you," he shouted to Undine and Surger, as a small open boat with a single lug sail rushed through the surf. "He will be making for the little bay by the cave. Away with you! Drive him on to the rocks!"

A solitary man half-sat and half-stood in the stern of the boat, his back to the tiller, the end of the 109
sheet in his hand. It was passed securely round a pin near to him. He stooped down to cover up with a spare sail two little children, girl and boy, who were lying frightened at the bottom of the boat. Then he set his teeth, and stared through the blinding hail into the gathering darkness, to find the opening into the little bay.

Undine and Surger rushed on to the slender little vessel with all their force. The man skilfully made way for them, and they passed under the keel of the boat, doing no harm. The wind howled and shrieked at them for their failure, and caught the boat with all its might, driving it past the two waves and nearer to the rocks. Then Undine and Surger raced on alongside the little boat until it neared the opening to the bay, and as the man tried to turn her into the safe harbour, the wind made a terrible effort, and the two waves, leaping together at the side of the boat, crashed her into the rocks.

In a moment the man had thrown back the sail and seized, from the bottom of the boat, the two 110
children, who were lying hidden under the sail. They were the little blue-eyed boy and his sister, Undine. Bravely he struggled with them across the rocks and through the surf to gain the beach. Surger and Undine were after him, for in her rage and fury she had not seen that it was the little blue-eyed boy. Mora and Old Lobster Pot, with many other big waves, seeing what had happened,

were rushing across the sea towards the bay, for fear Surger and Undine should not be strong enough to drown the man and his children. Happily they were too late; for before they arrived, the man had gained the shore and pulled himself up the slope of the beach, saving the girl in his arms, but Surger managed to knock the little boy out of his grasp, and was rolling him down again into the sea to drown him. The man and the girl were too stunned and bruised to know whether they were saved or drowned. A coastguard was running down the cliff, but he would have been too late to save the little boy, had not Undine heard him calling out in despair, as Surger dragged him underneath the waves, "Undine! Undine! Save me! Save me!" 111

The waters were falling on him, doing their best to choke him, when Undine heard the call, and for the first time since she had been a little ripple, remembered what the Zephyr had taught her of love and pity. In a moment she had forgotten her anger, and the fierce commands of Old Lobster Pot, and the battle shouts of the Storm War; she thought only of the beautiful little blue-eyed boy, who was being dragged under the water and drowned. She rushed past Surger, who tried his best to stop her, and, heedless of the shouts of Old Lobster Pot and Mora, who yelled out, "Kill him! Drown him!" and caring nothing for all the rage and raving of the mad waves that pressed round her, she caught up the little boy on her breast, and with all her might threw him on to the soft sand, just as the coastguard reached the edge of the sea, and was there to pull him out.

Then, half ashamed and half overjoyed at what she had done, she turned back and fled away out to sea. And there arose such a yell and a shout from the assembled waves, mingled with the groaning and howling of angry wind, that she sped on in the wildest terror like a hunted hare. And all the waves of the sea, full of rage that one of their number should turn traitor and coward and save a mortal man in a time of Storm War—gathered together and chased after her. 112

Away she went down the Channel, across the Bay of Biscay, round Cape Finisterre, and through the gates of Gibraltar into the warm Mediterranean; and after her in hot pursuit raced a surging crowd of fierce and angry waves. But they were not to punish her for her brave deed, for there, near the warm shores of Sicily, they say she met the good Zephyr, who saved her from her pursuers, taking her into her arms and changing her into a beautiful cloud.

And the glorious Sun heard the story of Undine, and was so pleased with what she had done that he made her one of his special evening attendants and gave her a splendid robe of amber and gold. And if you look in the sky when the sun is setting in the sea, you may see Undine even to this day, a beautiful golden cloud gazing lovingly down at the world she used to live in. 113

LEGEND OF THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS

(WYANDOTTE)

There was a time when the Indians called the Little Turtle, the Keeper of the Heavens. That was when the Indians thought the earth was a Great Island, which rested upon the Big Turtle's back. It came about in this way. When the Great Island was first made there were no Sun and no Moon and no Stars. In order to know what to do the old Turtle called a meeting of all the animals. When they had all gathered together the old Turtle told them that there was no light. After a long discussion as to what could be done to mend matters the animals grew weary and were about to go home and let the Great Island continue in darkness, when the Little Turtle spoke up and said: "If I were able to climb into the sky I could gather some of the lightning and make light." 114 115

"Go," said Big Turtle. "It will do no harm to try."

Now the Little Turtle had very great powers for, as soon as he had made up his mind to go, a vast cloud full of thunder and lightning slowly rolled down toward the animals, and came so near that Little Turtle climbed into it and was soon carried into the Sky.

As soon as Little Turtle arrived there he went around and gathered as much as he could of the lightning and kindled a great round flame, which stood still in the Sky. But it did not light all of the Great Island. The Sun, as Little Turtle had made it, was not satisfactory, so another meeting of all the animals was called. To this Council Little Turtle came in the cloud.

It was decided to give the Sun life and spirit, so that he could run about the Sky by day. Some animals were told to bore a hole through the earth so that the Sun could go through it and be back in the East by night.

This the animals did. But the Sun sometimes loitered in this earth passage and too often the world was left in total darkness. Again the animals were dissatisfied, and a third meeting was called to decide the best plan and to scold the Sun for his neglect. 116

To this third meeting the Sun and the Little Turtle and all the other animals came. They decided then and there that the Little Turtle should make the Sun a wife, and that she should shine while he was going back to the East through the earth passage.

Then the Little Turtle made the Moon, and gave her as a wife to the Sun. She was smaller and not so powerful as he. You can see her in the Sky. The Stars that run about the Sky are their many children.

One day the Moon ran into the earth passage earlier than she should have done, and before the Sun himself had passed through. So offended was he that he robbed her of all her heat and much of her light, and she was never able to keep pace with him in the Sky.

Not knowing why her light had grown dim, or what had become of her, the Little Turtle went out to see what was the matter. He found the Moon lingering along the underground trail. There was just a little light and heat left to her, and barely a strip of her once glorious body—just as much as one sees of the new Moon nowadays. 117

Little Turtle brought her out and tried to mend her. But it was of no use. She would become better for a time and then relapse. Soon she would improve again until she was almost as strong as ever she had been; then again she would begin to fade away until at last only a tiny strip was left of her, and she had almost no heat. And this trick of changing has been repeated many, many times. Indeed, to this day the Moon continually changes her shape.

THE PRINCESS MOONBEAM[1]

MARY F. NIXON-ROULET

A woodman once dwelt with his wife at the edge of the forest, under the shadow of the Honorable Mountain. The two were industrious and good, but though they loved each other they were not happy. No children had come to bless them and this the wife mourned deeply. The husband pitied her and treated her very kindly, yet still she was sad. As she gazed upon the snows of Fujiyama her heart swelled within her and she prostrated herself and said, "Fuji no Yama, Honorable Mountain, my heart is heavy because no childish arms encircle my neck, no little head nestles in my bosom. From thy eternal purity send some little white soul to comfort me!"

The Honorable Mountain spoke not; yet as she prayed, lo, from its heights there sparkled and glowed a tiny light. Fitful and gleaming it seemed, yet it had a silver radiance as of the moon.

The woodman's wife beheld it, and she called to her husband eagerly, "Come hither, I pray you. See the strange light which comes from Fuji San. I seem to see a face smiling at me. It is the face of a little child."

Then her husband smiled at her fancy, but, because he loved her so, he said, indulgently, "I will go and see what it is."

"I thank you, my lord; go quickly!" she replied.

So, quickly he went to the forest, and as he neared a mountain stream, with Fuji gleaming cold and white in the moonlight, he saw the strange light, which seemed to hover and rest upon the branches of a tall bamboo. Hastening thither he found there a moon child, a tiny, fragile, fairy thing, more beautiful than any child he had ever seen.

"Little creature," he said, "who are you?"

"My name is Princess Moonbeam," she answered sweetly. "My mother is the Moon Lady, and she has sent me to Earth because every Moon Child must do some good thing, else will its silvery light become pale and wan and be of no avail."

"Little Princess," he said eagerly, "the best of good deeds is to comfort a sad heart. Come home with me and be a child to my wife, who weeps for children. Thus will your beams grow bright."

"I will go with you," said the little Moonbeam, and, rejoicing greatly, he bore her tenderly to his wife.

"I bring you a treasure," he said. "The Moon Lady sends you this beam of light to lighten your sad heart."

Then was his wife much overjoyed and she took the little creature to her bosom and cared for her.

Lovelier grew the Moon Child every year and much she rejoiced the hearts of her foster parents. Her hair was like a golden aureole about her face. Her eyes were deep and tender, her cheeks were pale and delicate, and about her there was a subtle and unearthly charm. Every one loved her, even the emperor's son, who, hunting in the forest, saw her lighting up the humble cottage with her heavenly light. He loved her dearly and she loved him, but alas! she could not marry him, because her life upon the earth could be but twenty years. Then she must return to her home in the moon, for so willed her mother the Moon Lady.

At last the day came when she must go. Her parents wept, and could not be consoled; and her lover, who was now the emperor, could not keep her, although he besought High Heaven to spare her.

Her mother caught her up in a silver moonbeam; and all the way to the moon the little Princess wept silvery tears. As the tears fell from her eyes, lo! they took wings and floated away looking for the form of the emperor who might see her no more.

But the silver-bright tears are seen to this day floating hither and yon about the vales and marshes of fair Nippon. The children chase them with happy cries, and say, "See the fireflies! How fair they are! Whence came they?"

Then their mothers relate to them the legend and say, "These are the tears of the little Princess, flitting to seek her beloved"; and over all, calm and eternal, smiles the Honorable Mountain.

THE MOON

That orbèd maiden, with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT ON HIGH

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heaven, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim;
Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though no *real* voice or sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In *Reason's* ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing, as they shine,
"*The Hand that made us is divine!*"

JOSEPH ADDISON.

There is no rhyme that is half so sweet
As the song of the wind in the rippling wheat;
There is no meter that is half so fine
As the lilt of the brook under rock and vine;
And the loveliest lyric I ever heard
Was the wildwood strain of a forest bird.

MADISON CAWEIN.

THE GIFT OF FLAX

(NORSE LEGEND)

In a beautiful valley surrounded by mountains there once lived a shepherd with his wife and children. They were very poor, indeed, and were obliged to work hard in order to earn the scantiest living.

The good wife was most helpful to her husband. She kept the cottage spotlessly clean, and mended the children's clothes with patient skill. Every day the shepherd took his small flock of sheep to pasture on the side of a mountain, whose tall, white summit was hidden in the clouds. He often carried a crossbow, and sometimes he brought home some mountain game, which provided a fine meal for his family.

One day, while he was watching his sheep, he saw, a short distance above him, a fine reindeer drinking from a pool in the basin of a rock. The shepherd seized his crossbow and took aim to shoot the quarry, but before he could speed an arrow, the deer scented danger and leaped away up the steep slope of the mountain-side. The shepherd pursued his game with eager haste, climbing up the dangerous paths with a sureness of foot which comes only to those whose lives are spent among the mountain fastnesses.

It grew bitterly cold as the shepherd pressed on and on, and he saw the glittering ice-fields near the mountain top.

"'Tis the most fleet-footed quarry I ever followed," said the hunter, stopping for a moment's rest. "After this hard chase, I'm afraid I must give up the game."

Suddenly he saw the reindeer slacken pace, and walk into the entrance of a cavern in the glacier.

"I'll make one more effort," said the tired hunter, climbing on until he reached the opening where the reindeer disappeared. In a few moments he reached a dark passage, at the end of which he saw glittering, coloured lights. His heart beat fast, but he walked on toward the brilliant opening.

The desire to see the lighted hall at the end of the passageway now took possession of the hunter and, strange to say, he forgot all about the quarry, which had led him to this marvelous place. When he reached the threshold of the opening he was obliged to shade his eyes with both hands. Rainbow colours sparkled from the walls and ceiling, which were thickly set with precious stones. A floor of shining white marble added to the beauty of the place. The shepherd stood in silent wonder.

"Welcome to the Hall of Mists," said a queenly voice, but still he stood gazing from the entrance.

The queen repeated her words of welcome, and the shepherd walked humbly forward toward a beautiful woman, clothed in silvery white robes girdled with gold. On her bright hair was a crown of jeweled blossoms. She held a distaff in her right hand; in her left, a bunch of flowers the colour of the sky on a fair summer day. She was attended by many youthful maidens, who stood back of the queen near jeweled spinning wheels.

Filled with awe, the shepherd threw himself on his knees at the feet of this Queen of the Air.

"Have no fear, my good man," she said in a gentle voice. "Perseverance and courage led thee up a dangerous path, but thou hast not laboured in vain. Thou shalt be rewarded for thy dauntless chase. Choose anything thou wilt from my jeweled Hall of Mists."

Without hesitating a moment, the shepherd said, "Gracious Queen, there is nothing in the world I should like to have so much as the flowers your majesty holds."

The Queen of the Air smiled and put the blossoms into his hand. Then she took up a measure of small seed, which stood near her, and said: "Thou hast made a wise choice, my good man. Sow this seed in the field near your cottage. Farewell."

Suddenly a peal of thunder rang through the air, and the brilliant light in the Hall of Mists changed to total darkness. In a twinkling the bewildered man found himself once more upon the mountain-side not far from the spot where he had left his sheep grazing. At first he thought he had been dreaming, but there in one hand he held a bunch of blue flowers; in the other, a measure of seed.

He hastened home, told the marvelous adventure to his wife, and showed her the blue flowers and the measure of seed. For awhile she listened in wide-eyed wonder, but when the shepherd said the Queen bade him choose anything he wished from the jeweled hall, the good wife said impatiently: "Do not tell me that you chose a bunch of flowers when you might have had a precious stone! How could you be so foolish? One jewel would have made us rich for life."

"Let us see what the seed will bring forth," answered her husband. "I shall plant it to-morrow."

Accordingly, the next day he plowed the ground and planted the seed. He was amazed to find that the small measure held enough to sow a very large field. In a short time, tiny green shoots covered the ground. With eager interest, the shepherd watched the little plants grow and burst into blossoms exactly like those the Queen of the Air had given to him. In a few weeks he saw the star-like blossoms wither and seeds begin to form and ripen. One night the shepherd dreamed he saw a beautiful woman, clothed in silver white, float over his field and bless the ripening stalks.

The next evening an old woman knocked at the cottage door. When the shepherd invited her to come in, he noticed she carried in her hand a number of stalks from his field.

"I've come to teach you what wonderful use you can make of these stalks," she said.

Very gently and patiently she taught the shepherd and his wife how to separate delicate fibers from the woody core; how to spin them into thread and weave the thread into linen. Last of all she told them how to bleach the useful linen. It was a wonderful evening for the peasant and his wife.

When the old woman rose to leave the cottage, she said to the shepherd, "In the Queen's Hall of Mists you asked for the gift of blue flax flowers. To-night you have learned what a priceless blessing you chose. Farewell."

She left the cottage very quickly and when the shepherd and his wife went to the door to see which way she went lo! she had disappeared. In a short time all the people in the valley heard the wonderful story of making linen. For awhile they bought the linen which was made from the shepherd's first field of flax. But they bought some of his seed, too, and the next year they were able to spin their own thread and weave their linen. The blessing which came from the shepherd's choice was shared by all the people in the valley.

THE STORY OF THE DEWDROP

LUCILE CORBETT

One day as the children were coming home from school, the snowflakes began dropping lazily to the ground. One beautiful star-shaped flake fell on a little girl's hand.

"Oh, you pretty, pretty snow fairy. Where did you come from? Did you tumble off a fleecy cloud, or did you dance all the way from Frostland to show us your soft, lacy dress?"

To the little girl's surprise, a tiny voice said: "Do you really want me to tell you where I came from? I was not always a snowflake, and will not return to Frostland for a long, long time. I can stay with you but a little while; then, when the bright sun comes and the south wind calls, I must leave you, for I have much to do. Many things in the woods need my help.

"Last spring, when the earth became soft, the sky blue, and the warm breeze played with the sun, I was sent from the clouds to give the violets a drink of water. Taking the form of a sparkling dewdrop, I stooped and kissed the dark green leaves, and a violet held me in her arms until the sturdy oak called.

"A sunbeam drew me up, up, and up, then let me gently drop in the quiet pitter-patter of rain. I reached down, down to the roots, giving him new life, so that he put forth leaves which sheltered and protected the violets all summer.

"From the roots of the sturdy oak I traveled on and on and on until the babbling brook called. I turned into a tiny stream of clear water, and the brook rocked me as it went murmuring through a shady dell. The birds dipped into the cool water, then shook their wings till the drops glistened like diamonds in the sunlight. The willow tree bent and looked at herself in the mirror of water, the ferns crept nearer and nearer, and the small white pebble was worn smooth by the laughing brook, as it sang on its way to the sea.

"When I reached the big, broad waters, I found many, many dewdrops, which had been changed into rain and into streams to help the plants, the flowers, and trees. Ships, looking like great white birds, sailed on the waters. Suddenly a storm came up, the sea grew dark and angry-looking. I was turned into white foam, and the waves tossed me higher and higher until the ships went down. The seagulls flapped their wings and gave their cry of warning for all things in the forest to keep away from the wild billows.

"After the storm, I was carried up and up in the air as mist, so that I blotted out all sight of land. I drew closer and closer to the small islands, and wrapped them in a thick blanket of fog. The wind sighed, the flowers closed their beautiful petals, and the birds hid their heads under their wings in fear of this clinging white monster.

"The winter winds came along and carried me into the far Northland, where the Ice King reigns supreme. Here I found little men dressed in fur to keep them warm. Great white bears walked on huge cakes of ice. But the birds and flowers could not live in that still, cold land. The silence was broken only by the crunching of the ice. I, too, became ice, and drifted slowly out on the shining white waste.

"Then again came the sun, warm and strong, and forced back the cold north wind. Instead of being a thick white cake of ice, I became a tiny, fluffy bit of frost, as white as ermine, as soft, as soft as down. Gently the north wind, who was now a slave of the mighty sun, gathered me up and carried me into a strange land, a very strange land. The earth was hard, the trees bare, and the flowers were all dead. Dark, sullen-looking clouds took me from the north wind and sent me floating down, down through space until I reached your hand.

"When you gather up a handful of snow to make a big, round snowball, do not forget that once we were bright dewdrops sparkling in the morning sun. And when you wade in the little brook in the summer time, we will flow over your bare feet and sing you a song of the sea."

The tall Dew Mother, dressed in grey,
Last night at dusk went down the way,
By winding lane and meadow deep,
And kissed each little flower to sleep.

And some sweet buds so drowsy sat,
They hardly heard her pit-a-pat,——
They scarcely knew that they were found,——
Already dreams had wrapped them round.

But she, so pale and kind and tall,
Her cool, sweet kisses laid on all,
And left each leaf a dewdrop bright
To play with in the morning light.

May Byron.

ORIGIN OF THE DANDELION

(INDIAN LEGEND)

The gentle South Breeze, whom the Indians call Shawondasee, lay asleep on the soft grass in front of his wigwam. His face was turned toward the Northland, and he was dreaming of the joys and blessings he would send there to fill the summer days with gladness.

In the spring he had told the bluebird and swallow that it was time to build their nests in the budding Northland. His warm breath had melted the winter snows and enticed the brooks and rills to flow again toward the sea. Now the last days of spring were waning and summer was at hand.

Shawondasee smiled in his dream. He wafted gentle showers to the meadows of the Northland and blossoms opened their faces to the sun. Little children clapped their hands in glee when they saw the shining buttercups and the daisies with golden hearts.

The laughter which Shawondasee heard in his dream wakened him. Slowly he opened his eyes and looked dreamily at the great stretches of prairie which lay before him. In a little while the South Breeze aroused himself and gazed intently toward the Northland. There among the slender waving grasses he saw a beautiful maiden. Her tall, graceful figure was clothed in delicate green, and her moccasins were of the same color. Her hair was yellow as gold. Merrily she danced about the prairie, nodding and smiling at Shawondasee, who became enchanted with her grace and beauty.

"'Tis the loveliest vision I've ever seen," murmured the South Breeze softly. "Surely she is a daughter of the Sun, and he has made her wonderful hair out of his own beams."

All day long he watched her dancing gaily on the northern prairie, and at night when he went into his wigwam, he said, "I shall journey northward and woo the sunny-haired maiden. Gently will I woo her to be my bride."

The next day when Shawondasee came sleepily out of his wigwam, there, in the morning light, he saw the graceful maiden flitting about on the prairie. All the while she nodded her golden head and smiled gaily at him.

"There is plenty of time to woo her," sighed Shawondasee; "I'll enjoy her dancing a little longer before I journey northward and ask her to live with me in the Southland."

One morning when South Breeze came out of his wigwam to watch the dancing maiden, he noticed a great change had come to her. On her head was a fleecy white crown.

"What has happened to my golden-haired prairie maiden?" he sighed. "Can it be that my rough brother, North Wind, has crowned her with snow?"

He sprang to his feet and hastened toward the northern plains. As he drew near the maiden, he saw that her golden hair had, indeed, gone, and in its place were tresses soft and white as the snow.

Shawondasee's heart was filled with sorrow. His breath came quick and fast and, as he came very near to the maiden, he drew a deep, deep sigh.

Suddenly the strangest thing happened. All the air was filled with soft, downy fibers, which flitted over the prairie like the tiniest fairy sails and, in a little while, sank lightly among the waving grasses. Shawondasee closed his eyes for a moment, and when he opened them, lo! the prairie maiden had vanished.

"I cannot give up my beautiful maiden," sighed South Breeze. "I shall not go back to the Southland until I have found her."

For weeks he wandered over the meadows, but no trace of the maiden could he find. One day Kabibonokka, the rough North Wind, blew sharp and shrill. His cold blast made the gentle Shawondasee shiver and hasten back to his warm wigwam in the South.

During the cold winter months while Kabibonokka, with his icy breath, stalked over the prairie, Shawondasee stayed in his wigwam and mourned the loss of his prairie maiden. But when the warm days came again and the grass sprang up on the northern plains, the South Breeze came forth and planned to journey northward.

One day he looked toward the prairie where a year ago he had seen the dancing, golden-haired maiden. A marvelous sight greeted him. Hundreds of bright yellow flowers among the waving grasses nodded and smiled at him. The prairie was shining with golden dandelions.

PRINCE BUTTERFLY AND CLOVER

In a quiet, pleasant meadow, where green old trees waved their branches as the summer winds went singing by, bloomed a sisterhood of flowers. A neighbouring brook rippled musically, and passing clouds cast shadows upon the waving grass below.

The flowers were very happy together in this pleasant spot. No cold winds came to blight them, no rude hands tore them from their stems. Warm sunbeams smiled on them all day long, and the dewdrops refreshed them at night with a cooling drink.

One morning when the flowers awoke, fragrant and fresh, a little worm came creeping by.

"Oh, pity and love me," sighed the little worm. "Give me shelter, dear flowers. I am lonely, poor, and weak. A little spot for a resting place is all I ask. Only let me lie in the deep, green moss and weave my little tomb and sleep my long, unbroken sleep until spring's first flowers come. Then will I come forth in fairy dress, and repay your gentle care for a poor worm. Kind flowers, let me stay."

But none of the proud flowers would give shelter to the poor worm. Wild Rose showed her little thorns while her soft face glowed with pride. Violet hid beneath some drooping ferns and the daisy turned her face away. Little Houstonia laughed scornfully, as she danced on her slender stem, while Cowslip bent down and whispered the tale to the brook.

A blue-eyed Grass looked down on the poor worm as she silently turned away.

"You will harm our delicate leaves," she said; "that is why you may not stay."

At that moment a sweet voice called from a distance:

"Come here, poor worm, come to me. The sun lies warm in this quiet spot. I will share my home with you."

The flowers all looked in wonder to see who had offered the worm a home. To their surprise, they found Clover Blossom, with fluttering wings, beckoning him to come. From her snug little nook where the cool winds rustled by, and the murmuring bees and butterflies loved to come, her rosy face smiled kindly down as the friendless worm drew near.

"Poor thing, you are welcome here," she said in a soft voice. "In the soft, green moss close at my side you may sleep until spring comes. I will spread my leaves over you, and guard you through the long winter."

Then, deep in a moss bed, the grateful worm spun his winter home, and lay down for his long rest.

And well did Clover Blossom keep her watch. Autumn came and took all her sister flowers. Then when it was time for her to go, she spread her withered leaves softly over the sleeping worm, and bent her faithful little head beneath the winter snow.

Spring came again and the flowers arose from their winter sleep. How gaily they danced on their slender stems, and sang their songs with the rippling waves of the brook. The warm winds kissed their cheeks, as one by one they came again to dwell in their summer homes.

Little Clover Blossom bloomed once more, and watched patiently by the mossy bed where the worm still lay quietly sleeping. Her sister flowers cried scornfully, as they waved in the summer air, "Come and dance with us, Little Clover. That ugly worm was poor and friendless. He will not come again in fairy dress. Don't believe what a worm tells you—at any rate, he lies in the green moss dead. So come and be happy with us."

But Little Clover kept watch for she did not doubt the poor worm's truth; she trusted that he would come as he had said.

At last she felt the moss at her side move, then a small cell opened wide, and out flew a glittering butterfly that soared up to the summer sky on golden wings!

Then the flowers cried out, "Clover, your watching was in vain. It is as we told you, he will never come again." And the unkind flowers danced for joy as they watched him silently soar away.

Little Clover bowed her head in silence. As she drooped she heard a Daisy say:

"O sisters look, I see him now. He is floating back from cloudland. Spread wide your leaves that he may choose the one he deems most fair."

Then Wild Rose glowed with a deep blush as she proudly waved on her stem; Cowslip bent to look at herself in the rippling brook, little Houstonia merrily danced and spread out her white leaves wide; and Daisy whispered her joy and hope to Violet, who peeped out from the tall green ferns to watch the glittering form of the butterfly that shone in the summer sky.

Nearer and nearer the bright form came, and fairer and fairer grew the blossoms. Each welcomed him in her sweetest tones and each offered him honey and dew. But in vain did they beckon and smile and call. He floated past Violet, Daisy, and Rose, and went straight to the pleasant home of Clover Blossom, the flower most truly fair.

"Dear flower," he said, "when I was alone and friendless you watched over me and cared for me. And now I will try to show the thanks the poor worm could not tell.

"Sunbeam, breeze shall come to thee,
And the coolest dews that fall;
Whate'er a flower can wish is thine,
For thou art worthy all.

"And the home thou shared with the friendless worm
The butterfly's home shall be,
And thou shalt find, dear, faithful flower,
A loving friend in me."

Then, through the long, bright summer hours, through sunshine and rain, lived happily together Clover and Prince Butterfly.

I wonder what the Clover thinks,
Intimate friend of Bobolinks,
Lover of Daisies, slim and white,
Waltzer with Buttercups at night;
Keeper of Inn for traveling Bees,
Serving to them wine dregs and lees
Left by the Royal Humming Birds
Who sip and pay with fine-spun words;
Fellow with all the lowliest,
Peer of the gayest and the best,
Comrade of winds, beloved of sun,
Kissed by the Dewdrops, one by one;
Prophet of Good-Luck mystery
By sign of four which few may see;
Emblem of comfort in the speech
Which poor men's babies early reach;
Sweet by the roadsides, sweet by rills,
Sweet in the meadows, sweet on hills,
Sweet in its every living breath,
Sweetest, perhaps, at last, in death!
Oh! who knows what the Clover thinks!
No one! unless the Bobolinks.

SAXE HOLM.

TITHONUS: A LEGEND OF THE GRASSHOPPER

Lillian S. Hyde

Every day when Helios drove his wonderful horses and fiery chariot across the sky, Aurora opened the gates of pearl and drew back the dark curtains of the night; for Aurora was the Goddess of the Dawn. She was so beautiful that the whole sky flushed pink with pleasure when she appeared in the east.

On the earth lived a mortal called Tithonus, who loved Aurora so well that he never failed to leave his bed while it was still dark to watch for her coming. Aurora loved Tithonus in return, and one day she flew to the king of the gods, and begged of him that Tithonus might be given a draft of nectar, and so become immortal.

Jupiter granted this request, and Aurora took Tithonus up to Mount Olympus to live in her golden house.

The goddess had forgotten to ask that Tithonus might never grow old. Therefore, the time came when grey hairs could be seen among his golden curls. Aurora was always kind to him and continued to give him beautiful garments, and to feed him on ambrosia. Still, Tithonus grew older and older and, in time, after several hundred years, he was so very old that he could not move at all. Little was left of him but his voice, and even that had grown high and thin. Aurora felt so sorry to see him withering away in this manner that she changed him into a little insect, and sent him down to earth again where men called him the grasshopper.

Very glad to be free and active once more, Tithonus hops about in the fields all day, chirping cheerfully to Aurora.

Shuttle of the sunburnt grass,
Fifer in the dun cuirass,
Fifing shrilly in the morn,
Shrilly still at eve unworn;
Now to rear, now in the van,
Gayest of the elfin clan:
Though I watch their rustling flight,
I can never guess aright
Where their lodging-places are;
'Mid some daisy's golden star,
Or beneath a roofing leaf,
Or in fringes of a sheaf,
Tenanted as soon as bound!
Loud thy reveille doth sound,
When the earth is laid asleep,
And her dreams are passing deep,
On mid-August afternoons;
And through all the harvest moons,
Nights brimmed up with honeyed peace,
Thy gainsaying doth not cease.
When the frost comes, thou art dead;
We along the stubble tread,
On blue, frozen morns, and note
No least murmur is afloat:
Wondrous still our fields are then,
Fifer of the elfin men!

EDITH M. THOMAS.

THE GOLDEN GRASSHOPPER

Charles Lamb

It chanced upon a time that while the fairies were looking for cowslips in the meads, while yet the dew was hanging on the buds like beads, they found a babe left in its swathing-clothes—a little, sorrowful, deserted thing. It was a pity to see the abandoned little orphan left in that way.

How the cold dew kept wetting its childish coats; and its little hair, like gossamer, how it was bedabbled! Its pouting mouth, unknowing how to speak, lay half-opened like a rose-lipped shell; and its cheek was softer than any peach, upon which the tears, for very roundness, could not long dwell, but fell off in clearness like pearls—some on the grass, and some on his little hand; and some haply wandered to the little dimpled well under his mouth.

Pity it was, too, to see how the burning sun had scorched its helpless limbs; for it lay without shade or shelter, for foul weather or fair. So, having compassion on its sad plight, the fairies turned themselves into grasshoppers and swarmed about the babe, making such shrill cries as that pretty little chirping creature makes in its mirth, till, with their noise, they attracted the attention of a passing rustic, a tender-hearted kind who, wondering at their small but loud concert, strayed aside curiously, and found the babe where it lay in the remote grass, and, taking it up, wrapped it in his russet coat, and bore it to his cottage, where his wife kindly nurtured it till it grew up a goodly personage.

This babe prospered and, in time, became the famous Sir Thomas Gresham, one of the greatest merchants of England. He afterwards adopted the grasshopper as his crest, and you may see to this day, on a tall staff high above the roof of the Royal Exchange in London, a huge Golden Grasshopper to remind you of the wisest, richest, and greatest of all the men who built up the trade and commerce of England.

"Witness his goodly vessels on the Thames,
  Whose holds were fraught with costly merchandise,——
Jewels from Ind, and pearls for costly dames,
  And gorgeous silks that Samarcand supplies:
  Witness that Royal Bourse he bade arise,
The mart of merchants from the East and West;
  Whose slender summit pointing to the skies,
Still bears, in token of his grateful breast,
The tender grasshopper, his chosen crest."

Thomas Hood.

A BLADE OF GRASS

John Ruskin

Gather a single blade of grass, and examine for a minute its narrow, sword-shaped strip of fluted green. Nothing there, as it seems of notable goodness or beauty. A very little strength and a very little tallness, and a few delicate long lines meeting in a point, not a perfect point either, but blunt and unfinished, by no means a creditable or apparently much-cared-for example of Nature's workmanship, made only to be trodden on to-day, and to-morrow to be cast into the oven, and a little pale and hollow stalk, feeble and flaccid, leading down to the dull brown fiber of roots.

And yet, think of it well, and judge whether of all the gorgeous flowers that beam in summer air, and of all strong and goodly trees, pleasant to the eyes, or good for food, stately palm and pine, strong ash and oak, scented citron, burdened vine, there be any by man so deeply loved, by God so highly graced, as that narrow point of feeble green. And well does it fulfill its mission. Consider what we owe merely to the meadow grass, to the covering of the dark ground by that glorious enamel, by the companies of those soft, and countless, and peaceful spears.

The fields! Follow forth but for a little time the thoughts of all that we ought to recognize in these words. All spring and summer is in them, the walks by silent and scented paths, the rests in noonday heat, the joy of herds and flocks, the power of all shepherd life and meditation, the life of sunlight upon the world falling in emerald streaks, and falling in soft blue shadows where else it would have struck upon the dark mold or scorching dust.

Pastures beside the pacing brooks, soft banks and knolls of lowly hills, thymy slopes of down, overlooked by the blue line of lifted sea, crisp lawns, all dim with early dew, or smooth in evening warmth of barred sunshine, dinted by happy feet, and softening in their fall the sound of loving voices,—all these are summed in those simple words; and these are not all.

We may not measure to the full the depth of this heavenly gift in our own land, though still as we think of it longer, the infinite of that meadow sweetness, Shakespeare's peculiar joy would open on us more and more; yet we have it but in part. Go out in the springtime among the meadows that slope from the shores of the Swiss lakes to the root of the lower mountains. There, mingled with the taller Gentians, and the white Narcissus, the grass grows deep and free; and as you follow the winding mountain paths, beneath arching boughs, all veiled with blossoms—paths that forever droop and rise over the green banks and mounds sweeping down in scented undulation steep to the blue water, studded here and there with new-mown heaps filling all the air with fainter sweetness, —look up towards the higher hills, where the waves of everlasting green roll silently into their long inlets among the shadows of the pines; and we may, perhaps, at last know the meaning of those quiet words of the Psalmist, "He maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains."

Then Aurora, the Sun's
Rosy handmaiden, runs
With a basket of fruit blossoms poised on her head,
Green ones and pink ones and white ones, and red,
And with both hands uplifted, outscatters them wide
Through gardens and orchards on every side,
Such abundance,
Redundance,
On every side
Of blossoms for apples and damsons and cherries,
For currants and quinces, pears, plums and strawberries,
That the labourers call to each other to see
What a wonderful fruit year 'tis likely to be.

Charles Dalmon.

PRINCESS FIRE-FLY

(JAPANESE LEGEND)

Deep in the pink petals of a lotus bloom that grew in the castle moats of Fukui, lived Hi-o, the king of the Fire-Flies. In this beautiful flower his daughter, the Princess Hotaru, passed her childhood exploring every shady nook and fragrant corner of the bell-like palace, listening to the buzz of life around, and peeping over the edge of the petals at the wonderful world which lay mysteriously beyond. The princess had few youthful companions, but, as she daily bade her father farewell, she dreamed of the time when she, too, would fly abroad, and her brilliant light would attract unusual admiration.

Gradually, a beautiful sheen o'erspread her body; night by night it became brighter, until at last her home, in the hours of darkness, was as a lamp of coral wherein shone a lamp of gold. So glorious was her light that the stars paled before it, and the bright, sickle moon withdrew behind a cloud from jealousy.

The Princess was now allowed to fly from her home, to loiter among the pleasant rice fields, and to explore the indigo meadows which lay far off on the horizon. She had no lack of friends and would-be lovers. Thousands of insects, attracted by her magic light, came and offered their homage, but the Princess cared for none of their attentions and though she spoke politely to them all, she gave encouragement to none.

One evening the Princess said to her mother, the Queen:

"I have had many admirers but no one has found a way to my heart. To-night I shall hold court and if any of them love me they will come to me here. Then I shall set them an impossible task. If they are wise they will not attempt to do it, but if they love their lives more than they love me I do not want them. I shall say to one and all: 'Only he who loves me more than life shall call me bride.'"

"As you will," said her mother. And that evening, seated upon a throne formed of the heart of a lotus, Princess Hotaru held her court.

No sooner had twilight set in than forth came the golden beetle and laid his fortunes at her feet.

"Go and bring me fire and I will be your bride," said Hotaru.

Bowing his head the green-gold creature spread his wings and left the court with a stately whirr.

Next came cockchafer, who wooed her in passionate words. But to him she gave the same answer. "Bring me fire and you may have me for your wife."

Dragon-fly, proud in his gorgeous colours, offered his heart and his hand, quite sure that he would be accepted at once. The humble hawk-moth persistently addressed the lovely Princess. As the evening wore on countless other insects gained an audience, but the answer to them all was ever the same, "The treasure of fire shall be my bridegroom's gift."

One by one they took wing, enraptured by the hope of success and unconscious that they were all bent on the same errand.

But none ever came back to wed the Princess. The hawk-moth entered a temple and circled round and round the tall wax lights, coming nearer and nearer each time. "Now to win the Princess!" he murmured. Alas! the foolish creature darted forward to snatch a flash of flame, but the flame singed his wings and he fell helpless to the ground.

The beetle whizzed off to a neighbouring house and watched intently for a moment or two a log fire crackling on a hearth. He then boldly caught at a tongue of flame, hoping to carry it to the Princess. But he, too, was buried by the fire.

The dragon-fly, notwithstanding his sunlit splendours, could not fulfill the bidding of the Lady of the Lotus Bloom. He also fell a prey to her imperious command. Others there were who tried to steal from the diamond its heart of fire, or winged their way to the great mountain, or sped to the depths of the valley in their search for the great gift.

But all their efforts to bring the treasure of fire were in vain. The sun in roseate splendour shone on the bodies of the insect lovers who had given up their lives in their devotion to the Princess.

Now tidings came to Hi-maro, the Prince of the Fire-Flies, on the north side of the castle moat, that Princess Hotaru was exceedingly beautiful, whereupon he fled swiftly to her home among the lotus flowers, to ask of her father his daughter in marriage. The father agreed to the Prince's request with the condition that the Prince should come in person bringing the Princess the gift of fire.

Even as a flood of light the Prince at the head of his host of fire-flies came and filled the lotus palace with a blaze of glory.

But Hotaru herself was so beautiful that her charms were not dimmed.

One look passed between the youth and the maiden and the visit ended in the Prince's wooing and winning the Princess. He took her to his palace on the north side of the castle moat and there they lived happily for many years.

Many, many years have passed since Hi-maro won the Princess and still it is the fancy of all Fire-Fly Princesses to send their suitors in search of fire as a love-offering. It is for this reason that we see many thousand insects hovering around the evening lights in the vain hope of securing a flash of fire that shall win them their prize. (Adapted.)

JULY

When the scarlet cardinal tells
  Her dreams to the dragon-fly
And the lazy breeze makes a nest in the trees
  And murmurs a lullaby,
    It is July.

SUSAN HARTLEY SWETT.

CUFF AND THE WOODCHUCK

John Burroughs

I knew a farmer in New York who had a very large bob-tailed churn dog by the name of Cuff. The farmer kept a large dairy and made a great deal of butter, and it was the business of Cuff to spend nearly half of each summer day treading the endless round of the churning machine. During the remainder of the day he had plenty of time to sleep and rest, and sit on his hips and survey the landscape.

One day, sitting thus, he discovered a woodchuck about forty rods from the house, on a steep hillside, feeding about near his hole, which was beneath a large rock. The old dog, forgetting his stiffness, and remembering the fun he had had with woodchucks in his earlier days, started off at his highest speed, vainly hoping to catch this one before he could get to his hole. But the woodchuck, seeing the dog come labouring up the hill, sprang to the mouth of his den, and, when his pursuer was only a few yards off, whistled tauntingly and went in. This occurred several times, the old dog marching up the hill, and then marching down again, having had his labour for his pains.

I suspect that he revolved the subject in his mind while revolving the great wheel of the churning machine, and that some turn or other brought him a happy thought, for next time he showed himself a strategist. Instead of giving chase to the woodchuck, when first discovered, he crouched down to the ground, and, resting his head on his paws, watched him. The woodchuck kept working away from his hole, lured by the tender clover, but, not unmindful of his safety, lifted himself up on his haunches every few moments and surveyed the approaches.

Presently, after the woodchuck had let himself down from one of these attitudes of observation and resumed his feeding, Cuff started swiftly but stealthily up the hill, precisely in the attitude of a cat when she is stalking a bird. When the woodchuck rose up again, Cuff was perfectly motionless and half hid by the grass. When he again resumed his clover, Cuff sped up the hill as before, this time crossing a fence, but in a low place, and so nimbly that he was not discovered. Again the woodchuck was on the lookout; again Cuff was motionless and hugging the ground.

As the dog neared his victim, he was partially hidden by a swell in the earth, but still the woodchuck from his lookout reported "All right," when Cuff, having not twice as far to run as the chuck, threw all stealthiness aside and rushed directly for the hole. At that moment the woodchuck discovered his danger and, seeing that it was a race for life, leaped as I never saw marmot leap before. But he was two seconds too late, his retreat was cut off, and the powerful jaws of the old dog closed upon him.

The next season Cuff tried the same tactics again with like success, but when the third woodchuck had taken up his abode at the fatal hole, the old churner's wits and strength had begun to fail him, and he was baffled in each attempt to capture the animal.

WHY THE LADY-BUG IS SAID TO BE BELOVED OF GOD

Translated from the French by M. L. Cook

A long time ago, in France, the great lords had full power over the people. They had power to make them work and fight, and they judged them and punished them when they did wrong.

Now there was a lord in these times, who had a dearly beloved younger brother; and this brother was found dead one morning, lying near a hedge, from behind which the murderer must have sprung to strike him down.

The lord ordered the murderer to be taken, if possible, and vowed that if he was found he should suffer a punishment for his crime.

The very evening after his brother's death, when the lord was praying in his room, there entered his steward, Crondas, who said to him:

"My lord, I have discovered your brother's murderer, and have had him brought here that he may appear before you."

"Let him be brought to me," said the lord, "and if you see in me any signs of mercy, remind me of the crime he has committed, that I may punish him as he deserves."

Crondas made a sign to the servants; and they brought in a peasant with a white, shocked face, who fell on his knees before his master, exclaiming:

"Have mercy upon me, my lord! I swear to you I have committed no crime!"

When the lord demanded of Crondas the proofs of the man's guilt, Crondas showed him a purse, saying:

"My lord, if you are inclined to believe what this man says, I only beg you to ask the scoundrel how he happened to have in his house this purse, which belonged to your dead brother."

"I recognize it," said the lord, with deep feeling.

"And this, my lord, do you also recognize it?" said Crondas, showing him a gold ring.

"Yes," said the lord again; "it is the ring my brother always wore on the ring finger of his left hand."

"My lord," went on Crondas, "I found these things myself, in a hiding-place in this man's house. Now, does he dare say, on his knees, that he is innocent of the dreadful crime with which he is charged?"

Not being able to explain the presence of the things in his house, the poor peasant was judged to be guilty, and condemned to be killed on the very spot where his victim's body had been found. While he lay in prison, waiting for his execution, all the peasants round about visited the lord and begged him not to punish the man. They all said of him—what we say when we wish to credit anyone with unusual kindness and gentleness:

"We have known him long, my lord, and we know he would not even crush an insect in his path."

But Crondas, who never left the lord, said to each one:

"Bah! that is no reason why he should not kill a man; and if he is not punished, many others will be encouraged to be murderers. Let him suffer for his misdeeds."

And to every effort the peasants made to put off the day of punishment, Crondas replied:

"Ah, my lord, these people know how merciful you are. They think that, the first anguish of your grief once past, you will pardon the murderer."

At this the lord never failed to cry:

"No, no, never! He shall be punished."

So the lord, urged by Crondas, ordered the men to prepare to execute the peasant, adding that he wished to be present, that he might see perish the wretch who had killed his brother.

Crondas was very active in the preparations, bringing faggots to help build the fire, and arranging with his own hands a sort of throne made of branches for his lord. Then he went to tell him all was ready, and the lord came, followed by a crowd of people, who wept and lamented over the peasant's unjust death.

Crondas then said to the servants:

"Tie him, and set fire to the pile."

Meantime the lord was watching the proceedings with deep attention and saying nothing; but his eyes went from the peasant to Crondas and from Crondas back to the peasant, then to the servants who stood by the faggots ready to light the fire.

And as the servants were slow in obeying, Crondas cried to them:

"Come, come, hurry up! Our lord is waiting."

He was in haste to see the death of the peasant; but the poor man said to those who were about to tie him:

"Oh, let me make a last prayer, I beg of you!"

And, though Crondas begged the lord not to grant this request, the lord extended his hand to command the servants to grant to the peasant that which he had asked; and, as he did so, he saw Crondas make a sign of impatience.

The peasant, dropping his sad, haggard eyes, was about to kneel on a stone not far from where

his lord was sitting; but, seeing on the stone a little lady-bug just at the place where his knee was at rest, he put it to one side gently, with his hand, so as not to crush it. Then, kneeling down, he began to pray.

As the lord watched him, he noticed that the little creature, whose life he had just spared, suddenly opened its bright wings and, taking flight, lighted on Crondas's left hand. Crondas, for no reason except that he was perhaps annoyed at having to wait so long for the execution, put a finger of his right hand on the insect, and almost crushed it. When he lifted it, a pair of broken red wings faintly quivered.

At this moment the peasant, having finished his prayer, rose from the stone. The lord, descending from his throne, cried suddenly:

"Let that man go! Do not kill him; he is not my brother's murderer. That is impossible!"

While speaking thus, the lord kept his eyes fixed on the face of Crondas, which suddenly grew white with fear. However, Crondas approached his master, saying:

"But the proofs, my lord? The proofs are there. If you do not find them sufficient to convict this man, whom can you accuse of the murder?"

Then the lord, taking Crondas's hand, cried loudly:

"Whom can I accuse? Perhaps you, Crondas, for there is blood upon your hand. At the very moment when you pretended to be full of horror for the crime of murder, you killed for mere pleasure this poor little creature, which had lighted unsuspectingly upon your hand, but which the peasant, unjustly condemned, had spared, when his own death stared him in the face."

Then, seizing Crondas, and looking sternly and fixedly at the cowering fellow, the lord thundered:

"Now, confess your sin!"

Crondas grew more ghastly than before and, trying to control his voice, faltered out:

"I confess. Have mercy, my lord! I killed your brother because he threatened to tell you of my dishonesty toward you. I took his purse and ring, and hid them in this man's house, to make you think it was he who had sinned. I am the guilty one. Do with me as you will. Punish me in his place."

The lord did as Crondas had said, and the murderer suffered for his sin instead of the peasant, who was made steward in Crondas's place. No one pleaded for the guilty man's life, for he had been hard and cruel, and no man was his friend.

Now all the people of the country felt the good God himself had sent the little red lady-bug that it might teach the lord to administer justice. Since then everyone who sees such an insect takes care not to hurt it, and says:

"That is the insect beloved of God. Perhaps it is on its way now to help someone. I would not harm it, for my hand would be stained with blood."

And the story has been handed down from peasant to peasant, and is known throughout the whole of France.

And that is why the lady-bug is called in France "La petite bete au bon Dieu," which means "the little insect beloved of God"; and that is why everyone has reverence for it and loves it, and would not take its life.

An angular spider weaves
Great webs between the trees,
Webs that are witches' sieves.
And honey- and bumble-bees
Go droning among the leaves
Like the fairies' oboës.

MADISON CAWEIN.

THE STORY OF ARACHNE

(GREEK MYTH)

Once upon a time there lived a beautiful Grecian maiden named Arachne, who could card and spin, weave and embroider with marvelous skill. She became so proud of her art that she boasted no one in the whole land could equal her.

So great was her fame that many traveled from afar to see the beautiful garments which she made. Whenever she sat at her loom a group of people stood near so that they might see her work in the making. Indeed, it is said, that even the nymphs left their haunts among streams and groves to behold the grace and ease with which this maiden worked.

One day a group of people stood watching Arachne at her loom. Their admiration knew no bounds. They looked at each other in astonishment.

"See how deftly she rolls the wool into soft fleecy balls," said one.

"And with what delicate grace she cards it," said another. "It is as light and fine as the mists of the morning. She is wonderful, indeed."

"Surely the maiden has more than human skill," added the first speaker. "I believe Minerva, the goddess of spinning and weaving, taught her how to throw that swift shuttle."

When Arachne heard these last words she stopped her work, tossed her head, and said haughtily, "I did not learn my art from Minerva, but I'm quite sure I can equal the goddess in skill."

"Hush!" cried one of the bystanders. "Those are rash words, indeed. No mortal can compare with the gods."

But Arachne's pride knew no bounds. She tossed her head again and said, "I'm willing at any time to match my skill with Minerva's. If she can prove herself to be my superior I'll bear any punishment she may name."

The people were very much frightened to hear the maiden boast in this manner. They slipped away to their homes in fear and dread.

A few days after this conversation happened Arachne was seated at her loom. As usual many who were interested stood watching her. Suddenly there appeared before her an aged woman leaning on a staff, who said, "Lo, I've come to give you advice which I have learned through the years. Beware of pride and boastfulness. True knowledge teaches humility. Seek for fame among mortals if you like, but never try to match your skill with Minerva's. Your proud boasting has offended the goddess. Ask humbly for her forgiveness and I believe she will pardon your rash words."

Arachne laughed scornfully and said, "Old woman, begone! I care not for your advice. If Minerva's skill is greater than mine let the goddess prove it by fair trial. Why does she not come herself to see me?"

Then a marvelous thing happened. In a twinkling the bent figure of the old woman changed to the shining form of the goddess Minerva. The nymphs who stood near bowed reverently and the people drew back in breathless awe.

"A contest in weaving shall begin at once," declared the goddess.

Arachne's face flushed and then grew pale but she was not daunted. In her foolish pride she felt sure of victory.

Minerva now commanded that two looms be set up. In a few moments this was done; then each took her place and made ready by tying the web to the beam.

Now began the famous contest. With rare grace and ease the goddess and the maiden threw their swift shuttles. Silently the skilled weavers worked until each web was finished. Then Arachne glanced at her rival's marvelous web. The maiden never had dreamed of a vision so beautiful. Her heart sank, for, in a moment, she knew how foolish she had been to match her skill with Minerva's. Poor Arachne could not bear the great blow to her pride. In her grief she hung her head. But quickly Minerva sprinkled the maiden's body with magic juices and said, "Boastful Arachne, thou art now changed into a spider. Thou and thy descendants shall spin through the ages to come."

And there hanging to a slender thread was the first spider.

HOW THE SPIDER MAKES ITS WEB[2]

C. William Beebe

Nature has provided spiders with an organ filled always with liquid which, on being exposed to the air, hardens, and can be drawn out into the slender threads we know as cobwebs. The silk-worm encases its body with a mile or more of gleaming silk, but there its usefulness is ended as far as the silkworm is concerned. But spiders have found a hundred uses for their cordage, some of which are startlingly similar to human inventions.

Those spiders which burrow in the earth hang their tunnels with silken tapestries impervious to wet, which, at the same time, act as lining to the tube. Then the entrance may be a trap-door of soil and silk, hinged with strong silken threads; or in the turret spiders, which are found in our fields, there is reared a tiny tower of leaves or twigs bound together with silk. Who of us has not teased the inmate by pushing a bent straw into his stronghold and awaiting his furious onslaught upon the innocent stalk!

187 A list of all the uses of cobwebs would take more space than we can spare; but of these the most familiar is the snare set for unwary flies,—the wonderfully ingenious webs which sparkle with dew among the grasses or stretch from bush to bush. The framework is of strong webbing and upon this is closely woven the sticky spiral which is so elastic, so ethereal, and yet strong enough to entangle a good-sized insect. How knowing seems the little worker, as when, the web and his dew of concealment being completed, he spins a strong cable from the center of the web to the entrance of his watch-tower. Then, when a trembling of his aerial spans warn him of a capture, how eagerly he seizes his master cable and jerks away in it, thus vibrating the whole structure and making more certain the confusion of his victim.

188 What is more interesting than to see a great yellow garden-spider, hanging head downwards in the center of his web, when we approach too closely, instead of deserting his snare, set it vibrating back and forth so rapidly that he becomes a mere blur; a more certain method of escaping the onslaught of a bird than if he ran to the shelter of a leaf.

Those spiders which leap upon their prey instead of setting snares for it have still a use for their thready life, throwing out a cable as they leap, to break their fall if they miss their foothold. What a strange use of the cobweb is that of the little flying spiders! Up they run to the top of a post, elevate their abdomens and run out several threads which lengthen and lengthen until the breeze catches them and away go the wingless aeronauts for yards or for miles as fortune and wind and weather may dictate! We wonder if they can cut loose or pull in their balloon cables at will.

Many species of spiders spin a case for holding their eggs, and some carry this about with them until the young are hatched.

189 A most fascinating tale would unfold could we discover all the uses of cobweb when the spiders themselves are through with it. Certain it is that our ruby-throated humming bird robs many webs to fasten together the plant down, wood pulp, and lichens which compose her dainty nest.

Search the pond and you will find another member of the spider family swimming about at ease beneath the surface, thoroughly aquatic in habits, but breathing a bubble of air which he carries about with him. When his supply is low he swims to a submarine castle of silk, so air-tight that he can keep it filled with a large bubble of air, upon which he draws from time to time.

And so we might go on enumerating almost endless uses for the web which is Nature's gifts to these little waifs, who ages ago left the sea and have won a place for themselves in the sunshine among the butterflies and flowers.

THE FAIRY SPINNER

(SOUTHERN TALE)

Many years ago there lived at a swamp's edge a tiny fairy who occupied her time in spinning, and made the most beautiful and delicate fabrics imaginable.

Her wheel whirled so fast that it was nothing but a blur such as a fly's wings make when he is tangled in a flower, and her spindle was the sting of a bumble-bee—her uncle—who had left it to her, for any good use in amends for a life so grouchy that none of the other creatures would have anything to do with him.

Still, one inhabitant of the swamp was worse than the bee, and the fairy was mightily disturbed when she discovered that he had taken up his abode in the very next bush. He was an enormous spider, big as a bird and hideously gorgeous with red, blue, and yellow. He took some pride in himself as a spinner, but when he saw the shining tissue that the fairy was weaving he realized that his own art was cheap and poor in comparison and he was jealous and determined to destroy her. She caught up her wheel and spindle and ran with the spider in pursuit. She asked the mouse for shelter, but he was afraid, and shut the door. She begged the toad to protect her, but he only ran out his tongue. Finally a fire-fly came along, with his lantern lit. He saw the fairy; he saw the spider, and, calling to the fairy to follow, he flew with her across the field, lighting the way, for it was now night. They soon reached a bush which bore a handsome pink blossom.

"Jump into the flower," commanded the fire-fly. Still clutching her wheel, the fairy put her last strength into a spring and alighted in the heart of the blossom. The spider was close upon her, but as he put his ugly claw on the lower petal to draw himself up after her, she gave him such a stab in the leg with her spindle that he lost his hold and fell to the ground. In another second the flower closed over the fairy, gathering its petals so tightly that the spider could not get in. He wove his web about it, believing that he would catch her when she ventured out in the morning. But when morning came she did not appear. The spider kept watch, but finally the petals dropped to the earth and when he saw no fairy he knew it was all up, so he bit his own body and died. But the fairy was not dead. She remained snuggled in the little ball that the plant put out behind the blossom and in a few days the ball opened and all the beautiful fabric she had been spinning while in hiding poured out in a tassel of snowy white. And men wove the threads to make garments for themselves, and they bless the fairy of the cotton plant and are glad when she escapes the weevil as well as the spider.

MOTHER SPIDER

FRANCES GILLESPY WICKES

It was a beautiful day in midsummer. The meadow was alive with busy little people astir in the bright sunlight. A long line of ants came crawling down the path carrying provisions to their home under the elm tree; and an old toad came hopping down through the grass, blinking in the warm sun. Just a little higher up the bees were droning drowsily as they flew from flower to flower; and above them all, seeming almost in the blue sky, a robin was calling to his mate.

Pretty soon Mrs. Spider came down the path. She seemed to be in a great hurry. She looked neither to the right nor to the left, but kept straight ahead, holding tightly to a little white bag which she carried in her mouth. She was just rushing past Mr. Toad when a big black beetle came humping by, stumbled against Mrs. Spider, and knocked the bag out of her mouth.

In an instant Mrs. Spider pounced down upon him, and, though he was so much bigger than she, he tumbled over on his back. While he was trying to kick himself right side up once more, Mrs. Spider made a quick little dash, took up her bag, and scuttled off through the grass.

"Well, I never," said Grasshopper Green, who was playing see-saw on a blade of grass.

"No, nor I," grumbled Mr. Beetle, as he wriggled back to his feet. "I didn't want her bag. She needn't have made such a fuss."

"She must have had something very fine in that bag," said Grasshopper Green, "for she was so frightened when she dropped it. I wonder what it was"—and he balanced himself on his grass blade until a stray breeze blew him off, and then he straightway forgot about Mrs. Spider altogether.

Two weeks after this Grasshopper Green started out for a little exercise after breakfast. Just as he reached the edge of the brook he saw Mrs. Spider coming toward him. She was moving quite slowly, and no longer carried the little white bag. As she came nearer, he could see that she had something on her back.

"Good morning, neighbor," called Grasshopper Green. "May I help you carry your things?" "Thank you," she said, "but they wouldn't stay with you, even if they could stay on when you give such great jumps."

"They!" cried Grasshopper Green. And then, as he came nearer, he saw that the things on Mrs. Spider's back were wee little baby spiders.

"Aren't they pretty children?" she asked proudly. "I was so afraid that something would happen to my eggs that I never let go of the bag once, except when that stupid Mr. Beetle knocked it out of my mouth."

"Oh, ho," said Grasshopper Green, "so that was what frightened you so! Your bag was full of eggs! And, now, you are going to carry all these children on your back? Doesn't it tire you dreadfully?"

"I don't mind that a bit," said Mrs. Spider, "if only the children are well and safe. In a little while, you know, they will be able to run about by themselves, and then we shall be so happy here in the meadow grass. Oh, it's well worth the trouble, neighbor Grasshopper."

"Yes," said Grasshopper Green, "I have a dozen wee boys of my own at home; and that reminds me that it is time to go home to breakfast! Good-bye, neighbor. I hope the children will soon be running about with you. You certainly are taking good care of them. Good-bye."

Then home he went; and the proud, happy mother Spider kept on her way to hunt for a breakfast for the babies she loved so well.

I chatter over stony ways
  In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
  I babble on the pebbles.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
  Among the skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeams dance
  Against my sandy shallows.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

One night, long, long ago when the Moon of Flowers shone softly on the prairie a group of Indian youths sitting in a circle on the grass were talking about the stars. One of the braves, a young chieftain, gazed intently toward the south. On a wooded hill back of his wigwam twinkled a star which was the brightest he had ever seen.

"Surely the star has a message for the Red Men. Who can read it?" the watchers asked each other.

Each night during the beautiful Moon of Flowers the star grew more and more radiant until its glorious light filled the southern sky, but not one of the Indian youths had been able to explain the meaning of the light.

One night after the Moon of Flowers had given her place in Sky Land to the Hot Moon the chief 200
dreamed that a beautiful maiden stood by his side and said, "Young brave, how beautiful your world is when the Summer Queen reigns. Great stretches of prairie glisten with dandelions and red lilies; butterflies flit about in the sunlight; gentle breezes touch the forest leaves and they sing soft answers to the rapture of the birds; little children shout for joy in merry laughter. I long to live among you. Ask your wise men how I may become a part of this beauty, and how I may add to the children's happiness."

Then the young chief awakened. He sprang to his feet, called his braves together in the council-lodge and told them his dream.

"It's the message of the radiant star," they said. "Let us smoke the pipe of peace as a sign of our welcome."

Accordingly a band of young braves led by the chieftain climbed the wooded hill and smoked a pipe of peace filled with sweet-scented herbs. Then they stretched forth their hands towards the star and bade welcome to her. At the close of their ceremonies the light grew more luminous than ever before and the braves knew their welcome was understood. They walked back to the village 201
and the star followed them all the way, and shone over their wigwams until daybreak.

At night the chief dreamed that the beautiful maiden stood again by his side. "I'm coming to dwell among your people," she said. "I'm wondering what form I shall take in order to add to the children's joy."

"They love to hear the birds sing," said the chief.

But the maiden shook her head. "I shall not live in the tree-tops," she answered.

"Choose your own way to live, Star-Maiden," said the chief.

"I shall live among you as a flower," she said. "Surely the children's hearts are gladdened by the blossoms of the earth."

"They are, indeed," declared the chief. "The mountain-rose is wondrously beautiful."

"Oh, but it is too far away from the children," sighed the maiden.

"The prairie dandelion makes our little ones clap their hands in glee," suggested the chief.

The maiden thought awhile; then she said, "The buffalo's hoof often crushes the prairie 202
dandelion."

The chief was sorely puzzled. Finally he said, "You would be safe from harm if you should choose the rocky cliffs for your blooming place."

But the maiden said, "The children seldom climb the cliffs. I must live where the children can see me."

Suddenly her face brightened and she said, "I know! I know! I'll live in the clear streamlet and bloom on its surface. I shall feel soft breezes blow and hear the birds sing. In the branches which bend over me the warblers will build their nests. The children will play on the banks, and they will touch me with their little hands as they glide safely along in their canoes. Look for me in the streamlet."

Then the young brave awakened. He sprang up and walked to a clear stream which flowed near the Indian village. On the waters floated beautiful white blossoms with delicate waxen leaves. Hundreds of lovely water-lilies were waiting there to surprise the Indian children and bring added joy into their lives.

THE TALE OF TWO TAILS

MARY H. WILSON

"Taddypole and Pollywog
Lived together in a bog;
Here you see the very pool
Where they went to summer school.

"By and by—'tis true, though strange,
O'er them came a wondrous change;
Here you see them on a log,
Each a most decided Frog."

MOTHER'S PORTFOLIO.

The little pond behind the machine-shop was full of tadpoles—wee fellows—all head and tail. Jolliest of these were Taddypole and Pollywog, two little cousins, who spent their time in countless swimming matches or games of hide-and-seek among the stones which bordered the pond.

Barefooted boys and girls peeped over the edge of the water to watch the tadpoles darting hither and thither; then, with merry shouts, returned to their own play.

Taddy's and Pollie's round eyes watched them curiously. Sometimes when the landbabies waded in the shallow water these tiny water-babies played fearlessly around their feet, nibbling their toes or playing leapfrog over them.

So they passed merry days and when the twilight came, Taddy and Pollie were ready to listen to the band concert. This, unfortunately, was given on land, so the little tadpoles could not be present, but from the water they could catch glimpses of Father Frog booming away on his big bass drum, and hear the sweet chirping chorus of the tiny frog violinists in the marsh near by.

"Oh, Pollie," cried Tadpole, "if we could only go to the concert! Why, I'd be willing to give up hide-and-seek for a week just to get a little nearer to the music."

"I know," said Pollywog gloomily. "I want to go myself, the very worst kind of way. There's no use wishing, though, for we have no clothes that would be suitable. Only green silk dress suits with polka dots are worn this year. Besides, we can't stand it out of the water. It's too warm or something, I don't know just what, but I always feel half smothered if I try."

"Besides," reflected Taddy, "we haven't been invited. Only musicians are asked, and we can't sing, you know."

Splash! Ker-Chunk! Father Frog hopped into the water, then out again on a broad stone, where he began thundering a bass solo:

"Come along, come along,
Come along!"

"Oh, how I wish we could!" cried the little tadpoles, feeling that this was a personal invitation. They swam as close as possible to the stone, and gazed admiringly at the great singer.

"Could what?" grumbled Father Frog.

"Wish we could go to the concert."

"Ker-chug!" answered Father Frog.

It sounded very much like a hoarse chuckle. "Why don't you go?"

"No invitation."

"No dress suit."

"Can't breathe out of the water."

The tadpoles' voices were very mournful as they gave their reasons.

"I invite you," said Father Frog, "to the July concert three weeks from to-day. Your dress suits will be ready, and as far as breathing is concerned it's all practice. Would you believe it?" he said in a hoarse whisper, "I couldn't stay out of the water very well myself at one time, but I practised breathing every day, until now it is the easiest thing in the world. But speaking of practice making perfect reminds me I must rehearse my song for the concert.

"Come along, come along,
Come along!"

"Let's go down in the sand," whispered Pollie. "I can always think better down there; and, really, this is all so surprising I must think it over. Oh, Taddy, do you think we could truly go to the concert?"

Taddy swished his tail and dived down without answering, feeling this to be too much of a problem for a tadpole to decide.

"It's very strange," said Taddy a few days later; "it certainly seems as if we were getting legs—what use have tadpoles for them? We only need our strong tails for swimming."

"Taddy," cried Pollie, "there's something still stranger. Our tails are shrinking. If they don't stop they will disappear, and then what could we do?"

"Grr-nm, grr-nm!" sounded Father Frog's hoarse voice. "Getting ready for the concert, I see! Well, when you lose those ridiculous tails you will look much better."

"Lose them!" exclaimed the tadpoles; "and what do you think we could do without them?" But

Father Frog had disappeared, leaving only the echo of his "Come along."

"I feel as if something strange were about to happen," said Pollie. "I'm tired of tag and hide-and-seek; let's think of some new game."

"We might practice breathing, as Father Frog advised," suggested Taddy; "let's go to the top of the water and see who can keep his head out the longer." 208

This new game interested the tadpoles very much, and in a week's time they began really to enjoy the air.

"I can stay out a long while now," announced Taddy triumphantly, "and since my front legs appeared I can jump quite high."

"Our tails are quite gone," said Pollie, "and I don't know but that it is an improvement. I think I like legs better than tails, and hopping is much more fun than swimming. Some day I mean to hop up on that wet stone where Father Frog sits so often. Wouldn't he be surprised to see me there?"

"What fun!" exclaimed Taddy. "Try it now. There, you did it! Oh, Pollie, how fine you look! Do you like it up there? I'm coming, too, Pollie. Hurrah!"

"Ho, ho!" chuckled Father Frog from the land. "Are you ready for the concert, little frogs?"

Taddy and Pollie looked at each other in astonishment.

"Are we frogs?" they cried. 209

"Why, yes."

"Oh, Taddy, and you have your green suit!"

"So have you, Pollie."

"Why, I shouldn't be surprised at anything now, not even if we could sing. Let's try," and both little frogs lifted up their voices and sang.

"Che-weep, che-weep, che-weep."

They looked so droll, and sang with such a funny chirp, that Father Frog fell off the bank splash into the water with laughter.

Taddy and Pollie didn't mind this in the least, for they were sure that Che-weep was the most beautiful song in the world.

And this is the way Taddypole and Pollywog lost their tails, and gained their voices in time for the July concert.

ORIGIN OF BULLFROGS

Once upon a time in a mountain valley there was a group of Indian lodges where the people dwelt very happily. It was an excellent place for a village. In the thick forests which covered the mountain slopes there was abundance of game, and through the valley flowed a sparkling clear brook fed by a full torrent and many slender rills which leaped down the wild mountain sides. So pure and delicious was the water from this stream that the Indians felt sure it was a gift to them from the Great Spirit.

Each day it was the custom for the Indian maidens to take their kettles to the brook and fill them with water. They were much surprised one summer morning to note that the stream was not so deep as usual.

"Is it because we have had little rain lately?" they asked each other.

They reported what they had noticed to the villagers who said, "Our brook will not fail us. The weather has been very dry of late; but soon we shall have plenty of rain which will swell the waters of our precious stream."

But, strange to say, the rain did not deepen the brook and when the Indians saw that the water was becoming shallower each day they were very much alarmed. One morning they found that the brook and the waters which fed it had entirely disappeared. With sad hearts they gazed at the bed of shining pebbles which marked the course of their beloved stream.

"Is the Great Spirit angry with us?" they whispered. "What have we done to make him take away our life-giving water?"

The chief called the men to the council lodge in order to determine the best thing to do.

Now it happened that the people of the happy village had often heard rumors of another group of Indians who lived higher up on the mountain. After much deliberation a wise man rose in the council lodge and said, "Let us send one of our fleet-footed braves on a journey to discover this village which we have heard about but whose people we know not. Perhaps they can tell him what has stopped the flow of waters. Let the runner follow the bed of the mountain stream which leaped most willingly to our precious brook."

Accordingly a swift runner was chosen to search for the other Indian village. He was advised to follow a trail which led to the source of the brook. It was a hazardous journey up the slippery path of the mountain slope which was covered with dense thickets of tangled underbrush and forest trees.

For three days the young brave pursued his task of climbing the mountain. At last he came to a small stretch of level plain and there he saw a group of wigwams. Back of the village the runner could see a clear stream of water whose course further down the mountain had been stopped by a large dam which checked the water and turned it into a great pond. Several Indians came out of their wigwams and gazed coldly at the stranger. Not a word of welcome did they give.

"Why have you done this mischief?" asked the runner, pointing to the dam. "Know you not that this stopping of the mountain brook has cut off the supply of water to us who live in the valley below?"

"The dam was built by the order of our chief," replied one of the men.

"Lead me to him that I may tell him the misery he has caused my people. Surely he will be merciful," said the runner.

But no one offered to lead the way. In a little while one of them pointed to the pond and said, "The chief lives there."

The runner went quickly to the edge of the pond and there, lying in the mud, he saw a monster whose bloated body of giant size was half hidden. His great yellow eyes bulged out like knots on a tree-trunk; his mouth reached almost from ear to ear. At the approach of the Indian this creature aroused himself and stretched out his great broad skinny feet.

In a hoarse frog-like voice the monster chief croaked, "What do you want? What do you want?"

"I came to see why the brook which brought our village water has dried up. It is because you have built a dam to stop its course," said the runner.

"What do I care?" lazily replied the chief. "What do I care?"

"We cannot live without the water from our brook," pleaded the Indian.

"What do I care?" again croaked the monster. "If you want water go somewhere else! Go somewhere else!"

"My people are dying from thirst! No one may rightfully keep for his own use the water from a mountain stream. The Great Spirit sent the brook to our village!" said the runner earnestly.

The monster rolled his great yellow eyes for several minutes. Then he said, "Shoot a hole in the wall of the dam with one of your arrows. Your people may have as much water as will flow through the arrow hole."

Very swiftly the runner sped an arrow. It pierced the wall and a slender stream of water trickled through the opening.

"Begone!" croaked the monster when he saw the water flowing. "Begone! Begone!"

Feeling encouraged at the hope that enough water would flow to supply the needs of his people the runner hastened back to the village. When he told what had happened there was great rejoicing, especially when the Indians saw a slender stream of water flowing into the brook's dry bed. But, alas! The water did not continue to flow. In a few weeks the people were again suffering from thirst. A council of all the men in the village was held and earnestly they implored the Great

Spirit to help them.

After much deliberation it was decided that the bravest man among them should go to the Frog Chief, and challenge him to do battle for the mountain water. "Let us hope that our warrior will stay this monster whose selfishness is bringing destruction to us," said one of the leaders.

Many of the young men offered to go, each declaring his willingness to do battle, even at the greatest risk, with the monster chief. While several braves were clamoring for this great privilege of fighting for the good of the village, there appeared in the doorway of the council lodge a warrior who was marvelous to see. His flashing eyes were encircled with green rings; his cheeks were as red as blood. Great clam shells hung from his ears, and tall eagle plumes nodded on his head. It was Glooscap, the spirit who brought great blessings to the Indians and who sometimes took human shape in order to help them.

The silence of the council was broken by this mighty warrior who said, "I will undertake to do battle with the monster who has stopped the flow of water to your brook. He shall account to me for this wicked deed."

Then swiftly he departed and followed the mountain trail to the upper village.

In a short time he reached the place and sat down near the group of wigwams to rest. The people saw him, but they offered him neither food nor drink.

"Fetch me water to quench my thirst," said Glooscap to a small boy who came near.

After a long while the lad returned with a drinking vessel half filled with muddy water. Glooscap took the cup, emptied the contents on the grass and said, "I want clean water from the mountain brook."

"I cannot give it to you," said the lad. "Our chief drinks all the clean water."

"Then lead me to your chief," said Glooscap. "He shall give me pure water."

Quaking with fear, the Indian boy led Glooscap to the pond where the monster chief lay sunning himself.

"What do you want?" croaked the yellow-eyed creature.

"I've come to you for a drink of pure water," said Glooscap.

"Go somewhere else! Go somewhere else!" said the monster hoarsely.

The mighty Glooscap now rushed forward with his spear, thrust it through the chief's great body, and lo! a stream of water rushed forth with such force that it broke the dam and flowed down the mountain in a clear, sparkling torrent. The monster chief had swallowed all the pure water of the mountain streams.

Then Glooscap rose to a giant's height, caught the monster in his powerful hand and squeezed him with all his might. When he loosened his grasp there in his hand was a great bullfrog with crumpled back, yellow, bulging eyes, wide mouth, and broad, skinny feet. Glooscap flung the creature back into the pond and ever since that day croaking bull-frogs may be found in muddy streams.

Through leaves of the nodding trees
Where blossoms sway in the breeze,
Pink bag-pipes make for the bees,
  Whose slogan is droning and drawling,
Where columbine scatters its bells
And the wild bleeding-heart its shells
O'er mosses and rocks of the dells
  The brook of the forest is calling.

You can hear it under the hill
When the wind in the wood is still,
And, strokes of a fairy drill,
  Sounds the bill of the yellow-hammer.
By the Solomon's seal it slips
Cohosh and the grass that drips
Like the sound of an Undine's lips
  Is the sound of its falls that stammer.

MADISON CAWEIN.

THE GRUBBIEST GRUB

J. Bevan

"There's no use trying," said the newest newt; "you'll never be anything *but* grubby."

The newest newt lived at the bottom of the garden pond. He was a very elegant newt. The orange spots on his waistcoat were the brightest to be seen in all the garden.

The grubbiest grub was not elegant. He was unquestionably the very grubbiest thing in the garden pond. However, he had ambitions.

"But there's no use trying," said the newest newt again. "I myself saw you fall from a willow leaf not so long since, and had ideas about you. I thought, perhaps, you might be some new kind of egg and hatch into a royal turtle. But I watched you, and you didn't hatch—you grew just like a tadpole. Only you didn't grow even into a frog."

The grubbiest grub said nothing. His heart grew a little bitter as he thought, "Not even into a frog."

"But cheer up," said the newest newt, "there's mud enough at the bottom of the garden spot for all of us. And it's not a bad place—aristocratic turtles in the neighbourhood, and I live here."

He was off with an extra swirl of his extra shiny tail. He was due at the turtles' ball at sunset. He was always being invited somewhere because of the orange on his waistcoat.

The grubbiest grub was never invited anywhere, and he didn't look like anything that anybody had ever seen, and didn't seem related to anybody. And his heart rebelled.

"Up above the pond there is light," he said. "I know that, and there is some strange thing—tall, and coloured like—like——" He couldn't think what. He had only pond grass and pond creatures to compare it to. "Like——" A little fish swam slowly past him, and, as it turned, the long light, sifting through the water from the sunset, caught colours on its body. "Like that!" said the grubbiest grub.

The fish was swaying slowly. Then it saw the grubbiest grub. "Good evening," said the sparkling fish; "and isn't there a party?"

"To be sure," answered the grubbiest grub, "but you see I'm not invited."

The sparkling fish looked again. "Why," she said, "I thought you belonged to that set of newts and turtles, and the better class of pond frogs. Anyway, why aren't you invited?"

"I'm far too grubby," said the grubbiest grub; "didn't you know?"

The little silver fish swam slowly around the grub.

"I think you belong above," she said at last; "don't you ever want to go up there?"

"I have dreamed of a thing gleaming like—like——"

"Rainbows," said the shining fish.

"Rainbows," repeated the grubbiest grub, "and I have wanted so to find one. But I never could tell anyone. The newt would have died laughing."

"So you're afraid of being laughed at!" said the fish. "I think you *do* belong to the turtle set." And she swam away.

Suddenly something seemed to sting and burn into the heart of the grubby grub. The look the silver fish had given him was worse than the laughter of any number of newts. "I *will* go and find the thing I dreamed," he said.

The grubbiest grub started slowly up a mass of tangled roots and thence on to a long, thin stem. The wave that rippled round the stem saw the grub coming. "You don't belong here," he said.

"Please," entreated the grub, and his poor grubby face looked so sad that the wave paused a moment before he brushed him off.

"Well—what do you want here?" asked the wave. "We can't have grubs eating out our lily hearts, you know."

The grub took a deep breath, and clung on tightly to the lily stem. He was terribly afraid of being laughed at, but he thought of the silver fish and the pain that was worse than any laughter. "I don't want to eat your lily's heart," he said; "I'm only looking for a thing I—dreamed."

Strange, the wave didn't laugh. He only looked more closely at the grubby grub. "Oh, you're *that* kind," he said. "Sure enough. Well, go along. Take the first turning by the moss roots, and good luck to you."

The grubbiest grub went on. He found moving upward easier as he grew more used to it. At the place where the moss roots clung most closely to the lily stem, he turned off, then along the moss roots to the edge of the pond, and on up to a broad shaft of green pointing still higher.

The grubbiest grub paused. He was very, very tired, and everything was new and strange to him. He had never breathed the air before, nor seen the stars.

About him were many voices, and there were points of light and trails, and flashes of gold, such as the silver fish had scattered in the water. There was darkness, too, reaching beneath to clutch him.

The grubbiest grub clung tightly to the shaft of green. "What am I doing here? What am I doing here?" he asked himself, and his back ached and his sides ached, and his heart was numb with aching.

"Why, you are waiting for the morning," said a little voice beside him. "Don't be frightened. I've seen your kind before. You came up from the mud, and if you wait till daylight you'll have wings and fly away. The children in the big house will clap their hands and say, "Look, look, another dragon-

fly! Your wings are like rainbows."

"You can't be laughing at me," said the grubbiest grub; "your voice is kind."

"Why should I laugh?" said the little voice. "I am one of the grass-blade spirits, and I love all things with wings."

"But I have no wings," said the grubby grub, "and it seems darker."

"No, no," said the grass-blade spirit. "It's only the moon gone for a moment. But, oh!" she cried, as the moon flickered through on the broad green shaft again, "your shell has broken open."

And sure enough, there sat a pale wisp of a dragon-fly in the moonlight. "But I have no wings," he 226
cried in disappointment. "I cannot fly."

"Only wait," said the grass-blade spirit, and he waited in eager, trembling excitement.

He waited while the stars turned round the heavens and the moon sank.

Then his heart lifted up, and he felt his wings, and he flew.

He flew, trembling, quivering, white but touched with iridescent colour, on, on above the pointed shaft, on still in the dawn.

The grass-blade spirit watched. "Yes! yes!" he cried from below; "splendid—O beautiful spirit—but higher!"

Higher he went, and then he sank exhausted.

"You have found your dream," cried the grass-blade spirit, as the dragon-fly felt the warmth about him.

He opened his eyes. He saw blue and gold and yellow of sunlight flashing in the dawn. About him was fragrance and rest and peace.

"I love you," said the iris flower, where he had fallen; "and I have waited for you—it is day." 227

So the poor grub, with the funny, blinking eyes and the puffy face had fallen on the petals of a great sweet iris flower. Of course, as you know, every flower is the house of a fairy. And this house was a palace of blue flowers veined in gold, and blue fringes and tassels in the inmost inner room, where the wonderful fairy lived who was the flower princess.

The iris-flower princess rose from her couch of lavender and gold. It was then that she said, "I have waited for you—it is day."

And it was day, sparkling and gleaming on all the grass-blades.

The grubbiest grub—who was a dragon-fly prince now, in green velvet and a silken cloak, shimmering like wings behind him—and the flower princess stood on the flower palace steps, and looked out across the grass-blades.

All the little grass-blade spirits cried, "All hail, Prince Dragon-Fly!" and the flower princess—who would be queen now of all the winged folk as well—called to the grass-blade spirit who had urged Prince Dragon-Fly to find her. And as the little grass-blade fairy knelt there at her feet, she 228
proclaimed him "Knight of the Grass-Blades, Keeper of the Dewdrops, and Lord High Admiral of the Garden Pond."

The folk at the bottom of the garden pond, however, went on just the same in spite of the New Dewdrop—High Lord, Grass-Blade Admiral. In fact, they didn't even know that there was a new admiral, and they never dreamed of the great coronation ceremony that was to make the poor little despised grubby thing the king of the winged creatures. They just thought about themselves as usual, and the success of the last ball, and the aristocratic turtles, and the extra shiny mud floor where the newest newt with the orange spots on his waistcoat had danced so beautifully with Sir Fat-Frog's fattest daughter.

To-day I saw the dragon-fly
Come from the wells where he did lie;
An inner impulse rent the veil
Of his old husk! from head to tail
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

He dried his wings: like gauze they grew;
Through crofts and pastures wet with dew
A living flash of light he flew.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

Out of a tuft a little lark 232
Went higher up than I could mark,
His little throat was all one thirst
To sing until his heart should burst,
To sing aloft in golden light
His song from blue air out of sight.

JOHN MASEFIELD.

When birdies sing on every tree.
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the skylarks sing with me,
O what sweet company.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

HOW WOODPECKER CHANGED HIS COLOURS

(MICMAC LEGEND)

Long, long ago Woodpecker wore a plain suit of dark grey feathers with a few white patches on it. He often looked admiringly at the bright colours which many of the birds wore, and sometimes his gay companions taunted him about his plain clothes. Then Grey Woodpecker would leave the woods for awhile and flit about an Indian village.

Here he made friends with an Indian girl whose name was Pretty-Dancing-Maiden who was the pride of her people. There was no sport she loved so much as dancing, and the graceful movements of her slender figure and dainty feet made all the people call her the best dancer in the village.

Whenever this maiden dressed for a dance Grey Woodpecker helped her paint her face with many colours. When she was ready he would hop a little distance off and, with his head on one side, say, "Pretty-Dancing-Maiden is more beautiful than any bird of the forest."

One day after she had finished painting he looked admiringly at her but said nothing. The maiden laughed merrily and asked, "What colour needs deepening, Grey Woodpecker?"

"Red! *Red! Red!*" was his answer, for the bird loved the brilliant colour best which the maiden used on her cheeks and smiling lips.

Then Pretty-Dancing-Maiden always took up the bits of wood which she used for brushes, dipped them into red paint, and again touched daintily her cheeks and lips. And with a merry good-bye to Grey Woodpecker she ran lightly out of the wigwam to the dance.

It happened one evening after the maiden had gayly dressed for the dance and waved good-bye to her little feathered friend, the bird looked intently at the bits of wood which the maiden had used to put on the beautiful red paint. In a little while his eyes twinkled merrily and he said, "I'll make myself beautiful too! I'll use Pretty-Dancing-Maiden's red paint brushes and brighten my suit of plain grey and white."

He took up the wooden brushes and rubbed the red paint over his ears. Two brilliant stripes he made, for there was plenty of the colour on the bits of sticks. How happy he was!

"The birds of the forest shall never again call me a bird of plain clothes," said he.

And ever since that far-off day the woodpeckers have worn red stripes over their ears.

A RETORT FROM THE CATBIRD

I heard the Catbird in the bush
  With breathless ecstasy;
No bobolink or fluttering thrush
  Made carol sweet as he.

It bubbled like a mountain rill
  Drenching the weary day,
With eddying turn and rippling trill,
  A magic roundelay.

I heard the Catbird once again.
  A harsh, discordant note,
Which pierced the shuddering ear with pain,
  Came from the selfsame throat.

O bird perverse! That heavenly voice
  Tuned to so sharp a key!
Why cease to make the air rejoice
  Debasing minstrelsy?

Why not be ever at your best?
  Again the peevish mew
Answering, accusing me with zest:
  "Are you?" he cried, "are y-o-u?"

Abbie Farwell Brown.

WOODPECKER LIFE

MARGARET COULSON WALKER

On the thirteenth of July a red-mutched woodpecker knocked on the stricken bough of a lofty elm to crave of the Dryad within hospitality for a season. Yes, her wish would be granted, but only on condition that she would dig out a shelter for herself there in the hard, dry wood.

What had gone wrong in the woodpecker family that she was in need of shelter this late in the year? Earlier in the summer she and her mate had burrowed out a comfortable home in a great oak tree not two hundred yards away. Then they were on the best of terms and had relieved each other at the task of digging out their dwelling place. Twenty or twenty-five minutes at a time was thought long enough for either of them to devote to so labourious a task in the springtime; then the other spent an equal time at the work, while the one off duty hurried away to partake of refreshments or to seek rest in change of occupation.

Then there seemed to be some joy in their lives, for when they had occasionally found time for recreation, they had chased each other around the tree trunks and given utterance to their enjoyment of the game in many a peal of cackling laughter. Near the base of a tree the game began, and, spirally round and round its trunk, they pursued each other, the one in the lead every now and then casting a challenging look behind, then hurrying upward faster than before. Their playtimes were brief, however, for the unfinished burrow was calling.

When this was completed and later a half dozen or more eggs were laid, though madam spent most of her time in dispensing warmth to them, her mate also did his share. Together they had devoted their energies to providing for the little ones that pecked their way out of the round, white eggs. Many long journeys were they compelled to take, and many were the hours spent in search of suitable food for their hungry offspring; but on their return their throats were always full to the brim with the nourishment which they pumped into infant throats as, hanging head downward over them, they clung with their claws to the entrance of their home. And when, after a time, the chicks were old enough to scramble about on the trunk of the tree outside their home, a wheezy call from one of them was enough to bring one or both of the parents, with throat distended with the best the wood afforded, to minister to their wants. Together they had driven away the over-solicitous squirrels and meddlesome sparrows who came to visit them. Together they had guided their asthmatic young family about the wood, teaching them by example, if not by precept, where food was to be found, and how to meet the dangers they were likely to encounter at any moment.

The accidents of nature had depleted the brood, till now but two of them were left. A ball of baby feathers in the home of an owl living in the wood told the story of the passing of one of them; the gladness which attended the home-coming of a foraging mother squirrel marked the taking off of another; so they had gone, till only these two remained, wheezy and exacting.

Of late the care of them had fallen mainly on the father, who picked up a living for them as best he could. At times he seemed to try to get away from them—a futile effort, for when they did not follow his undulating flight in their awkward up-and-down fashion, they went in search of him if he was gone a few minutes overtime.

Here on the thirteenth of July was the mother seeking shelter away from her former home. Had there been a family disagreement? Was the home-nest no longer large enough for the parent birds and their now almost grown-up family? Was she planning for a new brood? Surely not! It would be impossible to rear in a single season two broods requiring so much care.

Whatever her purpose, here she was, drawing her plans on the under side of the dry old bough. Soon she began to peck out an entrance, and it was not long before the chips were flying in every direction. More than an hour she worked, then flew to the dead top of a tree across the way, where she sat for a brief time resting and sunning herself. Twice she left her perch to dart out after passing insects, then returned to her labour. Occasionally she swung around to the top side of the dead branch, and tore off bits of bark either for the purpose of seeing if the hole was going clear through or for securing the insect fare lurking under it. This part of the work continued at intervals, till the bark was removed from all the excavated portion of the bough. All day, until about five o'clock, she spent at her task with but little rest, then there was a long visit to the rest perch in the neighbouring treetop.

The early morning hours were probably devoted to commissary tours; for it was almost eight o'clock when she appeared on the scene of her labours and again began to wield the pick. About ten o'clock her spouse appeared and arranged himself comfortably on the same limb about a foot away from the hole she was digging, but not by so much as a single stroke did he assist her. Soon a wheezy, whistling cry called him to duties as insistent as home building, and he departed.

After watching the progress of woodpecker affairs for some time, a dweller in the house under the tree decided to lend a hand. A worm-eaten hitching-post stood near, on which was placed pieces of bread for the hungry little wielder of the pick. This not only satisfied her wants, but served also to bring her mate and offspring near occasionally. At first the young members of the family refused to pick up this food set before them, but, instead, clung to a neighbouring tree and called vociferously for help. Then the father took the bits of bread and pushed them far down into the screaming throats. The young Romulus must have possessed wonderful powers of endurance if the woodpeckers of old ministered to him as vigorously in response to his infantile wails as the woodpeckers of to-day respond to the screaming demands of their own offspring. How gentle the wolf must have seemed in comparison!

Several times the young woodpeckers followed the father to the limb in which the mother was

chiseling a home. Together they watched her work, but during the first three days seemed to take no interest whatever in the hole she was making. Then the father went in and examined the opening, but flew away without giving any real aid. And all through the work his assistance seemed to be limited to inspection.

In her digging, the mother woodpecker clung with her claws to the opening of the burrow, and, head downward, pecked rapidly. Sometimes she would throw out chips—which were little more than coarse sawdust—after three or four blows; again, she worked for a minute or two, then threw out several billfuls at a time. In throwing out these chips she slipped backward and forward over the lower edge of the opening, after the manner of that old-fashioned toy called a "supple jack." First she threw her chips to one side, then to the other, till the ground beneath the burrow, for a space thirty feet in circumference, was generously sprinkled with them.

Though several persons were watching her, and though squirrels were springing about among the 244
branches, she was not disturbed, but went steadily on with her task. While she was away on short vacations, the wren, dwelling in the porch roof beneath, frequently investigated the hole she was digging—sparrows examined it, and squirrels looked into it, but it was very noticeable that they all had an eye on her return. Once, in her absence, one of her own young woodpeckers scrambled to the edge of the hole, and peeped in for a moment, then scuttled back again to the place where the dead branch joined the trunk of the tree, and, in his usual noisy manner, demanded food.

It was near the end of the third day's labour that the woodpecker was first seen "trying on" her new home. Then she went into it, and, nestling there, with head up for the first time, looked out of the window. Evidently, the pocket was neither deep enough nor wide enough, for after this she worked on both bottom and sides of it, scattering chips as before. The work periods were shorter now and the rests more frequent, showing that her strength was failing. On the afternoon of the fifth day, when the burrow was finished, completely exhausted, she made her way to the roof of the 245
house, where, with wings spread, she lay for more than an hour. Seemingly too tired to reach her usual resting place in the treetop across the way, she lay there gathering strength for the longer flight.

Though the sexes are alike in the redhead family, it was not difficult to distinguish them in this case, for the feathers about the head and neck of the mother were much more worn than those of her less industrious mate. Yet it may be an injustice to him to accuse him of indolence, for was he not purveying to their younglings?—a task which may have taxed his energies to the limit. Perhaps, after all, it was only a case of division of labour.

After the completion of the burrow, though the woodpecker was anxiously watched for, for several days, she was not seen near it again, though the usual bits of bread placed on the hitching-post brought her to its neighbourhood.

The experiment was tried of putting some of the crusts on the top of the post and stuffing others 246
tightly into the large worm-holes. The latter were invariably taken first. Though the young birds came there regularly to be fed, more than a week passed before they made the slightest effort to help themselves. They would cling to the sides of the post, and, with upward-pointing, open bills, whistle asthmatically for the food, which the parents were compelled to place in their throats. Whether it was wilfulness or inability that caused them to act as they did, it was impossible to determine.

The whistling of the young birds, which was once believed to predict rain, or to be a demand for it from a thirsty throat, always precedes or accompanies the taking of food. It is, doubtless, a little more frequent before showers, for at such times the older birds are able to collect more beetles and other insects that come out then from their shelters into the open.

The old belief that woodpeckers are ever athirst because of their inability to drink any save the rain that falls into their open throats or the drops that fall from the leaves, may have some 247
foundation. In the case of this family, though a basin of water was always conveniently near, and though sparrows, robins, bluejays, and wrens constantly patronized it, no woodpecker was ever seen to refresh himself from it—many as there were of them in the vicinity.

When more bread than the four birds could consume was placed in the post, the older ones carried a part of it away—usually the larger pieces on top—for future use, or pounded it tightly into worm-holes in the same post, but never into the ones in which they found it.

Several weeks after the burrow was finished, one evening just about sunset, a redhead was seen peeping from the window in the treetop; then it was drawn back, and again it appeared and was withdrawn to be seen no more during the evening. It was a dormitory, then, that you hollowed out for yourself, was it, my lady?

One morning, near the close of August, it was noticed that the entrance to the lodging was distinctly larger, and that a patch of daylight showed through from the other side. Whether, for some reason, the bird herself had enlarged the opening before departing for the South, or whether 248
this had been done by mischievous squirrels on murder bent, is not known; but certain it is that the red-mutched labourer was gone. Others of her kind lingered in the grove for a week or more, and though food was placed on the accustomed post, neither she nor any of her immediate family appeared to claim it.

When he is gone, the most accomplished songsters are not missed more than the red-headed woodpecker, whose broad patches of clear colour enliven the wood. Though he may no longer assist in the growth of the forests by bringing refreshing showers, as he is said to have done in the long time ago, he certainly is doing much in his own way to preserve them. Well might the ancients have made a god of him. He still possesses one of the gifts which won that honour for him—the power of producing thunder—and in a way that mortals can understand. Hear it rumbling among the dead treetops, as the bird drums rapidly on the dry wood and sets it to vibrating, then quickly lays his

hollow bill against it to add resonance to the peal. Vulcan himself could not have felt greater satisfaction than he, as he stops to listen, in conscious pride over his accomplishment.

Whether he is a god made manifest in feathers, or merely an old woman under a curse, expiating the crime of selfishness in picking up a living where there seems to be no life, and in sharing this scant fare with the hungry, as we see this bird with breast flattened and shoulders bent by hard work, while our sympathies are awakened, we bless the day that gave to the world this tireless little labourer of the woods.

KINGFISHER'S NECKLACE AND RUFFLE

Kingfisher is very proud, indeed, of his white collar and ruffled head-dress, but there was a time in the long, long ago when he had neither of these ornaments. He wore a plain suit of gray-blue feathers and his head was as smooth as a robin's.

In that far-off time Kingfisher lived near a large lake, which was bordered by long stretches of pine trees. He chose this place for a home because he could catch plenty of fish in the clear waters of the lake. Also, he had made a friend of Wolf, who lived with the great spirit, Manabozho, in a bear-skin wigwam, which stood on the shore.

Wolf was a mighty hunter and provided Manabozho with plenty of food. It happened one season that game was scarce in the forest near the wigwam, and Wolf decided to hunt in the woods on the opposite side of the lake.

"Brother Wolf," said Manabozho, "see how dense the pine woods over there are. No hunter has ever ventured into that tangled forest."

"That is why I shall surely find plenty of game there," answered Wolf.

Accordingly, early next morning Wolf ran around the long margin of the lake until he came to the thick forest. He soon caught all the game he could carry, but instead of returning with it to the lodge, he stopped to fish on Big Rock, which jutted out into the lake.

Kingfisher, perched on one of the tall pine trees, called out: "Wolf, do not fish from Big Rock. The sea-serpents are lurking near, and they will catch you."

"I want some fine fish to take to Manabozho," answered Wolf. "I'm not afraid of the sea-ser——!"

He had not finished speaking when, in a very mysterious way, something gave his fishing-line a mighty jerk, and Wolf was pulled headlong into the water.

Manabozho had no game for supper. All night he listened for the footsteps of his faithful hunter, but Wolf did not return to the lodge. In the morning the great spirit began to search for his companion. He traveled all around the long margin of the lake, but not a single trace of Wolf could he find. Near Big Rock, on a tall pine tree, sat Kingfisher. Manabozho had never before spoken to the plain little bird, who was very much surprised when the great spirit said, "Kingfisher, can you tell me what has happened to Manabozho's brother Wolf? I'll give you a beautiful necklace of wampum if you can help me find him."

Kingfisher flew down from the pine tree to a branch near the great spirit and said, "Yesterday I saw your brother Wolf fishing from Big Rock. A sea-serpent pulled him under the water. If you would rescue him you must watch on this side of the lake. When the sun is highest the sea-serpents come to the rocks to sun themselves."

Manabozho was so pleased with the information that he put a necklace of beautiful white wampum around Kingfisher's neck.

"You must not tell the serpents that I am watching for Wolf," said Manabozho.

But Kingfisher was looking in the mirror of the lake, admiring his new necklace, so he did not hear the great spirit's words. Manabozho became suspicious and seized the little bird by the head. Kingfisher wriggled and twisted, and finally freed himself from the hand of the angry Manabozho and flew away. But the feathers on Kingfisher's head were very much ruffled in the struggle, and he has worn them so ever since; also, to this day, he wears Manabozho's gift of the beautiful white necklace.

OWL WISDOM

Frances Wright

Once upon a time the owls were the largest and the most dull and stupid of all the birds of the air. While the eagle soared above the mountain's crest to hail the sun before his rising, and the lark carolled his matin in the blue fields of ether, the owls were snoring; when the thrush and the blackbird, retreating from the heat of noon, filled the deep groves with their melody, the owls snored out the sylvan concert; and when the soft cushat poured his evening tale of love into the ear of his listening mate, the owls were still snoring in their unbroken and dreamless sleep.

It chanced, most naturally, that when towards midnight, the heavy, big-headed creatures half-opened their stupid eyes, and half-stretched first one drowsy pinion and then the other, that their stomachs craved for food; whereupon, after much yawning and stretching, they dragged themselves from their holes and went prowling after bats and mice in the dark. Tired with their hunt, and not over content with their supper, which was both coarse and scanty, they thus laid their heads together, and, however dull by nature, and doubly dulled by sleep, they were for once stimulated by hunger and disappointment to something like ingenuity.

Said an old gray-headed owl: "This barbarous exercise ill suits with my years and my gravity."

"And this barbarous fare," said a pert, idle youngster, "ill suits with the youthful activity of my stomach."

"I'll stake my reputation upon it," said a third, shaking his dull head, "but that proud, self-sufficient gormandizing eagle has eaten a whole sheep for his supper."

"And I'll stake mine," yawned a fourth, "that his first cousin, the vulture, and his second cousin, the hawk, have feasted; the one on a fat lamb, and the other on a hen and chickens."

"Chut," said the first old grey-beard, "we'll feast ere long on sheep, lamb, hen, chickens, and all; ay! mayhap on the eagle's own little ones, to say nothing of his cousins."

"How so," hooted out the whole junto—"you would not fight the king of birds?"

"Let me alone for that; there are better weapons than beak or talons; and so he and his subjects shall find. But you must all aid in the enterprise."

"If there be no fighting, and not too much labour, and not too much——"

"Peace! there shall be nothing but sleeping!"

"Sleeping?"

"Ay! and some talking. But leave that to me."

Here all the heavy heads poked forward, closing in a circle round their Nestor; while all their great round eyes opened in full stare upon his.

"To-morrow you must all sleep as usual, until I give a long hoot; then you must all open your eyes and observe what shall chance."

Tired with so unusual a debate, all went to sleep accordingly, and snored louder than usual; until, just as the sun had awakened to full life and stir all the feathered tribe, the old owl hooted and screeched forth such a yell, as first terrified and then attracted on wings, spurred by curiosity, though still trembling with fear, every bird of the air from the giant eagle to the diminutive wren.

"A vision! a vision!" cried the owl; and again he screeched and again he hooted, rustling up all his feathers, flapping his wings, blinking his eyes, and tumbling head over tail like a bird distracted.

Every creature present stared and wondered.

"A vision, a vision! A miracle, a miracle!" again shouted the owl.

"I have seen a bird larger than the ostrich and stronger than the eagle. Lightnings flame from his eyes, and thunder roars from his beak. He has spoken; and lo! his command was: *The owls are my servants and to them I make known my will. Let all the birds of the air hearken to their voice. Let them do their bidding, respect their repose, and feed them with the fat of the land; or, behold, I will feed upon them.*"

Thereupon, the owls set up a hoot in chorus, and all the birds scattered to the four winds to collect food for the servants to eat, lest the unseen master should eat them.

From this time forth these stupid owls were deemed the wisest of the birds of the air; they supped every night upon fat yearlings; and when they hooted all the feathered tribe clapped their wings and sang a song of praise.

BIRDS' NESTS

ERNEST INGERSOLL

A bird's nest is a bird's house. Sometimes it is strong, well made and tightly roofed, and sometimes it is not, just as with men's houses. The principal difference between the bird's house and ours is that we build ours to be used all the year round, while the bird prefers to make a new one each summer. There are some birds, such as the fish-hawk, however, that keep the same nest many years in succession, repairing it each spring; and I think more birds would do so were it not that their houses are usually made so slightly that the winter's gales knock them to pieces when the owners are absent at some Southern health resort. This is a pity, too, for many of our commonest nests are exceedingly pretty and call for a great deal of work and care on the part of the builders, whose only tools are their feet and beaks.

Take, for instance, the lovely hammock-like basket, hung by its rim beneath the fork of some low branch, which is made by the little grey, red-eyed vireo, which carols to us all the early summer days from every garden and orchard. Such a nest was hung in a maple close to my porch. The bird had built it within arm's length of where we were constantly passing, yet we never saw it until it was quite finished; and the only way we could get a look at it then was by pulling aside a branch. This care was not taken from fear of us, but in the hope that the cradle would escape the sharp eyes of red squirrels, weasels, bluejays, and other creatures who hunt for and rob birds' nests of eggs and young to get food for themselves. I am happy to say, however, that the vireo's nest was not disturbed.

How to hide their nests safely is the great question in the minds of all the little birds. The big, strong ones do not need to worry about that so much, because they can drive away most robbers; therefore, we find that the hawks and crows, jays, kingbirds, and others able to take care of themselves, usually set their baskets in the crotch of some tree, where they can be seen easily enough, but all nests of this kind are strongly made, and fastened so that the winds shall not rock them out of their places or spill the contents.

But the *little* birds try to hide their homes in various clever ways. A good many seek holes and crannies. The woodpeckers are able to dig these for themselves, for their beaks are like chisels. Others, like the wrens, bluebirds, nuthatches, chicadees, and so forth, find knot-holes, places where a branch has broken off, and various small hollows, in which to make their beds, where the young will be snug in bad weather, and pretty safe from all enemies except snakes.

Others, like the kingfisher, the sand-swallow, and certain sea-birds, make or find holes in earth-banks and rocky cliffs, so that their babies are born in a tiny cave. All of our swallows, before the country was settled by white people, lived in this manner or in hollow trees; but as soon as civilization came those we soon named barn-swallows left the wilds and put their nests under the roofs of barns and other outbuildings. Then some one, remembering the ways of old England, began to put bird-houses in the gardens; and now, in all parts of the United States, you may find those cousins of the swallows, the purple martins, living by the dozen in these lofty little hotels on the top of a pole.

The nests of the cliff-swallows are little jugs of mud, plastered by their bases to the face of the rock. The birds make them by bringing pellets of mud in their bills from some stream-side, and putting them one upon another, until each pair has formed a windowless, bottle-like house, with a front door like the neck of the jug, so small that no big bird can enter it. These are very safe and snug nests, and the birds can sit in their doorways and gossip with each other very sociably, for the nests are crowded together like the houses in a city block. This is the same kind of swallow that now puts its nest in rows along the outside of our barns under the eaves; but often they are mere cups instead of jugs, because the barn roof sheds the rain, and a clay roof is no longer necessary to protect the feather bed inside.

Another one of the small birds that is more and more coming to seek our protection and sympathy is the greenish-brown flycatcher that (as some folks think) calls out her own name every few minutes, *Phoebe, Phoebe*. She makes her home very solidly of mud and moss, lined with horse-hair, and in the old days always rested it on a ledge of rock, as many still do. Most of the phoebes, however, now think it easier and safer to get under a roof, and so they put their mossy cups on the stone piers or supporting timbers of bridges, among the rafters of sheds and porches, and in similar places.

A great number and wide variety of birds make their houses upon the ground. Most of the sea-birds do so—along the ledges of the sea-cliff. Nearly all the water fowl and game birds (except herons) also do so; and most of the ducks and similar birds nestle among the wet reeds of marshes, where their rude bedding is damp all the time and sometimes soaking wet. To keep their eggs warm when they have to leave them for a time, many of the ducks pluck a large quantity of downy feathers from their breasts with which to cover the eggs. The eider of the arctic regions is the foremost in this practice, and the eider-down sold in shops is gathered from their nests; but it is a habit of many other ducks. One of the most interesting of these ground-nest birds is the least bittern, a solitary bird frequenting swamps and marshy places.

Not only the water-birds, however, but some of the smallest and prettiest of our songsters choose to dwell and lay their eggs close to the ground, although they seem to be exposed there to many more dangers than are those in the treetops or elsewhere. None try more anxiously to hide their homes than do these ground-nesters, arching the grasses above them, or building little sheds of leaves to protect and hide the shining eggs. (Adapted.)

HATTO THE HERMIT: THE LEGEND OF A BIRD'S NEST

SELMA LAGERLÖF

Hatto, the hermit, stood in the desert and prayed to God. The storm was on, and his long hair and beard blew about him as wind-whipped grass blows about an old ruin. But he did not brush back the hair from his eyes, nor did he fasten his long beard to his girdle, for his arms were raised in prayer. Since sunrise he had held his gaunt, hairy arms out-stretched toward heaven, as untiring as a tree stretching out its boughs, and thus he would remain until evening. It was a great thing for which he was praying.

He was a man who had suffered much from the wickedness and dishonesty of the world. He himself had persecuted and tortured others, and persecution and torture had been his portion, more than he could endure. Therefore, he had gone forth into the wilderness, had dug himself a cave on the river bank, and had become a holy man whose prayers found hearing at the throne of God.

Hatto, the hermit, stood on the river bank before his cave and prayed the great prayer of his life. He prayed God to send down the Day of Judgment upon this wicked world. He cried to the angels of the trumpets, who are to herald the end of the reign of sin.

Round about him was the wilderness, barren and desolate. But a little up the bank stood an old willow with shortened trunk, which swelled out at the top of a round hump like a queer head, and from it new, freshly green twigs were sprouting. Every autumn the peasants from the unwooded flatlands robbed the willow of her fresh new shoots. But every year the tree put forth new ones, and on stormy days the slender, flexible twigs whipped about the old willow, as hair and beard whipped about Hatto, the hermit.

It was just on this day that a pair of water thrushes, who usually built their nest on the trunk of the old willow between the new twigs, had decided to begin their work. But the wild whipping of the twigs disturbed the birds. They flew up with their bits of dry grass with nothing accomplished. Then it was that they caught sight of old Hatto.

No one now living can picture to himself how moss-grown and dried-up, how gnarled and black and generally unlike a human being, such an old desert hermit can become. His skin clung so close to forehead and cheekbones that his head looked like a skull, and only a tiny gleam down in the depth of his eyeballs showed that there was still life in him. The dried-up muscles gave no curve to the body; the outstretched naked arms were merely a couple of narrow bones, covered with hard, wrinkled, bark-like skin. He wore an old black cloak, clinging close to his body. He was tanned brown by the sun and black with dirt. His hair and beard alone were of a lighter shade, for rain and sunshine had faded them to the grey-green hue of the under side of willow leaves.

The birds, flying about uneasily and seeking a place for their nest, took Hatto the hermit to be another old willow cut off by axe and saw in its heavenward striving. They flew about him many times, flew away and returned again, took note of the guide posts on the way to him, calculated his position in regard to protection from storm and birds of prey, found it rather unfavourable, but decided to locate there on account of the close vicinity of the stream and the reeds, their chief source of supply. One of the birds shot down suddenly and laid a bit of grass in the hermit's outstretched hand.

The storm had abated a little, so that the straw was not blown from his hand at once, but the hermit did not pause in his prayer, "Come soon, O Lord, come to destroy this world of sin, that mankind may not more increase its load of guilt."

The storm roared out again, and the bit of grass fluttered out of the hermit's great bony hand. But the birds came again and endeavoured to erect the cornerstone of their new home between his fingers. Suddenly a dirty, clumsy thumb laid itself over the grass spears and held them in firm position, while four fingers reached over the palm, making a peaceful niche where a nest would be safe. The hermit continued his untiring supplications, and before his eyes danced fever visions of the day of judgment. The earth trembled, the skies shot fire. He saw the black clouds of hurrying birds beneath the glowing firmament; herds of fleeing animals spread over the earth. But while his soul was filled with these visions of fever, his eyes began to watch the flight of the tiny birds that came and went with lightning dashes, laying new straws in the nest with little chirps of pleasure.

The old man did not move. He had made a vow to stand the entire day with outstretched arms, in order to force God to hear him.

The little thrushes built and built busily all the day, and their work progressed finely. There was no lack of material in this wilderness of rolling ground with stiff grass and brush, and on the river bank, with its reeds and rushes. They could not take time for dinner or supper. They flew back and forth, glowing with interest and pleasure, and when dusk came they had reached the peak of their roof.

But before evening fell the hermit's eyes had come to rest on their labour more and more. He watched them in their flight; he scolded them when they were clumsy; he grieved when the wind spoiled their efforts, and he became almost angry when they stopped a moment to rest.

Then the sun sank and the birds sought their accustomed resting place among the reeds, safe from all harm, for no enemy could approach without a warning splash of the water or a quivering of the reeds.

When the morning broke, the thrushes thought at first that the events of the preceding day had

been but a beautiful dream.

They found their guideposts and flew straight to their nest, but the nest had disappeared. They peered out over the moors and flew high up to gain a wider view. But there was no sign of nest or tree. Finally they sat down on a stone by the water and thought the matter over. They wagged their tails and turned their heads to right and left. Where were nest and tree?

271 But scarcely had the sun raised itself a hand's breadth over the belt of woods beyond the stream, when their tree suddenly came wandering up and stood itself upon the selfsame place it had occupied the day before. It was as black and as gnarled as before, and it carried their nest on the tip of something that was probably a thin, upright bough.

The birds began to build again without attempting to ponder further over the many miracles of nature.

Hatto, the hermit, who chased the little children from his cave and told them it were better for them if they had never seen the light of day; he who waded out deep into the mud of the river to hurl curses after the flagged boats filled with gay young people rowing past; he from whose evil glance the shepherds carefully guarded their flocks, he did not return to his place on the river bank because of thought for the little birds. But he knew that not only every letter in the Holy Book has its own mystical meaning, but that everything that God allows to happen in the natural world has its significance also. And he had discovered what it might mean, this sign of the birds building in his hand: God had willed that he should stand with outstretched arm until the birds had raised their 272 young—could he do this, then would his prayer be heard.

But on this day his glance followed the motions of the birds with greater attention. He saw the rapid completion of the nest. The tiny builders flew around it and examined it carefully. They brought a few rags of moss from the real willow and plastered them on the outside as a finishing decoration. They brought the softest young grass, and the female bird pulled the down from her breast to furnish the inside.

The peasants of the neighbourhood, who feared the evil power which the prayers of the hermit might have with God, were used to bring him bread and milk to soften his anger. They came now, and found him standing motionless, the bird's nest in his hand.

"See how the holy man loves the little creatures," they said, and feared him no longer. They raised the milk can to his lips and fed him with the bread. When he had eaten and drunk he drove them away with curses, but they smiled at his anger.

273 His body had long since become the servant of his will. He had taught it obedience by hunger and scourge, by days of kneeling and sleepless nights. Now his muscles of steel held his arm outstretched days and weeks, and while the mother bird sat on her eggs and did not leave the nest, he would not go to his cave even to sleep at night. He learned how to sleep standing with outstretched arm.

He grew accustomed to the two uneasy little eyes that peered down at him over the edge of the nest. He watched for rain and hail, and protected the nest as well as he could.

One day the little mother left her place. Both thrushes sat on the edge of the nest, their tails moving rapidly, holding great consultation and looking very happy, although the whole nest seemed filled with a frightened squeaking. After a little they set out upon an energetic gnat hunt.

One gnat after another fell before them, and was brought home to that which squeaked and peeped up there in his hand. And the peeping grew more intense whenever the food was brought in. It disturbed the holy man at his prayers. Gently, very gently, his arm sank down on the joints that 274 had almost lost the power of motion, until his deep-set, glowing eyes peered into the nest.

Never had he seen anything so ugly and so miserable—naked little bodies, with a few scattered down tufts, no eyes, no strength to fly, nothing but six great open beaks.

He could not understand it himself, but he liked them just as they were. He had not thought to make an exception of the old birds in his prayers for the great Doom, but when he now implored God to release the world through utter destruction, he made a silent exception in favour of these six little helpless creatures.

When the peasant women brought him food he no longer rewarded them with curses. As he was necessary for the little ones up there in his hand, he was glad that the people did not let him starve.

Soon six little round heads peered all day over the edge of the nest. Old Hatto's arm sank to the level of his eyes more and more frequently. He saw the feathers grow out of the red skin; he saw 275 the eyes open and the little bodies round out. The fortunate inheritance of all the beauty with which nature endows the feathered denizens of the air came early into their heritage.

And, meanwhile, the prayers for the great destruction came more and more slowly from Hatto's lips.

He believed he had God's promise that it should come as soon as the little birds were able to fly. And now he stood there seeking an escape from God. For he could not sacrifice these six little ones, whom he had watched and cared for.

It had been different before, when he had had nothing of his own to care for. Love of the small and the helpless—that love which every little child must teach to the dangerous grown man—this love came over him and made him hesitate.

Sometimes he wished that he could throw the entire nest into the stream, for he still believed that those alone are to be envied who die without having known care or sin. Was it not his duty to save 276 these little ones from beasts of prey, from cold and hunger and all of the many ills of life? But just as he was pondering on this, a hawk swooped down on the nest to kill the little ones. Hatto caught

the robber in his left hand, whirled him around his head, and threw him far out into the stream.

Then came the day when the little ones were ready to fly. One of the old birds sat inside the nest, trying to push the young ones out on the edge, while the other flew about and showed them how easy it was if they would only try. But as the young ones would not overcome their fear, both old birds flew out before them, showing off all their prettiest arts and tricks. They turned and twisted in the air, they shot up straight as does the lark, or they hung motionless on rapidly fluttering wings.

But the little ones would not move, and then Hatto decided to interfere in the matter himself. He gave them a careful push with one finger, and thus ended the dispute. They tumble out, trembling and uncertain, hitting at the air as bats do; they sink down, but rise up again; they find the proper 277
motion and use it at once to regain the nest. The old birds come back to them in happy pride, and Hatto chuckles.

It was he who had brought the matter to such a happy conclusion. And now he pondered most seriously the question as to whether a loophole of escape could be found for God.

Perhaps, when one comes to think of it, God holds this earth like a bird's nest in His right hand and perhaps He loves those within it—all the helpless children of earth. Perhaps He is merciful to them whom He had vowed to destroy, just as the hermit was merciful to the little birds. Of course the hermit's birds were much better than God's human beings, but he could still understand that God might have pity for them in His heart.

Next day the nest was empty, and the bitterness of loneliness came over the hermit. His arm sank slowly down at his side, and it seemed to him that all nature held its breath to hear the roar of the trumpets announcing the Last Judgment. But in the same moment all the birds returned and settled 278
down on his head and shoulders, for they had no fear of him. And a light shot through the tortured brain of the old hermit. He had lowered his arm every day to look at the birds.

And then, as he stood there, the six young birds flying about him, he nodded, smiling, to some one whom he could not see.

"Thou art free," he said. "Thou art free. I did not keep my vow, therefore Thou needst not keep Thine."

And it seemed to him that the hills ceased from trembling and that the river sank quietly into its bed to rest.

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE PLUCKY PRINCE

Once upon a time there lived a king who was exceedingly rich. His palace was built of rare marble; in his majesty's dining room food was served on plates and in vessels of pure gold; the royal family wore robes fashioned from richest silk and costliest ermine. But, although the king's household lived in this royal way, his majesty gave strict orders to all in the palace that nothing should be wasted. The command was intended particularly for the crown prince who spent money lavishly. It seemed as if he had never learned the proper value of things, and his extravagance was the talk of all the people in the kingdom.

The king had had many stormy interviews with his reckless son. Again and again did this wasteful prince promise to mend his ways, but before long he forgot his pledge, and did something which was marked by astonishing extravagance.

At last the king's patience came to an end. He decided to disinherit the prince and banish him from the royal household. Filled with wrath his majesty sent for the youth and in sternest words gave the following decree:

"Henceforth you are banished from this palace! Flee from my presence!"

The carefree manner of the prince at these words exasperated his majesty who grew white with rage and said, "Prodigal, listen further to my stern decree. I forbid you to wear any clothing made from skins of beasts or the threads of the silk-worm; your exile cave shall not be lighted by oil or taper, nor by candles of tallow or wax. You shall taste no vegetables that grow under the earth or on vines in the sunlight. Your hunger shall not be fed by fish, flesh, or fowl. Begone, thou Prodigal! Go, starve upon the plain! Nevermore shalt thou waste my wealth. Thou art banished! This is my stern decree!"

The young prince was too much astonished at this outburst of rage to realize the measure of the punishment the king had put upon him. He turned and left his majesty's presence without a word. But although somewhat dazed by his royal father's decree, the youth snapped his finger gayly as he slammed the palace door and said in his usual carefree way, "The king has left me the mighty help of trees. So long as I may use the blessed trees of the earth I shall not perish nor lack enjoyment." And whistling a merry tune he passed out of the gate of the royal park.

"I shall not take shelter in a dark cave," mused the prince.

Immediately he planned to build a spacious house from carefully selected wood. For the stout rafters he choose heavy English oak and for the floors, smooth Norwegian pine. Beautiful pillars of palmetto were raised to hold the roof, made of cypress shingles and strengthened by oaken eaves and carved gargoyles. After the house was completed, the floors were covered with curious palm-matting, dyed crimson by the stain of tropical logwood. The rooms were furnished with rich chairs, tables, and couches made from rosewood, black walnut, and fragrant sandal-wood. Nothing was lacking in this home of beauty and comfort.

The merry prince examined his house with great pride. "Now," said he, "I mean to give a ball, and show his majesty, the king, what luxury is mine even though he left me nothing but the precious trees to furnish my house, clothing, and larder!"

Accordingly, invitations were sent to the royal family, and many knights and ladies of high degree.

The king was very much surprised to receive word from his banished son.

"'Tis a huge joke," said his majesty. "However, we'll accept the invitation, and see what sport the prodigal can offer us."

On the night of the ball the prince was dressed in a superb robe, made from the fiber of the cocoa-tree; his fine dancing shoes were made of caoutchouc, and on his brow he wore a coronet of laurel leaves. With princely grace he received the king, knights, and ladies in a large hall brilliantly lighted with candlenuts in sconces. The rooms were fragrant with pink apple-blossoms from Maine, and rich magnolia and orange blossoms from the Southland.

The king and his train could not hide their astonishment at the superb beauty of the rooms and decorations.

"I wonder what the scapegoat will offer us to eat?" whispered the king to the High Chancellor.

"Providing refreshment from trees will tax his wits more than building and furnishing a house," answered the chancellor, smiling.

It was not long before the guests were invited into the dining room, where a sumptuous feast awaited them. His majesty looked with astonishment at the variety of luscious fruit heaped on large wooden platters curiously carved. Some of them held the products of the North,—apples, pears, plums, cherries, grapes, and peaches. Others were filled with tempting fruit from the South,—bananas, oranges, pomegranates, figs, dates, ripe olives, juicy soursops, and creamy durions. Delicious breadfruit, from the tropics, and rich cassava cakes from Java were served with luscious guava jam. Beautiful wooden bowls held almonds, English walnuts, filberts, pecans, chestnuts, Chinese nuts, and Brazilian creams. Dainty wicker baskets held sweets made of maple sugar cream covered with chocolate or cocoanut. The king declared that the grape juice and sweet pear cider were daintier than any wine he had ever tasted.

After the feast was ended the prince, with merry, twinkling eyes, said to his father: "See what a man banishment has made of me!"

To the youth's astonishment, his majesty smiled graciously, and, in the presence of the High Chancellor and all the knights and ladies, the king embraced his son and said, "Banishment has made a man of you! And, furthermore, you have taught all of us the wonders of the woodland. Welcome back to my heart, O Prince!"

And the High Chancellor, knights, and ladies of high degree all said, "Long live our plucky Prince."

Adapted from a poem by May Bryon.

A song to the oak
The brave old oak,
Who hath ruled in the greenwood long:
Here's health and renown
To his broad green crown
And his fifty arms so strong.
There's fear in his frown
When the sun goes down,
And the fire in the west fades out;
And he showeth his might
On a wild midnight,
When the storms through his branches shout.
Then here's to the oak
The brave old oak!
Who stands in his pride alone;
And still flourish he,
A hale, green tree
When a hundred years are gone.

H. F. Chorley.

SUMMER SNOW

Mrs. Humphrey Ward

A king once lived in a very hot part of Spain, where they have little rain and where it hardly ever snows or freezes.

This king had a very beautiful wife whom he loved very much. But the queen had one great fault. She was always wishing for the most impossible things.

The king always tried to give her everything she wanted, but she was never satisfied.

At last, one day in winter, a very strange thing happened. A shower of snow fell in the town where the king and queen lived. It made the hills white, so that they looked as if some one had been dusting white sugar over them.

Now snow was hardly ever seen in the town, so the people talked about it, a great deal. After the queen had looked at it a little while, she began to cry bitterly.

None of the ladies could comfort her, nor would she tell any one what was the matter. There she sat at her window weeping, till the king came to her. He could not imagine why she was crying, and begged her to tell him.

"I am weeping," she said, sobbing all the time, "because the hills are not always covered with snow. See how pretty they look! And yet, I have never, till now, seen them look like that. If you really love me, you would find some way or other to make it snow once a year at any rate."

"But how can I make it snow?" cried the king, in great trouble, because she would go on weeping and weeping, and spoiling her pretty eyes.

"I am sure I don't know," said the queen crossly.

Well, the king thought and thought, and at last he hit upon a beautiful plan. He sent to all parts of Spain to buy almond trees to plant. The almond tree has a lovely pink-white blossom, you know.

When the next spring arrived, thousands of these almond trees came into bloom on all the hills around the town. At a distance, the hills looked as if they were covered with white snow.

For once the discontented queen was delighted. She could now keep saying a nice "Thank you" to the king for all the trouble he had taken to please her. And suddenly it seemed to the king as if a black speck in the queen's heart had been washed away and so they lived happy ever afterwards.

THE BOY WHO HATED TREES

ALICE L. BECKWITH

"Good night, Dick. Remember, now, to wake up with the robins so that you may be ready to help me set out our new trees."

"Good night," answered Dick in a sulky tone, for Dick was cross.

"Trees, trees, trees!" he mumbled to himself, as he began to undress. "I'm so sick of hearing about trees. And now father has bought some old twigs to set out to-morrow, and I want to go fishing.

"I wish I lived in a land where there were no trees. We could get along well enough without them." And with this thought he jumped into bed.

Dick had been asleep perhaps an hour or more when he heard a queer, rustling noise, and then a voice called out: "Here he is—the boy who hates trees!"

There was the strangest procession coming toward him. It was made up of trees of all kinds. The Pine and Elm came first; the Maple and Oak followed: the Maple's leaves were flushed scarlet, she was so excited. The Willow was weeping, and the Poplar was trembling all over.

Next came all the fruit trees, led by the Cherry, while the Walnut, the White Birch, and the Palm were behind.

What did it all mean? Dick was frightened for a moment. It seemed as if every tree of which he had ever heard was there, and he wondered how the room could hold them all.

When they had all grown quiet, the Pine said: "Dear brothers and sisters, here is a boy who hates trees; he cannot see that we are of any use. It is more than I can stand, and I have called this meeting to see what can be done about it. Has anyone anything to say?"

The Cherry looked very sour. "I cannot see that boys are of any use," she said. "Many years ago, when cherry trees were scarce in this country, a boy named George cut down my great-grandfather just to try his new hatchet."

"And boys know so little," said the White Birch; "they are always hacking me with knives, and taking off my coat, no matter how cold the weather is. I loved a boy once, but it was many years ago. He was a little Indian boy. He loved trees. I remember how he stood beside me one day and said:

"'Give me of your bark, O Birch Tree!
For the summer time is coming,
And the sun is warm in heaven,
And you need no white skin wrapper.'

"Then he took off my bark so carefully that he did not hurt me a bit. But he is not living now. This boy is not like him."

"I don't like boys, either," spoke up the Apple. "One day a boy climbed up into my branches and broke off one of my limbs. He was a very silly boy, for he wanted green apples. Had my fruit been ripe, I would have tossed one down to him. How happy we should be if it were not for boys!"

The Maple was very angry. "This boy said we were of no use, but it was only this morning that I heard him tease his grandfather for a cake of my sugar."

"He ate it as if he liked it, too," said the Palm. "I saw him; he was fanning himself with one of my leaves."

The Willow wiped her eyes. "Boys, boys, boys!" she said. "I'm so sick of boys! This same boy made a whistle out of one of my children this very night, when he went for the cows."

Then a queer tree in the corner spoke in a thick voice: "We are of no use, are we? If it were not for me, where would he get the tires for his bicycle? There are his rubber boots, too. Why, he uses me every day about something. But I've thought of a plan."

The trees crowded around him, talking together excitedly. "But how shall we do it?" Dick heard them say. "Oh," said the Elm, "the Wind will help us. He is our friend."

Before Dick could cry out, he found himself being carried away by the Wind.

"Where am I going?" he called.

"To the land of no trees," they answered; and they bowed and smiled. Even the Willow held up her head long enough to call, "Good-by!" and then home and trees were left far behind.

How fast the Wind traveled! On and on they rushed, until suddenly the Wind dropped him and went whistling away.

Dick felt really frightened when he found himself all alone.

"Oh, I'm so hot!" he exclaimed. "Where am I?"

Certainly he had never before been in such a place.

There were no trees nor green grass anywhere in sight. As far as he could see, there was only sand—white sand, hot and scorching.

"It seems to me I've seen pictures in my geography like this," he said to himself. "I can't stay here. What shall I do?"

All at once he noticed a tiny speck far away in the distance. Now it looked larger. He brushed away something that looked very much like a tear, though he told himself that it was only because he was so warm.

Yes, that speck surely moved, and was coming nearer. What if it were a bear!

"There is no tree to climb, and I cannot run—I am so tired, and it is very hot."

Nearer and nearer it came, moving slowly. Dick watched it with a beating heart. At last he saw that it was not a single animal, but a great many in line.

"Oh, they are camels!" he cried. "Yes, I know they are. Once at a circus I saw some that looked just like them—but what queer-looking men are on them!"

They were now very near him, and one of the men beckoned with his hand and said something.

"I can't understand him," said Dick to himself, "but I suppose he meant he'll give me a ride."

The man helped him up and they journeyed on. After a time Dick grew very tired even of riding.

"The camel joggles me so," he said, "and I am so thirsty I shall die. If they would only stop a minute!" 297

What was the matter? What were they saying? Each man was bowing himself toward the ground and waving his hands.

"I don't see what they are making all that fuss about. I can't see anything; the sun hurts my eyes so." And Dick covered his eyes with his hand.

Suddenly there was a shout, and the camels stood still. Dick lifted his head. Could he believe his eyes? Right before him was a little spot of green grass, a spring of cool water, and one of those things he hated—a tree.

Hate a tree? He thought that he had never seen anything so beautiful in his life.

He fairly tumbled off the camel in his haste to reach it. The tears ran down his face as he threw his arms around its trunk.

"Dear tree!" he cried.

"Dick, Dick, are you going to help me plant the new trees?" called his father.

Opening his eyes, Dick found himself in his own little room, both hands clasping his pillow. 298

Dick was soon dressed and downstairs, and so anxious was he to plant trees that he could hardly eat his breakfast.

In just one night he had learned to see
The wonderful beauty there is in a tree.

THE FRIENDLY SUMMER TREES

FRANK A. WAUGH

It is curious how friendly the forests are to the sick. The trees reach out their arms to shelter them. In the stillness of the morning and through the long nights they whisper to every one who listens; there lie the patients listening and looking up through the gently waving branches to the floating clouds by day, and to the twinkling stars by night, until presently they are overcome by the spirit of health, which is the spirit of the pine-trees.

Trees appear at their best in the forest company, I think, just as men and women appear at their best in society. The single maple tree or the elm may be very proud and beautiful, but alone it cannot cure the sick or even accommodate a picnic.

So we ought to become acquainted with the trees, in their own society and in their native surroundings. We shall then understand them much better than when we find them lonely on our city lawns.

There is a glorious wealth waiting for us when we come to choose our tree friends for our homes. There are the elm, several kinds of maples, two kinds of sycamores, the linden, many sorts of oaks, the pines and the spruces, and almost a hundred others. Besides these big, lusty, shade-yielding trees, there are many small, more curious or more ornamental ones. Such are the magnolias, the maidenhair-tree, the Kentucky coffee-tree, the sweet-gum, and the flowering dogwood. These smaller trees are, of course, particularly suited to small lawns and close quarters; though, wherever possible, the true American will give first place to the big, noble, native trees like the elm and the maple. Even if there is room for only one of these, it will seem to be the one best friend in the garden.

And while I am speaking of these trees, I would not forget the apple. There is no kind of tree more beautiful in spring, more comfortable and homelike summer and winter, and more to be chosen for a life-long friend. Recently I was consulted by a committee of a Massachusetts town who wanted to cut down a half-dozen sturdy old apple trees, because a new library had been built in their midst, and the committee thought some more rare trees were needed to keep the balance. Blue spruce or Camperdown elm would have been choice, strange, and outlandish, but the homely, common apple tree they would gladly sacrifice.

We admire the tree for its size; the mere bigness of it draws our attention; we look up to it. We admire it for its form, the form of the elm, or the maple, or the pine, or the palm is wonderful. We admire the tree in its leafage, for its texture and color. Why, even the shadow of a tree is beautiful. The clever gardener places his best tree where its shadow will be traced all the afternoon across the lawn. How cool and pleasant the shadow lies there!

Nowhere do trees seem so useful as in the street. Even the city yearns for trees, and the best residence and suburban sections make these their greatest pride. The citizens turn to the city trees as one of the most important forms of public property. Tree-planting is to be encouraged, and the trees now grown to maturity must be saved at any cost. Leaky gas mains are the deadly enemies of street trees. Electric wires kill thousands more.

For the protection of street trees and those on public parks and grounds, every city should have a tree-warden. These are provided for by law in some states, but the system should become general. Truly modern cities have officers with the title of "city forester," with the extremely useful occupation of caring for the public trees. Such officers should be appointed everywhere.

The annual festival called Arbor Day, established in this country for the promotion of tree-planting, has, unfortunately, been turned over exclusively to the public schools, whereas it ought to be observed also by the churches, lodges, political clubs, and women's clubs. At all events, tree-planting should go on constantly, and should everywhere accompany the campaign for the preservation of street trees. We may well remember that as a rough, general rule, only one tree out of every twenty planted ever comes to maturity. Let us, therefore, plant liberally.

In rural and semi-rural communities everywhere, it is a custom to secure from the woods and pastures those trees needed for street and house-lot planting. Where stock is collected from the wild in this way, it is best to take the trees from the open pasture—or from recently cultivated land, where possible. Effort should be made also to select those which have grown on rich, well-drained soil. The theory that trees taken from the forest will be more hardy, runs quite opposite to the fact. Indeed, the best plan is everywhere to buy young trees from nurseries. Nursery trees have clean, symmetrical tops, and are likely to have a hundred times more good rootage than trees taken from the field.

Everything is in favor of the nursery-grown tree, except the price; however, very often the expense of digging and bringing in a half-dozen good-sized maples from the woods is greater than the cost of better trees of like size from the most expensive nursery in the country.

Arbor Day is not necessarily the best day for tree-planting, especially in the matter of big trees for streets, school grounds, and public places. The experts prefer to handle such trees in mid-winter; they do this even in sections where the ground freezes to a depth of two or three feet; in fact, it is considered the height of good practice to take up the tree from its place, accompanied by a huge block of frozen earth. Evergreen trees, such as pines and spruces, may be handled very successfully in August, and this season is widely chosen for the purpose by knowing treemen.

Many tree-lovers make the mistake of crowding their small private grounds with their pets. If one has only a city lot thirty feet wide by a hundred feet deep, he cannot grow a large forest. One or two large trees will be all such a place can reasonably support; any more will make the premises too

crowded. The trees themselves will suffer, and, besides that, there will be no opportunity to view them. There will be no room for a flower garden, and no lawn for any purpose. 305

The common mistake in planting trees on small home grounds is to place the individual in the middle of the lawn. As a matter of design, the center of the lawn should be kept open, and trees, at any rate, should file along the boundaries. In our northern climate sturdy, protecting evergreens will naturally choose a north boundary, and the shady summer trees with heavy foliage will cast their comfortable shadows from the south side of the garden.

The tree-lover who hopes to get the most satisfaction out of his hobby will not always wait to see his trees grow. It requires too many years. About the best way to do is to adopt a tract of well-grown woodland, and then to make the most of it. Improvement cuttings will come first; for the axe is as important as the spade, and trees have to be cut as well as planted. The best trees can be left and nursed and admired. If there is space enough, forest effects can be developed; roads and paths can be built; game-cover can be introduced, and wild life encouraged. Birds and boys and others 306 friends will visit you in your woods, and the days will go by like a lusty ballad. Between you and me and the beech-tree, it will be a jolly, pleasant company.

FOREST DAY

SELMA LAGERLÖF

On the mountain's broad back there had been a forest fire ten years before. Since that time the charred trees had been felled and removed and the great fire-swept area had begun to deck itself with green along the edges, where it skirted the healthy forest. However, the larger part of the top was still barren and appallingly desolate. Charred stumps, standing sentinel-like between the rock ledges, bore witness that once there had been a forest fire here; but no fresh shoots sprang from the ground.

One day in the early summer all the children in the parish had assembled in front of the schoolhouse near the fire-swept mountain. Each child carried either a spade or a hoe on its shoulder and a basket of food in its hand. As soon as all were assembled they marched in a long procession toward the forest. The banner came first, with the teachers on either side of it. Then followed a couple of foresters and a wagon load of pine shrubs and spruce seeds; then the children.

The procession did not pause in any of the birch groves near the settlements, but marched on deep into the forest. As it moved along the foxes stuck their heads out of their lairs in astonishment and wondered what kind of backwoods people these were. As they marched past the old coal pits where charcoal kilns were fired every autumn, the cross-beaks twisted their hooked bills and asked one another what kind of coalers these might be, who were now thronging the forest.

Finally, the procession reached the big burnt mountain plain. The rocks had been stripped of the fine twin-flower creepers that once covered them; they had been robbed of the pretty silver moss and the attractive reindeer moss. Around the dark water gathered in clefts and hollows there was now no wood-sorrel. The little patches of soil in crevices and between stones were without ferns, without star-flowers, without all the green and red and light and soft and soothing things that usually clothe the forest ground.

It was as if a bright light flashed upon the mountain when all the parish children covered it. Here again was something sweet and delicate, something fresh and rosy, something young and growing. Perhaps these children would bring to the poor abandoned forest a little new life.

When the children had rested and eaten their luncheon, they seized hoes and spades and began to work. The foresters showed them what to do. They set out shrub after shrub on every clear spot of earth they could find.

As they worked, they talked quite knowingly among themselves of how the little shrubs they were planting would bind the soil so that it could not get away, and of how new soil would form under the trees. By and by seeds would drop, and, in a few years, they would be picking both strawberries and raspberries where now there were only bare rocks. The little shrubs which they were planting would gradually become tall trees. Perhaps big houses and great splendid ships would be built from them!

If the children had not come here and planted while there was still a little soil in the clefts, all the earth would have been carried away by winds and water, and the mountain could never more have been clothed in green.

"It was well that we came," said the children. "We were just in the nick of time." They felt very important.

While they were working on the mountain their parents were at home. By and by they began to wonder how the children were getting along.

Of course it was only a joke about their planting a forest, but it might be amusing to see what they were trying to do.

So presently both fathers and mothers were on their way to the forest. When they came to the outlying stock farms they met some of their neighbors.

"Are you going to the fire-swept mountain?" they asked.

"That's where we're bound for."

"To have a look at the children?"

"Yes, to see what they are up to."

"It's only play, of course."

"It isn't likely that there will be many forest trees planted by the youngsters. We have brought the coffee pot along so that we can have something warm to drink, since we must stay there all day with only lunch-basket provisions."

So the parents of the children went on up the mountain. At first they thought only of how pretty it looked to see all the rosy-cheeked little children scattered over the gray hills. Later they observed how the children were working,—how some were setting out shrubs, while others were digging furrows and sowing seeds. Others again were pulling up heather to prevent its choking the growing trees. They saw that the children took the work seriously and were so intent upon what they were doing that they scarcely had time to glance up.

The fathers and mothers stood for a moment and looked on; then they, too, began to pull up heather,—just for the fun of it. The children were the instructors, for they were already trained and had to show their elders what to do.

Then it happened that all the grown-ups who had come to watch the children took part in the work. Then, of course, it became greater fun than before. By and by the children had even more help. Other implements were needed, so a couple of long-legged boys were sent down to the village

for spades and hoes. As they ran past the cabins, the stay-at-homes came out and asked, "What's wrong? Has there been an accident?"

"No, indeed! But the whole parish is up on the fire-swept mountain planting a forest."

"If the whole parish is there, we can't stay at home."

So party after party of peasants went crowding to the top of the burnt mountain. They stood a moment and looked on. The temptation to join the workers was irresistible.

"It's a pleasure to sow one's own acres in the spring and to think of the grain that will spring up from the earth, but this work is even more thrilling," they thought.

Not only slender blades would come from that sowing, but mighty trees with tall trunks and sturdy branches. It meant giving birth not merely to a summer's grain, but to many years' growths. It meant the awakening hum of insects, the song of the thrush, the play of grouse, and all kinds of life, on the desolate mountain. Moreover, it was like raising a memorial for coming generations. They could have left a bare, treeless height as an heritage. Instead, they were to leave a glorious forest.

Coming generations would know their forefathers had been a good and wise folk and they would remember them with reverence and gratitude.

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE

Woodman, spare that tree!
  Touch not a single bough!
In youth it sheltered me,
  And I'll protect it now.
'Twas my forefather's hand
  That placed it near his cot;
There, woodman, let it stand——
  Thy axe shall harm it not!

That old familiar tree,
  Whose glory and renown
Are spread o'er land and sea——
  And wouldst thou hew it down?
Woodman, forbear thy stroke!
  Cut not its earth-bound ties;
Oh, spare that aged oak,
  Now towering to the skies!

My heartstrings round thee cling,
  Close as thy bark, old friend!
Here shall the wild bird sing,
  And still thy branches bend.
Old tree! the storm still brave!
  And, woodman, leave the spot.
While I've a hand to save,
  Thy axe shall harm it not!

GEORGE P. MORRIS.

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The garden was pleasant with old-fashioned flowers,
The sunflowers and hollyhocks stood up like towers;
There were dark turncap-lilies and jasemine rare,
And sweet thyme and marjoram scented the air.

WILLIAM BRIGHTLY RANDS.

Buttercup, Poppy, Forget-me-not,
These three bloomed in a garden spot;
And once, all merry with song and play,
A little one heard three voices say:
"Shine and shadow, summer and spring,
  O thou child with the tangled hair
And laughing eyes! We thee shall bring
  Each an offering passing fair."
The little one did not understand
  But they bent and kissed the dimpled hand.

EUGENE FIELD.

HOW THE ROSE BECAME QUEEN

Albert Bigelow Paine

Once upon a time there was a very great garden that lay between two ranges of blue, blue hills. And the sky above was blue, as blue as the hills, so that you could hardly tell where the sky ended and the hills began, and underneath was the great, beautiful garden which covered all the lands between.

And in this rare garden there were all the choicest flowers and fruit that the world knew, and when the flowers were all in bloom, under that blue, blue sky—in all the wonderful colors of gold and crimson, and royal purple, and with all the banks of white daisies, and all the sweet orchards of apple-bloom, there was nothing like it in the whole world, and the sweet perfume went out so far that sailors in the ships coming in from sea, a hundred miles away, could smell the sweet odors and would say, "The wind blows from the garden of the Princess Beautiful." For I must tell you that the garden was owned by a great Princess, and she was called Beautiful by all who knew of her, and every traveler to that distant country made his way to her white marble palace to seek permission to look upon the most beautiful garden in the world.

And many who came there were of high rank, like herself, and some of them tried to win her love, for the Princess was like her name and as beautiful as the rarest flower in all that marvelous garden. But to the princes and kings she would not listen, for her heart and pride were only in her flowers, and she wished to remain with them forever and be happy in their beauty. She was only sad when she saw that some of those who came went away with heavy hearts because she would not leave her palace for theirs.

Now once there came to the palace of the Princess Beautiful a great queen. She had traveled far to see the splendid garden, and when she came the Princess led her with all her court among the flowers. And all that sunlit day, under the blue, blue sky, the great queen and her court lingered in the garden—up and down the paths of white shells, where hyacinths and lilies and daffodils and azaleas grew on every side—and rested in the shade of blossoming orchard trees. And when it was evening, and they had gone, and the flowers were left alone they whispered and murmured together, for never before had they seen a queen and her court.

And by and by, as the days passed, the flowers decided that they, too, must have a queen—some rare flower, fine and stately, whom they would honor, even as they had seen their beautiful Princess honor her royal guest. And night after night they talked of these things, but never could decide which of their number should be chosen for the high place.

And then one day a great sadness came upon the fair garden between the hills. A young traveler from an unknown country had come to the white palace, and one sunny afternoon the Princess Beautiful had led him among the beds of primroses and lilies and daffodils. And when the sun was going down and she turned and looked into his face, and saw how fair he was, and how the sun made his hair like gold, how it shimmered on his beautiful garments of velvet and fine lace. She felt for the first time a great love arise within her heart. Then, all at once, she forgot her garden, her palace, and her pride, forgot everything in all the world except the fair youth who stood there with her in the sunset—and she told him her great new love.

And as she spoke, softly and tenderly, the words she had never spoken to any one before, the breeze died, and the sun slipped down behind the far-off hills. And then, as the light faded, it seemed to the Princess Beautiful that the fair youth before her was fading, too. His face grew dim and misty—his hair became a blur of gold—his rare garments melted back into the beds of bloom. And behold, instead of the fair youth there stood before her in the twilight only a wonderful golden lily with a crimson heart.

Then the Princess Beautiful knew that because she had cared only for her garden and had sent from her those who had offered a great love like her own, that this wonderful lily had come to her as a youth with a face of radiant beauty, and with hair of gold, to awaken a human love in her heart. And each day she mourned there by the splendid lily, and called it to return to her as the fair youth she had loved; and at last when its flowers had faded and the stem drooped, the white palace of the Princess Beautiful was empty and the Princess lay beside the withered lily in the rare garden between the hills.

And there they made her grave and above it they built a trellis where a white climbing rose might grow. But when the rose bloomed, instead of being white, it was a wonderful crimson, such as no one had ever seen before. And when the other flowers saw those beautiful crimson blossoms they no longer mourned, for they said, "This is our beautiful Princess Beautiful who has returned to be our queen."

And so it was the red rose became the queen of flowers, and a symbol of great human love. The poet Burns says:

"My love is like a red, red rose,
That's newly blown in June."

And it was always in June that the great crimson rose bloomed on the grave in the garden of the Princess Beautiful.

They swing from the garden-trellis
  In Ariel-airy ease;
And their aromatic honey
  Is sought by the earliest bees.

The rose, it knows their secret,
  And the jessamine also knows:
And the rose told me the story
  That the jessamine told the rose.

And the jessamine said: "At midnight,
  E're the red cock woke and crew,
The fays of Queen Titania
  Came here to bathe in dew.

And the yellow moonlight glistened
  On braids of elfin hair;
And fairy feet on the flowers
  Fell softer than any air.

And their petticoats, gay as bubbles,
  They hung up, every one,
On the morning glory's tendrils,
  Till their moonlight bath was done.

But the red cock crew too early,
  And the fairies fled in fear,
Leaving their petticoats purple and pink,
  Like blossoms hanging there.

MADISON CAWEIN.

WHY ROSES HAVE THORNS

(ALGONQUIN LEGEND)

In the far-off days of long ago roses had no thorns. The branches of the bushes and the flower stems were smooth and delicate and made delicious food for the animals. They greedily ate the leaves, stems, and lovely blossoms; sometimes, indeed, they devoured the entire plant.

With grief the roses saw that each year the number of bushes was growing fewer and they feared the time would come when there would be none of their blossoms left to gladden the summer days. At last they held a council to see if anything could be done to prevent the animals from destroying the bushes. But no one could think of a way out of the difficulty.

"We must go to Manabozho, the Great Chief," said one of them. "He will advise us what to do."

Accordingly, it was decided that several messengers, chosen from the council, should seek the Great Chief and tell him how the animals were fast destroying the roses.

It was no easy matter to find Manabozho, for while he lived on earth among the Red Men he took many disguises. They who sought him were carried by the swiftest wind through valleys and meadows and far over the hilltops. All along the path of their journey, whenever they asked the question, "Where shall we find Manabozho?" they received the same answer, "Travel on toward the sunrise. There you will find the Great Chief. He is tending a wonderful garden."

At last one morning they saw the sun shining on a marvellous garden where vegetables grew in abundance. There were beds of cucumbers and squash, rows of corn and beans, and many other plants, whose names the messengers did not know. And what surprised them most was the beautiful hedge of rose-bushes which surrounded the garden. They looked anxiously for the Great Gardener Chief but he was nowhere to be seen. Silently the messengers hid themselves in a forest which grew near, for they believed Manabozho would soon return. The thought of talking to him filled them with awe, but they were determined to be brave and tell him their mission.

"He values roses or he would not have chosen them for his garden hedge," they whispered, looking with pride at the beauty of the flowering bushes.

While they were waiting a surprising thing happened. In the forest they heard quiet, stealthy steps approaching. Soon they saw a procession of animals from the woods. There were field mice, squirrels, rabbits, foxes, coyotes, elks, and bears, all making their way to Manabozho's garden. They were sniffing the air as if they scented something delicious. On they came until they reached the rose-hedge where they stopped to taste the dainty, fragrant leaves. Various cries of satisfaction were uttered and immediately they began feasting on the delicate bushes. Leaves, flowers, and stems were all devoured and in a short time not one bit of the rose-hedge around the Great Chief's garden was left. It could not have disappeared more completely if Manabozho himself had cut it down. The dainty morsel of the rose-hedge, however, was not enough to satisfy the hunger of the animals from the woods. They turned their attention to the vegetables and were devouring the very choicest of them when suddenly the smaller animals pricked up their ears and listened. The next moment they scuttled away as fast as they could into the forest. The larger animals took this for a sign of danger and hurried after them.

In a little while the messengers of the Rose Council heard a loud voice singing. Manabozho was returning from his adventure. As he drew near his song ceased for he saw that destruction had come to his precious garden. His rage was terrible! In a voice which shook the neighboring hillsides he declared he would punish the intruders. He was particularly grieved at the destruction of his rose-hedge which he valued not only for its beauty but because he believed it was a means of protection to his garden.

When the messengers saw this they came forward and stated the object of their journey. Manabozho listened with eager interest while one of them told the story of the rapidly decreasing number of rose-bushes.

"Great Manabozho," said the speaker, "the animals of the woods find rose-bushes such delicious food that they eat blossoms, leaves, and stems. Our number is decreasing so rapidly that in a little while there will be none left to gladden the earth. The destruction of your hedge proves how ruthlessly the animals destroy us. Help us, O Chief! Devise some plan to protect us."

"You shall, indeed, have my help," said Manabozho, thoughtfully.

For some time the chief was silent. Then he said, "I'll give *you* weapons and you shall protect yourselves. Sharp thorns shall grow on your branches and needle-like prickles shall cover the stems which hold your lovely blossoms. While you are armed with these, the cruel animals will not venture to touch you."

The messengers thanked Manabozho with all their hearts. Delighted with his gift, they hastened back to tell the Council how the Great Chief had saved the roses of the world. Ever since that day roses have had thorns.

SWEET PEAS

Here are sweet peas, on tiptoe for a flight,
  With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white
And taper fingers catching at all things,
  To bend them all about with tiny rings.

JOHN KEATS.

A LEGEND OF THE PRIMROSE

In a cottage which stood near a large meadow lived a poor woman and her little child Elizabeth. The mother earned a scant living by spinning and weaving. She was not strong and could work for only a few hours at a time.

Each morning after the little girl had swept the cottage she ran to the meadow and gathered a large bunch of golden primroses. They were her mother's favorite flowers and Elizabeth knew that their sunny color brought good cheer to the room where her mother worked.

One fair morning Elizabeth wandered far across the meadows searching for the brightest blossoms. She filled her arms with the sweetest primroses she could find and turned to hasten back to the cottage when she saw standing near her a lovely little creature. Her dress was made from the golden petals of the primrose and so were her dainty shoes. On her head sparkled a tiny crown studded with yellow jewels. She carried a fairy basket which held a number of wonderfully beautiful primroses.

"Elizabeth," said the little creature, speaking in the most friendly way, "I'm the queen of the key-flower fairies. Tell me why you choose daily to pluck our blossoms."

"These are primroses," said Elizabeth, looking at the flowers in her arms.

"Yes, yes, I know that is the name you mortals call them but their proper name is the key-flower," nodded the fairy.

"They are the blossoms mother loves best," said Elizabeth, answering the little creature's first question. "She is not strong enough to walk in the meadow so each day I fill a bowl with primroses and put them near her spinning wheel."

The queen of the key-flowers fairies came close to Elizabeth, took a blossom from her basket, and offering it to the little girl said, "Today I'm going to send your mother a gift. Hold this flower in your hand and walk to the hills on the east side of the meadow. You will find a path all the way bordered with our blossoms. Follow the path carefully until you come to a hillside in which there is a great arched doorway marked out by the pale gold of these flowers. Touch the door gently with this key-flower which I give you. It will open, and you may enter into an enchanted hall."

Elizabeth took the flower which the fairy offered her and the next moment the tiny creature vanished.

Stretching across the meadow Elizabeth now noticed the flower-bordered path which the fairy had directed her to follow. It led to a sunny hillside where the little girl found exactly what the fairy had described—an arched doorway around which grew pale golden primroses in full bloom.

Very gently Elizabeth tapped with her key-flower on the door, which immediately swung open without the least bit of noise.

"Come in," called a silvery voice. And there, standing in a hall marvellously lighted, stood the queen of the key-flower fairies. Elizabeth walked into the enchanted hall. Through a crystal roof the golden sunlight streamed on lovely hanging-baskets filled with brilliant primroses. The floor and walls were covered with rich green moss and the curious furniture was fashioned from pale yellow petals. On the tables stood baskets and vases holding large bunches of primrose blossoms. Their delicious scent filled the air.

"This is key-flower hall," said the fairy.

Then, pointing to some golden chests which stood near the walls she continued, "Your key-flower will unlock those treasure-boxes. Open one of them and see what it holds."

Elizabeth tapped gently with her fairy primrose on one of the boxes. Immediately the lid opened and she saw that the chest was filled with pale golden flower petals.

"You may take home to your mother as many flower petals as you can carry in your apron," said the fairy.

Elizabeth began to fill her apron with the soft golden disks, but, strange to say, she no sooner lifted them from the treasure-chest than they hardened into golden coins.

The fairy laughed merrily when she saw the astonished look on Elizabeth's face. Then, suddenly, again the little creature vanished.

Elizabeth hurried home as fast as she could and gave the fairy's gift to her mother. There was plenty of money to buy all the food and comforts which the poor woman needed to make her grow strong again.

Elizabeth loved to tell her about her adventure with the queen of the primrose fairies and the treasure which the magic key-flower unlocked.

EVENING PRIMROSES

While grey was the summer evening
   Hast never a small sprite seen
Lighting the fragrant torches
   For the feast of the Faerie Queen?

The buds in the primrose-bushes
   Upspring into yellow light,
But ever the wee deft spirit
   Escapes my bewildered sight.

Yet oft through the dusky garden
   A dainty white moth will fly,
Or, pink as a pink rose-petal,
   One lightly will waver by.

Perhaps 'tis the shape he comes in
   Perhaps it is he, indeed,
Sir Moth or the merry Cobweb
   Or the Whimsical Mustard-Seed!

HELEN GRAY CONE.

LEGEND OF THE LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY

Albert Bigelow Paine

Once when the Little Child of Bethlehem was playing, he grew very tired and thirsty, and his playmate was very thirsty, too. So Jesus ran to the well for a cup of water and hurried back with it without stopping to drink. But his playmate was greedy, for he seized the cup and drank it all except a few drops at the bottom; then he gave the empty cup to Jesus, who took it and let the last few drops fall on the grass, when suddenly, from where they fell, there flowed a little clear stream of water with lilies-of-the-valley blooming along its bank.

Hours fly,
Flowers die,
New days,
New ways
Pass by,
Love stays.

HENRY VAN DYKE.

There were once three little butterflies, one was white, one was red, and one was yellow. They played in the sunshine and danced from one blossom to another. They never grew tired, for they loved to play among the flowers in the garden.

One day a heavy rain fell and the little butterflies became very wet. They soon hurried home but when they got to their house they found the door locked and they could not find the key. So they had to stay outdoors and they became wetter and wetter.

But by and by they flew to a yellow and red striped tulip and said:

"Dear Tulip, open your little flower cup so that we may slip in until the rain is over?"

The tulip answered, "I will gladly open my flower cup to the red butterfly and the yellow one. 341
They are like me. But the white one may not come in."

But the butterflies, the red and the yellow ones, said: "No, if our white brother may not go into your flower cup with us, we will stay out here in the rain with him." And away they flew. It rained harder and harder and they flew to a white lily and said: "Good lily, open your flower cup a little so that we may find shelter from this rain." The lily answered, "I will open my flower cup so that the white butterfly may come in because he is like me, but the red and yellow butterflies must stay out in the rain." Then the white butterfly said: "No; if you will not shelter my brothers, you cannot shelter me. We would rather stay outside together and be wet than leave one another in need."

And the three little butterflies flew farther on together.

It happened that the jolly old sun who was behind the clouds heard all that was said and he knew how kind the little butterfly brothers were to each other, for, had they not stayed together in spite 342
of the hard, hard rain? So his sunbeams pierced the clouds and drove away the rain, and it was clear and bright once more in the garden. The butterflies were not wet long for the sunbeams soon dried their wings and warmed their bodies. Then how merry they were! They danced again and played among the flowers until it was evening, then they flew away together to their house—and the door was wide open!

THE PINKS

The pinks along my garden walks
Have all shot forth their summer stalks,
Thronging their buds 'mong tulips hot,
  And blue forget-me-not.

Their dazzling snows forth-bursting soon
Will lade the idle breath of June:
And waken through the fragrant night
  To steal the pale moonlight.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

THE FLOWER'S THANKS

LYMAN ABBOTT

A little flower lay drooping on the ground under an August sun. For days there had been no rain. The earth was dry and hard. The little flower had held up its open mouth for rain, but no rain had come.

And now it was dying of thirst.

As it lay dying a shadow passed over the sun. The air became dark.

Heavy thunder rolled. Flashes of lightning chased each other across the sky.

The birds hushed their singing. The very leaves of the tree stood still.

At last two big drops fell at the root of the little flower.

A moment, and then the air was full of raindrops. They lifted the dying flower. They washed it, fed it and brought it back to life.

When the sun broke through the clouds, two great tears glistened on the little flower's cheek. They were tears of thankfulness.

Then the flower lifted up its voice and said:

"Thank you, raindrops,—good raindrops,—you have saved my life."

But the raindrops answered, "Thank not us; thank the clouds; they sent us."

Then the flower lifted up its voice and said:

"Thank you, clouds,—good clouds,—you have saved my life."

But the clouds answered, "Thank not us; thank the sun. It saw you dying and called us from the ocean. The winds heard you sighing, and brought us here to help you."

Then the little flower turned to the wind and the sun. The wind bent down to the earth, and stopped for a moment to hear its words.

The sun sent down its beams to receive the flower's message.

"Thank you, wind,—good wind," said the little flower.

"Thank you, sun,—good sun,—you have saved my life."

"Thank not us," said the sun and the wind; "thank the good God. He saw you dying; He heard you sighing, He took pity on you. We, sun and winds and clouds and falling raindrops are only the givers of His bounty."

And the flower breathed a prayer of thanks to the great and good God.

PANSIES

Pansies! pansies! How I love you, pansies,
  Jaunty-faced, laughing-lipped and dewy-eyed with glee;
Would my song might blossom out in little five-leaved stanzas
As delicate in fancies,
  As your beauty is to me.

James Whitcomb Riley.

One morning a king went into his garden for a walk. He noticed that the trees and flowers were drooped and somewhat withered. Turning to a great branching oak tree, his majesty said, "Tell me what has happened to my garden?"

"Sire," moaned the oak tree, "I am most unhappy. See how thick my trunk is and how gnarled and twisted my great branches are. Now the pine tree, which stands at the other end of the garden, is a picture of grace and beauty. How tall and slender the stem is, and what dainty needles—like leaves—adorn the branches."

The king walked on until he came to the pine tree. As he drew near he heard a deep sigh.

"What troubles you, slender pine tree?" he asked. 347

"Sire," replied the pine, "I've been wishing for many a day that I could bear luscious grapes such as ripen on the vine which trails over the garden wall. To bear rich clusters of purple fruit must, indeed, bring great happiness."

The king walked on until he came to the garden wall where the grapevine trailed. But he saw that the vine was withering and slipping down from the wall.

"What a rich harvest of fruit you bear this autumn!" said the king, going close to the grapevine. But, to his surprise, he heard a deep sigh and the grapevine said, "It is very hard to be obliged to cling to a garden wall for support. I should like to stand erect in the sunlight where all could see my ripe fruit." And the vine looked longingly at a peach tree which stood near.

The king turned down a little winding path, which led to a quieter spot in his garden. There he saw a bright-faced pansy drinking the morning dew, and beaming with happiness. 348

"Heartsease, my brave little flower," said the king, "you seem very cheerful. Tell me what wish you are nursing in that golden heart of yours?"

"Sire," answered the little flower, "my dearest wish is to be the very best heartsease that ever I can."

Once upon a time there lived in a country far over the sea a prophet whose name was Mohammed. He was a great leader and traveled many miles through his country, teaching the people who looked to him for guidance.

One scorching hot day, after a long pilgrimage through a dusty country, the great prophet stopped to rest. A clear stream flowed near him, and Mohammed bathed in its cool waters and then washed his travel-stained clothes. He spread the clean linen over a tall mallow plant. Then he lay down to rest while his garments were drying.

After sleeping for an hour or two the prophet wakened, much refreshed. He lifted his dry linen from the common plant, and lo! a great surprise met his eye. The mallow had been changed into a magnificent geranium, whose red clusters were dazzlingly bright in the sunshine.

Tulips white and tulips red,
Sweeter than a violet bed!
Say, old Mother Bailey, say,
Why your tulips look so gay,
Why they smell so sweet and why
They bloom when others die?

"By the pixies' magic power
Do my tulips always flower,
By the pixies' magic spell
Do they give so sweet a smell!
Tulips, tulips, red and white,
Fill the pixies with delight.

"Pixie women, pixie men,
Seek my tulips from the glen;
Midnight comes, they may be heard
Singing sweet as any bird,
Singing their wee babes to rest
In the tulips they love best!"

MAUD KEARY.

IRIS

Juno, the wife of Jupiter, was queen of the earth and sky. In her beautiful golden chariot, drawn by six brilliant peacocks, the proud queen sometimes drove on errands to all parts of the kingdom and even to the ends of the earth.

But when she wished a message to be delivered quickly she usually sent Iris, her faithful messenger, who was swift as the wind, to carry out her queen's requests. She would arch a lovely bridge of many colors from the skies to the earth; then, in robes of violet, blue, green, yellow, and red, she would pass over the bridge like a flash of light with her message to the earth or, perhaps, to the depths of the sea. When the people saw the brilliant arch in the sky they would call out, "See the rainbow. Iris brings us a message from Juno."

One day Juno invited all the flowers to a festival, for it was Iris's birthday. Many flowers came clothed in wondrous beauty. While the merry-making was at its highest, three strange flowers, who were sisters, appeared. One wore a rich red gown, another a bright yellow, and a third was clad in the softest violet. Each was adorned with richest jewels.

"Who are they and whence do they come?" asked the revelers. No one could answer, for no one knew the names of the strange visitors; indeed, not one flower could remember ever having seen them before.

When the strangers neared the others to join in the festival, the rain began to fall, and the little raindrops laughed and frolicked and danced in glee, while the flowers caught them in their cups and quickly let them roll away again to join the rest of their playmates.

Soon the sun was shining gorgeously again. And right across the sky spread the splendid arch of a rainbow, like bent sunbeams, one end of which was held by the strange flowers.

"The rainbow," cried the others, as soon as they saw it. "See, Iris's bridge. And the colors worn by the strange flowers are exactly like the red, yellow, and violet of the rainbow. Let us give our new friends the name of Iris. It was they who brought her lovely arched bridge into our midst."

Ever since that day these tall, stately flowers have been called by the name of Iris, the faithful messenger of the gods.

THE YELLOW-BIRD[3]

Hey! my little yellow-bird,
  What you doing there?
Like a flashing sun-ray
  Flitting everywhere;
Dangling down the tall weeds
  And the holly-hocks,
And the lovely sunflowers
  Along the garden walks.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

ORIGIN OF THE SUNFLOWER

(GREEK MYTH)

Clytie was the name of a beautiful nymph who lived in a coral cave far down in the depths of the sea. It happened one morning that she ventured to the surface of the water and looked toward the east. In the distance where the earth and sky met she saw a marvellous sight. Aurora, the goddess of dawn, rolled aside the soft grey curtains of the morning sky and there, waiting for the day's journey, stood Apollo's jeweled car.

Clytie saw the sun-god leap into his seat and take lightly in hand the reins of his restless, prancing steeds. Then up the steep slope of the eastern sky he drove, and the gleam from his dazzling chariot filled the air with golden light. All day long Clytie sat on the rocks near the shore and watched Apollo in his brilliant course. At evening when the last beams from the sun-god's car sank into the western sea, the nymph, with a deep sigh, returned to her coral halls.

But she no longer took keen delight in fashioning delicate shells and tending her seaweed gardens. She had fallen in love with the sun-god and longed with all her heart to see him again. One morning very early she rose to the surface of the water and wandered eastward toward a large green meadow which was very near the place where Apollo started his course. Again she saw the "rosy-fingered Dawn" roll aside the soft grey curtains; again she saw the radiant beauty of the sun-god. Clytie fixed her eyes on the driver of the golden chariot and never for one moment lost sight of him in his day's journey through the sky. For nine days the sea-nymph lingered in the meadow, tasting neither food nor drink, hoping for some small sign of favour from Apollo. But he was too intent on his marvellous course to find interest in the adoring Clytie. Her constancy, however, touched the heart of the sun-god with pity, and he changed her into a flower. Her slender limbs became a tall green stem, her delicate sea-green dress turned into leaves, and her lovely face and golden hair changed into sun-like flowers which faithfully follow the brilliant god of day all through his course.

THE BLUEBELL

There is a story I have heard;
A poet learned it of a bird,
And kept its music, every word.

About two thousand years ago,
A little flower, as white as snow,
Swayed in the silence to and fro.

Day after day with longing eye,
The floweret watched the narrow sky
And the fleecy clouds that floated by.

And swiftly o'er its petals white,
There crept a blueness like the light
Of skies, upon a summer night.

And in its chalice, I am told,
The bonny bell was found to hold
A tiny star that gleamed like gold.

THE DEW MOTHER'S GIFT TO THE ROSE

On warm summer evenings, when the afterglow of sunset tints the sky, the Dew Mother comes to care for her children of the earth, the trees, grass, and flowers. She is dressed in garments of softest grey, so delicate and so much like the mists of the evening sky that it is very hard, indeed, to see her wander about with her precious refreshing gift.

One evening, after a scorching hot day, the Dew Mother had heavy work to perform. She was needed everywhere. The fierce rays of the sun had parched the forest leaves; the fruit in the orchards and vineyards must be bathed in the life-giving dew; the thirsty flowers, hanging their heads, waited patiently for her tender care and they knew she would not forsake them.

When the Dew Mother had completed her task she was so weary that she felt she must rest before leaving the earth. It happened that she was in an old-fashioned garden where she found a bed of velvet moss. Here she lay down and slept until sunrise. When she opened her eyes she saw bending over her a beautiful rose bush.

"My queen of flowers, thou hast watched me through the night, and sheltered me with tender care from the sun's first rays," said the Dew Mother. "But what new gift can I add to the beauty of the rose whose perfume is the richest I can bestow; whose colour is like the first flush of the morning sky?"

Very humbly the queen of flowers replied, "Grant me a gift of the green moss, which made your resting place under my branches."

So the Dew Mother gladly added the gift of delicate soft moss to the manifold beauties of the rose, and to-day in many an old-fashioned garden one finds the exquisite moss rose.

A YELLOW PANSY

To the wall of the old green garden
A butterfly, quivering, came;
His wings in the somber lichens
Played like a yellow flame.

He looked at the grey geraniums,
And the sleepy four-o'clocks;
He looked at the low lanes bordered
With the glossy-growing box.

He longed for the peace and the silence,
And the shadows that lengthened there,
And his wee wild heart was weary
Of skimming the endless air.

And now in the old green garden,—
I know not how it came,—
A single pansy is blooming,
Bright as a yellow flame.

And whenever a gay gust passes,
It quivers as if with pain,
For the butterfly-soul that is in it
Longs for the winds again!

HELEN GRAY CONE.

MIGNONETTE

There was once a queen who was so fond of flowers that she wished to make her garden the most beautiful one in the world. Messengers from her court were sent into strange lands, and commanded to bring her majesty rare and wonderful flowering plants to fill her garden with a wealth of bloom.

"It must be a garden fit for a queen," she said to those who were sent at her bidding.

So great was this queen's love of flowers that she ordered her servants to keep a bouquet in every room of the palace during the flower season. And every morning her handmaidens gathered the choicest blossoms and placed them upon a table in the queen's own room.

Now it chanced one day that while the handmaidens were picking the flowers for their queen, one of them looked over the garden wall to the blue hills that lay beyond. To her great surprise, she discovered that a field alight with wonderful colors—yellow, blue, and crimson—stretched before her. It reached out toward a bank of white daisies which bordered the distant hills.

"Come, come!" she called to the others. "See, is this not a fair sight?"

The handmaidens came at the call and were lost in wonder at the beauty of the scene.

"Let us gather her majesty's bouquet this morning from the flowers here," suggested one. "I am sure our queen does not know how much beauty lies so close to her own garden."

The others were well pleased with the plan. Together they climbed the stone wall, ran into the field, and gathered a wealth of blossoms. In a little while these field flowers graced the royal table.

Now the queen who, as you know, loved her flowers more than any other one thing in the world, never failed each morning to look at her bouquet and examine with loving care each blossom in it. And it was with no small surprise that she discovered the strange flowers placed that morning upon her table.

"These blossoms are rare, indeed," said she. "Is it possible that my garden contains so many plants that are strangers to me? I have seen blossoms more beautiful than some of these, but never before have I enjoyed a perfume so delicious. To which one of them does it belong, I wonder?" And the queen bent close to the bouquet to see if she could detect the flower with the sweet odor.

"I shall want the same kind of bouquet for many days," she said, smiling.

So it happened that each morning the handmaidens ran to the fields beyond the palace garden, and gathered some of the flowers which had won her majesty's heart.

One morning the queen called her handmaidens to her and said, "The flower with the delicious odor is missing. Do you know which one was not gathered to-day?"

"We do not know," said the maidens; "each day we have tried to bring the same kind of flowers. We will search for it."

But day after day the queen was disappointed, because she missed from her flowers the one whose perfume was the sweetest she had ever enjoyed.

Once or twice she thought the handmaidens had found the blossom, but in a little while she knew the scent was not the one she was hoping to find.

One morning she said, "I'll go with you to gather the blossoms, my handmaidens. I shall find the flower by its rare odor."

Then the maidens told the queen about the meadow outside the royal park, and together they went to the beautiful field, whose blossoms delighted her majesty's heart. Many times while they were all searching for the treasure, they saw the queen stoop over a bright flower and linger for a moment or two. Then she would shake her head and say, "No, that is not the perfume I am searching."

"It must be in this meadow somewhere," said one of the maidens, "for many days we have gathered flowers nowhere but here."

"We'll search until we find it, then," said the queen.

As she spoke a light breeze began to stir the flowers, and a delicate perfume filled the air.

"I smell the rare odor now," called out her majesty. "Come, stand near for a moment, and enjoy it. Surely the flower is not far away."

The handmaidens gathered round their queen. Suddenly one of them said, "Can it be that this odor comes from the little plant under your majesty's foot?" asked one of the maidens.

"Surely not," answered another; "those flowers are so small and colorless."

The queen stooped down and took a spray from the humble little plant which had sent forth an exquisite perfume when a careless foot had crushed its blossoms.

"It is! It is!" cried the queen in delight. "I have found it at last. It shall be brought into the royal gardens, and shall be my special treasure. What a modest little plant it is, and what rare delight it gives."

"Shall you give your treasure a name?" asked the handmaidens.

The queen looked for a moment at the spray she held. Then she said, "I shall call it Mignonette, which means 'little darling.'"

Accordingly, the mignonette was taken from its wild life in the meadows and brought into the gardens, where it still gives forth the sweetest of all perfumes.

Her garden was her pleasure and her care;
Morning and evening one could find her there
Working and wondering. Every scent and hue
Filled her with joy, with beauty pierced her through.

For as her flowers opened to the sun
Each seemed a radiant world her soul had won,
This paradise of perfume her own hand
Had made, this glowing tapestry she planned.
From walls that kept marauding winds shut out,
A fountain splashed, a brook wound slow about
Field of spiced-candy-tuft, hedged with trim box,
Dark blue verbenas, larkspur, snow-white phlox,
And beds of heliotrope that in the night 368
Offered rare incense for the stars' delight.
Robin and catbird sought her iris pool,
Fluttered and bathed them in its shallow cool,
Then poised one happy moment on the banks
To offer to the stream their lyric thanks.

Edward Bliss Reed.

O, grown-ups cannot understand
And grown-ups never will,
How short's the way to fairy-land
Across the purple hill:
They smile: their smile is very bland,
Their eyes are wise and chill;
And yet—at just a child's command—
The world's an Eden still.

ALFRED NOYES.

THE FRIENDLY COWSLIP BELLS

One midsummer day the bright sun shone from morning until evening; not even a wisp of white cloud floated across the blue, blue sky. The fairies were delighted, for that night they were going to have their gayest sport.

"We shall have a fine revel in cowslip meadow to-night," said a happy little creature to the fairy shoemaker who had been busy for many a day making shoes for the midsummer revel.

The little wrinkled old man was fastening a diamond buckle on the queen's dancing slippers and he did not like to be bothered when he was busy, so he merely shook his head and sang:

"Red sky at night
Is the fairies' delight;
Red sky in the morning
Is the fairies' warning."

"But there hasn't been a cloud as big as my thumb nail in the sky all day long," said the merry little fairy. "How can there be rain without clouds?"

The shoemaker nodded his head, went on with his work, and sang again:

"The clear blue sky
Means rain is nigh."

One hour before midnight when the big round moon lit up the fields and dells a rainbow troop of fairies in dainty gossamer robes and sparkling slippers came forth from their village in the hills for the midsummer night merry-making.

The dancing in a ring was the greatest sport. First they formed a circle standing very close together. Then, keeping time to the music of the fairy fiddler, who stood in the center, the little revellers danced round and round in a ring which grew larger and larger until the dancers could scarcely touch one another's tiny fingers. Peals of silvery laughter filled the air as they broke away from the ring and had a merry game of hide and seek or catch, until the fairy fiddler's music lured them back to the dancing ring.

Three times they had danced in the ring; three times they had frolicked among the grass blades in the merry games of hide and seek and catch, when suddenly they noticed a dark shadow fall on the green dancing rings.

Wistfully they peered at the sky to see what was the matter. Soft clouds were sailing right across the moon's face and the next moment a few pattering raindrops began to fall, and the fairy shoemaker, who had brought his work out into the fields (he never joined in the sport), sang out in a high, ringing voice:

"A clear blue sky
Means rain is nigh."

The fairies all knew what he meant for he had sung the same little rhyme several times during the day when they had rejoiced about the promise of a clear, moonlight night.

"What shall we do?"

"Where shall we go?" asked the tiny creatures, for the raindrops were beginning to fall faster.

"See how the cowslip bells are bending. Perhaps they mean to shelter us," said the fairy queen.

In a twinkling groups of fairies fled to the stalks of cowslip tufts. One after another each crept quickly into one of the hanging bells of the flowers, and there they nestled softly, safe from the pattering raindrops, which fell faster and faster in a midnight summer shower. How cosy they were, cuddled up in the golden bells which swayed gently to and fro as light breezes touched them. So delighted they were with these lovely cradles that they sang one of their sweetest melodies when the clouds disappeared and the full moon again flooded the meadow with light.

The fairies did not forget the service of the friendly cowslip bells. They gave the flower a new name—the fairy-cup—and always in their midsummer night's revel, at a sign from the fairy queen, they stop dancing for a few moments, creep into the bells of the cowslips, and sing their sweetest melody of Fairyland.

FAIRY DAWN

'Tis the hour of fairy ban and spell:
The wood-tick has kept the minutes well;
He has counted them all with click and stroke,
Deep in the heart of the mountain oak,
And he has awakened the sentry elve
  Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,
To bid him ring the hour of twelve,
  And call the fays to their revelry;
Twelve small strokes on his tinkling bell—
('Twas made of the white snail's pearly shell)—
  "Midnight comes, and all is well!
Hither, hither, wing your way!
  'Tis the dawn of the fairy-day."

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

ERNEST RHYS

Once upon a time, a great while ago, when men did eat and drink less, and were more honest, and knew no knavery, there was wont to walk many harmless sprites called fairies, dancing in brave order in fairy rings on green hills with sweet music. Sometimes they were invisible, and sometimes took divers shapes. Many mad pranks would they play, as pinching of untidy damsels black and blue, and misplacing things in ill-ordered houses; but lovingly would they use good girls, giving them silver and other pretty toys, which they would leave for them, sometimes in their shoes, other times in their pockets, sometimes in bright basins and other clean vessels.

Now it chanced that in those happy days, a babe was born in a house to which the fairies did like well to repair. This babe was a boy, and the fairies, to show their pleasure, brought many pretty things thither, coverlets and delicate linen for his cradle; and capons, woodcock, and quail for the christening, at which there was so much good cheer that the clerk had almost forgot to say the babe's name—Robin Goodfellow. So much for the birth and christening of little Robin.

When Robin was grown to six years of age, he was so knavish that all the neighbors did complain of him; for, no sooner was his mother's back turned, but he was in one knavish action or other, so that his mother was constrained (to avoid the complaints) to take him with her to market or wheresoever she went or rode. But this helped little or nothing, for, if he rode before her, then would he make mouths and ill-favored faces at those he met: if he rode behind her, then would he clap his hand on the tail; so that his mother was weary of the many complaints that came against him. Yet knew she not how to beat him justly for it, because she never saw him do that which was worthy of blows. The complaints were daily so renewed that his mother promised him a whipping. Robin did not like that cheer, and, therefore, to avoid it, he ran away, and left his mother a-sorrowing for him.

After Robin had travelled a good day's journey from his mother's house he sat down, and, being weary, he fell asleep. No sooner had slumber closed his eye-lids, but he thought he saw many goodly proper little personages in antic measures tripping about him, and withal he heard such music, as he thought that Orpheus, that famous Greek fiddler (had he been alive), compared to one of these had been but a poor musician. As delights commonly last not long, so did those end sooner than Robin would willingly they should have done; and for very grief he awaked, and found by him lying a scroll wherein was written these lines following, in golden letters:—

"Robin, my only son and heir,
How to live take thou no care:
By nature thou hast cunning shifts,
Which I'll increase with other gifts.
Wish what thou wilt, thou shalt it have;
And for to fetch both fool and knave,
Thou hast the power to change thy shape,
To horse, to hog, to dog, to ape,
Transformed thus, by any means
See none thou harm'st but knaves and queans:
But love thou those that honest be,
And help them in necessity.
Do thus and all the world shall know
The pranks of Robin Goodfellow,
For by that name thou called shalt be
To age's last posterity;
And if thou keep my just command,
One day thou shalt see Fairy-land!"

Robin, having read this, was very joyful, yet longed he to know whether he had the power or not, and to try it he wished for some meat. Presently a fine dish of roast veal was before him. Then wished he for plum-pudding; he straightway had it. This liked him well, and, because he was weary, he wished himself a horse: no sooner was his wish ended, but he was changed into as fine a nag as you need see, and leaped and curveted as nimbly as if he had been in stable at rack and manger a full month. Then he wished himself a black dog, and he was so; then a green tree, and he was so. So from one thing to another, till he was quite sure that he could change himself to anything whatsoever he liked.

Thereupon, full of delight at his new powers, Robin Goodfellow set out, eager to put them to the test.

As he was crossing a field, he met with a red-faced carter's clown and called to him to stop.

"Friend," quoth he, "what is a clock?"

"A thing," answered the clown, "that shows the time of the day."

"Why, then," said Robin Goodfellow, "be thou a clock and tell me what time of the day it is."

"I owe thee not so much service," answered the clown again, "but, because thou shalt think thyself beholden to me, know that it is the same time of the day as it was yesterday at this time!"

These shrewd answers vexed Robin Goodfellow, so that in himself he vowed to be revenged of the clown, which he did in this manner.

Robin Goodfellow turned himself into a bird and followed this fellow, who was going into a field a

little from that place to catch a horse that was at grass. The horse, being wild, ran over dyke and hedge, and the fellow after, but to little purpose, for the horse was too swift for him. Robin was glad of this occasion, for now or never was the time to have his revenge.

Presently Robin shaped himself exactly like the horse that the clown followed, and so stood right before him. Then the clown took hold of the horse's mane and got on his back, but he had not ridden far when, with a stumble, Robin hurled his rider over his head, so that he almost broke his neck. But then again he stood still and let the clown mount him once more.

By the way which the clown now would ride was a great pond of water of a good depth, which covered the road. No sooner did he ride into the very middle of the pond than Robin Goodfellow turned himself into a fish, and so left him with nothing but the pack-saddle on which he was riding betwixt his legs. Meanwhile the fish swiftly swam to the bank. And then Robin, changed to a naughty boy again, ran away laughing, "Ho, ho, hoh!" leaving the poor clown half drowned and covered with mud.

As Robin took his way along a green hedge-side he fell to singing:—

"And can the doctor make sick men well?
And can the gipsy a fortune tell
Without lily, germander, and cockle-shell?
With sweet-brier,
And bon-fire
And strawberry wine,
And columbine."

And when he had sung this over, he fell to wondering what he should next turn himself into. Then, as he saw the smoke rise from the chimneys of the next town, he thought to himself it would be to him great sport to walk the streets with a broom on his shoulder, and cry:

"Chimney sweep."

But when presently Robin did this, and one did call him, then did Robin run away laughing, "Ho, ho, hoh!"

Next he set about to counterfeit a lame beggar, begging very pitifully; but when a stout chandler came out of his shop to give Robin an alms, again he skipped off nimbly, laughing as his naughty manner was.

That same night, he did knock at many men's doors, and when the servants came out he blew out their candle and straightway vanished in the dark street, with his "Ho, ho, hoh!"

All these mirthful tricks did Robin play, that day and night, and in these humours of his he had many pretty songs, one of which I will sing as perfectly as I can. He sang it in his chimney-sweeper's humour, to the tune of "I have been a fiddler these fifteen years."

"Black I am from head to foot,
And all doth come by chimney soot.
Then, maidens, come and cherish him
That makes your chimneys neat and trim."

But it befell that, on the very next night to his playing the chimney-sweep, Robin had a summons from the land where are no chimneys. For King Oberon, seeing Robin Goodfellow do so many merry tricks, called him out of his bed with these words, saying:—

"Robin, my son, come; quickly rise:
First stretch, then yawn, and rub your eyes;
For thou must go with me tonight,
And taste of Fairy-land's delight."

Robin, hearing this, rose and went to him. There were with King Oberon many fairies, all attired in green. All these, with King Oberon, did welcome Robin Goodfellow into their company. Oberon took Robin by the hand and led him a fair dance: their musician had an excellent bag-pipe made of a wren's quill and the skin of a Greenland fly. This pipe was so shrill and so sweet that a Scottish pipe, compared to it, would no more come near it than a Jew's-harp doth to an Irish harp. After they had danced, King Oberon said to Robin:—

"Whene'er you hear the piper blow,
Round and round the fairies go!
And nightly you must with us dance,
In meadows where the moonbeams glance,
And make the circle, hand in hand—
That is the law of Fairy-land!
There thou shalt see what no man knows;
While sleep the eyes of men doth close!"

So marched they, with their piper before, to the Fairy-land. There did King Oberon show Robin Goodfellow many secrets, which he never did open to the world. And there, in Fairy-land, doth Robin Goodfellow abide now this many a long year.

A QUARREL IN FAIRYLAND

(Arranged from "A Midsummer Night's Dream")

Time—Midsummer Night.
Place—An enchanted grove.

Characters
Oberon—*King of Fairyland*
Titania—*Queen of Fairyland*
Puck—*Robin Goodfellow*
Bottom—*A clownish fellow*
Peas-blossom
Cobweb
Moth }
Mustard Seed } *Fairies*
Attendant Fairies

SCENE I

(*Enter, from opposite sides, a* Fairy *and* Puck)

Puck.

How now, spirit! whither wander you?

Fairy.

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the Fairy Queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be.
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, Fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours.
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone;
Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.

Puck.

The King doth keep his revels here to-night:
Take heed the Queen come not within his sight;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king.
She never had so sweet a changeling;
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild.
But she perforce withholds the lovèd boy,
Crowns him with flowers and makes him all her joy:
And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,
But they do square, that all their elves for fear
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

Fairy.

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Called Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skims milk, and sometime labours in the quern,
And bootless makes the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime makes the drink to bear no barn;
Misleads night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
You do their work and they shall have good luck.
Are not you he?

Puck.

Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal;
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab;
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her, and down topples she,
And "tailor" cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,
And waxen in their mirth, and sneeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

Fairy.

And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

(*Enter, from one side*, OBERON *with his train*;
from the other, TITANIA *with hers*)

OBERON.

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA.

What, jealous Oberon! Fairy, skip hence.

OBERON.

Tarry, rash wanton: am I not thy lord?

TITANIA.

Then I must be thy lady.
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, forest, or head,
By pavèd fountain or by rushy brook,
Or on the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlet to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport. 391

OBERON.

Do you amend it, then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.

TITANIA.

Set your heart at rest:
The Fairyland buys not the child of me.
If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

OBERON.

Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

TITANIA.

Not for thy Fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

(*Exit* TITANIA *with her train*.)

OBERON.

Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.—
My gentle Puck, come hither.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I show'd thee once. 392
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb, and be thou here again.
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

PUCK.

I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.

(*Exit* PUCK)

OBERON.

Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquour of it in her eyes.
The next thing then she, waking, looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,—
She shall pursue it with the soul of love;
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,—
As I can take it with another herb,—
I'll make her render up her page to me

(*Re-enter* PUCK)

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

PUCK.

Aye, here it is.

OBERON.

I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows;
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine.
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight.
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in;
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.

SCENE II

(*Another part of the wood*)

(*Enter* Titania, *with her train*)

TITANIA.

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;
Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves' coats; and some keep back
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

(*The* FAIRIES *sing*)

FIRST FAIRY

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newt and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.

Chorus.

Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby.
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

SECOND FAIRY.

Weaving spiders, come here;
Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offense.

Chorus.

Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby.
Never harm,
Nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

FIRST FAIRY.

Hence, away! now all is well;
One aloof stand sentinel.

(*Exeunt* FAIRIES. TITANIA *sleeps*.)

Enter OBERON, *and squeezes the flower on* TITANIA'S *eyelids*.

OBERON.

What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true-love take;
Love and languish for his sake:
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear:
Wake when some vile thing is near.

[*Exit* OBERON]

(The mischievous little PUCK, wandering in the forest, meets a clownish fellow named BOTTOM. Very slyly PUCK slips an ass's head over BOTTOM'S hairy pate; and in this strange disguise the clown walks very near the flowery bank where TITANIA lies sleeping. He sings in a harsh voice and awakens the Fairy Queen. The charm makes her fall in love with BOTTOM, since he is the first creature she sees upon waking.)

BOTTOM (*sings*).

The ousel cock so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill,—

Titania (awakening).

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bottom (sings).

The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plain-song cuckoo grey,
Whose note full many a man doth mark—
And dares not answer nay;— 397
for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? Who would give a bird the lie, though he cry "cuckoo" never so?

TITANIA.

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamor'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthrallèd to thy shape,
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM.

Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days; the more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

TITANIA.

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

BOTTOM.

Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

TITANIA. 398

Out of this wood do not desire to go:
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate,—
The Summer still doth tend upon my state;
And I do love thee. Therefore, go with me.
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing, while thou on pressèd flowers dost sleep:
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so.
That thou shalt like airy spirit go.
Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed!

(*Enter* PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, *and* MUSTARDSEED)

PEASEBLOSSOM. Ready.

COBWEB. And I.

MOTH. And I.

MUSTARDSEED. And I.

ALL. Where shall we go? 399

TITANIA.

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricots and dewberries.
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries:
The honey-bags steal from the humble bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes.
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

PEASEBLOSSOM. Hail, mortal!

COBWEB. Hail!

MOTH. Hail!

MUSTARDSEED. Hail!

TITANIA.

Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.

SCENE III

(*Enter* Titania *and* Bottom; Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustardseed, *and other* Fairies *attending*; Oberon *behind, unseen*.)

Titania.

Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head.

Bottom. Where's Peaseblossom?

Peaseblossom. Ready.

Bottom.

Scratch my head, Peaseblossom.—Where's
Monsieur Cobweb?

Cobweb. Ready.

Bottom.

Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur,
get your weapons in your hand, and kill me
a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a
thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the
honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much
in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur,
have a care the honey-bag break not; I
would be loath to have you overflown with
a honey-bag, signior. Where's Monsieur 401
Mustardseed?

Mustardseed (*bowing*). Ready.

Bottom.

Give me your neaf, Monsieur
Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your courtesy,
good monsieur.

Mustardseed. What's your will?

Bottom.

Nothing, good monsieur, but to
help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must
to the barber's, monsieur, for methinks I
am marvellous hairy about the face; and I
am such a tender ass, if my hair do but
tickle me I must scratch.

Titania.

What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet
love?

Bottom.

I have a reasonable good ear in
music. Let's have the tongs and the bones.

(*Rough music is played*)

Titania.

Or say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

Bottom.

Truly, a peck of provender; I
could munch your good dry oats. Methinks
I have a great desire to a bottle of
hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

Titania. 402

I have a venturous fairy that shall
seek the squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee
thence new nuts.

Bottom.

I had rather have a handful or two
of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of
your people stir me. I have an exposition
of sleep come upon me.

TITANIA.

Sleep thou:
Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away.

(*Exeunt* FAIRIES)

(*Enter* PUCK)

OBERON (*advancing*).

Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity;
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her and fall out with her:
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds
Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls, 403
Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes
Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail.
When I had at my pleasure taunted her
And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child,
Which straight she gave me, and her fairies sent
To bear him to my bower in Fairyland.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes:
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That, he awaking ...
May to Athens back again repair
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the Fairy Queen.

(OBERON *touches the queen's eyes with an herb which lifts the charm*)

Be as thou wast wont to be,
See as thou wast wont to see:
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower 404
Hath such force and blessed power.
Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet Queen!

TITANIA.

My Oberon! what visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

OBERON.

Sound music! Come, my Queen, take hands with me....

PUCK.

Fairy King, attend and mark:
I do hear the morning lark.

OBERON.

Then, my Queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night shade:
We the globe can compass soon
Swifter than the wand'ring moon.

TITANIA.

Come, my lord.

(*Exeunt* OBERON, TITANIA, *and train*)

PUCK.

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumberéd here
While these visions did appear.
So, good-night unto you all;
Give me your hands if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING

In the cool of the evening, when the low sweet whispers waken,
When the labourers turn them homeward, and the weary have their will,
When the censers of the roses o'er the forest-aisles are shaken,
Is it but the wind that cometh o'er the far green hill?

For they say 'tis but the sunset winds that wander through the heather,
Rustle all the meadow-grass and bend the dewy fern;
They say 'tis but the winds that bow the reeds in prayer together,
And fill the shaken pools with fire along the shadowy burn.

In the beauty of the twilight, in the Garden that He loveth,
They have veiled His lovely vesture with the darkness of a name!
Thro' His Garden, thro' His Garden it is but the wind that moveth,
No more; but O the miracle, the miracle is the same!

In the cool of the evening, when the sky is an old story
Slowly dying, but remembered, ay, and loved with passion still,
Hush! ... the fringes of His garment, in the fading golden glory,
Softly rustling as He cometh o'er the far green hill.

ALFRED NOYES.

FOOTNOTES:

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The original spelling and punctuation has been retained.
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