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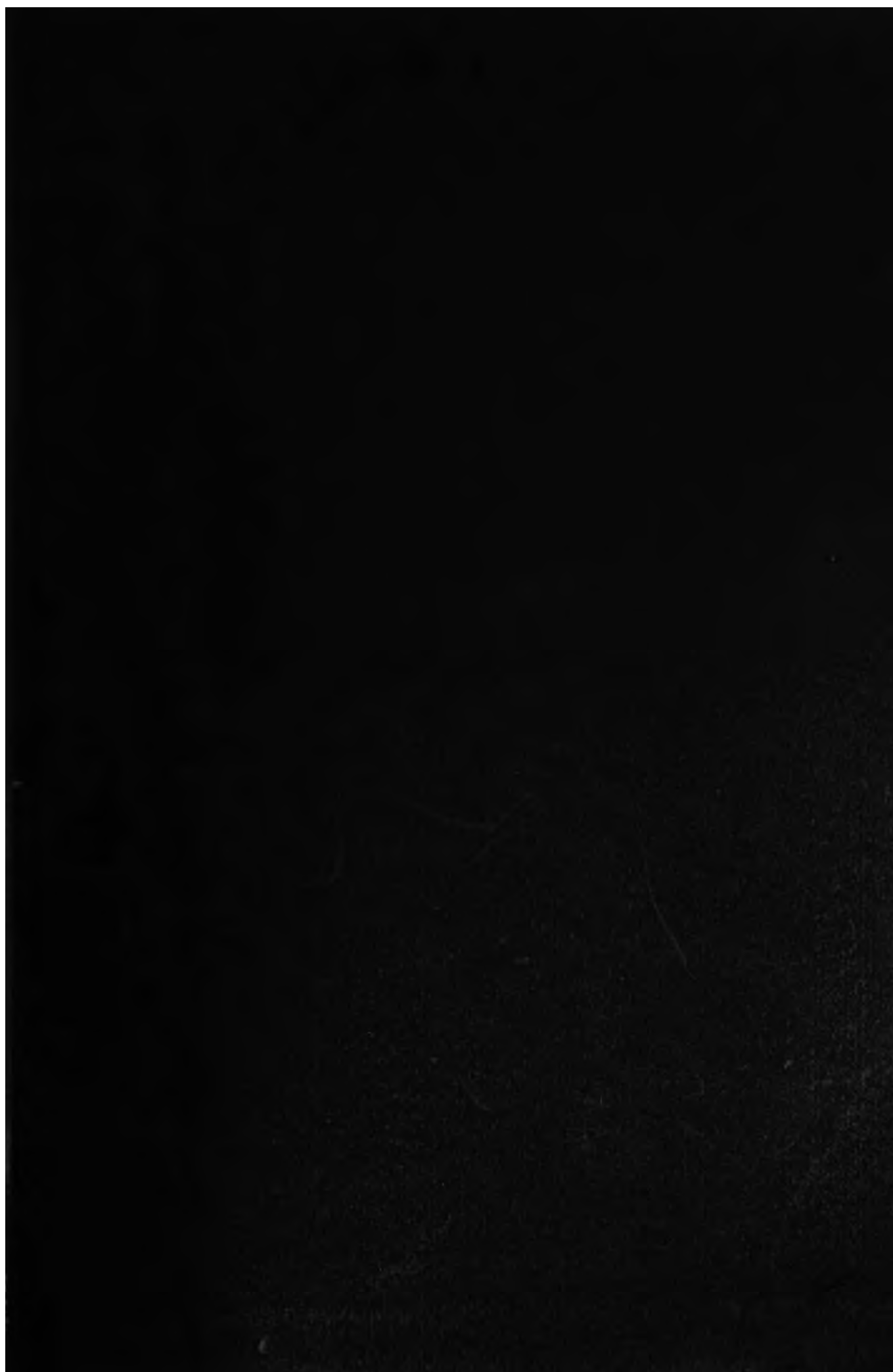
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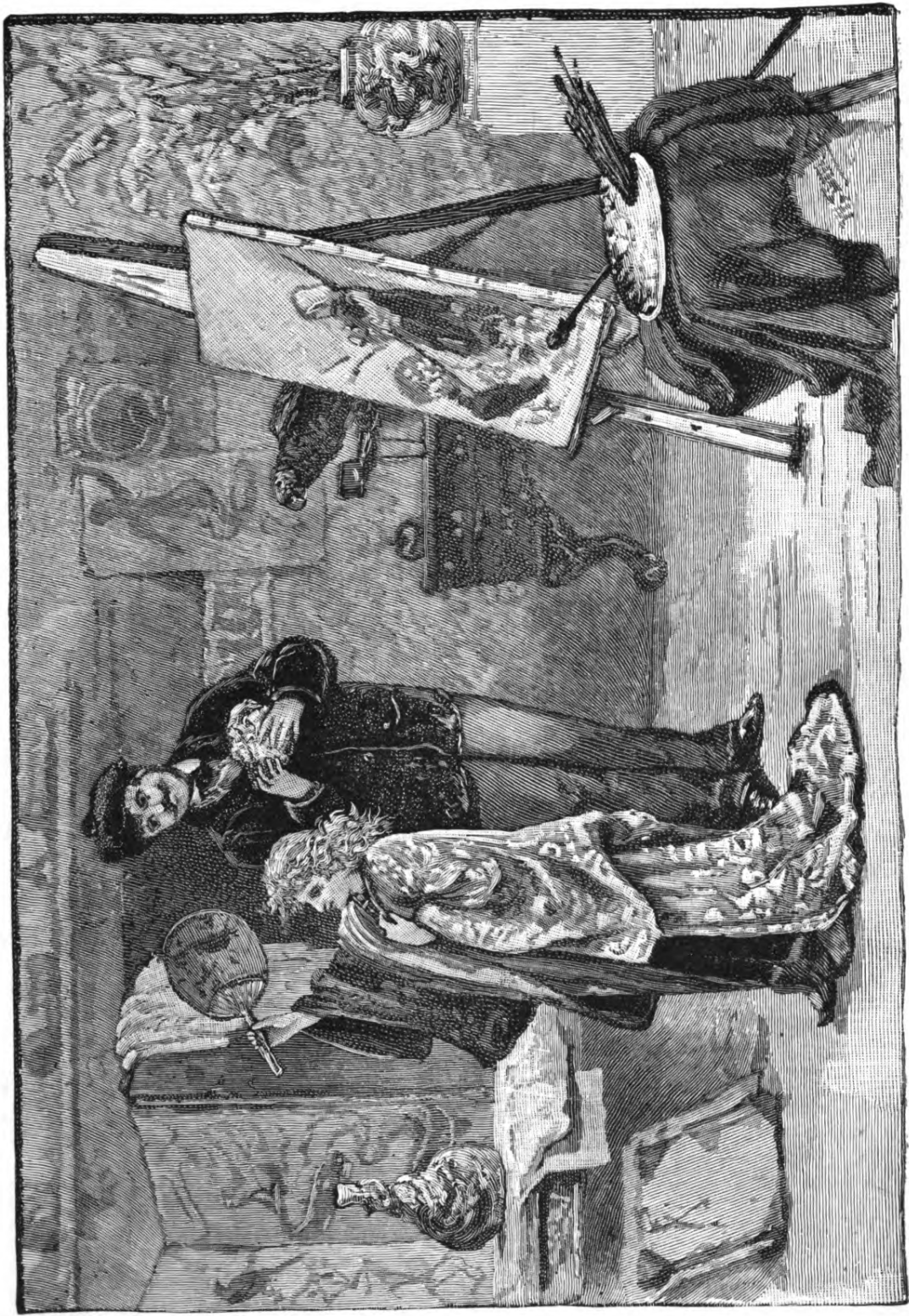


THE
BUBBLING
TEA-POT
— A —
WONDER
STORY









FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN IN MR. ROSE'S STUDIO.

THE BUBBLING TEAPOT:

A WONDER STORY.

BY

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Author of "All Around a Palette;" "In the Sky Garden;" "Three Girls Abroad;" &c.

*WITH TWELVE FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
BY WALTER SATTERLEE.*



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THE BUBBLING TEAPOT.

CHAPTER I.

FLOSSY TAKES A JOURNEY.

MR. ROSE, whose studio was on the very top floor of the apartment house opposite which Flossy Tangleskein lived, wished Flossy to pose for him.

He admitted that this was a great favor, but among all the models of the city he knew of no little face that would suit him so well, and as the families were old friends he asked it as a special kindness.

The studio had a great fascination for Flossy. She had a queer notion that one day, when she was a younger girl, and had played here with the artist's son Ruby, they had seen a pair of wonderful paint-bogies ; queer little elves who had told

them stories and had made remarkable things happen to them. Flossy had been laughed at not a little for this belief but she still held it firmly, and the studio seemed to her enchanted ground where anything strange might happen. It was a year since she had entered it, for when Ruby and she had last played there they had made free with the paints, and had dressed up in the costumes; and since then Mr. Rose had not been prodigal of his invitations to children. He was a nervous man, and did not enjoy having them dash about among his bric-à-brac, or stand too near his freshly-painted pictures. Still Flossy cherished the memory of what she had seen in the room, how her eyes had grown large with wonder and admiration at the curious things with which it was filled. There was a brilliant blue and yellow macaw chained to a perch, which she liked to feed, offering it lumps of sugar at a safe distance with a pair of sugar-tongs, for the macaw had a vicious temper. There were portfolios of sketches which she would have liked to rummage; and stately gowns which she would have enjoyed trying on. Alto-

gether everything was different from the careful propriety of their own parlor, and Flossy was tired of the sameness and commonplace of her comfortable and quiet life, in which nothing exciting ever happened as in the story-books.

"I wish," she thought to herself, "that I had been born some other kind of a child,

For I might have been a Russian,
A Frenchman or a Prussian,
Or even an Italian.
But in spite of each temptation,
To belong to another nation,
I am only an Englishman."

It would have been a great deal more romantic, she thought, to have been an Italian bambino in wonderful Rome or Naples, far more interesting to have been born among lotus blossoms, an Egyptian child. There was a portfolio of Egyptian photographs in Mr. Rose's studio, and among them one of a ruined temple with long colonnades of columns with tulip-shaped capitals, and the great, lazy Nile shimmering in the background. No school bell could pierce the slumberous air;

there certainly was the Child's Paradise. How picturesque too, she might have been as a French peasant in the happy vineyards of France. It was as a Breton peasant child that Mr. Rose wished her to pose. And he handed her a queer little costume which he had brought back from Pont Aven ; consisting of a rather long-skirted, dull blue petticoat, a white waist with full sleeves, a black velvet bodice and a queer little cap. Flossy slipped these on in the dressing room, her fluffy blonde hair escaped from the cap, covering her shoulders, and Mr. Rose fastened about her neck a silver chain with curiously formed links, and gave her a clumsy pair of sabots or wooden shoes, in which she found it very hard to hobble across the studio. Then he showed her a sketch of the picture which he wished to make — a little girl guarding a flock of turkeys in a broad meadow ; in the distance loomed the pinnacled and gabled roof of a grand French chateau.

When Flossy had taken the desired position Mr. Rose began to paint, amusing her as he did so with a legend of Brittany. The child's head was

quite turned, and she wished passionately that she might have been a Breton peasant child. She was so discontented with her hum-drum-bread-and-butter-spelling-book, English child-life that she even said to herself she would gladly change to a little Zulu savage, or an almond-eyed Oriental like the ones who were perpetually walking in the tea-garden on the great embroidered screen.

Mr. Rose, like many another artist, was extremely fond of Oriental bric-à-brac, by which term we mean all the bright and curious things we see in the Japanese stores. He was a collector too, as far as his purse would permit. A great Japanese umbrella hung in the centre of his studio, and, as Flossy said, *gayafied* the whole apartment. The room was further brightened by a shelf of Japanese and Chinese porcelain, and a screen draped with costumes in Canton crêpe and soft silks of exquisite tints. Mr. Rose let her put on one of these. It was a little brocade wrapper, one side of which was sky-blue, and across it were embroidered sprays and branches of blossoming peach, and soft white storks, flying in long lines.

The other side of the dress was irregularly divided into purple and rose-colored spaces, the purple figured in great golden dragons, and the rose in kaleidoscopic patterns of mingling colors. It was a very beautiful garment wadded and lined with fine crêpe of a pale saffron tint. It nearly touched the floor, and Flossy thought she had never seen any English child dressed half so fine. Why was it that her mamma considered it out of taste to wear more than two colors at once, when this gorgeous robe combined at least eight? She stepped before the mirror and lifted her arms with the long sleeves. "I look like one of the teapots up there on the shelf," she said, laughing.

"You do indeed," replied Mr. Rose, taking down a beautifully enamelled Satsuma one and placing it on the table beside her. "Do you know," he continued, "that the Japs have a story about a Bubbling Teapot, something like Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp? And it is not very strange that there should be a similarity between the two, for Aladdin is a Chinese story."

"Tell me about the teapot, please," said Flossy.

"I don't quite remember it. It was a mess of nonsense about a bubbling girl and a weeping teapot. Every time the teapot cried it turned into a boiling girl, and every time the girl bubbled she turned into a weeping teapot."

"I think you have mixed that up, something the way my Grandma Tangleskein mixes sermons," Flossy remarked gravely. She remained perfectly quiet for a few moments, her eyes fixed on a gilt dragon which formed the handle of the teapot with its contortions. Then she glanced at her right sleeve about which another golden dragon writhed, and said slowly, "I wish I had been born in the Arabian Nights, and could change into a pretty teapot." Then she gave a little cry, but Mr. Rose did not hear her for he had suddenly remembered a Cloisonné vase which was to be sold that morning at auction at the custom house, for non-payment of duty, and seizing his hat he rushed out, hoping that he was not too late to secure it.

(First Transformation.)

Flossy's scream was occasioned by a double circumstance. The teapot on the table grew limp and

settled down into a mass of silken drapery. It had changed suddenly into the costume which Flossy had been wearing. At the same time her right arm, which she had raised to her head, stiffened, and she was unable to lower it, the left, which she had extended involuntarily, was paralyzed in that position, and she felt her own form changing into a dumpy round shape, while the silken dress hardened into adamant, the tints and patterns only remaining the same. She looked at the mirror and saw that her features were transforming, her head sinking in, the eyes disappearing, the lips losing themselves in a wrinkle until the change was complete. She had become a teapot! Flossy laughed merrily, the idea was so funny; but her laugh had an unnatural gurgling sound like the boiling of water.

"I wonder how long I shall stay so," she said to herself. "Until somebody tries to make tea in me, I suppose. I wonder whether Mr. Rose will put me over the gas-stove and make some for lunch." The idea was rather appalling, and she hoped that he would not do so. She sat very quietly after that looking at the other bits of porcelain and wonder-

ing whether they too were enchanted maidens, until Mr. Rose flung open the studio door and strode into the room in a manner which betokened triumph. He held in his hand the coveted vase, and he had brought with him an almond-eyed, dark-skinned stranger, who, although he was dressed like a European, was unmistakably a Japanese.

"Yes," Mr. Rose remarked, evidently continuing a conversation, "I have already some nice bits of the art of your country, which I shall be pleased to show you. Flossy! Where is the child? Ah! she has placed the costume on the table; but how careless in her to leave this teapot on the floor (lifting Flossy by one arm as he spoke). Let me see, where shall I put this? I must have my new vase on the shelf, and really I have no room for this little object now."

"May I see it?" the strange gentleman asked, and Mr. Rose placed Flossy in his hand. He looked at her attentively turning her around slowly and not taking any great interest in the other articles which Mr. Rose showed him. Just as he was leaving he asked, "Have you ever made tea in this teapot?"

"No," replied Mr. Rose, "I feared I might injure it."

The stranger smiled significantly. "I need not have asked," he said, "you were quite right, you would have had no teapot left. I sail to Japan tomorrow, and have taken a fancy to this object, will you sell it?"

"You may take it freely," replied Mr. Rose, "and I shall in turn be obliged to you if you can pick up for me something in the way of costume."

The stranger bowed, and wrapping Flossy carefully, carried her away. She felt sure from what he had said that he knew her secret, and she looked forward with curiosity to future events. Many days passed before Flossy was unwrapped. When she saw the light once more she knew she was in Japan. She recognized the funnel-shaped mountain of Fusi-yama, which she had seen painted upon so many fans, and the storks that the Japanese are so fond of repeating in their decoration.

She was placed upon a square of matting in a little booth, and the stranger had stretched before her a tight rope. He was lighting some charcoal in a

brazier, and when it was well-ignited he spoke to her.

“Bubbling Teapot,” he said, “I have found you at last. Know that I am the magician, your former owner. Know that I have travelled in search of you over two continents, and having found you I am not likely to lose you again. For although it is in your power, when a girl, by weeping to change yourself into a teapot at any time when you are discontented with your condition, you can only be changed from a teapot to a girl again by being boiled over a fire — and that I shall be careful not to do. Rise, therefore, and dance upon the tight-rope as I taught you to do in years past.”

He ceased, and began beating a drum. Flossy was frightened, but would neither move nor speak.

“Dance, obstinate teapot,” commanded the magician, “or I will place you over this brazier !”

“That is only an idle threat,” Flossy replied, for she found that she could speak, though only to the magician and when he willed it ; “for if you boil me I will change into a girl.”

“If I *boil* you, yes — but if I give you no water
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but simply burn you, no. Will you dance or not?"

Flossy rocked from side to side in an agony of fear, and seeing that she made an attempt to obey him, the magician poised her carefully upon the tight-rope. Then tilting the teapot gently with his finger he set it to swaying in time to his drum, and alternately lifting either end of the rope he allowed it to slide backward and forward. "That will do," he said at length. "I see you have not forgotten. I shall take you to-night to perform before a rich daimio. Dance your prettiest, or, by the great Ti Fun, I will not only burn you, but break you to atoms."

Flossy travelled with the magician for many months. They performed at the country fairs surrounded by the populace and at the court of grand personages. The children especially were glad to see the performing teapot and in the children Flossy was most interested. They were all grave little creatures; the girls especially seemed to have little to make life happy except upon the Feast of Dolls which occurred but once a year. It was natural that the children of the poor should have

their privations, but Flossy was shocked when she saw one delicate little girl, the daughter of a rich daimio, submitted to cautery, or the torture of having little pith cones burned upon her flesh for some trifling pain, for which Flossy would have received a dose of homeopathic medicine.

"I would not like to be a Japanese child, but if I could see China," she said to herself, "I am sure that the mandarins' children there, and the little princes and princesses have better times."

And strangely enough it happened that the magician was called upon to perform before a Chinese lady of rank who was visiting in Japan. She was the wife of a wealthy grandee as ugly as the horrible two-toed dragons which were embroidered on his robes as a sure proof of his rank and consequence; but he was as kind and indulgent as he was ugly, and his greatest happiness was to gratify the whims of his beautiful wife.

Her name, which was a long one when translated, signified "The Fair One, whose nails are transparent as fish scales, as long and curling as the tendrils of the vine, and as exquisitely tinted as rose-leaves."

As this is rather too long a name to be mentioned frequently, we will speak of her as The Long-nailed Fair One. Her finger nails were indeed of extraordinary length and were encased in beautifully engraved silver shields. She was surrounded with every luxury which Chinese art could execute. The finest porcelain, the richest satins exquisitely embroidered, elaborately carved teak-wood furniture, lacquered ware and bronzes, vases of jade, statues of ivory, perfumes and dainties, and beautiful flowers filled the rooms of the palace, and yet the pampered little lady was not happy. She had lost a little daughter and since that bereavement had fallen into a deep melancholy.

Her husband, hoping to distract her, had taken her on a journey to Japan and here everything that was curious or remarkable was shown her. She had the finest singers and dancers among her women, and everything that it was possible for them to devise was done to enliven her spirits, but all in vain. At last some one suggested the performing teapot, and the magician was introduced to her presence.

She watched the motions of the magician with a listless air, for she was familiar with the tricks of all the Chinese jugglers and they had ceased to entertain her. But Flossy was smitten with a sudden love and pity for this beautiful, sad woman. "If I were only a little girl I would comfort her," she thought; "and as her daughter I would certainly find the Child's Paradise." So she bobbed about upon her rope in the most comical manner possible, jerking so enthusiastically in time to the "tom tom," of the drum, that the grand lady was interested in spite of herself. "I want the teapot for my own," she said, as a spoiled child might have done who was accustomed to have all it desired.

"Impossible," replied the magician hastily gathering together his wares for departure.

"I tell you I want it, and I will have it," the lady cried in a high temper, and her slaves put the magician out of the palace without any more ceremony.

When the Mandarin, the husband of The Long-nailed Fair One, heard the story he was indignant that the magician should have refused to sell the teapot; but he was also a little apprehensive lest,

as they were strangers in the country, the fellow might prejudice the magistrates against them, and he advised his wife to return immediately to Peking. They set out that very afternoon, travelling in jin-riki-shas—a word which may be literally translated *pull-man-cars*; for they were carriages drawn by men, and ferried over the rivers by elephant-prowed boats drawn by strong swimmers. Throughout the entire journey the lady held and caressed the precious object which she had coveted and stolen. Her ladies admired the teapot greatly and discussed whether it was of Hizen, Satsuma, Kaga or Kiyoto manufacture, without being able to settle either the period or the factory in which it was made. Almond Blossom, one of the ladies-in-waiting, appointed to hold a gay umbrella over the head of the Long-nailed Fair One was soundly scolded if the teapot was exposed to the sun. Pheasant's Eye, whose duty it was to fan the lady, was sent from her presence in disgrace, because by an inadvertent movement she had nearly upset the new idol, and Nightingale's Throat was kept constantly on her knees before it as its especial guardian.

With all this care, it certainly was very inconsiderate and even ungrateful in Flossy to refuse to dance for her kind owner ; but great was that lady's disappointment on her arrival in her own home to find that none of them could make the teapot perform. Evidently the magic was in the magician and not in the teapot, for when placed on a tight-rope it merely fell off as an ordinary piece of porcelain would have done and was only saved from destruction by being caught in the long sleeve of The Long-nailed Fair One.

"Since we can not make it perform," that lady exclaimed in a high temper, "it shall be degraded to the offices of an ordinary teapot ; and you, Pheasant's Eye, may make me a cup of tea in it at once, for I am quite fatigued with my exertions."

Flossy's delight at these words knew no bounds. She had foreseen precisely what would happen and this was why she had obstinately refused to dance, and she could scarcely refrain from turning a somersault for joy when Pheasant's Eye proceeded to slowly fan the coals in the little chafing-dish, and filled her with clear water. She did not even

shudder when placed over the fire, for the heat caused her no pain but sent a warm thrill of pleasure through her entire being. She seemed overflowing with merriment and began suddenly to laugh heartily — she was actually boiling — the lid flew up, and Pheasant's Eye shrieked so loudly that the other ladies hobbled in as quickly as their little deformed feet would permit ; for the cloud of steam which had issued suddenly from the teapot had condensed into a pretty little Chinese girl, and the teapot itself had disappeared.

CHAPTER II.

IN A CHINESE HOME.

(Second Transformation.)

FLOSSY'S wish was now gratified ; she was the daughter of the Long-nailed Fair One, her father a mandarin of the order of the Two-toed Dragon.

The Chinese lady looked at her in rapture. "My daughter !" she cried, "my own little Boo-hi-ski !"

There was a great deal more to the name, as there was to the mother's. Fully translated, it signified "The child with a balloon instead of a heart, which causes her to soar above all human sorrow, and to dance among the stars." For convenience's sake we will designate the balloon-hearted child simply as Hi Ski.

"My adored Hi Ski !" exclaimed the happy

mother, "have you indeed come back to me again?" And the mandarin's wife threw her arms around Flossy's neck and wept for joy; for contrary to all Chinese tradition she had loved her little daughter as well as if she had been a son. The Chinese say,

When a son is born
He sleeps on a bed;
He is clothed in robes;
He plays with gems;
His cry is princely and loud!
But when a daughter is born
She sleeps on the ground;
She is clothed with a wrapper;
She plays with a tile;
She is incapable either of evil or good;
It is hers only to think of preparing wine and food,
And of not giving any occasion of grief to her parents.

The Two-toed Mandarin had a son, the child of a former marriage; but the boy's mother was dead, and the mandarin had married the Long-nailed Fair One, and, although it was very improper of him, he loved their little daughter Hi Ski quite as

well as his gem-wearing loud-crying son. Every luxury which the Celestial Empire could furnish was accordingly lavished upon Flossy whom both parents supposed to be their lost daughter.

Their home was one of the elegant country-houses near the great city of Peking. It was built in the light and airy Chinese style, with projecting roofs gayly painted, and was surrounded with gardens of blossoming quince, plum, pear, mulberry, peach and other trees. Many of these fruit trees had been dwarfed so that they grew in flower-pots and seemed to Flossy "too cunning for anything;" and there were artificial lakes where gold fish swam, and beside which queer birds stalked. There were artificial mountains too, which did not seem to Flossy quite as beautiful as the natural hills of England, though they had been constructed with infinite pains.

Everything was so new and curious that for a time Flossy watched the life about her with interest — the rice fields, the cultivation of the silkworms, the tea-gardens and opium farms; and when they rode into town all the bustle and racket of

the dirty, disorderly city. She was taken to see the great China wall, thirty-six feet high and forty feet broad, which stretches away for over a thousand miles to the north of the empire ; a rampart against the barbarian hordes. There were ramps on the inside, so that cavalry could ride to the summit, and six horsemen could pace abreast on the top. The Buddhist temples interested her also with their ugly idols and strange ceremonies. She was very inquisitive to learn all she could about the new religion, but was highly indignant when told by her brother (whose name if literally translated would fill a page, but whom we may call "for short," the Dragon-clawed, elephant-tusked, lion-throated Roarer) that women had no souls.

"No souls !" she exclaimed, "then why must I worship our ancestors, and burn incense before the images?"

"Because," replied the Long-nailed Fair One, "if you are very good you may be permitted to be born again, and may then happen to be a boy and have a soul."

"Ridiculous !" said Flossy.

“Hi Ski!” said her mother reprovingly.

“I want to read about it,” said Flossy, “or go to Sunday-school, and see if you are not mistaken.”

“I was carefully instructed in my youth,” said the Long-nailed Fair One; “more so than most Chinese women. If you would like to learn to read you may do so, though it is not customary for girls.”

“Of course I want to read,” Flossy replied. “It is very stupid to play all day by one’s self, and I want to read some fairy stories.”

Flossy found learning to read in Chinese the most difficult study she had ever attempted; but she struggled bravely on, for in her own home she was an insatiable reader of story-books. No Paradise could be quite perfect to Flossy without her Hans Andersen and *Alice in Wonderland*. She missed them now vaguely, but in her transmigration had forgotten just what they were. She mastered the weary printed language a great deal more rapidly than her stupid brother. The separate characters for each word were very hard to remember, and it did seem as if the Roarer forgot one for every new one which he learned. He was

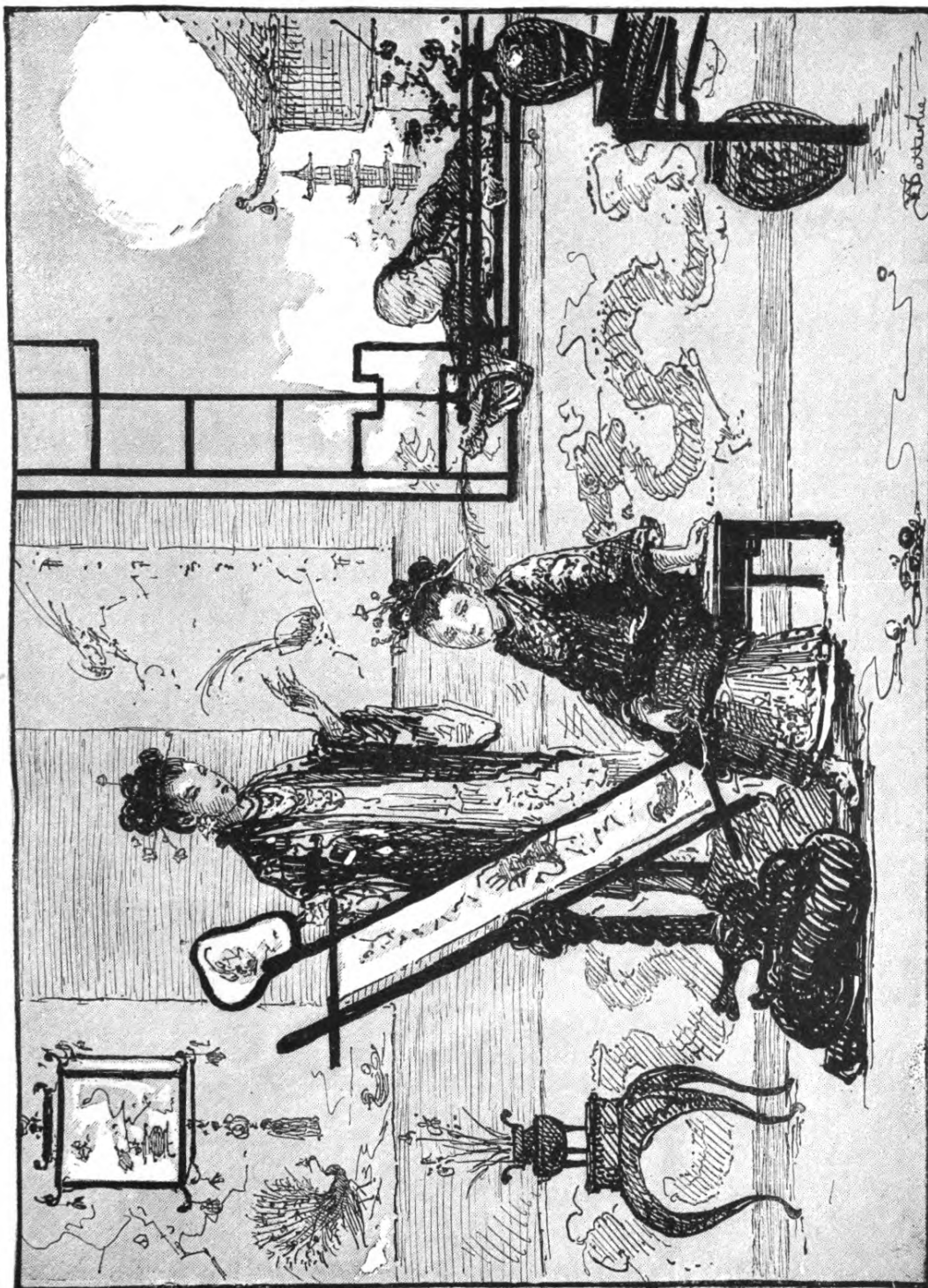
only expert in kite-flying, and had no love for books, though he was given the best of instructors.

When Flossy had learned to read, she asked for the most interesting book in the language, and her expectations were quite high, for she remembered that Mr. Rose had said that *Aladdin* was a Chinese story. When her mother presented her with a volume bound in gold brocade, called *The Girls' Book*, and written by Tsau-ta-ku, ages ago, she opened it eagerly. It began :

This girls' Classic is the instruction of a woman ; let the girls attend to it !

Every day rise early at the fifth watch ; do not sleep until the sun is bright. With an old handkerchief cover up your hair ; go quickly and sweep the veranda. Brush your hair bright.

Flossy had lost her fluffy blorde curls, and had now very straight and coarse black hair which she wore in shining bands oiled and perfumed with great care, and decorated with flowers and great hairpins as big as skewers.



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS THE CHINESE GIRL, HI SKI.

Wash your face clean; soon go into the hall and use your needle. Depict the peacock; embroider the phoenix; work the mandarin ducks.

This embroidery seemed at first great fun, but Almond Blossom, who gave her lessons, was so very particular, and so much shocked with her long Kensington stitches, that Flossy at length voted the peacock, the phoenix, and the mandarin ducks, the most disagreeable birds in the world.

Do not laugh loudly, or call in a loud tone. When you walk neither skip nor jump. At eight and nine you are growing older; you should love your elder and younger brothers, and share with them your tea, rice, wine or meat; do not quarrel if your part is less than theirs.

Flossy read this with some indignation. "Must I give up everything to this stupid pig-tailed brother?" she said to herself. "When I was an English child I used to hear Mrs. Rose tell Ruby that boys were put into the world especially to be nice and helpful to girls. Ruby was a lovely boy; he used to carry my satchel to school, and let me stamp on all his percussion caps when he had any to fire off instead of enjoying the noise himself."

The Roarer, Flossy's new brother, had been very selfish with his fire-crackers and had even complained because she was allowed to see the procession of the Feast of Lanterns.

At ten years old do not idle about, but diligently make shoes or seams. Early and late sit with your mamma, and do not leave the house without cause.

The first doctrine is that you must obey; the second good thing is to respect your elder brother and his wife; the third important thing is, do not waste rice or flour; be careful of the soy, vinegar, oil and salt.

"Well, of all uninteresting books!" exclaimed Flossy. "Haven't you anything more entertaining than this?"

"No," replied her mother, "that is the only book I know of suitable for girls. I told you that it was hardly worth your while to learn to read."

It would take too long to relate all the persecutions which Flossy endured from her selfish brother; suffice it to say that he fully availed himself of all the advantages to which his sex entitled him. One was the choice of dishes on the bill-of-fare. There were many articles of food prepared in the Chinese

style of cookery which Flossy found very nice and appetizing ; for instance sponge cake stuck all over with almond meats and moistened with milk, and various marmalades and preserves ; but there were others which seemed to her disgusting. The Roarer insisted on ordering every dinner, and he took a malicious delight in leaving out the rice custards and fruits which Flossy enjoyed, and insisting on the messes which she could not eat. The following was his favorite bill-of-fare rarely varied except by necessity :

Birds' nest Soup.

Ducks' feet Soup.

Puppies' Brains.

Sharks' Fins.

Roof of pig's mouth.

Mouse stew with bamboo sprouts.

Eels with onions and chutney.

Tea served in Chinese style.

This insufferable boy became more and more exasperating every day ; still Flossy might have borne it but for another species of torture to which she was subjected. The size of her daughter's feet

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greatly distressed the Long-nailed Fair One, and the ladies-in-waiting were instructed to bandage them that they might be reduced to the fashionable size. Flossy was a brave little girl, and she tried to bear the pain as best she might, but it grew more and more intolerable. She could not enjoy the beautiful gifts which her fond mother was continually lavishing upon her, or the novel sights which she saw from her elegant palanquin. She envied the poor coolies who carried her, and who planted their huge, flat-soled feet with such emphasis upon the pavement, while her own, swathed in perfumed silk, racked her frame with pain. At length she could endure it no longer. "This is no Child's Paradise," she cried. "I had rather be an English girl and wear gingham instead of crèpe and silver tissue." Her sorrowful wail ended in violent sobbing, and Flossy found herself, much

(*Third Transformation.*)

to her surprise, not a teapot, as the magician had told she would be if she wept, but restored to her own original shape, seated in Mr. Rose's studio with one foot fast asleep from having been curled

up beneath her. She sprang from the chair and hopped about the room until circulation was fully restored. Was it only a dream induced from her uncomfortable position? She was inclined at first to think so; but afterward when similar experiences were renewed, she believed that some condition of the wonder-working charm was unfulfilled, so that instead of passing into the teapot stage she was restored at once to her old life.

The robe of many colors, which had at first excited her admiration and envy, lay upon the model-stand beside the curious teapot, and Flossy gently lifted the piece of porcelain to her cheek. "I wonder whether it knows," she thought; "whether it is as glad to be *it* once more as I am to be I."

But Flossy was not altogether cured of her bad habit of dissatisfaction. "I chose a bad country," she said to herself. "If the magician had only carried the Bubbling Teapot to some land where they do not torture little girl's feet, and where dreadful boys are not so highly esteemed, and the food not so outrageous, I do not believe I would ever have wished myself back again."

She slipped on the little Breton costume which Mr. Rose wished to paint, and stretched her feet luxuriously in the roomy sabots.

“If I had only been sensible enough to have wished myself a French peasant,” she thought; “I wonder whether it is too late now; I wonder where Mr. Rose has gone, and why he does not come back and finish his picture. That chateau is very natural; he must have been painting on it while I was asleep. How gray the sky is, like ours in autumn, and what finely painted turkeys! You can almost see them move.”

While Flossy thought this, one of them actually did move. A gallant gobbler, with a breast shining with iridescent metallic colors, gravely stepped over the lower edge of the picture-frame and approached her with a dignified swinging stride. Flossy felt her head turning dizzy; the whole studio seemed circling round and then vanished completely. She was seated on the grass in the meadow, with the turkey looking her solemnly in the face. The chateau with the gabled roof remained clear and real above the trees of the park,

and the suit of clothes which she wore was the same which Mr. Rose had lent her. She comprehended the situation at once; her wish had been granted and in this fourth transformation she had become a Breton peasant child.

NOTE.—The two extracts from Chinese authors are taken from an article published in *Life and Light for Woman*, May, 1879.—L. W. C.

CHAPTER III.

THE LITTLE BRETON PEASANT.

(Fourth Transformation.)

FLOSSY had only a vague idea of peasant life. She had seen peasant costumes at a fancy-dress party, and thought them pretty. She had seen pictures of peasants at the exhibitions and in books; the queer chairs with carved backs were so picturesque, and even the clumsy kitchen utensils were quaint and interesting, the copper and brass shone so brightly in the dark backgrounds, and the rough pottery was usually gaudily painted and made bright spots on the dresser. Then the stories which she had read and which Mr. Rose had told her of enchanted forests and gnomes and trolls were intimately connected with peasant-life and altogether it seemed to her the most delightful thing

in the world to be a peasant ; and of all peasantry in the world surely that of France was the most favored.

And now Flossy knew she was changed into just such a little peasant. Her hair was tucked under a queer little white cap. There was the blue petticoat, and the full white sleeves, and the silver necklace, the long knitted stockings and the wooden sabots. They felt very comfortable, and Flossy stretched herself lazily in the marguerite-starred grass and laughed softly to herself for very joy. "This is very peculiar," she said to herself, "but it is also very nice. I am sure I shall have no occasion to cry here. This must be somewhere in Brittany, for the landscape is similar to the sketches which Mr. Rose made there. Now let me see what I know about the country. I can just see how it looks on the map ; it is that part of France which juts out into the Atlantic Ocean like a cat's head. It is bounded on the west by the Atlantic Ocean, on the north by the English Channel, on the east by the provinces of Normandy and Maine, on the south by Anjou and Poitou and the Atlantic. Its principal

towns are, Brest and Morlaix and Vannes and Saint something-or-other — I don't believe, however, that any one here will examine me on the geography of the country, and if they do I presume I know as much about it as any of the inhabitants. I wonder where I live. Perhaps in that chateau, for I don't see any other house near. I think I will go and see."

Flossy accordingly climbed over the low stone wall and walked through the great park toward the chateau. It was filled with tall trees, dark and gloomy, a real forest such as the grand seigneurs of France reserved for their hunting-grounds. A bridle-path appeared to lead in the direction of the chateau, and she followed it until the pointed roof and turrets appeared and she caught a glimpse through an opening in the trees of a milk-white pony standing on the terrace and of a little girl no taller than herself in a green velvet dress coming down the stone steps with a riding whip in hand. Then a sudden turn in the road brought her face to face with a poacher. She knew he was a poacher, for he was cramming a rabbit into a gunny sack. He

started with fear when he heard Flossy's step upon the dry leaves, but he seemed to recognize her face, for his expression changed to one of ugly malignity.

"Why have you followed me, Babette?" he asked. "Go drive your turkeys home and never dare venture inside the park again. Do you think that you are a grand lady, or that it was intended for poor peasants such as we are?"

Flossy obeyed humbly; something told her that this unpleasant-looking man was her father for the present, and though she did not like his appearance she felt that it would be of no use to object to the fact. She returned to the field, collected her turkeys, and then was at a loss in which direction to drive them. She determined to trust to their sagacity, and as they started off at a good pace she followed them until they stopped in the dooryard of a stone cottage with a thatched roof. Flossy saw that this cottage with the outbuildings picturesquely huddled about it, would have made a pretty painting, but that the yard was sloppy, the walls dirty, and it was a very poor home indeed. A peasant woman,

with coarse hands but a kind face, was coming in from the barn with two foaming pails of milk. "Put up the turkeys, little Babette," she said pleasantly; "thou shall have thy cup of milk and crust of black bread on the doorstep, and I will tell thee the story of the Golden Basin." Flossy hastily penned her turkeys, and taking her porringer sat down at the woman's knee.

"It is by such stories as these, my cherished one," her new mother said kindly, "that we poor people keep up our hearts, ay, and fill our stomachs. Many is the time when I have had nothing to eat but a crust of bread spiced with a nasturtium leaf, when it seemed a sumptuous banquet for the stories that my mother told me; and this story of the Golden Basin was always my favorite.

"Once upon a time, then, my little cabbage, a thousand years ago and more, there lived a certain Yvon, who had plenty of straw in his sabots." [This was the good woman's way of expressing the fact that Yvon was rich and lived comfortably.] "He had also a beautiful daughter named Bella. Bella had many suitors, but Yvon would say to all



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS BABETTE THE LITTLE BRETON PEASANT.

of them, 'Bella shall be the bride of the Golden Basin. She is promised to the man who can carry away from the castle of Kerivaro the basin which changes everything with which it is filled to gold.'

"Many departed on this quest but none returned.

"One evening a young peasant, beautiful as an angel and good as a saint, who was returning from a pilgrimage sat down to rest on Yvon's doorstep. He fell in love with Bella, like all the rest, and what was more to the purpose, Bella was equally charmed with him, and he departed in search of the basin leaving her in tears. As the youth, whose name was Lanik, journeyed, he noticed flying before him a sky-blue pigeon, and following it he soon came in sight of the towers of the castle. He trembled when he saw that the walls were an hundred feet high, and that perched upon the only gate stood a korrigan, or hideous black dwarf, with one eye in the middle of his forehead, and one in the back of his head, and that this ugly creature held a long lance in his hand. Lanik continued, however, to approach until suddenly the lance of the dwarf darted out to such a length that it nearly touched him. Petrified with

fright, Lanik stood still, but the blue pigeon began to warble so gayly that the black dwarf's attention was turned. The bird continued its singing, trilling forth such a lively air that the dwarf began to dance. Faster and faster piped the music and the dwarf's legs fairly twinkled in time to it until, utterly exhausted, he sank upon the rampart and fell asleep. A huge bunch of keys dropped from his hand, the lance clashed to the ground and its head rolled off. Lanik picked up both, unlocked the gate and entered the castle. He saw an immense court and in the centre a three-headed dragon. The place was strewn with the bones of those who had come in search of the Golden Basin. Lanik threw the lance-head at the dragon, who mistaking it for a cake swallowed it instantly. Cold steel did not agree with the creature's digestion and it fell to the ground in the agonies of death. Lanik then went through the castle finding no more terrors to test his bravery, but tables spread with dainties, and heaps of glittering jewels. He resisted all these temptations, seized only the Golden Basin and darted out of the castle without once looking behind. In the place where he

had left the blue pigeon he found a good fairy who gave him her blessing and disappeared in a blue cloud. Looking up he saw that the Castle of Keri-varo had also disappeared, but the Golden Basin remained, and Yvon was glad to receive it in exchange for Bella whose heart proved a golden talisman to her husband, and the love with which it was filled a treasure more precious than jewels or gold.'

It seemed to Flossy that she had listened many an evening before to stories at this new mother's knee, of elves and korrigans and other enchanted beings, while the kindly woman knit long gray stockings from coarse yarn. Days passed, and she learned to love the hard-working simple peasant woman dearly, and most of all to love the twilight hour when the turrets of the chateau were silhouetted darkly against the tender afterglow left by the sunset, and she could almost discover the fairies peeping at her through the dusk. There was John Redthroat, the obliging bird, who helped little Snowdrop through all her difficulties, the Queen of the Pearl Islands who changed her lovers to fish, the korils of the Fairy Copse who compelled be-

lated travellers to dance all night with them, and enchanter with wands of witch-hazel. They were all very real to Flossy ; and sometimes after hearing the wonderful tales of the Cow of the Sea and other bewitched animals, she would fancy that their own black cow was a fairy in disguise and that she might take hold of her tail and wish herself beyond seas only to have the animal start off and swim over to Jersey or Guernsey, or some other of the Channel Islands, from whence it was possible her ancestors had come in by-gone days. But when Flossy attempted the spell, old Black kicked viciously, narrowly missing Flossy's forehead and sending the pail of foaming milk to grief. That was a sad experiment, but Flossy's mother believed so thoroughly in enchantments herself that she did not chide her little daughter for the mishap. She told her a new fairy story to console her, of Barbaika the dairy-maid of Morlaix, for whom the elves churned butter, scoured milk-pans, baked bread, washed the churns, covered the butter-pats with linen dipped in the running brook, and left cherries on her platters and gold pieces in her apron pockets. In return Bar-

baika was to set out a feast for the helpful fairies in the barn. She did so; but out of pure malice strewed hot cinders around the table which scorched their feet almost to the bone. "And that is the reason," said Flossy's mother, "why elves come no more to Brittany, for they went away singing:

Barbaika, the shrew,
The bad wife of Jegu,
By her wicked deceit
Burned our poor little feet,
So no more may we dwell
In the green fairy dell;

But we leave our black ban on the barn and the dairy
And we leave Barbaika the curse of the fairy."

Flossy wondered if she could coax the fairies back by setting out a feast for them in their cow-shed, but she was always so very hungry at mealtime that it was hard to spare a crumb of the coarse black bread. She did so one day, however; she covered the milking-stool with a clean white kerchief, set acorn cups and saucers upon it, with crumbs of bread and a few small sweet strawberries. But the greedy turkeys flew in through a little window and

devoured the supper ; and Flossy never heard from the elves.

Her mother was deeply religious as well as credulous, and knew many legends of the saints and miraculous tales about the sacred image in the little church, which Flossy found quite as interesting as that of the good-natured elves who helped the dairymaids with their cheese. One day, the festival of her patron saint, the good woman took her little Babette on an excursion on the river Laitu.

The father had borrowed a boat for this trip and had agreed to row them, but the temptation of the *cabaret*, or low drinking shop, was too much for him and he had slipped away to spend the day drinking strong cider with his boon companions. The peasant woman's arms were strong and muscular, and putting Flossy in the stern with the basket of *crepes*, or fried cakes, which were to serve as luncheon, she took the oars and sped away on the tranquil stream to the ruins of the castle of the Comte de Commore. They could trace only the foundations of the old chateau with its four massive towers and its terrible donjon. The fosse was overgrown with grass and

wild flowers, and Flossy frolicked in it and skipped across it without the aid of a drawbridge. She looked through a rusty grating into what must have once been a dismal prison, and fancied she saw a ghost flit through the darkness.

“It may well be,” said her superstitious mother crossing herself, “for this castle was one of the residences of the famous Comte de Commore, the terrible lord who murdered his wives, and made no exception of Sainte Triphine, his last bride, who was the sister of Saint Gildas and daughter of the Count of Vannes.”

It was really another version of Blue Beard, that story which belongs to so many countries, but it seemed like authentic history here beside the ruins of the ancient castle.

After eating their luncheon they floated down the river to the deserted monastery of St. Maurice, and the mother's legends took on a still more gloomy character. By the time they reached home the towers of the chateau in the park were turned to gold in the sunset glory. “And the people in the chateau?” Flossy asked.

"Ah! those others. Their life is as different from ours as that of the saints in Paradise," said her mother meekly.

This fête-day had been an exceptional one for Flossy and her mother. Not often were they allowed a whole day's holiday. All through the heat of harvest they labored side by side in the fields beginning at daybreak, and returning to their poor home at night with heavy baskets of potatoes. Sometimes they went to the seacoast and assisted the men at the fisheries, coming home with heavy loads of fish. Sturdy as Flossy's peasant mother was this labor was too severe for her, and the day came when she was too ill to rise from her miserable bed. Flossy prepared the poor breakfast, and waited upon her with ready alacrity, but when her brutal father bade her clean the stable the spirit of the English girl within her rebelled. "That is man's work," she replied, "and you ought not to compel me to do it."

"It is your mother's work," said the peasant, "and if you will not do it for her, she must."

Flossy went to the stable burning with indigna-

tion. "Women do not labor like this in England," she said to herself. "Is there no escape from this horrible life?" She had forgotten that the way of escape was a very simple one. She had only to weep to become a teapot, and as a teapot only to boil to become a girl. "If I were only the little girl at the chateau," she thought, and then, as she saw no friendly *korrigan* ready to assist her, she bent to the disagreeable task. But she was only a sensitive little girl after all; she felt the degradation of her present employment more than the drudgery, and forgetful of the spell which would turn her, if she wept, immediately into a teapot, she burst into a passion of weeping.

NOTE.—The Story of the Golden Basin is translated from the French
L. W. C.

CHAPTER IV.

AS A SPANISH GIRL.

(Fifth Transformation.)

WHEN Babette's hard-hearted father came to seek her, he found only a pretty teapot standing on a bundle of straw. "How did this come here, I wonder," he said to himself; and fearing that some one might come in and answer the question, he popped it into the cornbin. There was to be a fair at Pont-Aven in a few days, and he determined to carry it there and barter it for something — something which could be converted into cider.

The fête was a grand success. There were gayly-decorated booths where gingerbread was sold in great rolls covered with silver paper; there were peepshows, puppet-shows, merry-go-rounds, and

footraces and games, and a pavilion for the dancers, with two fiddlers; and there were mountebanks and strolling actors, musicians, pedlers and every variety of the genus tramp. There was even an oriental-looking juggler in a fez cap with a long tassel, who called himself a pilgrim from Jerusalem, and sold rosaries, which he said were made from olive-wood from Gethsemane, and who performed marvellous tricks with paper butterflies which he kept in the air with his fan. Babette's father stood before him a long time in open-mouthed admiration.

"*Tiens !*" he said, "but that is beautiful. How can he make those little beasts disappear and come again?"

The juggler noticed him and saw that he carried something wrapped up under his blouse. "What have you there, my friend?" he asked.

"Only a teapot which I wish to sell."

"A teapot! Let me see it."

"With pleasure, Monsieur. Is it not adorable? Monsieur is doubtless from the East and a judge of such things. If Monsieur will derange himself to observe the ravishing colors."

“Hold, you rascal!” exclaimed the juggler. “I know that teapot well. You stole it out of my cart when I camped last night in the dingle.”

Babette’s father turned pale. “I call upon all the saints to witness that I found it! I am no thief, your worship.”

“Get you gone,” replied the other; “or I will have the gend’armes yonder arrest you.” Babette’s father, glad to get off so easily, retreated hastily; and the magician—for it was indeed he—bestowed the teapot among his wares, and as hastily took his departure in an opposite direction.

Flossy’s old life of performing now recommenced. The magician wandered down through the south of France to Spain. He stopped at every village and showed his tricks to the peasants, and sometimes in the market places of great cities. But Flossy did not find her life as a dancing teapot as hard as it had been in Japan; the magician was kinder to her, and among all the French children who watched her bobbing upon the tight rope, she saw none whom she envied. Her life as Babette, the Breton peasant-child, had opened her

eyes. "Since the fairies are all dead," she said to herself, "I would rather be a teapot than a child in France."

Through the ancient chateau-cities of Touraine; Blois, Tours, and Chinon, through the quaint streets of Orleans, Joan of Arc's town, across the vineyard region to Bordeaux and the sands of La Manche, they tramped and camped until they reached the region of the Pyrenees. And now Flossy began to look about her with more of interest. The mules with their gay trappings and jingling bells, the muleteers with their striped blankets worn so jauntily, were picturesque, and so were the red-capped goatherds who skipped as lightly as their own kids among the chasms of the great mountain range.

But now Flossy was not tempted to wish herself a peasant of any nation. "When I am a girl again," she thought, "I shall not choose poor parents. Poverty may be very picturesque, but it is not comfortable."

As they descended into Spain and visited the wealthy and aristocratic cities of Burgos, Madrid,

Cordova and Seville, Flossy scanned the faces of the stately old hidalgos and donnas, looking in vain for a possible father and mother.

One hot and dusty day as the magician trudged wearily through the long avenue which led to the Alameda, a public square of Cordova, Flossy caught sight of a face to which she lost her heart. A beautiful lady reclined languidly in an open barouche. She was dressed in the Spanish style, with a lace veil over a high comb instead of Parisian bonnet, a white rose was tucked coquettishly behind her ear, her hair and lashes were very long and dark, and she held gracefully an enormous fan. Her expression was so extremely sweet and gentle that Flossy quite forgot she was only a teapot, and gave a sudden leap which threw her out of the magician's pack and landed her in the dust of the highway. The magician walked on, not knowing that he had lost his teapot, and Flossy hoped that the lovely lady might notice her where she lay. Her heart sank as the barouche rolled away, and an almost naked street boy picked her up and carried her to his squalid home in the lowest part of the

city. The boy's mother exclaimed at the sight of the treasure-trove. "It is doubtless the work of the Moors," she said; "none but the sorcerer Moors could make an object so beautiful, and surely no person save the *Gran Capitan* can be rich enough to own it."

"We might sell it," suggested the boy.

"Surely, surely. Come with me, and we will go to the dwelling of the alcayde; he will give us good money for this lucky find."

The woman and her son proceeded to a large stone house painted pink, with no windows toward the street, but with a wrought iron gate in an arched entrance which gave the passers-by a glimpse of a beautiful court filled with oleanders and jasmine, and watered by a tinkling fountain. A portress admitted them to the presence of the mistress of the house, a portly dame with spiral love-locks plastered against her temples, and a dark moustache on her upper lip. "Dolores," said this strange woman, "these people have a bit of bric-à-brac to sell. Perhaps you would like to look at it."

Then, from a reclining chair by the side of the

fountain, rose the very same lady who had won Flossy's heart in the Alameda.

"What have you?" she asked in a silvery voice.

"It is a piece of porcelain of the time of the Moors," replied the boy's mother, "which my son has dug up on the Guadalquivir back of the great mosque, near the spot where the Khaliff Anasir had his golden palace."

"Santiago grant you pardon," said the boy. "I did not find it there at all, but on the avenue leading to the Alameda."

"Hold your tongue," exclaimed the mother under her breath, while she proceeded volubly to praise the workmanship of the teapot which she declared resembled the best Moorish enamelled work in the great mosque. Ascertaining her price, the Lady Dolores purchased the teapot, saying that it made little difference to her whether it were of Moorish or Christian manufacture; its own beauty was sufficient recommendation. The lady was from Madrid, and was only visiting in Andalusia. She left the next day for Seville, and continued her tour to Granada before returning to her home.

Everywhere in Southern Spain she was struck by the Moorish remains, their wonderful metal-work and porcelain, and above all their fairy architecture. It was after a visit to the Giralda, or bell-tower of Seville, that the lady deeply impressed with the skill of the Moorish builder was about to refresh herself with a cup of tea. The servants of the house happened to be absent, and she decided to make it herself. "Those old Moors were certainly magicians," she said to herself, as she filled the teapot with water and placed it over the fire. "If this teapot could speak, what stories it could tell of ancient splendors, perhaps of Moorish sultans and princesses who formerly inhabited this very city. I wonder if the Giralda was once the home of a Moorish princess. Oh! that it were so, and that she might have been kept alive by some potent spell, that I might see and speak with her."

(Sixth Transformation.)

As she finished speaking, the kettle boiled, or rather exploded like a harmless bombshell, and Flossy stood before her.

"Blessed St. Antonio!" exclaimed the Lady Dolores. "Are you a Moorish princess?"

"No," Flossy replied, "I am your little girl."

The lady shook her head doubtfully. "But you were a Moorish princess," she insisted.

"Perhaps so," Flossy replied; "I have been so many persons, that I do not exactly remember. At all events, I am your little girl now. What are you going to call me?"

"You are so very fair and white, you shall be Bianca, my little Bianca."

The lady returned to Madrid with her foster daughter. As they had no children of their own her husband was very willing to adopt Flossy; but they determined to keep between them the secret of her magical appearance. "We do not know how this experiment may turn out," they said to themselves; "we must have her regularly baptized, and taught the catechism, in order to counteract any wiles which the Evil One may be planning against us."

The family, of which Flossy now found herself a member, was a very noble one and numbered

many proud names, Mendoza-y-Diaz-y-Cortez-y-Manzanilla, all linked together like a train of cars. They lived in a tall house near the royal palace and had a little country house toward the Escorial. Here Flossy was always happy; for there were gardens and a grange, and she could ride on the back of El Campeador, the trusty old war horse who had borne her father through the last campaign against the Moors under General Prim, had served later as carriage horse, but had been excused from labor in the city on account of his age. El Campeador had been a proud high-stepping steed in his day, and had drawn the cumbrous coach on state occasions, prancing in step with his mate. But the other carriage horse had died, and El Campeador himself was past service and had been turned out to graze. He was kindly disposed, however, had never grown vicious, and the children were never afraid of venturing too near his heels. He soon learned Flossy's voice, and would rest his nose lovingly on her shoulder, and even thrust it into her pocket in search of bonbons.

It was always a trial to Flossy when they left the

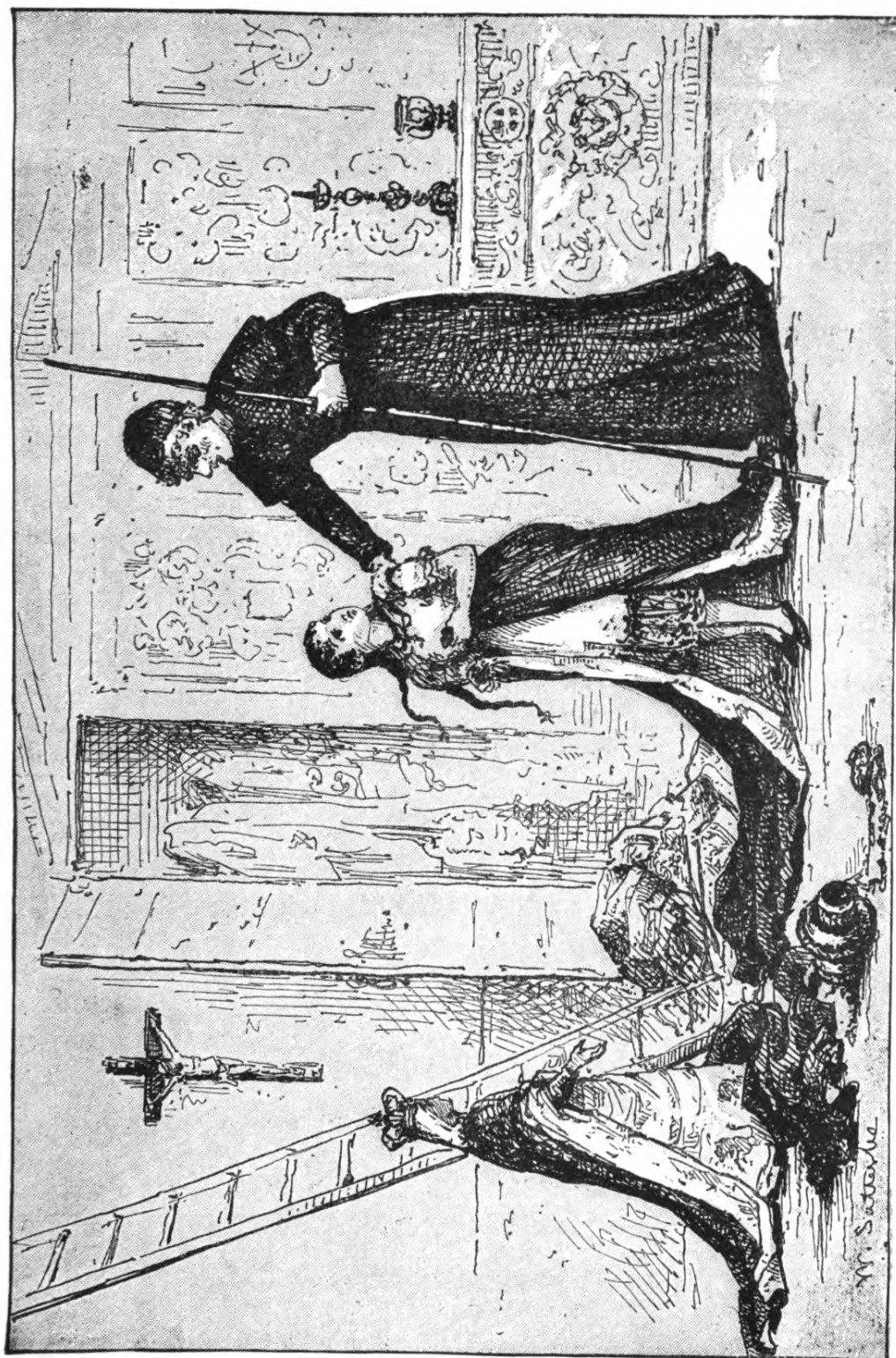
country, but her father and mother were frequently required at court, for her mother was one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting, and before her marriage had been one of the noble young ladies selected to the office of dressing the image of the Virgin at the Atocha convent, the protectress of the royal family. Flossy had seen this image, and thought it a particularly ugly doll; but it had a wardrobe which a queen might envy, for it was made up of the coronation and bridal dresses of the different queens of Spain. These robes had been shown her; magnificent trained gowns of green velvet embroidered with silver, maroon velvet covered with gold lace, brocades of every color, milky satins loaded with point lace — dresses worn by all the queens of Spain from Isabella the Catholic, to little Mercedes. There were two of this unfortunate child-queen which touched Flossy most of all; one a coronation robe embroidered with the arms of Spain, the other a dainty blue silk of Worth's manufacture, encrusted with pearls.

On festival days, the image promenaded the city in a queer little pickle-jar chariot, which allowed

the common people to have a glimpse at her magnificence through its glass doors. Flossy's mother told her how it had been her privilege to dress the image for these rides, and that one day the honor would be her daughter's. Flossy had a little girl's love of dolls, and though she did not think the virgin as pretty as any of the dozen dolls which she left in her English home, she still thought it would be great sport to dress it in the royal gowns.

One day there was a royal christening at the convent of Atocha and Flossy was present; and though it was the grandest ceremonial which she saw while in Spain, the pomp and parade wearied her extremely. It had been arranged for her to return to her own home after the baptism with her nurse, for her parents were going to the palace; but in the confusion of departure she was separated from the waiting-woman who, concluding that her master and mistress had changed their mind and carried the little Bianca to the palace with them, returned to the city without her. Flossy, when she missed the nurse, waited for her near the tomb of General Prim; but the entire congre-

gation passed out and she was left quite alone. Then when she attempted to leave the chapel she found, to her dismay, that the door was locked. She did not cry as another child might have done, but looked about, trying to ascertain how she might make the best of circumstances. The virgin gazed at her from her elevated position above the high altar, and Flossy thought that if she could ever get her down it would be pleasant to pass away the time by dressing her. She wandered into the vestry and found, to her delight, that one of the wardrobes was unlocked. There was a step-ladder here too, and a long pole used in lighting the altar candles. These Flossy laboriously dragged into the chapel, and thus succeeded in gaining possession of the virgin. Then how the hours flew by! It seemed to Flossy that she had the very best time that afternoon that she had enjoyed in any of her transformations. She dressed and undressed the image, over and over again. She even dressed herself in a robe once worn by Blanche of Castile, and played house with the virgin in the wardrobe.



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS BIANCA, THE SPANISH GIRL.

"At last," said Flossy, "I have found the Child's Paradise. It is in Spain, and I am having lovely fun."

Alas! for Flossy. At that very moment the sacristan entered the room and discovered her at her play. He turned green with rage and horror and, seizing Flossy by the shoulders, shook her until she was dizzy.

"What is your name, sacrilegious one?" he asked, when quite weary of shaking her.

"Flossy Tangleskein," the child replied when she could catch her breath.

"Zangalzagein! I know the names of every Madrid family — there is none such in all Spain."

"I beg your pardon, sir. I forgot. I have had so many different names, and you shook me so that it mixed me up. Let me see what is it this time — Babette? Hi-ski? No. Oh! I remember. Bianca Mendoza-y-Diaz-y-Cortez-y-Manzanilla."

Flossy was hustled home in disgrace. Her father was deeply mortified, and her mother shocked and grieved. The affair would have created a great scandal had not the sacristan been

bribed to silence. Donna Dolores and her husband had a long and serious talk together about their foster child. Dolores was convinced that Flossy's pagan nature, as a Moorish princess, was beginning to assert itself; and she trembled for her future behavior. "And yet, I cannot give her up to the Church, as I fear me I ought to do," she said sadly. "It is true that the holy office of the Inquisition is abolished, and Mother Church is more tender to her erring children than formerly; but it might be thought best that Bianca should adopt a religious life, and I cannot part with my little girl, for I have learned to love her very dearly."

"Then there is only one thing left to be done; she must be kept out of sight for the present. We cannot have her bring disgrace and scandal upon our family in this way. She must go to the grange, and be brought up there in strict seclusion."

When this announcement was made to Flossy, she could have clapped her hands for joy, had it not been for the distress which she saw in her kind mother's face.

"You will come to me often, mamma dear, will you not?" she begged, "and I will be very good, will study and mind my governess, and try hard not to grieve you."

"Sweet one," replied Donna Dolores, "I am afflicted only because you will have so little to amuse you at the grange."

"I shall be very happy, mamma dear, for El Campeador will be there and I shall learn to ride him. He lets me climb to his back by pulling myself up by his mane, and is so gentle and loving."

"You shall have El Campeador for your own, my angel, and I will send out a little blue velvet saddle with you. It is decided that you are to go to-morrow after the bull-fight. I have begged that you may remain to see that beautiful spectacle. It would be too heart-rending that you should lose all the festivals in honor of the christening."

"Is the bull-fight so very splendid, mamma?"

"Ah! my sweet one, it is ravishing! the music and the prancing horses, the velvet suits of the *picadores*, the *banderillos* all laced in gold, with satin suits and curled hair, the terrible bulls paw-

ing the earth, bellowing, rushing upon their tormentors — Ah! but it is heavenly!”

The next day Flossy attended the bull-fight. It seemed to her that all Madrid went with her; for the long road from the city to the amphitheatre was crowded with vehicles of every sort—the elegant coaches and barouches of the noble and wealthy, loaded omnibuses bearing people of the middle class, and every description of cart, dray and wagon that could be devised to go on wheels. While those too poor to afford a ride trudged through the dust on foot. The bull-ring was open to the sky, the seats of the spectators circling it as in a circus. Only those of the upper classes were shielded from the sun by awnings; but every one wore their best, and the ladies in their bright dresses made bouquets of rose-color, yellow, blue and vivid crimson, while fans moved incessantly like a flock of restless butterflies.

Presently there was a fanfare of trumpets, and the triumphal entry of the performers took place. This part of the spectacle was very brilliant and imposing. Flossy's eyes sparkled with excitement.

She did not enjoy so much the next act, where a furious bull was teased and badgered by *pica-dores*; but when an agile *banderillo* — a young man dressed in light green satin embroidered with silver, and further enriched with a rose-colored sash — performed a number of reckless feats before the very nose of the infuriated animal, she could not help admiring his intrepidity and quick and graceful movement. Each time that the bull would lunge toward him he would leap aside, throwing a little dart decorated with ribbons at his neck, until the poor creature became an animated pincushion. Finally the *matador* despatched the animal with a single stroke of a long sword, and the body was dragged from the arena by mules covered with gay trappings and jingling bells. Flossy shuddered at this, but the band struck up a gay selection from the *Barber of Seville*, and the same programme was repeated with a new bull.

He was an ugly animal, brindled and long-horned, with small vicious eyes; and in the very first round he killed two horses, mangling them horribly. Flossy hid her eyes, quite sick with

disgust, and her father tried to comfort her, saying that the horses were wornout hacks, not good for anything.

“Oh! how can they treat them so cruelly, when they have spent their lives in faithful service?” Flossy cried. “Only think of El Campeador! How would you like to see him treated so!”

At that instant one of the *picadores* who had been dismounted entered on a fresh horse. He was old like the others, and slightly lame; but he snorted when he heard the martial music and tried to curvet as he had done at other ceremonies. “Only see that poor creature!” cried the child. “They have bandaged his eyes, and he does not know that he is riding to his death, for he trusts to his master. See what a long silky mane and tail—just like El Campeador, father. Mother it is El Campeador!” And she shrieked aloud.

“It is impossible,” exclaimed Donna Dolores.

“No,” replied the father, “it is quite true. The steward wrote me a few days ago that he had been offered a handsome sum for him by the *picadores*, and I wrote him to accept it, for it was much more

than we could hope to realize for him in any other way. He would die soon — what does it matter?"

As he spoke, the bull approached the *picador* warily, and Flossy screamed louder than before in apprehension. She was sure that the horse recognized her voice, for he wheeled partly around and neighed joyfully. Then the bull made a sudden lunge, and horse and rider rolled upon the ground.

Donna Dolores rose to lead her sobbing daughter from the ring; but as she turned to take her hand it seemed to her that Flossy must have slipped out before her, for the child was gone. She hurried after her and sought her in the crowd outside, but she was nowhere to be seen.

The janitor of the ring who dusted the seats and picked up the scattered cigarettes, programmes and flowers, afterward found a curious teapot in the stall which the family had occupied; but as no inquiries had been made for it, he did not trouble his conscience to seek for its owner.

CHAPTER V.

AT THE GYPSY QUARTER.

(Seventh Transformation.)

THE janitor of the bull-ring carried the teapot home to his wife Inez, who thought it a great deal too fine to make tea in, and set it before her image of St. James to be used as a *benitiek* — a holy water can.

There it stood until one day a wild-eyed woman entered the house. The room happened to be vacant; and the gypsy looked around quickly, the teapot caught her eye, and she had stepped forward with outstretched hand when Inez, hearing her footfall, entered, and both women looked at each other with dislike and suspicion. The gypsy was the first to speak. She assumed a wheedling manner and her voice was insinuating in its tone :

"May the blessing of the Zincali await you, beautiful lady, and may you have pity on the poor wanderer who has nothing but her wisdom to read the future, and who does not envy you the high fortune which she sees in store for you. No, though the next time we meet the dust of your ladyship's carriage will be whirled in the face of the poor fortune-teller."

Inez, who had never ridden in anything more aristocratic than a cake-pedler's cart, was consumed with delight and curiosity.

"How much do you ask for telling the future?" she inquired. "I have only a few reals."

"O beautiful lady, do not hesitate on account of the cost. I will tell your *ventura* out of love and admiration for your sweet face, and you will give me in return any old scraps of rags or second-hand crockery which you may like to rid yourself of. Listen, fair lady; you are on the verge of unexpected wealth. Your husband is about to be promoted to a post of great honor. He will also discover a hidden treasure, and will clothe you in cloth of gold and jewels, and this will come true in four moons."

“When will he find this treasure?”

“It is buried deep under ground in a place which is daily trodden by hundreds of feet.”

“Yes,” thought Inez, “under the entrance of the bull-ring.”

“It must be dug for at dead of night, yourself holding the lantern. Now for this beautiful fortune what will my noble lady give me? Some castaway dresses and this trumpery teapot which takes up the place of the elegant silver vase which you will find in the buried treasure?” The gypsy strode to the mantel and placed her hand on the teapot.

“Leave that, woman,” Inez cried so determinedly that her hand fell. “I will give it to you when we have found the vase, not one moment before.”

“When people achieve success they forget the friends of their obscurity. You will give me somewhat now for the good fortune, or I will lay on you the spell of the evil eye.”

She looked malign enough to be able to do this; and Inez under her stout exterior trembled.

She furtively crossed herself, and taking from her bosom a small purse at the conclusion of the ges-

ture, handed the gypsy a silver coin. "Begone," she exclaimed, "I have wasted too much time in listening to you already."

A black look came over the gypsy's face, but she caught the shadow of a cocked hat on the floor and knew that a member of the military guard was sauntering past. Accordingly she thrust the coin among her rags and slunk away.

That night Inez and her husband hurried to the bull-ring as the gypsy well knew that they would, the one bearing a lantern and the other a spade. They had hardly vanished around the corner when three shadowy forms darted from as many recessed doorways, and the little house was entered. "There is the teapot," said the gypsy. "I am convinced that it is the same one which the strange brother from over-seas told us to search for and secure for him."

One of the men seized it, saying, "It is full of treasure most likely. We will divide the booty and swear that when we found it it was empty. Hold your hands, both of you."

The others clustered closely about, and the man

overturned the teapot. They darted back as they felt the involuntary baptism. "Bah!" exclaimed the woman, "it is what the Busne call holy water; it will do us a mischief most likely unless we repeat some strong spell against it. Let us hasten from the house."

So frightened were they by this accident that they did not wait to make other thefts, but hurried away with all speed possible, mounting their donkeys just outside the city and taking the road to the south. They travelled all night, and two days after they reached the gypsy quarter of Granada in the cliffs back of the Alhambra. Little did her gypsy captors suspect that this teapot was a metamorphosed little English girl who had read a great deal of sentimental nonsense about the delights of gypsy life and was very glad to observe it in disguise.

Flossy found the gypsy quarter a very queer place. The almost perpendicular cliffs were honey-combed with caves, in front of which narrow paths went zig-zagging up and down. Donkeys and mules were frequently stabled in caves whose further re-

cesses were occupied by their owners. Many of the caverns were lit up by lurid fires, for blacksmithing is a favorite gypsy trade. Hordes of half or wholly naked children scampered like goats up and down the steep paths.

The cave in which Flossy found herself was at once a blacksmith's shop and an inn. The woman who had stolen the teapot was assigned a corner where she slept with her head on a pack-saddle. The family merely rented rooms, their guests going out for their meals, by which term we may express the begging excursions which furnished them food.

One day it inevitably happened that the magical teapot was placed to boil over the blacksmith's forge, and when the woman looked to see if it were ready she was terrified to find that it had disappeared. "It has melted!" she shrieked; "it has been consumed in the fire. Now when the Strange Brother comes from his journeying in the land of the Moor, I cannot give it to him and claim my reward. Woe betide the day that I ventured under this roof."

She continued her lamentations but did not notice that the horde of little black-eyed gypsy chil-

(Eighth Transformation.)

dren counted one more. Flossy stood among the others, a little bewildered by the suddenness of the change, but outwardly quite like the rest, a brown-skinned child with straight coarse hair, clad a little more extravagantly than her brothers and sisters since she wore a white chemise, a blue flannel petticoat, and a pair of gold earrings, while among the seven other children only five garments were distributed.

"Who are you?" the woman of the house asked, as Flossy presented herself when the contents of the begging bag were divided. Flossy was silent, for she did not as yet know her name, and one of the children said, "She must be Katinka, the daughter of the woman who died last night."

"Then," said the mother, "I will not turn you off. Go and beg, and as long as you bring me each night your gains you may sleep with the children,"

“I shall not do that,” Flossy thought to herself, “if I can find any other place to sleep.”

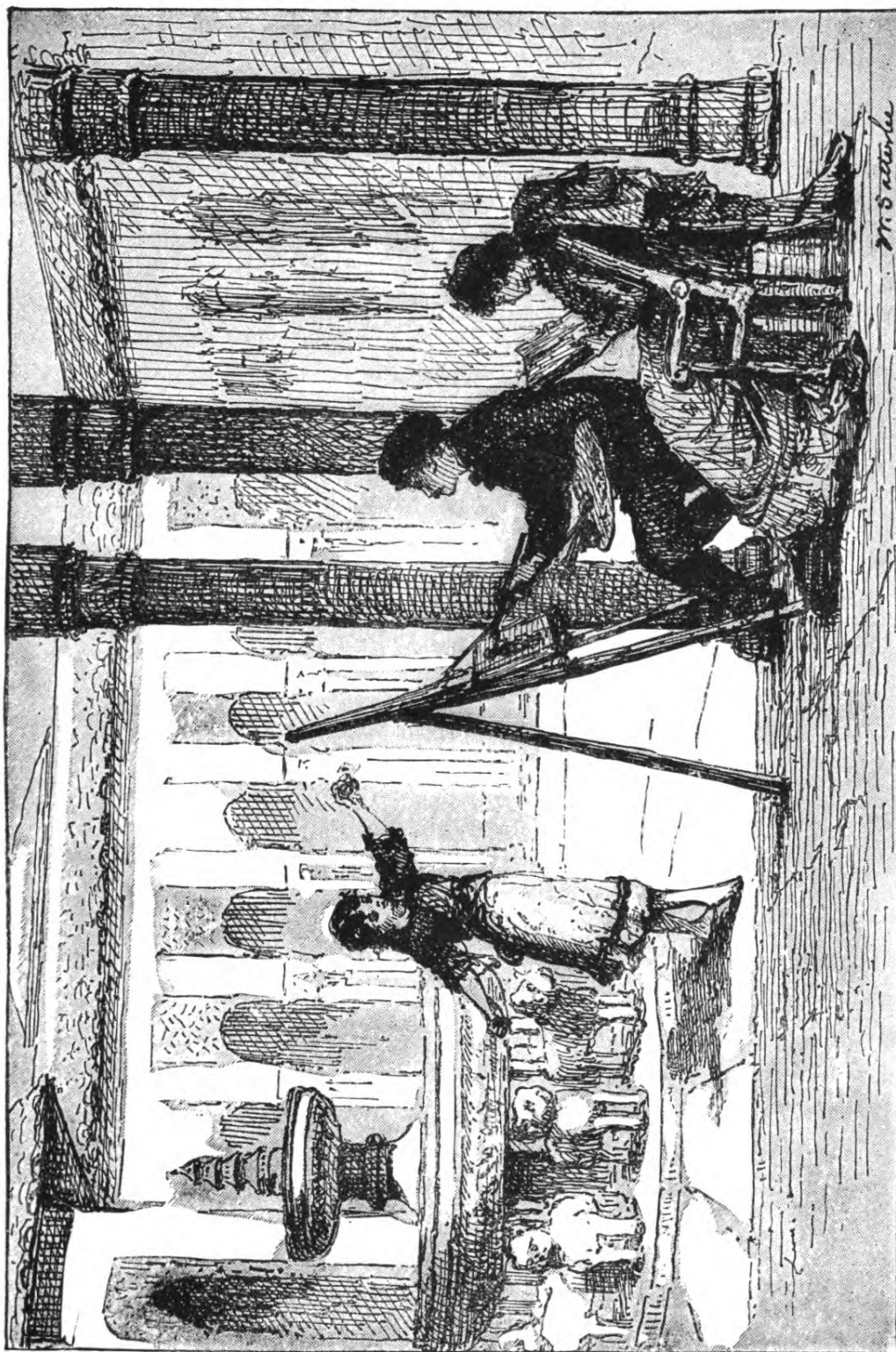
Leaving the cave she mounted to the top of the cliff. There was a church here, and behind the church, streets. She strolled through them leisurely, sometimes stopping to examine a wayside shrine or to pick up a bright bit of broken tile from the débris behind the Alhambra-wall. In the course of her wanderings she came at last to the great Gate of Justice, the entrance to the Alhambra. She came to know the place better as time passed, but at present she wondered, as any other untutored child would have done, at the red brick tower with the horseshoe-shaped portal. She descended to the city of Granada and wandered through the market-place, growing more hungry as she went, but not once begging or complaining. A fruit-seller noticing her wistful face threw her a slice of melon, and this was all her dinner. Days passed by of which this was the type. She was hungry often, she underwent many hardships, but she was perfectly free to wander where she pleased, the climate was delicious, and when she did not

care to go home she slept out of doors, and was on the whole as happy a little wild animal as ever burrowed in the thicket.

One day she entered the Alhambra, slipping by the guard while he flirted with a pretty Spanish girl. The beauty of this wonderful palace of the Moors surprised and enchanted her. There were courts with fountains, long colonnades of arches decorated with brilliant colors, mosaic pavements of beautiful patterns, and fairy domes opening into each other like clustered soapbubbles.

Some dim memory was awakened by the sight. It seemed to Flossy that she had heard or read of this place before. An English artist was sketching the Fountain of Lions and she ventured near enough to peep at his picture. He was not alone, for a lady seated beside him was reading aloud from Washington Irving's *Tales of the Alhambra*.

Flossy listened to a story of a Moorish Princess who lived in a tower, and heard the artist and his wife discuss which of the towers of the Alhambra was probably meant. They looked up, the one from the story, the other from the painting, and



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS KATINKA, THE GRANADA GYPSY GIRL.

noticed her. Each made an exclamation. "I must put her in this sketch," said the artist; and he asked Flossy if she would pose for him. The sum he offered seemed immense to her gypsy ideas and she readily took the required position. The lady read many stories during the days that followed, for Flossy still continued to pose for the artist. He painted her with tambourine or castanets; dancing, resting, in a number of different attitudes.

Flossy's foster-mother was delighted with the silver coin which she brought every evening, and Flossy herself became more and more interested in the stories.

"If I had only been born a Moorish Princess!" she thought to herself, and then she remembered that her Spanish mother believed that she was one in disguise.

When she returned to her cave home she interested her foster-brothers and sisters by telling them the tales which she had heard, and the older people gathered about her, listening as well. Flossy concluded one marvellous story with the

somewhat startling remark : " And I know that all this can be true, for I also am a Moorish Princess."

A dead silence followed the assertion. Looking up she saw that her foster-mother was squinting horribly, the blacksmith was also squinting, and every child, down to the youngest baby, rolled its eyes in an unnatural and disagreeable manner.

" Will your Moorish Mightiness condescend to descend to the river and fetch me a jar of water ?" said the old crone with a mocking leer.

" Give me a necklace of pearls, Princess ?" said one of the girls.

" A scimitar with a jewelled hilt," cried the eldest boy. While those who could not comprehend what the jeering was about, still joined in it, thrusting out their tongues and pointing at her derisively. Only the blacksmith refrained, and as she took up the heavy earthen water-pot and stumbled down the hill to the river, he turned to his wife with the remark : " Have a care what you say ; what she says may be true."

" Idiot, have you taken leave of your senses ?"

" No more than yourself, my beautiful one.

But do you remember the Strange Brother who was in our company a year ago, he of the Dar-Bushi-Fal, who came to us travelling out of the Land of the Moors?"

"Remember him, have I not cause to do so? It was he who told us of the precious teapot hidden somewhere in Spain and set my cousin wild to search for the same, which being found brought us only ill luck."

"Know then, that the stranger is no true Roma (gypsy) though he spoke our language, but a Moor of the sect of Sidi Hamed au Muza, and for aught I know a descendant of the very kings who once reigned in the Alhambra."

"And if that be so, brother, what has it to do with the child Katinka?"

"The woman who died and left her was also of the Dar-Bushi-Fal, travelling out of the land of the Moors. The child is like the stranger. I believe that she is his daughter."

"It is likely, brother, your guess is a shrewd one."

"Did the woman leave no clothing, or orna-

ments, anything by which the guess might be verified?"

"She brought no bundles with her. Her money, which was considerable, I claimed for her burial. There was a key fastened about her neck by a cord which I have preserved, but I know not what manner of door it opens."

The woman brought the key and the man examined it curiously. He was enough of an expert in metal-work to know that this was no ordinary key. It was large, of curious shape, and damascened upon it in gold was an Arabic sentence.

"I have heard," said the man, "that when the Moors were driven out of this land by the Christians they carried the keys of their houses with them. This poor woman had brought hers back but died before she was permitted to enter. Give it to her, daughter; she wanders about the Alhambra daily. Tell her to try every door, and to tell us when she finds one which it will open."

Flossy took the key, but she determined that she would not tell her gypsy parents if she made any extraordinary discoveries.

The next day it happened that the reading was about the unfortunate Prince Boabdil. "It was from the Tower of the Seven Floors," said the lady as she closed the book, "that he left the Alhambra when obliged to surrender it to Ferdinand and Isabella. He is said to have requested that no one should be permitted to pass through that gateway after him, and it was walled up by Ferdinand. Our hotel backs against the tower and the owner has torn down the brick wall which was so sentimentally built. The door of the gateway remains and opens into the hotel garden. I have asked the landlord to let me have the tower fitted up as a studio for the rest of the season."

Flossy's curiosity was excited. She was sure that the key would open this door, and one day when she had been asked to visit the new studio, she had an opportunity to try the lock. She found her suspicions true. The gypsies had asked her from time to time of her success, and to stimulate her efforts had told her the entire story, so that when the key turned back the massive bolt in Boabdil's door the conviction came upon Flossy

that she was not a gypsy but, as she had wished, a real Moorish Princess. And yet what was the gain? Even if she could prove her descent straight from the great Muley Abul Hassan, she was a Moorish Princess of the year of grace 18— and not of the old and splendid day of which she had heard. Evidently the charm of which she had the benefit had no power to roll back the wheels of time, but could only transport her from country to country and give her an experience of the life which now is. To be a Moorish Princess to-day in the Alhambra was exactly equivalent to being a barefooted gypsy. She wondered whether it would not be better in Morocco, the land of the Moor. If the Stranger Brother of the Dar-Bushi-Fal would arrive some night and take her with him to Barbary, perhaps in the royal gardens of Fez she might find the Child's Paradise.

She had finished her posing for the day as she thought this, and was leaving the Tower of the Seven Floors by Boabdil's Gate, when she saw a strange-looking man peering through the hotel entrance into the garden. He was dressed some-

thing like a gypsy, but his complexion was lighter and instead of the broad sombrero he wore a voluminous turban. Flossy approached him fearlessly, but in the shadow of the entrance he caught her arm.

"Give it to me," he said in a hoarse whisper, "I saw it in your hand, do not deny it."

Flossy handed him the coin which she had just received and tried to wrench herself from his grasp, but he held her wrist tightly.

"That is not what I mean," he said. "Give me the key. Those English have plenty of money; there is no reason why they should not share it with us. I am your father Hamet au Muza, and I will take you to the land of the Moor, but first we will despoil these Christians."

"No, father," Flossy cried bravely; "they have been good to me and you must not rob them." Her remonstrance was useless. The man's grasp closed on the key. "I will not let go," the child cried; "if you kill me I will not let go. Help! help!" The man loosened his hold on the key and placed his hand over her mouth. Flossy felt

the uselessness of her resistance and burst into tears. It was her best defence.

(Ninth Transformation.)

Key and child vanished and the astonished man found himself holding a small porcelain teapot.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BEST OF ALL.

THE magician, for it was really he, was very much surprised at receiving his teapot in this remarkable manner, for he had not recognized Flossy in the Gypsy child. He was as pleased as he was astonished. "Bubbling Teapot!" he cried, "I would rather have thee again than all the treasure which the Christian artist may have hidden in that tower. We will journey into the Land of the Moor, O precious teapot! and there you shall vault and tumble and dance upon the tight-rope before sheiks and pashaws and we will get gain, and your renown shall be published throughout the entire land—even from Mogadore to Timbuctoo and the uttermost parts of the Soudan."

The magician was as good as his word. They crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and Flossy found

herself in Africa. The magician spread a small prayer rug for himself in the *Soc*, or market-place just outside the city of Tangier, and began his performances. There were motley groups all about him; here an encampment of pilgrims on their way to Mecca, there a caravan of camels, dusty and travel-worn, just arrived from the desert with ivory and ostrich feathers. There were gayly-attired negresses selling pomegranates and other tropical fruits, wild Bedouin Arabs with long guns and splendid horses. There were veiled women and naked children, long-bearded and turbaned sheiks, donkeys and donkey drivers. All of this hurrying, jostling crowd were intent on their own business, pausing only to kick or to blaspheme when interrupted; but when Sidi Hamet au Muza planted his stakes, stretched his rope and set his teapot dancing, the circles about the story-teller and the snake-charmer broke at once and re-formed around the performing teapot. Even the pilgrims hurried through their prayers, and the weary camel-drivers rose from the ground and belabored each other for the best positions. Flossy bobbed and sidled

in her usual comical manner, and a yellow-faced Moor in a snowy turban and robes of fine material said to the magician, "Know, O Sidi Hamet au Muza, that I am purveyor to the Sultan's harem. He has sent me to this city to purchase and devise amusements for his ladies. I have found nothing but thy performing teapot and a box with a crank out of which music can be ground (an invention coming from the land of the Christians, even the island of Sicily), which is at all worthy to absorb the attention of the royal ladies. Teach me the secret by which you make your teapot to dance, and I will give you as much yellow gold as it will hold."

The magician replied that while he was perfectly willing to make his teapot dance for the Sultan's harem it was impossible for him to impart the secret to any one. The purveyor took him aside, and whispered, "Then there is but one way whereby this affair can be managed. The Sultan will not allow any man to be admitted to his harem. You must be disguised as an old woman."

To this the magician readily consented, and the

two set out the next day on their journey by caravan to the city of Morocco. Flossy had now an ample opportunity of observing the life of real Moorish princesses. They were dressed in spangled gauze and in rich silks. They reclined on the softest of cushions, were bathed with perfumes and fanned by slaves. They walked in rose-gardens watered by beautiful fountains, and were fed upon dainties. But in spite of all this Flossy saw that they were not happy. Their palace was as truly a prison as the gilded aviary which held the birds of brilliant plumage in their garden. "I hope no one will boil me," Flossy said to herself, "for I am sure I do not want to be a Moorish Princess if I am to be locked up every night, and never allowed to go outside the harem even in the daytime."

One day Flossy saw a girl fondling a gazelle in the court of the harem, and weeping over it as though her heart would break. "Thou mindest me of the days of my freedom," she said, "when I wandered an Arab maid as unfettered as the wind."

The girl would not even look at Flossy that evening though she danced her best, hoping to beguile her from her melancholy. Some one said that she was from Egypt and was homesick for her own country. "It must be very beautiful," thought Flossy, "if it is more charming than this palace," and she tried in her dull crockery way to remember what she had ever heard of Egypt. The photograph which she had seen in Mr. Rose's studio in London, came to her mind; a ruined temple shaded with palms, and a lazy river sleeping in the sun.

"I wish I were an Arab child," she thought. "I could see all those wonderful things in old Egypt — the mummies and pyramids, the palaces and temples."

It was not that she cared so particularly for these, but that she feared she might be transformed to a Moorish maiden.

Happily for her the magician soon found that his disguise was suspected, and gathering together his effects he fled from the palace and joined a company of pilgrims in the character of a dervish.

They journeyed for many weeks before he dared take his performing apparatus from its concealment.

At last a day came when Flossy was exhibited in a hut filled with swarthy faces. As she tilted and courtesied she caught a glimpse through the open door of a broad river and, lying on the sand, the long slant shadows of a temple with colonnade of many columns. "I am in the photograph," she bubbled delightedly, "and I mean to stay here."

The audience dispersed and the juggler packed up his baggage, but while he was counting his gains Flossy rolled into a corner, and he went off without her. The woman who lived in the hut found the little teapot after he had gone, and filling it with water placed it over the fire, while she busied herself about her household duties.

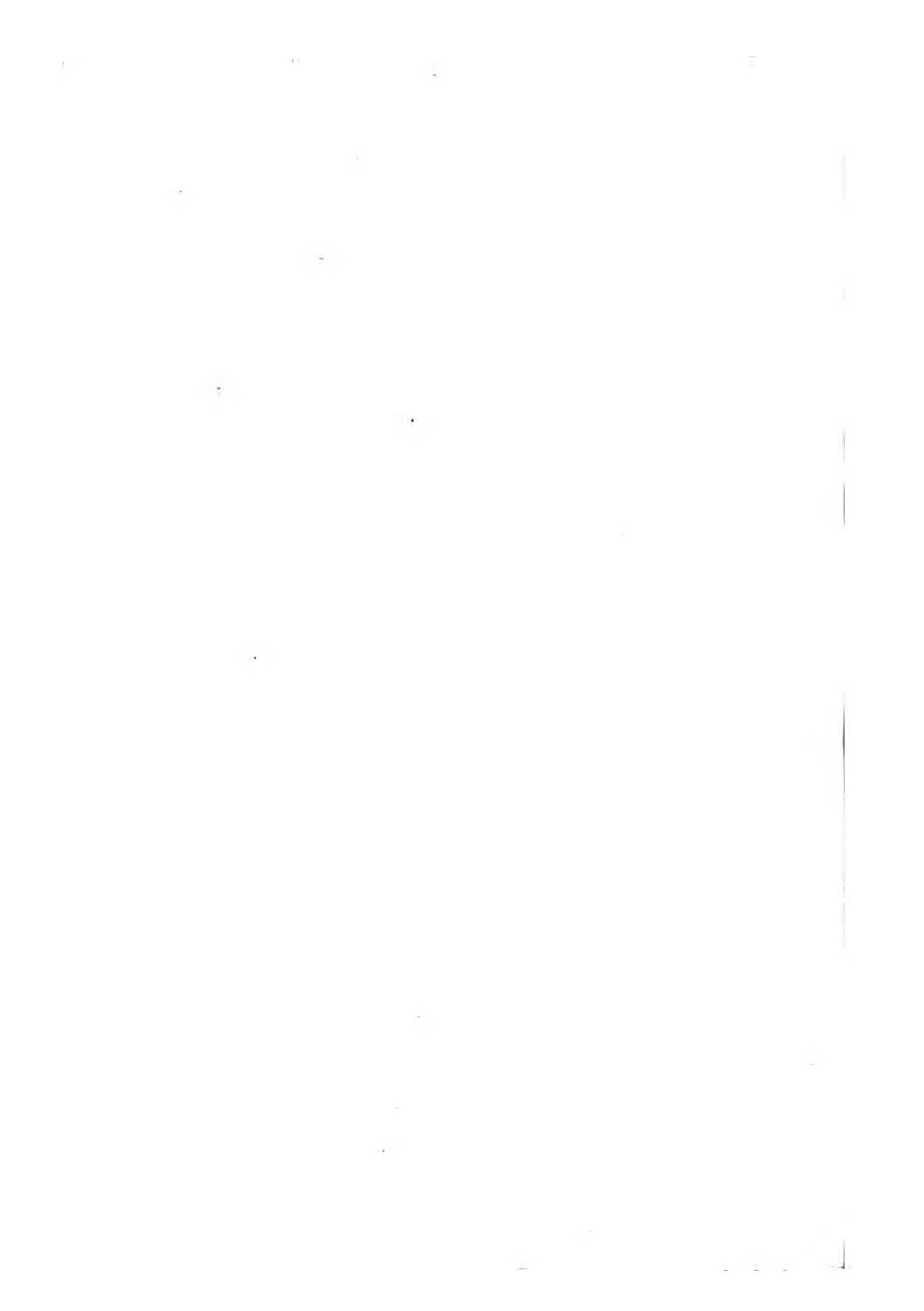
(Tenth Transformation.)

When she approached the fire she was surprised to see Flossy standing beside it. "Whose child are you?" the woman asked not unkindly.

"I am your child," Flossy replied quietly; "that



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS ZOBEIDE, THE LITTLE EGYPTIAN.



is I am yours until you make me cry ; you must be careful about that, you know."

"My child!" the woman repeated, "you are neither Fatima nor Zuleika, and yet your face seems familiar. What is your name?"

"Zobeide," Flossy replied ; it was the most appropriate name she could think of. The woman shook her head in a puzzled way. "She is my child," she said to herself ; "strange I should have forgotten her—but then there are so many." Indeed the hut was filling with children of every size clamoring for their supper.

"I have put the kettle on to boil, children," the woman replied, "but I have nothing to cook ; you must wait for that until your father arrives. Go," she said to Flossy, "and meet him. If he has brought any food, bring it home before him."

Flossy walked toward the river where a number of fishermen were busy with their boats. Instinctively she approached the most disagreeable one and asked him for a fish which he held.

"Begone, child!" he exclaimed. "Wherefore should I give you this fish?"

"Because mother wishes to cook it," Flossy replied.

"Mother sent her for it," said a voice at her side, and turning Flossy saw that the whole troop of her new brothers and sisters had followed her to the shore.

"Shades of the pyramids!" exclaimed the man. "When I left home this morning there were surely but seven and now there are eight! There is a mistake somewhere; these can not be all my children." He stood them in review, muttering their names and passed Flossy without noticing any peculiarity as she stood between Fatima and Zuleika. "I am a stupid fellow," he said to himself; "there must have been eight, and yet I could have sworn I had but seven children."

As the days passed, Flossy found that the new life was not as picturesque as it had appeared. The scorching sands burned her bare feet in spite of the bangled anklets. Her tunic was only of red calico, and her necklace of blue beads. The food was coarse and scanty, her father downright unkind, and her mother ignorant and overworked,

toiling with the men at unlading the dahabeeahs.

Flossy had plenty of time to play in the great temple against which their hut backed. Sometimes the children found coins in the sand, and these they sold to the travellers who stopped to visit the temple on their way up and down the Nile.

Flossy found nothing for a long time; but at last in digging a little well for her playhouse she came upon a curious amulet in the form of a scarabæus, or beetle, finely moulded in bronze and corroded with streaks of a beautiful blue and green.

She brought her precious find to her mother who was delighted, and showed it to her husband. His small eyes glittered greedily, and he cried as he examined it, "This is from the necklace of some princess; it will bring us many a lucky penny."

"Shall you take it down the river and sell it to the Director of the Museum at Cairo?" his wife asked.

"I shall do better than that," the man replied.

"I shall not only sell it once, but twice and many times. I can make a mold of this in wax, from which we can make as many like it as we choose, which the children can sell one by one, not too frequently, to the travellers who visit the temple."

Though Flossy was now an Egyptian child, there yet lingered in her mind some faint memory of Christian training; or was it perhaps the Spirit of Truth which enlightens every conscience no matter how benighted, and "is not far from every one of us"? Her cheek burned indignantly as she thought of the proposed fraud; taking the scarabæus from the man's hand she examined it attentively.

"And do you mean to cheat people and make them think your beetles are real antiques?" she said.

"Certainly, we can make much money."

"You shall not do it," Flossy exclaimed. "I will throw the scarabæus into the river," and she darted down the bank toward the water.

"Stop!" shouted the man, "if you throw it into the river I will beat you to death."

But Flossy did not pause until close to the water's edge ; then she faced her pursuers. " Promise that you will not coin more," she said, " and I will not throw it."

The man's face was black with rage, but Flossy's Egyptian mother laid her hand upon his arm. " We must not anger her," she said. " That kind always die if they are crossed. She is a spirit-child, with strange notions. We shall not long keep her. Promise."

" I promise," the man grumbled sullenly, " but," he added to himself, " it will take more than a spirit-child to make me keep my promise."

That night while Flossy slept he made the mold from the scarabæus, and melting all the odd coins, buttons and pieces of brass and copper to be found in the hut, he coined ten forgeries of the amulet. These he carefully boiled in vinegar to corrode them, and placing them beside the original it was difficult to tell which was the genuine. Still they did not quite suit him ; and burying them in the ashes he kindled a fire above them. He raked them out in the morning roughened,

smoked, with bits of the ashes burned in, altogether a thousand years older in appearance than the true antique. "These will do," he chuckled, tying them up in a bit of rag.

"But what are you going to do with them?" his wife asked. "Zobeide will perceive that you have not kept your word."

"Trust me for that, only hold your tongue," he replied with a smile of low cunning. Then entering the temple he buried the amulets close beside the spot where the original scarabæus had been found. After their scanty breakfast he bade Flossy dig and search more carefully in the temple, and see if she could be as lucky again. "You will not be too pious to sell for us what you really find there, I suppose," he said mockingly.

"Certainly not," Flossy replied with brave dignity, and taking her wooden shovel she worked faithfully all the morning, at last coming upon the amulets. She was delighted with her success, carrying them proudly home, and exhibiting them to her mother. "A large dahabeeah has just been moored to the bank—run down and sell

them to the gentlemen," Flossy's mother said kindly, and Flossy nothing loth scampered down to the Nile boat.

It was larger and handsomer than any she had yet seen. A pompous dragoman stood by the gangway ordering aside the donkey-boys and fruit-sellers who pressed toward him. Flossy held aloft her amulets and was so fortunate as to catch the man's eye. "Anticos!" he muttered; "if they are genuine my master, the Professor, would like to see them." And obliging the others to make way he led Flossy on board. The cabin was elegantly fitted up, but what impressed Flossy most was the quantity of books piled everywhere. An elderly gentleman was seated at a table on which was spread a quantity of curiosities, little images, bits of crumbled mummy-cases, armlets, vases, and coins.

He looked up kindly and examined Flossy's amulets. A disappointed look crossed his face as he pushed them back to her. "My child," he said, "it is of no use to try to deceive me with forgeries."

"But I found these myself in the temple," Flossy wailed.

The gentleman shook his head sorrowfully. "Learn to speak the truth," he replied; "that is better than all the amulets of Egypt."

A great sob rose to Flossy's throat but died in a bubbling sound. One tear fell upon the scarabæus in her hand, then hand and arm stiffened once

(Eleventh Transformation.)

more, and her form shrunk again into a teapot.

"Here, take your amulets, and do not try to impose them upon ignorant travellers," the gentleman said; then looking around and not seeing Flossy, he added, "How quickly that child disappeared! and what an innocent expression she had! why, the injured look which she gave me when I accused her of deception quite cut me to the heart. Joseph!" he called to the dragoman, "carry away this teapot. I cannot imagine how it came upon my table."

Joseph picked Flossy up and hung her on a hook in the butler's pantry where she bobbed and wagged as the boat made its way up the river.

The Nile boat sailed quietly on for days and days and Flossy, as a teapot, had plenty of time to think.

“I have had a good deal of experience,” she said to herself. “I have been a Chinese child — and suffered more with my poor feet than ever I did in all my life in England. I was a French child — and my dear mother and I were subjected to such degrading labor as never falls to the lot of the poorest at home. I was the daughter of a Spanish grandee — and learned how cruel and ungrateful civilized men can be to their faithful dumb servants. I liked the Gypsies and would never have wept when living with them — if they had only been honest ; but the Moorish harem life was most unendurable of all — for there was nothing to do. The Arab life was wild and free — but I could not lie. On the whole there was no life so satisfactory or enjoyable as my bread-and-butter-and-spelling-book life at home. I wonder where we are going now and whether I shall see my own Mamma Tangleskein again. All of my mothers have been kind. Mothers are alike in that the world over.

But on the whole I don't believe a mother could be invented quite so nice as an English one."

As Flossy said this a lady walked from the saloon of the Nile boat to the cook's cuddy. She looked about her at the shining neatness of Joseph's saucepans with a smile of approval. She opened a canister and took out a teaspoonful of English breakfast tea. Then she lighted a spirit lamp, and taking Flossy from her hook set her on to boil. As the steam arose Flossy saw that there were tears of longing in the lady's eyes, which had a strangely familiar look, and as the magic bubbles

(Twelfth Transformation.)

rose, and the imprisoning spell was lifted, she stretched out her arms with an eager happy cry, "Mamma, my own Mamma Tangleskein, the best in all the world!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHILD'S PARADISE.

FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN was happy; and the old proverb, "Be good and you will be happy," will bear reading backward; for there are few happy people who do not naturally incline to be good.

Flossy had passed through some strange experiences which had conduced to this desirable end. Through the agency of a powerful spell she had lived successively the lives of a Japanese, a Breton, a Spanish, a Gypsy, and an Arab child. In Spain she had learned to pity animals, and she could never afterwards see a cruel driver beat his horse without begging the man to stop. When she saw how her life was shielded from the pains of rough labor she thought of the Breton peasants, and thanked her Heavenly Father for the refine-

ments of civilization. She had never been tempted to lying or stealing; but the lessons of the Gypsy and the Arab experiences were not thrown away upon her. She grew to appreciate the physical comfort which untrammelled dressing gives; and seeing some little girls, only slightly older than herself, cramped in corsets and tight French shoes she did not envy them, but told her mother that they reminded her of her life as a little Chinese girl.

She was never idle, for she remembered the yawning misery of harem-imprisonment, and in play and work she naturally was as busy and merry as a bee.

Still there were certain conditions of her home life which she did not fully appreciate. She did not enjoy winter, and though fond of the luxury of a bath in summer was something of a shirk when the ice had to be broken in the pitcher on a cold morning. She had even been heard to declare that she wished she lived in a country where snow never fell. But she was inconsistent; for when the hot summer came she remarked

repeatedly that she wished it was winter all the year round. She had heard older people complain about our changing climate and she caught their carping tone, and said a great many foolish things about the weather, which indeed has always been a fruitful subject for inane remarks.

If too the conditions of life pleased her in England so far as mere physical comfort went, she did not yet fully endorse the demand for higher education for woman; and one day, finding nothing at home to inspire her in preparing the composition which would be required the next morning, she betook herself to Mr. Rose's studio as a good place in which to write it.

It was in this studio that the chain of magical experience had begun to unfold its links; and as Flossy wrote the subject of her composition

"THE CHILD'S PARADISE,"

she wished that the scenes would dissolve into each other as they had done once before. She had been a teapot first, a magical Japanese teapot, so constituted that whenever it was boiled it

changed to a girl, and whenever the girl cried she stiffened into a teapot. "I would like," she thought to herself, "to visit a few more countries before I decide whether England really is the Child's Paradise. I was a teapot in the Nile-boat just before I was transformed back to an English child. I wonder where we were going. Somewhere up the great river. There were palm-trees and temples on either bank, and brown men and women and camels."

The snow stormed against the great studio window, tapping with muffled white-mittened fingers for admittance, and the fire on the hearth burned drowsily. Flossy's head began to wag backward and forward, like the bobbing of the magic teapot on its hook in the little kitchen of the dahabeeah on the Nile. Bump, bump! it was a wonder her head did not drop off into her lap; and suddenly

(Thirteenth Transformation.)

Flossy was conscious that she had no head and no lap. She was only a saucy spout, a wicker-bound handle, and a gayly-decorated round little body.

The enchantment had begun again just where it had left off!

"Good!" thought Flossy. "Didn't I get rid of that composition nicely? Now we will see — what we shall see."

For many days, Flossy voyaged quietly on. At length the dahabeeah stopped at an African village in the Soudan. There was an unusual bustle on shore and in the boat, a hasty packing and removal of bundles and boxes, and Flossy understood that a part of the party intended to make a caravan-trip to the interior. Joseph, the dragoon, packed her in a chest containing a varied assortment of strange articles; boxes of beads, knives, mirrors, fish-hooks, gay handkerchiefs, toys, tools, sleighbells and other trinkets. Flossy heard some one say that these articles were intended as a medium of exchange with the natives; and she laughed to herself as she wondered what use they could find for the sleighbells. Meantime the sleighbells were rather cheerful companions, for they were the only things with tongues in the chest; sometimes, as they swayed and jolted along

with a slow shambling motion suggestive of the gait of a camel or a bullock, the sleighbells tinkled merrily and their musical laughter carried her memory back to a far-away country where the snows drifted thick and soft, tufting the lilacs with swan's-down. The memory made her give a little sniff with her coppery nose; but Flossy was not going to be homesick just yet. She would wait first, and see what was going to happen.

Bump, bump, crash, bang, jingle! the chest was on the ground; a burst of light; the lid was off and Flossy saw a group of natives looking at her curiously and enviously.

An African chief had brought ivory and gold-dust and ostrich feathers to trade with the strangers, and the articles in the chest were handed out lavishly. The sleighbells were hung as a necklace about the neck of his favorite wife, and Flossy found herself in her dark hands.

"Now," thought Flossy, "I wonder what *she* will do with me. She never can have made a cup of tea in her life."

This was quite true; but the negroes had tasted

coffee, and the queen hugged the teapot close to her swarthy bosom, anticipating the luxury in which she would indulge on the first opportunity. It was long before it came, and during the interval Flossy hung as an ornament among some decorated calabashes in the queen's booth.

But one day a caravan of Bedouins halted near the village, there was traffic and barter, and the queen came into her booth with a yard of red cotton filled with coffee-berries. She browned them carefully and beat them with a pestle; then she filled the magic teapot with water, placed it over the fire, and calling upon her chief invited him to a banquet, giving him to understand that a surprise awaited him. It proved a surprise for them both; for when they entered the booth Flossy

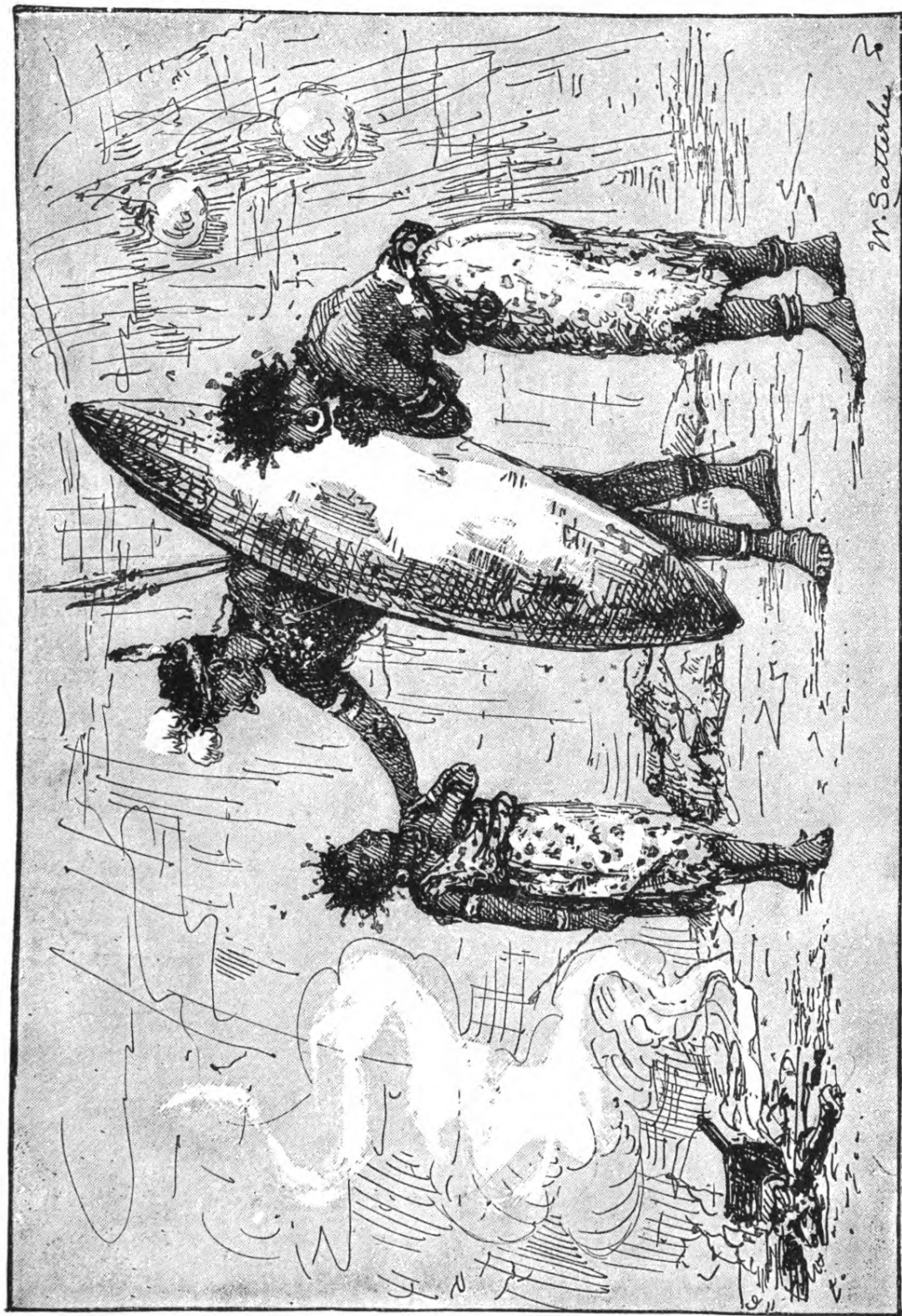
(Fourteenth Transformation.)

stood before the fire in a bright leopard-skin tunic, her woolly locks braided in a hundred little spikes, and a silver ring dependent from her flat little nose. The negro queen clasped her hands in rapture, for she had never seen so beautiful a child.

“Ah! this is the surprise!” grunted the king; “a handsome daughter. But why have you kept her a secret so long? Well,” he added, turning Flossy around, “she was worth keeping.”

The queen, seeing that her liege lord was really pleased, wisely concealed her own astonishment and proceeded to make him some coffee in an earthen jar; for the little teapot had unaccountably disappeared. She developed an intense affection for her foster daughter, whom she believed had been sent her through the enchantments of an old Jiji woman, or witch, and to whom she sent her necklace of sleighbells as an offering of gratitude.

Flossy lived for some time in the wild kraal, and found the life of an African princess not without its pleasures. It must have been that her sensibilities had been blunted in the change; for the rancid pomatum with which her woolly hair was smeared seemed to her a most delicious perfume, and roasted elephant's foot a great dainty. The tribe moved about from time to time, and Flossy witnessed a lion-hunt and an expedition for



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS AN AFRICAN PRINCESS,

spearing hippopotami. There were no hard lessons to be learned and, degenerating as she was into a little savage, it seemed to her that at last she had found the Children's Paradise.

But one day a very startling thing happened to our happy little African Princess.

Their tribe was attacked by another and beaten. The king and his soldiers were forced to fly, and the women and children were taken prisoners. A heavy yoke of wood was fastened around the neck of Flossy's mother, and a brutal man drove them in long procession across the desert sands. Flossy realized that they had fallen into the hands of slave-dealers. But her heart was so full of bitterness that she could not shed a single tear. Besides this she was too brave to desert her poor mother. She trudged cheerfully by her side, comforting her by stroking her hand from time to time, and when they paused to rest she brought her water, and tried to unfasten the heavy yoke which weighed her down so cruelly. The guard saw her doing this, and raising his murderous axe he dealt her mother a blow upon the head which

killed her instantly. Then Flossy uttered a heart-broken cry, but not in fear of the infuriated negro who raised the axe above her head, for she felt her-

(Fifteenth Transformation.)

self changing, and saw his look of rage fade into one of alarmed surprise. She was only a teapot once more, and as such had nothing to fear, unless, indeed, it should occur to her horrible owner to boil her, when according to the mysterious conditions of her enchantment she would of course change again to a little girl.

The barbarian did not know this; nor had he any idea of the use of the little object which he held in his hand. He admired its bright coloring, and, concluding that it was intended for personal decoration, hung it around his neck by a cord, and wore it against his naked chest all the way to the coast. Here some trading vessels were at anchor and the wily merchants bartered rum, gun-powder and trinkets for the ivory and gold-dust which the negroes brought. A harmonica attracted the attention of Flossy's owner. His

cherished teapot would not make such music as this, and he at once offered Flossy in trade for the mouth-organ. The proposition was accepted, and the ship sailed away to the northward, the magical teapot lying forgotten in the chest of one of the merchants. For many weeks she voyaged steadily on, her keel resolutely pointed in the same direction.

"I wonder where we are going," Flossy thought to herself. "I hope far away from Africa and from any tropical country. I hope it is to the Arctic regions, to the very North Pole itself. There at least I might stand a chance of having some ice-cream, and *how* I have longed for it!"

One of Flossy's chief luxuries in hot summer days had been unlimited ice-cream. As an African child she had craved the refreshing coolness without remembering exactly the delicacy which she vaguely missed; but as a teapot it all came back to her. "I am baked," she said to herself, "broiled, roasted, fried to a crisp. If some one would only fill me now with chopped ice, I would be content to remain a piece of crockery

for an indefinite period. Really the climate in Africa is worse than in England."

In reality the ship was bound for Stockholm, and as it entered the dark waters of the Baltic, winter was beginning and the shores of Russia and Sweden were already white with snow. At Stockholm the ship was unladen, and Flossy found herself the property of a Swedish pedler, who packed his sledge with a strange medley of articles and started one frosty morning over the glittering snow to the northward. The bells on his horses' harness jingled merrily, and the pedler drew his fur robes well about him and whistled encouragingly to his horses, for he was bound for the far north and expected to double the value of his wares in the furs for which he would exchange them. The fiords were firm green ice and the snow was crisp and very hard, and the runners creaked noisily as they cut through the diamond-like particles, and the pedler had to rub his nose frequently with his fur mitten for fear that it would be frozen. Indeed there was especial danger of this for he was of the Jewish race and

his nose stood out like a bold promontory, flanked by two glittering lighthouses of eyes.

At Tornea, on the Russian frontier, he turned his course backward; for he had disposed of all his wares with the exception of the teapot, which he offered to the innkeeper in payment for his supper. "I do not care for it," said the man; "it is only a woman's toy, and I am not rich enough to pamper my wife with such trinkets."

A stupid-looking Laplander who had been drinking the host's strong ale reeled forward.

"I am not as rich as thou," he said, "but I am not too poor to pleasure my wife. I said I would bring her a present from Tornea, and I had almost forgotten it. See if I have enough left to pay for your woman's toy."

He handed the pedler his deerskin purse which was unscrupulously emptied, and taking the teapot he stumbled out to his sledge. Stowing it safely away he twisted the end of the thong, with which he guided his reindeer, about his wrist, and with a joyful snort the animal bounded forward.

The Laplander's name was Lars Forstrom. He

had driven a long distance to Tornea to dispose of some sea-otter skins and to purchase necessities for his family. Fortunately these had been purchased before entering the inn door, for Lars had one grave weakness—a fondness for strong drink. Though short and dark, he was not an ill-looking man. He wore a mustache and his coppery cheeks had a ruddy healthful tinge. He was stupid certainly, but he was good-natured and warm-hearted. He wore the Lapland tight jerkin of deerskin strapped about him with a crimson worsted scarf, his sea-otter cap was decorated with hanging squirrel-tails, his mittens were of dogskin, and his leggins of sheepskin with the wool inward.

He sang until the beer and the cold rendered him too drowsy, and then he fell asleep on his sledge, and the strong deer pursued his way straight up the Tornea river which spread, a highway of ice, down to the Bothnian Gulf. All night the stout-limbed reindeer sped northward, the moonlight shining full on the snow-laden trees that marked the banks of the buried river. The next morning the wary animal halted in a little

village ; but Lars neither spoke nor stirred. Some passers-by shouted in his ear and shook him, and finally carried him inside one of the houses.

“ He is drunk,” said one. “ He is frozen,” said another. They bustled about preparing and applying remedies, but with little hope. “ He is dead,” said the father of the family.

CHAPTER VIII.

AMONG THE LAPPS.

NO, you cannot bring him to life," repeated the man in an earnest tone.

"Perhaps not," replied the mother; "but think of his poor wife."

They had brought the contents of the sleigh within doors, and the good woman proceeded to make some coffee in the little teapot. "It will be good for him if he revives," she explained; and contrary to all expectation Lars drew a heavy breath as she set it on the close Russian stove. He was coming out of his stupor. Then there was more rubbing with snow and rum, and shaking and joyful exclamation, for they were welcoming a man from the jaws of death and, stranger as he was, for the moment they were as interested in him as if he had been their own kith and kin.

After he had spoken and been bolstered up with a bear-skin, the housewife thought of the coffee; but the teapot was no longer where she had set it. In its place a little girl, whom the

(Sixteenth Transformation.)

woman had not noticed before, stood by the stove. She was dressed, like Lars Forstrom, in clothes of reindeer skin trimmed with eider-down, and she wore a boa of squirrel-tails strung on deer's sinew about her neck.

A closely-knitted scarlet hood covered her head, her hair hung in black elf-locks about her face, and her hands were incased in fur mittens.

"Are you his daughter?" the woman asked. Flossy nodded and stepped nearer her new father. He did not notice her at first, for he was not quite conscious of his present surroundings and babbled incoherently of a bear with which he fancied he had been fighting. Presently his glance fell upon Flossy. He stared at her a moment in bewilderment then rubbed his eyes with this exclamation: "Then it was not a dream, after all!"

"It is no dream that you are saved, my friend," said the kind housewife ; "you are in the hands of friends."

"Yes," replied Lars, "but I have been in the bear's den, and I have brought back my Gudrun — little Gudrun who was lost."

"Are you Gudrun ?" the woman asked.

"I suppose so," Flossy replied a little uncertainly ; and it was well for her that no more questions were put at that time, for she was quite as puzzled as her father. He was not able to continue his drive until the next day ; but he told her then the story of his wild early life. When first married he had gone with his wife to live in the mountains. He hunted the wild animals and would follow them with great agility, skating down the frozen slopes on long skides, or wooden skates, six feet in length. He carried with him a barbed pole to guide his course, and with which he was not afraid to battle the most savage animals. It was a solitary life ; but his wife, Drontha, and he were never lonely, for they loved each other, and she was as hardy and adventurous as he, and would often accompany

him on his wanderings. After their little Gudrun came to them she did this more rarely; but one morning he induced her to do so, as he was going up a ravine in search of a bear which had carried off a pig from their neighbor. Baby Gudrun was left sound asleep in her hammock-cradle of sealskin suspended from the centre of the tent. They were gone only a few hours, hunting unsuccessfully for any traces of the bear; but when they returned they found the tent door torn open, the hammock dragged to the ground, and the baby gone. Worse than all, on the snow outside they saw the tracks of an enormous bear. The whole country was roused and the region thoroughly searched, but neither child nor bear were ever found. At last the parents gave up all hope and believed that their child had been devoured by wild beasts.

“And now, how was it that I found you, or that you found me?” Lars asked.

But Flossy could not tell. She remembered her former transformations only vaguely, like dreams. Perhaps they were dreams, and she had lain all this time in some shaggy bear's den.

"How glad the mother will be to see you," Lars continued, "there are nearly a half-dozen other children, but she has kept your place for you."

That day, without knowing it, they crossed the Arctic Circle, and another day's sledging brought them to the Lapp village. The huts were mere mounds of earth with canvas roofs; half cave, half tent. The Finns, who live in the same region, build houses; but the Lapps have a tradition that shortly after both races were created it began to rain, whereupon the Finns sheltered themselves under a board and the Lapps under a piece of canvas; and this is the reason that to this day the Finns live in houses, and the Lapps in tents.

Swarms of snapping black Spitz dogs greeted their arrival, and some men and boys, who in their clumsy deerskin suits resembled bears and cubs walking on their hind legs, came out to meet them. One of the men took charge of the sledge, and Lars led Flossy through a sort of root-cellar and fur-storeroom, into the house proper. A fire burned in the centre of the only room, the smoke escaping as best it could through a hole in the roof.

A woman, who was cooking something in a pot, looked up as Lars entered, and listened to his story of the finding of the lost Gudrun. She was not quite satisfied. Drawing Flossy to her, she catechised and scrutinized her closely. "She is like you in face, Lars," she said at length; "but she is too bright by far to be your daughter. I fear me you have brought home some forest-troll or water-nixie which will work us mischief."

"Nay," Lars replied, "she is a Christian child, and she may well be bright, for she is your child, Drontha, and you were ever quicker than I."

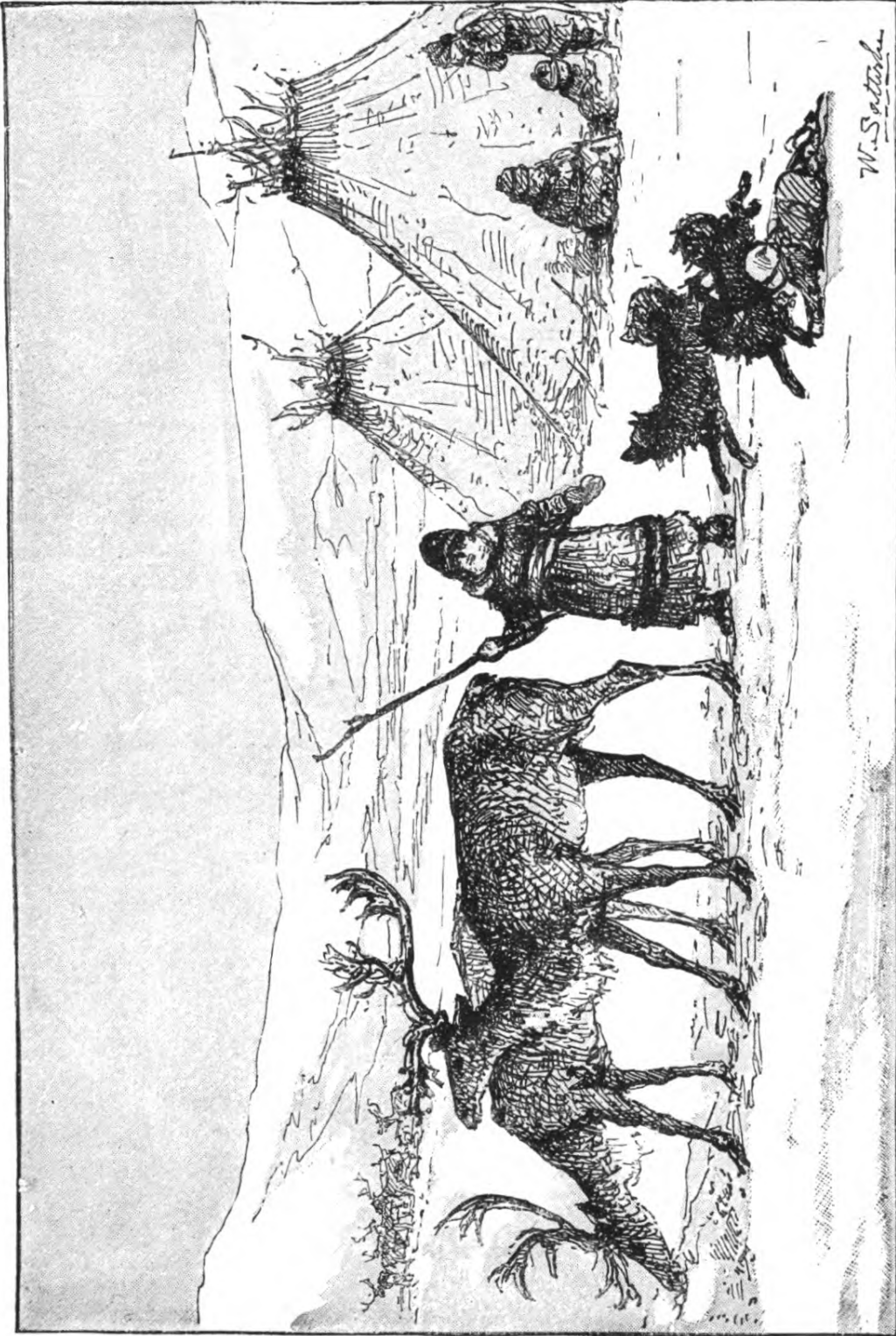
Drontha shook her head, but her heart was touched by her husband's compliment. "She may stay, Lars," she said, "and though she may not be our lost daughter I am willing to accept her as such. How drunk you must have been not to be able to tell where you found her!"

"Yes," Lars replied, complacently, "but if I had not been drunk perhaps I would never have found her at all, and surely it was a piece of good fortune."

"Good for once," replied the woman, "but don't count this a reason for getting drunk again."

Flossy was not certain whether the woman meant that the same happy result might not again follow, or that she did not wish any more children brought her in such a mysterious manner. Hitherto Flossy had loved her mothers better than her fathers. In every transformation the mother, whether a high-born lady or simple peasant, was gentle and loving — the one invariably dear and delightful element in every existence. Here, however, Lars was certainly the more amiable member of the family. He smiled almost constantly, showing a mouth full of broad white teeth, and he had a trick, when pleased, of tossing his head like a horse and throwing back his mane of black straight hair. He did so now; and Flossy noticed an irregular dark spot on his forehead which was usually hidden by the bang which all Laplanders wear.

She was about to tell him of it when her mother proceeded to dish up the contents of the pot, which proved to be stewed pigs' feet, for her husband and the newly-arrived daughter. An older girl brought a pitcher of sour reindeer's milk; and Flossy was so hungry that this refreshment seemed delicious.



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS GUDRUN, THE LAPLANDER GIRL,

After supper she felt so sticky and uncomfortable that she asked her mother for water in which to bathe. "We never wash ourselves in winter," the woman replied; "it is so extremely cold that it would be dangerous to do so."

Now Flossy was very fond of splashing about in the big bath-tub at home, and to go without the luxury of bathing for an entire winter seemed to her a great deprivation. "I can at least wash my face and hands, can I not?" she asked.

"No, indeed," replied her mother; "rub them with this greasy rag instead. Your father and I never wash our faces from one year's end to the other."

Flossy looked at them both. She could readily believe this, for, though rather handsome and sturdy people, her parents were decidedly dirty. Perhaps this was the reason that in the long stay which she made with them, she never saw them kiss each other or their children. The Laplanders are not destitute of affection and yet, strange to say, kissing is unknown to them. Flossy missed this caress at first; but it was with a feeling of thankfulness

that such repulsively dirty people did not expect her to kiss them. Little by little she became accustomed to their habits. The intense cold, often forty and fifty degrees below zero, helped to excuse their slovenly habits, and purified their home from offensive smells which would otherwise have arisen. The white snow covered everything out of doors with its purifying mantle and supplied the craving for cleanliness which could not be gratified within the hut. In spite of the cold she was out of doors much of the time, accompanying her father in the care of his herd of reindeer, milking the does, and even learning how to drive stout North Wind, the animal that brought her to her new home; the shaggy black dogs with their sharp foxy noses and ears were great pets, and amused her with their playful pranks. Her brothers and sisters, Olga, Knud, Olaf and Hjalmar, always seemed like so many young animals to her; but they were good-natured little cubs and their mouths stretching from ear to ear, gave them the appearance of perpetually smiling. They were very noisy whether in sport or sorrow; their grief was clamorous and their play obstreperous.

But Flossy very soon learned to be as rude as they. Long after, she read some lines which reminded her of her experience among the Lapps, and might, indeed, have been written of her own family :

In Lapland the people are dirty,
Flat-headed and broad-mouthed and small,
They squat round the fire while roasting
Their fishes, and chatter and squall.

But there were also delightful things which she remembered all her life with pleasure, and which helped to reconcile her to the squalor of her present surroundings. One of these experiences was the six hours of twilight and combined sunrise and sunset in the middle of the day. She was living now so far within the Arctic zone that the sun at noonday was only one degree above the horizon. The noonday-hour was preceded by a long slow sunrise; the sky and long stretches of snow illumined with the most beautiful colors melting into each other with exquisite gradations. At home she was rarely up early enough to see the sunrise. But here the stars only began to fade, and the deep violet of the sky to flush to lilac at about ten o'clock

in the morning. As the hours went on, the lilac changed to pink, the pink warmed to rose, and the rose burned to orange, as the orb of the sun appeared above the horizon. Then the tints retrograded in the same way, until darkest night settled upon them at three in the afternoon. Further north she knew it was midnight all winter; the sun never showing its face and the train-oil lamp burning smokily all day long. But here the sky during the noonday hours was a sea of glory.

She had her cherished possessions too, like every other child. One of these was a scarlet jacket, wadded with eider-down which her father had himself brought from the ducks' nests, and trimmed with a band of real ermine. There was a whale's tooth, too, on which an old sailor had carved some queer characters. Drontha believed that it had some magical virtue and looked at her child with alarm when she saw what a favorite plaything it was with her. "Who knows," she said to her husband, "but she may blow us up a storm with it when we are all soundly sleeping at night?"

The Lapps, as a tribe, have been converted to

Christianity; and there exist among them but few relics of their ancient superstitions; but Drontha still believed in the power of wizards to sell winds. The old sailor, who gave her the whale's tooth, had told her of one who had sold his captain a knotted cord, and whenever he wished the wind to blow from a certain quarter he had only to untie one of the knots.

But what troubled Drontha most in regard to Flossy, or little Gudrun, as she was now called, was her strange desire to be clean. None of her other children were afflicted with this mania. It must be, she thought, that the child missed being licked by the bear.

But there was a still greater trial in store for her. The long winter of nine months was over, and the family was about to make its annual migration to the seashore for the fisheries. Here Gudrun was happier than ever, building sand-forts with her brothers and sisters and wading out into the surf. None of the other children were so venturesome, or enjoyed the water as she did.

"I wonder whether the bear taught her to swim,"

Drontha worried, as she watched Gudrun leaping and splashing among the waves; and she strictly forbade Olga, Knud and Olaf to follow her. "There are water-nixies out there," she said, "where the white foam breaks at the foot of the lighthouse; and if they catch you by the legs they will pull you under and never let you return."

"I believe that Gudrun is a water-nixie herself," said Olga. "She likes to tempt us out into the surf and then splash the salt water in our faces."

The mother did not reply. But what was only a half joke with the child was becoming with her a settled conviction. This was no flesh-and-blood child of hers, but an elfin sprite who would disappear sometime as the troll did that danced with the peasant girl until daylight and then vanished like an exploding rocket.

One day a party of English tourists came to visit the encampment of Lapps. The huts were even dirtier and more repulsive than in winter, for now the hot sun brought out all the sickening sewer-like smells, and the cleansing snow no longer covered the filth which surrounded their homes. Gud-

run offered one of the ladies a cup of sour milk, but she drew back with an expression of disgust; and then, because they thought there was no one present who could understand their language, they commented freely on the slovenly lives of the Lapps. The gentleman of the party, who, it seemed, was a physician, remarked: "This is the greatest fault which the Lapps have. It is even worse than their drinking habits, for it effects every one alike, and is a prolific cause of disease. Leprosy in its most loathsome forms exists among them and is due to their filthy manner of living."

The doctor little thought that the large-eyed Lapp maiden who looked at him so earnestly understood all he said. After he had gone, as Gudrun helped her father mend his nets, she said to him, "Father Lars, what is leprosy?"

Lars shouted. "Who has been talking to you of leprosy?" he asked.

"The foreigners who were here said that it came to people who were dirty."

Lars fired up with indignation. "It comes to the clean and the unclean alike," he said. "My father

was attacked with it when he was well along in years, and no one was more particular than he. He bathed twice a year — once when we came down to the seacoast in the spring, and again before we went back for the winter.”

“Did he die?” Gudrun asked.

“It was a living death,” Lars replied. “All lepers are obliged to go away from their families and stay at the Leper Asylum with other unfortunates. Do not question me about it.”

Gudrun said no more. But from that day she made every effort in her power to cleanse her poor home.

She bathed the children and washed their clothing, swept and sanded the floor, and persuaded her father to clear away the garbage from the doorway. Every day, too, she frolicked in the waves, and the children looked on longingly but dared not follow her example, because their mother had forbidden them, until one day Drontha herself was persuaded to wade into the waves and try the pleasures of a bath in the salt-water. She enjoyed it so much that all her suspicions vanished, and the next

day the entire family floundered in the water like young seals.

They were very happy that summer. Lars was so busy with his fishing, so contented when at home, that he forgot to drink. Drontha began to take a housewifely pride in her home and in the appearance of her children. She showed more affection for Gudrun than ever before, and told her stories of Karen in the wooden petticoat, who, it seemed to Gudrun must have looked very like a churn; of King Olaf and his famous ship, the *Long Serpent*, and many another legend and saga of the North. The children picked the wild berries and helped Drontha make cheese of the does' milk. They salted the fish for winter, and sometimes went out with their father in the fishing-boat. The life was so simple, so wild and free, that it seemed to Gudrun that at last she had found the Child's Paradise.

But the short summer was drawing to a close. Already the water was cold and the waves rough. "It is a pity," said Lars, "but we must soon think of driving the herds inland, and there will be no more bathing. The Finns manage it in some way ;

they have furnaces and steam themselves after the Russian fashion. I think I must build a furnace near our hut. I cannot bear to think of living in the old, dirty fashion."

They lingered by the seashore a little longer, collecting their effects for moving, although it was now too late in the season to bathe. Lars was obliged to make several trips inland before everything was moved. He carried his fish first, drove the reindeer next, and left his family for the last. He had just returned from his second journey when Gudrun noticed that the dark spot, which she had seen on his forehead when she first came to live in the family, had greatly increased and was settling down like a thunder cloud over his eyes and temples. She brought a pan of water and strove to wash it away, but it would not come off. Lars looked at himself in a small mirror and turned pale. "I must go out and bathe in the surf," he said hastily.

"Do not," Drontha replied, "it is far too cold."

But Lars would not listen to her. He hurried down to the beach and, tearing off his clothing,

sprang into the deadly cold water. For a little while they watched him swimming about; then suddenly he sank.

"It is the cramp!" Drontha exclaimed. "Run for the boat."

Gudrun and Knud launched it at once, and Drontha herself seized an oar and sculled rapidly across to the spot where Lars had disappeared. As they approached they thought they saw him come to the surface and sink again. But they could not find him, though they searched long and faithfully. They reluctantly rowed back without him. Then Drontha broke out into loud reproaches, calling Gudrun a water-nixie, and accusing her of tempting her father to his death.

This was more than Gudrun could bear and she fell to weeping bitterly. When they reached the shore Gudrun was not in the boat.

(Seventeenth Transformation.)

"She must have drowned herself for grief," said Olaf, "for she was with us a moment ago."

The children were crying wildly, but Drontha

uttered no word. "The water-nixie has done her work," she thought, "it is time she disappeared."

The next day the fishermen brought from the beach the body of Lars, and the children heard them saying to one another, as they looked at the face from which the wet hair fell straight and heavy, "It was perhaps for the best that he died so. Neither he nor she could have borne that other separation which must otherwise have come."

And Drontha herself as she came to kiss her husband for the first time, shrank away as she saw that he was a leper. The bathing and tardy attempt at cleanliness had come too late for him, though not for the children who remembered their water-nixie sister long after she had left them, and could never be content with the old filthy life after her short visit.

CHAPTER IX.

GOING TO THE MISSION.

MEANTIME the teapot lay unnoticed in the boat, and the boat drifted out to sea. A stiff breeze was blowing from the north, and the boat floated out and onward day after day, the only object between the heaving billows and the threatening heavens. Sometimes a wave broke over it and covered the teapot with briny drops which seemed to Flossie to be the tears which she had shed; but the boat was staunch and did not sink. Sometimes a tired petrel rested upon it, and the barnacles coated its keel with a heavy mail of shells. It had reached warmer waters and was rocking quietly on the Gulf Stream when the captain of a vessel bound for South America caught sight of it with his field-glass. Instantly the ship's boat was lowered from the davits and stout sailors were pulling

away over the long swells toward the unknown object. They worked with a will, for they imagined that it was a bit of wreck to which some human being might still be clinging. When they brought the boat alongside the ship and held up the pretty Japanese teapot they were greeted with shouts of derision. But the captain hung the teapot in his cabin, intending to take it home to his own little girl.

At Para, however, the large city at the mouth of the Amazon, some Indians came on board with objects to sell. The captain thought that a cunning little monkey which one of them held would please his daughter more than the teapot, and the Indian, in his turn, was greatly attracted by the gay piece of porcelain. The transfer effected, Flossy was stowed away in the Indian's canoe and carried up the Amazon.

It was a wild, strange country through which she journeyed on a network of interlacing rivers, which are generally set down in our geographies as one stream — the Amazon. In some places they united in one broad flood several miles wide, in others

they lost themselves in an intricate maze of lagoons, lakes and channels. Palms grew on the shores — and such palms ! Even in Egypt Flossy had never seen anything to equal them ; for here were at least a hundred different varieties in the space of a few miles, festooned together with vines and matted with a dense undergrowth of broad-leaved tropical plants. Here and there on the surface of the water floated bits of pumice-stone from volcanoes far up in the Andes. They could hear the howling monkeys crying in the forest, and now and then an alligator lifted its head and fell with a heavy thud into the water.

At last the boat was moored before a little clearing in the woods, the home of the Indian who was what is called a *seringuerio*, or rubber collector. His house, built near the river, was elevated on tree-trunks as a safeguard against the floods. It had no windows, and only one door which was closed at night to keep out the mosquitoes. A handsome embroidered hammock was stretched from the hut to a palm-tree, and in it reclined a young Indian woman, the wife of the *seringuerio*.

She sprang up as her husband dragged his canoe upon the bank and eagerly examined the articles he had brought from the city. Several brown children, very scantily clothed, but scrupulously clean, also gathered about the canoe to inspect the presents. The teapot was universally admired, and each wished to have it as his or her particular property.

“Be still, Candida,” exclaimed the father. “Pedro, stop pounding your sisters. Ignacia, cease your chattering. The thing is your mother’s, and you shall not one of you lay a finger upon it.”

The mother, to appease the children, promised to make some chocolate in it which they should all drink. Pedro accordingly climbed to a platform in front of the hut where some fruit of the cacao-tree was drying. He broke open the pods and brought down a handful of the seeds. These Candida ground in a wooden mortar and stirred to a paste with water and sugar. The mother had already placed the teapot to boil over the camp fire. She took the cacao paste from her daughter’s hand and was about to stir it into the hot water, when

she saw with surprise that water and teapot had disappeared.

"Which of you children—" she began, but

(Eighteenth Transformation.)

paused, for a strange little girl was standing beside baby Ignacia. This new arrival entirely took her mind from the lost teapot, for they lived apart from any village, or settlement, shut in by the impenetrable forest and by the broad river, and she wondered how the child could have reached them.

"Where did you come from? What is your name?" she asked in a breath.

"I am afraid you will not believe me," Flossy replied, "but I came from the teapot. I was bewitched and your boiling the teapot set me free."

The children clapped their hands.

"That is a pretty story," Pedro said. "It is like the Jurupary who alone can live in the fire and who changed himself into a jaguar and then into a tortoise. Are you a Jurupary? Can you make yourself into a jaguar?"

"Pray do not," Candida cried in alarm; "be a

parrot instead, a beautiful blue parrot with a crimson tail."

"I can not turn myself into different animals and things at will; you have boiled me and I am a child, and I shall have to remain a child until" —

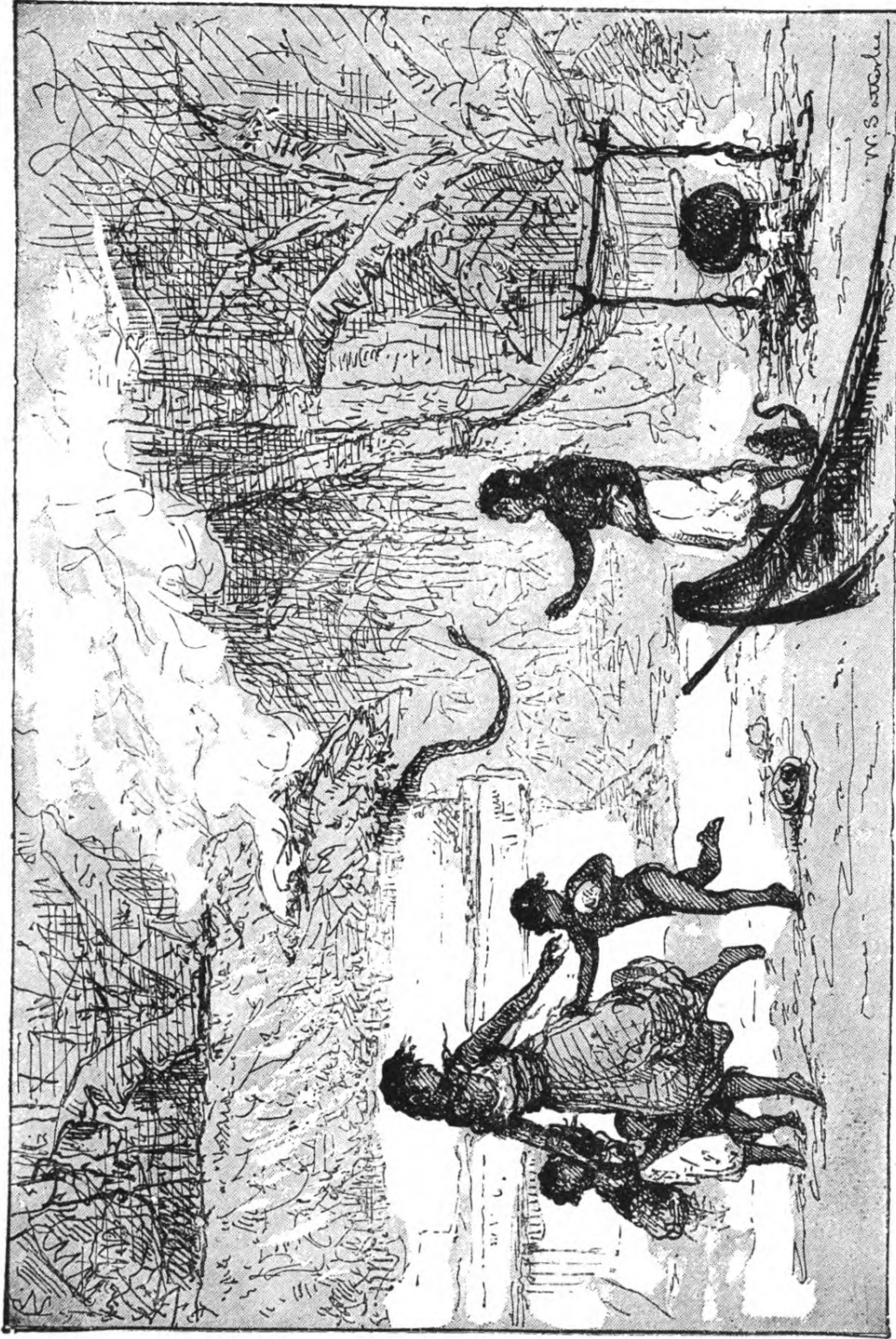
"Until we boil you again?" asked Pedro. "Come, Candida, help me to place the great kettle over the fire and we will boil her."

"No," said Candida, cautiously, "not unless she promises not to turn into a jaguar—or a big snake."

"It will be of no use to boil me," Flossy assured them. "I shall remain a child until you make me cry, and then" —

"This is all nonsense," said the mother, who had been quietly listening. "Don't you know that it is wrong to lie? José, where did you find the child?"

"I did not bring her with me," the father declared. "Some people have probably been camping near here and she has strayed away. They will come in search of her by and by, and meantime she can stay with our children; there is farinha enough for all"



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS THE BRAZILIAN INDIAN GIRL.

Farinha is a kind of flour, or meal, made from the manioc root. From it a mess is made which is the staple food of the Brazilian Indians. Flossy found it not unpalatable at first, but grew very tired of it before long. It seemed very strange to her that in this tropical country, where the most luscious fruits grow with but slight culture, the natives should hardly ever taste them. Only occasionally were bananas brought home by Father José. Oranges and pineapples were cultivated by the Portuguese settlers on their *fazendas*, or farms, but the Indians knew nothing of them. There were a few wild fruits in the woods, and these as they happened in his way as he made his rounds to his rubber-trees, José brought back to his family.

Sometimes José went fishing and their ordinary fare was varied. Flossy accompanied him on a torchlight excursion one night for fish. She sat with the mother and the children in the body of the canoe, while José stood in the prow shaking a torch in his left hand and held a spear with his right, ready to strike as the fish appeared at the surface of the water. It was exciting sport and he

secured many large fish which his wife afterward salted and dried. The flashing torch, a fountain of glowing sparks reflected in the black mirror of the water, fascinated Flossy almost as much as it did the fishes. It seemed to her to have a great resemblance to the coruscating St. Catherine's wheels which she had seen at home in a display of fireworks. The South American Indians are particularly fond of fireworks and her foster-parents promised that she should see some beautiful ones on the festival day of St. Antonio when they would go to the Mission to hear mass and see the spectacles.

Flossy grew to like this wild wood life. It had one great blessing; that of cleanliness. There was a spring, a little way from the house, surrounded on all sides by the forest, which served the family as a bathroom. Here the children frolicked twice a day in the pure fresh water, pouring it upon one another from calabashes (bowls made from the gourd-like fruit of a tropical tree), and gaining from their frequent baths strength to meet the debilitating influences of the climate. It was very different from her Lapland life and Flossy remembered the

long winter spent in the dirty kennel with a shudder of disgust. She grew as strong and brown as her little Indian brother and sisters. The simple life and fare was good for her body, and she stretched her arms like a growing vine, and raced like a young deer. But, unconsciously, as her body grew her mind starved. There were no story-books or children's magazines here, and Flossy longed with a great hunger for a story. One day as her mother was weaving a hammock she told her children a folk-lore story, which had been told her by her own grandmother. The other children were already familiar with it, and called loudly for the story of

HOW THE FOX AND THE JAGUAR RAN A RACE.

"A fox once boasted," said the mother, "that he could run faster than a jaguar. The latter accepted the challenge, and it was decided that the race should be in a large circle, and whoever should first reach the spot from which they started, passing on the way by a certain palm-tree, a thicket of bushes and a high boulder, should be pronounced the winner. On the morning set for the race the

fox stationed one of his three brothers behind each of these objects. The two combatants then set out; the jaguar with his long strides easily distancing the fox who, when his opponent was out of sight, quietly returned to the goal, sat down, and waited. The jaguar kept on running. When he reached the palm-tree he cried out, 'Where are you now, Friend Fox!' 'I reached this point some time ago,' replied the elder brother of the fox; 'and I climbed into this palm-tree to rest and wait for you.' The jaguar was surprised, and, without waiting for the fox to come down, ran away with all his might. What was his astonishment as he neared the bushes to see a fox walking leisurely along in advance of him! but, putting forth all his strength, he passed by the second brother, and came panting up to the rock just in time to see the third brother refreshing himself at a meal which he had spread upon the top. 'Will you not join me, Friend Jaguar? You look tired!' said the fox with mock politeness; but the jaguar, goaded to madness, rushed by like a whirlwind and dashed around to the goal in the quickest time ever known

to be made by any animal. But, as he sank exhausted upon the ground, he stumbled over the true fox, who started up, rubbing his eyes, exclaiming, 'Bless me, Friend Jaguar, I have been waiting for you so long that I fell sound asleep!' And as the fox called Jurupary to witness that what he had just said was quite true, and as no animal can invoke Jurupary and the same time tell a lie, it was decided that he had won the race."

"That is a good story," all the children said, as she finished.

"Was not the fox clever!" Pedro exclaimed. "I mean to be just like him."

"I think the fox was a great rascal," Flossy said. "Did he never get paid for his deceit?"

"O, yes!" the mother replied. "Jurupary always catches the liars."

"Who is Jurupary?" Flossy asked.

"He is he whom the priest calls the Evil Spirit. We must take you to the Mission to hear about him, for you seem very ignorant. Jurupary can change himself into any animal, though his favorite form is that of a serpent."

"Tell her," said Candida,

HOW THE FOX FOUND HIMSELF OUTWITTED.

"It happened in this way," said the mother. "The fox went on playing his tricks on all the animals, but especially on the jaguar. At last he became so presumptuous as to challenge the jaguar to change himself into other animals and objects, a thing which Jurupary will permit to no one but himself."

"And that is why," interrupted Candida, "we know you could not have changed from the teapot, or have been boiled; for neither can any but Jurupary endure the fire."

Flossy was silent, and the Indian woman continued:

"'I can change myself as well as you can,' said the jaguar. 'Only let me see you do it first.' 'Very well,' said the fox, 'what shall I become?' They were standing on the borders of a lake in the centre of which grew a beautiful Victoria Regia. The jaguar looked around, and said carelessly, 'Change yourself into that water-lily.' 'Very well,

Friend Jaguar, but when will you believe that it is I?' 'When I hear the flower speak and call me by name.' 'Nothing is easier,' replied the fox. 'I have only to dive to the bottom of the lake and remain there until my tail takes root in the ground, when I will grow into the king lily of the lake.' 'Boasting is easy,' said the jaguar scornfully. The fox immediately dived into the lake, and, swimming under the lily-pads, he allowed his nose to protrude from the water just where it was hidden by the petals of the principal lily. From this concealment he addressed the jaguar: 'My friend, I have done as you desired. Am I not the most beautiful lily in the lake?' While he was speaking, an Indian approached the lily from behind the fox, with a boat-hook, and, thrusting it into the water, dragged the flower into his canoe. In so doing it chanced that he cut off a piece of the fox's tail. The fox swam at once to the shore and showed the jaguar his wounded member as a proof that when the Indian picked the lily it was the fox in disguise. The jaguar stared stupidly at him, believing all that he was told. 'And now, Friend Jaguar,' said

the fox, 'it is your turn. Do you dive to the bottom of the lake and change yourself to a lily. But as it is extremely difficult to resist the impulse to rise to the surface, I will tie this great stone to your tail, which will enable you to remain patiently at the bottom while you are taking root.' The jaguar permitted the fox to do so, and at once sank below the surface where he would inevitably have perished had not Jurupary appeared in the person of an alligator and gnawed him free. The jaguar at once came to the surface and threw himself upon the bank snorting and strangling with the water. 'I see, Friend Fox,' said he, after he had a little recovered, 'that only a drowned jaguar can be changed to a water-lily, and I prefer to award you the victory rather than try that experiment.'

"But when the jaguar had gone away, Jurupary, who was angry with the fox for having usurped his prerogative of transforming himself or pretending to do so, appeared before the fox in the form of the jaguar. 'What, have you come back?' asked the fox. 'Yes,' replied the false jaguar; 'I have thought of one more trial of strength which I would

like to perform.' 'What is that?' asked the fox. 'There is a burning oven yonder in which a potter intends to bake some water jars. Let us each run through it?' 'Very good,' replied the fox laughing; 'but since I performed the other experiment first, you must take the lead in this.' 'Gladly, if you will pledge me to follow;' and the jaguar leaped into the furnace, leaving the fox still convulsed with laughter, for he thought, 'he will now certainly be burned to death.' But the jaguar came out unharmed, and the fox trembled as he looked at him with fiery eyes, exclaiming, 'It is now your turn. Go into the furnace.' The fox, too cowardly to redeem his pledge, turned to run away; but Juru-pary fell upon him in the shape of an enormous serpent and devoured him."

"Do you still desire to be as clever as the fox?" Flossy asked of Pedro.

The boy shook his head sheepishly. "I forgot that story," he replied. "But in real life it does not always end so."

Flossy was eager for more stories, but her mother's stock was soon exhausted. "Padré Cris-

toval will tell you some of another kind," she said, "when we go up to the fête of St. Antonio."

The entire family had looked forward with much joyful anticipation to this festival, but when the day came the mother lay ill of a low fever. "I will take the children, nevertheless," said the father; "they shall not lose their enjoyment, and I will bring back with me some Jesuit powder,* which may cure the mother."

It was a long distance to the Mission. They reached it by paddling all night from one tortuous channel to another. Flossy had little idea of what she was going to see or hear, but she had lately felt a vague longing after a higher life than the purely animal one which she was now living. Her mind ached with its own emptiness; and her soul was groping in the dark. Her mother's stories had interested her in the animals about her. She regarded them as intelligent beings, and would nod her head to the mischievous monkeys peering at her through the branches of the trees, and kiss her hand to the parrots. She knew that there was a

* Quinine. So called from its use by the early Jesuits.

family of serpents under the roof of their own home, but they were not of a poisonous kind and José had left them there because they destroyed the bats who were so numerous as to be a nuisance, and Flossy would hear the snakes crawling about above the rude ceiling at night without a thought of fear. There was only one being whom she dreaded — this Jurupary, or Spirit of Evil. Perhaps he would be angry with her for changing from a teapot to a little girl, and yet she did not think that she ought to be blamed for this, since she never did it of her own will.

She found that the Mission was a village built around a plaza with a cross in the centre. A church stood on one side of the plaza, and into it the Indians were pressing. Here the ceremonies interested and confused her, but she came away with one clear idea — there was a being more powerful than Jurupary, whom the priest knew and to whom he talked. That being could heal the sick, she understood; and Flossy determined that she would ask the Padre to send him to her mother. After the services in the church, they ate

their dinner and then joined the procession which proceeded to the burying-ground where a great many rockets were fired off. Flossy saw that a letter was tied to each and was told that this was the way to send a message to the powerful friend of the Padre. This would seem a very strange mode of praying to us, but the South Americans send up their prayers in this way with perfect confidence that they reach the good Jesus, and will be answered by him. The children were so delighted with the rockets that José purchased one for each of them. Padre Cristoval was near and watched them send off the rockets with a kindly sympathy in their pleasure. He noticed that Flossy held hers tightly and was not willing that her father should light it.

“Why is this ?” he asked in so pleasant a tone that Flossy was not afraid of him ; “are you not fond of fireworks ?”

Flossy explained : “ Mine has no letter. I want to send a letter to the friend you were talking of.”

“Child of Heaven,” the priest replied, “you shall have your choice of every prayer in my bre-

viary. Will you have this — ‘A Prayer for Souls in Purgatory’, or ‘A Prayer for the absolution of Sins’, or ‘A Prayer for a good Death’?”

“No,” Flossy replied. “I don’t want any one to die. It is just the other way. I want my mother not to die.” And she explained how her mother could not come to the festival but lay at home sick with the fever.

“I understand,” the Padre said gently, and he asked José a number of questions and gave him a package of Jesuit powder. Then, as though suddenly recollecting Flossy’s request he went into the sacristy and wrote a special prayer for her, sprinkling it with holy water. This he brought to her, and fastened to the rocket with one of her own golden hairs. “There,” he said, smiling, “Jurupary can never intercept a message sent by an innocent soul. Take this and send it off after your mother has taken one of the powders, and the answer will come before they are all used.”

Flossy returned from the festival very tired, but very happy, for had not the priest promised that her mother should recover? If the Padre

could have seen the miasmatic, malarious surroundings in which their hut was built he might have doubted the efficacy of both quinine and prayer ; for nothing but removal from their present home could guard against the ravages ; and as for moving, there was nothing further from José's mind. Here was a house and he could not bring his lazy soul to think of building another, no matter if his entire family died.

As Flossy splashed about in the delicious spring the next morning, she was so joyful that her sisters could not forbear a few spiteful remarks. "You need not give yourself such important airs," said Candida, "just because you happened to think of saving your rocket. I do not believe it will do mother any good."

"Nor I," added Ignacia. "I think it will be more likely to bring an answer from Jurupary than from the good Jesus, for when the wicked pray, it is Jurupary who answers."

After this envious talk they discussed the festival which they had just attended, and Candida longed for the gaudy dresses which she had seen

there. Hitherto Flossy had thought that the white waist and blue cotton petticoat which she now wore an all sufficient toilet, and with the addition of a flower behind her left ear really elegant ; but her eyes were also opened and her feminine vanity, and love of pretty things was stirred. "When mother gets well we will ask her for new dresses," she said.

"Mother can never afford to get them for us," Candida replied, "as long as she keeps adopting strange children. Father said he could have bought me a string of beads if it had not been for your rocket yesterday."

Flossy's kind heart was troubled, but she answered meekly, and as the reference to the rocket reminded her that her own had not yet been fired off, she hurried to the house to do the little work that was required, administer her mother's medicine and try the new charm. Her father had started on his round collecting the rubber sap, but Flossy had watched the operation so closely that she did not need his help. Taking a brand from the camp fire she touched off the rocket, which shot straight up

—up as far as her dizzy eyes could follow it. “It will surely reach the good Jesus,” she thought; “but what was that flaming bolt descending almost as swiftly as the rocket had mounted?”

It was the rocket-stick, one end of which was burning. It fell upon the roof of the hut, and the light palm thatch burst almost instantly into flames. This surely was not the answer which she had expected from the Padre’s kind friend; but she did not stop to speculate. She thought only that her mother was in the burning house, and, climbing the rude staircase, she dragged her out upon the balcony and how—she never quite knew—helped her safely to the ground. The other children stood regarding the fire with staring uncomprehending eyes. Suddenly Candida shrieked and pointed, and Pedro cried, “Jurupary is coming out of the flames!”

It was the old boa who lived under the roof who now coiled out of the fire; but not one of the little group doubted that this was indeed Jurupary come to claim his own.

“It is the new child whom he wants,” said Candida, pushing Flossy in the direction of the serpent,

and the mother, taking Ignacia by one hand and Pedro by the other, fled wildly toward the forest. Candida turned and ran also. Flossy tried to follow, but the mother turned, and crying, "Stay! you have done us enough evil," sank exhausted upon the ground.

Flossy stood still. It seemed to her that her heart would burst. The frail house had burned to the ground, and the serpent had disappeared—even Jurupary did not want her, and she was utterly alone. Without knowing it, she had brought to these people the blessing which she desired; for now that their house was burned they would be compelled to move and would choose a more wholesome locality. But it seemed to her that she had been their ruin; and, desolate and heart-broken, she sat down and sobbed, not caring the least bit what might become of her.

CHAPTER X.

“CASKET OF PEARLS.”

(Nineteenth Transformation.)

WELL, here I am a teapot again,” thought Flossy. “At any rate it is nicer than being a South American girl with no pretty things. I hope if ever I am a child again it will be where they live in decent houses and wear nice dresses and don’t send their prayers up on rockets — and oh! I do hope, whatever else there may be, that there will be no mosquitoes.”

But at first it did not seem likely that Flossy was to be a girl anywhere. A teapot she was and, for the present, a teapot she was to remain.

The family returned to the site of their home, collected the few articles which had escaped burning by not being in the house, and packing them

in the canoe departed by way of the river. Flossy lay undetected in a group of ferns, until one day the sharp eyes of a monkey spied the bright-colored bit of porcelain among the leaves. He seized it and clambered with it nimbly to the top of a palm-tree.

A pedler happened to be floating down the river in a canoe with some Indians at this moment, and, wondering what the gay object could be, he aimed a shot at the monkey. The unfortunate little creature fell into the water still tightly grasping its fate-bringing treasure. The Indians paddled swiftly to the spot and secured both the body of the monkey and the teapot. "That was a narrow escape," thought Flossy; "it really seemed as if I would be drowned. I wonder if I *could* have been drowned as a teapot! Perhaps not. But at any rate it would not be pleasant to stay down in the bed of the river with the fishes, and to get my nose full of sand. I wonder where I am going, and to whom I belong now."

Flossy stared hard at the pedler and fancied that there was something familiar in his appearance although he sat with his back toward her.

Surely she had seen those stooping shoulders before. But when he turned and looked at her with a glare of triumph, she fairly trembled with dismay. It was her old master, the magician.

He smiled a cruel, malicious smile, and muttered between his teeth, "Ah! you begin to shake already, Bubbling Teapot. Time enough for that when I place you on the tight-rope. You have had a long rest, but now you shall dance, Bubbling Teapot. Oh! how you shall dance!"

You may be sure that Flossy did not like the prospect of her old slavery; but there was no escape from it at present. So for several months after this she performed for the mountebank before crowds of gaping, admiring people, who collected in the towns along the river to see the dancing teapot spin on the end of a stick, climb a pole, or tilt upon a tight-rope.

At Para the magician embarked upon a ship bound for the Mediterranean. "Now," said Flossy to herself, "I shall have another chance of seeing the world. I hope we shall visit some new countries." But as the ship sailed through the Strait of

Gibraltar she turned cold with fear. "I have had enough," she thought, "of Africa and of Spain. I trust he will not stop here."

But the magician turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, and the good ship steadily pursued its way past Algiers and Sicily and the Ionian Isles up the Ægean Sea until it anchored before the most beautiful city of the world, domed and minaretted Constantinople. Here the magician disembarked, and again the wonderful performing teapot drew its circle of admirers.

While Flossy bobbed and spun, she observed keenly all that was passing around her. There were grave men in turbans and flowing robes, fierce bandits from the interior in gay, gold embroidered jackets and tasseled fez, with scimitars and daggers thrust in their sashes; the merchants in the bazars, calmly standing with folded arms or sitting cross-legged while they smoked endless chibouks; silent veiled women and noisy carriers. It was all a panorama out of the *Arabian Nights*, and Flossy recalled the stories from that wonder-book which had delighted her at home. The

adventures of Aladdin, and Ali Baba, Sindbad and the good Sultan Haroun Alraschid. The costumes and occupations were the same. Princes, and dervishes, robbers and slaves, snake-charmers, and camel-drivers. She could imagine herself the Princess Badroul Badour, or wise Morgiana.

"I think I would like to be a little Turkish girl," she thought ; and then she reflected that the cities of Damascus and Bagdad were the ones which figured most frequently in the stories of the *Arabian Nights* and she hoped that she would not be transformed just at present.

She had her wish ; for in the course of a few weeks the magician came to Damascus, and now Flossy opened her eyes in good earnest and tried to remember everything she had read or heard of this ancient city. They approached it from Beyrout, crossing the Lebanon and the Ante-Lebanon ranges, and several mountain torrents, the last being the beautiful Pharpar, the "river of Damascus" which Naaman thought so incomparably superior to the Jordan. And now the white-walled city with its onion-shaped domes and slender min-

arets, its great khan and mosques, appeared before them. Into this city only a few years before the Christians of Lebanon had crowded, driven by the fanatical Druses, only to become the victims of a massacre by the Mahomedans of Damascus, from which none would have escaped but for the heroism of the Arab chieftain, Abd el Kader. Here in ancient times had lived the Saracen Sultans from whom the builders of the Alhambra, the Mahomedans of Spain and Morocco, were descended. Here came the crusader to fight the Turks and deliver the Holy Land, and here is still to be shown a fragment of wall and window from which it is said St. Paul was let down in a basket.

All of these events mingled in Flossy's mind like the shifting scenes of a magic-lantern; but no impressions were so fascinating, or so vivid, as those obtained from the legends of the genii. What Flossy now saw was this: "The street that is called Strait" with its latticed windows and balconies, the bazar of soaps close to the bath with its odors of orange-flower water and attar of roses; the bazar of tobacco, so very snuffy that

it made even a teapot's nose ache for a good sneeze; the bazar of sweetmeats with its pots of candied confections and cubes of fig paste; the slipper bazar; the goldsmith's bazar, a mere niche in the wall hung with strings of pearls and embossed armlets, bangles, anklets, ear-rings, necklaces and ornaments of every description. Most brilliant of all were the carpet bazars, gay with rugs of different colors. There were small prayer rugs of convenient size to be carried about, woven with a pointed arch intended to be turned toward the sacred city of Mecca — and heavy silken carpets from Persia fit for the floors of palaces. The bazar of swords with its glittering blades and jeweled scabbards reminded Flossy of a robber's cave; and the merchant who sat regarding the passers-by with an eye as keen as his daggers might have been the captain of the Forty Thieves.

The magician stopped to examine his wares. Hassan, the sword merchant, handed him a scimitar of wavy-lined steel so elastic that he curved the point to the hilt and assured the magician that

it had once been the property of the Sultan Saladin. There was a motto let into the blade, a kind of ornamentation for which the metal-workers of Damascus were noted and which has been called damascening, from its having originated here. The sword-seller translated the inscription: "I am the maker of widows and orphans, the bringer of misfortune and death."

"It is a famous sword," said Hassan. "It would be a fine one for a juggler to perform tricks with, for it will sever a silken scarf floating in the air, but he must have a long purse who would hope to purchase it of me."

It seemed that the magician's purse was not long enough, for he passed on and stopped before the bazar of pipes, which was perhaps the most curious little shop of all. Here were long reed-stemmed chibouks, and nargilehs with coiling snake-like tubes, and glass vases so constructed that the smoke could be cooled by passing it through rose-water. The pipe-seller examined Flossy curiously, taking her up in his hands to obtain a better view. "This queer object would

make a good pipe-bowl," said he. The longer the pipe-seller, Ibrahim, caressed the coveted object the stronger became his desire to possess it. Having exhausted every means of temptation in his power, his crafty brain began to devise unfair means of securing it. Putting on an aspect of cordiality, he invited the magician to a feast at his house. "I would fain," he said, "have my family see the performances of this remarkable creature, for surely creature it would seem to be."

The magician was flattered by the merchant's attention and accepted the invitation. Ibrahim's home was one of the richest in Damascus; though plain without, the interior was decorated with a flashing mosaic of tiles of beautiful colors and patterns, and the lofty rooms were panelled with carved and gilded wood-work. Behind a latticed screen which opened into the harem the women of the family were gathered to peer at what was going on in the hall below. In the centre of this hall bubbled a fountain, and divans cushioned with crimson velvet and gold embroidery ran along the wall.

Both the magician and Ibrahim kicked off their slippers on entering, and the host having clapped his hands, slaves appeared bearing two little tables on which were spread the first course of the feast. Strange indeed was the bill-of-fare, including as it did camel-stew, a pottage with olives, stuffed cucumbers, curious cakes and sweet-meats and washing of the hands in rose-water between every course.

Contrary to Moslem law, Ibrahim plied his guest with various wines and strong liquors; for it was a part of his evil purpose to get him thoroughly intoxicated. Before this was entirely accomplished, he exhibited his performing teapot before the eyes of the beauties hidden behind the lattice, and after they had been dismissed a story-teller was admitted to interest the magician and take his attention from the number of glasses of cordial which he drank. Ibrahim sent him away in the midst of a story, for he saw that the magician's head was beginning to nod, and he was in haste to complete his work of villainy. As soon as the man was completely overcome with liquor the

slaves of his host carried the magician to the gate of the city and there deposited him.

Ibrahim, having thus gained possession of the teapot, exercised all his ingenuity in the vain attempt to convert it into a pipe-bowl. As the night was far advanced, and he needed various appliances which were at the bazar, he gave up the work until the next day.

When the magician, with aching and confused brain from his night's excess, presented himself at the pipe-seller's bazar and demanded his property, Ibrahim assured him that he had taken it with him when he left his house and must have been robbed afterward. With all his skill as a sorcerer the magician could not be certain that this was not the fact. At any rate Ibrahim had might if not right upon his side — and once again the magician was obliged to bid farewell to the bubbling teapot.

Meantime Flossy lay on one of the cushions of the divan, regarding the magnificence about her, and wishing very much that some one would boil her and transform her into a little Syrian Maiden. It was not long before little Selim, the youngest

child of the household, discovered the strange piece of porcelain. He played with it a while and finally carried it into the kitchen. He was asleep when his father returned from the bazar, and great was Ibrahim's anger when his new pipe-bowl could not be found. Selim's mother thought she had seen the magician lurking in front of the house, and Ibrahim did not doubt but that he had crept in and stolen his own property. This conclusion made him so frightfully cross that his entire family kept out of his sight.

His favorite wife suggested an expedient which was at once resorted to. Ibrahim was fond of very strong coffee ; it had a soothing influence on his nerves, and after the eighth cup he was often known to become almost amiable. Moreover had not the prophet Mahomet's son written of coffee, "O coffee, thou dispellest the cares of the great. When coffee is infused into the bowl it exhales the odor of musk and is of the color of ink." Ibrahim should have a pot of coffee of the inkiest dye, and orders to this effect were issued to the slave cook.

You can guess the result. The cook tried the

experiment of boiling the coffee in the magic teapot, and in an instant the house was filled with odorous steam, for the coffee was in the fire, the pot had vanished, and a little Syrian girl stood

(Twentieth Transformation.)

before the angry cook.

"Out of my kitchen, mischief-maker," screamed the black, brandishing a huge copper ladle. "You have overturned the coffee. Children are always working calamities wherever they stray. Away, I say, to the harem!"

Flossy strayed through the apartments until she reached the salon in which she had performed the night before. Here she was confronted by Ibrahim, who was even a more terrible spectacle than the angry cook. He was walking the floor with impatience, sniffing the air with distended nostrils, for he could smell the coffee, and wondered why it was not brought to him.

"Who are you?" he asked as Flossy hesitated on the threshold.

"I am your little girl," she replied, "but I shall

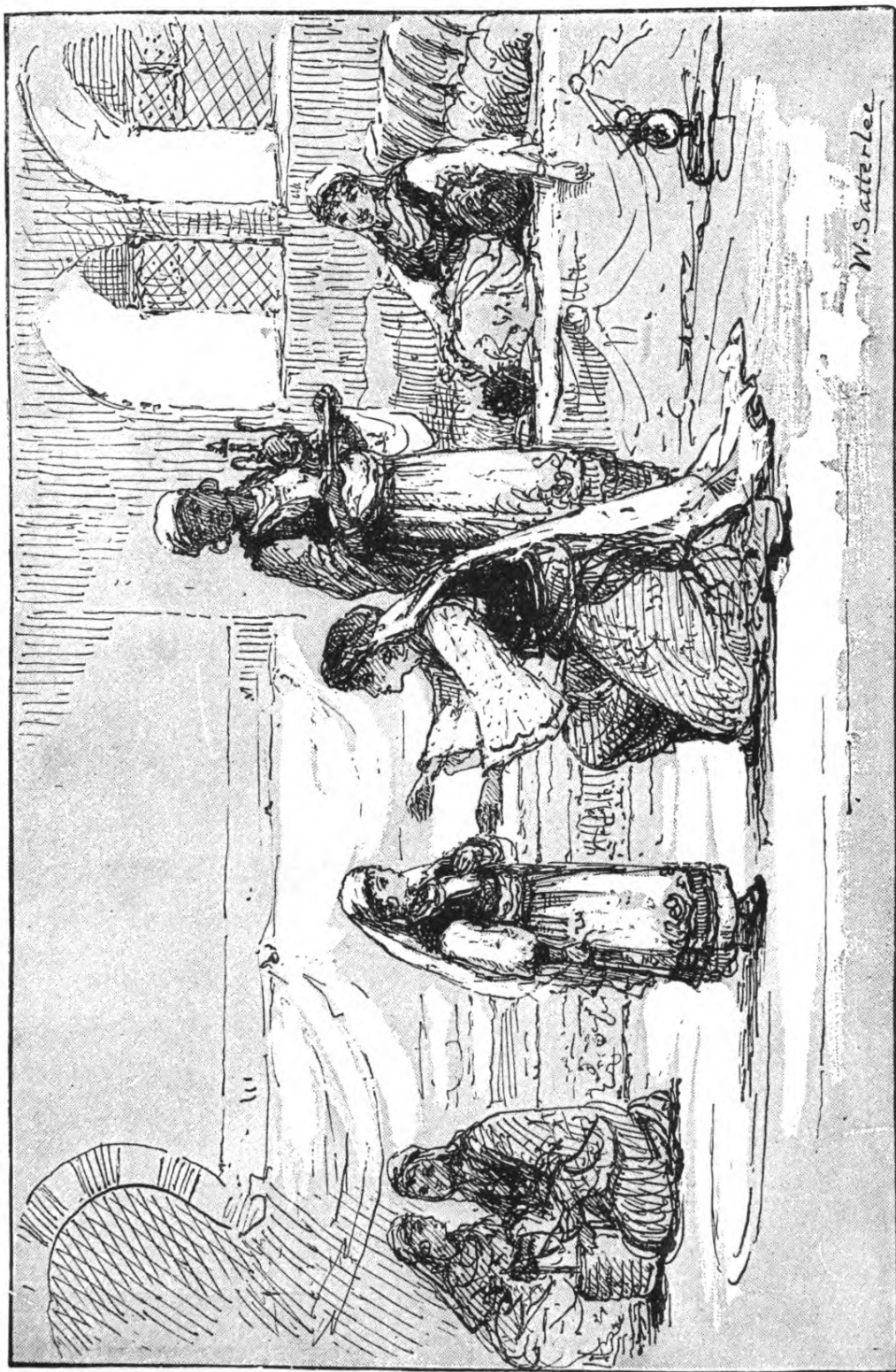
not be able to tell my name until you give me one."

"What, have I not yet named you?" Ibrahim asked; "that is indeed an oversight. I can not have seen you since you were a baby, for your face is unfamiliar to me. I suppose your mother has kept you out of my sight, fearing to irritate me, for it is indeed unpardonable that my wives should have given me so many daughters. Let me see," he added, counting upon his fingers, "there are eleven or thirteen of them — was ever man so shabbily treated? And only fifteen sons — what are they thinking of? What says the Koran? When any of the land of the Prophet is told the news of the birth of daughter — 'his face becometh black, and he is deeply afflicted; he hideth himself from the people because of the ill tidings that have been told him; considering within himself whether he shall keep it with disgrace, or whether he shall bury it in the dust!' Nay, never start. It is too late for that now. You are not to be buried, you must be married. I must look about for a suitable husband, and count my dinars to see if I have

wherewithal to render a dowry. I will name you Casket of Pearls, for you are likely to swallow up much of my treasure. How old are you? Ten! Another year and you will pass the marriageable age. I must bestir myself. Why do they not bring my coffee? By the bones of the Prophet, they are burning it! I will have that dog of a cook bastinadoed within an inch of her life."

Ibrahim looked so fierce as he uttered this threat that Flossy fled with great precipitation, and having threaded several passages found herself in the harem. Here the pipe-seller's various wives were seated; some at work grinding meal at a handmill, and some lazily smoking nargilehs, for pipes were plenty in this house. A young woman who sat in an alcove in an attitude of utter dejection, sprang to her feet as Flossy entered and overwhelmed her with caresses.

"The poor wild thing," said Selim's mother; "she thinks that child is her little girl that died. Well, let her imagine so; it may cheer her and she has seemed like to die of grief. Foolish thing! if it had been a boy one might have understood her



"MY PRECIOUS POMEGRANATE BLOSSOM," SHE EXCLAIMED.

sorrow ; but to weep so for a girl who is much better off dead than alive shows an unbalanced mind."

Poor Gulbeyaz did not share the opinion of the others. The daughter she had lost was her only child and she was overjoyed to welcome her as she supposed again.

"My precious Pomegranate Blossom," she exclaimed, "now that you have come back to me you must never leave me. But no, I must not call you by your old name ; it disagreed with you or you would not have died."

"Father has given me a new name," Flossy replied, "Casket of Pearls."

The mother gave a cry of delight. "It is a propitious name," she cried, "for pearls are enduring, and will not fade like blossoms. Come with me to the bath, for I have sat with ashes on my head since the time of your departure."

Flossy found that she obtained her wish in one respect at least ; the people among whom she now dwelt were as fond of bathing and cleanliness as the South American Indians. Instead of a plunge in the palm-shaded spring, however, she

was steamed in a marble apartment, rubbed and kneaded by a negress, and after her bath anointed with perfumed oils. Then she was robed in gauze and silks, and, closely veiled, accompanied her mother for a walk in the city. In the market they saw the story-teller repeating his tales. Gulbeyaz paused on the outside of the group to allow her little girl to listen. The story was that of Gulnare of the Sea and the adorable Prince Beder, so gentle and amiable, the flower of all perfections and the model of courtesy. Flossy listened entranced, and returned to her new home quite contented. If only that terrible father would keep away, she felt sure that this Syrian life would be very pleasant.

She spent the greater part of the next day on the flat housetop embroidering a gauze scarf with gold thread and tiny spangles. In the cool evening she played in the little enclosed garden with its bed of tulips and hyacinths and its tiny fountain.

As day after day passed, the monotonous idle life without studies of any kind began to grow wearisome. She tired even of the panorama of the streets, the cries of the cake-sellers and the tea-

pedlers bearing on their heads their trays of tiny glasses and droning "*Ya Karim—ya Allah.*" (O bountiful God.)

Her mother was always kind, but the other wives of Ibrahim were not. Selim's mother sometimes taunted Gulbeyaz because she had no son, and then Gulbeyaz would draw her veil across her face and weep silently. "Why do you weep?" Flossy asked her one day. "Am I not as good as a boy?"

"Yes, my precious Casket of Pearls," replied Gulbeyaz, "but if I should become a widow my lot would be most miserable without a son to support and protect me."

"I will support you," Flossy replied confidently. "We will keep a bazar of cakes—you make them so nicely."

"Allah have pity!" Gulbeyaz cried, "that is the occupation of a man."

"Then we will sell our embroideries."

"Ah! but who would buy?"

"Is there nothing then that I could do for you?"

"You might become a dancing girl, but their lives are wretched."

Flossy did not see how this could be. Dancing women were sometimes admitted to the harem to amuse the family with their whirlwind dances and barbaric music. One of these girls had imitated a cloud, languidly floating in the sunset, skimming before the wind, and caught and torn by a tempest. Another with waving arms had reproduced the eccentric movements of a kite. Flossy had admired them, and she determined that when opportunity offered she would learn to dance, that she might be able in case of need to support her mother. It made her indignant to see girls rated so meanly. She longed to prove to every one that they were of some consequence.

Selim was a stubborn little fellow, a persistent fighter like the great Sultan for whom he was named, but unlike him in always getting the worst of every combat and returning home bleeding and bawling. It was Casket of Pearls who bound his wounds and wiped his tears, for she was hungry for love even from such a little reprobate as Selim, and when she saw him one morning pluckily engaged in a fight with a boy much larger than him-

self, and heard him declare in a pause in the battle that he had a sister who could beat his adversary even if he could not, she could not forbear running into the street and tripping the larger boy up. He turned upon her with a look of rage, but Flossy stood quietly awaiting his attack. The boy's fury cooled into sullen vindictiveness. "I will pay you yet," he said as he shook the dust from his fez and scampered down the street.

"Come, Selim," Flossy said to her half-brother, and she led him howling as usual into the house where they were met by his mother who accused Flossy of leading him into mischief and threatened to sell her to the Bedaween, the wild bandits of the mountains. Flossy laughed scornfully, for she was growing every bit as unlovely as the people with whom she was surrounded; but when she saw her mother was pained she grew gentle again for her sake, but under her breath she repeated her determination—"I will show them what a girl can do."

The opportunity did not come immediately, for that night she was taken ill with diphtheria, and as this was the disease of which little Pomegranate

Blossom had died, Gulbeyaz was greatly alarmed. A dervish, or holy priest, was sent for, who mumbled some prayers, daubed Flossy's forehead with sacred oil, and then, strangest of all, thrust his rough finger down her throat. An English child would probably have died under such treatment, but Casket of Pearls was a Syrian and she survived. After this she could never see the tall peaked hat of a dervish without running as fast as her feet could carry her.

During her illness Ibrahim came but once to look at her. It was after the visit of the dervish, and his call was one of curiosity to ascertain the result of the treatment, rather than any fatherly interest in his little girl. "Girls are a continual expense," he growled, "and it seems likely that this one is to survive to make me more trouble."

Flossy heard the words and her heart swelled with indignation. No one seemed glad that she was recovering; even her mother said under her breath, "My poor Casket of Pearls, it would perhaps have been better had you died, though I could not have borne to part with you."

"I will show them, I will show them," Flossy said to herself after each of these speeches; "they shall both be glad yet that they have a daughter."

The time came very soon. A fire broke out in the kitchen one night, and grew apace, creeping stealthily into the main part of the house and feeding on the carved wood-work of the grand salon. Soon the smoke poured through the latticed screen, filling the harem. Flossy awoke with a choking sensation and alarmed the women, who ran to the housetop and dropped by means of ropes to the street below, for the stairway was in flames. She was about to follow when she thought of her father. Ibrahim occupied a room on the other side of the house, with the burning hall between. The only means left of reaching it from the harem was by a long, covered gallery on the garden side. Flossy ran out upon it, but the flames were streaming from the windows of the hall below and already were crackling among its supports. As she fled along it, the boards were so hot as to scorch her naked feet, and she knew there would be no possibility

of returning upon it. She reached her father's door only to find it locked, and though she beat upon it with all her strength and called wildly, it seemed a long time before he unbarred it. As she burst in the gallery upon which she had been standing fell with a crash, and Ibrahim recognized the danger in which he stood and through which his unloved daughter had come to save him. They mounted together to the roof ; but here there were no ropes by which they could lower themselves to the street. A crowd had gathered, and a ladder was hoisted. It was too short, and a man mounted upon the back of another held it upon his shoulders. Still it did not quite reach the parapet. "You can lower yourself to it, papa," said Flossy, "go down, don't mind me." There was real heroism in her words, for, for the moment, she forgot that the fire could have no power over her if she shed but a single tear.

But Ibrahim, though a bad man, was not utterly base. He unwound his many folded turban and lowered Flossy by it till her feet touched the rounds of the ladder and her hands grasped the sides.

Not until he saw her safe on the ground did he add his weight to the ladder.

The homeless family were temporarily lodged in the opposite house which belonged to Hassan, the scimitar-polisher, a friend of Ibrahim's. When the women were safely lodged in Hassan's harem, Ibrahim told his friend of his rescue.

"You have a brave girl for a daughter," Hassan replied, "and if you are not so impoverished by this fire as to be able to give her a good dowry, I would like to demand her in marriage for my son Ali."

"There is still an indifferent supply of wealth in my bazar," replied Ibrahim, "and in a coasting vessel which I own that plies between here and Beyrout. Casket of Pearls has become very dear to me by the action of to-night; and I will settle upon her half the profits made by this vessel for five years to come as a marriage portion."

The sword-polisher was delighted, and the next morning Flossy was informed that her marriage contract was signed. It seemed very odd to her, and she was not sure that she altogether liked the

idea. She seemed to remember dimly the joyous occasion of her aunt Josie's wedding in England; but aunt Josie was a lady fully twenty-five years of age, and had had a very happy girlhood and a young ladyhood for eight years before the event. Flossy reflected with regret that she had never revelled in the dignity of a trained dress, had never attended a "grown-up" party, or led the German, or taught a Sunday school class, or had engraved cards with "Miss" on them, or received a diploma at Girton or Newnham, or rejoiced in any of the society privileges that come to English girls after their debut. Still she had never observed that marriage was anywhere regarded as a calamity, and she was sure that any change would be delightful. Her mother indeed wept because they must be parted and Flossy would have followed her example had she not remembered in the very nick of time the consequences of an inopportune tear.

As soon as the family were settled in a new house, the arrangements for the marriage went rapidly on. Flossy did not see the little bridegroom

until after the ceremony ; but she was told that he was only a year older than herself. She remembered her father-in-law, as she saw him when the magician carried her about in teapot guise, seated in his bazar surrounded by swords and daggers. Some of these were damascened in gold with texts from the Koran, or encrusted with small jewels, rubies and amethysts, which shone like drops of blood on the murderous blades. Damascus steel was noted in the time of the Crusaders, and Hassan's ancient scimitar, whose elasticity was such that the point could be made to touch the hilt, may have belonged to one of the Saracens of that period. He was very proud of it, and it was a proof of his affection for his son that this sword was laid aside as one of the wedding presents. Flossy felt the same cold fear which she had experienced on first seeing this weapon hanging in Hassan's bazar. She looked at the cruel motto on the blade. It was true enough that all swords were "makers of widows and orphans," and she did not see how it could be to her the bringer of misfortune and death ; but in spite of her reasoning she dreaded

it with all the credulity of a child brought up to believe in evil omens.

But she had many other and more cheerful presents. Ibrahim bestowed upon her the handsomest set of pipes in his bazar, and Gulbeyaz spent all her time now embroidering the wedding outfit. Even Selim's mother gave her a head-band of golden sequins, and Selim himself fastened upon her arms a pair of bangles, saying, "Good fists to beat the bad boy. Be strong and beat your husband too if he is naughty."

In secret Flossy packed her doll, for ugly as it was, she loved it with all a little girl's fondness, and it proved a great source of comfort in after days.

The wedding took place in the usual Syrian style with feasting and music and dances and the bride was carried home with a torchlight procession.

What was Flossy's surprise on meeting her boy-husband to find that he was an old acquaintance — Selim's antagonist whom she had tripped up in the street.

"I told you I would pay you back some day," he told her as they ate their wedding feast to-

gether, "and now I shall have plenty of chances."

This was quite true, for although the little couple were to live at Hassan's house, and be subject to the bridegroom's mother until the coming of age of the young husband, still Ali found many an opportunity to tease and vex his child-wife.

Flossy found too that she had only exchanged a kind mother for a harsh mistress. Ali's mother made her grind meal, fetch water, and do all the drudgery of the household. She sometimes met her own mother at the public fountain in the street, and she noticed that she lifted her jar to her head with more difficulty and that she looked worn and weary. Once Flossy left her own water-pot at the fountain while she carried her mother's to Ibrahim's door; but for this delay her mother-in-law gave her a beating. Flossy did not cry under the punishment, for Ali was looking on, and it seemed to her as if her tears were all dried, scorched with burning indignation and that she would never weep again. She hated Ali, for he had grinned when his mother struck her, and she felt herself growing hard and wicked. She longed to become a teapot

again, but it was no use — try as she might, she could not cry.

This was not at all like being married in England, and once she wished a very wicked thing. She wished that some one would take the wedding scimitar hanging on the wall and cut off Ali's head with it, so that she could be a widow. She remembered how widows looked at home — with long crape veils, crimped ruffles of frosty whiteness, jewelry of onyx and pearls ; and she thought with what pleasure she could wear mourning for Ali, if the scimitar would only fulfil its threat by making some one a widow.

But something very different from what she had hoped happened. Ibrahim paid the family a visit. He was received with ceremony and given a seat on the divan of honor. Flossy was allowed to see him for a moment but under the eye of her mother-in-law she was afraid to tell him of her unhappiness. After dining, dancing women, who happened to be in the street, were called in to honor his visit ; and they danced with such abandon that the coffee cups on the brazen salver caught the infec-

tion and danced too, everything movable in the room rattled and trembled, the curtains in the archways gently fluttered, the very walls shook and the scimitar suspended by a silken cord vibrated like a pendulum three times and then fell, striking Ibrahim upon the head. Flossy saw him carried out; there followed two days of suspense and then came the news that he was dead. Chance, or Kismet the scimitar had done its work, and Flossy was an orphan and Gulbeyaz a widow.

Flossy heard the announcement without a tear. Now, there would be a change of some kind, and of this she was glad. She learned that Selim's mother and the other wives who had sons were provided for; but Gulbeyaz was left in poverty. She came to bid her daughter farewell. "I am going away over the Lebanon," she said, "to try to find my brother who is a water-carrier at Beyrout; but he is poor and I fear cannot support me. If he will not shelter me I shall die in the streets."

"My father gave me a large dowry — you shall share it," said Flossy.

"No, that will not be permitted," was the reply.

"Then I will go with you."

"Nay, you are a wife and must stay with your husband's mother."

"But I do not like being a wife. I am only a little girl, and I want my own mother;" and as Flossy saw Gulbeyaz torn from her and turned from the gate to a life of beggary, the tears, which until now would not come, gushed from her eyes, the bangled arms waved wildly in the air, then stiffened, the spangled gauze robe hardened and

(Twenty-first Transformation.)

the magic teapot rolled outside the closing doors of Hassan's house — and was picked up with a cry of joy by the magician who had long haunted the neighborhood, sure that the time would come when Casket of Pearls must weep, for he had a shrewd guess that she was his dancing teapot.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CASTE SYSTEM.

IT was the festival of the Kumb at Benares, the great holy-day of India recurring only once every twelve years when the Hindus flock in immense throngs to the Ganges to adore the sacred river.

The sandy plain outside the city skirting the river, swarmed with the multitude ; some of them just arriving, unpacking their ox carts and pitching rude tents consisting only of four poles with a piece of matting stretched across them, others preparing their evening meal of rice and curry at camp-fires ; while still a larger number were passing around gazing with idle curiosity at the hawkers with their wares spread before them on the ground, the devotees bathing in the river, the self-torturing fakirs, and the snake-charmers, the bazar

of booths, the processions headed by men beating upon tom-toms, the decorated elephant of a rajah from the interior, the white-robed Brahmans, and the tinsel-bedecked Nautch girls. All was noise and confusion — a strange mingling of fanaticism and merry-making.

In the very thickest of the crowd an Indian juggler was performing his tricks, which were so clever as to defy the detection of the closest observer. This may be said of even the ordinary jugglers of India; but the one now performing was the celebrated Zal Gubz, the favorite of his Excellency the Rajah Ramasami who had come from his distant province in fulfilment of a vow to drink at the Well of Knowledge at Benares and to take part in this festival. The Rajah was now looking down upon the juggler from the eminence of the howdah, or little house, on the back of his richly caparisoned elephant. He was as interested in the cleverness of his servant as a sporting-man in the speed of his racer, and he had challenged all India to produce an expert who could surpass his feats.

"Let us see what he can do," exclaimed a voice from the crowd. Zal Gubz, confident of easy victory and arrogant in manner, came forward. He was naked with the exception of waist-cloth and turban, and the appearance and disappearance of rupees, which he presently effected with no pockets or sleeves in which to conceal them, was unexplainable indeed. He caught up a handful of sand, shook it slowly until it had filtered out between his fingers, then opened his hands to release a bird. He bathed his shaven head, then wound his turban about it. He next lifted the turban off and laid it on the sand. Then giving the light scarf a whisk a large cobra was discovered coiled beneath it. The bystanders applauded this performance and asked for more, but Zal Gubz refused to go on unless some one could be found to match him.

A tawny-skinned man with almond eyes stepped forward and remarked that he was no juggler, but he fancied he could show them a trick or two; at the same time he planted two wands in the sands whose tops were connected by silken cords.

Under this tight rope he placed a small porcelain teapot and, sitting down at a little distance, he began to play upon a queer drum. After a few moments the teapot began to rock in time to the measured beating, and to edge itself nearer one of the wands. Then, to the amazement of every one present, it climbed the wand and balancing itself on the tight rope danced backward and forward, at first slowly, then more rapidly, until it became only a whizzing spot of color.

The juggler in jealous suspicion rose and crossed between the new magician and the performing teapot, expecting to intercept some horse-hair lines by which the movements were managed, but none of these could be found. The music ceased and the teapot glided to the ground. Zal Gubz examined both the ground and the teapot, but could discover no hidden mechanism; and could only acknowledge himself baffled. "I can beat that trick," he said, "if I cannot explain it."

"Do your best, Zal," his master commanded, "or I will be your patron no longer," and the juggler proceeded to perform the Basket Trick. An

empty basket was handed him and, turning it upside down, Zal Gubz began a weird chant at the close of which he overturned the basket and discovered a small pig. The pig was replaced under the basket and was heard to squeal piteously. The basket was lifted and the pig had disappeared. In its place stood a jackal which the juggler declared had eaten the pig. An attempt being made to cover the jackal with the basket it was discovered that the animal was much too large to be placed inside. The juggler next whirled the basket high into the air and caught it in his extended hand when it was seen to be full of eggs. He covered the basket with his turban and trampled upon it, then kicked it over, and a flock of pigeons issued from it. Then returning the basket to its owner he sat down with folded arms in the calm assurance that his rival could do no more.

The strange magician only smiled contemptuously and said, "Let some one kindle a fire before your Excellency." It was no sooner said than done.

"Now let the teapot be filled with water from the sacred Ganges."

Two Brahmins snatched the teapot up together, rushed to the river, filled and returned it.

"Set it on the fire," commanded the magician, "and watch. That I do nothing, let Zal Gubz watch me. That you see what my magic does, I beseech his Excellency the Rajah to watch the teapot."

The suspense for the moment was intense. The Rajah looked to the loading of his rifle and pointed it at the teapot, not knowing but a tiger might leap from the flames upon him, and several of the bystanders brought forward a fakir who carried a pair of tongs as an emblem that he was a fire-worshipper, and invoked his protection. The fakir seized the teapot with his tongs just as it began to boil, when to his astonishment the bubbling of the water was changed to a peal of silvery laughter, the fire and the teapot had vanished, and the astonished fakir saw that he was

(Twenty-second Transformation.)

holding a very pretty little girl at arm's length in his sacred tongs.

The crowd nearly went wild with delight. The Rajah Ramasami descended from his elephant and took the child by the hand. "She is the image of my daughter who died two moons ago," he said, "whose remains we burned in the sacred banyan-grove, and whose ashes I this morning scattered upon the Ganges. Zal Gubz, can you surpass this feat?"

The juggler well knew that he could not do so, but he was not willing to acknowledge himself beaten. "Let the strange magician," he said, "change the child again to a teapot."

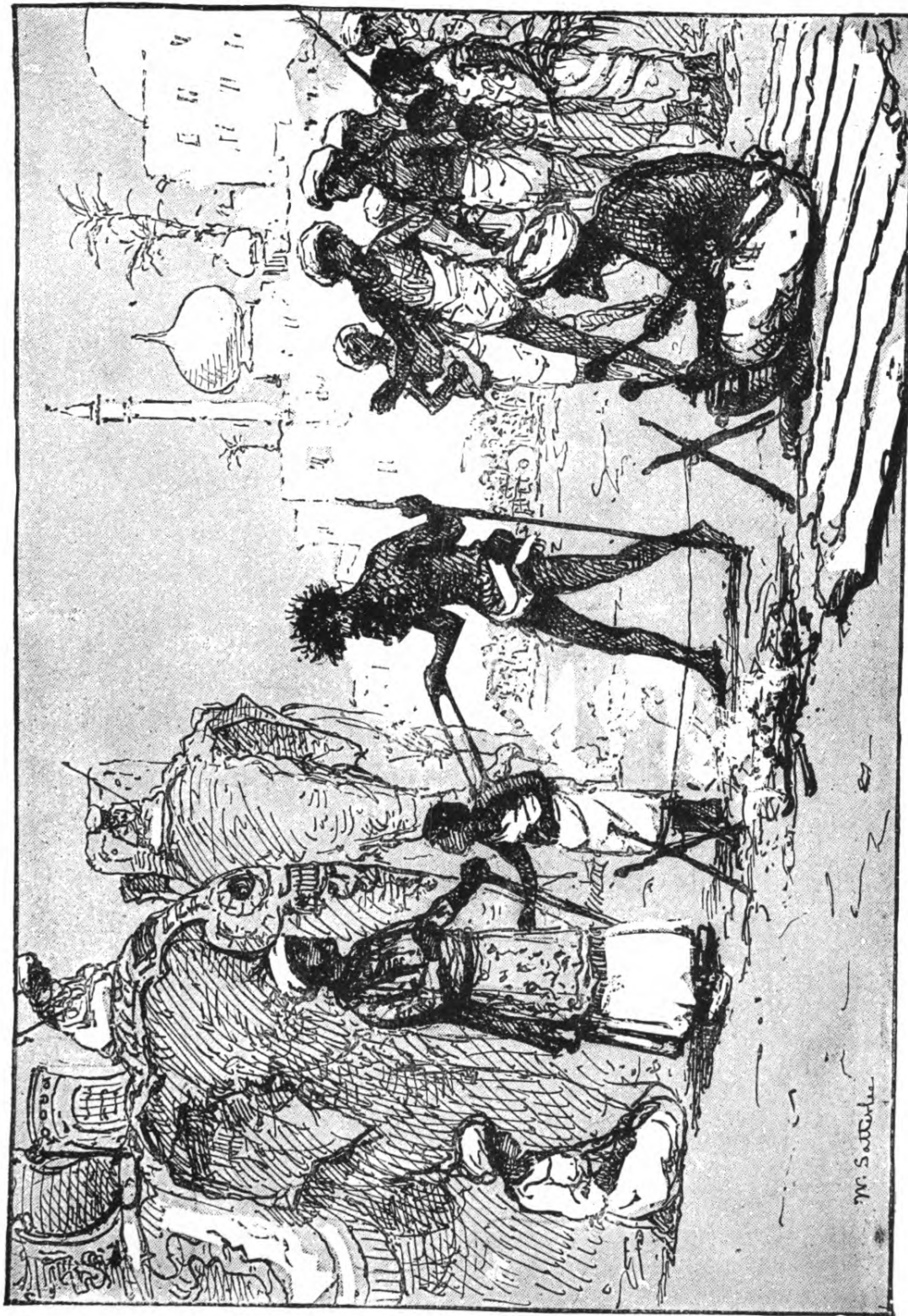
"Nothing is easier," replied the stranger, and seizing Flossy he raised the staff which he carried to beat her; but Flossy stretched out her arms toward the Rajah crying, "My father, protect me."

Ramasami's keen eyes glittered, his bushy black whiskers seemed to curl more fiercely, the diamond in his turban danced like a meteor, as he rushed upon the magician. "You shall not strike," he cried furiously. "This is my own little daughter Nourmahal, whom the Ganges has restored to me by miracle."

“Nay, your Excellency,” replied the magician, “she is only a mirage, a false image, whom I can readily convert again into a senseless piece of porcelain.”

“Indeed you cannot,” Flossy exclaimed. “This is the first time that you have transformed me into a girl of your own free will, but you will find that it is beyond your power to change me into a teapot again. You know you cannot do it unless you make me cry, and whatever you do to me I am determined not to shed one tear, for I believe Hindu children have a nice time, and I mean to try being one.”

The magician was about to reply but Ramasami motioned him aside with a lordly gesture. “Be off, impostor!” he cried, and the words were echoed by the entire company. “Be off impostor!” yelled Zal Gubz in an ecstasy of triumph. “Be off, impostor!” shouted the Brahmans, each seizing him by a shoulder and nearly tearing him in pieces in their efforts to hustle him in opposite directions. Zal Gubz followed kicking the magician’s musical instrument after him, while he en-



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS THE HINDU GIRL NOURMAHAL.

tertained the rabble by mocking and gibing at his rival's discomfiture.

The Rajah now summoned to his side some palankeen bearers who carried one of these wheelless vehicles between them. It was a long box with poles extending from each end. There were sliding doors at the side, and inside the doors rose-colored curtains of thin silk. On the floor was a mattress, and pillow, also covered with silk. The Rajah assisted Flossy to enter the box, and ordered the bearers to take up their line of march directly behind his own elephant. "We shall return home at once," he said to Flossy, "and in return for this favor of the gods I will build a temple to Vishnu."

Night was falling as they began their journey; and night in India is the time for activity, for eating and travelling, while the glowing noonday is taken for repose. The highway leading from Benares was alive with palankeen bearers pursuing their way at a brisk trot, bullocks and humped zebus drawing creaking carts, post-runners clearing the way before them with their bells, noisy

donkey-drivers, and foot-travellers bearing torches and chanting as they went. Flossy enjoyed the spectacle from her gently-swaying palankeen until the buzzing mosquitoes forced her to draw the silken curtains and the plaintive droning of her bearers lulled her to sleep.

She was awakened by a halt toward morning in a solitary place; the stars were looking down silently from between the branches of a banyan-tree. The shadowy form of a vampire bat flitted by, and off in the distance toward the jungle she saw an animal skulking which might be either a hyena or a tiger. The bonfire which had been built between her and the jungle had sunk into a few glowing embers. The attendants were asleep and the Rajah's pavilion was at a little distance. The savage beast prowled nearer, then crouched low, lashing its tail, with its glowing eyes fixed upon Flossy, who gazed fascinated from the door of the palankeen. She knew now that it was no hyena, but a huge man-eating tiger that was facing her; but her tongue seemed glued to the roof of her mouth and she could not scream until the

beast sprang. Then, as he overturned the palankeen and stood upon it clawing furiously to raise it from the position in which it had fallen, with the door to the ground, a stifled cry burst from the imprisoned child. She remembered standing before the Bengal tiger in Central Park, and trembling in every limb at its fierce aspect. But now the conditions were reversed. It was Flossy who was caged, the ferocious beast was at large, and her only hope was that he might not be able to get at the opening of her prison.

Suddenly there was another bound upon the palankeen, the box rocked more wildly and creaked under the addition of more weight. One of the bamboo supports gave way, the side was breaking in, she would be crushed within, while a terrific combat seemed to be going on outside. Were there two tigers there fighting for one little girl? Just as she was fainting from suffocation and fear several shots rang through the air, followed by a confusion of voices. The palankeen was turned back and her father drew her from it. The dead tiger lay at her feet, and Zal Gubz,

bleeding from frightful scratches, stood beside it. He had first heard her cry for help and, bounding to her rescue, had attacked the tiger armed only with a long knife.

As soon as Flossy comprehended this she sprang to his side and, taking his lacerated hand in hers, thanked him for this deed of heroism.

The Rajah Ramasami was horror-struck. "My child," he exclaimed, "you have defiled yourself — you have touched the hand of an out caste."

Flossy looked up wonderingly, and Zal Gubz, trembling in every limb, covered his face with his hands and staggered away. "What have I done?" Flossy asked, and her father explained to her the caste distinctions of India.

"There are five distinct classes of men," he said; "the Brahmans, or priestly scholars; the Kshatriyas, or rulers and soldiers; the Vaisyas, or farmers and traders; these three are high caste. There are also the Sudras, servants of the high castes and the Out castes which include all men not numbered in the four other classes. It is written in the sacred books: 'The first part of a

Brahman's name should indicate holiness; of a Kshatriya's power; of a Vaisya's wealth; of a Sudra's contempt.' But the out castes are more contemptible than the Sudras, and of the out castes it is written : 'Let no man who regards his religious duty hold any intercourse with them. Let food be given them in potsherds, but not by the hands of the giver; their sole wealth must be dogs and asses, their clothes mantles of the deceased, their ornaments rusty iron.'

"You are a member of the Kshatriya caste. Zal Gubz is an out caste. You have defiled yourself by touching his hand and we must consult the holy Brahmans for means of restoring you to your caste."

These arguments seemed very flimsy to Flossy; but she was accustomed to obedience, and she listened meekly, although quite determined to show her gratitude to Zal Gubz whenever allowed to do so. This was not to be the only time that the rules of caste would oppose themselves to her inclination and even to her moral convictions, for this giant system holds India in its iron grasp,

holding it back from any advance in religion or modern civilization.

Flossy did not see Zal Gubz again for many days. She was little Nourmahal now, the petted child of rank. They had reached her father's domain, and the little girl was sent to a beautiful pleasure-palace near the capital city. This was the summer zenana or residence of the Rajah's ladies. It was a low, wide-spreading structure of white marble surmounted by one long dome shaped like the keel of a boat, and by two smaller ones shaped like a boy's top. The floors were a mosaic of agate and looking-glass, the walls were panelled in sandal wood inlaid with silver and ivory, the furniture was of intricately-carved teak wood and the window screens were thin slabs of marble perforated with a tracery resembling lace. These windows opened upon gardens freshened by springing fountains, and sweet with flowers—beds of tulips, tuberoses, rich-scented lilies and purple hyacinths, the last a favorite flower in the Orient, and one which an Eastern poet has compared in the following lines to Hindu maids :

All day the rain
Bathed the dark hyacinths in vain.
The flood may pour from morn till night
Nor wash the pretty Indians white.

In the garden too were tanks filled with gold-fish which darted about like sunbeams under the large-leaved aquatic plants, and came to be fed at the ringing of a small silver bell.

The little Hindu princess was dressed in the Indian fashion, in a straight piece of spangled gauze wound many times about the body and limbs and gracefully draped over the shoulder. She wore many necklaces, some of golden coins, and one many-linked chain in the shape of a serpent that held a small circular mirror in its mouth. Her ankles were ornamented with slender golden hoops from which were suspended a number of tinkling bells, and her fingers were tipped with henna. The children of the lower castes were not only less sumptuously dressed, but many of them were not clothed at all, and this not only in the hot season, but also when the weather was so cool that the poor things shivered with discomfort, not-

withstanding the Indian proverb that, children and the legs of a stove do not feel cold. In Ramasami's palace however even the servants were well clothed. There was a little punkah-puller, a boy who kept in movement the great fans that rendered the air of the house cool and pure, to whom Nourmahal sometimes talked when no one else was by. He was so patient and contented, and pulled the punkah cords so untiringly from morning till late at night, that she pitied him with all her generous heart. He had been looking sad for several days and one morning Nourmahal saw that he was weeping.

"What is the matter, Ahmed?" she asked.

The boy explained that Zal Gubz was his father, and that he had now fully recovered from the wounds inflicted by the tiger.

"I should think that was good news," said Nourmahal.

"No," sobbed the boy, "as long as he was sick we hoped he would get better; but now that he is as well as he ever will be, we know that he can never practice his old feats again."

"Do you mean that he is so maimed that he cannot be a juggler?"

"Yes, and as he knows no other trade and has no money, my poor mother and little sisters will starve."

"My father will never suffer him to want, for he was hurt in saving my life."

"The Rajah our master is very generous to all, but he is away in the city and the steward is generous only to himself."

"Tell your father to come to the garden at night-fall, and I will myself see that he is rewarded," said Nourmahal who ran forthwith to her mother, telling the story and not doubting a moment her assistance. But her mother upbraided her for her rash conduct, and only reluctantly consented to have a present of a basket of food placed at the end garden, and to allow the ayah, or nurse, to wait with Nourmahal in a small kiosk until Zal Gubz should come and take it.

The juggler entered the garden in a hesitating way. He was loosely wrapped now in the linen cloths which make up the dress of the low-caste

Hindu, and his maimed hand was hidden in his bosom. He came forward to a little distance from the kiosk and made a humble obeisance.

"I am more sorry for you than I can tell," said Nourmahal, "and I would like to aid you in some way. What would you like to have me do?"

"If you will kindly take my poor family under your protection," Zal Gubz replied, "my heart will bless you while I am far away."

"But what are you going to do if you can no longer practise your tricks of jugglery?"

"I shall follow the trade of a story-teller."

"Ah! that is better still. What stories do you know?"

"I can tell all the legends of the Persians and the Arabs; the story of the Combat of Rustam with the White Demon, the tales of the Mahomedans, of Solomon and his genii and flying carpet, the sacred poetry of the Vedas, the adventures of Hanneman the Monkey-god, and the story of the Christians of the Red Table which descended from Heaven from which their prophet fed a thousand men."

The nurse had wandered to a little distance and Nourmahal spoke more unreservedly. "I will ask my father to let you come and tell some of those stories to me, for I love stories better than anything else, and if they are as good as their titles sound I am sure you will soon earn a great deal of money."

"If I could perform a few tricks at the same time it might indeed prove so; for the people are fond of tricks, but the stories are all old and well known."

"I will tell you what I can do for you," Nourmahal cried impulsively. "I will turn into a teapot again, and you can take me about and exhibit me."

"No, no," exclaimed Zal Gubz in alarm, "your father, should he lose you again, would cause me to be put to death."

"I am sure he could not," Nourmahal insisted, "and it is very easy; I have only to cry and I will vanish. I will tell Ahmed that if he sees a teapot lying about the house he is to take it to you."

Nourmahal's suggestion did not sound at all

impossible to Zal Gubz, for besides having witnessed her transformation from an inert thing to a living being, his religion taught him to believe in the transmigration of souls. The Hindu poet, Omar Khay yam of Naishapur, has shown in one of his poems his belief that the spirit of a dead man as well as his dust might exist in an earthen vessel. He says:

For I remember, stopping by the way
To watch a potter thumping his wet clay,
And with its all obliterated tongue
It murmured, "Gently, Brother, gently I pray."

Zal Gubz replied credulously but sadly, "Alas I could not carry you about with me even in the form of a vase, for your clay and spirit would still be high caste and I could not touch you."

"But I would not care," Nourmahal explained, "it would not make any difference with me."

"But it would injure my own caste," Zal Gubz replied, "and I have no money to pay the fine to the Brahmans."

"I do not see how it can hurt your caste when

you belong to the lowest class of all — ” Nourmahal pondered wonderingly.

“Nor I,” admitted Zal Gubz, “yet so it is. I could not take food or drink from your hand were I dying.”

“It is time to go in,” said the ayah coming forward.

“Good night then,” said the child reluctantly. “I wish I could shake hands with you ; but since I may not — ” and here Nourmahal went through with a pretty pantomime common in the East. She turned the mirror, which she wore as a locket, so that Zal Gubz’s image was reflected in it, and then kissed it shyly. The juggler prostrated himself upon the earth, and the ayah led her little mistress away.

Notwithstanding Zal Gubz’s assurance that he could not touch her even in a transformed shape, Nourmahal tried her best to become a teapot. She found however that it is no easy matter to weep at will, and that she could not force herself to cry when she had no grief to cry for. She learned soon, too, that Zal Gubz had gone away

to seek his fortune, and now the only thing for her to do was to influence her father on his return to help the poor man's family. This Ramasami appeared very willing to do and for a time the juggler and his troubles passed from her mind.

Just at this time also, her attention was occupied in a new direction. The Rajah rented his palace to an English officer and moved his family to a smaller residence not far distant. Nourmahal was interested in seeing the English take possession, for they arrived sooner than they were expected, on the very day that the Ramasami's ladies were leaving. There was a good deal of confusion resulting in the mingling of the two households, and Nourmahal watched the new comers with a curiosity in which was mingled a feeling that this alien life had at sometime been a familiar one to her. There were subaltern officers in gay uniforms, foreign servants, a French maid in cap and apron, and a little girl about her own age with long golden hair. The child found her way at once to the garden and stood looking at the gold-fish darting about among the lotus leaves.

Nourmahal followed her and, handing her the little silver bell, showed her how to call the fish to dinner. The child had lived long enough in India to speak a little Hindustani, and they soon found themselves chatting pleasantly together, when her mother suddenly appeared and snatched Nourmahal away with an angry countenance. "Have you forgotten your caste?" she asked her with much irritation. "Did I see you give the stranger a cluster of tuberose and receive from her hand sweet-meats?"

"Only these candies," Nourmahal replied, handing her mother some innocent caramels.

"And have you eaten any?" she cried in real alarm.

"No," said the child; "would they make me sick?"

Nourmahal's mother threw the offending sweets into the dusty road. "These people are out castes," she explained; "you must hold no intercourse with them."

"I do not understand," Nourmahal replied; "the Empress of India is English, and these peo-

ple belong to the governing class — are they not therefore of the same class as ourselves? ”

“They are all of an alien nation and a false religion! they are all out castes! the Empress Victoria herself is an out caste.”

“Why then does my father rent our home to them, and let them use our furniture? ”

No very clear explanation being rendered, Nourmahal felt sure that her father would not have forbidden her speaking to the little English girl.

Fully a week passed before she thought of the family of Zal Gubz. It was possible that her father also had forgotten them, for he had returned to the city. Ahmed’s countenance was very sad and though he uttered no reproaches or reminders, Nourmahal’s conscience smote her for she feared that they might have suffered through her neglect, and, accompanied by her ayah, she set out at once to their relief. When she reached their hut she was surprised to find all comfortable, plenty of rice and other necessities. Zal Gubz’s wife met her at the door but spoke to her coldly.

"My husband told me before he went away," she said, "that the daughter of the Rajah had promised to protect us. I have been ill with the fever and unable to work, no help has come to us from Ramasami. We would have died but for the English. They have supplied all our wants."

As she spoke footsteps were heard approaching. Nourmahal stepped to the door of the hut and saw a servant carrying a large basket on his head, accompanied by the fair-haired English girl. He set down the hamper in his mother's hut, and the little girls again talked and laughed together, playing under the Palmyra palm trees, and greatly enjoying each other's company.

"Come up to the house," the English child said at length, "and I will show you my doll."

Nourmahal's ayah nodded consent, for she was curious to see the interior of an English dwelling, and the four walked on together. But Nourmahal not quite certain of her father's approval did not enter the house. She only stood upon the veranda and peeped shyly in. She saw a parlor

furnished in bamboo, a small upright piano at which a lady dressed in white was playing, a table scattered with books and copies of the *London Graphic*, pictures on the wall, and outside some gentlemen playing lawn-tennis.

It was all new and delightful but the music was best of all. Nourmahal listened entranced, hoping the lady would not stop playing. When she turned and saw the child she asked her to come in, but this Nourmahal would not do. They thought her only shy, and the lady played again and the little girl brought out the magazines and showed her the pictures. When the ayah at last took her away, it seemed to her that she had never enjoyed so much. Of course this was not her last visit; she came again and the music was such a temptation that this time she crossed the threshold, and the English child tried to teach her a simple exercise. After this she threw prudence and obedience to the winds, and went often; the English lady came to the Zenana too and was kindly received by Nourmahal's mother. But at last these doings came to the ear of the Rajah,

and Nourmahal was strictly forbidden to leave the Zenana. This was hard indeed but she determined to obey her father and did not weep until some weeks after.

Ahmed came to her one evening and whispered the information that his father was in the banyan grove and wished to speak to her. It was a long time since she had seen Zal Gubz, and she went gladly hoping to hear of his success. Something in the aspect of the man struck her unpleasantly; he was changed for the worse, his expression was sullen, and though well clothed he was haggard and bore the marks of suffering. After the first glance of glad recognition he avoided Nourmahal's eye.

"I have only a moment to stay," he said, "my companions are waiting for me in the road yonder. I had permission only to speak to Ahmed as we went by. He has told me how kind the English family have been to my wife and children and I wish to requite their goodness. Ahmed must take a message to them at once. A band of Thugs have agreed to make a descent upon their palace

toward morning, will murder them all and carry away their goods, unless they are prepared to defend themselves."

"How did you gain this information?" Nourmahal asked.

"No matter, it is no false alarm. Let word be sent at once."

As he spoke a low whistle sounded from the direction of the road. Zal Gubz made a low obeisance and disappeared. The conviction that he was a member of the band of Thugs or robbers, shot through Nourmahal's mind.

"You must save your father's friends and ours," she said to Ahmed.

"Unhappily I cannot go," Ahmed replied. "The Rajah gives a Nautch at the little palace and I shall have to pull the punkah-ropes all night."

"Then I must go," Flossy exclaimed in desperation, and without waiting to return to the house she drew her veil around her, and sped across the fields the nearest way to the home of her English friends. When nearly there the hunting

dogs came out and barked at her and she dared not approach; but the Major came out and silenced the dogs and she told her story.

He thanked her and said that he would summon some soldiers encamped not far away and station them as sentinels. "Will you not pass the night with us?" he asked, "you will be perfectly safe." But Nourmahal was in an agony to get home and the Major had scarcely time to summon a servant to accompany her before she was beyond call. Nourmahal had nearly reached home when she heard a band of horsemen approaching. Her first thought was that these were the Thugs, and she shrunk into the shadow of a little copse. The next moment the glare of torches illuminated the place, and Nourmahal saw that these gayly attired men were not assassins but the guests invited to her father's Nautch and — crowning calamity of all — the Rajah was with them. The bright uniform of the English orderly caught his eye and the next moment he discovered the crouching child as well.

"Where have you been, Nourmahal?" he

asked; "but no—you need not speak; the presence of this out caste answers the question. You are determined to disgrace yourself and me, and from this hour I disown you. Go with the English if you wish—you are no child of mine!"

Nourmahal followed the retreating form of the Rajah with a despairing cry. If he would only hear her explanation—but he struck spurs to his horse and rode rapidly on—and the sobbing child sank upon the ground.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SPELL IS BROKEN.

(Twenty-third Transformation.)

THE Thugs met with so stout a resistance from the English soldiers hastily gathered inside the summer palace, that they retired in disorder after the first attempt to force an entrance. Indeed so prompt had been the fusilade poured upon them from the row of narrow arched windows that they concluded the soldiers had been waiting for their attack, and must have been informed of their intentions.

“Who is the traitor?” asked the robber-chief-tain as he rallied his forces at a little distance.

The reply came from many lips: “Zal Gubz alone has had opportunity of sending word.”

“Strangle him at once,” was the next order; but Zal Gubz, anticipating the consequence of his

actions, had fled in the confusion of the attack and repulse and was now beyond their reach. As he ran across the shadowy plain he stumbled on some round object. Stooping, he recognized the teapot which the strange juggler had exhibited at the festival on the banks of the Ganges; and he remembered that Nourmahal had said her soul would be shut up in this object, and if he ever found it it was her wish he should take it with him.

“Alas!” he said, “I am disobeying the laws of caste in touching this casket, since it holds the soul of my master’s daughter; but since I have already unwittingly spurned it with my foot I may be forgiven for cherishing it in my bosom.” So saying he wrapped it in a fold of his robe and hurried on. Just before dawn he reached a station of the English railway. Natives were piling one of the long cars with bales of cotton and among these he secreted himself until the train had arrived at Bombay. Here he wandered about the wharves until he found employment as a sailor. He had not noticed to what point the ship was bound, his

only desire being to escape from India and from any possibility of meeting again with the Thugs.

The ship sailed across the Arabian Sea, steamed up the Red Sea and through the Suez Canal, and then shaped her course for Gibraltar ; but on the way the Indian sailor fell sick, and he was put off at Palermo in Sicily. Here he was nursed in a hospital and found himself one day quite well again but a stranger with no knowledge of the Italian, no money and no means of support. As he went out of the hospital gate a servant handed him the teapot, which had been carefully kept for him during his illness. He took it mechanically. He wandered through the streets until, weary and thirsty, he paused beside a fountain and drank from the magical teapot. Then he sat down in the shade, leaving the teapot on the rim of the fountain. A number of women had collected, staring at the foreigner in the strange Oriental costume ; but suddenly their attention was turned from him to the teapot, which, entirely of its own accord, began to balance itself on the fountain rim, and from rocking and tottering fell to danc-

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ing in the jolliest and most enthusiastic manner.

The women were astonished and Zal Gubz as much as they. A crowd collected, and a girl with a tambourine beat time merrily, whereupon the teapot executed the tarantella and other Italian dances, proving that although its master was a foreigner, it at least was a true Italian. It did more; when the crowd was greatest and most interested it sidled about among the spectators showing plainly by its actions that it solicited contributions. The audience good-naturedly took the hint and nearly filled the teapot with copper coin, which it in turn deposited in Zal Gubz's lap.

This performance was repeated every day. Zal Gubz wandered through different Italian cities, the magical teapot never failing to gain money.

"All roads, in Italy, lead to Rome;" and it was in Rome that the teapot now danced. Black-eyed contadinas in white sleeves and gay bodices and petticoats sometimes danced with it, and little children folded their arms on the church steps and gazed gravely at it in the same attitudes in which Raphael painted his Sistine cherubs.

Christmas time was approaching, and through the half-opened doors one caught glimpses of busy people arranging the decorations, and heard bursts of music from the choir where white-robed boys were practicing the carols and anthems. Christmas-tide filled all the air, and through her dull porcelain shell Flossy felt it, and could no more remain a teapot at this blessed season than a tulip-bulb can contain the flower shut up within it when spring rains and spring sunshine are calling.

An old woman was roasting chestnuts at a little earthen ware brazier at the street corner. Flossy eyed the fire longingly. "Will not any one set me on to boil?" she said to herself; but no one understood her. Zal Gubz was asleep in the sunshine, the old woman was dozing too, and there was no one else in the square. A sudden determination took possession of the teapot; it rolled noiselessly across the square to where the fountain splashed and waited patiently under the dripping rim until half filled. Then it jerked and sidled up to the old woman's brazier, where it began its liveliest dance, trying to dance itself on to the fire.

But weighted with the water this was not an easy task. Each leap came a little short of the aim, and the teapot tumbled over, weeping tears of vexation. Righting itself, it found that it was now a little lighter, and one joyous bound carried it to the top of the brazier. There was only a little water left, and it would not take long for this to boil; but the bumping noise roused Zal Gubz, who now looked stupidly about for his teapot. He saw it just as it was beginning to hum, and rushing across the square began to scold the old woman in excellent Hindustani for stealing his property. But instead of at once snatching it from the fire, as Flossy feared he would do, he had delayed to point his remarks with violent gesticulations, and when he at length turned to the brazier the teapot had vanished.

(Twenty-fourth Transformation.)

A pretty little Italian girl with plaited hair, under a folded towel-like head-kerchief stood calmly waiting with a small coin to purchase some chestnuts. Zal Gubz scanned the child keenly,

but did not recognize her, and turned angrily away threatening to visit the old woman with the police.

"And now," thought Flossy to herself, "I wonder who I am, and where my relations are."

The old woman handed her a few chestnuts, and she placed one in her mouth, when a shrill voice at her elbow cried, "That is not fair, Giovanna" (pronounced Jo-va-nee-na). "You ought to divide."

Turning, Flossy saw a beautiful little boy with curling golden hair. He looked like the brother whom she had left at home in England, and Flossy extended her arms: "You can have all the rest, Merry Twinkle, you blessed little fellow."

The child took the chestnuts, but regarded her with displeasure. "Why do you call me such ugly names?" he said. "Call me Giuseppi."

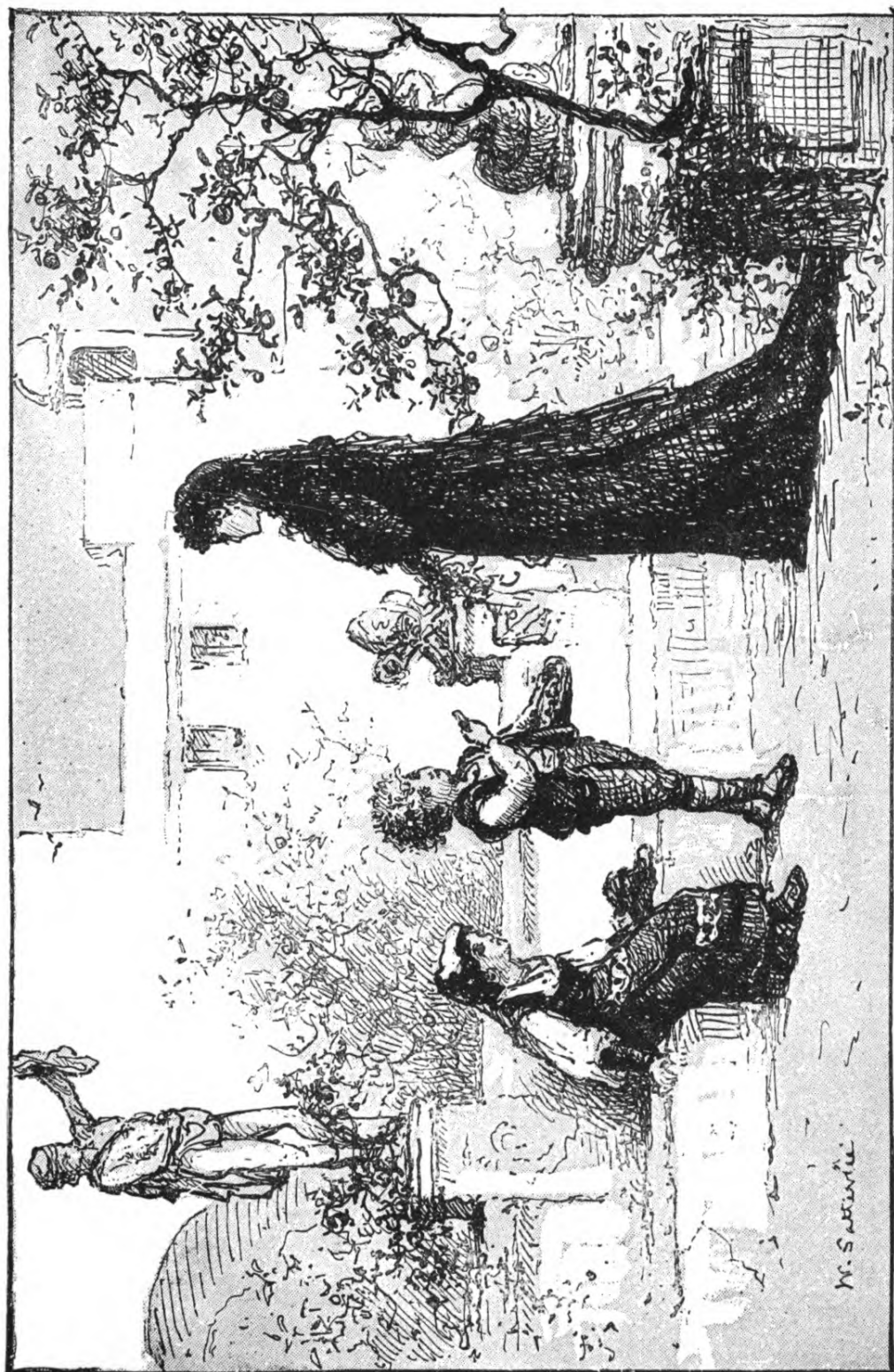
"Very well, Giuseppi; where shall we go?"

"Why home, of course, I am tired," and the boy led the way toward the Pincian Hill. He paused at a gateway in a high stone wall, and Flossy rang the bell. A kind-faced woman opened the gate, and the children entered a beau-

tiful garden, bright with dahlias and geraniums, and long rows of orange-trees and green hedges. A mosaic pavement stretched away to a grassy terrace where there was a fountain flanked by ancient statues, all more or less broken and moss grown. The garden was so very pretty that Flossy paused before entering the house. A gentleman was seated by an easel near the terrace. "Who is he?" she asked.

"That is the English artist," the boy replied. "Don't you remember he rented the top floor? He wants me to pose for him, but I shall not have time until after Christmas, for I am to be in the Mystery at the Ara Cœli and Father Felician wants us to come afternoons and rehearse."

Flossy entered the house wondering whether this beautiful villa with its garden and statues, its grand spiral stone staircase winding up to palatial apartments above, really belonged to her parents. She mounted the stairs and peeped into a grand salon with a carved chimney piece and full-length portraits of cardinals, gentlemen in armor and ladies in court costumes, ranged around the



FLOSSY TANGLESKEIN AS THE LITTLE ROMAN GIOVANINA,

walls, and a great blue vase on a pedestal in the centre.

The room had a chilly, damp feeling, and as she crossed it her footsteps re-echoed in a fashion that set her heart beating with apprehension. She drew aside the tapestries and looked into the next room, which was darkened, and had a shut-up, close smell. The wood carvings here were white with dust, and the Genoa velvet upholstery was tied up in cloth bags. Clearly these rooms, though elegant, were not inhabited, and Flossy retraced her steps, and descended the staircase to the pleasant basement where Giuseppe was eating a dish of macaroni, and her mother was moving briskly about her work. Giuseppe paused with a piece of macaroni lifted half-way to his lips.

"You have been spying about in the Contessa's apartments," he said, "and you know you have no business to go there."

"The Contessa has written that she is coming for the Christmas holidays, and will stay until the end of Carnival," said the mother, "so you can help me put the rooms in readiness."

Flossy, or as she was now called, Giovanina, was interested in hearing about the Contessa and the Count and the two beautiful children, and how the Contessa had lost all three through the terrible Roman fever. "That is why she seldom comes to the villa," said the mother, "for it was here they sickened and died. The place is full of malaria in summer, but it is then that it is most beautiful. The garden was overflowing with roses that summer; how the little ones loved to play hide and seek among the box hedges. The box is two hundred years old, and was set out when the villa belonged to a pope; that is the reason it is planted in such queer shapes, mitres and keys, and croziers and crosses."

"Why does not the malaria kill us too?" Giovanina asked.

"Have you forgotten how sick you were last summer?" the mother replied. "I shall send you away every summer; it is death to stay here."

Giovanina thought she would gladly have run the risk of fever for a little summer warmth, for though there was no snow and ice as at home in

Christmas time, the weather was cold and damp and none of the rooms were really comfortable. There was no blazing fireside where she could thoroughly warm through. Instead of this, as Hawthorne has noticed, people "took their firesides out of doors with them," and sat on the sunny side of the street trying to thaw their fingers and toes with a handful of lighted charcoal in the earthen pipkins which served them for stoves.

Giovanina and her little brother kept themselves warm by running. Every day they were away on long expeditions and there was hardly a locality in Rome which they did not explore. Frequently they wandered together from altar to altar in the great church of St. Peter's, and sometimes they strayed through parts of ancient Rome, along the Forum and the Appian Way; but there was no one to explain the Column of Trajan to them, or to tell them the meaning of the triumphal arches of Titus and Constantine. They had their own theories and views of the Circus Maximus and the Palace of the Cæsars, the Mamertine

Prison and the Baths of Caracalla. Giuseppi was an elfish child and he suggested that these old buildings had been the homes of giants and fairies. Sometimes they played they were fairies themselves, and they found an empty tomb on the Appian Way with a loosened door through which they crept and played at housekeeping until driven away by some one in authority.

They collected a little stock of marbles; porphyry, bits of verde antique and lapis lazuli, snakily mottled serpentine, translucent alabaster, fragments of mosaic and broken pieces of stained glass, some of which a virtuoso would have prized, but which were only dishes and eatables for their play-house. There was a finger among them from some ancient statue — a lady's finger, slender and graceful, from the hand of some Greek goddess or proud Roman matron — but which Giuseppi fancied belonged to the fairy who lived in the ruins. There was a dash of gold too in one of the splinters of stained glass which told that it had formed a part of an aureole around the head of some saint, and this he called fairy sunshine.

After they were sent away from playing in the tomb they carried their store of marbles to the villa garden, where they were near enough to the kitchen to have real picnics. One of their favorite dishes was boiled snails. They were plentiful in the garden; the children would sometimes gather a bowlful and thought them quite a treat.

Once when they were playing, a lady dressed in black and with a lace veil thrown over her stately head, came down the garden walk and looked at them. They offered her some snails balanced on the marble finger, but the lady shook her head sadly, and there were tears in her eyes as she turned away and entered the house. "She must be the fairy lady," Giuseppi said, "and she doesn't like it because we are playing with her finger." But Giovanina knew that it was the Contessa and that she was thinking of her little children who died.

After she had gone in, a servant brought them two beautiful bunches of grapes, whereupon Giuseppi was sure she was a fairy, for grapes were out of season.

But their time was not entirely given to play and rambling. Giuseppi had to go frequently to rehearse his part as an angel in the tableaux which were to take place on the festival of the Epiphany at the church of the Ara Cœli. Giovanna too was to recite some verses, and she studied them diligently for fear she should forget before that great audience.

Christmas Eve came and they went with their mother and the artist to see the procession at the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, when the holy relic, the cradle of the Infant Jesus, was carried in a glass case up and down the nave. Unseen voices in the choir sang the "Veni Creator" as it passed them, and one soprano voice trilled forth so passionately sweet that the artist looked upward, and the mother murmured, "It is the Contessa. No one else can sing like that."

Then came Epiphany, or Twelfth Day, when all the little Roman Children receive their Christmas presents. The squares were filled with booths where trumpets of every size were displayed for sale. And through the entire city nearly every

one was blowing a trumpet. The Contessa sent them each one, the artist bought some for them, and the mother earlier than the others had laid one on each of their pillows. What times they had trying to blow three trumpets at once like some pictured cherubs which they had seen in one of the churches. Their mother quieted them in the house for fear they would disturb the Contessa, but after their loudest blast she appeared at the first landing of the spiral staircase and blew them a merry answer on a silver cornet. The artist was coming down the stairs and thinking it was only the children he sounded a terrific peal from a great fish horn, which sent the Contessa flying into her apartments, her fingers in her ears.

In the evening came the Mystery at the Ara Cœli. A small stage had been erected in one corner of the church, and on it was arranged the manger, Mary and Joseph and the Santissimo Bambino or Most Blessed Babe, with Giuseppi among the angels, the wise men and the shepherds in the background, and a real ox and donkey standing beside the manger.

Giovanina recited her verses so clearly and distinctly that there was a rustle of admiration in the audience, which was the nearest approach to applause permitted in the church. And the Contessa sent up two bouquets so large and heavy that the children could scarcely hold them.

After this things settled back into their old channels for a time, the children posing for the artist and looking forward to the carnival for their next holiday season. They told him of their explorations among the ruins of old Rome, and after the painting hours were over he would go with them and tell them the history of the ruins in which they were interested. "I do not understand," Giovanina said after he had explained some Roman baths, "how it is that you, who are a foreigner, know all about these things, while my mother, who was born here, could not tell for what purpose they were built."

"The reason is," the artist replied, "that in England schools are provided where even poor children can learn about all the great and noble things that have been done in the world."

"I would like to go to school," Giovanina said musingly. "I wish I lived in England."

"Wait a moment," exclaimed Giuseppi; "do they have any carnival in England, and sports in which the poor people can have their share? Do you hang all the balconies on your Corso with tapestry and velvet, and does every one carry his lighted candle, and shout *Senza Moccoli!* and try to keep it burning while he blows out every other person's light?"

The artist was obliged to confess that there was no such play in England.

"Then I am glad," said Giuseppi, "that I was not born there. You shall see, you shall go with us, and you must fasten your candle to a very high pole so that others cannot reach it. But even then you must look out for the balconies—they will pour water on you from the balconies, and squirt at you from the windows, and some carry great bellows and some wet towels with which they flap out your light. Ah! it is heavenly sport."

"And then the horses!" cried Giuseppi, "that race riderless right down the Corso! Some of

them seem to know they are racing and strain every nerve to come out first. And the others have little iron barbs fastened to their gay trappings to spur them along, and the crowd clap their hands and encourage them. Oh! it is beautiful. I would not live in a country where there was no carnival. Bah!" And with a snap of the fingers Giuseppi expressed his contempt for the whole English nation.

The gay carnival days finally came and passed, one by one; but the children looked forward most eagerly to the last night of the gay festival when the horses would race riderless down the Corso. This was to be the crowning spectacle; after it the heavy days of Lent would come, all gayety would cease, and the monks would chant misereres.

The streets were more than usually crowded; it seemed as if the entire population of Rome had determined not on any account to lose the Mocoli, its favorite festival. The Contessa sat on the balcony of a palace. She saw them in the crowd beneath and waved her fan to them and smiled and bowed.

It was inspiriting to watch Giuseppi. All the morning he had been full of glee and roguish pranks, and now that the play with the candles had begun it seemed as if he were fairly wild with joy. The artist laughed in sympathy with the merry child, and the Contessa's attention was fairly drawn from her companion's conversation as he flew like a moth from candle to candle.

"Are children as happy as we in England?" Giovanina asked; but before the artist could answer Giuseppi replied,

"Ah! no, my sister. How is it possible? the poor things have no carnival."

At that instant the crowd broke and swayed close to the walls with a gasping cry. The horses had started before the signal, and were dashing madly down the Corso. The artist caught Giovanina in his arms and sprang into the archway, but Giuseppi stood unconscious of danger in the centre of the street, his back to the advancing horses and his pretty curls blown across his smiling face, while he waved his handkerchief and shouted "Senza Moccoli!" The Contessa shrieked, but

Giuseppi only looked up to her startled and wondering what had happened to her. Then following the pointing fingers he looked back and started to run. It was too late, the horses were upon him and a powerful black charger, the property of a cardinal, struck out viciously with his heavy hoofs as he dashed by.

There was a cry of consternation as the crowd closed round the child's prostrate form. The artist dropped Giovanina and pushed his way into the street, and the Contessa came down the staircase white with terror. It seemed to Giovanina an age afterward when the little figure was borne past her into the palace. The king of the festival rode through the street, as it was brought in, his harlequin heralds proclaiming "The Carnival is dead! the Carnival is dead!"

The twinkling lights were all extinguished. Lent had begun. It was time now to chant the Miserere. Giovanina pushed close to the physician who was helping to carry her brother up stairs. "Is he dead?" she cried.

"No," he replied, "but he will never dance

again; his spine is injured. There were several children run over. The sport should be abolished. I think you do not have it in England."

This was said to the artist. Giovanina did not hear for she sank in a miserable little heap on the staircase at the words "He will never dance again." Giuseppi, her light-hearted little brother! The scalding tears gushed from her eyes; and the doctor as he came down the steps tripped on a small round object—a china teapot, which bounded before him down the stairs, and shivered on the marble pavement below.

(Twenty-fifth Transformation.)

The momentary giddiness which always accompanied her transformations passed, and Flossy recognized the familiar studio of Mr. Rose. There was the picture of the Breton landscape with the gabled chateau. An African leopard-skin was stretched before the fireplace, and beside it a whale's tooth from the Arctic seas. Some Roman mosaics lay in a little East Indian cabinet of sandal-wood. "I wonder if it is not almost

time for Mr. Rose's lunch," Flossy thought, "and whether he will set me on to boil. I am so impatient to be a child again."

"What did you say?" asked Mr. Rose, coming in from his etching-room. "I am not an ogre to boil little girls even if it is lunch-time."

"Then I am a little girl already?" Flossy replied.

"And a little girl who has been asleep I fancy," said Mr. Rose, and then his eye fell on some fragments of porcelain. "What! my teapot broken!" he exclaimed.

"I am very sorry," Flossy replied; "but you see I rolled down the palace staircase, and it was made of marble, and I could not help breaking."

"Is the child daft?" asked Mr. Rose.

But Flossy picked up the pieces, remarking, "I suppose the spell is broken too, and I shall never be a teapot again, or any other kind of a little girl. Well, this is the real Child's Paradise, after all—where one can hear about all the strange countries of the great world, and yet be that happiest of all created beings—an *English* child."

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