

### THE TARTARO AND PETIT PERROQUET.

LIKE many others in the world, there was a mother and her son. They were very wretched. One day the son said to his mother that he must go away, to see if he could do anything. He goes far, far, far away. He traverses many countries, and still goes on and on. He arrives in a great city, and asks if they know of a place for a servant. They tell him that there is one in the king's house. There they tell him that he is to be gardener. But he tells them that he does not know how to use a hoe at all, but that, all the same, he would learn it with the others. He was very nice-looking. He soon learnt it, and was liked by everybody.

This king had a daughter, and she often noticed Petit Perroquet, because he was polite to everybody. In this city there was a prince, and he was paying court to this young princess, and he was seized with dislike and jealousy of Petit-Perroquet. One day this prince\* went to find the king. He said to him,

"You do not know what Petit Perroquet says?—that he could bring the Tartaro's horse here."

The king sends for Petit Perroquet, and says to him,

"It seems that you have said that you could bring the Tartaro's horse here?"

"I certainly did not say it."

"Yes, yes," said the king, "you said it."

"If you will give me all that I ask for, I will try."

He asks for a great deal of money, and sets off. He travels on, and on, and on, and he had to pass a wide river. He speaks to the ferryman, and pays the passage money, and tells him that perhaps he will have a heavy load on his return, but that he will be well paid.

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\* Only in this, and one other tale, is the word "prince" used instead of "king's son." Compare the Gaelic of Campbell in this respect. This tale is probably from the French, and the Tartaro is only a giant.

He lands on the other side ; but he had yet a long way to go in the forest, because the Tartaro lived in a corner of the mountain. At last he arrives, and knocks at the door. An old, old woman comes to him, and says to him,

“ Be off from here as quickly as possible ; my son smells the smell of a Christian a league off.”

“ To eat me here, or to eat me elsewhere, it is all the same to me.”

But he goes outside, and hides himself under a great heap of cut ferns. He had scarcely been there a moment, when he hears a deep breathing and a grinding of teeth, which sounded like thunder. He stops where he is, trembling. The Tartaro goes to his house, and asks his mother if there is not some Christian or other hidden here.

“ No, no,” says she. “ But eat away, your dinner is all ready.”

“ No, no ! I must eat this Christian first.”

He goes hunting, looking, looking into every corner. He goes to the heap of ferns, and pulls off some to put them on one side ; but our Petit Perroquet was quite, quite at the bottom. The Tartaro was just on the point of finding him, but he grew tired, and went indoors, and began to eat and to drink enormously. Our Petit Perroquet creeps out of his ferns, and goes off to the stable. The horse had a big bell round his neck, but he fills it with ferns (this bell was as large as the big bell in the church of St. Jean de Luz). He mounts on the horse's back, and very soon he arrives at the ferry, and the ferryman comes to meet him. Together they get the horse into the ferry-boat as well as they could, and they cross over. He gave him a handsome reward. As soon as he was on the other side, the Tartaro appeared, crying out to him to give him his horse back again, and that he would give him all he could wish for. He replies, “ No,” and goes off full gallop. When he came near the king's palace he took the fern out of the bell, and everybody comes running out of doors or to the windows. All the world was astonished to see Petit Perroquet return.

The king was in ecstasy. He did not know what to say,

but he liked him even more than he did formerly, and the princess did also. The other prince was not at all pleased, and he begins to think of some other plot. He goes off to find the king, and he says to him,

“Do you not know that Petit Perroquet says that he could bring the Tartaro’s diamond?”

The king sends for Petit Perroquet, and says to him,

“It seems that you say you can get the Tartaro’s diamond?”

“I certainly did not say any such thing.”

“Yes, yes—you said it.”

“No, no! I did not say it; but I will try, if you give me all I shall ask for.”

And he asks for a great deal of money.

He goes off, and reaches the ferry, and pays the ferryman well, and goes far, far, far away into the forest, till he gets to the house of the Tartaro. The old woman tells him to be off from there; and he goes and hides himself again in the ferns. And he stops there until the Tartaro comes to the house, just as he did the first time. He turns over nearly all the ferns, and leaves him scarcely covered. He stops quietly there all the time that the Tartaro was having his huge supper, and when he thinks he has finished, and is taking his nap, he creeps out very, very gently. The Tartaro always put his diamond under his pillow, and he takes it away without waking him, and escapes, running off as fast as if to break his feet. The ferryman is there, and he crosses him over, and he pays him well. The Tartaro appears on the other side again, and calls out to him telling him to give him back his diamond, and that he would give him all that he could wish for. He answers, “No, no!” and runs on to the king’s house.

When he arrived there, the king did not know what to do. One feasted him, and another feasted him, and all the world was busied about him, and everyone loved him more and more, and the princess as well as the rest. The wicked prince did not know what to think of it. He was eaten up with jealousy, and he thought of something else, and said to the king:

“ Petit Perroquet says that he can bring the Tartaro himself.”

The king sends for Petit Perroquet, and says to him :

“ It appears that you have said that you will bring the Tartaro himself here.”

“ No, no, no, I did not say anything at all like that ; but if you will give me all I ask for, I will try. You must have a carriage made of iron, half-a-yard thick, and three horses to draw it, and lots of money. When all that is ready, I will set out.”

He asks, also, for a barrel of honey, another of feathers, and two horns, and starts off.

When he comes to the ferry, it was no easy thing to get this carriage into the boat. When he has got to the other side, he first puts himself into the barrel of honey, and then into the barrel of feathers, and ties the horns on to his head, and then mounts as postilion. He then comes to the Tartaro's house, and just then he happened to be at home. Petit Perroquet knocks at the door. The Tartaro himself comes to open, and asks :

“ Who are you ? You ! ”

“ I ! !—I am the oldest of all the devils in hell.”

He opens the carriage door for him, and says :

“ Get in there.”

The Tartaro gets in, and Petit Perroquet, very glad, starts off, and arrives at the ferry. He crosses, as he best can, with his carriage and horses. He pays the ferryman generously, and comes to the king's palace. They were all terrified when they saw that he had the Tartaro there. They tried to shoot him with cannon, but he caught the bullets, and sent them back as if they had been balls to play with. They could not kill him in that way, so they finished him with other arms.

As Petit Perroquet had well gained her, they gave him the princess in marriage. He sent for his mother to the court, and as they lived well, so they died happily.

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