

A STORY  
FOR CHILDREN,  
FROM THE FRENCH  
OF  
E. LABOULAYE.

"All women are fools," said Zerbin. "How ridiculous to sleep at noon with the sun on one's face!"

He arranged some branches so as to form a screen above her head, and upon this he placed his workman's blouse to keep the sun's rays from penetrating.

He had just finished his work when he was startled by perceiving near the fair sleeper a viper, with protruding tongue, crawling towards her.

"Ha!" said Zerbin, "so small and already so venomous." And with two blows from his hatchet he slashed the serpent into three pieces.

The noise of this awoke the fairy, who started to her feet, her eyes sparkling with delight.

"Zerbin!" she cried. "Zerbin! you have saved more than my life."

"I have done nothing at all," replied Zerbin, with his usual courtesy. "Take my advice, another time be careful not to sleep upon the grass without looking for serpents. Now leave me in peace, I am going to sleep."

He then stretched himself upon the grass and closed his eyes.

"Zerbin," said the fairy, "have you nothing to ask of me?"

"Nothing, except to leave me alone," said Zerbin. "When people have no desires, they have everything they want; when they have what they want, they are happy. Good-night." And the boor began to snore.

I.



At one time there lived at Salerno a young wood-cutter of the name of Zerbin. Poor, and an orphan, he had no friends; sullen and uncouth, he shrank from all observation. As he

held himself so much aloof from the concerns of others, he was generally taken for a fool. He had been nicknamed the "Savage," a name that suited him well.

At daybreak, when all in the town were still asleep, he started off for the mountain with his hatchet on his shoulder; he spent the whole day alone in the woods, returning only at dusk, dragging after him a wretched bundle of wood, which he sold for a supper.

One day, after cutting down the branches of an old tree, Zerbin became so exhausted that he was glad to take a rest beside a pool fringed with fine trees. To his surprise, he saw lying upon the grass a young girl of most exquisite beauty, whose robe was composed of the plumes of the swan. Her face looked troubled, and she moved her hands restlessly as if some frightful dream were oppressing her.

"Poor fellow," said the fairy, "your soul is still sleeping; but whatever you may be, I will not be ungrateful. If it had not been for you I should have fallen into the hands of a cruel genie, my bitter enemy; if it had not been for you I should have become a snake for a hundred years; it is to you I owe one hundred years of youth and beauty. In future, Zerbin, all your wishes shall be gratified, and you shall have reason to bless the water fairy."

She then made three circles in the air with her wand, and entered the pool with a step so light that the surface was not even ruffled. The reeds bowed their heads at the approach of their Queen, and the water-lilies opened their loveliest buds; the trees and even the wind seemed to participate in the joy of the fairy. She raised her wand for the last time, and the sparkling waters parted to receive their young Sovereign, who slowly sank, illuminating the depths like a golden shaft of light. Then the surface grew dim and shadowy, and silence reigned once more.

The sun had reached its height when the wood-cutter awoke from his slumbers. He quietly resumed his task of cutting down the tree he had been working at in the morning. The hatchet struck the wood with great force, until the blows rang again and the perspiration ran down Zerbin's face, but all his efforts were in vain.

"Ha!" he said, looking at the blunted edge of his hatchet, "what a pity no instrument has been invented that can cut wood like butter. I wish I had one like that."

He drew back two steps, and swinging his hatchet above his head, he let it fall with such force that he lost his balance, and fell forward on his face with outstretched arms.

"By Bacchus!" he exclaimed, "my aim was crooked."

But Zerbin was soon reassured, for at the same instant the tree fell, and so close to him that he narrowly escaped being crushed.

"What a fine blow!" he cried. "That is a wonderful help. How beautifully it is cut. After all, there is not another wood-cutter to equal myself."

Upon which he gathered together the branches that he had cut in the morning, and taking a cord he had fastened round his waist, he sat astride upon the bundle to draw the ends closer together.

"What a pity it is," he said, "that fagots have not four legs like horses. I should prance into Salerno like a handsome cavalier who rides at his leisure. How delightful that would be."

At the same moment the fagot rose and began to trot at a good pace. Without showing the least astonishment, our worthy Zerbin let himself be carried along by this new steed, pitying as he went those wretched creatures who had to walk for lack of a fagot.

## II.

In the time of which we speak there existed in the centre of Salerno a large square, on which stood the King's palace. As everyone is aware, this monarch was the famous King Honeybee.

Every afternoon the King's daughter Aleli might have been seen seated pensively upon the balcony. In vain her attendants endeavoured to divert her by their songs, their tales, or their flatteries; Aleli was absorbed in her own thoughts. For three years the King had been trying to wed her to some of the barons of the neighbourhood, but Princess Aleli refused all suitors. Upon the

afternoon of which we speak, Aleli, yet more dreamy than usual, was startled by the sudden apparition of Zerbin riding his fagot



"THE FAGOT BEGAN TO TROT."

across the square with all the majesty of an imperial Cæsar. At this sight the two attendants of the Princess burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, and having some oranges at hand, they pelted the rider so adroitly that he received two straight in his face.

"You may laugh," he cried; "I only wish you might never cease laughing." And here the two women began to laugh immoderately in spite of the commands of the Princess, who had taken pity on the poor wood-cutter.

"What a charming Princess!" said Zerbin regarding Aleli; "so lovely, yet so sad. I wish you every blessing, Princess, and may you love him who is the first to make you laugh, and may he become your husband." Upon which he bowed most graciously to the Princess.

As a rule it is better to salute no one, not even a Queen, when riding a fagot; but, unfortunately, Zerbin forgot this. In order to bow to the Princess he had unfastened the cord that bound the branches together, whereupon the bundle burst apart and the worthy Zerbin fell backwards in the most ridiculous fashion, with his legs in the air. He picked himself up by turning head over heels as he did so.

Philosophy has not yet explained why people laugh at seeing others fall.

Princess Aleli did as everyone else did, and burst into a loud peal of laughter. Soon after she rose, glanced at Zerbin with a strange expression, and, pressing her hand to her heart, entered the palace in great agitation.

In the meantime Zerbin picked up his branches and returned home on foot, like an ordinary wood-cutter. Prosperity had not dazzled him; misfortune troubled him as little.

Whilst these grave events were taking place, four o'clock struck in the Salerno

Tower. The heat was stifling, silence reigned in the streets. King Honeybee, in a chamber far removed from the heat and noise, was sleeping and dreaming of the welfare of his people. He awoke suddenly with a start; the fair Aleli, in an access of tenderness, was clinging round his neck, whilst burning tears fell upon his face.

"What is this?" asked the King, surprised at this unwonted show of affection. "What are all these tears and kisses? I suppose there is something you wish me to do for you."

"Nothing of the kind, my dear father," said Aleli; "I wish to do whatever pleases you. I have found the son-in-law you have been longing for, and I am ready to give him my hand."

"Oh," said King Honeybee, "is that the end of your obstinacy? Who is it to be? Is it the Prince of Cava? No? The Count of Capri, then, or the Marquis of Sorrento? No? Well, who is it, then?"

"I do not know who he is, my dear father."

"You do not know him? How is that? You must have seen him."

"Yes, I have seen him—a little while ago, on the palace square."

"And did he speak to you?"

"No, father. When hearts understand each other, is there any need to speak?"

King Honeybee made a grimace, scratched his ear, and, looking fixedly at his daughter, said: "Of course, he is a Prince?"

"I do not know; it matters little," replied Aleli.

"It matters much, my daughter; you understand little of politics. Where is this fine lover hidden, whom you have never spoken to and who adores you?"

"I do not know," said Aleli.

"This is too much," cried King Honeybee. "My time is too precious to be wasted in listening to such nonsense! Slaves! call



"SHE ENTERED THE PALACE IN GREAT AGITATION."

the attendants of the Princess to lead her back to her apartments."

At these words Aleli threw up her arms and burst into tears. Then she fell sobbing at the King's feet. Shortly after, the two maids of honour appeared, still in peals of laughter.

"Silence, fools, silence!" shouted King Honeybee, indignant at this lack of respect. But the more the King shouted "Silence!"

"Oh, my father!" sobbed poor Aleli.

"Mercy, sire! We will cease laughing," cried the two ladies, falling upon their knees. "We implore your Majesty to pardon us; we are the victims of a sorcerer who has bewitched us."

"A sorcerer in my kingdom," said the King; "that is impossible. How can there be any when I do not believe in them?"

"Sire," said one of the ladies, "is it natural for a bundle of wood, ridden by a wood-cutter, to trot and prance like a circus horse? We have just seen one do that on the palace square."

"A bundle of wood!" replied the King; "that certainly looks like sorcery. Guards, seize the man and his fagot, and burn both of them together. And then, I hope, I shall have a little peace."

"Burn my beloved!" cried the Princess. "Sire, that noble cavalier is to be my husband. If a hair of his head were touched, I should die."

"My house is possessed," said poor King Honeybee, in dismay. "What is the use of being King if I cannot even rest in peace? But what is the good of tormenting myself? Call Mistigris. Since I have a minister, the least he can do is to tell me what I think and what I wish to do."

Mistigris soon appeared. He was a little, fat, round man, who seemed to roll along like a ball rather than walk. He had eyes like a ferret's, a low forehead, a hooked nose, fat cheeks, and three chins; such is the portrait of the celebrated minister of King Honeybee. He appeared smiling and puffing, with mincing steps.

"Here you are at last," said the King. "How is it that unheard-of things happen in my empire, and I, the King, am the last to hear of them?"

"Everything is in proper order," replied Mistigris. "I have here the police reports;



"THE TWO MAIDS OF HONOUR."

the more the two ladies laughed, regardless of all etiquette.

"Guards," said the King, beside himself with anger, "seize these insolent creatures, and off with their heads."

"Sire," cried Aleli, clasping her hands, "remember, you have made your reign illustrious by abolishing capital punishment."

"You are right, my daughter. We are civilized people. These women shall be spared; we will content ourselves by having them shut up in a dungeon, and they will then be sure to die a natural death, weary of hearing no other tongue but their own."

the kingdom is peaceful and contented as usual." And unfolding a huge parchment, he read as follows:—"Town of Salerno,—Prosperity and morality continue to improve. Two women died of starvation; ten children forsaken; three husbands have beaten their wives; ten wives have beaten their husbands; thirty robberies; two murders, three cases of poisoning. Nothing new."

"Is that all you have to tell me?" said King Honeybee, in a tone of irritation. "Well, I know much more, though I do not profess to know State affairs. A man has crossed the palace square, riding a fagot, and he has bewitched my daughter. She wishes to marry him!"

"Sir," replied Mistigris, "I was aware of this little event—a minister knows everything; but why trouble your Majesty with these petty details? The man shall be hanged, and that settles the matter."

"And can you tell me where this rascal is?"

"Of course I can," answered Mistigris. "A minister sees and hears everything, and is everywhere."

"Well, sir, if this rogue is not here within a quarter of an hour, I will give your place to someone who will not merely see, but act. Now you may go."

Mistigris left the room smiling, but when he reached the ante-chamber, he turned purple with rage, and was obliged to seize the arm of the first friend he met. This happened to be the town magistrate. Mistigris grasped him by the collar.

"Sir," he said, "if within ten minutes you do not bring me a rogue who rides about Salerno on a bundle of sticks, you

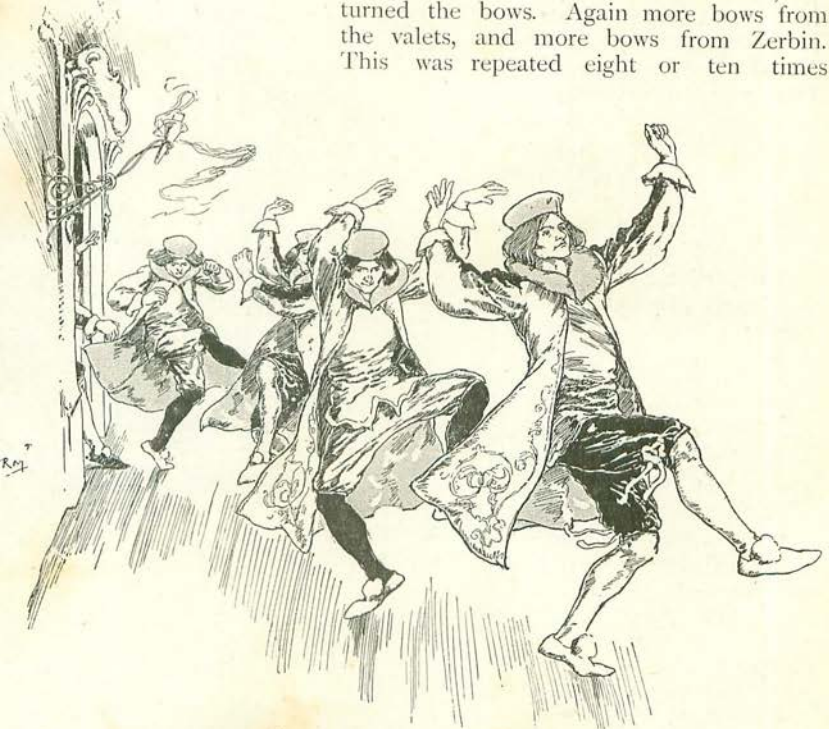
shall suffer for it. Remember this. Now you may go."

Leaving the magistrate to carry out these orders, the clever Mistigris returned to the King's chamber, resuming as he went the perpetual smile that played about his lips.

### III.

GLORY is a splendid thing, but it has its inconveniences. Farewell to the pleasure of being unknown. Zerbin's triumphant entry into Salerno had hardly been accomplished before every child in the place knew all about the mode of living and the abode of the wood-cutter, so that the officials had little trouble in finding the man they were looking for. Zerbin was kneeling in his yard, sharpening his famous hatchet, when he felt himself suddenly seized by the neck, and a powerful hand lifted him upon his legs by main force.

Zerbin, as unconcerned as ever, was proceeding to the palace, when on the square he was met by a long procession of gentlemen in embroidered coats and knee-breeches. These were the King's valets, who had come to escort the *fiancé* of the Princess to the King's palace. Having received orders to be polite, each held his hat in his hand and smiled amiably. They bowed to Zerbin; the wood-cutter, like a well-bred man, returned the bows. Again more bows from the valets, and more bows from Zerbin. This was repeated eight or ten times



"NOW LET ME SEE YOU DANCE."

with great solemnity. Zerbin, not having been born in a palace, was the first to weary of these ceremonies.

"Enough," cried he, "you have done enough bowing, now let me see you dance." And the valets began dancing, and thus they all entered the palace, giving him a welcome worthy of a King.

Wishing to look particularly majestic, King Honeybee sat solemnly gazing at the end of his nose. Aleli was sighing, and Mistigris seemed racking his brain for an idea to give himself the air of a diplomatist, when at last the big door opened and, to the great surprise of the Court, the whole procession came dancing in.

The wood-cutter walked behind the valets, as little astonished at the Royal magnificence as if he had been born in a palace. On seeing the King, however, he stopped short, took off his hat, and bowed three times. He then replaced his hat upon his head and calmly took possession of an armchair, where he sat rocking his foot up and down.

"Father," cried the Princess, throwing herself into her father's arms, "here is my husband. How handsome, how noble he is! You will love him, will you not?"

"Mistigris," whispered King Honeybee, "question this man very cautiously. Remember, it concerns my daughter as well as myself. What an adventure, to be sure! How happy fathers would be if they had no children!"

"Your Majesty need not fear," said Mistigris. "Humanity is my duty and my pleasure. Get up, rascal, and answer at once if you wish to save your skin," he said to Zerbin. "Are you a Prince in disguise? You are a sorcerer. You are silent."

"I am no more a sorcerer than you are, old fellow," replied Zerbin, without rising from his chair.

"Knave!" cried the minister, "your silence proves your guilt."

"If I admit it I shall then be innocent," answered Zerbin.

"Sire," said Mistigris, "let

justice pursue its course. Rid the earth of this monster. Death is too good for such a miscreant."

"Go on; snarl as much as you like, old chap, but do not bite," said Zerbin.

"Sire," cried Mistigris, breathlessly, "humanity demands that you should protect your subjects from this sorcerer. Let him be hanged or burned. You are a father, but you are a King, and the father must give place to the King."

"Mistigris," said the King, "you speak with great ease, but your manner is odious. Not so much affectation, please. Conclude."

"Sire," gasped Mistigris. "Death, rope, fire!"

Whilst all this was going on, Aleli quitted abruptly her father's side and placed herself close to Zerbin.

"Give your orders, sire — this is my



"SIRE," SAID MISTIGRIS, "RID THE EARTH OF THIS MONSTER."

husband. His fate shall be mine," she said.

The ladies of the Court were scandalized at this, and hid their faces in their hands; even Mistigris felt obliged to blush.

"Miserable being," cried the furious King. "In dishonouring yourself you have pronounced your own condemnation. Guards! arrest these two persons, and let them be married without further delay; then take possession of the first boat you see in the port, and after placing the guilty couple in it, abandon it to the mercy of the waves."

"Oh, sire," cried Mistigris, whilst the Princess and Zerbin were being dragged away, "you are the mightiest monarch in the world. Your kindness, your mildness, your indulgence will be an example and astonishment to posterity. As for ourselves, we are dumfounded at such magnanimity; we can only admire it in silence."

"My poor daughter," said the King, "what will become of her without her father? Guards! seize Mistigris and put him also on board the boat. It will be a consolation to me to know that this clever man is near my dear Aleli. Besides, the idea of a new minister is rather pleasant—it will divert my thoughts from my troubles. Good-bye, my good Mistigris."

Mistigris stood gaping with astonishment; he had barely recovered breath to rave against monarchs and their ingratitude, when he was borne out of the palace. In spite of his tears, threats, and prayers, he was cast into the boat, and the three friends soon found themselves alone in the midst of the waves.

As to good King Honeybee, he wiped away a tear, and retired into his chamber to finish the nap so unpleasantly interrupted.

#### IV.

THE night was fine and calm; the moon shed its pale beams across the ever-restless sea; the wind blew from the land, and soon

carried the boat far away. Capri was soon in view, rising from the waves like a garden of flowers. Zerbin held the rudder and sang in a minor key some plaintive wood-cutter's or sailor's song. At his feet sat Aleli, silent, but not sad; she was listening to her lover. The past was all forgotten, the future did not trouble her; she was with Zerbin, and that satisfied her.

Mistigris, less sensitive, was also less philosophical. Impatient and furious, he was restless as a lion in its cage. Zerbin sat with bowed head, unconcerned as usual at the sermons Mistigris preached for his benefit. Not being used to official orations, so much talking wearied Zerbin and made him sleepy.

"What will become of us?" cried Mistigris, at last. "If you have any power, wretched sorcerer, now is the time to show it. Can't you make yourself a Prince somewhere, and make me your minister? I must have something to rule. What is the good of your power if you do not make your friends' fortune?"

"I am hungry," said Zerbin, opening one eye.

Aleli rose at once and looked about her.

"Dear Zerbin," she

said, "what should you like?"

"I should like some figs and raisins," said the wood-cutter.

Mistigris uttered a shriek; for a barrel of figs immediately rose between his legs and overturned him.

"Oh!" thought he, as he picked himself up. "I have found your secret, wretched sorcerer. If you have whatever you wish for, my fortune is made; I have not been a minister for nothing, my fine Prince. I will soon make you wish for whatever pleases me."

While Zerbin was eating his figs, Mistigris came forward bowing, his face beaming with smiles.

"Lord Zerbin," said he, "I crave from your Excellency your most esteemed friendship. Perhaps his Highness had not discerned all the devotion that I had hidden under the severity of my words; but I can assure him



"MISTIGRIS."

I have done everything in the interest of his happiness. It was I who hastened his happy marriage."

"I am hungry," said Zerbin, "give me some figs and raisins."

"Here are some, my Lord," said Mistigris, with all the grace of a courtier. "I hope his Excellency is satisfied with all my small attentions, and that he will often put it in my power to serve him. Great boor," he murmured to himself, "he does not understand what I mean. I must get Aleli on my side. The great secret of diplomacy is to please the ladies."

"By the way, my Lord Zerbin," he continued, with a smile upon his lips, "you seem to forget that you are newly-married. Would you not like to make your Royal Princess a wedding present?"

"You bother me, old man," said Zerbin. "A wedding present! Where do you expect me to get it from? From the bottom of the sea, perhaps! Go yourself and ask the fish for it and bring it back to me."

At that instant, as though an invisible hand had knocked him over, Mistigris jumped overboard, and disappeared beneath the billows.

Zerbin continued quietly munching his raisins, while Aleli kept her eyes fixed fondly upon him.

"There is a porpoise coming out of the sea," said Zerbin.

But it was not a porpoise, it was Mistigris, who, rising to the surface, was struggling with the waves. Zerbin grasped him by his hair, and dragged him into the boat. The little fat man held between his teeth a carbuncle as brilliant as a star. As soon as he had recovered his breath, he said:—

"Here is the wedding present that the King of the Fishes offers to charming Princess Aleli. Lord Zerbin, you can see that I am your most faithful and devoted slave. If ever you are in need of a minister——"

"I am hungry," said Zerbin. "Give me some figs and raisins."

Mistigris was in despair, and broke in adroitly.

"My Lord Zerbin, look over there in front of you; how splendid!"

"What?" said the Princess. "I see nothing."

"Nor I," said Zerbin, rubbing his eyes.

"Is it possible?" continued Mistigris, looking very astonished. "You do not see that marble palace glittering in the sun; that great staircase with one hundred steps, on each side of which stand beautiful orange

trees, and which reaches majestically down to the sea?"

"A palace?" said Aleli, "where we should be surrounded with selfish courtiers and valets! I do not wish for that."

"Nor I," said Zerbin; "a cottage would be nicer—we should have more peace."

"But this palace is unlike any other," cried Mistigris, whose imagination was stimulated by fright. "In that fairy dwelling there are neither courtiers nor valets; everything is done by invisible hands. The furniture has hands, and the walls have ears."

"Have they a tongue?" said Zerbin.

"Yes," said Mistigris, "they speak, but they are silent at command."

"Well," said the wood-cutter, "they have more sense than you, then. I should like a palace like that. Where is that wonderful place? I do not see it."

"There it is before you, dear Zerbin," said the Princess.

The vessel was making for the land, and the anchor was about to be cast in a harbour where the water was shallow enough to allow of a safe landing. Before them rose a wide staircase which led to a terrace; upon this stood the most enchanting palace that can be imagined.

The three friends ascended gaily, Mistigris leading the way and puffing at every step. On arriving at the palace gate he wished to ring, but he could see no bell, so he shouted and the gate itself replied.

"What do you want, stranger?" it asked.

"I want to speak to the owner of the palace," said Mistigris, rather taken aback at being spoken to by an iron gate.

"The owner of this palace is Lord Zerbin," replied the gate. "When he arrives I shall open."

And at the sight of Zerbin, having on his arm the fair Aleli, the gate opened to let the bridal couple, followed by Mistigris, enter.

On finding herself upon the terrace, Aleli gazed upon the splendid view which extended before her eyes; the mighty ocean lay sparkling in the morning sun.

"How beautiful it is here," she said, "and how nice it would be to rest under these laurels in full blossom."

"Yes," said Zerbin, "let us sit down."

"But there are no armchairs," said Mistigris.

"Here we are, here we are!" cried the armchairs, and they came running up as quickly as their four legs would allow.

"It would be nice to breakfast here," said Mistigris.



"Yes," said Zerbin, "but where is the table?"

"Here I am, here I am!" replied a mellow voice. And a fine mahogany table marched in with all the dignity of a matron, and placed itself before the guests.

"This is charming," said the Princess, "but where are the plates?"

"Here we are, here we are!" cried the little tinkling voices, as thirty dishes, with their sisters, the plates, and their cousins, the knives and forks, and their aunts, the salt-cellsars, all took their places in admirable order round the table, upon which stood already game, fruits of all kinds, and flowers.

"My Lord Zerbin," said Mistigris, "you see what I have done for you. All this is my work."

"Story-teller!" cried a voice.

Mistigris looked around, but could see no one; it was the voice of one of the pillars.

"Your Highness," he said, "I think no one can accuse me of insincerity. I have always spoken the truth."

"Story-teller," said the voice.

"This palace is hateful," thought Mistigris. "If walls speak the truth I shall never be minister. I must alter this."

"My Lord Zerbin," he continued, "rather than live in this lonely place, would you not prefer to be surrounded by people who would be your devoted soldiers, and upon whom you could levy taxes?"

"What! be a King!" said Zerbin.

"What for?"

"Dear Zerbin," said Aleli, "let us remain here; we are both of us very happy."

"All of us," said Mistigris. "I am the

happiest of men; when I am with you, I wish for nothing better."

"Story-teller," said the voice.

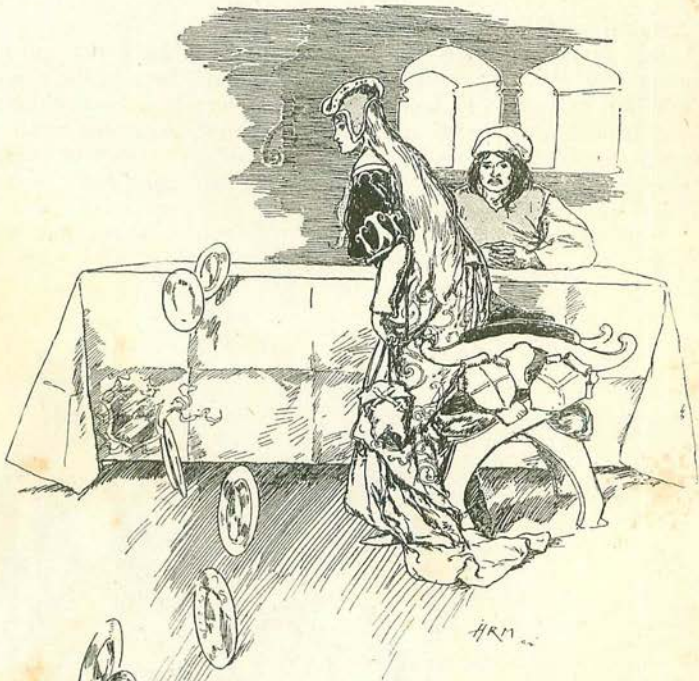
"Do not listen to this, my Lord," cried Mistigris. "I esteem and respect you, believe me."

"Story-teller," replied the voice, relentlessly.

"Oh, if all you say is untrue," said Zerbin, "be off to the moon, it is the country of lies."

These words were no sooner uttered than Mistigris flew up in the air like an arrow and disappeared above the clouds.

We do not know whether he has ever returned, though certain historians assure us that he has, under another name. One thing



is certain, and that is, that he has never been seen in a palace where even the walls speak the truth.

#### V.

THEY were now left to themselves. Zerbin folded his arms and gazed upon the sea, whilst Aleli gave herself up to sweet day-dreams and castles in the air. What dream can be sweeter than to live in an enchanted solitude by the side of one whom you love? Aleli took Zerbin's arm, and set off to inspect her new home. The palace was surrounded with beautiful meadows, through which flowed sparkling



"HERE WE ARE!"

brooks. Mossy oaks, purple beeches, feathery larches, and plane trees with their golden leaves cast their long shadows upon the grass. From the foliage came the song of a finch, whose melody expressed joy and peace. Aleli smiled with pleasure, and turned to Zerbin.

"Dear Zerbin," she asked, "are you not happy here? Could you wish for anything more?"

"I never wished for anything," said Zerbin. "To-morrow I shall take my axe and I shall work hard; there is some fine wood here. I could make at least a hundred fagots."

"Oh!" said Aleli, with a sigh; "I see you do not love me."

"Love you!" said Zerbin; "what does that mean? I would do you no harm, certainly—rather the contrary. We have a palace which appears to have fallen from the clouds; it is yours; send to your father, and ask him to come; I shall be glad. As for me, I was born a wood-cutter—a wood-cutter I will die. That is my sphere—in it I will remain. Do not weep; I do not wish to grieve you."

"Oh, Zerbin," cried poor Aleli, "why do

you treat me thus? Am I then so disagreeable and ugly that you cannot love me?"

"Love you? That is not my business. Do not weep; be reasonable. What! Fresh tears! Well then, if it gives you any pleasure, I will wish to love you."

And poor Aleli raised her eyes dimmed with tears to his face, and in the eyes which met her own she beheld the reflection of her strong and deep love, which would endure for ever. At this sight she smiled through her tears.

Then appeared the water fairy, leading by the hand the worthy King Honeybee, who had been very unhappy since the departure of his daughter and his minister.

He tenderly embraced his children and gave them his blessing, and then returned to rule over his own kingdom.

The water fairy continued to watch over the welfare of the happy couple, who dwelt long in their beautiful palace, content to forget the world, and still more content to be forgotten by it.

Zerbin's want of sense completely disappeared; or if it did not it was little matter, for in the case of every married couple the wife has always wit enough for two.

