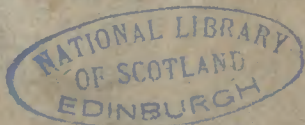


THE
Comical and Merry Tricks
OF
TOM THUMB,
THE WONDERFUL.
TO WHICH IS ADDED
THREE WISHES



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THE
HISTORY
OF
TOM THUMB.



THIS is an amusing little history, abounding with so many ludicrous incidents, that it almost never fails to excite the merriment and risible faculties of the young reader. Tales of enchantments and transformations by fairies and magicians, being mere chimeras of the brain, are believed by no one; and although the wonderful achievements of the renowned Tom Thumb are of this description, yet the many laughable adventures which our hero goes through makes the story be eagerly sought after and greedily devoured by juvenile readers of both sexes.

It is said, that in the days of the celebrated Prince Arthur, who was king of Britain in the year 516, there lived a great magician, called Merlin, the most learned and skilful enchanter in the world at that time.

This famous magician, who could assume any form he pleased, was travelling in the disguise of a poor beggar, and being very much fatigued, he stopped at the cottage of an honest ploughman to rest himself, and asked for some refreshment.

The countryman gave him a hearty welcome, and his wife, who was a very good-hearted, hospitable woman, soon brought him some milk in a wooden bowl, and some coarse brown bread on a platter.

Merlin was much pleased with this homely repast, and the kindness of the ploughman and his wife; but he could not help observing, that though every thing was neat and comfortable in the cottage, they seemed both to be very dispirited and unhappy. He therefore questioned them on the cause of their melancholy, and learned that they were

miserable, because they had no children.

The poor woman declared, with tears in her eyes, that she should be the happiest creature in the world, if she had a son; and although he was no bigger than her husband's thumb, she would be quite satisfied.

Merlin was so much amused with the idea of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb, that he determined to pay a visit to the queen of the fairies, and request her to gratify the wishes of the poor woman. When he had accomplished his journey, Merlin thought on the kind treatment he had received at the cottage, and the comical whim of the little man again suggested itself; and, being on an intimate footing with Queen Mab, he told her the purpose of his visit, and requested her to grant the desire of the countryman's wife.

The droll fancy of such a little personage among the human race pleased the queen of the fairies exceedingly and she told Merlin that the wish of the poor woman should be granted. Accordingly, in a short time after, the ploughman's wife was safely delivered of a son, who,

wonderful to relate ! was not a bit bigger than his father's thumb.

The fairy queen, who had taken an interest in the little fellow, came in at the window while the mother was sitting up in the bed admiring him. The queen kissed the child, and, giving it the name of Tom Thumb, sent for some of the fairies, who dressed her little favourite according to the instructions she gave them ;

An oak-leaf hat he had for his crown ;
 His shirt of web by spiders spun ;
 With jacket wove of thistle's down ;
 His trowsers were of feathers done.
 His stockings, of apple-rind, they tie
 With eyelash from his mother's eye :
 His shoes were made of mouse's skin,
 Tann'd with the downy hair within.

It is remarkable, that Tom never grew any larger than his father's thumb, which was only of an ordinary size ; but as he got older he became very cunning and full of tricks. When he was old enough to play with the boys, and had lost all his own cherry-stones, he used to creep into the bags of his playfellows, fill his pockets

and, getting out unobserved, would again join in the game.

One day, however, as he was coming out of a bag of cherry-stones, where he had been pilfering as usual, the boy to whom it belonged chanced to see him. "Ah, ha! my little Tommy," said the boy, "so I have caught you stealing my cherry-stones at last, and you shall be rewarded for your thievish tricks." On saying this, he drew the string tight round his neck, and gave the bag such a hearty shake, that poor little Tom's legs, thighs and body, were sadly bruised. He reared out with pain, and begged to be let out, promising never to be guilty of such bad practices again.

A short time afterwards, his mother was making a batter-pudding, and Tom, being very anxious to see how it was made, climbed up to the edge of the bowl; but, unfortunately, his foot slipped, and he plumped over head and ears into the batter, unobserved by his mother, who stirred him into the pudding-bag, and put him in the pot to boil.

The batter had filled Tom's mouth, and prevented him from crying; but,

on feeling the hot water, he kicked and struggled so much in the pot, that his mother thought that the pudding was bewitched, and, instantly pulling it out of the pot, she threw it to the door. A poor tinker, who was passing by, lifted up the pudding, and, putting it into his budget, he then walked off. As Tom had now got his mouth cleared of the batter, he then began to cry aloud, which so frightened the tinker, that he flung down the pudding, and ran away. The pudding being broke to pieces by the fall, Tom crept out covered over with the batter, and with difficulty walked home. His mother, who was very sorry to see her darling in such a woful state, put him into a tea-cup, and soon washed off the batter; after which she kissed him, and laid him in bed.

Soon after the adventure of the pudding, Tom's mother went to milk her cow in the meadow, and she took him along with her. As the wind was very high, for fear of being blown away, she tied him to a thistle with a piece of fine thread. The cow soon observed the oak-leaf hat, and, liking the appearanee of it,

took poor Tom and the thistle at one mouthful. While the cow was chewing the thistle, Tom was afraid of her great teeth, which threatened to crush him in pieces, and he roared out as loud as he could—"Mother, mother!"

"Where are you, Tommy, my dear Tommy,?" said his mother.

"Here, mother," replied he, in the red cow's mouth."

His mother began to cry and wring her hands; but the cow, surprised at the odd noise in her throat, opened her mouth, and let Tom drop out. Fortunately his mother caught him in her apron as he was falling to the ground, or he would have been dreadfully hurt. She then put Tom in her bosom and ran home with him.

Tom's father made him a whip of a barley-straw, to drive the cattle with, and having one day gone into the fields, he slipped a foot and rolled into the furrow. A raven, which was flying over, picked him up, and flew with him to the top of a giant's castle that was near the sea-side, and there left him.

Tom was in a dreadful state, and did

not know what to do ; but he was soon more dreadfully frightened ; for old Grumbo the giant came up to walk on the terrace, and observing Tom, he took him up and swallowed him like a pill.

The giant had no sooner swallowed Tom, than he began to repent what he had done ; for Tom began to kick and jump about so much, that he felt very uncomfortable, and at last threw him up again into the sea. A large fish swallowed Tom the moment he fell into the sea, which was soon after caught, and bought for the table of King Arthur. When they opened the fish in order to cook it, every one was astonished at finding such a little boy, and Tom was quite delighted at regaining his liberty. They carried him to the king, who made Tom his dwarf, and he soon grew a great favourite at court ; for, by his tricks and gambols, he not only amused the king and queen, but also all the knights of the Round Table.

It is said, that when the king rode out on horseback, he frequently took Tom along with him ; and if a shower came on, he used to creep into his majesty's waist-

coat-pocket, where he slept till the rain was over.

King Arhur one day interrogated Tom about his parents, wishing to know if they were as small as him, and what circumstances they were in. Tom told the king that his father and mother were as tall as any of the persons about court, but in rather poor circumstances. On hearing this, the king carried Tom to his treasury, the place where he kept all his money, and told him to take as much money as he could carry home to his parents, which made the poor little fellow caper with joy. Tom went immediately to procure a purse, which was made of a water-bubble, and then returned to the treasury, where he received a silver threepenny-piece to put into it.

Our little hero had some difficulty in lifting the burden upon his back ; but he at last succeeded in getting it placed to his mind, and set forward on his journey. However, without meeting with any accident, and after resting himself more than a hundred times by the way, in two days and two nights he reached his father's house in safety.

Tom had travelled forty-eight hours with a huge silver piece on his back, and was almost tired to death, when his mother ran out to meet him; and carried him into the house.

Tom's parents were both happy to see him, and the more so, as he had brought such an amazing sum of money with him; but the poor little fellow was excessively wearied, having travelled half a mile in forty-eight hours, with a huge silver threepenny-piece on his back. His mother, in order to recover him from the fatigue he had undergone, placed him in a walnut shell by the fireside, and feasted him for three days on a hazel-nut, which made him very sick; for a whole nut used to serve him a month.

Tom soon recovered; but as there had been a fall of rain, and the ground very wet, he could not travel back to King Arthur's court; therefore his mother, one day when the wind was blowing in that direction, made a little parasol of cambric paper, and tying Tom to it, she gave him a puff into the air with her mouth, which soon carried him to the King's palace. The king, queen, and all

the nobility, were happy to see Tom again at court, where he delighted them by his dexterity at tilts and tournaments; but his exertions to please them cost him very dear, and brought on such a severe fit of illness that his life was despaired of.

However, the queen of the fairies, hearing of his indisposition came to court in a chariot drawn by flying mice, and placing Tom by her side, drove through the air without stopping till they arrived at her palace. After restoring him to health and permitting him to enjoy all the gay diversion of Fairy-Land, the queen commanded a strong current of air to arise, on which she placed Tom, who floated upon it like a cork in the water, and sent him instantly to the royal palace of King Arthur.

Just at the time when Tom came flying across the court-yard of the palace, the cook happened to be passing with the King's great bowl of furmenty, which was a dish his majesty was very fond of; but unfortunately the poor little fellow fell plump into the middle of it and splashed the hot furmenty about the cook's face.

The cook, who was an ill-natured fellow, being in a terrable rage at Tom for frightening and scalding him with the furmenty, went straight to the king, and represented that Tom had jumped into the royal furmenty, and thrown it down out of mere mischief. The king was so enraged when he heard this, that he ordered Tom to be seized and tried for high treason; and there being no person who dared to plead for him, he was condemned to be beheaded immediately.

On hearing this dreadful sentence pronounced, poor Tom fell a-trembling with fear; but, seeing no means of escape, and observing a miller close to him gaping with his great mouth, as country boobies do at a fair, he took a leap, and fairly jumped down his throat. This exploit was done with such activity, that not one person present saw it, and even the miller did not know the trick which Tom had played upon him. Now, as Tom had disappeared, the court broke up, and the miller went home to his mill.

When Tom heard the mill at work, he knew he was clear of the court, and therefore he began to tumble and roll

about, so that the poor miller could get no rest, thinking he was bewitched; so he sent for a doctor. When the doctor came, Tom began to dance and sing; and the doctor being as much frightened as the miller, sent in haste for five other doctors and twenty learned men.

When they were debating upon the cause of this extraordinary occurrence, the miller happened to yawn, when Tom embracing the opportunity, made another jump, and alighted safely upon his feet on the middle of the table.

The miller, who was very much provoked at being tormented by such a little pigmy creature, fell into a terrible rage, and, laying hold of Tom, he then opened the window, and threw him into the river. At the moment the miller let Tom drop a large salmon, swimming along at the time, saw him fall, and snapped him up in a minute. A fisherman caught the salmon, and sold it in the market to the steward of a great lord. The nobleman, on seeing the fish, thought it so uncommonly fine, that he made a present of it to King Arthur, who ordered it to be dress'd immediately. When

the cook cut open the fish, he found poor Tom, and run to the King with him; but his majesty being engaged with state-affairs, ordered him to be taken away, and kept in custody till he sent for him.

The cook was determined that Tom should not slip out of his hands this time, so he put him into a mousetrap, and left him to peep through the wires. Tom had remained in the trap a whole week, when he was sent for by King Arthur, who pardoned him for throwing down the furmenty, and took him again into favour. On account of his wonderful feats of activity Tom was knighted by the King and went under the name of the renowned Sir Thomas Thumb. As Tom's clothes had suffered much in the batter-pudding, the furmenty, and the insides of the giant, miller, and fishes, his majesty ordered him a new suit of clothes, and to be mounted as a knight :

Of Butterdy's wings his shirt was made,
 His boots of chicken's hide ;
 And by a nimble fairy blade,
 Well learned in the tailoring trade,
 His clothing was supplied.—
 A needle dangled by his side ;
 A dapper mouse he used to ride,
 Thus strutted Tom in stately pride !

It was certainly very diverting to see Tom in this dress, and mounted on the mouse, as he rode out a-hunting with the king and nobility, who were all ready to expire with laughter at Tom and his fine-prancing charger.

One day, as they were riding by a farmhouse, a large cat, which was lurking about the door, made a spring, and seized both Tom and his mouse. She then ran up a tree with them, and was beginning to devour the mouse; but Tom boldly drew his sword, and attacked the cat so fiercely, that she let them both fall, when one of the nobles caught him in his hat, and laid him on a bed of down, in a little ivory cabinet.

The queen of the fairies came soon after to pay Tom a visit, and carried him back to Fairy-Land, where he remained several years. During his residence there, King Arthur, and all the persons who knew Tom, had died; and as he was desirous of being again at court, the fairy queen, after dressing him in a suit of clothes, sent him flying through the air to the palace, in the days of King Thunstone, the successor of Arthur. Every

one flocked round to see him, and being carried to the king, he was asked who he was—whence he came—and where he lived? Tom answered—

My name is Tom Thumb,
From the fairies I've come.
When King Arthur shone,
This court was my home.
In me he delighted,
By him I was knighted;

Did you never hear of Sir Thomas Thumb?

The king was so charmed with this address, that he ordered a little chair to be made, in order that Tom might sit upon his table, and also a palace of gold, a span-high, with a door an inch wide, to live in. He also gave him a coach, drawn by six small mice.

The queen was so enraged at the honours conferred on Sir Thomas, that she resolved to ruin him, and told the King that the little knight had been saucy to her.

The king sent for Tom in great haste; but being fully aware of the danger of royal anger, he crept into an empty snail-shell, where he lay for a considerable time, until he was almost starved with

hunger ; but at last he ventured to peep out, and perceiving a fine large butterfly on the ground, near the place of his concealment, he approached very cautiously, and getting himself placed astride on it, was immediately carried up into the air. The butterfly flew with him from tree to tree and from field to field, and at last returned to the court, where the king and nobility all strove to catch him ; but at last poor Tom fell from his seat into a wateringpot, in which he was almost drowned.

When the queen saw him, she was in a rage, and said he should be beheaded ; and he was again put into a mousetrap until the time of his execution.

However, a cat observing something alive in the trap, patted it about till the wires broke, and set Thomas at liberty.

The king received Tom again into favour, which he did not to enjoy ; for a large spider one day attacked him, and although he drew his sword and fought well, yet the spider's poisonous breath at last overcame him ;

He fell dead on the ground where he stood,
And the spider suck'd every drop of his blood.

King Thunstone and his whole court
where so sorry at the loss of their little
favourite, that they went into mourning,
and raised a fine white marble monument
over his grave, with the following epi-
taph :

Here lyes Tom Thumb, King Arthur's knight,
Who died by a spider's cruel bite.
He was well known in Arthur's court,
Where he afforded gallant sport;
He rode at tilt and tournament,
And on a mouse a hunting went.
Alive he filled the court with mirth;
His death to sorrow soon gave birth.
Wipe, wipe your eyes, and shake your head,
And cry,—Alas! Tom Thumb is dead!

FINIS.





THE THREE WISHES.

There was once a man, not very rich, who had a pretty woman to his wife. One winter's evening, as they sat by the fire, they talked of the happiness of their neighbours, who were richer than they. Said the wife, "If it were in my power to have what I wish, I should soon be happier than all of them."—"So should I too," said the husband; "I wish we had fairies now, and that now of them was kind enough to grant me what I should ask." At that instant they saw a very beautiful lady in their room, who told them,—"I am a fairy, and I promise to grant to you the three first things you shall wish, ; but, take care—after having



wished for three things, I will not grant one wish further.” The fairy disappeared; and the man and his wife were much perplexed.—“For my own part,” said the wife, “if it is left to my choice, I know very well what I shall wish for; I do not wish yet, but I think nothing is so good as to be handsome, rich and to be of great quality.” “But,” the husband answered, “with all these things one may be sick fretful, and one may die young,—it would be much wiser to wish for health, cheerfulness, and a long life.”—“But to what purpose is a long life with poverty?” says the wife, “it would only prolong our misery. In truth, the fairy should have promised us a dozen of gifts, for there are at least a dozen things which I want.”—

“That’s true,” said the husband ; but let us take time ; let us consider, from this time till morning, the three things which are most necessary for us, and then wish.” —“I’ll think all night,” said the wife, “meanwhile let us warm ourselves, for it is very cold.” At the same time the wife took the tongs to mend the fire ; and seeing there were a great many coals thoroughly lighted, she said, without thinking on it, “Here’s a nice fire, I wish we had a yard of black pudding for our supper, we could dress it easily.” She had hardly said these words, when down came tumbling through the chimney a yard of black pudding.—“Plague on your greedy guts, with your black pudding !” said the husband, “here’s a fine wish indeed ! Now we have only two left ; for my part, I am so vexed, that I wish the black pudding fast to the tip of your nose.” The man soon perceived that he was sillier than his wife ; for, at this second wish up starts the black pudding, and sticks so fast to the tip of the poor wife’s nose, there was no means to take it off. “Wretch that I am !” cried she, “you are a wicked man for wishing the pudding fast to

my nose.”—“My dear,” answered the husband, “I vow I do not think of it; but what shall we do? I am about wishing for vast riches, and propose to make a golden case to hide the pudding.”—“Not at all,” answered the wife, “for I should kill myself, were I to live with this pudding dangling at my nose; be persuaded, we have still a wish to make—leave it to me, or I shall instantly throw myself out of the window.” With this she ran and opened the window; but the husband, who loved his wife, called out, “Hold, my dear wife, I give you leave to wish for what you will.” “Well,” said the wife, my wish is, that this pudding may drop off.” At that instant the pudding dropped off; and the wife, who did not want wit, said to her husband,



“The fairy has imposed upon us; she was in the right; possibly we should have been more unhappy with riches, than we are at present. Believe me, friend, let us wish for nothing, and take things as it shall please God to send them,—in the mean time, let us sup upon our pudding, since that’s all that remains to us of our wishes.” The husband thought his wife judged right; they supped merrily, and never gave themselves further trouble about the things they had designed to wish for.

F I N I S .

