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KOREAN FAIRY TALES

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A NOTE TO THE FRIENDS OF KOREA

Everywhere on earth the fairy world of each country is older and perhaps more enduring than the one we see and feel and tread upon. So I tell in this book the folk lore of the Korean people, and of the behavior of the particular kind of fairies that inhabit the Land of Morning Splendor. Yet, if I live long enough, I shall write the wonderful history of the Korean nation and civilization, which once so enriched Asia, and made possible the modem Japan such as we know today, of which fact the literature and art of both countries bear ample witness.

W. E. G.

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FANCHA AND THE MAGPIE

A THOUSAND years ago or more, there was a tribe in the cold and desert land of the Tartars, north of Korea, which grew to be famous in that part of the world. The men let their hair grow long and then plaited it into a long braid that hung down their backs, but they shaved the front of their heads. These people were called Manchus.

Almost from babyhood they were trained to ride on horses, and in time they became such bold horsemen and warriors, that they swooped down in thousands like clouds from their mountain land into warmer and richer regions. They had terrible bows and arrows, spears and swords, and they won many victories, so that other tribes joined them. They captured great China and invaded Korea.

As long as they had been wandering tribes in the desert, they were poor and lived on plain food that the grassy plains and forests could furnish, such as nuts, herbs, the milk of mares, and mutton. Their clothes were made of the wool from their own sheep. They were not proud, except of their strength, and they never asked who their grandfathers were.

But it was very different when they came to be rulers of a vast empire, rich and great like China, which had books and writing and a history of thousands of years. The elegant Chinese gentlemen and nobles used to call their conquerors the “horsey Tartars.” So they learned to wash and perfume themselves, and to care for jade, and tea, and porcelain, and silk, and other things Chinese.

Now it came to pass that when these people out of the desert sat on the thrones, and wore crowns on their heads, and dressed in satin, with jeweled robes and velvet shoes, they wanted to know who had been their ancestors long ago, and whence they came.

It would not do to believe that the fathers and mothers of so mighty a race were once common folks who in the distant deserts lived on acorns and pine nuts, with horse meat often, and mutton occasionally, and mare's milk for dessert, or that they dressed in sheep skin and tended horses like stable boys.

Oh no! If the common folks, whom they now governed and made obey them, knew that the nobles who now lived in Peking and bullied the Koreans were once only stable and butcher boys, and had no houses but lived only in tents, there would surely be trouble. These Koreans and Chinese might disobey and rebel. They might even cut off their pigtails, which the Tartars had forced them to wear, and clip their locks, like men in Europe and America. These white-faced and bearded foreigners they called "Southern Barbarians," because their ships came up from the south by way of India.

"What shall we do to make the Chinese and Koreans think we are somebody?" asked the Chinese Emperor of his wise men.

In the council it was the custom to ask first the younger men to tell what they thought about it, and for the oldest and wisest to speak last. They talked over the matter a long time. Finally one graybeard took off his goggles and made answer. He had on his nose a pair of horn-rimmed green glasses, bigger than those which anyone else wore. These it was supposed enabled him to look farther into the past and the future than his fellows. For the bigger the goggles, the more learned a man was supposed to be. He looked as wise as a stuffed owl, and was very fat. He spoke last, after all the younger counsellors had been invited to give their opinions. Behind his back they called him Green Lamps, because of his goggles and their color.

Now in Korea and China it is not polite to keep your spectacles on your nose, when you look into the face of any person to whom you are talking. So pulling off his goggles old Green Lamps got down on his knees. Then he performed the kowtow. That was done by knocking the matting of the floor with his forehead nine times. Green

Lamps nearly broke his stiff bones in doing it, and then he addressed the Emperor, whose title was the Son of Heaven, as follows:

"Sire, the common people will not respect us unless we can show that our far-off ancestors were not born like plain folks, but came down from Heaven. There is an old woman, nearly two cycles or one hundred and seventeen years old, who tells the children about our distant forebears, who dropped out of the sky. Shall I call her in?"

"What is her name?" inquired His Imperial Majesty.

"Mrs. Crinkles, they call her, O Son of Heaven," answered Green Lamps.

"Summon her before me instantly," said the Emperor, and he waved his lotus-bud sceptre.

Now Green Lamps was a foxy old fellow. He wanted to get even higher in the Emperor's favor and had expected this. So, having the old lady ready in another room of the palace, he went out and brought her in. She was all ready to tell her story, with which she had interested the children for a long time. It was the same story which her grandmother had told, when around the fire on winter nights young and old gathered to hear, while the winds howled and the snow covered the land. Once, Mrs. Crinkles was a rosy maid, but now in Peking she was the oldest living person among the Tartars.

The young women called her Mrs. Crinkles because of her face which was so wrinkled and puckered. Once while the old lady was telling her story a mischievous maiden started to count how many wrinkles and puckers, the old lady had in her face, but after reaching seventy-four she stopped, for fear there might be one pucker for every year; and the number 117 for some reason was thought to be unlucky.

In hobbled Mrs. Crinkles. She was already bowed with the weight of years so that when she bowed still lower the court chamberlain, remarking that it beat the kowtow itself, excused her from making the nine prostrations of her stiff old bones. In fact it

was feared that if she got down, she could never get up again. So she was allowed to sit and begin her story.

Her speech was not in the polished Chinese tongue, which for ages since Confucius has been refined by poets and scholars and literary ladies and gentlemen, but was in plain Tartar, or Manchu. Yet the general style of her narrative was very fine. As the old lady told it with animation and fine gestures all eyes sparkled and the Emperor's visage—they called it the Dragon Countenance—beamed with delight.

This was the narrative:

On the other side of the Ever White Mountains, which divide Korea from Manchuria, is the Land of Lakes. On one of these, as in a mirror, the glorious blue sky and the forms of the snow covered, majestic mountains are reflected. At night when the stars come out the waveless mirror is spangled with jewels. The fame of this crystal clear flood and the lovely tints which the sunrise and sunset daily made upon it reached even to the skies. There were three lovely virgins who dwelt in the Heavenly palaces and they wanted to come down and bathe in the water of this lake and live on its shores.

Permission was given them by the Lord of Heaven, and descending to the earth they were as happy as fairies could be. They never tired of their enjoyment, seeing their own beautiful faces in the mirror of the lake. When they rose early in the morning, to see the golden sun rise and tint the clouds and waters, it seemed like music when song answered song. When the light breezes rippled the surface of the lake they clapped their hands with delight and at bedtime they were lulled to sleep by the waves lapping on the quiet shore.

They fell in love with the beautiful land and became so charmed with it that in time they forgot about their old home and never wished to go back again into the skies. They were very kind to all living things and especially to the magpies. These feathered

creatures were very plentiful and tame, so the maidens made pets of them and chose the magpie as their sacred bird.

Fond of gazing into the blue above and bathing in the liquid blue beneath, the three sisters went often into the lake. Leaving their robes on the pebbly beach, the youngest one always stepped last into the crystal waters. One day they noticed a magpie flying far above them in the air, which seemed to motion as if it had a message to deliver. On coming near they saw that it bore in its bill a blood-red fruit. Descending near where their clothes lay on the beach it poised for a moment, and then dropped the red fruit on the garment of the youngest of the sisters.

Rushing out of the water they sat down to talk over the wonderful incident. Then they agreed that this gift of the bird, which was sacred in their eyes, was a happy omen and meant that something good was to follow, though the magpie, after circling around their heads, flew away. They divided the fruit, which had a most delicious taste, enjoying it also as a message from Heaven.

From this divine token brought by a magpie, the sacred bird, the youngest of the virgins conceived and bore a son. They named the baby boy Golden Family Stem, for they felt sure that he would grow up and become the founder of a dynasty of kings, who should take the name of Great Bright from the shining water near which he was born.

The young mother brought up her boy to believe that he was not like ordinary mortals but was Heaven-born, and therefore should be noble in all his actions. When he grew up he was to be a prince of peace healing the quarrels of men, which should bring happiness and prosperity to them and to all the world.

So in the shadow of the great mountains, which were so high that they seemed to touch the sky and were as the shadows of the eternal world itself, he grew up. Nothing did he love more than to watch the play of light and shade on these mountain sides and

in the valleys, as well as in the reflections on the fair face of the lake. These were to him as the smile of the Great Guardian Spirit.

But by and by his dear mother's breath ceased and she "entered into the icy caves of the dead," and he found himself an orphan with no one near him; for long since the other two virgins had gone away he knew not where.

Left alone instead of staying among the mountains the boy resolved to take the name of Fancha, or Heaven-born, and to go out into the world and lead men.

He at once set about to build a boat and in this, when finished, he floated down the outlet of the lake into a river. It happened that he landed at a place where three tribes or clans were at war, each one with the other. They were rude enough fellows, accustomed to brawls, and they cared nothing about other common fellows who were like themselves and no better.

But when they saw this noble youth alone and unarmed step fearlessly over the gunwale of the boat and advance to meet them in a friendly way, they were mightily impressed at his noble appearance and his courage in coming among them. When he told them the story of his birth, and that his mother had called him her Heaven-born son, they one and all shouted "Our chief!" and put on him the signs and tokens of lordship over them.

At once the Heaven-born youth became a great leader. At the head of his brave warriors he was always victorious, but he never provoked war. Other tribes flocked to his standard and in time he built a city, and for his wife and queen married a princess in the principal tribe, the daughter of a great chief, and several sons were born in his home.

But wars continued, for the custom of fighting was too old to be given up at once. In one of the battles he and all his sons except one, who was named Fancha, were killed. This one was chased by the enemy for a long distance over the open plains; for they

hoped to capture him and make him their prisoner, before he could get into the forest and hide.

But when Fancha reached a dense dark wood a deliverer came to him in the form of the sacred bird, the magpie. This creature settled on his head, and Fancha at once took it to be the token of safety and to have been sent from Heaven.

When his pursuers rushed into the forest and began their glances among the trees looking around for the lad's hiding place, he stood as still as a post. They seeing the bird supposed the figure was a piece of dried wood or the splinter of a tree struck by lightning, and rushed on and past him. By and by they gave up the hunt: by which time, Fancha had escaped to a place of safety.

"The rest of the story Your Majesty knows," concluded the old lady, "for Fancha was your ancestor of seventeen generations ago."

The great Emperor of all the Chinas was intensely interested and deeply moved at the story of the aged woman, and he loaded her with presents and honors, and created for her the office of Chief Story-Teller to the Imperial children. Besides this he made provision for her comfort as long as she lived. With a vermilion pencil he wrote with his own hand the order that when she "ascended to the skies" she should be buried in a gilded sandal-wood coffin, receive a state funeral, have a marble tablet over her grave, and be awarded posthumous honors.

As for old Green Lamps he was raised one degree higher in office, given the honors of wearing a jade button on his cap, and the right to ride in his palanquin nearer the Imperial palace door than any other mandarin, except the prime minister.

THE KING OF THE FLOWERS

KOREA is the land of beautiful scenery and lovely flowers. Snow white and ruby red are their chief colors. In the spring time when the ice has melted and the rivers have poured their floods into the sea, the whole country blushes with the pink bloom of azaleas. The glens are white with lilies of the valley. The breezes as they sweep the land come laden with perfume.

The girls mark the season of the year and the time of the month by the blossoms even more than by the almanac, for they keep in mind the calendar of the flowers. Daughters that are especially beloved of their parents are named from the blossoms, and the Korean house-father, when affectionate, speaks of his wife as the plum tree. An old song says: The homesick husband, long away from his dear ones, inquires of a fellow townsman newly arrived:

" 'Have you seen my native land?
Come tell me all you know;
Did just before the old home door
The plum tree blossoms show?' "

And the stranger answers promptly:

" 'They were in bloom, though pale, 'tis true,
And sad, from waiting long for you.' "

This is like the Scotsman who calls his wife his "bonnie briar bush," for in the Land

of Morning Glow, they have a language of flowers. Each plant and blossom has a meaning and either delightful or disagreeable associations. It is a compliment to speak of a girl as a pear blossom, for the pear is one of the most glorious of trees and its blooms are lovely to behold. It would hardly do, however, to call her a cinnamon rose, for this flower has evil associations. The gee-sang, as the Koreans pronounce the name of the gei-sha, as the Japanese call the dancing girls, are associated with the cinnamon rose, for did not the sages tell this story?

Twelve centuries ago lived the renowned scholar Sul Chong, the greatest of all the learned men of Korea. His head was as full of knowledge as a persimmon is of pulp, and his ideas were as numerous as the seeds in a pomegranate. He taught his countrymen all that was in the books of China, and in the temple of Confucius his portrait hangs to this day. He lived in the kingdom of Silla, in the days of its glory, when ships from Japan and China sailed into its seaports and the Arabs from Bagdad brought their pretty wares to exchange for gold, ginseng, camphor, porcelain, cinnamon, ginger and tiger skins, to take to their renowned Caliph and his turbaned nobles at court, of whom we read in the "Arabian Nights."

When the King of Silla, Sin Mun, was living in luxury and filling his palace with too many pretty dancing girls, who distracted his mind from attending properly to the affairs of state, Sul Chung warned his master against the increasing influence of these women by telling him the following story:

Once upon a time, in spring, the Peony, king of the flowers, blossomed so gorgeously that it became the admiration of all the lovers of beauty in the whole country. Hundreds of people made long journeys to the capital of Silla to see the bright blossoms. In the king's gardens, on very tall stalks, the many branches were heavily laden with large red flowers. These were indeed lovely to behold, but the king of the whole garden was a single peony, grown on one stem, so that all the strength and

nourishment of the plant were concentrated in that unique royal bloom. All saluted this flower as king.

When all the other flowers heard of their king's glory, they came to pay their respects at the floral court, of which the Peony was sovereign. All the trees sent their choicest blooms as envoys. In one glorious procession of perfume and color the Peach, Plum, Pear, Apple, and Persimmon trooped in, each making its obeisance to the monarch of all flowers. All these tree blossoms prided themselves on their being so useful to man as harbingers of the delicious fruits to come.

Then, among the bright throng appeared sprightly young virgin flowers, the Tea-Rose, in pearl-tinted frock; the Azalea, in pink; the Lily, in white; the Strawberry Blossom; and a score of other pretty creatures of the garden. Last of all appeared the Cinnamon Rose. She tripped nimbly along in a green skirt and red jacket, with haughty air and breath of spice.

One after the other they were presented to King Peony, and gracefully made their salute. But of them all, the king seemed most to favor Miss Cinnamon Flower. He let the others pass out from the Court, but lingered long with the spicy visitor, spending much time in her society, as if smitten with her charms. By and by he invited Miss Cinnamon Rose to come and live in the palace, and leaving his ministers to carry on the government, he spent all his time in her society. She was installed in a place near His Majesty and seemed always to have his ear and attention, even when the king's prime minister had to wait long for an audience, or even a word. Miss Cinnamon Rose seemed to be the real ruler instead of the king himself.

But one day there came to the palace the flower called Old Man. He looked exactly like an aged beggar dressed in sackcloth and leaning on a staff. Respectfully bowing, he asked if he might share the hospitality of the king's palace. He was welcomed and fed, partaking of the royal bounty. When at last he was given audience of King Peony,

and was invited to speak, he said:

"Out along the road, Your Majesty, I heard of your rich feast and good things to eat. Now I hear that you need medicine. Although you dress in Chinese silk and none are equal to you in the magnificence of your robes and the splendor of your Court, yet you are much like me in your wants, and you need a common knife string, as well as I. Is it not so?"

"You are quite right, Old Man," replied the king. "Yet I like this Cinnamon Rose and want her with me. I cannot do without her."

"Yes, Your Majesty. Yet, is it not true that if you keep company with the wise and prudent, your reign will be long, powerful and glorious? But if you consort with the foolish your house will fall? Did not three dynasties of the emperors of Great China fall because of the beautiful women who tempted their Majesties to forget their duties? If it were so with the ancients, how much more so is it now?"

The king blushed, even to a deep crimson. He confessed his faults and reformed his life.

It is said the lesson was not lost on the real human king. He dismissed his harem, sent away the dancing girls and ruled wisely till the day of his death.

CAT-KIN AND THE QUEEN MOTHER

KOREA is called the Land of the Plum Blossom, but in winter the rivers freeze over. Then the men cut through the ice which is often several feet thick, to catch with their fishing lines and hooks the fish that swim in the water beneath. Yet they are very glad to welcome any sign of the coming spring, and they watch eagerly for the pussy willows to show themselves.

Now there was a farmer who lived in Nai-po, which is the grain garden of the Korean peninsula, who wanted a little daughter, though other parents cared more for sons.

One day farmer Pak, for that was his name, discovered a pussy willow which seemed to him, after the long winter, like a light shining in a dark place. He plucked it and carried proudly home this branch full of fuzzy little buds. This was in sign of his happiness at the return of spring. He was tired of ice and snow and now he knew that soon the gloomy hills would burst into a glory of bright colors from the blooming flowers, and look like an army with flags.

That same day his prayers were answered and a little girl was born into his home. Giving the pussy willow to his wife, he said: “We shall name our baby Cat-kin, that is Little Puss.”

Cat-kin never saw a cradle, for the Korean mothers carry their babies on their backs. She was soon out of infancy, and then it was not long before she was standing up and toddling about and playing with her doggie and pet bull. These little pets on four legs usually take the place of kittens in a country home in Korea, for the cats are wild and do not allow children to fondle them.

Long before she was a dozen years old, Cat-kin became very fond of fairy stories,

of which Korea has a great many, besides thousands of tales of wonderful people and animals and what happened to them. She often looked up towards the high hills and distant mountains, where she thought the fairies, dragons, ogres and tigers lived. Here also dwelt the sen-nin or mountain spirits, wise and good, of whom the old people talked and the soldiers painted on their banners when they went to war.

When about eight years old, Cat-kin wanted very much to walk up towards the north star, which her father showed her shining in the heavens. He had once traveled up into one of the Northern provinces, where during the daytime he could see afar off the great snowwhite mass of the Ever White Mountain rising up to meet the azure sky. There, at the top he had heard, lay the Dragon Prince's Pool, out of which flowed the two rivers that made Korea an island. One was named the Tumen and the other the Yalu, after the beautiful green and blue sheen on the feathers of a drake's back, so richly colored were its shining waters. When her father told of his travels, Cat-kin also longed to go north to get to the very top and touch the sky.

But this she knew she could not do, even if she had had long legs and were as strong as a man, for the tigers were very numerous and always roaming about. These yellow and black striped brutes were man-eaters. They loved nothing better for a good dinner than a young girl.

So as she did not know any way of getting to the top of the Ever White Mountain and of seeing the deep blue waters of the Pool, except by riding on the back of a dragon, which she sometimes dreamed of, she kept waiting and waiting for one of these flying creatures to come, yet it never came.

Cat-kin was bound to have the fairies visit her, if possible. So one day, sitting under a persimmon tree and reading a story, she held the book in one hand, while she struck the ground several times, saying earnestly:

"Earth-spirit, earth-spirit, come to me; come up and see me."

All of a sudden the air seemed heavy with sweet perfume, and a silver mist like a cloud spread over her house and garden. Then a bright dazzling light flooded everything and there stood before her a glistening chariot, made of blue jade with golden wheels. It was drawn by milk-white horses and on a seat of shining silver sat the Western Heavenly Queen Mother herself.

Attendant upon the Mother Queen were thousands of the most beautiful maidens, who were all dressed in resplendent robes. They wore amber ornaments, and silver girdles, and necklaces of precious stones and silken robes with many tassels. Their feet were shod with gold embroidered velvet slippers, and on their heads were caps of gold studded with glittering gems. Cat-kin could hardly count the rich ornaments, necklaces, breast chains and the jade wands, like sceptres, which they held in their hands. These were shaped like lotus flowers. The faces of all these maidens were rosy, their eyes sparkled, and all had small hands and feet.

In a voice of great sweetness that sounded like music the Heavenly Queen Mother looked at Cat¬-kin and spoke to her, saying:

“Come forward, little maid, fear not. I shall take you with me to my palace, in the Island of Gems and give you all you want, besides showering blessings on your people, if you will come.”

Cat-kin did not feel at all timid or frightened, but came boldly forward and knelt at the base of the chariot.

The Mother Queen first touched her with her milk-white jade wand, that was carved like a lotus bud, and made the little girl rise.

In a moment more, a silver chariot, with wheels made of turquoise and drawn by two young milk-white dragons, wheeled up close to her, and the attendant lady in golden robes bade her step in.

The dragons were fierce, powerful, fire-breathing creatures, with wide spreading

wings, and their bodies and tails together were of the length of whales, while their eyes darted fire. Yet Cat-kin was not at all afraid, and thought it was great fun. Then up through and far above the clouds the host of bright beings flew. They followed the Queen Mother's chariot until, far away, they poised in mid-sky. Cat-kin was then told to look over the side of the chariot to the earth and ocean, miles and miles below. She was asked if she could recognize her father's cottage, but she could not. The whole village looked only like a grey mass of thatched roofs, and she could pick out only the temple.

There, spread out, was the great sea, as blue as a sapphire, and in places deep green, like an emerald, but she could see no ships nor any coast or shores, nor any ranges of mountains, nor signs of the land of Korea. Nothing but ripples and waves were visible. Yet in the center of the azure sea was an island. The trees were emeralds and the roofs of the houses were of gold, and the windows diamonds. These were so full of light that no lamps were necessary.

Beautiful beings, all maidens, as lovely in garb and face as those who filled the train of the Queen Mother, walked or played, or sang in the gardens. Or swam and sported in the sapphire waves, or rowed and sailed about in boats that seemed as if made of marble, they were so white.

At a signal from the Queen the singing ceased. Then there rose up wave upon wave of sweetest melody from the players on instruments who were in the gardens below.

Cat-kin thought she heard at intervals the chorus, sounding out the words, rising upward like pulses, through the air, "Welcome lovely mortal! Our Queen invites and we greet thee! Manifold be her gifts to thee and thine! Come, thou honored among all Korean maidens! Come to us and join our band and we shall love thee as one of ourselves."

In the wink of a falcon's eye—so short a time it seemed— the Mother Queen and

her host descended.

As the chariots touched the island, a bevy of radiant maidens came forward, some to attend the Queen Mother and some to lead Cat-kin into her own room in the palace. There the most gorgeous robes were put on her, beside a cap begemmed with glittering, precious stones of various colors, and a pair of gold-embroidered velvet slippers.

Cat-kin was surprised when one of the shining maidens set a royal tiara adorned with five gems upon her brow.

"For me?" she asked in surprise.

"Yes for you, whom the Heavenly Mother Queen would honor."

"And what do these five gems, jade, crystal, malachite, amber and agate signify?" asked Cat-kin.

"Ah, that is not for us to tell you, but the Queen Mother ordered these. Tomorrow she will explain to you the secret of each gem."

Cat-kin walked about freely, enjoying the lovely sights and sounds. She also ate with keen appetite and to her full of the delicacies set on the table before her. Yet never once did she feel sleepy, nor see any beds, nor hear anyone talk of retiring. She wondered what they meant when they said "tomorrow"; for she could see no sun or moon or twilight. However, she did not think long about such things, and by and by forgot all about them.

When the entire court and all the hosts of the Queen Mother's attendants had assembled. Her Majesty's chamberlain read the proclamation, which declared that the Queen looked with great favor upon the Korean people, and had decided to bestow great gifts upon them. For this purpose, she had selected and brought to her palace the Korean maid named Cat-kin, to endow them through this, their daughter, with five precious traits of disposition and character. In token of gracious thought and tender

love, Her Majesty would now present and explain the meaning of the five precious gems. These were jade, crystal, malachite, amber, and agate.

Cat-kin kneeled down before the Queen, who placed in Cat-kin's hands the shining gems, while an attendant fairy took them from her opened palm and placed each one of them on vermilion velvet, edged with gold. Then five maidens stood by, each with a gem laid on a cushion.

After the ceremony of presentation was over, the Queen made a speech, which told the Korean maiden's fortune and her future.

Cat-kin would be sent back over the clouds and ocean to the King's palace in the capital of her home land, and there be made a princess. Many nobles and king's sons from other countries, hearing of her beauty and her wonderful visit to the Island of Gems would come to pay her court as suitors. Many would ask for her hand, to be wedded to her; but she was to marry none but the king's son, a prince of her own people.

"Take these gems, fair maiden, and bestow their virtues and what they mean upon your people," said the Queen. "A thousand years from now—as men count time—we together will visit Korea again."

Then both the Queen and Cat-kin, stepping into the silver chariot, drawn by the fire-breathing dragons, plunged on and mounted up into space. First they sailed above the clouds and then dipped downwards, steering to Korea and over the mountains, bearing their precious charge to the capital. They reached the ground in a cloud and the wheels of the chariot stood still before the palace gate.

Yet before any mortal eyes could see their full forms, the Queen Mother and the dragons had disappeared, and Cat-kin stood alone, a resplendent maiden of dazzling appearance and in the robes given by the Heavenly Queen Mother, which all recognized at once as coming from the Island of Gems.

A throng of court ladies and palace attendants and a long line of nobles and princes were already waiting for the maiden, who they knew came gift-laden from the Queen Mother, of whom all had heard from childhood. The five gems were laid, each in a covered casket of perfumed wood, encrusted with gold on top and inlaid with mother-of-pearl.

Escorted into the throne room by a bevy of princesses, the Heavenly Mother's gifts in the five caskets were reverently placed on silken fans, spread out on a table having on its top the five cushions of crimson velvet.

Then, by lot and word of the diviners, the choice of a first drawing was awarded to a prince of fair face and mien. The other four nobles, one by one and in turn, approached and each was allowed to choose one of the caskets, all of which looked alike, and none was to be opened until the possessor was in his own home.

Now these were the gifts for body and mind, of which the polished gems were the tokens. According as each prince chose and received, so with the trait, which each gem signified, would his children and posterity be endowed. In the course of centuries, these would become the national features, of twenty millions of Koreans.

One by one the caskets were opened by each prince, and therein he discovered what was a trait in the character of the Korean people. These were:

Procrastination—Putting off until tomorrow, or some other time, what ought to be done today, and keeping back not only one person but the whole nation. —

Hospitality—Always glad to see friends, to entertain people, even strangers, and to take care of relations, even to the making of one's self poor—a habit carried too far as the years and centuries rolled on.

Inexactness—The habit of not usually thinking clearly, counting correctly, or stating facts precisely, and when telling a story of "blowing a conch; " that is, of exaggerating.

Love of family—How the mothers and fathers in Korea do love their children, their

kinsfolk and their relatives!

Sense of humor—A Korean can always see the funny side of things. He loves to joke and he bears his troubles well, because he likes to smile. As for the girls, they laugh as easily as the rain falls, or the flowers bloom.

And what the Queen Mother predicted came true. Just as five fingers make up the hand, so the average people among the Koreans are known by the five traits, for better or for worse.

THE MAGIC PEACH

OUT on the ocean, so far away that no ship ever sailed there, is an island on which stood the seven storied palace of the royal lady, Su Wang Moo. In our language, this title means Western Queen Mother. She is always ready to help good mortals with her gifts and favors.

On this island thousands of genii wait to obey the commands of the Queen Mother. She has also chariots of silver and gold drawn by dragons, by which she sends her messages everywhere.

The genii and most of the shining maidens stay at home to fulfil the Queen's commands. In addition to these servants, she has hundreds of azure pigeons, which she often despatches to far-off places. In their bills, or under their wings, they carry some gift or promise to make people happy.

In the mind of many a Korean maiden there rises the dream, or there wells up the hope, that some day the Western Queen Mother will send to her pretty clothes of silk, with necklaces of jewels, a handsome youth to wed her, and a silver ring for the marriage ceremony.

Then she pictures to herself how splendidly she will be arrayed and how fine she will look in the costume of a bride; how her long black hair will be done up very high, with flowers and rosettes over the crown of her head, and ermine-edged slippers will be put on her feet. She wonders how she will feel when she drinks the cups of sacramental wine that make her a wife, after which she will go with her husband and bow to the memorial tablets of his ancestors.

She goes all over in her mind the happy times she will have in her husband's home. What she hopes for most, after all these things, is to have a kind mother-in-law. Then

she will be a queen in her own little kingdom, with plenty of rice and kimchi, and cakes and goodies.

So it is that many Korean maidens go out under the blue sky to look up at the stars, or on moonlight nights scan the heavens to see if the birds are coming. Hoping to greet the azure pigeons, they put on their best clothes and watch. Many are their dreams.

Oh! how many lads also dream of the genii and of the riding on the dragon's back, to cross the mountain ranges and the great oceans, and to visit strange, far-off countries; or, they think of the pink coat which they will wear. The pink coat shows that the lad is engaged to be married and will, when grown up, be a husband to the little girl who may be in her cradle days; for in Korea children and even babies in arms are engaged to be married to other children.

Then the boy pictures the day when the long braid of hair, which he now has to wear down his back, shall be tucked up into a topknot, like a man's. No matter how old a bachelor may be, he must wear this boy's braid of hair. He must not speak, or talk with his elders, without first asking permission. He must be "seen and not heard" in company, and every one treats him as a child. So the boy also waits for the azure pigeons to come, for to be engaged to be married even when quite young, or to have a wife when older, means a great deal.

Then the young husband will wear a wide brimmed hat after school and go up to the city, with his fellow villagers, to try at the literary examinations. They will all march together, under a banner tufted at the top with pheasant feathers. If he passes successfully, he will be welcomed home with a parade and band of music. By and by, he will become a magistrate and have a string of amber beads over his ear, and wear on his breast a square of gold-embroidered velvet. Servants will carry him in a palanquin and his men will carry wooden paddles to punish folks who break the laws. Then he can strut about, in starched white flowing clothes, with the common people all

afraid of him. No wonder that the boy waits for the coming of the blue pigeon!

Now in the gardens of the Queen's Palace, on the Island of Gems, there grow wonderful fruits of a rich, ripe color, brilliant with light and sheen. These, when served at the banquets and eaten, have the power of making the guest live very long, even for thousands of years.

Especially powerful is the celestial peach of longevity, which is served on little golden tables, its juice makes an old person's body new, so that one who eats the peach will live hundreds of years.

Sometimes the Queen sends one of these fruits to her favorites on the earth. Yet no one can ever get any of these peaches, unless the Queen herself gives them, and the peach trees are always jealously guarded by genii and dragons. None, even of the Queen's servants, or her waiting maids, or any of the genii, or dragons, can bestow the peach of longevity on mortals.

Now it happened that the Queen, hearing of the virtues of a certain king's son, despatched one of her lovely maidens, in one of her ten thousand dragon chariots, inviting him to visit Her Majesty, in the Island of Gems. She sent a message also to the prince's parents, telling them that their son would return before the end of the moon, which was then in its first quarter.

His anxious mother, who had a bride already picked out for her son to wed, warned him against looking too long at the lovely princesses, or pretty maids in the Queen's Palace of Gems. In truth she had her lurking suspicions. She feared for her darling son, that, beneath their rosy faces and moon-like eyes, they were really sirens, possibly even sea monsters in female form, and might eat him up.

She also urged him to be very careful as to etiquette. He must be especially decorous, because the code of behavior and manners might not be the same as those

among polite people upon the earth. Moreover, he must notice and hear everything and, when he came back home, tell her all about it.

On the other hand, the Queen of the Island of Gems warned the lovely maiden, a princess whom she sent, to beware lest the prince might fall in love with her, either on the way, or when at the island. If he tried to persuade her to marry him and to stay on the earth and not come back to the Island of Gems, and to her duties to the Queen, the palace maid would be disgraced and die early.

Although the Queen laughed when she said it, and quoted the proverb, "Don't trust a pigeon to carry grain," she was really very serious, and the maiden knew that it would not do to thwart the royal wishes.

So this discreet princess made a firm resolve to be very careful. She decided that when she met the prince she would be very cold in her bearing. When delivering the Queen's invitation, she would appear to think it only a matter of business, though very important. She would not stay more than an hour in the prince's mansion.

When the dragon chariot was returning homeward she would be silent. She would hold no conversation, nor speak a word, nor let the prince sit beside her, but she would keep in the front seat nearest the dragon, while he should ride on the great creature's back.

So it was a very quiet journey which the prince made, while the chariot sped over the clouds, with the earth and oceans lying far beneath. Part of the time he sat on the dragon's back, as if in a saddle, but after a while he climbed back into the chariot again, and all the time he was so thrilled with the speed and the grandeur of it all that, to tell the truth, he forgot all about the lovely princes who had brought the Queen's message, until he found himself at the Queen's Palace of Gems and was invited to step out of the chariot.

Soon he was seated with others, similarly honored, at the table which was loaded

down with dishes of gold and silver which were heaped with the choicest viands. The guests, all in fine clothes like the prince, were waited on by shining maidens of exquisite beauty and robed in golden garments gemmed with glittering jewels of the most precious workmanship.

Upon one of these lovely creatures, a maiden who seemed to be about sixteen, not far away from where he sat, the prince cast his eyes. She was kneeling on the floor ready to do his bidding. He was so filled with admiration at her loveliness that he could hardly pay any attention to the talk at the table. Despite his mother's warning, he made several mistakes in propriety.

Yet his appetite was very good after his long journey and he ate heartily of the delicious fare. Towards the end of the feast, feeling in a jolly mood, he picked up one of the peaches. Then he pared and sliced it, greatly enjoying its juicy nectar. Every morsel of the pulp, as he put it in his mouth, made him feel as if he were gaining a century of vigor. He knew he was lengthening his life and increasing his power to enjoy the pleasures of which he had always been very fond.

Indeed the prince was far less of a scholar and student than he ought to have been. Often at home when his teachers were all present and ready to begin the tasks of the day, the lad was still out at play. His older sister used to say laughingly of her brother, "He never let his studies interfere with his education."

Yet every moment this maiden kneeling near him seemed to grow more charming in both face and form, dress and adornment, ease and grace of motion. Indeed she seemed the very embodiment of all loveliness, and the prince could not keep his eyes off her. He did not know that this was the effect of eating the peach of longevity, for the maiden was really no prettier at the end of the banquet than she had been at the beginning. The change was in him, not in her.

So intoxicated was the prince, that he so far forgot himself and what his mother had

told him not to do, that he picked out one of the finest-looking of the peaches from its golden basket on the table and tossed it over to the pretty maiden.

On her part the maid of honor had herself been so wrapped up in admiration of the young and princely guest, that when he motioned that he was about to toss a peach to her she broke the rule of the Palace of Gems. She threw out her hands and caught the peach deftly, as if playing ball.

The palace ladies were all horrified. They had been taught that, except to perform the duties of waiting and serving, they were to pay no attention to anything the guests might say or do. When heated with wine the guests might be only making sport of the attendants. They were to decline any personal attentions and continue in their duty of serving. But instead of averting her gaze, or bowing low with her face to the ground, or having her eyes downcast, the maid, actually threw out her hands, caught the peach and, to the horror of all who saw her, bit into it and swallowed the morsel.

What it was that happened the very next moment even the fairies could not tell or exactly remember; for a golden mist seemed to fall in the banquet hall, enveloping everything.

It happens that just here in the story a great gap occurs. At such a pause the Korean story-teller, who sits in his booth in one of the back streets of Seoul, would stop and send his boy to take up a collection from the crowd. Nor would he go on, until all had been invited to give and the coins rattled in the gourd shell.

When he began again some said it was the same story continued. Others were sure it was a new story, but that the palace maid and the prince were the same who had been in the banquet hall of the Western Queen Mother, in the Island of Gems, and that the peach had never lost, since it never could lose its virtues, because given by the Queen. But such as it was, this is the way the story ran on:

More than a thousand years afterwards it was known that in the high mountains of the Ever White range lived a holy man, a hermit, who was honored, almost worshiped by the people in that region. In the summer time hundreds of pilgrims visited his hut to hear wise words about how to live and do good, and then to receive the hermit's blessing. Even the wild beasts appeared to be tame in his presence. At any rate, they never tried to bite or devour one another, or hurt the old man or to destroy his humble shelter. The tigers, the leopards and the bears seemed to forget they had claws, or teeth; while their little cubs played peacefully with each other.

The dress of this hermit was of the ancient style of a thousand years before, of the time of the ancient dynasty of Ko.

One day while out on one of his walks this old, white-bearded hermit met a woman of fair countenance, who seemed to be quite young, for her face was unwrinkled and rosy. It appeared that she had travelled far, yet she walked with the springing step of a maiden who was still in her teens. Her dress betokened that of ages gone, for it was of the sort and fashion which are revealed in the cave pictures painted on the walls of the dolmens, or the colossal stone chambers, in which kings and mighty men were buried, ten or fifteen centuries ago, which are very many in Korea.

The hermit and maid met in the path under the tall pine tree and exchanged greetings, the lady bowing very low. Then, as she looked up in his eyes, her face became radiant with joy as if she recognized a dear friend.

The sage inquired who she was, and whether she were the wandering lady, of whom rumor spoke of having been seen during centuries, over all the nine provinces of Korea, by people who were great grandfathers, as well as by the children of that day.

Then she told her story.

She was the same palace maid, who, in the Western Queen Mother's palace on the

Island of Gems had waited upon him, once a gay prince and now the holy hermit. Then again she bowed low.

For catching and eating the peach which the princely guest had tossed to her, and thus breaking the rules of the palace, the Queen had ordered her banishment for a thousand years.

But during all this time she had been seeking the prince who tossed her the peach of longevity; for she knew that neither she nor he could die, till the thousand years had passed. Yet none of the men she met, however handsome, learned or wealthy, reached her ideal of the youth she had seen so long ago. Not finding him, she went back to the Island of Gems, traveling on a dragon's back, and humbly begged the Queen to extend her term of life, until she should meet the one she loved so dearly, even if she found him only after hundreds of years more of wandering and of hope deferred.

The Mother Queen listened to her petition and was gracious and extended the maiden's life. So on the earth she kept up her wanderings. Now, having met the holy hermit she was happy, for she felt sure that she had found the same prince, venerable in appearance though he was, for she could see his soul.

The hermit listened with delight to the lady's story of her life in the palace and of her wanderings, during a thousand years in search of one she loved; and, especially, that she had been willing to have the Mother Queen order her future.

As for the hermit, his long white beard which swept his breast fell off, his bald head was in a moment covered with luxuriant black hair, and he became young again in her presence, with springing step and bright eyes. He could not be more rosy in countenance, for the pure life he had led had kept his skin pink. They spent many hours together, in talking long and joyfully over their experiences in the Island of Gems.

Then both agreed that now, since they had met again, they would bow gladly to the Queen's decision concerning them both, and do whatever Her Majesty ordered.

But already by a flying dragon that was famous for gathering up news from all parts of the universe, the Queen had been told of the meeting of the lovers in the mountain path, and of their pious resolve to commit their future to Her Majesty in the Island of Gems.

Suddenly the pair of lovers heard near the mountain top a sound of sweet music, as of some fairy playing on a lute, and at every second the sounds seemed to come lower and nearer. Soon a great white cloud of sweet smelling odors, like incense, enveloped them. What was their surprise to see a golden chariot drawn by two dragons, whose eyes were like emeralds, come up close to where they stood. Both of them, prince-hermit and maid were then taken up into the chariot and borne swiftly over cloud, and mountain and sea, to the Island of Gems. There the Queen ordered them to be married, and, after a splendid wedding, they lived happily ever after.

THE MIRROR THAT MADE TROUBLE

THE city of Seoul lies near the Han river, which flows all the way across Korea from the high mountains to the level sea. To most Korean people, in the old days when no one traveled abroad, Seoul was the center of the universe.

All roads in the kingdom led to this wonderful city, in which there were big shops and stores, and gay streets full of lively people in rich clothing. The gentlemen in their stiffly starched and glistening white clothes walked very proudly with their heads up in the air. When they straddled the little Korean ponies, which are not much bigger than Newfoundland dogs, it seemed as if elephants were trying to ride on donkeys.

From morning to night the avenues were full of traffic and business. All the wonderful things brought by the Arabs from India, and by the merchants from Japan and China, could be bought in the Korean capital.

A thousand bulls loaded with dry grass and firewood came through the city gates into Seoul every day. They could be seen passing along, but not much besides legs, tail and horns were visible. At breakfast and supper time clouds of blue smoke rose up from ten thousand low, and often underground chimneys, carrying the heat and fire from the kitchens, where good things to eat were cooked. The cartloads of bags of rice, millet, barley, fruits and vegetables, goodies and cookies, jars and crockery, seen in the shops, would make a mountain.

Palaces, pagodas, temples and mansions of the nobles and wealthy people made the place in which the king lived very beautiful, while out beyond were the high stone city walls, white or covered with vines.

When the sun dipped below the mountains the gates were shut, and after that no one could enter until morning. At every closing and opening of the gates the musicians

played lively tunes and the great bell tolled out the time of sunrise and sunset. In the band were drums, fifes, trumpets and stringed instruments.

At night from inside the house and wineshops, one could hear the sounds of revelry, music, song, dancing and feasting, which often lasted till morning.

Out on the Great South Mountain, a mighty fire burned and the flames shot high up in the air. This was the welcome message that all was peaceful throughout the whole kingdom. On hilltop and mountain, from the snowy peaks of the Ever White Mountain to the islands out in the Southern Sea, and from the east to the west coast, these signal fires blaze. Flame answering flame made a telegraph announcing that all was well.

But at nine o'clock Seoul outdoors was a woman's city. All boys and men must be off the streets. Any male person caught by the police would be taken to the magistrate's office and there receive a severe beating with wooden paddles by the public spankers. Then the women and grownup girls, old and young, went outdoors, breathed the air, took their walks, made their visits, and had a delightful time with play and chat and gossip. But by midnight every one must be indoors.

It was no wonder then that in the country the farmers and the village folk thought that Seoul, the capital, was the most splendid city on earth. If they ever heard of London and Paris and New York, they supposed that these places on the map were only villages. How was it possible that any city could equal or surpass Seoul? Why, the very idea was nonsense!

In every hamlet even the children hoped some day to see the city. Often they dreamed of riding through the air on a dragon's back in order to get there. It was thought that anything which a mortal man or even the insatiable Tokgabi should require, could be bought in Seoul.

Now in a village up north, which in English we should call Cucumberville, lived a miller, Mr. Kim and his wife Cho. The man had worked hard for many years and

heaped up piles of iron and brass cash, which he kept hidden under a rafter beneath the roof. He had long intended to see the royal city, and his wife encouraged him, for she wanted a new dress, and a comb and a pair of shoes, such as city people wear. His daughters said they would like to have girdles, ermine-trimmed slippers and silver hair pins. Kim felt that he must surely go, to please both himself and his family.

So one fine May morning he started off to walk to Seoul and see the sights. His wife and daughters, bowing down with their faces to the paper carpet, begged him to bring them the pretty things they talked about so much, and also whatever might please himself.

His faithful spouse bade him beware of thieves and robbers and not to let his money lie around loose in the inns by the way. When in Seoul he must not go into the wineshops, or to see the dancing girls called ge-sang (or geisha), or to spend his cash foolishly. There were many wicked men about and she had heard that beside the polite people there were boors even in the capital. This she thought must surely be the fact, for there was a proverb that said so.

On his part Kim cautioned his wife, since it was still chilly weather, to keep the kitchen fires burning, so as to have the house warm and not let the girls take cold. She must beware also of robbers. These bad men had the habit of coming after midnight, when the fire was out, and of quietly loosening the stones of the foundations under the floor and getting inside, and also into the rooms through the flues. The house must be well locked up and the door barricaded at night, so that no prowling leopard or tiger roaming around should get in. If she heard any scratching or clawing on the roof, she was to strike the gong. This would alarm the villagers, and then the men would rush out with torches and drive off the beasts of prey. If she should hear the pigs squealing out in the pen, she must sound the alarm for the tigers loved Korean pork even more than Korean people.

Now Kim was a first-rate fellow. When at home he was pretty sharp at a bargain while buying beans, millet or rice, and was skilful in grinding barley or chopping up straw for the donkeys. But when he was once inside the walls of the big city, one would think "he carried his head under his armpits," as the Koreans say.

For amid so many strange sights and sounds he was dazed. Like a great gawk he stood on the main street, with his mouth open. As the crowds went by, he wondered where all the people came from, and how they all got a living.

He found the saying true that "There are rude people, even in Seoul," for one fellow shouted at him asking him whether he intended to swallow the moon. Some of the boys laughed at him and one said his mouth was like a bird box, and something might fly in.

Kim looked at many things in the shops, but when he asked how much they cost he nearly fainted. He was truly scared at the price, and walked on. However, he bought some pretty things for his wife and daughters, such as a fan, a roll of silk for a dress, a box of hairpins, some amber beads, and a silver ring, so that when his oldest daughter, who was soon to marry, became a bride, she would have everything ready.

While in the silk shop the clerk who sold him the goods saw that Kim was from the country and thought he would have a little fun. So he told Kim about the fairies, and pointed out a shop across the way. There, if he looked at the round thing which the shop man would gladly show him, he would see and feel as he never felt or saw before.

At once Kim went across the street and over to the shop, where they made metal things, bright, shining, polished and silvery. There he stood in front of a round thing like the moon. In it was a man's face. It was the face of some one he thought he knew. It was a man about his own age he fancied, yet he could not tell just who it was or call him by name, but he was sure he had seen the person before. When he turned around suddenly, hoping to surprise a friend, and perhaps a neighbor, from his home town,

there was nobody near. He looked again. There it was! Had his friend hid himself and then come back?

When Kim dodged he lost sight of the face, but when standing in front of this round thing, there was the same man again in the mirror, for that is what the shining metal was.

When Kim laughed the fellow laughed too. When he made a wry face or grimaces, the other person, whoever he was, did the same. No matter how quickly Kim might turn around to catch him, he was gone.

Now Kim had never before seen a mirror and did not know what it might be. Yet thinking it was almost like fairy magic, he bought the metal disc and took it back with him.

When he arrived home he must first of all unpack the boxes containing the pretty things for the women of his family, for the girls were impatient to see what their father had brought them.

They were so absorbed in their gifts that they did not notice what Mr. Kim had bought for himself. So he laid the case containing the mirror on the table and put some other purchases away in the big cabinet, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, that stood in the best room. Then he went out to look after his mill, and the pigs, the donkey, and the bull.

No sooner had the girls opened the mirror case, than terrible things happened. The mother, who was behind the daughter, saw the face of a young woman and was startled at beholding a stranger, as she thought, in her house. Instantly she broke out in a fit of jealous passion.

“Your father has brought home another woman, a ge-sang, from Seoul, to take my place. What does he mean?”

At the same time the daughter, seeing a face in the polished metal, cried out, “No

mother, we won't have any strange woman in your place. Besides she's too young and will be a tyrant to us."

Hearing the loud voices and crying, the grandmother hobbled in and asked what was the matter.

"Look, see for yourself, what our daddy has brought home to us to make us miserable."

Seeing the mirror, Granny looked into it for a moment. Then she too burst into a passion, and cried out, "I won't have this old woman in our house. It's enough for my son to support me and his family. Oh, why did he go to Seoul?"

By this time there was such a racket with four women, young, middle-aged, and old, crying so lustily, that each one quickly used up three paper handkerchiefs apiece, before they could dry their tears.

While still crying out, "ugo, ugo!" very loudly, grandfather came in, shaking his stick and ordering them to be quiet. Then, looking at their streaming faces and dropping tears, he demanded to know the cause of the trouble.

"See for yourself," said his wife. Then she handed him the metal trouble-maker, such as had never before been seen in the village.

At once the old man turned almost purple with rage.

"What," cried he in his cracked voice, "is my son so unfilial as to bring another old man into the house? How can he support two fathers? Where will he get the kimchi and millet for the old fellow to eat?" Then he threw the mirror into its box and slammed down the lid tight.

All this time while jealousy was eating up these angry people and threatening to disrupt the family, the noise increased so greatly, that the husband left his pigs and his mill, and rushed in to see what was the matter.

At once his wife, who was a very strong woman, flew at him, and seizing his

topknot, pulled him and dragged him over the floor and outdoors, and along into the street, never stopping till she reached the house of the judge to tell her troubles. There she made out a terrible story.

Once in the presence of the great man who wore a mighty hat and had a string of amber beads hung over his ear, she told the story of what her husband had brought from Seoul, to destroy the peace of his family. Surely, he meant to go back to the capital and have a young wife! In her anger her tongue never stopped a moment.

She charged her husband with all the crimes known in the codes. Yet all that she could prove against him was that he had brought something round, made of metal, into the house. She assured the judge that it was as full of evil magic as Tokgabi and all his imps.

Now the other members of the family joined in accusation of the miller. Besides supporting the wife's story, they all declared that it was true in every detail; because the five witnesses all agreed in their story.

When the flood of talk had subsided somewhat, the judge, who meanwhile had kept on smoking a brass-bowled pipe, the stem of which was a yard long, while the bowl was only as big as a chestnut, asked,

"In what form did you say this evil magic came?"

At this, the miller's old father produced the box, opened it, and handed the metal mirror to the judge, who had never before seen anything like it. In fact, he had never been out of his district except once, when he went to the examinations, years before, in Seoul. Even then he was so much with his fellow students and so long shut up in his little cell writing out his essays that he saw hardly anything of the city.

When he held up the mirror before his eyes he suddenly became like a demon in his rage, and behaved just like the other people in the courtroom.

On the face of the round thing which he held in his hand he saw a man in official

robes, such as only men of eminence wear. He had on his head a high round hat, like those which only magistrates ever put on, while on his right ear hung a string of twenty-eight big round amber beads.

When he held the mirror down in front of him he discerned also the embroidered breastpiece, and the little silver stork, that served to hold together the folds of a judge's coat of office, while around his waist was a decorated girdle.

All this made him almost choke with anger, at the idea that another magistrate should come into the village of Cucumberville, to take his place.

What should he himself do for a salary? If he lost his position how would he support his old parents and his twenty-five poor relations. He saw himself a pauper in his old age.

Speechless with rage there was silence in the court-room for at least half a minute. Even the women's tongues did not wag. All looked at each other to see what would come next.

But the peace lasted no longer than thirty seconds, for the storm broke out again in full force when the jealous wife seized her husband by his topknot to drag him home. She feared that the magistrate was himself so angry and jealous, that he might adjourn the court.

Just when the hullaballoo was at its height, a messenger rushed into the court-room, to announce that the royal inspector direct from the king was on his travels of observation in the province. Within five minutes he would be at the gate of the court house.

Instantly the jealous wife let go her husband's topknot. The magistrate called for order and posted his under officers in their places, according to the etiquette of welcoming the king's agents. Then the magistrate adjusting his hat and topknot which had been badly tumbled in his passion went out to greet his worship, the Royal

Inspector. Salutations over, he waved his hand to his superior to take to the chief seat of honor.

As soon as all formalities were over, the high officer inquired into the cause of the troubles and into the merits of the case.

The local magistrate put the mirror on a silken cushion and handed both to his highness, the inspector, saying:

"Please, your worship, it is this that has turned us all into devils of jealousy. What is it?"

Then this gentleman from the capital, who was every day accustomed to the comforts and conveniences of the great city and the splendor of the palace, explained what a mirror was. He gave them all a mild scolding for their folly and dismissed them, telling them that whenever he or she felt angry, or jealous, to go out and pull the tops off five turnips; or, to drink slowly a cup of rice water before speaking an angry word.

Thereupon, the miller's wife fell on her face and begged pardon of her husband. Then, all the family, young and old, while walking home, laughed heartily at their mistakes.

When a Korean begins to laugh, it is sometimes hard for him to stop; but after half an hour, all was quiet again. After that, nearly every one who could afford it bought a mirror. All the girls in the village, sooner or later, possessed one.

They used to look into its face so often to see their own, that the oiled-paper carpet fronting the mirror was, in many houses, soon worn out.

In Seoul, the mirror-makers wondered what had happened in Cucumberville, the village, so long famous only for its cucumbers, but they slapped their thighs for joy and grew rich.

OLD TIMBER TOP

THE fairies in the Korean province of Kang Wen, which means River Meadow, were having great fun, when one of their number told how they played a trick on an ox-driver whom they called Old Timber Top. How he got such a strange name this story will tell.

This driver was a rich and stingy fellow who had made a fortune in lumber. He used to buy up all the trees he could. Then he would have them cut down and sawed up into logs and boards. His men would haul them away in their rough carts, drawn by stout bulls, to his lumber yard. In winter time sleds were used, but whether it was the season of snow and ice, or of tree blossoms and flowers, the animal used to draw sleds or carts was always a bull.

For in Korea, horses or donkeys do not know how to pull anything. The ponies and donkeys are too small. Not being used to the work, if harnessed they would kick the wagon all to pieces.

They can carry loads on their backs, but the bulls can do this also, so the creature with horns is considered to be the most valuable of beasts of burden. Besides, he fills the purse and makes good dinners when his owner is through with him.

You can see these patient carriers loaded with brushwood or sticks piled so high they seem to be carrying small mountains of twigs, grass and leaves for kindlings, or with heavy logs of wood for fuel. Yet when the bull is very young, a mere baby, he has a happier time than a colt or little donkey, for he lives in the house and is the children's pet.

Old Timber Top sold his logs and boards at such high prices that the poor suffered. This was because they were cold and could not afford to pay so many strings of cash

for fuel. The people used to say that the old fellow would skin a mosquito for his hide and tallow. So sometimes they gave him the nickname of Skin-flay.

Not many of the villagers were able to buy planks of wood thick and heavy and strong enough to keep their pigs from the tigers, which came down from the mountains and prowled about at night in the villages. These long-haired and black-striped beasts got to be so fond of pork, that even in the snow they would, without fearing the cold or the guns of the hunters, claw up the tops of the pens and get down among the squealing prey. They might get a baby pig at once or perhaps drag out and carry off enough of a big pork to feed their cubs for a week. All the stables and cow-houses had to be made very strong, for the tigers, when they had gone a good while without food, seemed to be hungry enough to eat a horse with all his harness on, and even a grown-up cow or ox. Yet as a rule, no tiger cared to taste either beef or horse meat, if he could get young pork or veal.

Old Timber Top was not satisfied to make money at his lumber yard only. It is the custom in Korea to plant the most beautiful trees around tombs or in the cemeteries. When this skin-flint heard of a family which had become so poor that they must needs sell the splendid trees which had been planted around their ancestors' graves he sent his agents to buy the timber. These fellows would load up a horse with long ropes, of copper and iron cash, coins that had a square hole in the middle and were strung together with twine made of twisted straw. It was a heavy horse load to carry twenty dollars' worth of coin. Arrived on the spot, after beating the owner down to the lowest price possible, Old Timber Top's men would go out, chop down and saw up the grand trees, leaving only the sawdust on the graves, while the people wept to lose what they loved.

In this way the landscape was spoiled and this made many villagers very angry at such a man, for the Koreans love natural scenery and almost worship fine trees, which

had made the country beautiful for centuries.

But what cared Old Timber Top, provided he could pile up his strings of cash and jingle his silver?

In time, this hard old fellow could think of nothing else but how to get richer out of the wants and sufferings of other people. The wealthier he became, the more he wanted. Yet he did not get any happier. Nobody loved him, while many hated him.

At last he thought he would make a trip to Seoul, the great capital city, which every Korean hopes to see sometime. There he expected to receive honor and appointment to rank and office. Timber Top had a relative who was high in the king's service, who, he thought, would assist him; for all Koreans are kind and helpful to each other, especially when they are related.

To be an officer Timber Top knew would permit him, even to wear a gorgeously shining mandarin's hat with wide flaps or wings on it and a long white silk coat with a big square on the breast of velvet or satin, embroidered with storks or dragons, clouds and waves. When he went out on the streets he could strut about, as if he were the lord of the universe; for he would then wear a hat so high and with such a round wide brim, that he would not dare to go out during a high wind, for fear of being blown away, like a ship in a tempest. In such a costume he would be saluted by servants and the common people, who would bow down before him, because they would think him a great man.

But how could he win such a position and gain the glory of it?

He was not a scholar, learned in books, or in law, or a doctor of medicine. Not being a soldier, either, he knew nothing of war. He could not ride on a monocycle, as a general did, drawn or pushed by four men and dressed in a long red coat studded all over with shining metal with a brass helmet on his head, on the top of which was a little dragon. He feared, even if he were appointed, he might fall off the one-wheeled vehicle and show what a fool he was.

Nevertheless this old fellow was so vain and full of conceit that he followed what was once the common custom in Korea. He took his journey to Seoul, leaving his family behind him to live on the cheapest kind of kimchi, with turnips and millet.

Now the Koreans are all famous for giving welcome and showing hospitality to their poor relations, and often they do this even to tramps and lazy people. When a man becomes rich or holds a high office, he usually has around him many hangers on. Some, we should even say, were loafers.

So on arriving in Seoul, Old Timber Top took up his quarters in one part of his relative's big house. There he lived a long time and was treated decently, for he always was saying soft things and making flattering speeches to his host. In fact, he bowed down like a slave when in presence of his august master. Yet, in truth, he was despised even by the servants and work people.

In order not to wear his welcome entirely out he had to make from time to time a handsome present to his patron. This steadily reduced both his income and his fortune, and while these were shrinking his family at home suffered, so that, by and by, he received notice by letter that his business had dried up and soon no more money could be sent to him in Seoul. While he lingered news from home grew worse and worse. His wife was obliged to sell their house to pay debts. The next item was that she and her daughter were living in a wretched shanty at the end of the village and were no longer in society.

All this time those in Seoul who knew that the foolish fellow was as ambitious as ever to wear the fine white clothes of a scholar, or the gay colors of a soldier, declared that Old Timber Top had no brains. They even jested about a pumpkin set on shoulders, or they laughed when they declared that the wood, which he had sold so long, had gone to his head. They debated in the wine shops whether, if his skull were opened, pumpkin seeds or timber would be found inside of it.

So they, also, called him “Old Timber Top,” meaning that inside his skull was a wooden head and no better than that of an idol carved out of persimmon wood, such as were so plentiful in the Buddhist temples. Others declared that he had a real head of bone and brains, but “he carried It under his arm pits,” as the saying was.

When the fairies heard all this, they unanimously resolved to reform the old fellow, even if they had to make an ox of him.

Timber Top, now poor and bankrupt, knew he must leave Seoul and go home and work for a living. When he made his final call on his rich Seoul relative and told him he must, to his great regret, take his leave and go back to his native village, he was not well received. Being too poor to buy a present to give to his host, on whose bounty he had lived so long, he was answered coldly and told to go and do as he liked.

And this, after years of fawning and gift-making! Not a word of thanks or appreciation! Poor Timber Top was down in the mouth and his heart was cold in his bosom. He knocked on his head with his fists, to find out whether, after all, it had really turned into timber.

On his way back, a big storm came on and when he came to a village inn, cold, wet and hungry, he begged for shelter over night. The woman who kept it was the wife of a butcher, who was then away from home. This was an awful blow to Timber Top’s pride, for butchers were held to be the lowest of people, and they were not even allowed to wear hats, like the rest of the men in Korea.

The woman was kind to the traveler. She gave him a hot supper and let him sleep in that room of the house which had the best stone floor, under which the flues from the kitchen fire ran. So he warmed himself and baked his clothes, which were sopping wet, until they were dry. He was so tired that he kept on sleeping till very late next morning, and nearly to the noon hour. He was altogether so comfortable that to him it seemed as if he were a great man in the capital, thus to receive such kind treatment.

Waking up from one of his naps, he heard what he thought was the big butcher, who had come home, asking of his wife in a gruff tone of voice, “Where is that ox? I must sell him this morning, for it is market day,” he said.

In less than a minute more, the man and his wife entered the room with four sticks which the fairies had put there, a halter, and a rope, made of twisted rice straw, besides a thick iron ring, such as they put into bulls’ noses, to make them obey their masters. Throwing down the iron ring and rope on the floor, in a trice they had thrust the stick under Old Timber Top’s back. In a moment more, he felt horns growing out of his head, and his lips becoming thick as sausages. His mouth was as wide as a saucer and had big teeth growing on the upper jaw. A tail sprouted at his other end and the four sticks became four legs.

Before he could quite understand just what was going on, or what the matter could be, Old Timber Top was standing on four legs and the butcher was slipping the ring through his nose. Oh how it did hurt!

It was an awkward job to get the animal out of the room and through the narrow door, and some of the paper on the walls and the furniture suffered. But finally when out in the open air the bull, that was no other than what had been the man Timber Top, went quietly along to the market place. Any attempt to pull his head away, or to stop or run off, or in any way to misbehave, hurt his nose so dreadfully, that he quickly quit. The butcher needed to give only a slight jerk of the rope when the bull changed his gait and was as quiet as a lamb, even though as an animal he was big enough to gore the man and toss him on its horns, or crush him by trampling on him with his hoofs, if once he got angry.

One would have supposed that Timber Top would be a fighting bull, but no! In the market place he stood patiently and quietly for hours, hardly even stamping, when the flies began to bite.

“Oh that I had been as diligent and kept on at my honest occupation in my native village, as that fly!” mused the bull, that still had a man’s memory.

At last there came a man with money to buy. He was a drover, who unloaded his pony and paid down many strings, or about twenty pounds, of copper and iron cash. The owner put the halter in the buyer’s hand, and the new master then led off Timber Top to be sold to a butcher who lived up in his home town in the north. This fellow intended first to fatten the animal and then turn him into steaks and stewing meat.

But on his way the new owner thought that, because he had made a good bargain, he must stop at a wine shop and have a drink. So he tied Timber Top’s nose with the rope to the low wall, which enclosed a turnip field, and went inside the shop.

But while the drover’s wine went in his wits went out, and he fell asleep and stayed in the shop a long time. In fact, it was as the old song said:

“First the man takes a dram,

Then the dram takes another dram;

Then the dram takes the man.”

Meanwhile Timber Top looked over the low wall, and, yielding to temptation, pulled up with his teeth some of the plants by the roots, first chewing the green leaves and then grinding the turnips and swallowing them.

Presto! The horns drew in and shrivelled up. The ring dropped out of his nose and fell with a crash on the stones of the village path. His two forelegs turned into arms, the hair and hoofs became human legs and Old Timber Top was a man, and himself once again. To make sure of it he felt himself all over; pulled his own nose, felt around his back to see if he had a tail, and rubbed his head for horns. None there! He looked down and found he had only two legs. Then he swung his arms with delight, at being once more a man.

“Well named, Turn-up thou,” he mused, “thou green plant with a mustard-like taste.

Thou hast turned me inside out. Or, have the fairies been busy?"

He had hardly got these ideas through his half wooden head, that he was on two legs and a man once more and could think like one, than he started on the road home. Just then the drover rushed out of the wine shop and accosted him, saying:

"Have you seen a stray bull anywhere near this place?"

Of course Timber Top using fine language, like a yang ban, said there was no bull in the neighbor¬hood that he could see or knew of, and he had heard none bellowing. Then he gave the drover a look of contempt for being so stupid, and for asking of him, a gentleman, so foolish a question.

Yet after he was out of sight of the drover he slapped his thighs, as Koreans do when they are amused at their own smartness, and went on joyfully. He kept on repeating to himself, "sticks and turnips, turnips and sticks."

Then a big idea struck him, as if it were a tap on a wooden drum, such as one sees in Buddhist temples. It hit his brain so hard and so swelled his head, that his big Korean hat nearly toppled off. Immediately he put this idea into action.

He returned hastily to the inn and into the room in which he had been turned into a bull and stole the butcher's four fairy sticks, which stood in a corner, then he hied at once over the roads towards the capital.

Reaching Seoul, he went to the house of his rich relative, where he had waited ten years for the fortune and the favor which did not come. Going into his host's bedroom, he tapped the high lord of the house with the fairy sticks, not hard, but only lightly.

Forthwith the man's head became horns at the top, with muzzle of thick lips in front. His hands turned into front hoofs and his legs into the hind quarters of a bull. Yet he was not entirely an ox, but only half animal and half man.

Old Timber Top stopped tapping and then went away, to await events, leaving the creature half man and half ox. He knew that soon he would be called in.

When the family of wife, many sons, several daughters, servants, retainers, hangers-on, and what not, saw their master half man and half ox, with horns and hoofs, they were distracted. Each one had his own notion of how to get him back into human form and like his former self. Each one ran all over town and into the adjoining villages to get and call in the mudangs.

These mudangs were the people, mostly women, whose business it was to drive out the imps and bad fairies, such as had, in this case, done the mischief. The kitchen maids stoutly declared that Tokgabi had wrought the change upon their master. They felt quite sure of it; but the men thought that the gods of the mountains were punishing him for his sins. On the other hand, the mudang woman said she would find out and get him back into his human skin, if they paid her enough money.

With drums and dancing and songs, screams, yells, and every sort of noise, the mudangs kept up such a terrible racket that it almost deafened the family. There were several of them called in, and they knew that they would all be well paid.

Meanwhile the doctors also kept on with their awful medicines, besides rubbing, pounding, blowing, and sticking needles into the bull and burning moxa, or little balls of cottony mugwort, on its hide.

Yet not a hoof or horn, not even a hair changed.

The mudangs declared that the imps had got inside the man and they must get them out. One fellow carried a big bottle to trap the imps and cork them in. Another insisted that they would have to use scissors and snip the skin in about a hundred places, thus making small holes to let the evil creatures out. Then they must bottle them up, lest they should get out and overrun the house and infest the whole town.

There seemed not so many chances of getting well as “one hair among nine oxen”; but the wife pleaded that they would put off using the scissors until all other means had failed. She did not want to see her dear husband’s skin made into a colender, or sieve,

if it could be helped.

At this point, when the din and the despair were worst and had come to a climax, Old Timber Top appeared. As some of the family had collapsed and lay helpless on the floor, and as all were too tired to ask questions, they at once made way for him. After looking at the patient with a face as wise as an owl's, Old Timber Top solemnly announced that only one thing could save him and that was a rare and wonderful drug, of which only he knew the secret, but which he could speedily procure. Of course the wife, sons and daughters instantly promised to give up their all, to see their husband and father himself again.

So while Timber Top went out to get the famous medicine, they all fell asleep, tired out, while the ox-man lay over on his side resting his horns and hoofs on the floor bed; for in Korea they do not have bedsteads, that is, beds raised up from the floor.

As for Old Timber Top, when once out on the street, he immediately began saying to himself, over and over again, "Turnips and sticks, sticks and turnips."

Going to a vegetable shop, he bought a fine large turnip, or turnip-radish, of the kind that grows in Korea, silvery white and about four feet long. He first peeled, then sliced, and finally pounded it into a sauce very fine. Then entering the house in triumph, he woke up the doctors, kicked the servants awake, and announced that the potent drug would soon restore their master. He solemnly bade them all watch and see him do it.

Pulling and hauling all together, five or six fellows were able to get the man-bull on his two hoofs and two feet and then Timber Top put a spoonful of the sauce on the big tongue.

At once a most marvellous change took place!

The horns shortened until they disappeared, the lips thinned, the mouth became smaller. Hoofs, hair, and hide departed into empty air. In the wagging of a dog's tail,

the mighty man of the house had become himself again.

All the doctors, jugglers, and mudangs packed up their imp-bottles and medicines, and with their drums, flutes, bags, boxes and wares slunk away, while the family loaded Old Timber Top with grateful thanks and compliments.

As for the master, he declared Timber Top the greatest physician the world ever knew. He invited him to make the house his permanent home and showered upon him many gifts, with plenty to eat, and white clothes starched as white as snow. The hats with which he presented Timber Top were so big around and had a brim so wide, that he used them when covered with oiled paper covers as umbrellas in rainy weather, but he never went out doors when the wind was blowing, for fear he would be whirled down the street. Besides this, he feared there was still much wood in his head, which might turn into a top and spin round, if he were not careful.

Old Timber Top set up a medicine office, practiced among the nobility and became physician to the king. When he visited the palace, he used a red visiting card, a foot long. He had a plastron, or square of velvet embroidery on his breast. He wore a string of amber beads as big as walnuts over his ears. He soon became fat with a double chin and plump fingers, showing that he reeked with prosperity. He lived to a good old age, his family were made comfortable, his sons and daughters married well, and he had seventeen grandchildren before he died.

Yet all the time, the fairies claimed that they did it all. They made the sticks work one way, and the turnips another, and they still play their tricks on the Koreans, especially those with more or less wood in their heads.

LONGKA, THE DANCING GIRL

AFTER the islanders in the Eastern Ocean had found out how rich Korea was, they were not satisfied with their own land. They seemed to have eyes like dragon flies, that wanted everything they saw. They kept on borrowing until they got many of the plants and animals which they now possess, which as everybody knows came from the Land of Morning Glory.

Even the neko, or Korean cat, was carried over to the islands; though in some way it lost its tail on the voyage or else had it bobbed. This is the reason why poor pussy in these islands seems to carry around with her something like a corkscrew, instead of a tail. Moreover, when the Korean puss, that had so long been accustomed to scrambling over the roofs and back alleys at home, was introduced into the islands, it was thought to be a wild animal, and for a long time was treated as a fox or badger would be. However, because it kept down the rats and the mice this bob-tailed puss was highly valued.

Yet not content with borrowing so many things, the greedy islemen thought they might as well have all Korea and everything in it, and then go further and overrun China.

So they sent a great army in a mighty fleet of ships to invade the Koreans' country. They took horses with them, but as their soldiers were fed chiefly on rice, salt fish and pickles, they did not need any wagons. They had only oxen to draw their carts, for they had never trained horses to pull anything, but only to be pack and saddle animals.

This army of islanders marched to the capital, in which were palaces, and pagodas. Then they sent one of their armies along the sea front and another along the west coast. They expected to march into China, but two things happened to prevent this. So, after

they had wasted and tarried in the country for five years, they gave it up and were sent home flying.

From the north a Chinese army came to the help of the Koreans and drove the islemen to the coast. But when they got there they found their ships were gone. A clever Korean admiral had invented an iron-clad ship that rammed and sunk their war junks. So their army had to wait till a new fleet of ships had been built and then came over to take them back.

But before the islanders left Korea they smashed statues and monuments, broke up images and even the observatories for the study of the stars. They took marble pagodas apart to load on their ships and carry away. They enticed, or forced to go with them, hundreds of the Korean potters, artists, and craftsmen.

For, by this time, the islanders had given up living in huts of straw and roving about like Arabs or gypsies. They had cities with paved streets, like as in Korea, though they had none of the beautiful marble pagodas and images and temples, for everything was of wood, while thousands of large buildings and images in Korea were of stone, chiseled into beautiful forms.

Now in Korea there were some beautiful daughters of the land and many noblemen and men of courage, who determined not to be carried away from their dearly beloved country. Of this, in southern Korea, the Rock of the Fallen Flower is to this day the witness.

Over three hundred years ago, when “the terrible fighting dwarfs,” as the Koreans called their enemies, came, they encamped in a town where lived a beautiful dancing girl named Longka. Being a ge-sang, (gei-sha) or accomplished young lady, she could sing beautifully. The islanders took this lovely damsel prisoner and made her a waitress in the general’s tent.

One night a great banquet was given in a famous pleasure hall named the Cliff

House, because it was built on the high bank overlooking a deep river. All the chief captains were invited and the large room was illuminated with a thousand wax lights. These were tall and square candles, moulded into a beautiful shape, and each one was painted and decorated with figures of flowers, birds and pet animals. Very odd and ornamental is a Korean candle.

O how charming was the dancer, and what a beautiful sight to behold, was her graceful posing! For, Korean dances tell stories of birds and flowers, of summer, and of lovely snow-covered landscapes in winter, of a boat in a storm, of a tiger in a trap, of a brave soldier in battle, or a sad lady in the palace, or of the fairy tales of the Western Queen Mother and many others. Those who watch the dance and know the manners and customs, the dancer's gestures and poses, the motions of her fan and sleeves, besides the games of the children, the sports of the people, the harvest songs and the fun at the festivals, can read, because they see, the story of each told in most graceful motions. There are several languages, besides words which are spoken, and these appeal to the eye, instead of the ear.

The pretty dancer was robed in pure white, with ermine-edged slippers, and jeweled girdle, and her shining hair was done up like a queen's. Loud was the applause among the spectators at the end of every dance.

After the dinner was over, the general of the islanders grew very lively, because he had drunk much wine, and was not satisfied to see the dances of the lovely girl. Some of the rude soldiers also wanted to waltz with the beautiful maiden. But it was not the custom for Korean virgins to dance, or waltz, with male partners; for in this Country of Gentle Manners, dancing is by the sexes apart.

Yet the rough islanders insisted and forced her so hard, that she felt that both her own modesty and her country were outraged. She thought of the thousands of her countrymen, brothers, fathers and friends, who had died on the battle field, in

defending their beloved land. Why should not she? So, pretending to yield to her country's enemies, she drew the general out of the banqueting hall and down toward the river, close to the edge of the rock.

Before he knew her purpose she seized his hands and leaped out, dragging her enemy with her over the cliff, and both passed into the other world.

She died for her country. To this day, the Rock of the Falling Flower is pointed out, and the story is told that here was exhibited a woman's devotion to her country. Around this rock poets have entwined their verses, while romantic associations cluster like the azalea flowers, that cover the hills of Korea with a riot of color, making their land seem to the natives the most beautiful on earth.

SHOES FOR HATS

MANY centuries ago when Korea was named Chosen, or the Land of Morning Splendor, the island-kingdom out in the eastern sea, where the sun rises, was called The Land of the Dragon-Fly; which some foolish people call "the Devil's Darning Needle," because its body is so slender, its wings so wide and its eyes so big. The Koreans called these islanders "dwarfs," because they were not tall of stature, though they were very warlike and brave. The isle men had no books or letters, and were very rude in their manners.

Therefore, many kind teachers, filled with the spirit of Great Buddha, crossed the sea, from Everlasting Great Korea, to teach these islanders politeness, and how to read and write, and to build pagodas, and temples and schools.

This is the reason why these islanders, who had no story books or writing before the coming of the Korean teachers, have no ancient history of what happened long, long ago when Korea was a great country. So the grandmothers in the islands used to tell their children the good old fairy tales, which many elderly people know by heart, and can relate without reading, thinking that the kings and queens they talked about were real people, when they were only dreams.

The islanders call their country The Land Where the Day Begins, and there are many fairies in these islands, some good, some bad.

So today, these island people make pictures in books and plays on the stage, and "movies" about these Koreans. They get up tableaux and pageants to tell how first the fairies and the King's servants from these far off islands, long ago came to Korea. They wanted to learn politeness, how to make and wear the proper kind of clothes, and how to draw and paint, how to make pictures, how to build houses, how to dance

and sing, and make music and play on instruments, how to teach and have schools. For the good fairies always like to do pretty things.

Yet instead of being grateful for what they had received from Korea, there was one of these island people, a famous woman, who was envious because she lived in a poor land while the Koreans had a rich and beautiful country. Instead of swamps and grassy plains, with plenty of wild beasts and birds, and only a few people, poor and miserable, Korea was rich in rice fields and orchards full of fruit. Flowers grew in plenty. Birds, deer, and rabbits were numerous in the mountains and the scenery was beautiful.

In the warm waters millions of fat fish swam and were easily caught. So the people had plenty of food to eat. Down along the bottom of the sea were most lovely water plants of rich colors, yellow, purple, green and white, with sea weeds, corals and sponges. In some of the sea caves lurked the giant crabs, cuttle-fish and every sort of marine monster.

Still further down, below, deeper than any line could fathom, dwelt the Dragon King of the World Under the Sea and his Queen, with genii and dragons, and all her attendant maidens. These made sweet music, and here amid the mermaids the fairies had a happy time.

These islanders had priests who went down by the seaside when the tide was low. There they called on the spirits of the deep to grant them a safe voyage, good luck, victory over the Koreans, and safe return. There they stood and watched the rippling waves as the breezes blew over the sea.

The first living thing that poked its nose above the waters was the guardian of the seashore and the tides, called the Salt Water Giant. He came up with his head all covered with clam and oyster shells, sea weed, shrimps and whatever grows in the sand or bottom of the ocean. He had to push aside hundreds of white jelly fish that

bumped against him, as the clumsy old chap made his way up to the surface and then waded to the shore.

Now this giant fairy was a grumpy sort of a fellow, and seeing the Queen and her soldiers he growled out: "What do you want?"

Very politely the Queen's messenger made a soft answer to the big fellow and begged him to announce to his master, the Dragon King of the World Under the Sea, that the Queen wished him to help her.

Would he please order all the great fish and every sea monster to go ahead and pull her ship forward?

Would he also present her with the two sparkling tide-jewels, which govern the ebb and the flood tides? If he would do so, then, in the one case her enemies might be overwhelmed. In the other case, the ships of the Koreans would be left high and dry on the shore. Then she could march through the country and get all the gold and gems, and furs and jewels, and clothes and nice things to eat, and bring them back to her own country.

With the tide jewels in her hand she could certainly conquer.

"And if you please, one thing more," added the messenger.

"What else do you want?" growled the Salt Water Giant.

"Have your master, the Dragon King, give our queen power to capture many hundreds of the Korean artists, craftsmen, teachers, and men of books and letters. We shall make these men prisoners and bring them to our country and be civilized."

"And what will you do in return to me and my master for all this?" roared the Salt Water Giant. His voice was like a booming cannon for he was as mad as fire.

"As soon as we get back safely to these shores, our Queen will build a temple in honor of the Dragon King. We shall burn incense to him, and our people will pay him our devotions."

“Well then, what else?” roared the Salt Water Giant.

“There will be a shrine also dedicated to you, my lord, and we’ll get the best Korean artists to decorate it it in wave patterns, with drops of foam.”

The Salt Water Giant bowed and disappeared with a tremendous splash. Down, down, down, he went to report to his master, the Dragon King of the World Under the Sea.

It was necessary for the dignity of His Majesty, that the Queen and her soldiers should wait until flood tide; for the Dragon King never appeared except at high water. So the Queen’s servant launched her ship and waited out on the waves for the answer they hoped to get.

No sooner did the tide mark on the sea beach show that the waves had reached the highest point of flood tide, than the sea opened. The white foam curled round the Queen’s ship while all on board held their breath, to see what was coming. They knew they would soon behold a sight to make them shiver, for the great deep was mightily stirred.

First rose into view a terrible dragon’s head, on the helmet of the King. It had eyes that seemed to flash fire. Then His Majesty appeared. In a great sea shell, as big as a bushel and held in both hands, he had the two tide jewels.

These he presented to the Queen and then quickly disappeared beneath the waves. The last thing they saw was the dragon’s head, which, besides the two eyes like lightning, had teeth that could bite a boat in half, even when full of men. This monster could swallow down the whole crew in his mouth, that was as wide as a man-eating shark’s. His enormously long black moustaches were as stout as ships’ cables.

Immediately after receiving the tide jewels, the Queen of the barbarians landed on the southern coast of Korea. After a few weeks, having fought many battles with the Koreans, she made them bring to her their gold, jewels, furs, fans, rice and pretty

things.

She and her people cared nothing about slaves, or common prisoners, but whenever and wherever they could find a painter, an artist, a costumer, a maker of pottery, or a man of books, or a priest, they seized and took him along. They carried over with them, to the island, a great treasure of gems, gold, ornaments and pretty clothes. They also took away many seeds of flowers and fruit trees, such as lemons, oranges, apples and pears.

In the islands to which they came, these smart men of skill and knowledge from Korea taught the islanders, who had lived like gypsies or Indians, how to build houses, palaces, and temples, to make fine clothes, to paint pictures, and to be like the Koreans and Chinese who knew all about these things. So the islands became rich in fruit, rice, grain, pagodas and temples. After this the island people wore lovely clothes, and had fine manners.

Now the islanders were great borrowers. They invented very few things themselves, but depended on their neighbors for much of what they had. So they filled both their heads and pockets from what they had brought from Korea. But they often made funny mistakes. When they wanted to learn about fine manners and fine clothes, they asked what, on solemn occasions, and in time of ceremony, they should put on their heads.

The Koreans were greatly offended at these savages from over the sea for invading their country and taking away their artists and craftsmen. So they now resolved to play a trick on the islanders.

So when men from the isles in the ocean sent a company of men to Korea and asked for caps to put on their heads, and be shown how do to things properly, the Koreans in contempt gave them their old shoes, which had strings on them to tie over their feet.

But the islanders, who loved to go about with little clothing on their backs, and

usually went barefoot, did not know what these shoes were. They thought these were some kind of head-gear, hats or bonnets.

So they put them on their heads like skull caps and tied them with the white strings down under their chins. These were like tapes and held the caps on around their necks.

So to this day the islanders, when making offerings to the fairies, wear this head-gear and think their shoe-caps are very fine.

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Originally published in English as
Korean Fairy Tales
by Thomas Y. Crowell Co. New York in 1922.

Translated by William Elliot Griffis

Digitally republished by the Literature Translation Institute of Korea in 2016

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Yeongdong-daero(Samseong-dong),
Gangnam-gu, Seoul, 06083, Korea
www.ltikorea.org

eISBN
979-11-87947-08-0(05810) (PDF)

Cover Design by
NURIMEDIA Co.