

house. When old Malbrouk hears the violin, he says to himself :

“My wife, not being able to hold out any longer, has, doubtless, killed Malbrouk, and to show me her joy she has taken the violin.”

And he does not trouble himself any more about it. When he approaches the house he stands, well pleased, looking at the caldron on the fire, but, on coming nearer, he sees some long hairs. He pulls out a little more, and perceives that it is his wife, who is there already, half-boiled. Think what a rage he was in. The young Malbrouk went to the king's house, and married his well-beloved princess. They made great rejoicings. As the king was somewhat aged, he gives his crown to Malbrouk, saying that he had well gained it. They all lived happily, and he made his two brothers kings also.

LAURENTINE,

About 35 years old ; learnt it from her mother.

THE FISHERMAN AND HIS SONS.

LIKE many others in the world, there was a fisherman who lived with his wife. One day he was fishing and caught a fine fish (at that time all the animals and everything used to speak), and the fish said to him :*

“Spare my life ! Spare my life ! I will give you all that you shall desire.”

And this poor man spared its life, and went home without having caught anything else. When he came home his wife asks him :

“Where are your fish ?”

* For the whole of this tale compare Campbell's “Sea-Maiden,” Vol. I., p. 71. The sea-maiden takes the place of the fish. Besides the three sons, the three foals, and the three puppies, three trees grow behind the house, and serve as a sign like the well boiling. Bladé's “Les Deux Jumeaux,” in his “Contes Agenais,” is identical with this ; cf. also Köhler's notes, p. 148.

He tells her how that he had caught a fish, and that it had begged him to spare its life, and that he had left it in the water. His wife says to him :

“ Have you lost your head then ? After having caught a fish to put it back again into the water ! ”

And she called him all sorts of names, even “ big donkey.”

The next day he goes fishing again, and (what a chance !) the same fish came again. It asks him again to spare its life. But the man answers :

“ No ! My wife loaded me with abuse last evening.”

The fish said to him that he would give him as much money as he wished if he would but spare him. And our fisherman lets him go again. He remains there again all day, but nothing comes to his hook. Again he goes off home without anything at all. His wife is furious at seeing that he has nothing. He gives her some money, but she was not satisfied, and told her husband that he ought to have brought the fish.

He goes fishing again for the third time, and again the same fish returns, and says to him, “ Let me go into the water.”

But our man will not let him go again ; his wife had scolded him so much last night. He must carry him home.

“ Well, then, since you will carry me home, I will tell you how you must divide me. You must give my tail to the dog, my head to the mare, and my trunk to your wife. At the end of a certain time your wife will bear three sons, and they will all be exactly like each other, exactly alike. The mare will have three colts, but all three alike, and the bitch three puppies, all exactly alike too. And if any misfortune should happen to any of the three children, the well which is behind the house will begin to boil.”

The woman did as the fish had said, and she gave birth to three wonderfully fine boys, who were all exactly, exactly alike, and the mare had three colts exactly alike, and the bitch three puppies exactly alike too.

When these children grew big, one of them said to his parents that he wished to go from country to country to see the world. His parents did not wish it. But he had such a desire that at last they gave him leave. He takes a horse and a dog, extraordinarily large and handsome, a sword also,* and off he starts. He goes on, and on, very, very far. He comes to a city and goes to an inn. They were lamenting loudly there, and everybody was sad.† He asks, "What is it?" They tell him how that a serpent with seven heads lived in the mountain, and that every day they drew lots to know who should go to him, because he must eat one person every day; and that to-day the lot has fallen on the king's daughter, and that everyone was in mourning, and that the next day this princess must go very early to the mountain.

Our young man takes his horse, his dog, and his sword, and starts off before the princess. He keeps himself hidden until the princess was alone at the top. Then our lad comes out, and the princess says to him :

"Where do you come from here? Go down quickly, else you will be eaten as well as I. It is quite enough for one (to die)."

And she entreats him to go down, but our lad will not. He wishes to try if he can do anything. At the same moment they hear a shrill hissing, and with that the serpent comes. The lad says to the dog :

"Do your duty."

And the dog leaps upon the serpent and holds him. He takes his sword and cuts off his seven heads as best he can. When he has done that he takes the seven tongues out of the seven heads and puts them in his pocket. This princess had on seven robes, each more beautiful than the others,

* Much more is made of the sword in the Gaelic tales. In them it is always a magic or a mystic weapon.

† This episode of the fight with the seven-headed beast is introduced in the same way in the Gaelic—"The Sea-Maiden," pp. 76, 77. Cf. also "Rouge Etin," in Brueyre.

and he cuts seven pieces out of them severally. The princess does not know what to do to thank him. She wishes to take the lad home with her, but he will not go. And he returns to the inn.

The king proclaims that the man who has killed the serpent has gained the half of his kingdom, and his daughter; that he should make himself known. Our lad does not show himself at all, but a charcoal-burner* passing by on the mountain found the seven heads. He presents himself before the king as if he had killed the serpent. But the princess does not recognise him, and says that it is not he who has saved her. But as no one else came the marriage was about to be celebrated, when the princess pointed out to her father from a distance her rescuer. The king would not believe her. But they send and fetch him, and tell the charcoal-burner to show the seven heads of the serpent, and he shows them with great boldness. Our young man tells him to open their mouths. He does so, and the mouths had no tongues. Then he who had killed the serpent shows the seven tongues, and the seven pieces of the princess' robes, and they were all convinced that he had killed the serpent; and they burned the charcoal-burner alive in the middle of the market-place.

Our young man marries the princess, and they had many and great rejoicings because he had delivered all the world from the terrible serpent. In the evening, when they retired to their chamber, the wife knelt down to say her prayers, and the husband went and looked out of the window, and he saw by the moonlight a magnificent castle,† which he had never seen before.

He asks his wife :

“What is that?”

His wife says to him :

* In the Gaelic the charcoal-burner is a general.

† This takes place not on the wedding night, but some time after in the “Sea-Maiden,” p. 82. The wife at prayers and the husband standing by indifferent is but too true a picture, we fear.

“Nobody goes to that castle, for they who go there never return.”*

The husband said to her that he must go there. His wife did not wish it, but he had such a desire to do so that he takes his horse, his dog, and his sword, and goes off. He looks round and round (the castle), but he cannot find the door. At last he finds a little door half hidden, very small. He knocks. An old woman comes to him, and asks him what he wants.

He says, “I have seen this castle so beautiful outside, that I am anxious to see the inside.”

She shows him in. He sees a table splendidly laid out. There was nothing that there was not on the table. This woman invites him to take something. He says that he does not want anything, but she insists so much that he ends by taking something. As soon as he has eaten the first mouthful he becomes a terrible monster, and by no means could he get out of that house.

The water begins to boil at home, as the fish had said. All those in the house are grieved because some misfortune has happened to the son. One of the brothers at home said that he would immediately set out to the help of his brother. Those at home are very sorry, but they let him go. He takes a horse and a dog. The father and mother give him all the money that they can give him, and he starts off. He goes on, and on, and on, and, as was fated,† he comes to the same inn as his brother. There they recognise him. They inform the king that the gentleman is at the house, because he had had a search made for him through all the neighbourhood. They come and fetch him out of his corner, and he lets them do as they wish. A great supper was made, and he goes off with the princess. As before, the princess knelt down to pray. The young man goes to look out of the window, and sees this palace. He asks her what this beautiful castle is. She says to him :

* The “Sea-Maiden,” p. 82—“Go not, go not,” said she, “there never went man to this castle that returned.” See below.

† Basque, “as must needs be.”

"You do not know what takes place there! They who go there never return."

He says that he will start off directly. His wife asks him if he will return to that castle as before. "Do not go, I pray you."

But nothing could have stopped him, and off he goes with his horse and his dog. Like the other brother, he goes wandering round and round the house without finding the door. At last he sees a very little door half hidden. He knocks at it, and the old woman comes and says to him:

"What do you want?"

"I have seen the outside of this castle, and I wish to see the inside."

She tells him to come in. He leaves his horse and his dog outside, and he sees a table splendidly set out; one could not mention anything that was wanting, there was something of everything. She tells him to eat something. He did not wish to, but at last he takes something, (so little, that it was) almost nothing. At the first mouthful he becomes a terrible monster, and cannot in any way get out.

The water at home begins to boil, and they know that some misfortune has happened to him.

The third brother said that he must set out as quickly as possible. The parents did not wish it, but he said to them:

"Perhaps I shall save them; let me go."

They give him as much money as they can. He takes a horse and a dog, and off he starts. He goes on, and on, and on. He also goes to the same inn as his other brothers. He is recognised immediately, and the king is informed that this young gentleman is there. He sends to fetch him immediately, and makes great feastings and rejoicings, thinking that it is always the same as their first young gentleman. In the evening he is conducted to the princess. The princess kneels down to say her evening prayers, and her husband, wishing to see a little more of the festival, placed himself at the window. He also sees the beautiful castle. He asks his wife:

“What is this beautiful house?”

She says to him, “What! You! Do not *you* know what it is? No one returns from there. You know yourself what happens there, since you have been there yourself.”

He said to her, “I must go and see it again.”

The princess would not let him go; but he broke away from her. He takes his horse and his dog, and starts off. He looks, and looks all round, and cannot find the door. An old woman appears to him, and says to him—

“What do you think will become of you here? They who go in there do not come out.”

“But that is why I wish to go in, to know what passes within.”

Then the old woman gives him a pigeon, cooked and prepared for eating, and said to him,

“Inside there is an old woman. She will try and force you to eat; but, if you are wise, you will not eat. You will show her the pigeon that you have in your pocket which remains after your repast, and you must make her eat some of the pigeon, and you will have full power over her.”

When he has found the door, he knocks. This old woman comes, and asks him what he wants. He says that he only wishes to see this house. She lets him in. He takes his dog, also, with him. He sees this splendid table. She wishes absolutely to make him eat; but he says that it is altogether impossible—that he has in his pocket a pigeon which he has not been able to eat, and that she must eat some of that. The old woman says she will not. He compels her, and tells her she must; and at last she eats it. He then asks her what she has done with his brothers. She says that she knows nothing about them; that she does not know what he means. He forces her to tell him, and says to her,

“I will make my dog strangle you if you do not tell me.”

He frightens her so, that she shows him some terrible

monsters. He tells her to restore them as they were before, otherwise some misfortune shall happen to her, and to mind what she is about. At last she set to work to change them as they were before, and their horses and dogs as well.

They all go to the king's palace, where everyone is immensely astonished to see three gentlemen arrive exactly alike in all respects. They ask the princess which is her husband. But the poor young lady is greatly embarrassed. She could not distinguish them, because they were exactly alike. At last he who had killed the serpent said that he was her husband. They make great rejoicings, and give a great deal of money to the two brothers, and to their parents, and they went off. They burnt the old woman in the midst of the market-place, and this handsome castle was given to the newly-married pair, and they lived happily at court; and, as they lived well, so they died happily.

CATHERINE ELIZONDO.

All the *latter* part of this tale is much more detailed than in the Gaelic, and it is singular to read this note from Campbell's collector:—"The Gaelic is given as nearly as possible in the words used by Mackenzie; but he thinks his story rather shortened." Of the identity of the two stories there can be no doubt, although each supplies what is wanting to the other.

TABAKIERA, THE SNUFF-BOX.*

LIKE many others in the world, there was a lad who wished to travel, and off he went. He finds a snuff-box, and opens it. And the snuff-box said to him—

"Que quieres?" ("What do you wish for?")

* We were also told, in Basque, "The Powerful Lantern," which was the story of Aladdin's lamp, with only *one* incident omitted. The present is much more like the Gaelic, but there (Campbell, Vol. II., 297-9) it is a lady who gives the snuff-box, which says, "Eege gu djeege," on being opened. Campbell's note is:—"The explanation of these sounds was, that it was 'as if they were asking.' The sounds mean nothing, that I know of, in any language." "Que quieres?" is pure Spanish—"What dost thou want?"