

were only poor people. The king will go all the same. He finds this lady, who says that they are poor, and that she is ashamed to receive the king in her bed-room; but it was there she had her step-daughter very nicely dressed, with only one shoe on her feet. She was dazzling with beauty, and the king finds her very much to his taste. They are married immediately; he takes the father and step-mother to his house, and they all live happily, and this step-daughter owed her good fortune to her step-mother.

LOUISE LANUSSE.

There are two curious versions of these tales in Bladé's "*Contes Populaires Recueillis en Agenais*" (Paris, Baer, 1874), Nos. I. and VIII. Those who wish to compare others may follow up the references there given by Reinhold Köhler, on pp. 145 and 153; also those given at pp. 44 and 47 of Brueyre's "*Contes Populaires de la Grande Bretagne*" (Paris, Hachette, 1875).

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.*

As there are many in the world in its state now, there was a king who had three daughters. He used continually to bring handsome presents to his two elder daughters, but did not pay any attention at all to his youngest daughter, and yet she was the prettiest and most amiable.

The king kept going from fair to fair, and from feast to feast, and from everywhere he used to bring something for the two eldest daughters. One day, when he was going to a feast, he said to his youngest daughter:

"I never bring anything home for you; tell me then what you want and you shall have it."

She said to her father: "And I do not want anything."

"Yes, yes, I am going to bring you something."

* Cf. "The Serpent in the Wood," p. 38.

"Very well then, bring me a flower."

He goes off, and is busy buying and buying; for one a hat, for the other a beautiful piece of stuff for a dress, and for the first again a shawl; and he was returning home, when in passing before a beautiful castle, he sees a garden quite full of flowers, and he says to himself:

"What! I was going home without a flower for my daughter; here I shall have plenty of them."

He takes some then, and as soon as he has done so, a voice says to him:

"Who gave you permission to take that flower? As you have three daughters, if you do not bring me one of them before the year be finished, you shall be burnt wherever you are—you, and your whole kingdom."

The king goes off home. He gives his elder daughters their presents, and her nosegay to the youngest. She thanks her father. After a certain time this king became sad. His eldest daughter said to him:

"What is the matter with you?"

He says to her: "If one of my daughters will not go to such a spot before the end of the year, I shall be burned."

His eldest daughter answers him, "Be burned if you like; as for me, I shall not go. I have no wish at all to go there. Settle it with the others."

The second also asks him, "You seem very sad, papa; what is the matter with you?"

He told her how he is bound to send one of his daughters to such a place before the end of the year, otherwise he should be burned.

This one too says to him, "Manage your own business as you like, but do not reckon upon me."

The youngest, after some days, said to him, "What is the matter with you, my father, that you are so sad? Has someone done you some hurt?"

He said to her, "When I went to get your nosegay, a voice said to me, 'I must have one of your daughters

before the year be completed,"* and now I do not know what I must do. It told me that I shall be burned."

This daughter said to him, "My father, do not be troubled about it. I will go."

And she sets out immediately in a carriage. She arrives at the castle and goes in, and she hears music and sounds of rejoicing everywhere, and yet she did not see anyone. She finds her chocolate ready (in the morning), and her dinner the same. She goes to bed, and still she does not see anyone. The next morning a voice says to her:

"Shut your eyes; I wish to place my head on your knees for a moment."

"Come, come; I am not afraid."

There appears then an enormous serpent. Without intending it, the young lady could not help giving a little shudder. An instant after the serpent went away; and the young lady lived very happily, without lacking anything. One day the voice asked her if she did not wish to go home.

She answers, "I am very happy here. I have no longing for it."

"Yes, if you like, you may go for three days."

He gives her a ring, and says to her, "If that changes colour, I shall be ill, and if it turns to blood, I shall be in great misery."†

The young lady sets out for her father's house. Her father was very glad (to see her). Her sisters said to her:

"You must be happy there. You are prettier than you were before. With whom do you live there?"

She told them, "With a serpent." They would not believe her. The three days flew by like a dream, and she forgot her serpent. The fourth day she looked at her ring, and she saw that it was changed. She rubs it with her finger, and it begins to bleed. Seeing that she goes running

* Literally, "be full."

† Cf. the well behind the house in the "Fisherman and his Three Sons," p. 87.

to her father, and says to him that she is going. She arrives at the castle, and finds everything sad. The music will not play—everything was shut up. She called the serpent (his name was Azor, and hers Fifine). She kept on calling and crying out to him, but Azor appeared nowhere. After having searched the whole house, after having taken off her shoes, she goes to the garden, and there too she cries out. She finds a corner of the earth in the garden quite frozen, and immediately she makes a great fire over this spot, and there Azor comes out, and he says to her:*

“You had forgotten me, then. If you had not made this fire, it would have been all up with me.”

Fifine said to him, “Yes, I had forgotten you, but the ring made me think of you.”

Azor said to her, “I knew what was going to happen; that is why I gave you the ring.”

And coming into the house, she finds it as before, all full of rejoicings—the music was playing on all sides. Some days after that Azor said to her:

“You must marry me.”

Fifine gives no answer. He asks her again like that three times, and still she remained silent, silent. The whole house becomes sad again. She has no more her meals ready. Again Azor asks her if she will marry him. Still she does not answer, and she remains like that in darkness several days without eating anything, and she said to herself, “Whatever it shall cost me I must say, Yes.”

When the serpent asks her again, “Will you marry me?” she answers, “Not with the serpent, but with the man.”

As soon as she had said that the music begins as before. Azor says to her that she must go to her father's house and get all things ready that are necessary, and they will marry the next day. The young lady goes as he had told her. She says to her father that she is going to be married to the serpent to-morrow, (and asks him) if he will prepare everything for that. The father consents, but he is vexed. Her

* Cf. “Dragon,” p. 108.

sisters, too, ask her whom she is going to marry, and they are astounded at hearing that it is with a serpent. Fifine goes back again, and Azor says to her :

“ Which would you prefer, from the house to the church, serpent, or from the church to the house, (serpent) ? ”

Fifine says to him, “ From the house to the church, serpent.”

Azor says to her, “ I, too.”

A beautiful carriage comes to the door. The serpent gets in, and Fifine places herself at his side, and when they arrive at the king's house the serpent says to her :

“ Shut the doors and the curtains, that nobody may see.”

Fifine says to him, “ But they will see you as you get down.”

“ No matter ; shut them all the same.”

She goes to her father. Her father comes with all his court to fetch the serpent. He opens the door, and who is astonished ? Why, everybody. Instead of a serpent there is a charming young man ; and they all go to the church. When they come out there is a grand dinner at the king's, but the bridegroom says to his wife :

“ To-day we must not make a feast at all. We have a great business to do in the house ; we will come another day for the feast.”

She told that to her father, and they go on to their house. When they are come there her husband brings her in a large basket a serpent's skin, and says to her :

“ You will make a great fire, and when you hear the first stroke of midnight you will throw this serpent's skin into the fire. That must be burnt up, and you must throw the ashes out of window before the last stroke of twelve has ceased striking. If you do not do that I shall be wretched for ever.”

The lady says to him, “ Certainly ; I will do everything that I can to succeed.”

She begins before midnight to make the fire. As soon as she heard the first stroke she throws the serpent's skin

(on the fire), and takes two spits and stirs the fire, and moves about the skin and burns it, till ten strokes have gone. Then she takes a shovel, and throws the ashes outside as the last twelfth stroke is ending. Then a terrible voice says:

"I curse your cleverness, and what you have just done."

At the same time her husband comes in. He did not know where he was for joy. He kisses her, and does not know how to tell his wife what great good she has done him.

"Now I do not fear anything. If you had not done as I told you, I should have been enchanted for twenty-one years more. Now it is all over, and we will go at our ease tomorrow to your father's house for the wedding feast."

They go the next day and enjoy themselves very much. They return to their palace to take away the handsomest things, because they did not wish to stop any more in that corner of the mountain. They load all their valuable things in carts and waggons, and go to live with the king. This young lady has four children, two boys and two girls, and as her sisters were very jealous of her, their father sent them out of the house. The king gave his crown to his son-in-law, who was already a son of a king. As they had lived well, they died well too.

LAURENTINE.

We have another version of this tale, which is a little more like its prototype, the "Cupid and Psyche" of Apuleius. In this the monster comes only at night. At first she is horribly frightened at it, but little by little she becomes accustomed to it, and loves it. At last, after having been left alone for some days, a magnificent young man appears to her, a king's son, who had been bewitched into the monster until some one should love him. Of course they marry and are happy.

ESTEFANELLA HIRIGARAY.