

debts of a dead man, and that his soul (the fox was his soul) had saved him from the cistern into which his brothers had thrown him.

Think of the joy of the father, and his sorrow at the same time, when he saw how wisely this young son had always behaved, and how wicked his two brothers had been. As he had well earned her, he was married to the young lady whom he had brought away with him, and they lived happily and joyfully. The father sent the two brothers into the desert to do penance. If they had lived well, they would have died well.

THE SISTER AND HER SEVEN BROTHERS.

THERE was a man and a woman very poor, and overburdened with children. They had seven boys. When they had grown up a little, they said to their mother that it would be better that they should go on their own way—that they would get on better like that. The mother let them go with great regret. After their departure she gave birth to a little girl, and when this little girl was grown up a little she went one day to a neighbour's to amuse herself, and having played some childish trick the neighbour said to her:

“You will be a good one, you too, as your brothers have been.”*

The child goes home and says to her mother, “Mother, have I some brothers?”*

The mother says, “Yes.”

“Where are they?”

“Oh, gone off somewhere.”

The daughter said to her, “I must go too, then. Give me a piece of linen enough to make seven shirts.”

And she *would* go off at once. The mother was very sorry for it, having already seven children away from home, and the only one she had wished to go away. She let her go then.

* Cf. “Basa-Jauna,” p. 49.

This young girl went off, far, far, far away. She asks in a town if they know seven brothers who work together. They tell her "No." She goes off to a mountain and asks there too, and they tell her in what house they live. She goes to this house, and sees that all the household work is to be done, and that there is nobody at home. She makes the beds, and cleans the whole house, and puts it in order. She prepares the dinner, and then hides herself in the dust-hole. Her brothers come home, and are astonished to see all the household work done and the dinner ready. They begin to look if there is anyone in the house, but they never think of looking in the dust-hole, and they go off again to their work. Before night this young girl does all the rest of the work, and had the supper ready against the return of her brothers, and hides herself again in the dust-hole. Her brothers are astonished, and again search the house, but find nothing.

They go to bed, and this young girl takes to sewing and sews a whole shirt. She gives it to her eldest brother, and in the same way she made a shirt every night, and took it to one of her brothers. They could not understand how that all happened. They always said that they would not go to sleep, but they fell asleep as soon as they were in bed. When the turn of the youngest came to have the shirt, he said to them, "Certainly I will not fall asleep." After he is in bed the young girl goes and says to him, thinking that he is asleep :

"Your turn has come now at last, my dearly loved brother."

And she begins to put the shirt on him on the bed, when her brother says to her :

"You are then my sister, you?"

And he kisses her. She tells him then how she had heard that she had brothers, and how she had wished to go to them to help them. The other brothers get up and rejoice, learning that it was their sister who had done all the household work.

The brothers forbid her ever to go to such a neighbour's, whatever might happen. But one day, without thinking about it, when she was behindhand with her work, she went running to the house to ask for some fire,* in order to make the supper ready quicker. She was very well received; the woman offered to give her everything she wanted, but she said she was satisfied with a little fire. This woman was a witch, and gives her a parcel of herbs, telling her to put them as they were into the footbath—that they relieved the fatigue very much.† Every evening the seven brothers washed their feet at the same time in a large copper. She therefore put these herbs into the copper, and as soon as they had dipped their feet in they became six cows, and the seventh a Breton cow.‡ This poor girl was in such trouble as cannot be told. The poor cows all used to kiss their sister, but the young girl always loved much best the Breton one. Every day she took them to the field, and stopped with them to guard them.

One day when she was there the son of a king passes by, and is quite astonished to see so beautiful a girl there. He speaks to her, and tells her that he wishes to marry her. The young girl says to him that she is very poor, and that that cannot be. The king says, "Yes, yes, yes, that makes no difference."

The young girl makes as conditions that, if she marries him, he must never kill these cows, and especially this little Breton one.§ The king promises it her, and they are married.

* A piece of the braise, or burnt stick. This is constantly done all through the South of France, where wood is burnt. If your fire is out you run to get a stick from your neighbour's fire.

† Cf. note to "Basa-Jauna," p. 49.

‡ Cf. "Old Deccan Days" ("Truth's Triumph"), pp. 57-58. The little girl is the rose tree there among the mango trees, her brothers. Cows are very gentle in the Pays Basque, and are often petted, especially the tiny black and white Breton ones. We have known a strong man weep at the death of a favourite cow, and this one of ten others.

§ The Ranee makes the same conditions in "Truth's Triumph"—"You will let me take these cows" (her brothers) "with me, will you not? for I love them dearly, and I cannot go away unless they may come too."—"Old Deccan Days," p. 59.

The princess takes these cows home with her ; they were always well treated. The princess became pregnant, and was confined while the king was absent. The witch comes, and takes her out of her bed, and throws her down a precipice that there was in the king's grounds, and the witch puts herself into the princess' bed. When the king comes home, he finds her very much changed, and tells her that he would not have recognised her. The princess tells him that it was her sufferings that had made her thus, and, in order to cure her more quickly, he must have the Breton cow killed.

The king says to her—

“ What ! Did you not make me promise that she should never be killed ? How is it you ask me that ? ”

The witch considered that one her greatest enemy ; and, as she left him no peace, he sent a servant to fetch the cows. He finds them all seven by the precipice ; they were lowing, and he tried to drive them to the house, but he could not do it in any way ; and he hears a voice, which says,

“ It is not for myself that I grieve so much, but for my child, and for my husband, and for my dearly-loved cows. Who will take care of them ? ”

The lad could not succeed (in driving them), and goes and tells to the king what is taking place. The king himself goes to the precipice, and hears this voice. He quickly throws a long cord down, and, when he thinks that she has had time to take hold of it, he pulls it up, and sees that they have got the princess there. Judge of the joy of the king ! She relates to her husband all that the witch had done to her, both formerly and now. The king goes to the witch's bed, and says to her,

“ I know your villanies now ; and, if you do not immediately change these cows, as they were before, into fine boys, I will put you into a red-hot oven. ”

The witch makes them fine men, and, notwithstanding that, the king had her burnt in a red-hot oven, and threw her ashes into the air. The king lived happily with his

wife, and her seven brothers married ladies of the court, and sent for their mother, and they all lived happily together.

LOUISE LANUSSE.

We have also, in Basque, a version of Madame d'Aulnoy's "Abenan." It seems to be a mixture of various legends strung together by this fanciful writer; but we do not think it worth either our own or our readers' while to try to disentangle its separate parts. The pretty little tale of "The Faded Roses" has been told us from two quite different sources. This tale, though without doubt derived from the French, we can trace up in Basque further than any other. It was told us by a lady of between seventy and eighty, who heard it as a child from an old nurse, whom she distinctly remembers to have told her that *she* learnt it as a child from her mother. It must thus have existed in Basque over a century.

We have also two versions of Tom Thumb, who is called in the one "Ukhaitcho," or "Baratchuri"—"a clove of garlic;"* in the other, "Mundua-mila-pes," both containing the episode of his being swallowed by an ox; in the last, he himself is swallowed, as they are washing out the ox' entrails, by "a thief of a dog"—"Ohoñ chakhurra." It is singular that the same episode is preserved in the Gaelic; cf. Campbell, Vol. III., p. 114.

We have in MS. a long Rabelesian legend, which opens like Cenac-Moncaut's tale of "Le Coffret de la Princesse," in his "Littérature Populaire de la Gascogne" (Paris, 1868). A king will give one of his daughters to whoever can guess what the skin of a certain animal is. It is the devil who guesses it, and who marries the princess. She is saved by the "white mare," which appears in so many of our tales. She then dresses as a man, but, nevertheless, a prince falls in love with her; and then follow a lot of scenes, the converse of the adventure of Achilles in Scyros. They marry;

* This was recited to M. Vinson, and has been published by him in the "Revue de Linguistique," p. 241 (Janvier, 1876). We have since heard of a longer form preserved at Renteria, in Guipuzcoa.