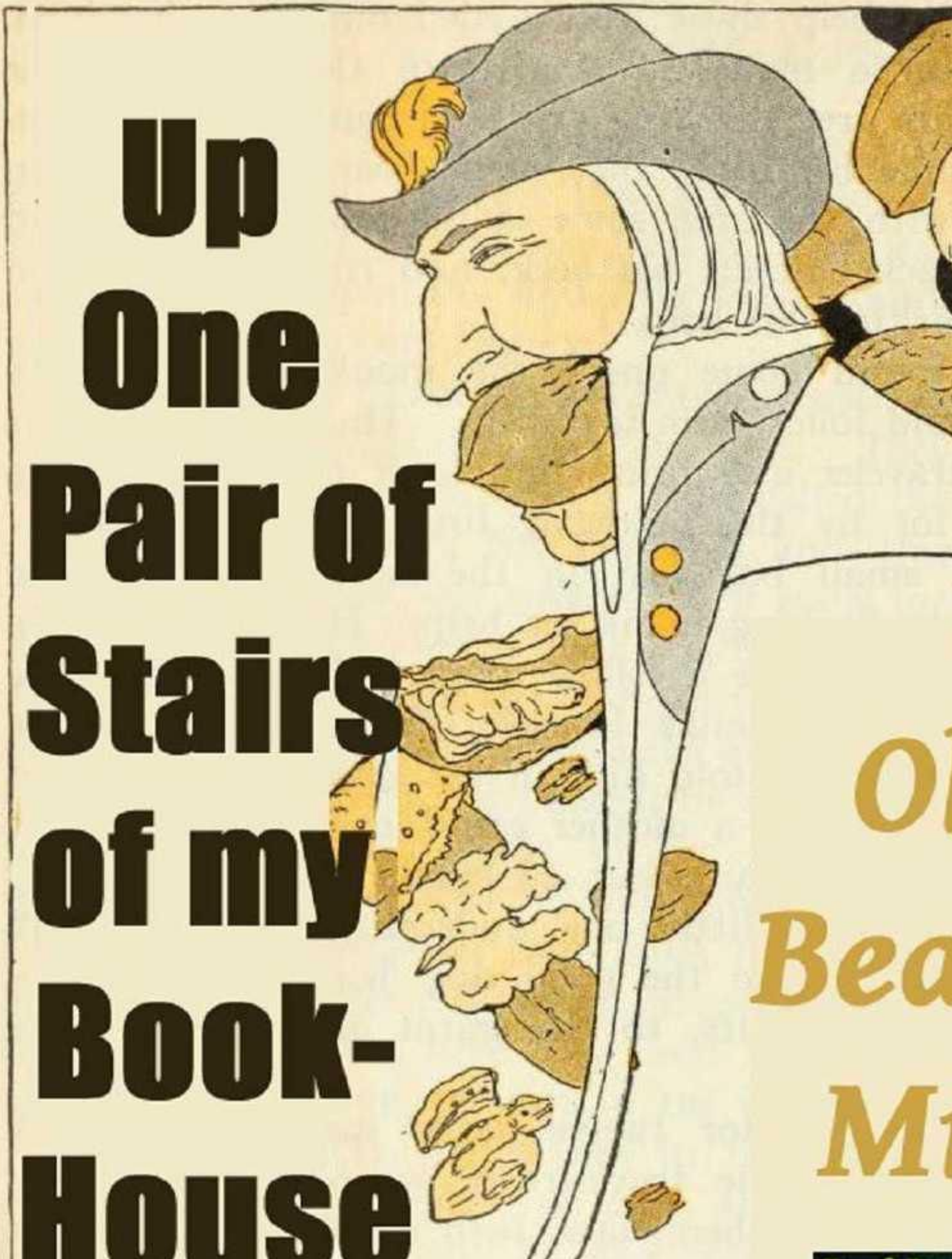
Up One Pair of Stairs of my Book-House



Up One Pair of Stairs of My Bookhouse Olive Dupre Miller

Full of delightful fairy tales, charming poems and engaging stories, this is the second volume of the "My Bookhouse" series for little ones. Originally published in the 1920's as a six volume set, these books, edited by Olive Beaupre Miller, contained the best in children's literature, stories, poems and nursery rhymes. They progressed in difficulty through the different volumes. (Summary by Maria Therese)

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Up One Pair of Stairs of My Bookhouse Olive Dupre Miller

My BOOKHOUSE

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

MY BOOK HOUSE
UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

I WENT up One Pair of Stairs;
Just like me!
I looked out the window;
Just like me!
And there I saw a bigger world
Than In the Nursery!

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS of MY BOOKHOUSE

Edited by

Olive Beaupré Miller

CHICAGO
The BOOKHOUSE for CHILDREN
PUBLISHERS

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Printed in U. S. A.

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THE WONDERFUL WORLD*

William Brighty Rands

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully dressed.

*Reprinted by the courteous permission of John Lane Company.

THE CAP THAT MOTHER MADE

A Swedish Tale

Once upon a time there was a little boy, named Anders, and he had a new cap. A prettier cap was never seen, for his mother herself had knit it; and who could ever make anything half so nice as Mother! The cap was red, except a small part in the middle. That was green, for there had not been enough red yarn to make it all; and the tassel was blue.

Anders' brothers and sisters walked about admiring him; then he put his hands in his pockets and went out for a walk, for he was altogether willing that everyone should see how fine his mother had made him.

The first person he met was a farmhand walking beside a cart loaded with peat, and bidding his horse gee-up. When he saw Anders' new cap, the farmhand made a bow so deep that he bent nearly double, but Anders trotted proudly past him, holding his head very high.

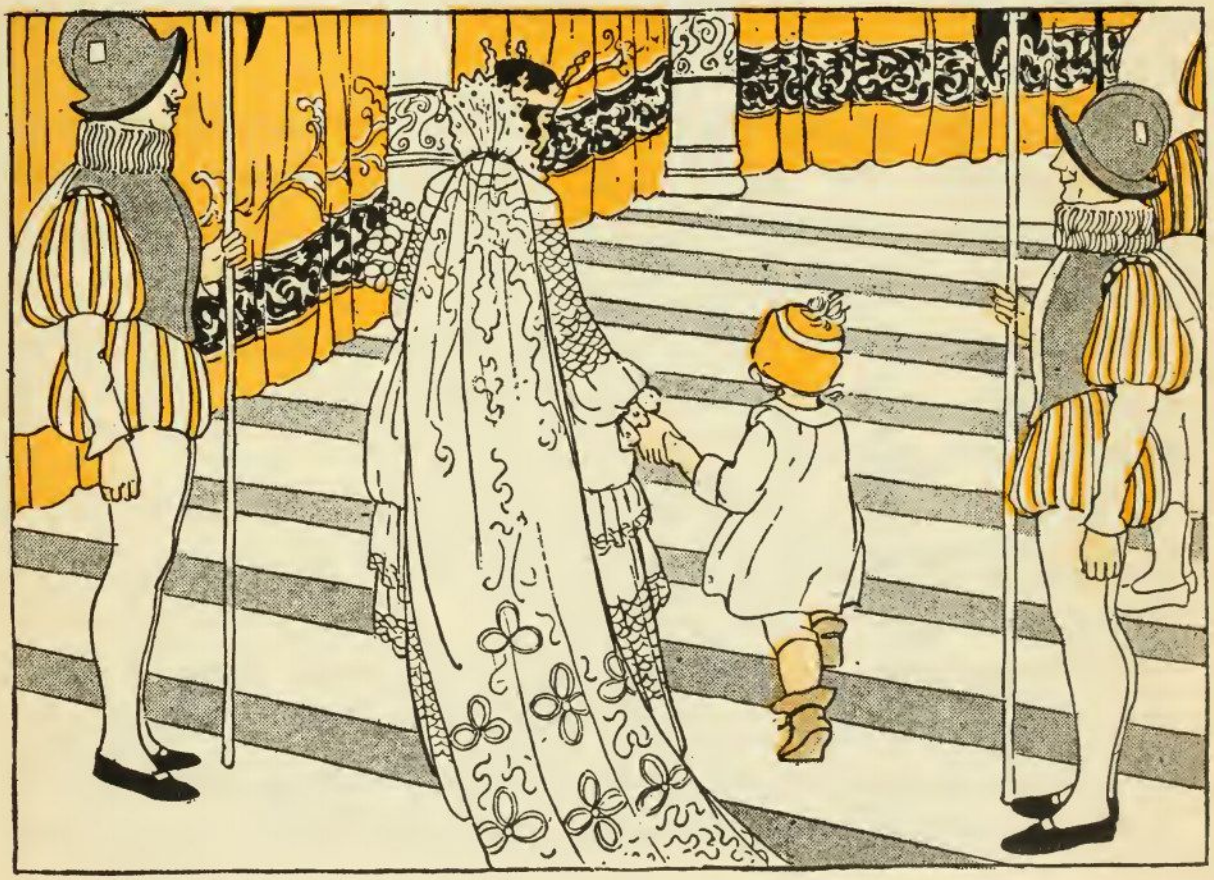
At the turn of the road he came upon Lars, the

tanner's boy. Lars was such a big boy that he wore high boots and carried a jack-knife. But oh, when he saw that cap, he stood quite still to gaze at it, and he could not help going up close to Anders and fingering the splendid blue tassel.

"I'll give you my cap for yours," he cried, "and my jack-knife besides!"

Now this knife was a splendid one, and Anders knew that as soon as one has a jack-knife, one is almost a man. But still he would not for all the world give up, for the knife, the cap which Mother had made.

"Oh, no, I could not do that," he said. And then



he nodded good-bye to Lars, and went on.

Soon after this Anders met a queer little lady. She curtsied to him until her skirts spread out about her like a balloon and she said: "Lad, you are so fine, why do you not go to the king's ball?"

"Yes, why do I not?" thought Anders. "With this cap, I am altogether fit to go and visit the king."

And off he went.

In the palace yard stood two soldiers with guns over their shoulders and shining helmets on their heads. When Anders went to pass them, they both leveled their guns at him.

"Where are you going, boy?" asked one of the soldiers.

"I am going to the king's ball," answered Anders.

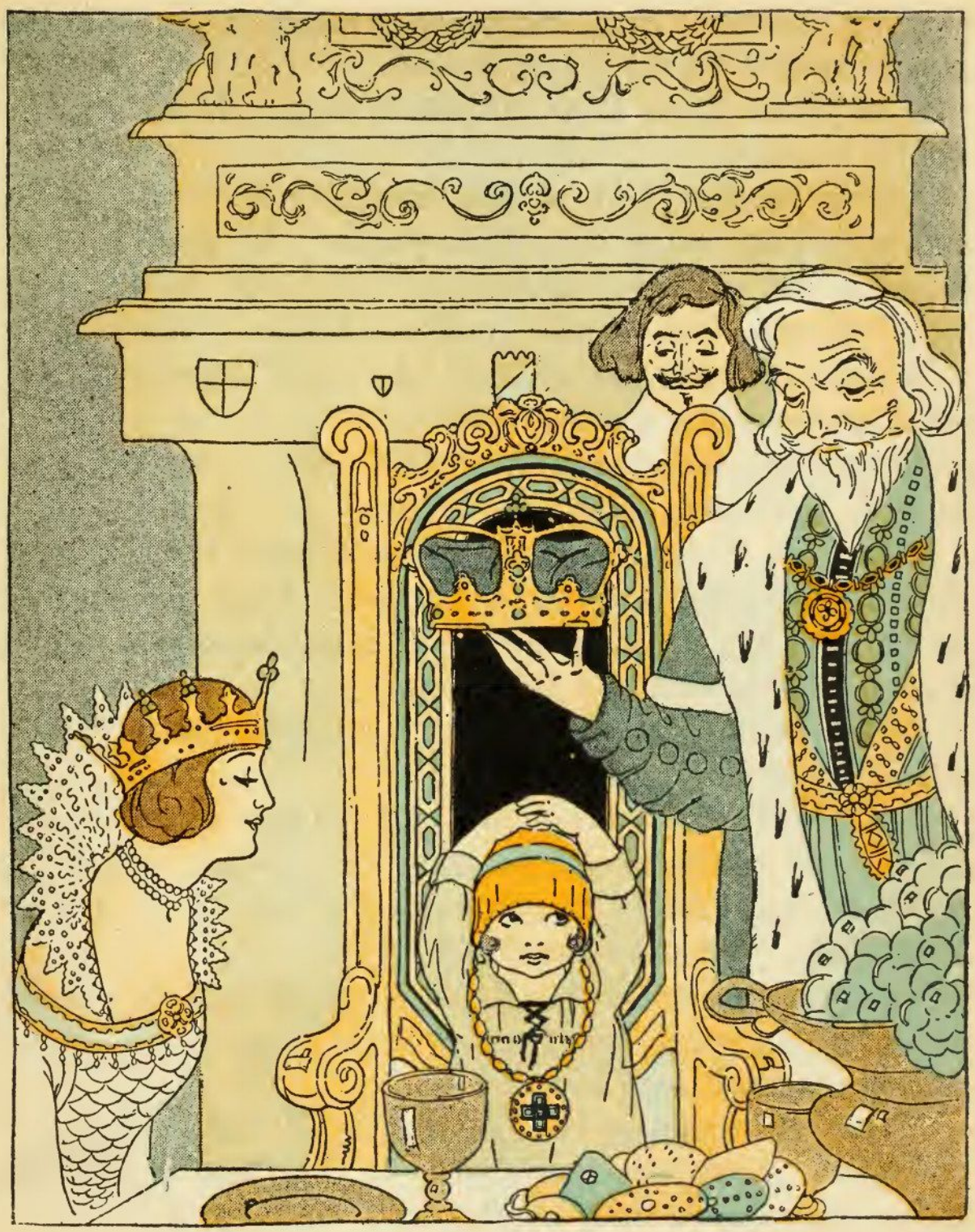
"No, you are not," said the other soldier, trying to push him back. "Nobody can go to the king's ball without a uniform."

But just at this moment the princess came tripping across the yard, dressed in a white satin gown, with ribbons of gold.

"This lad has no uniform, it's true," she said, "but he has a very fine cap and that will do just as well. He shall come to the ball."

So she took Anders by the hand and walked with him up the broad marble stairs, past the soldiers who stood on every third step, through magnificent halls where gentlemen and ladies in silk and velvet were

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



waiting about. And wherever Anders went, all the people bowed to him, for, as like as not, they thought him a prince when they saw what it was that he wore on his head.

At the farther end of the largest hall a table was set with long rows of golden plates and goblets. On huge silver platters were piles of tarts and cakes. The princess sat down under a blue canopy with bouquets of roses on it; and she bade Anders to sit in a golden chair by her side.

"But you must not eat with your cap on your head," she said, and she started to take it off.

"Oh, yes, I can eat just as well with it on," said Anders, and he held on to it with both his hands, for if it were taken away from him, he did not feel sure he would ever get it again.

"Well, well, give it to me," begged the princess, "and I will give you a kiss."

The princess was beautiful, and Anders would surely have liked to be kissed by her, but not for anything in this world would he give up the cap that Mother had made. He only shook his head.

Then the princess filled his pockets full of cakes; she put her own heavy gold chain around his neck, and bent down and kissed him.

"Now will you give me the cap?" she said.

Anders moved farther back in his chair, but he never once took his hands from his head.

Then the doors were thrown open and the king himself entered, accompanied by gentlemen in glittering uniforms and plumed hats. The king wore a mantle of blue velvet, bordered with ermine, and he had a large gold crown on his head.

When he saw Anders in the golden chair, he smiled.

"That is a very fine cap you have," he said.

"So it is," said Anders, "it is made of Mother's best yarn, and she has knit it herself, and every one wants to get it away from me."

"But surely you would like to change caps with me," said the king, and he lifted his shining gold crown from his head.

Anders said never a word but when the king came nearer to him with his gold crown in one hand, and the other hand outstretched toward that beautiful cap, then, with one jump, Anders was out of his chair. Like an arrow he darted out of the hall, through the palace, down the stairs, and across the yard. He ran so fast that the necklace the princess

had given him fell from his neck, and all the cakes rolled out of his pockets.

But he had his cap! He had his cap! He had his cap! With both hands he clutched it tight as he ran back home to his mother's cottage.

"Well, Anders, where have you been?" cried his mother. So he told her all about what had happened.

All his brothers and sisters stood around and listened with mouths wide open.

But when his big brother heard how he had refused to give his cap in exchange for the king's golden crown, he cried out:

"Anders, you were foolish! Just think of all the things you might have bought with the king's gold crown! Velvet jackets and long leather boots and silken hose, and a sword. Besides, you could have bought yourself a much finer cap with a feather in it."

Anders' face grew red, very red. "I was not foolish," he answered sturdily, "I could never have bought a finer cap, not for all the king's crown. I could never have bought anything in all this world one half so fine as the cap my mother made me!"

Then his mother took him up on her lap, and kissed him.

DAME WIGGINS OF LEE, AND HER SEVEN WONDERFUL CATS

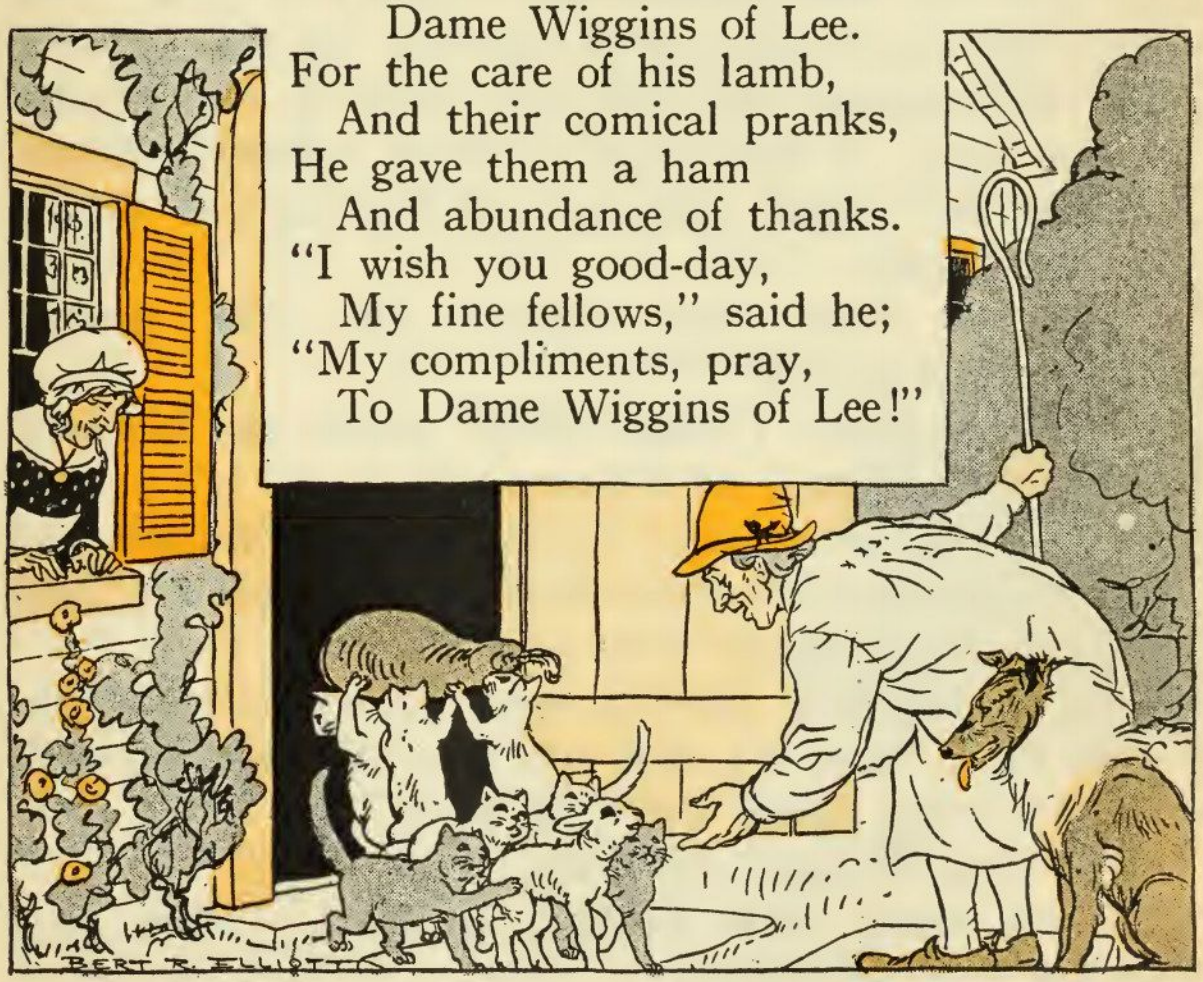
Mary E. Sharpe and John Ruskin

Dame Wiggins of Lee
  Was a worthy old soul,
As e'er threaded a nee-
  dle, or washed in a bowl;
She held mice and rats
  In such antipathie,
That seven fine cats
Kept Dame Wiggins of Lee.
    The rats and mice scared
      By this fierce whiskered crew,
    The poor seven cats
      Soon had nothing to do;
    So, as any one idle
      She ne'er loved to see,
    She sent them to school,
      Did Dame Wiggins of Lee.
The master soon wrote
  That they all of them knew,
How to read the word "milk"
  And to spell the word "mew."

And they all washed their faces
  Before they took tea:
"Were there ever such dears!"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.
    But soon she grew tired
      Of living alone;
    So she sent for her cats
      From school to come home.
    Each rowing a wherry,
      Returning you see:
    The frolic made merry
      Dame Wiggins of Lee.
When spring-time came back,
  They had breakfast of curds;
And were greatly afraid
  Of disturbing the birds.
"If you sit, like good cats,
  All seven in a tree,
They will teach you to sing!"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.
    So they sat in a tree,
      And said, "Beautiful! Hark!"
    And they listened and looked
      In the clouds for the lark.
    They sang, by the fireside,
      Symphoniouslie,
    A song without words,
      To Dame Wiggins of Lee.
They called the next day
  On the tomtit and sparrow,
And wheeled a poor sick lamb
  Home in a barrow.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"You shall all have some sprats
For your humanity,
My seven good cats,"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.
The Farmer soon heard
Where his sheep went astray,
And arrived at Dame's door
With his faithful dog Tray.
He knocked with his crook,
And the stranger to see,
Out the window did look
Dame Wiggins of Lee.
For the care of his lamb,
And their comical pranks,
He gave them a ham
And abundance of thanks.
"I wish you good-day,
My fine fellows," said he;
"My compliments, pray,
To Dame Wiggins of Lee!"



HOW THE FINCH GOT HER COLORS

A Flemish Legend

There was once a time when all the birds were gray and had no colors at all. Then the Great Bird, who ruled over them, called them all together, showed them the rainbow, and told them that he had decided to give each of them one of those splendid colors. At once they began pushing and shoving and crowding about him.

"Let me have first choice! I'll take green," screeched the parrot.

"Give me blue! I want blue!" piped the bluebird.

"I'll take yellow," cried the oriole.

And so it went. But during all this clamor and strife, there was one little bird who sat quietly back and waited her turn. That was the finch.

"Now you each have a splendid color," said the Great Bird, "and it's well you have all been provided for, for every single color is gone."

Just then he spied the finch.

"Come here, little finch," he cried. "Why have you asked for nothing?"

"I was waiting my turn," said the finch.

"But now all the colors are gone," said the Great Bird.

"Then must I go always in gray?" asked the finch.

Suddenly the Great Bird called all the other birds back as they were about to fly away.

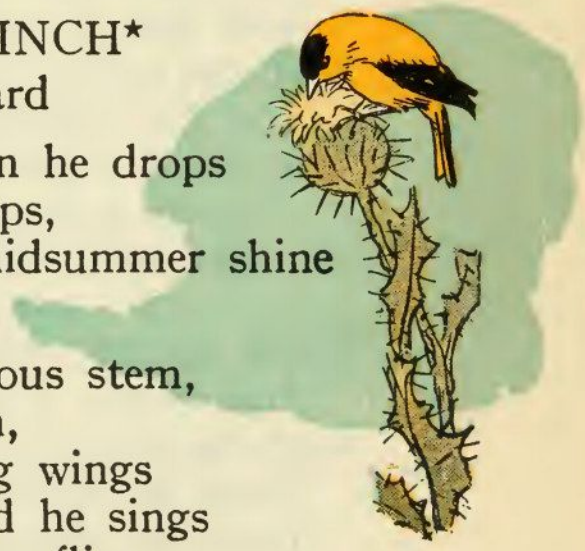
"Go always in gray because you were too unselfish to push and shove!" he cried. "No! that you shall not!"

So he made all the other birds pass before him. From each he took a bit of color and gave it to the finch. Then lo and behold! she shone with all the tints of the rainbow; not one color alone was her's, but all—all, shading beautifully into each other, and blending together in one lovely whole!

Thus it came about that the most beautiful bird of the air was the little wee finch who waited her turn.

THE GOLDFINCH*

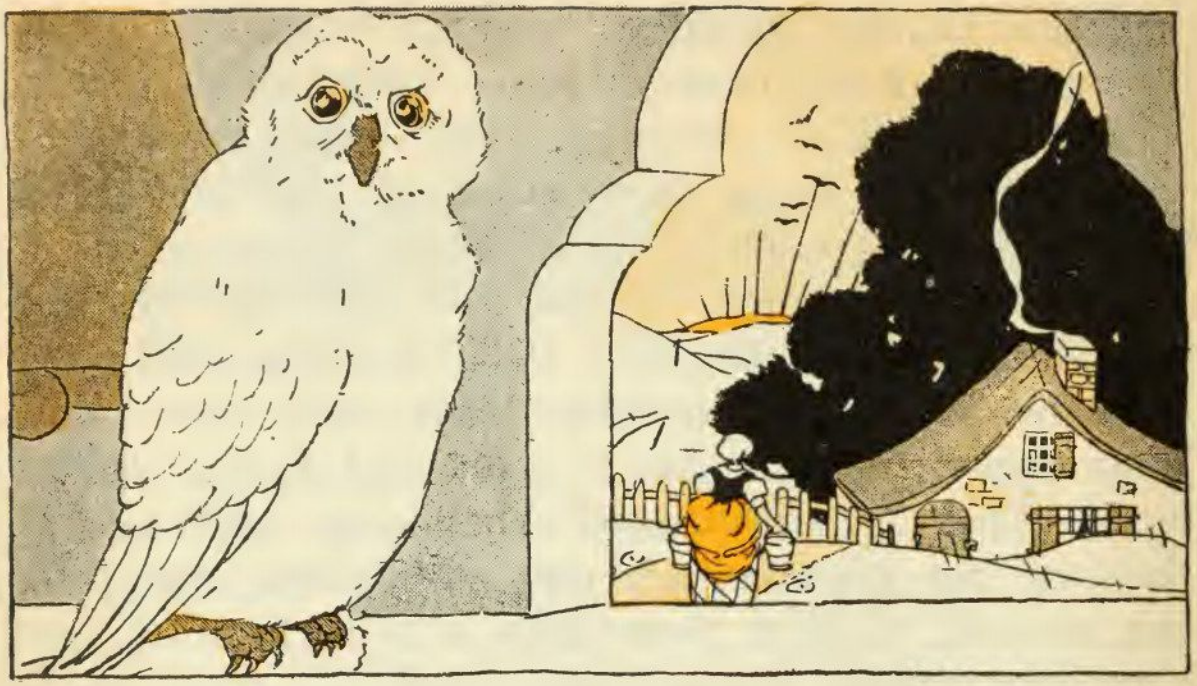
Odell Shepard



Down from the sky on a sudden he drops
Into the mullein and juniper tops,
Flushed from his bath in the midsummer shine
Flooding the meadowland. . . .

Lightly he sways on the pendulous stem,
Vividly restless, a fluttering gem,
Then with a flash of bewildering wings
Dazzles away up and down, and he sings
Clear as a bell at each dip as he flies
Bounding along on the wave of the skies. . . .

*From *A Lonely Flute.* Used by permission of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.



THE OWL
Alfred Tennyson

When cats run home and light is come,
  And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
  And the whirring sail goes round;
  And the whirring sail goes round;
    Alone and warming his five wits,
    The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
  And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
  Twice or thrice his roundelay;
  Twice or thrice his roundelay;
    Alone and warming his five wits,
    The white owl in the belfry sits.

THE OWL'S ANSWER TO TOMMY*

Juliana Horatia Ewing

One evening Tommy's grandmother was telling him and his little brother Johnny a story about a BROWNIE who used to do all the work in a neighbor's house before the family got up in the morning.

"What was he like, Granny?" asked Tommy.

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

"What did he do?"

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

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

"No, my dear. He did it for love. They set a pancheon of clear water for him over night, and now

*From *Brownies*, published by The Macmillan Company.

and then a bowl of bread and milk or cream. Sometimes he left a bit of money in the water. Sometimes he weeded the garden or threshed the corn. He saved endless trouble both to men and maids."

"O Granny! Why did he go?"

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

" 'What have we here? Hemten hamten!
Here will I nevermore tread nor stampen.'

And away he danced through the door and never came back again."

"O Grandmother! But why didn't he come back?"

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

Now Tommy was a lazy boy. He wished that he could find a brownie to tidy the room, and fetch the turf, and pick up chips, and do all his work for him. So that night, while little Johnny was off in the land of dreams, growing rosier and rosier as he slept, Tommy lay wide awake, thinking of his grandmother's story.

"There's an owl living in the old shed by the lake," he thought. "It may be *the* Old Owl herself, and she knows, Granny says. When father's gone