Water-Babies
Tom and his friend in the lobster pot
Water-Babies

By Charles Kingsley
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Introduction

CHARLES KINGSLEY, preacher, novelist, poet, and reformer, was born in 1819. His father was a clergyman, and the family was living at Holne in southwestern England not far from Plymouth. But within a few years they took up their residence in Barnack rectory near Peterborough in the fen country of the east coast.

The rectory was more than four hundred years old, and it had a haunted chamber which was frequented by a ghost known as "Button Cap." Kingsley himself has written that "Button Cap lived in the great north room. He used to walk across the floor in flapping slippers and turn over the leaves of books to find the missing deed, whereof he had defrauded the orphan and the widow. He was an old rector of Barnack. He wore a flowered dressing-gown and a cap with a button on it. Sometimes he turned cross and rolled the barrels in the cellar about with surprising noise. But he put them all back in their places before morning. He was rats!"
At the age of four Charles began to compose both poems and sermons, and he liked to make a little pulpit in the nursery and preach to an imaginary congregation. His father was a keen sportsman and took the boy out on shooting expeditions as soon as the little fellow could sit on a horse.

In 1830 the family returned to the southwest of England and established themselves at the quaint little coast town of Clovelly, where the sailors and fishermen and the rocky shore and blue sea filled the boy with wonder and delight.

When he was thirteen he left home to go to school, at first near Bristol, and a year later at Helston, only a short distance from Land’s End, where he greatly enjoyed sallying out, hammer in hand, and his botanical tin slung round his neck, on some long expedition to investigate the rocks and search for new flowers.

His father was transferred to a London parish in 1836, and Charles became a student at King’s College. Two years later he continued his studies at Cambridge. There he was known as an excellent companion, full of information of all kinds, who treated every subject he discussed with striking originality. He had great physical strength. One day he made an early start and walked fifty-two miles from Cambridge to London,
where he arrived at nine in the evening. On many a day in the years that followed he would tramp twenty to twenty-five miles simply for refreshment.

At the age of twenty-three he graduated from Cambridge, and soon afterward became curate in the rustic parish of Eversley, about forty miles southwest of London near Aldershot. Within two years he was appointed vicar and married. Previous to his coming the alehouses were full on Sunday and the church empty, and when grass was scarce the farmers turned their sheep into the neglected churchyard. Hardly a man or woman among the laborers could read or write, and the only school was kept in a room ten feet square and seven high, where cobbling shoes and teaching and flogging the children went on together. He wrote at this time, “I go to the school every day and teach as long as I can stand the heat and the smell.”

His influence in the parish became very great, but was acquired less through the excellence of his church services than by daily house to house visiting. He could discuss the rotation of crops with the farmers, he understood hedging and ditching as well as any laborer, and he could swing a flail and pitch hay as expertly as the best of them; nor was he surpassed in all the countryside for his knowledge and skill in fishing.
and hunting. There was abounding humor and fun in his intercourse, and he was always courteous and considerate and free from artificiality. A hunger for knowledge made him eager to talk to and learn from every one he met, and this put him on an easy human footing with his people.

He established clubs, a loan fund, village lectures, and singing classes, and in every way did what he could to brighten the monotonous lives of the peasantry. When the cholera threatened to invade Eversley, and fear made it difficult to secure nurses, Mr. Kingsley was with those who were ill at all hours. Another year there was an epidemic of diphtheria in the region, and he went from house to house with medicine, regardless of personal danger.

A great heath fire started one Sunday in the middle of divine service, and he hurried out of the church, armed himself with a billhook, organized bands of beaters, and with them resisted the farther advance of the flames. The fire was still smoldering that night, and he went round to inspect the situation and cheer the watchers.

He early associated himself with those who were fighting against oppression and wrong, and was a strong power in the contest with the evil in the world
through his spoken words, his letters, and his books. His course aroused antagonism, newspapers attacked him, and some persons refused to associate with him, but he fought on.

For several years he was professor of modern history at Cambridge. His ideal of education was to make it not so much a matter of what was taught as the training of "men—bold, energetic, methodic, liberal-minded, magnanimous." One of his Cambridge pupils has said: "There was a strange fascination about him which no young man could resist. No other lecture room was half so full and none half so quiet. One could hear a pin fall."

It was his habit to rise at five o'clock and write till breakfast. His parish work in the main kept him busy all through the day and into the evening. Then he would labor deep into the night at the book he was preparing for the press. Most of what he wrote was thought out while walking, fishing, or engaged in other outdoor occupation. Much writing was done for him by his wife, to whom he dictated as he paced up and down the room.

His impetuous, restless energy was always evident, his application was intense, and brain and nerves were ever on the stretch. He believed it was "better to
wear out than to rust out." At the age of forty he wrote, "I have known enough ill-health and sorrow to make me feel very old."

He had many visitors, and he was at his best talking to some congenial guest at the day's end after the rest of the household had retired and he sat by the study fire. Stammering was all his life a "misery" to him, but he was free from it in the pulpit, and he used to say that he could speak for God but not for himself.

On various occasions he preached before Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace, and in later life he preached somewhat frequently at Westminster Abbey, where he drew immense congregations.

He had two sons and two daughters, and it was always his endeavor to surround them as children with an atmosphere of cheerfulness. He considered that their enjoyment was good in itself and valuable as a tonic for the inevitable trials of life. Their rooms were the largest and sunniest in the house, and they had a wooden hut on high ground in a bit of woodland where they kept books and toys and tea-things and spent long, happy days. At this hut their father would join them when his parish work was done, bringing them some flower, fern, beetle, lizard, or other treasure picked up on his walk.
The Kingsley children began Sunday with decking the graves, an example which the parishioners followed so that by the time for service the churchyard looked like a flower garden. After service they went for a stroll on the moor with their father, who pointed out each fresh object of natural beauty. Later, indoors, the Sunday picture books were brought out, and the little folks chose a Bible subject for him to draw.

Punishment was little known in the home, and he was careful not to confuse his children with a multiplicity of small rules. "It is difficult enough to keep the ten commandments," he would say, "without making an eleventh in every direction." He believed that weariness at lessons and sudden fits of temper often spring from purely physical causes, and are mere phases of depression which disappear with change of occupation, air, and scene.

The family gatherings were the brightest hours in the day. "I wonder," he would say, "if there is as much laughing in any other home in England as in ours." He seemed as light-hearted as a boy in the presence of his children. The fierceness which sometimes flashed out in the presence of wrong and oppression, of meanness and untruth, was never shown in the home.
His dog and his horse were his friends, and they knew it. He was an excellent rider, and if his horse shied he did not lose his temper and increase its fear by punishment, but talked to it like a rational being. His dog was his companion in all his parish walks. He took great delight in cats and never tired of watching their graceful movements.

On the rectory lawn dwelt a family of running toads who continued on from year to year in the same hole, which the scythe was never allowed to approach. He made friends with a pair of sand wasps. They lived in a crack of the window in his dressing room, and every spring he looked eagerly for them or their descendants as they came out of or returned to the same crack. The little fly-catcher, which built its nest each year under his bedroom window, was a constant joy to him. He encouraged his children to love and handle gently toads, frogs, beetles, and all other living things.

He knew the notes of all the birds and was deeply interested in their habits. When the winter was past he looked for the coming of the birds of passage with a strange longing. His eyes would fill with tears at each fresh arrival, and in autumn he grieved over each departure.

One morning in 1862, when his youngest son was four
years old, his wife reminded him at the breakfast table that he had promised to write a book for the "baby." He made no answer, but got up, went to his study, and locked the door. In half an hour he returned with the first chapter of "Water-Babies." The whole book was more like inspiration than composition, and seemed to flow naturally out of his brain and heart. His only other child's book that at all rivals this in popular interest is "The Heroes," a retelling of old Greek myths. Probably these will outlive any of his novels.

Mr. Kingsley has said in one of his letters, "I love home and green fields more and more." He did not travel largely even in England, and his journeys outside were single trips to Ireland, Scotland, the continent, the West Indies, and the United States.

He arrived in New York in February, 1874, and here are some stray comments that he made in his letters on what he saw: "It is a glorious country, and I don't wonder at the people being very proud of it. New England is in winter an iron land which only iron people could have settled in. They must have been heroes to make what they have of it." He spoke of Niagara as "this lovely phantom," and went on to say, "After all it is not a quarter of the size of an average thunderstorm, and the continuous roar and
steady flow make it less terrible than either a thunderstorm or a real Atlantic surf.” He called the Mississippi “a huge rushing muddy ditch,” and he remarked of the prairies that they had “a sadness as of a desert sea.”

After he had reached the Pacific Coast an attack of sickness made him hasten his return. He was at home in Eversley in August and presently resumed preaching in Westminster, but his bent back and shrunken figure grieved those who remembered how he had carried himself so nobly. He died in January and was buried at Eversley. There had been deep snow and bitter cold for weeks, but the day of the funeral was kindly and mild, with now and then gleams of sunshine. People came from near and far. Villagers and strangers mingled together, the famous and the wealthy, the humble and the poor, soldiers and sailors, gypsies, men of many creeds and professions, Englishmen and Americans. Few eyes were dry when his body was lowered into the grave, and every one went away feeling that life was poorer for his going.

This edition of “Water-Babies” has been prepared especially for American children. They have always delighted in the story so far as the main narrative is concerned; but most of them will not read the com-
plete book, nor listen with unfaltering interest even when it is read to them. The present edition endeavors to sustain the attraction from beginning to end by omitting scientific and religious discussions, rambling digressions, and obscure references that the average child, and many grown persons also, find are stumbling blocks to them in their reading.

Aside from omissions, the only changes in the text are the correction of occasional obvious grammatical or typographical mistakes, and the substitution now and then of a modern word for one that is obsolete, or the turning into an American form an English expression which would not be understood by our children. The text is not in any wise rewritten.

CLIFTON JOHNSON

HADLEY, MASS.
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ONCE upon a time there was a little chimney-sweep, and his name was Tom. He lived in a great town in the North country,¹ where there

¹ The north of England. The scene of this part of the story was in or near Yorkshire.
were plenty of chimneys to sweep, and plenty of money for Tom to earn and his master to spend. He could not read nor write, and did not care to do either; and he never washed himself, for there was no water up the court where he lived. He cried half his time, and laughed the other half. He cried when he had to climb the dark flues,\(^1\) rubbing his poor knees and elbows raw; and when the soot got into his eyes, which it did every day in the week; and when his master beat him, which he did every day in the week; and when he had not enough to eat, which happened every day in the week likewise. And he laughed the other half of the day, when he was tossing halfpennies with the other boys, or playing leapfrog over the posts. As for chimney-sweeping, and being hungry, and being beaten, he took all that for the way of the world, like the rain and snow and thunder, and stood manfully with his back to it till it was over, as his old donkey did to a hailstorm; and then was as jolly as ever, and thought of the fine times coming, when he would be a man, and a master sweep, and wear velveteens, and keep a white

\(^1\) The English law since 1842 has forbidden any one under the age of twenty-one to go up a chimney to sweep it. Before that time small boys did much of the work.
bulldog with one gray ear, and carry her puppies in his pocket, just like a man. He would have apprentices, one, two, three, if he could. How he would bully them and knock them about, just as his master did him; and make them carry home the soot sacks, while he rode before them on his donkey, with a pipe in his mouth and a flower in his button-hole, like a king at the head of his army. Yes, there were good times coming.

One day a smart little groom rode into the court where Tom lived. Tom was just hiding behind a wall, to heave half a brick at his horse's legs, as is the custom of that country when they welcome strangers; but the groom saw him, and halloed to him to know where Mr. Grimes, the chimney-sweep, lived. Mr. Grimes was Tom's master, and Tom was always civil to customers. So he put the half-brick down quietly behind the wall, and proceeded to take orders.

Mr. Grimes was to come next morning to Sir John Harthover's, for his old chimney-sweep was gone to prison, and the chimneys wanted sweeping. He rode away, not giving Tom time to ask what the sweep had gone to prison for, which was a matter of interest to Tom, as he had been in prison once or twice himself. Moreover, the groom looked so very neat and clean,
with his drab breeches, drab jacket, snow-white tie with a smart pin in it, and clean round ruddy face, that Tom was offended and disgusted at his appearance, and considered him a stuck-up fellow, who gave himself airs because he wore smart clothes and other people paid for them; and went behind the wall to fetch the half-brick after all: but did not, remembering that he had come in the way of business, and was, as it were, under a flag of truce.

His master was so delighted at his new customer that he knocked Tom down, and drank more beer that night than he usually did in two, in order to be sure of getting up in time next morning. When he did get up, he knocked Tom down again, in order to teach him that he must be an extra good boy that day, as they were going to a great house, and might make a very good thing of it, if they could give satisfaction.

Tom thought so likewise, and, indeed, would have done his best, even without being knocked down. For, of all places on earth, Harthover Place (which he had never seen) was the most wonderful; and, of all men on earth, Sir John (whom he had seen, having been sent to jail by him twice) was the most awful.

Harthover Place was really a grand place, even for
the rich North country; with a park full of deer, which Tom believed to be monsters who were in the habit of eating children; with miles of game-preserves,\(^1\) in which Mr. Grimes and the collier-lads poached at times, on which occasions Tom saw pheasants, and wondered what they tasted like. Harthover was a grand place, and Sir John a grand old man, whom even Mr. Grimes respected. Not only did he own all the land about for miles; not only was he a jolly, honest, sensible squire, who would do what he thought right by his neighbors, as well as get what he thought right for himself, but, what was more, he weighed full two hundred pounds, was nobody knew how many inches round the chest, and could have thrashed Mr. Grimes himself in fair fight, which very few folk round there could do, and which would not have been right for him to do, as a great many things are not which one both can do, and would like very much to do. So Mr. Grimes touched his hat to him when he rode through the town, and called him a "buirdly awd chap,"\(^2\) and his young ladies "gradely\(^3\)"

\(^1\) Land on which the owner raises and protects game for hunting. Any one who kills or snares the animals on a game-preserve without the owner’s permission is a poacher.

\(^2\) Fine-looking old fellow.

\(^3\) Handsome.
lasses,” which are two high compliments in the North country; and thought that made up for his poaching Sir John’s pheasants.

I dare say you never got up at three o'clock on a midsummer morning. Some people get up then because they want to catch salmon; and some because they want to climb Alps; and a great many more, because they must, like Tom. But, I assure you, that three o'clock on a midsummer morning is the pleasantest time of all the twenty-four hours, and all the three hundred and sixty-five days; and why every one does not get up then I never could tell, save that they are determined to spoil their nerves and their complexions by doing all night what they might just as well do all day. But Tom, instead of going out to dinner at half-past eight at night, and to a ball at ten, went to bed at seven, when his master went to the public-house, and slept like a pig: for which reason he was always ready to get up when the fine gentlemen and ladies were just ready to go to bed.

He and his master set out. Grimes rode the donkey in front, and Tom with the brushes walked behind; out of the court, and up the street, past the closed window-shutters, and the winking weary policemen, and the roofs shining gray in the gray dawn.
They passed through the pitmen's village, all shut up and silent now; and through the turnpike; and then they were out in the real country, and plodding along the black dusty road, between black slag walls, with no sound but the groaning and thumping of the pit-engine in the next field. But soon the road grew white, and the walls likewise; and at the wall's foot grew long grass and gay flowers, all drenched with dew; and instead of the groaning of the pit-engine, they heard the skylark saying his matins high up in the air, and the pit-bird warbling in the sedges, as he had warbled all night long.

All else was silent. For old Mrs. Earth was still fast asleep. The great elm trees in the meadows were fast asleep above, and the cows fast asleep beneath them.

On they went; and Tom looked, and looked, for he never had been so far into the country before; and longed to get over a gate, and pick buttercups, and look for birds' nests in the hedge; but Mr. Grimes was a man of business, and would not have heard of that.

Soon they came up with a poor Irishwoman, trudging along with a bundle at her back. She had a gray shawl over her head, and a crimson petticoat. She

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1 Pitmen are workers in the pit of a coal mine.
2 An early morning religious service.
had neither shoes nor stockings, and limped along as if she were tired and footsore: but she was a very tall, handsome woman, with bright eyes, and heavy black hair hanging about her cheeks. She took Mr. Grimes's fancy so much that when he came alongside he called out to her, "This is a hard road for a gradely foot like that. Will ye up, lass, and ride behind me?"

But perhaps she did not admire Mr. Grimes's look and voice, for she answered quietly: "No, thank you; I'd sooner walk with your little lad here."

"You may please yourself," growled Grimes, and went on smoking.

So she walked beside Tom, and talked to him, and asked him where he lived, and what he knew, and all about himself, till Tom thought he had never before met such a pleasant-spoken woman. She asked him, at last, whether he said his prayers; and seemed sad when he told her that he knew no prayers to say.

Then he asked her where she lived; and she said far away by the sea. Tom asked her about the sea: and she told him how it rolled and roared over the rocks in winter nights, and lay still in the bright summer days for the children to bathe and play in it; and many a story more, till Tom longed to go and see the sea, and bathe in it likewise.
At last, at the bottom of a hill, they came to a spring: not a spring which soaks up out of a white gravel in the bog, among red fly-catchers,¹ and pink bottle-heath, and sweet white orchis; nor such a one as bubbles up under the warm sand-bank in the hollow lane by the great tuft of lady ferns, and makes the sand dance reels at the bottom, day and night, all the year round; not such a spring as either of those: but a real North country limestone fountain, like one of those in Sicily or Greece, where the old heathen fancied the nymphs sat cooling themselves on the hot summer days while the shepherds peeped at them from behind the bushes. Out of a low cave of rock, at the foot of a limestone crag, the great fountain rose, bubbling and gurgling, so clear that you could not tell where the water ended and the air began; and ran away under the road, a stream large enough to turn a mill; among blue geranium, and golden globe-flower, and wild raspberry, and the bird-cherry with its tassels of snow.

There Grimes stopped, and looked; and Tom looked too. Tom was wondering whether anything lived in that dark cave, and came out at night to fly in the meadows. But Grimes was not wondering at all.

¹ Commonly called the sundew. Its leaves are sticky and catch flies and other insects.
Without a word he got off his donkey, and clambered over the low road wall, and knelt down, and began dipping his ugly head into the spring — and very dirty he made it.

Tom was picking the flowers as fast as he could. The Irishwoman helped him, and showed him how to tie them up; and a very pretty nosegay they had made between them. But, when he saw Grimes actually wash, he stopped, quite astonished; and, when Grimes had finished, he said: "Why, master, I never saw you do that before."

"Nor will again, most likely. 'Twasn't for cleanliness I did it, but for coolness. I'd be ashamed to want washing every week or so, like any smutty collier-lad."

"I wish I might go and dip my head in," said Tom. "It must be as good as putting it under the town-pump; and there is no beadle 1 here to drive a chap away."

"Thou come along," said Grimes; "what dost want with washing thyself? Thou did not drink half a gallon of beer last night, like me."

"I don't care for you," said naughty Tom, and ran down to the stream and began washing his face.

1 An official whose duty it was to enforce good behavior in the church and to help the constable maintain order in the parish.
Grimes was very sulky because the woman preferred Tom's company to his; so he dashed at him with horrid words, and tore him up from his knees, and began beating him. But Tom was accustomed to that, and got his head safe between Mr. Grimes's legs, and kicked his shins with all his might.

"Are you not ashamed of yourself, Thomas Grimes?" cried the Irishwoman over the wall.

Grimes looked up, startled at her knowing his name; but all he answered was, "No: nor never was yet;" and went on beating Tom.

"True, for if you ever had been ashamed of yourself you would have gone over into Vendale long ago."

"What do you know about Vendale?" shouted Grimes; but he left off beating Tom.

"I know about Vendale, and about you, too. I know, for instance, what happened in Aldermire Copse, by night, two years ago."

"You do?" shouted Grimes; and leaving Tom, he climbed up over the wall, and faced the woman. Tom thought he was going to strike her; but she looked him too full and fierce in the face for that.

"Yes; I was there," said the Irishwoman, quietly.

"You are no Irishwoman, by your speech," said Grimes, after many bad words.
"Never mind who I am. I saw what I saw; and if you strike that boy again I can tell what I know."

Grimes seemed quite cowed, and got on his donkey without another word.

"Stop!" said the Irishwoman. "I have one more word for you both; for you will both see me again, before all is over. Those that wish to be clean, clean they will be; and those that wish to be foul, foul they will be. Remember."

She turned away through a gate into the meadow. Grimes stood still a moment, like a man who had been stunned. Then he rushed after her, shouting, "You come back." But when he got into the meadow the woman was not there.

Had she hidden away? There was no place to hide in. But Grimes looked about, and Tom also, for he was as puzzled as Grimes himself at her disappearing so suddenly; but look where they would, she was not there.

Grimes came back as silent as a post, for he was a little frightened; and, getting on his donkey, filled a fresh pipe, and smoked away, leaving Tom in peace.

Now they had gone three miles and more, and came to Sir John's lodge-gates.

Very grand lodges they were, with iron gates, and
stone gate-posts, and on the top of each a most dreadful bogy all teeth, horns, and tail, which was the crest Sir John's ancestors wore in the Wars of the Roses; and very prudent men they were to wear it, for all their enemies must have run for their lives at the very first sight of them.

Grimes rang at the gate, and out came a keeper and opened it.

"I was told to expect thee," he said. "Now, thou'lt be so good as to keep to the main avenue, and not let me find a hare or a rabbit on thee when thou comest back. I shall look sharp for one."

"Not if it's in the bottom of the soot-bag," quoth Grimes, and at that he laughed; and the keeper laughed and said, "If that's thy sort, I may as well walk up with thee to the hall."

"I think thou best had. It's thy business to see after thy game, man, and not mine."

So the keeper went with them; and, to Tom's surprise, he and Grimes chatted together all the way quite pleasantly.

They walked up a great lime avenue, a full mile long, and between the tree stems Tom peered trembling at the horns of the sleeping deer which stood up among the ferns. Tom had never seen such enormous trees,
and as he looked up he fancied that the blue sky rested on their heads. But he was puzzled very much by a strange murmuring noise, which followed them all the way. At last he took courage to ask the keeper what it was.

He spoke very civilly and called him Sir, for he was horribly afraid of him, which pleased the keeper, and he told him that they were the bees about the lime-flowers.

“What are bees?” asked Tom.

“Thou hold thy noise,” said Grimes.

“Let the boy be,” said the keeper. “He’s a civil young chap now, and that’s more than he’ll be long, if he bides with thee.”

Grimes laughed, for he took that for a compliment.

“I wish I were a keeper,” said Tom, “to live in such a beautiful place, and wear green velveteens, and have a real dog-whistle at my button, like you.”

The keeper was a kind-hearted fellow. “Let well alone, lad. Thy life’s safer than mine at all events, eh, Mr. Grimes?”

Grimes laughed again, and then the two men began talking quite low. Tom could hear, though, that it was about some poaching fight; and at last Grimes said surlily, “Hast thou anything against me?”
“Not now.”

“Then don’t ask me any questions till thou hast, for I am a man of honor.”

At that they both laughed again, and thought it a very good joke.

By this time they were come to the great iron gates in front of the house; and Tom stared through them at the rhododendrons and azaleas, which were all in flower; and then at the house itself, and wondered how many chimneys there were in it, and how long ago it was built, and what was the name of the man who built it, and whether he got much money for his job?

These last were very difficult questions to answer; for Harthover had been built at ninety different times, and in nineteen different styles, and looked as if somebody had built a whole street of houses of every imaginable shape, and then stirred them together with a spoon.

So Harthover House was a great puzzle to antiquarians, and critics, and architects, and all persons who like meddling with other men’s business and spending other men’s money. They were all setting on poor Sir John, year after year, and trying to talk him into spending a hundred thousand pounds or so in building to please them and not himself. But he always
put them off. He had no more notion of disturbing
his ancestors' work than of disturbing their graves.
For now the house looked like a real live house that
had a history, and had grown and grown as the world
grew; and it was only an upstart fellow who did not
know who his own grandfather was, who would change
it for some spick and span new thing, which looked as
if it had been all spawned in a night, as mushrooms are.

Tom and his master did not go in through the great
iron gates, but round the back way, and into a little
back door, where the ash-boy let them in, yawning
horribly. Then in a passage the housekeeper met
them, in such a flowered chintz dressing-gown, that
Tom mistook her for My Lady herself, and she gave
Grimes solemn orders about, "You will take care of
this, and take care of that," as if he was going up the
chimneys, and not Tom.

Grimes listened, and said every now and then, under
his breath, "You'll remember that, you little beggar?"
and Tom did remember, all at least that he could.

Then the housekeeper turned them into a grand
room, where everything was covered up in sheets of
brown paper, and in a lofty and tremendous voice
bade them begin. So after a whimper or two, and a
kick from his master, into the grate Tom went, and
up the chimney, while a housemaid stayed in the room to watch the furniture; to whom Mr. Grimes paid many playful and chivalrous compliments, but met with very slight encouragement in return.

How many chimneys Tom swept I cannot say: but he swept so many that he got quite tired, and puzzled too, for they were not like the town flues to which he was accustomed, but such as you would find in old country-houses, large and crooked chimneys, which had been altered again and again till they ran one into another. Tom fairly lost his way in them; not that he cared much for that, though he was in pitchy darkness, for he was as much at home in a chimney as a mole is underground; but at last, coming down as he thought the right chimney, he came down the wrong one, and found himself standing on the hearthrug in a room the like of which he had never seen before.

Tom had never been in gentlefolks' rooms but when the carpets were all up, and the curtains down, and the furniture huddled together under a cloth, and the pictures covered with aprons and dusters; and he had often wondered what the rooms were like when they were all ready for the quality to sit in. Now he saw, and he thought the sight very pretty.

The room was all dressed in white: white window
curtains, white bed curtains, white furniture, and white walls, with just a few lines of pink here and there. The carpet was all over gay little flowers; and the walls were hung with pictures in gilt frames, which amused Tom very much. There were pictures of ladies and gentlemen, and pictures of horses and dogs. The horses he liked; but the dogs he did not care for much, for there were no bulldogs among them, not even a terrier. But the two pictures which took his fancy most were, one a man in long garments, with little children and their mothers round him, who was laying his hand upon the children’s heads. That was a very pretty picture, Tom thought, to hang in a lady’s room. For he could see that it was a lady’s room by the dresses which lay about. The other picture was that of a man nailed to a cross, which surprised Tom much.

The next thing he saw was a washstand with pitchers and basins, and soap and brushes, and towels, and a large bathtub full of clean water — what a heap of things all for washing! “She must be a very dirty lady,” thought Tom, “to want as much scrubbing as all that. But she must be very cunning to put the dirt out of the way so well afterwards, for I don’t see a speck about the room, not even on the towels.”
Then, looking toward the bed, he saw that dirty lady, and held his breath with astonishment.

Under the snow-white coverlet, upon the snow-white pillow, lay the most beautiful girl that Tom had ever seen. Her cheeks were almost as white as the pillow, and her hair was like threads of gold spread all about over the bed. She might have been as old as Tom, or maybe a year or two older; but Tom did not think of that. He thought only of her delicate skin and golden hair, and wondered whether she was a real live person, or one of the wax dolls he had seen in the shops. But, when he saw her breathe, he made up his mind that she was alive, and stood staring at her as if she had been an angel out of heaven.

"No, she cannot be dirty. She never could have been dirty," thought Tom to himself. Then he thought, "And are all people like that when they are washed?"

He looked at his own wrist and tried to rub the soot off, and wondered whether it ever would come off. "Certainly I should look much prettier then, if I grew at all like her."

Looking round, he suddenly saw, standing close to him, a little ugly, black, ragged figure, with bleared eyes and grinning white teeth. He turned on it angrily. What did such a little black ape want in that
sweet young lady's room? And behold it was himself, reflected in a great mirror.

Tom, for the first time in his life, found out that he was dirty; and burst into tears with shame and anger; and turned to sneak up the chimney and hide; and upset the fender and threw the fire-irons down with a noise as of ten thousand tin kettles tied to ten thousand mad dogs' tails.

Up jumped the little white lady in her bed, and, seeing Tom, screamed as shrill as any peacock. In rushed a stout old nurse from the next room, and, seeing Tom likewise, made up her mind that he had come to rob, plunder, destroy, and burn; and dashed at him, as he lay over the fender, so fast that she caught him by the jacket.

But she did not hold him. Tom had been in a policeman's hands many a time, and out of them too; and he would have been ashamed to face his friends forever if he had been stupid enough to be caught by an old woman: so he doubled under the good lady's arm, and was across the room and out of the window in a moment.

He did not need to drop out, though he would have done so bravely enough; nor even to let himself down a spout, which would have been an old game to
The nurse catches Tom by the jacket
him; for once he got up by a spout to the church roof, he said to take jackdaws' eggs, but the policeman said to steal lead; and, when he was seen on high, sat there till the sun got too hot, and came down by another spout, leaving the policeman to go back to the station-house and eat his dinner.

But all under the window spread a tree, with great leaves, and sweet white flowers almost as big as his head. It was a magnolia, I suppose, but Tom knew nothing about that. Down the tree he went, like a cat, and across the garden lawn, and over the iron railings, and up the park toward the wood, leaving the old nurse to scream murder and fire at the window.

The under gardener, mowing, saw Tom, and threw down his scythe, caught his leg in it, and cut his shin open; but in his hurry he never knew it, and gave chase to Tom. The dairymaid heard the noise, got the churn between her knees, and tumbled over it, spilling all the cream; and yet she jumped up and gave chase to Tom. A groom cleaning Sir John's riding horse at the stables let him go loose, ran out, and gave chase to Tom. Grimes upset the soot-sack in the new-gravelled yard; but he ran out and gave chase to Tom. The old steward opened the park gate in such a hurry that he hung his pony's chin upon the spikes,
but he jumped off and gave chase to Tom. The ploughman left his horses at the headland, and one jumped over the fence and pulled the other into the ditch, plough and all; but he ran on and gave chase to Tom. The keeper, who was taking a stoat out of a trap, let the stoat go, and caught his own finger; but he jumped up and ran after Tom, and considering what he said, and how he looked, I should have been sorry for Tom if he had caught him. Sir John looked out of his study window (for he was an early old gentleman), and up at the nurse, and a marten dropt mud in his eye; and yet he ran out and gave chase to Tom. The Irishwoman, too, was walking up to the house to beg — she must have got round by some byway: but she threw away her bundle and gave chase to Tom likewise. Only my Lady did not give chase; for, when she had put her head out of the window, her night cap fell into the garden, and she had to ring up her lady’s-maid and send her down for it privately; which quite put her out of the running, so that she came in nowhere.

Never before was there heard at Harthover Place such a noise, hubbub, babel, shindy, hullabaloo, and total contempt of dignity, repose, and order, as that day, when Grimes, the gardener, the groom, the dairymaid, Sir John, the steward, the ploughman, the keeper, and
the Irishwoman, all ran up the park, shouting, "Stop thief!" in the belief that Tom had at least a thousand pounds' worth of jewels in his pockets; and the very magpies and jays followed Tom up, screaming and drooping, as if he were a hunted fox beginning to droop his brush.

All the while Tom paddled up the park with his little bare feet, like a small black gorilla fleeing to the forest. Alas for him! there was no big father gorilla therein to take his part.

However, Tom did not remember ever having had a father; so he did not look for one, and expected to have to take care of himself; while, as for running, he could keep up for a couple of miles with any stagecoach, if there was the chance of a copper or a cigar-end, and turn coach wheels on his hands and feet ten times following. Wherefore his pursuers found it very difficult to catch him.

Tom, of course, made for the wood. He had never been in a wood in his life: but he was sharp enough to know that he might hide in a bush, or climb a tree, and, altogether, had more chance there than in the open.

But when he got into the wood, he found it a very different sort of place from what he had fancied. He
pushed into a thick cover of rhododendrons, and found himself at once caught in a trap. The boughs laid hold of his legs and arms, poked him in his face and his stomach, made him shut his eyes tight (though that was no great loss, for he could not see at best a yard before his nose); and, when he got through the rhododendrons, the hassock-grass and sedges tumbled him over, and cut his fingers most spitefully.

"I must get out of this," thought Tom, "or I shall stay here till somebody comes to help me—which is just what I don't want."

But how to get out was the difficult matter. And indeed I don't think he would ever have got out at all, if he had not suddenly run his head against a wall.

Running your head against a wall is not pleasant, especially if it is a loose wall, with the stones all set on edge, and a sharp-cornered one hits you between the eyes and makes you see all manner of stars. The stars are very beautiful, certainly; but unfortunately they go in the twenty-thousandth part of a second, and the pain which comes after them does not. Tom hurt his head; but he was a brave boy and did not mind that. Over the wall he went, like a squirrel.

And there he was, out on the great grouse-moors, which the country folk called Harthover Fell—heather
and bog and rock, stretching away and up, up to the very sky.

Tom was a cunning little fellow — as cunning as an old Exmoor stag. Though he was but ten years old, he had lived longer than most stags, and had more wits to start with into the bargain.

So the first thing he did when he was over the wall was to make the neatest double sharp to his right, and run along behind the wall for nearly half a mile.

Whereby Sir John, and the keeper, and the steward, and the gardener, and the ploughman, and the dairy-maid, and all the hue-and-cry together, went on ahead half a mile in the very opposite direction, and inside the wall, leaving him a mile off on the outside, while Tom heard their shouts die away in the wood, and chuckled to himself merrily.

At last he came to a dip in the land and went to the bottom of it, and then he turned away from the wall and up the moor; for he knew that had put a hill between him and his enemies, and he could go on without their seeing him.

But the Irishwoman, alone of them all, had seen which way Tom went. She had kept ahead of every one the whole time: and yet she neither walked nor ran. She went along quite smoothly and gracefully,
while her feet twinkled past each other so fast that you could not see which was foremost; till every one asked the other who the strange woman was, and all agreed that she must be in league with Tom.

But when she came to the woods they lost sight of her. For she went quietly over the wall after Tom, and followed him wherever he went. Sir John and the rest saw no more of her, and out of sight was out of mind.

Now Tom was right away into the heather. There were rocks and stones lying about everywhere; and the moor as he went upward grew more and more broken and hilly, but not so rough but that little Tom could jog along well enough, and find time, too, to stare about at the strange place, which was like a new world to him.

He saw great spiders there, with crowns and crosses marked on their backs, who sat in the middle of their webs, and, when they saw Tom coming, shook them so fast that they became invisible. Then he saw lizards, brown and gray and green, and thought they were snakes, and would sting him: but they were as much frightened as he, and shot away into the heath. Then, under a rock, he saw a pretty sight—a great brown sharp-nosed creature, with a white tag to her
brush, and round her, four or five smutty little cubs, the funniest fellows Tom ever saw. She lay on her back, rolling about, and stretching out her legs and head and tail in the bright sunshine; and the cubs jumped over her, and ran round her, and nibbled her paws, and lugged her about by the tail; and she seemed to enjoy it mightily. But one selfish little fellow stole away from the rest to a dead crow close by, and dragged it off to hide it, though it was nearly as big as he was. Whereat all his little brothers set off after him in full cry, and saw Tom; and then all ran back, and up jumped Mrs. Vixen and caught one up in her mouth, and the rest toddled after her and into a dark crack in the rocks; and there was an end of the show.

Next he had a fright; for as he scrambled up a sandy brow — whirr-poof-poof-cock-cock-kick — something went off in his face with a most horrid noise. He thought the ground had blown up.

When he opened his eyes (for he shut them very tight), it was only an old cock-grouse, who had been washing himself in sand for want of water, and who, when Tom had all but trodden on him, jumped up with a noise like an express train, leaving his wife and children to shift for themselves, and went off scream-
ing, "Cur-ru-u-uck, cur-ru-u-uck — murder, thieves, fire — cur-u-uck-cock-kick — the end of the world is come — kick-kick-cock-kick!"

He was always fancying that the end of the world was come when anything happened which was farther off than the end of his own nose. But the end of the world was not come, though the old grouse-cock was quite certain of it.

So the old grouse came back to his wife and family an hour afterwards, and said solemnly, "Cock-cock-kick; my dears, the end of the world is not quite come; but I assure you it is coming the day after to-morrow — cock!"

But his wife had heard that so often that she knew all about it, and a little more. Besides she was the mother of a family, and had seven little birds to wash and feed every day; and that made her very practical and a little sharp-tempered. All she answered was, "Kick-kick-kick — go and catch spiders, go and catch spiders — kick!"

Tom went on, and on, he hardly knew why: but he liked the great, wide, strange place, and the cool, fresh, bracing air. He went more and more slowly as he got higher up the hill; for now the ground grew very bad indeed. Instead of soft turf and springy
heather, he met great patches of flat limestone rock, just like ill-made pavements, with deep cracks between the stones, and ledges filled with ferns. So he had to hop from stone to stone, and now and then he slipped in between and hurt his little bare toes, though they were tolerably tough ones: but still he would go on and up.

What would Tom have said, if he had seen, walking over the moor behind him, the very same Irishwoman who had taken his part on the road? But whether it was that he looked too little behind him, or whether it was that she kept out of sight behind the rocks and knolls, he never saw her, though she saw him.

Now he began to get a little hungry, and very thirsty; for he had run a long way, and the sun had risen high in heaven, and the rock was as hot as an oven, and the air danced reels over it till everything round seemed quivering and melting in the glare.

But he could see nothing to eat anywhere, and still less to drink.

The heath was full of bilberries and whimberries: but they were only in flower yet, for it was June. As for water, who can find that on the top of a limestone rock? Now and then he passed by a deep dark hole,
going down into the earth, as if it was the chimney of some dwarf's house underground; and more than once, as he passed, he could hear water falling, trickling, tinkling, many many feet below. How he longed to get down to it, and cool his baked lips! But, brave little chimney-sweep as he was, he dared not climb down such chimneys as those.

So he went on, and on, till his head spun round with the heat, and he thought he heard church bells ringing, a long way off.

"Ah!" he thought, "where there is a church there will be houses and people; and perhaps some one will give me a bit and a sup."

So he set off again, to look for the church; for he was sure that he heard the bells quite plain. In a minute more, when he looked round, he stopped again, and said, "Why, what a big place the world is!"

So it was; for, from the top of the mountain, he could see, behind him, far below, Harthover, and the dark woods, and the shining salmon river; and on his left, far below, was the town and the smoking chimneys of the collieries; and far, far away, the river widened to the shining sea; and little white specks, which were ships, lay on its bosom. Before
him lay, spread out like a map, great plains, and farms, and villages, amid dark knots of trees. They all seemed at his very feet; but he had sense to see that they were long miles away.

To his right rose moor after moor, hill after hill, till they faded away, blue into blue sky. But between him and those moors lay something, to which, as soon as Tom saw it, he determined to go.

A deep, deep green and rocky valley, very narrow, and filled with trees: but through them, hundreds of feet below him, he could see a clear stream glance. Oh, if he could but get down to that stream! Then, by the stream, he saw the roof of a little cottage, and a little garden set out in squares and beds. And there was a tiny little red thing moving in the garden, no bigger than a fly. As Tom looked down, he saw that it was a woman in a red petticoat. Ah! perhaps she would give him something to eat. And there were the church bells ringing again. Surely there must be a village down there. Well, nobody would know him, or what had happened at Harthover Place. The news could not have got there yet, even if Sir John had set all the policemen in the county after him; and he could get down there in five minutes.

Tom was quite right about the hue-and-cry not
Water-Babies

having got thither; for he had come, without know-
ing it, the best part of ten miles from Harthover; but he was wrong about getting down in five minutes, for the cottage was more than a mile off, and a good thousand feet below.

However, down he went, like a brave little man as he was, though he was very footsore, and tired, and hungry, and thirsty; while the church bells rang so loud he began to think that they must be inside his own head, and the river chimed and tinkled far below.

So Tom went down; and all the while he never saw the Irishwoman coming down behind him.
A MILE off, and a thousand feet down. So Tom found it; though it seemed as if he could have chucked a pebble on to the back of the woman in the red petticoat who was weeding in the garden, or even across the dale to the rocks beyond.
For the bottom of the valley was just one field 
broad, and on the other side ran the stream; and, 
above it, gray crag, gray down, gray moor, walled up 
to heaven.

A quiet, silent, rich, happy place; a narrow crack 
cut deep into the earth; so deep, and so out of the 
way, that the bad bogies can hardly find it. The 
name of the place is Vendale.

Tom went down three hundred feet of steep 
heather, mixed with loose brown gritstone as rough 
as a file; which was not pleasant to his poor little 
heels, as he came, bump, stump, jump, down the 
steep. And still he thought he could throw a stone 
into the garden.

Then he went down three hundred feet of lime-
stone terraces, one below the other as straight as 
if a carpenter had ruled them with his ruler and then 
cut them out with his chisel. There was no heath 
there, but —

First a little grass slope covered with the prettiest 
flowers, rockrose and saxifrage, and thyme and basil, 
and all sorts of sweet herbs.

Then bump down a two-foot step of limestone. 
Then another bit of grass and flowers. 
Then bump down a one-foot step.
Then another bit of grass and flowers for fifty yards, as steep as the house-roof.

Then another step of stone, ten feet high; and there he had to stop himself, and crawl along the edge to find a crack; for, if he had rolled over, he would have rolled right into the old woman's garden and frightened her out of her wits.

Then, when he had found a dark narrow crack, full of green-stalked fern, and had crawled down through it with knees and elbows, as he would down a chimney, there was another grass slope, and another step, and so on.

At last he came to a bank of beautiful shrubs; whitebeam, and mountain-ash, and oak; and below them cliff and crag, cliff and crag, with great beds of crown-ferns and wood-sedge; while through the shrubs he could see the stream sparkling, and hear it murmur on the white pebbles. He did not know that it was three hundred feet below.

You would have been giddy, perhaps, at looking down, but Tom was not. When he found himself on the top of a high cliff, instead of sitting down and crying, he said, "Ah, this will just suit me!" though he was very tired; and down he went, by stock and stone, sedge and ledge, bush and rush, as if he had
been born a jolly little black ape with four hands instead of two.

All the while he never saw the Irishwoman coming down behind him.

But he was getting terribly tired now. The burning sun on the fells had sucked him up; but the damp heat of the woody crag sucked him up still more; and the perspiration ran off the ends of his fingers and toes, and washed him cleaner than he had been for a whole year.

At last he got to the bottom. But, behold, it was not the bottom—as people usually find when they are coming down a mountain. For at the foot of the crag were heaps and heaps of fallen limestone, of every size from that of your head to that of a stage-wagon, with holes between them full of sweet heath-fern; and before Tom got through them he was out in the bright sunshine again; and then he felt, suddenly, that he was tired out.

He could not get on. The sun was burning, and yet he felt chill all over. He was quite empty, and yet he felt quite sick. There were but two hundred yards of smooth pasture between him and the cottage, and yet he could not walk down it. He could hear the stream murmuring only one field
beyond the cottage, and yet it seemed to him as if the stream was a hundred miles off.

He lay down on the grass till the beetles ran over him, and the flies settled on his nose. I don’t know when he would have gotten up, if the gnats and the midges had not taken compassion on him. The gnats blew their trumpets so loud in his ears, and the midges nibbled so at his hands and face wherever they could find a place free from soot, that at last he woke up, and stumbled away down over a low wall, and into a narrow road, and up to the cottage door.

A neat pretty cottage it was, with clipt yew hedges all round the garden, and yews inside too, cut into peacocks and trumpets and teapots and all kinds of queer shapes. Out of the open door came a noise like that of the frogs, when they know that it is going to be scorching hot to-morrow.

He went slowly up to the open door, which was all hung round with clematis and roses; and then peeped in, half afraid.

There sat by the empty fireplace, which was filled with a pot of sweet herbs, the nicest old woman that ever was seen, in her red petticoat, and short dimity jacket, and clean white cap with a black silk hand-
kerchief over it tied under her chin. At her feet sat the grandfather of all the cats; and opposite her sat, on two benches, twelve or fourteen neat chubby little children learning their A B C's; and gabble enough they made about it.

Such a pleasant cottage it was, with a shiny clean stone floor, and curious old prints on the walls, and an old black oak sideboard full of bright pewter and brass dishes, and a cuckoo clock in the corner which began shouting as soon as Tom appeared: not that it was frightened at Tom, but that it was just eleven o'clock.

All the children started at Tom's dirty black figure; the girls began to cry, and the boys began to laugh, and all pointed at him rudely; but Tom was too tired to care for that.

“What art thou, and what dost want?” cried the old dame. “A chimney-sweep! Away with thee! I'll have no sweeps here.”

“Water,” said poor little Tom, quite faint.

“Water! There's plenty i' the stream,” she said, quite sharply.

“But I can't get there; I'm most dead with hunger and thirst.” And Tom sank down on the doorstep and laid his head against the post.
The old school dame in Vendale
The old dame looked at him through her spectacles one minute, and two, and three; and then she said, "He's sick; and a bairn's a bairn, sweep or none."

"Water," said Tom.

"God forgive me!" and she put by her spectacles, and rose, and came to Tom. "Water's bad for thee; I'll give thee milk." And she toddled off into the next room, and brought a cup of milk and a bit of bread.

Tom drank the milk off at one draught, and then looked up, revived.

"Where didst come from?" said the dame.

"Over Fell, there," said Tom, and pointed up into the sky.

"Over Harthover? and down Lewthwaite Crag? Art sure thou art not lying?"

"Why should I?" said Tom, and leant his head against the post.

"And how got ye up there?"

"I came from Harthover Place," and Tom was so tired and desperate he had no heart or time to think of a story, so he told all the truth in a few words.

"Bless thy little heart! And thou hast not been stealing, then?"

"No."
"Bless thy little heart! and I'll warrant not. Away from the Harthover Place, and over Harthover Fell, and down Lewthwaite Crag! Who ever heard the like? Why dost not eat thy bread?"

"I can't."

"It's good enough, for I made it myself."

"I can't," said Tom, and he laid his head on his knees, and then asked, "Is it Sunday?"

"No; why should it be?"

"Because I hear the church bells ringing so."

"Bless thy pretty heart! The bairn's sick. Come wi' me, and I'll wrap thee up somewhere. If thou wert a bit cleaner I'd put thee in my own bed. Come along."

But, when Tom tried to get up, he was so tired and giddy that she had to help him and lead him. She put him in an outhouse on soft sweet hay and an old rug, and bade him sleep off his walk, and she would come to him when school was over, in an hour's time.

So she went in, expecting Tom to fall fast asleep at once.

But Tom did not fall asleep.

Instead he turned and tossed and kicked about in the strangest way, and felt so hot all over that he
longed to get into the river and cool himself; and
then he fell half asleep, and dreamt that he heard
the little white lady crying to him, "Oh, you're so
dirty; go and be washed;" and then that he heard
the Irishwoman saying, "Those that wish to be clean,
clean they will be."

Then he heard the church bells ring so loud, close
to him, that he was sure it must be Sunday, in spite
of what the old dame had said; and he would go to
church, and see what a church was like inside, for he
had never been in one in all his life. But the people
would never let him come in, all over soot and dirt
like that. He must go to the river and wash first.
He said out loud again and again, though being half
asleep he did not know it, "I must be clean, I must
be clean."

All of a sudden he found himself, not in the out-
house on the hay, but in the middle of a meadow,
over the road, with the stream just before him, say-
ing continually, "I must be clean, I must be clean."

He had got there on his own legs, between sleep and
awake, as children often will get out of bed and go
about the room, when they are not quite well. But
he was not a bit surprised, and went on to the bank
of the brook, and lay down on the grass, and looked
into the clear limestone water, with every pebble at the bottom bright and clean, while the little silver trout dashed about in fright at the sight of his black face; and he dipped his hand in and found it so cool; and he said, "I will be a fish; I will swim in the water; I must be clean, I must be clean."

So he pulled off his clothes in such haste that he tore some of them, which was easy enough with such ragged old things. And he put his hot sore feet into the water, and then his legs; and the farther he went in the more the church bells rang in his head.

"Ah," said Tom, "I must be quick and wash myself. The bells are ringing quite loud now; and they will stop soon, and then the door will be shut, and I shall never be able to get in at all."

Tom was mistaken: for in England the church doors are left open all service time for everybody who likes to come in, even if he were a Turk or a heathen; and if any man dared to turn him out, as long as he behaved quietly, the good old English law would punish that man for ordering any peaceable person out of God's house, which belongs to all alike. But Tom did not know that, any more than he knew a great deal more which people ought to know.
And all the while he never saw the Irishwoman: not behind him this time, but ahead.

For, just before he came to the river side, she had stepped down into the cool clear water; and her shawl and her petticoat floated off her, and the green water-weeds floated round her sides, and the white water-lilies floated round her head, and the fairies of the stream came up from the bottom and bore her away and down on their arms; for she was the Queen of them all.

"Where have you been?" they asked her.

"I have been smoothing sick folks' pillows, and whispering sweet dreams into their ears; opening cottage casements to let out the stifling air; coaxing little children away from gutters and foul pools where fever breeds; doing all I can to help those who will not help themselves: and little enough that is, and weary work for me. But I have brought you a new little brother, and watched him safe all the way here."

Then all the fairies laughed for joy at the thought that they had a little brother coming.

"But mind, maidens, he must not see you, or know that you are here. He is but a savage now, and like the beasts which perish; and from the beasts which
perish he must learn. So you must not play with him, nor speak to him, nor let him see you: but only keep him from being harmed."

Then the fairies were sad, because they could not play with their new brother, but they always did what they were told.

Their Queen floated away down the river. But all this Tom, of course, never saw nor heard: and perhaps, if he had, it would have made little difference, for he was so hot and thirsty, and longed so to be clean for once, that he tumbled himself as quick as he could into the clear cool stream.

He had not been in it two minutes before he fell fast asleep into the quietest, sunniest, cosiest sleep that ever he had in his life; and he dreamt about the green meadows by which he had walked that morning, and the tall elm trees, and the sleeping cows; and after that he dreamt of nothing at all.

The reason of his falling into such a delightful sleep is very simple; and yet hardly any one has found it out. It was merely that the fairies took him.

The kind old dame came back at twelve, when school was over, to look at Tom; but there was no Tom there. She looked about for his footprints; but the ground was so hard that there was no mark.
So the old dame went in quite sulky, thinking that little Tom had tricked her with a false story, and shammed ill, and then run away.

But she altered her mind the next day. For, when Sir John and the rest of them had run themselves out of breath, and lost Tom, they went back, looking very foolish. They looked more foolish still when Sir John heard more of the story from the nurse; and more foolish still, again, when they heard the whole story from Miss Ellie, the little lady in white. All she had seen was a little black chimney-sweep, crying and sobbing, and going to get up the chimney again. Of course, she was very much frightened; and no wonder. But that was all. The boy had taken nothing in the room. By the mark of his little sooty feet they could see that he had never been off the hearth-rug till the nurse caught hold of him. It was all a mistake.

So Sir John told Grimes to go home, and promised him five shillings if he would bring the boy quietly to him, without beating him, that he might be sure of the truth. He took for granted, and Grimes too, that Tom had made his way home.

But no Tom came back to Mr. Grimes that evening; and Mr. Grimes went to the police-office to
tell them to look out for the boy. But no Tom was heard of. As for his having gone over those great fells to Vendale, they no more dreamed of that than of his having gone to the moon.

So Mr. Grimes came to Harthover next day with a very sour face; but, when he got there, Sir John was over the hills and far away; and Mr. Grimes had to sit in the outer servants' hall all day, and drink strong ale to wash away his sorrows; and they were washed away long before Sir John came back.

Good Sir John had slept very badly that night; and he said to his lady: "My dear, the boy must have got over into the grouse-moors and lost himself; and he lies very heavily on my conscience, poor little lad. But I know what I will do."

So, at five the next morning, up he got, and into his shooting jacket and gaiters, and into the stable-yard, like a fine old English gentleman, with a face as red as a rose, and a hand as hard as a table, and a back as broad as a bullock's; and bade them bring his shooting pony, and the keeper to come on his pony, and the huntsman, and the under-keeper with the bloodhound in a leash—a great dog as tall as a calf. They took the hound up to the place where
Tom had gone into the wood; and there he lifted up his mighty voice, and told them all he knew.

Then he took them to the place where Tom had climbed the wall; and they shoved it down, and all got through.

And then the wise dog took them over the moor, and over the fell, step by step, very slowly; for the scent was a day old, you know, and very light from the heat and drought. That was why cunning old Sir John started at five in the morning.

At last he came to the top of Lewthwaite Crag, and there the dog bayed, and looked up in their faces, as much as to say, "I tell you he is gone down here!"

They could hardly believe that Tom would have gone so far; and, when they looked at that awful cliff, they could never believe that he would have dared to face it. But if the dog said so, it must be true.

"Heaven forgive us!" said Sir John. "If we find him at all, we shall find him lying at the bottom," and he slapped his great hand on his great thigh, and said: "Who will go down over Lewthwaite Crag, and see if that boy is alive? Oh that I were twenty years younger, and I would go down myself!" And so he would, as well as any sweep in the county.
Then he said, "Twenty pounds to the man who brings me that boy alive!" and, as was his way, what he said he meant.

Among the lot was a little groom-boy, a very little groom indeed; and he was the same who had ridden up the court and told Tom to come to Harthover; and he said, "Twenty pounds or none, I will go down over Lewthwaite Crag, if it's only for the poor boy's sake; for he was as civil spoken a little chap as ever climbed a flue."

So down over Lewthwaite Crag he went. A very smart groom he was at the top, and a very shabby one at the bottom; for he tore his gaiters, and he tore his breeches, and he tore his jacket, and he burst his braces, and he burst his boots, and he lost his hat, and, what was worst of all, he lost his shirt pin, which he prized very much; for it was gold, and there was a figure at the top of it of t'ould mare, as natural as life. So it was a really severe loss; but he never saw anything of Tom.

All the while Sir John and the rest were riding round, full three miles to the right, and back, to get into Vendale and to the foot of the crag.

When they came to the old dame's school, all the children came out to see. The old dame came out
too; and when she saw Sir John she curtsied very low, for she was a tenant of his.

"Well, dame, and how are you?" said Sir John.

"Blessings on you as broad as your back, Harthover," says she — she didn't call him Sir John, but only Harthover, for that is the fashion in the North country — "and welcome into Vendale: but you're no hunting the fox this time of the year?"

"I am hunting, and strange game too," said he.

"Blessings on your heart, and what makes you look so sad the morn?"

"I'm looking for a lost child, a chimney-sweep that is run away."

"Oh Harthover, Harthover!" says she, "ye were always a just man and a merciful; and ye'll no harm the poor little lad if I give you tidings of him?"

"Not I, not I, dame. I'm afraid we hunted him out of the house all on a miserable mistake, and the hound has followed him to the top of Lewthwaite Crag, and —"

Whereat the old dame broke out crying, without letting him finish his story.

"So he told me the truth after all, poor little dear! Ah! first thoughts are best, and a body's
heart’ll guide them right, if they will but hearken to it.” And then she told Sir John all.

“Bring the dog here, and lay him on,” said Sir John without another word, and he set his teeth very hard.

The dog at once went away at the back of the cottage, over the road, and over the meadow, and through a bit of alder copse; and there, on an alder stump, they saw Tom’s clothes lying. Then they knew as much about it all as there was any need to know.

And Tom?

Ah, now comes the most wonderful part of this story. Tom, when he woke, found himself swimming about in the stream, being about four inches long, and having a set of gills just like those of a sucking eft,¹ which he mistook for a lace frill, till he pulled at them, found he hurt himself, and made up his mind that they were part of himself and best left alone.

In fact, the fairies had turned him into a water-baby.

The keeper, and the groom, and Sir John were very unhappy (Sir John at least) when they found a black thing in the water, and said it was Tom’s body, and

¹ A small animal something like a lizard.
that he had been drowned. They were utterly mistaken. Tom was quite alive; and cleaner and merrier than he ever had been before. The fairies had washed him in the swift river so thoroughly that not only his dirt, but his whole husk and shell had been washed quite off him, and the pretty little real Tom was washed out of the inside of it, and swam away.

But good Sir John took it into his head that Tom was drowned. When they looked into his pockets and found no jewels there, nor money—nothing but three marbles, and a brass button with a string to it, Sir John did something as like crying as ever he did in his life, and blamed himself more bitterly than he need have done. He cried, and the groom-boy cried, and the huntsman cried, and the dame cried, and the little girl cried, and the dairymaid cried, and the old nurse cried (for it was somewhat her fault), and my lady cried, but the keeper did not cry, though he had been so good-natured to Tom the morning before; for he was so dried up with running after poachers that you could no more get tears out of him than milk out of leather: and Grimes did not cry, for Sir John gave him ten pounds. The little girl would not play with her dolls for a whole week, and never forgot poor
Tom. Soon my lady put a pretty tombstone over Tom's shell in the little churchyard in Vendale, where the old dalesmen all sleep side by side between the limestone crags. The dame decked it with garlands every Sunday, till she grew so old that she could not stir abroad; then the little children decked it for her. And always she sung an old old song, as she sat spinning what she called her wedding-dress. The children could not understand it, but they liked it none the less for that; for it was very sweet, and very sad. These are the words of it:

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down;
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among:
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young.
Those are the words, but they are only the body of it. The soul of the song was the dear old woman’s sweet face, and sweet voice, and the sweet old air to which she sang; and that, alas! one cannot put on paper. At last she grew so stiff and lame that the angels were forced to carry her; and they helped her on with her wedding-dress, and carried her up over Harthover Fell, and a long way beyond that too; and there was a new schoolmistress in Vendale.

All the while Tom was swimming about in the river, with a pretty little lace-collar of gills about his neck, as lively as a grig,¹ and as clean as a fresh-run salmon.²

¹ It is generally considered that a grig is either a cricket or a grasshopper, both of which are lively and musical.
² One that has just come into fresh water from the sea.
TOM was now quite amphibious,¹ and what is better still, he was clean.

He did not remember having ever been dirty. In-

¹ An amphibious animal is one that can live both on the land and in the water.
deed, he did not remember any of his old troubles, being tired, or hungry, or beaten, or sent up dark chimneys. Since that sweet sleep he had forgotten all about his master, and Harthover Place, and the little white girl, and all that had happened to him when he lived before; and he had forgotten all the bad words which he had learned from Grimes and the rude boys with whom he used to play.

Tom was very happy in the water. He had been sadly overworked in the land-world; and so now, to make up for that, he had nothing but holidays in the water-world for a long, long time to come. He had nothing to do but enjoy himself, and look at all the pretty things which are to be seen in the cool clear water-world, where the sun is never too hot, and the frost is never too cold.

What did he live on? Water-cresses, perhaps; or perhaps water-gruel and water-milk.

Sometimes he went along the smooth gravel water-ways looking at the crickets\(^1\) which ran in and out among the stones, as rabbits do on land; or he climbed over the ledges of rock, and saw the sand-pipes\(^2\) hang-

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\(^1\) These were water-crickets, a kind of creeping grub.

\(^2\) Little animals which incase themselves with grains of sand. A slimy substance on their bodies causes the sand to stick.
ing in thousands, with every one of them a pretty little head and legs peeping out; or he went into a still corner, and watched the caddises eating dead sticks as greedily as you would eat plum-pudding, and building their houses with silk and glue. Very fanciful ladies they were; none of them would keep to the same materials for a day. One would begin with some pebbles; then she would stick on a piece of green wood; then she found a shell and stuck it on too. The shell was alive, and did not like at all being taken to build houses with; but the caddis did not let it have any voice in the matter, being rude and selfish, as vain people are apt to be. Then she stuck on a piece of rotten wood, then a pink stone, and so on, till she was patched all over like an Irishman’s coat. Then she found a straw, five times as long as herself, and she stuck it on her back and marched about with it quite proud, though it was very inconvenient indeed. At that, tails became all the fashion among the caddises in that pool, and they all toddled about with long straws sticking out behind, getting between each other’s legs, and tumbling over each other, and looking so ridiculous that Tom laughed at them till he cried. But they were quite right, you know; for people must always follow the fashion.
Then sometimes he came to a deep still reach, and there he saw the water-forests. They would have looked to you only weeds; but Tom, you must remem-
ber, was so little that everything looked a hundred times as big to him as it does to you, just as things do to a minnow, who sees and catches the little water-
creatures which you can only see in a microscope.

In the water-forest he saw the water-monkeys and water-squirrels (they all had six legs, though; almost everything has six legs in the water, except efts and water-babies); and nimbly enough they ran among the branches. There were water-flowers there too, in thousands, and Tom tried to pick them; but as soon as he touched them they drew themselves in and turned into knots of jelly, and then Tom saw that they were all alive — bells, and stars, and wheels, and flowers, of all beautiful shapes and colors.

There was one wonderful little fellow, who peeped out of the top of a house built of round bricks. He had two big wheels, and one little one, all over teeth, spinning round and round like the wheels in a thresh-
ing-machine. Tom stood and stared at him, to see what he was going to make with his machinery. And what do you think he was doing? Brick-making. With his two big wheels he swept together the mud
which floated in the water. All that was nice in it he put into his stomach and ate; and all the rest he put into the little wheel on his breast, which really was a round hole set with teeth; and there he spun it into a neat hard round brick; and then he took it and stuck it on the top of his house-wall, and set to work to make another. Was not he a clever little fellow?

Tom thought so, but, when he wanted to talk to him, the brick-maker was much too busy to take notice of him.

You must know that all the things under the water talk; only not such a language as ours, but such as horses, and dogs, and cows, and birds talk to each other. Tom soon learned to understand them and talk to them; so that he might have had very pleasant company if he had only been a good boy. But I am sorry to say he was too like some other little boys, very fond of hunting and tormenting creatures for mere sport. Some people say that boys cannot help it; that it is nature, and only a proof that we are all originally descended from beasts of prey.

Tom pecked and dragged the poor water-things about sadly, till they were all afraid of him, and got out of his way, or crept into their shells; so he had no one to speak to or play with.
The water-fairies were sorry to see him so unhappy, and longed to teach him to be good, and to play and romp with him; but they had been forbidden to do that. Tom had to learn his lesson for himself by sharp experience.

At last one day he found a caddis, and wanted it to peep out of its house: but its house-door was shut. He had never seen a caddis with a house-door before, so what must he do, the meddlesome little fellow, but pull it open. How should you like to have any one breaking your bedroom door in to see how you looked when you were in bed? Tom broke to pieces the door, which was the prettiest little grating of silk, stuck all over with shining bits of crystal; and when he looked in, the caddis poked out her head, and it had turned into just the shape of a bird's. But when Tom spoke to her she could not answer; for her mouth and face were tied up tight in a new night-cap of neat pink skin. However, if she didn't answer, all the other caddises did; for they held up their hands and shrieked: "Oh, you horrid boy; there you are at it again! And she had just laid herself up for a fortnight's sleep, and then she would have come out with such beautiful wings, and flown about, and laid such lots of eggs; and now you have broken her door, and
she can't mend it because her mouth is tied up, and she will die. Who sent you here to worry us out of our lives?"

Tom swam away. He was very much ashamed of himself. Then he came to a pool full of little trout, and began tormenting them, and trying to catch them; but they slipt through his fingers and jumped clean out of the water in their fright. As Tom chased them, he came close to a great dark hover under an alder root, and out floused a huge old brown trout ten times as big as he was, and ran right against him, and knocked all the breath out of his body. I don't know which was the more frightened of the two.

Then he went on, sulky and lonely, and under a bank he saw a very ugly dirty creature sitting, about half as big as himself; which had six legs, and a big stomach, and a most ridiculous head with two great eyes, and a face just like a donkey's.

"Oh," said Tom, "you are an ugly fellow to be sure!" and he began making faces at him, and put his nose close to him, and halloed at him like a very rude boy.

When, hey presto! all the thing's donkey-face came off in a moment, and out popped a long arm with a pair of pincers at the end of it and caught Tom by the
nose. It did not hurt him much, but it held him quite tight.

"Yah, ah! Oh, let me go!" cried Tom.

"Then let me go," said the creature. "I want to be quiet. I want to split."

Tom promised to let him alone, and he let go. "Why do you want to split?" said Tom.

"Because my brothers and sisters have all split and turned into beautiful creatures with wings; and I want to split too. Don't speak to me. I am sure I shall split. I will split!"

Tom stood still and watched him. And he swelled himself, and puffed, and stretched himself out stiff, and at last—crack, puff, bang—he opened all down his back, and then up to the top of his head.

And out of his inside came the most slender, elegant creature, as soft and smooth as Tom, but very pale and weak, like a little child who has been ill a long time in a dark room. It moved its legs very feebly, and looked about it half ashamed, and then it began walking slowly up a grass stem to the top of the water.

Tom was so astonished that he never said a word, but he stared with all his eyes. And he went up to
the top of the water too, and peeped out to see what would happen.

As the creature sat in the warm bright sun a wonderful change came over it. It grew strong and firm; the most lovely colors began to show on its body, blue and yellow and black, spots and bars and rings; out of its back rose four great wings of bright brown gauze, and its eyes grew so large that they filled all its head, and shone like ten thousand diamonds.

"Oh, you beautiful creature!" said Tom; and he put out his hand to catch it.

But the thing whirred up into the air, and hung poised on its wings a moment, and then settled down again by Tom quite fearless.

"No!" it said, "you cannot catch me. I am a dragon-fly now, the king of all the flies; and I shall dance in the sunshine, and hawk over the river, and catch gnats, and have a beautiful wife like myself. I know what I shall do. Hurrah!" And he flew away into the air and began catching gnats.

"Oh! come back, come back," cried Tom, "you beautiful creature. I have no one to play with, and I am so lonely here. If you will come back I will never try to catch you."

"I don't care whether you do or not," said the
dragon-fly, "for you can't. But when I have had my dinner, and looked a little about this pretty place, I will come back and have a chat about all I have seen in my travels. Why, what a huge tree this is! and what huge leaves on it!"

It was only a big dock, but you know the dragon-fly had never seen any but little water-trees; starwort, and milfoil, and water-crowfoot, and such like; so it did look very big to him. Besides, he was short-sighted, as all dragon-flies are, and never could see a yard before his nose, any more than a great many other folks who are not half as handsome as he.

The dragon-fly did come back, and chatted away with Tom. He was a little conceited about his fine colors and his large wings, but he had been a poor dirty ugly creature all his life before, so there were great excuses for him. He was very fond of talking about all the wonderful things he saw in the trees and the meadows, and Tom liked to listen to him, for he had forgotten all about them. So in a little while they became great friends.

I am glad to say that Tom learned such a lesson that day that he did not torment creatures for a long time after. The caddises grew quite tame, and used to tell him strange stories about the way they built
their houses, and changed their skins, and turned at last into winged flies; till Tom began to long to change his skin, and have wings like them some day.

The trout and he made it up (for trout very soon forget, if they have been frightened and hurt). So Tom used to play with them at hare and hounds, and great fun they had; and he used to try to leap out of the water, head over heels, as they did before a shower came on; but somehow he never could manage it. He liked most, though, to see them rising at the flies, as they sailed round and round under the shadow of the great oak, where the beetles fell flop into the water, and the green caterpillars let themselves down from the boughs by silk ropes and then changed their foolish minds, and hauled themselves up into the tree, rolling up the rope in a ball between their paws; but why they should take so much trouble about it no one can tell.

Very often Tom caught them just as they touched the water; and caught the alder-flies, and the caperers, and the spinners, and gave them to his friends the trout.

At last he gave up catching even the flies; for he made acquaintance with one by accident and found him a very merry little fellow. This was the way it happened.
He was basking at the top of the water one hot day in July, catching duns and feeding the trout, when he saw a new sort, dark gray with a brown head. He was a very little fellow, but he made the most of himself. He cocked up his head, and he cocked up his wings, and he cocked up his tail, and he cocked up the two whisks at his tail-end, and, in short, he looked the cockiest little man of all little men. And so he proved to be; for, instead of getting away, he hopped on Tom’s finger, and sat there; and cried out in the tiniest, shrillest, squeakiest little voice you ever heard, “Much obliged to you, indeed; but I don’t want it yet.”

“Want what?” said Tom, quite taken aback by his impudence.

“Your leg, which you are kind enough to hold out for me to sit on. I must just go and see after my wife for a few minutes. Dear me! what a troublesome business a family is!” (though the idle little rogue did nothing at all, but left his poor wife to lay all the eggs by herself). “When I come back, I shall be glad of it, if you’ll be so good as to keep it sticking out just so;” and off he flew.

Tom thought him a very cool sort of personage; and still more so, when in five minutes he came back,
and said: "Ah, you were tired waiting? Well, your other leg will do as well."

And he popped himself down on Tom's knee, and began chatting away in his squeaking voice.

"So you live under the water? I lived there for some time, and was very shabby and dirty. But I didn't choose that should last. So I turned respectable, and came up to the top, and put on this gray suit. It's a very business-like suit, you think, don't you?"

"Very neat indeed," said Tom.

"Yes, one must be neat and respectable and all that sort of thing, when one becomes a family man. But I'm tired of it, that's the truth. I've done quite enough business, I consider, in the last week, to last me my life. So I shall put on a ball-dress, and go out and be a smart man, and see the gay world, and have a dance or two. Why shouldn't one be jolly if one can?"

"And what will become of your wife?"

"Oh! she is a very plain stupid creature, and thinks about nothing but eggs. If she chooses to come, why she may; and if not, why I go without her."

As he spoke, he turned quite pale, and then quite white.
“Why, you’re ill!” said Tom. But he did not answer.

“You’re dead,” said Tom, looking at him as he stood on his knee as white as a ghost.

“No I ain’t!” answered a little squeaking voice over his head. “This is me up here in my ball-dress, and that’s my skin. Ha, ha! you could not do such a trick as that!”

And no more Tom could, nor all the conjurers in the world. For the little rogue had jumped clean out of his own skin, and left it standing on Tom’s knee, eyes, wings, legs, tail, exactly as if it had been alive.

“Ha, ha!” he said, and he jerked and skipped up and down, never stopping an instant. “Ain’t I a pretty fellow now?”

And so he was; for his body was white, and his tail orange, and his eyes all the colors of a peacock’s tail. What was the oddest of all, the whiskers at the end of his tail had grown five times as long as they were before.

“Ah!” said he, “now I will see the gay world. My living won’t cost me much, for I have no mouth, you see, and no inside; so I can never be hungry nor have the stomach-ache neither.”

He had grown as dry and hard and empty as a quill, as such silly shallow-hearted fellows deserve to grow.
But, instead of being ashamed of his emptiness, he was quite proud of it, and began flirting and flipping up and down, and singing —

"My wife shall dance, and I shall sing,  
   So merrily pass the day;  
For I hold it for quite the wisest thing,  
   To drive dull care away."

He danced up and down for three days and three nights, till he grew so tired that he tumbled into the water and floated down. But what became of him Tom never knew, and he himself never minded; for Tom heard him singing to the last, as he floated down —

"To drive dull care away-ay-ay!"

And if he did not care, nobody else cared either.

One day Tom had a new adventure. He was sitting on a water-lily leaf, he and his friend the dragon-fly, watching the gnats dance. The dragon-fly had eaten as many as he wanted, and was sitting quite still and sleepy, for it was very hot and bright. The gnats danced a foot over his head quite happily, and a large black fly settled within an inch of his nose, and began washing his own face and combing his hair with his paws; but the dragon-fly never stirred, and kept on chatting to Tom about the time when he lived under the water.
Suddenly Tom heard the strangest noise up the stream; cooing, and grunting, and whining, and squeaking, as if you had put into a bag two stock-doves, nine mice, three guinea-pigs, and a blind puppy, and left them there to settle themselves and make music.

He looked up the water, and there he saw a sight as strange as the noise; a great ball rolling over and over down the stream, seeming one moment of soft brown fur, and the next of shining glass: and yet it was not a ball, for sometimes it broke up and streamed away in pieces, and then it joined again, and all the while the noise came out of it louder and louder.

Tom asked the dragon-fly what it could be, but, of course, with his short sight, he could not even see it, though it was not ten yards away. So Tom took the neatest little header into the water, and started off to see for himself; and, when he came near, the ball turned out to be four or five beautiful creatures, many times larger than Tom, who were swimming about, and rolling, and diving, and twisting, and wrestling, and cuddling, and kissing, and biting, and scratching, in the most charming fashion that ever was seen. If you don't believe me, you may go to the Zoological Gardens, and then say if otters at play in the water
are not the merriest, lithest, gracefullest creatures you ever saw.

When the biggest of them saw Tom, she darted out from the rest, and cried sharply, "Quick, children, here is something to eat!" and came at poor Tom, showing such a wicked pair of eyes, and such a set of sharp teeth in a grinning mouth, that Tom, who had thought her very handsome, said to himself, "Handsome is that handsome does," and slipt in between the water-lily roots as fast as he could, and then turned round and made faces at her.

"Come out," said the wicked old otter, "or it will be worse for you."

But Tom looked at her from between two thick roots, and shook them with all his might, making horrible faces all the while, just as he used to grin through the railings at the old women, when he lived before.

"Come away, children," said the otter in disgust, "it is not worth eating, after all. It is only a nasty eft, which nothing eats, not even those vulgar pike in the pond."

"I am not an eft!" said Tom.

"You are an eft," said the otter very positively, "and therefore you are not fit food for gentlefolk like
me and my children. You may stay there till the salmon eat you (she knew the salmon would not, but she wanted to frighten Tom). Ha! ha! they will eat you, and we will eat them;” and the otter laughed a wicked cruel laugh.

“What are salmon?” asked Tom.

“Fish, great fish, nice fish to eat. They are the lords of the fish, and we are lords of the salmon;” and she laughed again. “We hunt them up and down the pools, and drive them up into a corner, the silly things; they are so proud, and bully the little trout and the minnows, till they see us coming, and then they are meek all at once, and we catch them. They are coming soon, children, coming soon; and then hurrah for a freshet, and salmon, and plenty of eating all day long.”

“Where do they come from?” asked Tom, who kept himself very close, for he was considerably frightened.

“Out of the sea, the great wide sea, where they might stay and be safe if they liked. But out of the sea the silly things come into the river down below, and we come to watch for them; and when they go down again we follow them. There we fish for the bass and the pollock, and have jolly days along the
shore, and toss and roll in the breakers, and sleep snug in the warm dry crags. Ah, that is a merry life, children, if it were not for those horrid men."

"What are men?" asked Tom.

"Two-legged things; and, now I come to look at you, they are actually something like you, only a great deal bigger, worse luck for us; and they catch the fish with hooks and lines, and set pots along the rocks to catch lobsters. They speared my poor dear husband as he went out to find something for me to eat. I was laid up among the crags then, and we were very low in the world, for the sea was so rough that no fish would come in shore. But they speared him, poor fellow, and I saw them carrying him away on a pole. Ah, he lost his life for your sakes, my children."

The otter sailed solemnly away down the stream. And lucky it was for her that she did so; for no sooner was she gone than down the bank came seven little rough terrier dogs, snuffing and yapping, and grubbing and splashing, in full cry after the otters. Tom hid among the water-lilies till they were gone.

He could not help thinking of what the otter had said about the great river and the broad sea. And he longed to go and see them. The more he thought, the more he grew discontented with the narrow little
stream in which he lived and all his companions there, and wanted to get out into the wide wide world and enjoy all the wonderful sights of which he was sure it was full.

Once he set off to go down the stream. But the stream was very low; and when he came to the shallows he could not keep under water, for there was no water left to keep under. So the sun burnt his back and made him sick; and he went back and lay quiet in the pool for a whole week more.

Then, on the evening of a very hot day, he saw a sight.

He had been very stupid all day, and so had the trout; for they would not move an inch to take a fly, though there were thousands on the water, but lay dozing at the bottom under the shade of the stones; and Tom lay dozing too, and was glad to cuddle their smooth cool sides, for the water was quite warm and unpleasant.

But toward evening it grew suddenly dark, and Tom looked up and saw a blanket of black clouds lying right across the valley above his head, resting on the crags right and left. He felt not quite frightened, but very still; for everything was still. There was not a whisper of wind, nor a chirp of a bird to be heard; and next
a few great drops of rain fell plop into the water, and one hit Tom on the nose and made him pop his head down.

Then the thunder roared, and the lightning flashed and leaped across Vendale and back again from cloud to cloud and cliff to cliff, till the very rocks in the stream seemed to shake; and Tom looked up at it through the water and thought it the finest thing he ever saw in his life.

But out of the water he dared not put his head; for the rain came down by bucketsful, and the hail ham-mered like shot on the stream and churned it into foam; and soon the stream rose, and rushed down, higher and higher, and fouler and fouler, full of beetles, and sticks, and straws, and worms, and wood-lice, and leeches, and odds and ends, and this, that, and the other, enough to fill nine museums.

Tom could hardly stand against the stream, and hid behind a rock. But the trout did not; for out they rushed from among the stones, and began gobbling the beetles and leeches in the most greedy and quarrel-some way.

Now, by the flashes of the lightning, Tom saw a new sight — all the bottom of the stream alive with great eels, turning and twisting along down stream.
They had been hiding for weeks past in the cracks of the rocks, and in burrows in the mud; and Tom had hardly ever seen them, except now and then at night: but now they were all out, and went hurrying past him so fiercely and wildly that he was quite frightened. And he could hear them say to each other, "We must run, we must run. What a jolly thunderstorm! Down to the sea, down to the sea!"

Then the otter came by with all her brood, twining and sweeping along as fast as the eels themselves. She spied Tom, and said: "Now is your time, if you want to see the world. Come along, children, never mind those nasty eels; we shall breakfast on salmon to-morrow. Down to the sea, down to the sea!"

Then came a flash brighter than all the rest, and by the light of it — in the thousandth part of a second they were gone — but he had seen them, he was certain of it — three beautiful little white girls, with their arms twined round each other's necks, floating down the torrent, as they sang, "Down to the sea, down to the sea!"

"Oh stay! Wait for me!" cried Tom; but they were gone; yet he could hear their voices clear and sweet through the roar of thunder and water and wind, singing, "Down to the sea!"
"Down to the sea?" said Tom; "everything is going to the sea, and I will go too. Good-by, trout."

But the trout were so busy gobbling worms that they never turned to answer him.

Now, down the rushing stream, guided by the bright flashes of the storm, past tall birch-fringed rocks, which shone out one moment as clear as day, and the next were dark as night; past dark hovers under swirling banks, from which great trout rushed out on Tom, thinking him to be good to eat, and turned back sulkily, for the fairies sent them home with a tremendous scolding for daring to meddle with a water-baby; on through narrow channels and roaring cataracts, where Tom was deafened and blinded for a moment by the rushing waters; along deep reaches, where the white water-lilies tossed and flapped beneath the wind and hail; past sleeping villages; under dark bridge-arches, and away and away to the sea. Tom could not stop, and did not care to stop; he would see the great world below, and the salmon, and the breakers, and the wide wide sea.

When the daylight came, Tom found himself out in the salmon river.

A full hundred yards broad it was, sliding on from broad pool to broad shallow, and broad shallow to
broad pool, under oak and ash coverts, past low cliffs of sandstone, past green meadows, and fair parks, and a great house of gray stone, and brown moors, and here and there against the sky the smoking chimney of a colliery.

But Tom thought nothing about what the river was like. All his fancy was to get down to the wide wide sea.

After a while he came to a place where the river spread out into broad still shallow reaches, so wide that little Tom, as he put his head out of the water, could hardly see across.

There he stopped. He got a little frightened. "This must be the sea," he thought. "What a wide place it is. If I go on into it I shall surely lose my way, or some strange thing will bite me. I will stop here and look out for the otter, or the eels, or some one to tell me where I shall go."

So he went back a little way, and crept into a crack of the rock, and watched for some one to tell him his way; but the otter and the eels were gone miles and miles down the stream.

There he waited, and slept too, for he was quite tired with his night's journey; and, when he woke, the stream was clearing to a beautiful amber hue,
though it was still very high. And he saw a sight which made him jump up, for he knew in a moment it was one of the things which he had come to look for.

Such a fish! ten times as big as the biggest trout, and a hundred times as big as Tom, sculling up the stream past him, as easily as Tom had sculled down.

Such a fish! shining silver from head to tail, and here and there a crimson dot; with a hooked nose and curling lip, and bright eyes, looking round him as proudly as a king, and surveying the water right and left as if all belonged to him. Surely he must be the salmon, the king of all the fish.

Tom was frightened; but he need not have been, for salmon are all true gentlemen, and never quarrel with nor harm any one, but go about their own business and leave rude fellows to themselves.

The salmon looked at him full in the face, and then went on with a swish or two of his tail which made the stream boil again. In a few minutes came another, and then four or five, and so on; and all passed Tom, rushing and plunging up the cataract with strong strokes of their silver tails, now and then leaping clean out of water and up over a rock, shining gloriously for a moment in the bright sun; while Tom was so delighted that he could have watched them all day long.
At last one came bigger than all the rest; but he came slowly, and stopped, and looked back, and seemed very anxious and busy. Tom saw that he was helping another salmon, an especially handsome one, who had not a single spot upon it, but was clothed in pure silver from nose to tail.

"My dear," said the great fish to his companion, "you really look dreadfully tired, and you must not overexert yourself. Do rest behind this rock;" and he shoved her gently with his nose to the rock where Tom sat.

This was the salmon's wife. For salmon always choose their lady, and love her, and take care of her, and work for her, and fight for her, as every true gentleman ought, and are not like vulgar chub and roach and pike, who have no high feelings, and take no care of their wives.

Then he saw Tom, and looked at him fiercely one moment as if he was going to bite him.

"What do you want here?" he said.

"Oh, don't hurt me!" cried Tom. "I only want to look at you; you are so handsome."

"Ah?" said the salmon, very stately but very civilly. "I really beg your pardon; I see what you are, my little dear. I have met one or two creatures like you before, and found them very agreeable and
well-behaved. Indeed, one of them showed me a great kindness lately. I hope we shall not be in your way here. As soon as this lady is rested we shall proceed on our journey."

What a well-bred old salmon he was!

"So you have seen things like me before?" asked Tom.

"Several times, my dear. Indeed, it was only last night that one at the river's mouth came and warned me and my wife of some new stake-nets which had gotten into the stream, I cannot tell how, and showed us the way round them in the most charmingly obliging way."

"So there are babies in the sea?" cried Tom, and clapped his little hands. "Then I shall have some one to play with there? How delightful!"

"Were there no babies up this stream?" asked the lady salmon.

"No; and I grew so lonely. I thought I saw three last night, but they were gone in an instant down to the sea. So I went too, for I had nothing to play with but caddises and dragon-flies and trout."

"Ugh!" cried the lady, "what low company!"

"My dear, if he has been in low company, he has certainly not learned their low manners," said the salmon.
“No, indeed, poor little dear! but how sad for him to live among such people as caddises, who have actually six legs, the nasty things! and dragon-flies, too! why, they are not even good to eat; for I tried them once, and they are all hard and empty; and, as for trout, every one knows what they are.” Whereon she curled up her lip, and looked dreadfully scornful.

“Why do you dislike the trout so?” asked Tom.

“My dear, we do not even mention them, if we can help it; for I am sorry to say they are relations of ours who do us no credit. A great many years ago they were just like us; but they were so lazy, and cowardly, and greedy, that instead of going down to the sea every year to see the world and grow strong and fat, they chose to stay and poke about in the little streams and eat worms and grubs.”
IV

THE salmon went up, after Tom had warned them of the wicked old otter, and Tom went down, but slowly and cautiously, coasting along the shore. He was many days about it, for it was many miles down to the sea.
As he went, he had a very strange adventure. It was a clear still September night, and the moon shone so brightly down through the water that he could not sleep, though he shut his eyes as tight as possible. So at last he came up to the top, and sat on a little point of rock, and looked up at the broad yellow moon, and wondered what she was, and thought that she looked at him. He watched the moonlight on the rippling river, and the black heads of the firs, and the silver-frosted lawns, and listened to the owl’s hoot, and the snipe’s bleat, and the fox’s bark, and the otter’s laugh; and smelt the soft perfume of the birches, and the wafts of heather honey off the grouse-moor far above; and felt very happy. You, of course, would have been very cold sitting there on a September night, without the least bit of clothes on your wet back; but Tom was a water-baby, and therefore felt cold no more than a fish.

Suddenly he saw a beautiful sight. A bright red light moved along the river side, and threw down into the water a long tap-root of flame. Tom must needs go and see what it was, so he swam to the shore, and met the light as it stopped over a shallow run at the edge of a low rock.

There, underneath the light, lay five or six salmon,
looking up at the flame with their great goggle eyes, and wagging their tails, as if they were very much pleased at it.

Tom came to the top to look at this wonderful light nearer, and made a splash. And he heard a voice say, "There was a fish rose."

He did not know what the words meant, but he seemed to know the sound of them, and to know the voice which spoke them; and he saw on the bank three great two-legged creatures, one of whom held the light, flaring and sputtering, and another a long pole. He knew that they were men, and was frightened, and crept into a hole in the rock from which he could see what went on.

The man with the torch bent down over the water and looked earnestly in, and then he said: "Tak' that muckle fellow, lad; he's ower fifteen p'unds; and hau'd your hand steady."

Tom felt that there was some danger coming, and longed to warn the foolish salmon, who kept staring up at the light as if he was bewitched. But, before he could make up his mind, down came the pole through the water. There was a fearful splash and struggle, and Tom saw that the poor salmon was speared right through, and was lifted out of the water.
Three great two-legged creatures on the bank
Then, from behind, there sprang on these three men three other men; and there were shouts, and blows, and words which Tom recollected to have heard before; and he shuddered and turned sick at them now, for he felt somehow that they were strange, and ugly, and wrong, and horrible. It all began to come back to him. They were men; and they were fighting; savage, desperate, up-and-down fighting, such as Tom had seen too many times before.

He stopped his little ears, and longed to swim away, and was very glad that he was a water-baby, and had nothing to do any more with horrid dirty men with foul words on their lips; but he dared not stir out of his hole, while the rock shook over his head with the trampling and struggling of the keepers and the poachers.

All of a sudden there was a tremendous splash, and a frightful flash, and a hissing, and all was still.

For into the water, close to Tom, fell one of the men, he who held the light in his hand. Into the swift river he sank, and rolled over and over in the current. Tom heard the men above run along, seemingly looking for him, but he drifted down into the deep hole below, and there lay quite still, and they could not find him.
Tom waited a long time, till all was quiet, and then he peeped out and saw the man. At last he screwed up his courage, and swam down to him. "Perhaps," he thought, "the water has made him fall asleep, as it did me."

Then he went nearer. He swam round and round him, closer and closer; and, as the man did not stir, at last he came quite close and looked him in the face.

The moon shone so bright that Tom could see every feature; and, as he saw, he recollected, bit by bit. It was his old master, Grimes.

Tom turned tail, and swam away as fast as he could.

"O dear me!" he thought, "now he will turn into a water-baby. What a troublesome one he will be! And perhaps he will find me, and beat me again."

So he went up the river a little way, and lay there the rest of the night under an alder root; but, when morning came, he longed to go down again to the big pool, and see whether Mr. Grimes had turned into a water-baby yet.

He went very carefully, peeping round all the rocks, and hiding under all the roots. Mr. Grimes lay there still; he had not turned into a water-baby. In the afternoon Tom went back again. He could
not rest till he had found out what had become of Mr. Grimes. But this time Mr. Grimes was gone, and Tom made up his mind that he was turned into a water-baby.

He might have made himself easy. Mr. Grimes did not turn into a water-baby, or anything like one. But Tom did not make himself easy; and for a long time he was fearful lest he should meet Grimes suddenly in some deep pool. He could not know that the fairies had carried him away, and put him, where they put everything which falls into the water, exactly where it ought to be.

Then Tom went on down, for he was afraid of staying near Grimes; and, as he went, all the vale looked sad. The red and yellow leaves showered down into the river; the flies and beetles were all dead and gone; the chill autumn fog lay low on the hills, and sometimes spread itself so thickly on the river that he could not see his way. But he felt his way instead, following the flow of the stream, day after day, past great bridges, past boats and barges, past the great town, with its wharves and mills, and tall smoking chimney's, and ships which rode at anchor in the stream; and now and then he ran against their hawsers, and wondered what they were, and peeped
out and saw the sailors lounging on board smoking their pipes; and ducked under again, for he was terribly afraid of being caught by man and turned into a chimney-sweep once more. It was a dreary journey for him; and more than once he longed to be back in Vendale playing with the trout in the bright summer sun.

But Tom was always a brave, determined little fellow, who never knew when he was beaten; and on and on he held, till he saw a long way off a red buoy through the fog. Then he found, to his surprise, the stream turned round and running up inland.

It was the tide, of course: but Tom knew nothing of the tide. He only knew that in a minute more the water, which had been fresh, turned salt all round him. Then there came a change over him. He felt strong, and light, and fresh; and gave, he did not know why, three skips out of the water, a yard high, and head over heels, just as the salmon do when they first touch the noble rich salt water.

He did not care now for the tide being against him. The red buoy was in sight, dancing in the open sea; and to the buoy he went. He passed great shoals of bass and mullet, leaping and rushing in after the
shrimps, but he never heeded them, nor they him; and once he passed a great black shining seal, who was coming in after the mullet. The seal put his head and shoulders out of water, and stared at him, looking exactly like a fat old greasy negro with a gray pate. Tom, instead of being frightened, said, "How d'ye do, sir; what a beautiful place the sea is!"

And the old seal, instead of trying to bite him, looked at him with his soft sleepy winking eyes, and said, "Good tide to you, my little man; are you looking for your brothers and sisters? I passed them all at play outside."

"Oh, then," said Tom, "I shall have playfellows at last!" and he swam to the buoy, and got on it and sat there, and looked round for water-babies; but there were none to be seen.

The sea-breeze came in freshly with the tide and blew the fog away, and the little waves danced for joy around the buoy, and the old buoy danced with them. The shadows of the clouds ran races over the bright blue bay, and yet never caught each other up; and the breakers plunged merrily upon the wide white sands, and jumped up over the rocks to see what the green fields inside were like, and tumbled down and broke themselves all to pieces, and never minded
it a bit, but mended themselves and jumped up again. The terns hovered over Tom like huge white dragonflies with black heads, and the gulls laughed like girls at play, and the sea-pies, with their red bills and legs, flew to and fro from shore to shore, and whistled sweet and wild. Tom looked and looked, and listened; and he would have been very happy, if he could only have seen the water-babies. Then, when the tide turned, he left the buoy, and swam round and round in search of them; but in vain. Sometimes he thought he heard them laughing, but it was only the laughter of the ripples. And sometimes he thought he saw them at the bottom, but it was only white and pink shells. Once he was sure he had found one, for he saw two bright eyes peeping out of the sand. So he dived down and began scraping the sand away, and cried, "Don't hide; I do want some one to play with so much!"

And out jumped a great turbot, with his ugly eyes and mouth all awry, and flopped away along the bottom, knocking poor Tom over. And Tom sat down at the bottom of the sea and cried from sheer disappointment.

To have come all this way and faced so many dangers, and yet to find no water-babies! Well, it
did seem hard; but people, even little babies, cannot have all they want without waiting for it, and working for it too.

Tom sat on the buoy long days, long weeks, looking out to sea, and wondering when the water-babies would come back; and yet they never came.

Then he began to ask all the strange things which came in out of the sea if they had seen any, and some said “Yes,” and some said nothing at all.

He asked the bass and the pollock; but they were so greedy after the shrimps that they did not care to answer him a word.

Then there came in a whole fleet of purple sea snails, floating along each on a sponge full of foam, and Tom said, “Where do you come from, you pretty creatures? and have you seen the water-babies?”

The sea-snails answered, “Whence we come we know not; and whither we are going, who can tell? We float out our life in the mid-ocean, with the warm sunshine above our heads, and the warm gulf-stream below; and that is enough for us. Yes, perhaps we have seen the water-babies. We have seen many strange things as we sailed along.” And they floated away, the happy stupid things, and all went ashore upon the sands.
Then there came in a great lazy sunfish, as big as a fat pig cut in half; and he seemed to have been cut in half too, and squeezed in a clothespress till he was flat; but to all his big body and big fins he had a mouth no bigger than Tom's; and, when Tom questioned him, he answered in a little squeaky, feeble voice: "I'm sure I don't know; I've lost my way. I meant to go to the Chesapeake, and I'm afraid I've got wrong, somehow. Dear me! it was all by following that pleasant warm water. I'm sure I've lost my way."

When Tom asked him again, he could only answer, "I've lost my way. Don't talk to me; I want to think."

But the more he tried to think the less he could think, and Tom saw him blundering about all day, till the coast-guardsmen saw his big fin above the water, and rowed out, and struck a boat-hook into him, and took him away. They took him up to the town and showed him for a penny a head, and made a good day's work of it. But of course Tom did not know that.

Then there came by a shoal of porpoises, rolling as they went—papas, and mammas, and little children—and all quite smooth and shiny, and they
sighed so softly as they came by that Tom took courage to speak to them: but all they answered was, "Hush, hush, hush"; for that was all they had learned to say.

Then there came a shoal of basking sharks, some of them as long as a boat, and Tom was frightened at them. But they were very lazy, good-natured fellows, not greedy tyrants, like white sharks and blue sharks and ground sharks who eat men. They came and rubbed their great sides against the buoy, and lay basking in the sun with their backfins out of water, and winked at Tom; but he never could get them to speak. They had eaten so many herrings that they were quite stupid, and Tom was glad when a collier brig came by and frightened them all away; for they did smell most horribly, and he had to hold his nose tight as long as they were there.

Then there came by a beautiful creature, like a ribbon of pure silver with a sharp head and very long teeth; but it seemed sick and sad. Sometimes it rolled helpless on its side; and then it dashed away glittering like white fire; and then it lay sick again and motionless.

"Where do you come from?" asked Tom. "And why are you so sick and sad?"
"I come from the warm Carolinas and the sand-banks fringed with pines. But I wandered north and north on the treacherous warm gulf-stream, till I met the cold icebergs afloat in the mid-ocean. I got chilled with their frozen breath. But the water-babies helped me from among them, and set me free. Now I am getting better every day."

"Oh!" cried Tom. "And you have seen water-babies? Have you seen any near here?"

"Yes; they helped me again last night, or I should have been eaten by a great black porpoise."

How vexatious! The water-babies close to him, and yet he could not find one.

Then he left the buoy, and used to go along the sands and round the rocks, and come out in the night and sit on a point of rock among the shining seaweeds in the low October tides, and cry and call for the water-babies; but he never heard a voice call in return. At last, with his fretting and crying, he grew quite lean and thin.

But one day among the rocks he found a playfellow. It was not a water-baby, but it was a lobster; and a very distinguished lobster he was, for he had live barnacles on his claws, which is a great mark of distinction in lobsterdom.
Tom had never seen a lobster before, and he was mightily taken with this one; for he thought him the most curious, ridiculous creature he had ever seen, and there he was not far wrong, for all the ingenious men, and all the scientific men, and all the fanciful men, in the world, could never invent, if all their wits were boiled into one, anything so curious, and so ridiculous, as a lobster.

He had one claw knobbed and the other jagged; and Tom delighted in watching him hold on to the sea-weed with his knobbed claw, while he cut up salads with his jagged one, and then put them into his mouth, after smelling at them, like a monkey. And always the little barnacles threw out their casting nets and swept the water, and came in for their share of whatever there was for dinner.

But Tom was most astonished to see how he fired himself off—snap! Certainly he took the most wonderful shots, and backwards, too. For, if he wanted to go into a narrow crack ten yards off, what do you think he did? If he had gone in head foremost, of course he could not have turned round. So he used to turn his tail to it, and lay his long horns straight down his back to guide him, and twist his eyes back till they almost came out of their sockets,
and then made ready, snap! — and away he went, pop into the hole; and peeped out and twiddled his whiskers, as much as to say, "You couldn’t do that."

Tom asked him about water-babies. Yes, he said, he had seen them often. But he did not think much of them. They were meddlesome little creatures that went about helping fish and shells which got into scrapes. Well, for his part, he should be ashamed to be helped by little soft creatures that had not even a shell on their backs. He had lived quite long enough in the world to take care of himself.

He was a conceited fellow, the old lobster, and not very civil to Tom. But he was so funny, and Tom so lonely, that he could not quarrel with him; and they used to sit in holes in the rocks, and chat for hours.

About this time there happened to Tom a very important adventure — so important, indeed, that he was very near never finding the water-babies at all.

I hope that you have not forgotten the little white lady all this while. For it befell in the pleasant short December days, when the wind always blows from the southwest, till Old Father Christmas comes and spreads the great white tablecloth ready for little boys and girls to give the birds their Christmas dinner of crumbs — it befell in the pleasant December days
that Sir John was so busy hunting that nobody at home could get a word out of him. Four days a week he hunted, and very good sport he had, and the other two he went to the bench and the board of guardians, and very good justice he did; and, when he got home in time, he dined at five, and fell asleep every evening, and snored so terribly that all the windows in Harthover shook and the soot fell down the chimneys. Whereon My Lady, being no more able to get conversation out of him than a song out of a dead nightingale, determined to go off and leave him, and the doctor, and Captain Swinger, the agent, to snore in concert every evening to their hearts’ content. So she started for the seaside with the children.

Now it befell that on the very shore, and over the very rocks, where Tom was sitting with his friend the lobster, there walked one day the little white lady, Ellie herself, and with her a very wise man indeed — Professor Ptthmlnsprts.

His mother was a Dutchwoman, and his father a Pole, but for all that he was a thorough Englishman. And his name, as I said, was Professor Ptthmlnsprts, which is a very ancient and noble Polish name.

He was a great naturalist, and professor in the new university which the king of the Cannibal Islands had
founded; and he had come here to collect all the disagreeable things which he could find on the coast of England, and turn them loose round the Cannibal Islands, because they had not disagreeable things enough there to eat what they left.

But he was a very worthy, kind, good-natured little old gentleman, and very fond of children (for he was not the least a cannibal himself); and very good to all the world as long as it was good to him.

He had met Sir John somewhere or other, and had made acquaintance with him, and become very fond of his children. Sir John knew nothing about sea-cockyolybirds, and cared less, provided the fishmonger sent him good fish for dinner; and My Lady knew as little, but she thought it proper that the children should know something. For in the stupid old times, children were taught to know one thing, and to know it well, but in these enlightened new times they are taught to know a little about everything, and to know it all ill.

Ellie and he were walking on the rocks, and he was showing her the beautiful and curious things which are to be seen there. But little Ellie was not satisfied with them at all. She liked much better to play with live children, or even with dolls, which she could pre-
tend were alive; and at last she said honestly, "I don’t care about these things, because they can’t play with me, nor talk to me. If there were little children in the water, and I could see them, I should like that."

"Children in the water, you strange little duck?" said the professor.

"Yes," said Ellie. "I know there used to be children in the water, and mermaids too, and mermen. I saw them all in a picture at home of a beautiful lady sailing in a car drawn by dolphins, and babies flying round her, and one sitting in her lap; and the mermaids swimming and playing, and the mermen trumpeting on conch-shells. It hangs on the great staircase, and I have looked at it ever since I was a baby, and dreamed about it a hundred times; and it is so beautiful that it must be true."

But the professor had not the least notion of allowing that things were true merely because people thought them beautiful. So he gave her, in a form suited for the youthful mind, his arguments against water-babies.

Ellie was, I suppose, a stupid little girl; for, instead of being convinced by Professor Ptthmlnsprts’ arguments, she only asked, "But why are there not water-babies?"
I trust and hope that it was because the professor trod at that moment on the edge of a very sharp mussel, and hurt one of his corns sadly, that he answered quite sharply, forgetting that he was a scientific man, "Because there ain't."

Which was not even good English. The professor ought to have said, Because there are not: or are none.

He groped with his net under the weeds so violently, that, as it befell, he caught little Tom.

He felt the net very heavy, and lifted it out quickly with Tom all entangled in the meshes.

"Dear me!" he cried. "What a large pink Holothurian; with hands, too!"

He took him out.

"It actually has eyes!" he cried. "Why, it must be a Cephalopod! This is most extraordinary!"

"No, I ain't!" cried Tom, as loud as he could; for he did not like to be called bad names.

"It is a water-baby!" cried Ellie; and of course it was.

"Water-fiddlesticks, my dear!" said the professor, and he turned away sharply.

There was no denying it. It was a water-baby, and he had said a moment ago that there were none. What was he to do?
The professor catches Tom in his net
He would have liked, of course, to have taken Tom home in a bucket, kept him alive, and petted him and written a book about him.

If the professor had said to Ellie, "Yes, my darling, it is a water-baby, and a very wonderful thing it is, and it shows how little I know of the wonders of Nature, in spite of forty years' honest labor. I was just telling you that there could be no such creatures; and, behold! here is one come to confound my conceit, and show me that Nature can do, and has done, beyond all that man's poor fancy can imagine." I think, if the professor had said that, little Ellie would have believed him more firmly, and respected him more deeply, and loved him better, than ever she had done before. But he was of a different opinion. He hesitated a moment. He longed to keep Tom, and yet he half wished he never had caught him. At last, he poked Tom with his finger, for want of anything better to do.

Tom had been in the most horrible and unspeakable fright all the while, and had kept as quiet as he could, for it was fixed in his little head that if a man with clothes on caught him, he might put clothes on him too, and make a dirty black chimney-sweep of him again. But when the professor poked him, it was
more than he could bear, and, between fright and rage, he turned to bay as valiantly as a mouse in a corner, and bit the professor's finger till it bled.

"Oh! ah! yah!" the professor cried; and, glad of an excuse to be rid of Tom, dropped him on to the sea-weed, and thence Tom dived into the water and was gone in a moment.

"But it was a water-baby, and I heard it speak!" cried Ellie. "Ah, it is gone!" And she jumped down off the rock to try and catch Tom before he slipped into the sea.

Too late! and what was worse, as she sprang down, she slipped, and fell some six feet, and struck her head on a sharp rock, and lay quite still.

The professor picked her up, and tried to waken her, and called to her, and cried over her, for he loved her very much; but she would not waken at all. So he took her up in his arms and carried her to her governess, and they all went home, and little Ellie was put to bed and lay there quite still; only now and then she woke up and called out about the water-baby, but no one knew what she meant, and the professor did not tell, for he was ashamed to tell.

After a week, one moonlight night, the fairies came flying in at the window, and brought her such a pretty
pair of wings that she could not help putting them on; and she flew with them out of the window, and over the land, and over the sea, and up through the clouds, and nobody heard or saw anything of her for a very long while.
TOM slipped away off the rocks into the water, as I said before. But he could not help thinking of little Ellie. He did not remember who she was; but he knew that she was a little girl, though she was a hundred times as big as he. Tom thought about her
all that day, and longed to have her to play with, but he very soon had to think of something else.

He was going along the rocks in three-fathom water, watching the pollock catch prawns, and the wrasses nibble barnacles off the rocks, shells and all, when he saw a round cage of green withes, and inside it, looking very much ashamed of himself, sat his friend the lobster, twiddling his horns, instead of thumbs.

“What, have you been naughty, and have they put you in the lock-up?” asked Tom.

The lobster felt a little indignant at such a notion, but he was too much depressed in spirits to argue, so he only said, “I can’t get out.”

“Why did you get in?”

“After that nasty piece of dead fish.”

He had thought it looked and smelt very nice when he was outside, and so it did, for a lobster; but now he turned round and abused it because he was angry with himself.

“Where did you get in?”

“Through that round hole at the top.”

“Then why don’t you get out through it?”

“Because I can’t,” and the lobster twiddled his horns more fiercely than ever. “I have jumped upwards, downwards, backwards, and sideways at least
four thousand times, and I can’t get out; I always get up underneath there and can’t find the hole.”

Tom looked at the trap, and, having more wit than the lobster, he saw plainly enough what was the matter.

“Stop a bit,” said Tom. “Turn your tail up to me, and I’ll pull you through hind foremost, and then you won’t stick in the spikes.”

But the lobster was so stupid and clumsy that he couldn’t hit the hole. He was very sharp as long as he was in his own country, but as soon as he got out of it he lost his head, or, so to speak, lost his tail.

Tom reached and clawed down the hole after him, till he caught hold of him; and then, as was to be expected, the clumsy lobster pulled him in head foremost.

“Hello! here is a pretty business,” said Tom. “Now take your great claws, and break the points off those spikes, and then we shall both get out easily.”

“Dear me, I never thought of that,” said the lobster; “and after all the experience of life that I have had!”

But they had not got half the spikes away when they saw a great dark cloud over them, and lo and behold, it was the otter.

How she did grin and grin when she saw Tom. “Yar!” said she, “you little meddlesome wretch, I
have you now! I will punish you for telling the salmon where I was!" And she crawled all over the pot to get in.

Tom was horribly frightened, and still more frightened when she found the hole in the top and squeezed herself right down through it. But no sooner was her head inside than valiant Mr. Lobster caught her by the nose, and held on.

There they were all three in the pot, rolling over and over, and very tight packing it was. The lobster tore at the otter, and the otter tore at the lobster, and both squeezed and thumped poor Tom till he had no breath left in his body; and I don’t know what would have happened to him if he had not at last got on the otter’s back, and safe out of the hole.

He was right glad when he got out; but he would not desert his friend who had saved him, and the first time he saw his tail uppermost he caught hold of it, and pulled with all his might.

But the lobster would not let go.

"Come along," said Tom; "don’t you see she is dead?"

So she was, quite drowned and dead. And that was the end of the wicked otter. But the lobster would not let go.
“Come along, you stupid old stick-in-the-mud,” cried Tom, “or the fisherman will catch you!” And that was true, for Tom felt some one above beginning to haul up the pot.

But the lobster would not let go.

Tom saw the fisherman haul him up to the boatside, and thought it was all up with him. But, when Mr. Lobster saw the fisherman, he gave such a furious and tremendous snap that he snapped out of his hand, and out of the pot, and safe into the sea. But he left his knobbed claw behind him; for it never came into his stupid head to let go, so he just shook his claw off.

Tom asked the lobster why he never thought of letting go. He said very determinedly that it was a point of honor among lobsters. And so it is, as the Mayor of Plymouth found out once to his cost eight or nine hundred years ago.

For one day he was so tired with sitting on a hard chair, in a grand furred gown with a gold chain round his neck, hearing one policeman after another come in and sing, "What shall we do with the drunken sailor, so early in the morning?" and answering them each exactly alike — "Put him in the round house till he gets sober," that, when it was over, he jumped up and played leap-frog with the town-clerk till he burst
his buttons, and then had his luncheon and burst some more buttons, and then said: "It is a low spring tide; I shall go out and have an afternoon's fun, and catch lobsters with an iron hook."

So to the Mewstone he went, and for lobsters he looked. And, when he came to a certain crack in the rocks, he was so excited that, instead of putting in his hook, he put in his hand. Mr. Lobster was at home, and caught him by the finger, and held on.

"Yah!" said the mayor, and pulled as hard as he dared; but the more he pulled the more the lobster pinched, till he was forced to be quiet.

Then he tried to get his hook in with his other hand; but the hole was too narrow.

Then he pulled again; but he could not stand the pain.

Then he shouted and bawled for help; but there was no one nearer him than the men-of-war inside the breakwater.

Then he began to turn a little pale; for the tide flowed, and still the lobster held on.

Then he turned quite white; for the tide was up to his knees, and still the lobster held on.

\[1\] A rock that stands up out of the sea just outside of Plymouth harbor.
Then he thought of cutting off his finger; but he wanted two things to do it with—courage and a knife; and he had neither.

Then he turned quite yellow; for the tide was up to his waist, and still the lobster held on.

Then he thought over all the naughty things he ever had done: all the sand which he had put in the sugar, and the sloe-leaves in the tea, and the water in the treacle.

Then he turned quite blue; for the tide was up to his breast, and still the lobster held on.

Then, I have no doubt, he repented fully of all the naughty things which he had done, and promised to mend his life, as too many do when they think they have no life left to mend.

Then he grew all colors at once, and turned up his eyes; for the water was up to his chin, and still the lobster held on.

Then came a man-of-war's boat round the Mewstone, and saw his head sticking up out of the water. One said it was a keg of brandy, and another that it was a cocoanut, and another that it was a buoy loose, and another that it was a black duck, and wanted to fire at it, which would not have been pleasant for the mayor; but just then such a yell came out of a great
hole in the middle of it that the midshipman in charge guessed what it was, and bade his comrades pull up to it as fast as they could. So somehow or other the Jack-tars got the lobster out, and set the mayor free, and put him ashore. He never went lobster-catching again; and we will hope he put no more sand in the sugar. That is the story of the mayor of Plymouth.

And now happened to Tom a most wonderful thing; for he had not left the lobster five minutes before he came upon a water-baby.

A real live water-baby, sitting on the white sand very busy about a little point of rock. When it saw Tom it looked up for a moment, and then cried, "Why, you are not one of us. You are a new baby! Oh, how delightful!"

And it ran to Tom, and Tom ran to it, and they hugged and kissed each other for ever so long.

At last Tom said, "Oh, where have you been all this while? I have been looking for you so long, and I have been so lonely."

"We have been here for days and days. There are hundreds of us about the rocks. How was it you did not see us, nor hear us, when we sing and romp every evening before we go home?"
Tom looked at the baby again, and then he said: "Well, this is wonderful! I have seen things just like you again and again, but I thought you were shells, or sea-creatures. I never took you for water-babies like myself."

"Now," said the baby, "come and help me, or I shall not have finished before my brothers and sisters come, and it is time to go home."

"What shall I help you at?"

"At this poor dear little rock; a great clumsy boulder came rolling by in the last storm, and knocked its head off, and rubbed off all its flowers. And now I must plant it again with sea-weeds, and coralline, and anemones, and I will make it the prettiest little garden on all the shore."

So they worked away at the rock, and planted it, and smoothed the sand down round it, and capital fun they had till the tide began to turn. Then Tom heard all the other babies coming, laughing and singing and shouting and romping; and the noise they made was just like the noise of the ripple. So he knew that he had been hearing and seeing the water-babies all along; only he did not know them, because his eyes and ears were not opened.

In they came, dozens and dozens of them, some
bigger than Tom and some smaller, all in the neatest little white bathing dresses; and when they found that he was a new baby they hugged him and kissed him, and then put him in the middle and danced round him on the sand, and there was no one ever so happy before as little Tom.

"Now, then," they cried all at once, "we must go away home, we must go away home, or the tide will leave us dry. We have mended all the broken seaweed, and put all the rock pools in order, and planted all the shells again in the sand, and nobody will see where the ugly storm swept in last week."

This is the reason why the rock pools are always so neat and clean; because the water-babies come in shore after every storm, to sweep them out, and comb them down, and put them all to rights again.

Only where men are wasteful and dirty, and let sewers run into the sea, instead of putting the stuff on the fields like thrifty reasonable souls; or throw herrings' heads, and dead fish, or any other refuse, into the water; or in any way make a mess upon the clean shore, there the water-babies will not come, sometimes not for hundreds of years (for they cannot abide anything smelly or foul): but leave the sea-anemones and
the crabs to clear away everything, till the good tidy sea has covered up all the dirt in soft mud and clean sand, where the water-babies can plant live cockles and whelks and razor-shells and sea-cucumbers and golden-combs, and make a pretty live garden again, after man’s dirt is cleared away.

Where is the home of the water-babies? In St. Brandan’s fairy isle.

Did you never hear of the blessed St. Brandan, how he preached to the wild Irish on the wild wild Kerry coast; he and five other hermits, till they were weary and longed to rest? For the wild Irish would not listen to them, nor come to mass, but liked better to brew potheen, and dance, and knock each other over the head with shillalahs, and shoot each other from behind turf-dykes, and steal each other’s cattle, and burn each other’s homes; till St. Brandan and his friends were weary of them, for they would not learn to be peaceable Christians at all.

So St. Brandan went out to the point of Old Dunmore, and looked over the tide-way and away into the ocean, and sighed, “Ah that I had wings as a dove!” And far away, before the setting sun, he saw a blue fairy sea and golden fairy islands, and he said, “Those are the islands of the blest.”
Then he and his friends got into a fishing boat, and sailed away to the westward, and were never heard of more. But the people who would not hear him were changed into gorillas, and gorillas they are until this day.

When St. Brandan and the hermits came to that fairy isle, they found it overgrown with cedars, and full of beautiful birds; and he sat down under the cedars, and preached to all the birds in the air. They liked his sermons so well that they told the fishes in the sea; and they came, and St. Brandan preached to them; and the fishes told the water-babies, who live in the caves under the isle; and they came up by hundreds every Sunday, and St. Brandan taught the water-babies for a great many years, till his eyes grew too dim to see, and his beard grew so long that he dared not walk for fear of treading on it, for then he might have tumbled down. At last he and the five hermits fell fast asleep under the cedar shades, and there they sleep unto this day.

On still clear summer evenings, when the sun sinks down into the sea among golden cloud-capes and cloud-islands, and lakes and inlets of azure sky, the sailors fancy that they see, away to westward, St. Brandan's fairy isle. But whether men can see it or
not, St. Brandan's Isle once actually stood there; a

great land out in the ocean, which has sunk beneath

the waves. Old Plato called it Atlantis, and told

strange tales of the wise men who lived therein, and of

the wars they fought in the old times.

When Tom got there he found that the isle stood

on pillars, and that its roots were full of caves. There

were pillars of black basalt, and pillars of green and

crimson serpentine, and pillars ribbed with red and

white and yellow sandstone, and there were blue grot-

toes and white grottoes, all curtained and draped with

sea-weeds, purple and crimson, green and brown; and

strewn with soft white sand on which the water-babies

sleep every night. But, to keep the place clean and

sweet, the crabs picked up all the scraps off the floor

and ate them like so many monkeys; while the rocks

were covered with ten thousand sea-anemones and corals,

who scavenged the water all day long and kept it nice

and pure. To make up to them for having to do such

unpleasant work, they were not left black and dirty,

as poor chimney-sweeps and dustmen are. No; the

fairies have dressed them all in the most beautiful

colors and patterns, till they look like vast flower-

beds of gay blossoms. An old gentleman named Fourier

used to say that we ought to do the same by chimney-
sweeps and dustmen, and honor them instead of despising them; and he was a very clever old gentleman.

Instead of watchmen and policemen to keep out disagreeable things at night, there were thousands and thousands of water-snakes, and most wonderful creatures they were. They were dressed in green velvet, and black velvet, and purple velvet; and were all jointed in rings; and some of them had eyes in their tails; and some had eyes in every joint, so that they kept a very sharp lookout. If any wicked thing came by, out they rushed upon it; and then out of each of their hundreds of feet there sprang a whole cutler's shop of

Scythes,    Lances,
Billbooks,  Fishhooks,
Pickaxes,   Bradawls,
Forks,      Gimlets,
Penknives,  Corkscrews,
Javelins,   Pins,
Sabres,     Needles,

And so forth,

which stabbed, shot, pricked, and scratched those naughty beasts so terribly that they had to run for their lives, or else be chopped into small pieces and be eaten afterward.
There were water-babies in thousands—all the little children who are untaught and brought up heathen, and all who come to grief by ill-usage or ignorance or neglect; and all the little children in alleys and courts, and tumble-down cottages, who die by fever, and cholera, and measles, and other complaints which no one has any business to have.

I wish Tom had given up all his naughty tricks, and left off tormenting dumb animals, now that he had plenty of playfellows to amuse him. Instead of that, I am sorry to say, he would meddle with the creatures, all but the water-snakes, for they would stand no nonsense. So he tickled the madreporars, to make them shut up; and frightened the crabs, to make them hide in the sand and peep out at him with the tips of their eyes; and put stones into the anemones' mouths to make them fancy that their dinner was coming.

The other children warned him, and said, "Take care what you are at. Mrs. Bedonebyasyouidid is coming."

But Tom never heeded them, being quite riotous with high spirits, till, one Friday morning early, Mrs. Bedonebyasyouidid came indeed.

A very tremendous lady she was; and when the children saw her they all stood in a row, very upright,
and smoothed down their bathing dresses, and put their hands behind them, just as if they were going to be examined by the inspector.

She had on a black bonnet, and a black shawl, and a pair of large green spectacles, and she had a great hooked nose, and under her arm she carried a great birch-rod. She was so ugly that Tom was tempted to make faces at her, but did not; for he did not admire the look of the birch-rod under her arm.

She looked at the children one by one, and seemed very much pleased with them, and then began giving them all sorts of nice sea-things—sea-cakes, sea-apples, sea-oranges, sea-toffee; and to the very best of all she gave sea-ices made out of sea-cows' cream.

Little Tom watched all these sweet things given away, till his mouth watered and his eyes grew as round as an owl's. He hoped that his turn would come at last; and so it did. For the lady called him up, and held out her fingers with something in them, and popped it into his mouth; and, lo and behold, it was a cold hard pebble.

"You are a very cruel woman," said he, and began to whimper.

"And you are a very cruel boy, who puts pebbles into the sea-anemones' mouths to cheat them and
make them fancy that they had caught a good dinner! As you did to them, so I must do to you."

"Who told you that?" said Tom.
"You did yourself, this very minute."

Tom had never opened his lips. So he was very much taken aback.

"Yes; every one tells me exactly what they have done wrong, and that without knowing it themselves. So there is no use trying to hide anything from me. Now go and be a good boy, and I will put no more pebbles in your mouth, if you put none in the mouths of other creatures."

"I did not know there was any harm in it," said Tom.

"Then you know now. People continually say that to me: but I tell them, 'If you don't know that fire burns, that is no reason that it should not burn you; and if you don't know that dirt breeds fever, that is no reason why the fevers should not kill you.' The lobster did not know that there was any harm in getting into the lobster pot; but it caught him all the same."

"Dear me," thought Tom, "she knows everything!"

"And so, if you do not know that things are wrong, that is no reason why you should not be punished for
them; though not as much, my little man" (and the lady looked very kindly, after all), "as if you did know."

"Well, you are a little hard on a poor lad," said Tom. "Not at all; I am the best friend you ever had in your life. But I will tell you I cannot help punishing people when they do wrong. I like it no more than they do; I am often very, very sorry for them, poor things: but I cannot help it. If I tried not to do it, I should do it all the same. For I work by machinery, just like an engine, and am full of wheels and springs inside, and am wound up very carefully, so that I cannot help going."

"Was it long ago since they wound you up?" asked Tom. For the cunning little fellow thought, "She will run down some day; or they may forget to wind her up, as old Grimes used to forget to wind up his watch when he came in from the public-house; and then I shall be safe."

"I was wound up once and for all so long ago that I forget all about it."

"Dear me," said Tom, "you must have been made a long time!"

"I never was made, my child, and I shall go for ever and ever; for I am as old as Eternity, and yet as young as Time."
There came over the lady’s face a very curious expression — very solemn, and very sad; and yet very sweet. She looked up and away, as if she were gazing through the sea, and through the sky, at something far, far off; and, as she did so, there came such a quiet, tender, patient, hopeful smile over her face, that Tom thought for the moment that she did not look ugly at all. No more she did; for she was like a great many people who have not a pretty feature in their faces, and yet are lovely to behold and draw little children’s hearts to them at once; because, though the house is plain enough, yet from the windows a beautiful and good spirit is looking forth.

Tom smiled in her face, she looked so pleasant for the moment. And the strange fairy smiled too, and said: "Yes. You thought me very ugly, did you not?"

Tom hung down his head and got very red about the ears.

"And I am very ugly. I am the ugliest fairy in the world; and I shall be, till people behave themselves as they ought. Then I shall grow as handsome as my sister, who is the loveliest fairy in the world; and her name is Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby. She begins where I end, and I begin where she ends; and those who will not listen to her must listen to me. Now,
all of you run away, except Tom; and he may stay and see what I am going to do. It will be a very good warning for him to begin with, before he goes to school.

"Now, Tom, every Friday I come down here and call up all who have ill-used little children and serve them as they served the children."

At that Tom was frightened, and crept under a stone; which made the two crabs who lived there very angry, and frightened their friend the butter-fish into flapping hysterics; but Tom would not move for them.

First she called up a whole troop of foolish ladies, who pinch their children’s waists and toes; and she laced them all in tight stays, so that they were choked and sick, and their noses grew red, and their hands and feet swelled; and then she crammed their poor feet into the most dreadfully tight boots, and made them all dance, which they did most clumsily indeed; and then she asked them how they liked it, and when they said not at all, she let them go, because they had only done it out of foolish fashion, fancying it was for their children’s good, as if wasps’ waists and pigs’ toes could be pretty, or wholesome, or of any use to anybody.
Then she called up all the careless nurserymaids, and stuck pins into them, and wheeled them about in baby carriages with tight straps across their stomachs and their heads and arms hanging over the side, till they were quite sick and stupid, and would have had sun-strokes; but, being under the water, they could only have water-strokes, which are nearly as bad.

By that time she was so tired she had to go to luncheon.

After luncheon she set to work again, and called up all the cruel schoolmasters; and, when she saw them, she frowned most terribly, and set to work in earnest, as if the best part of the day’s work was to come.

She boxed their ears, and thumped them over the head with rulers, and struck their hands with canes, and set them each three hundred thousand lines of Hebrew to learn by heart before she came back next Friday. At that they all cried and howled so that their breaths came up through the sea like bubbles out of soda-water. By that time she was so tired that she was glad to stop; and, indeed, she had done a very good day’s work.

Tom did not quite dislike the old lady, but he could not help thinking her a little spiteful — and no wonder
if she was, for, if she has to wait to grow handsome till people do as they would be done by, she will have to wait a very long time.

Poor old Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid! she has a great deal of hard work before her, and had better have been born a washerwoman, and stood over a tub all day: but, you see, people cannot always choose their own profession.

Tom longed to ask her one question; and, after all, whenever she looked at him, she did not look cross; and now and then there was a funny smile on her face, and she chuckled to herself in a way which gave Tom courage. At last he said, "Pray, ma’am, may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly, my little dear."

"Why don’t you bring all the bad masters here, and punish them too? The miners that knock about the poor collier-boys; and all the master sweeps, like my master, Grimes? I saw him fall into the water long ago; so I expected he would be here. I’m sure he was bad enough to me."

Then the old lady looked so stern that Tom was quite frightened, and sorry that he had been so bold. But she was not angry with him. She only answered, "I look after them all the week round; and they are
in a very different place from this, because they knew that they were doing wrong.”

She spoke very quietly; but there was something in her voice which made Tom tingle from head to foot, as if he had got into a shoal of sea-nettles.

“But these people,” she went on, “did not know that they were doing wrong: they were only stupid and impatient; and therefore I only punish them till they become patient and learn to use their common sense like reasonable beings. But as for chimney-sweeps and collier-boys, my sister has set good people to stop all that sort of thing; and very much obliged to her I am, for if she could only stop the cruel masters from ill-using poor children I should grow handsome at least a thousand years sooner. Now do you be a good boy, and when my sister, Madame Doasyouwould-bedoneby, comes on Sunday, perhaps she will take notice of you, and teach you how to behave. She understands that better than I do.”

Tom was very glad to hear that there was no chance of meeting Grimes again, though he was a little sorry for him; but he determined to be a very good boy all Saturday, and he was; for he never frightened one crab, nor tickled any live corals, nor put stones into the sea-anemones’ mouths, to make them fancy they
had got a dinner; and, when Sunday morning came, sure enough, Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoney came too. Whereat all the little children began dancing and clapping their hands, and Tom danced too with all his might.

As for the pretty lady, I cannot tell you what the color of her hair was, or of her eyes. No more could Tom, for, when any one looks at her, all they can think of is that she has the sweetest, kindest, tenderest, funniest, merriest face they ever saw, or want to see. Tom saw that she was a very tall woman, as tall as her sister; but instead of being gnarly and scaly like her, she was the most nice, soft, fat, cuddly, delicious creature who ever took care of a baby; and she understood babies thoroughly. All her delight was, whenever she had a spare moment, to play with babies, in which she showed herself a woman of sense; for babies are the best company and the pleasantest playfellows in the world; at least, so all the wise people in the world think. Therefore, when the children saw her, they naturally all caught hold of her, and pulled her till she sat down on a stone, and they climbed into her lap, and clung round her neck, and caught hold of her hands. Then they all put their thumbs into their mouths, and began cuddling and purring like so
many kittens. Those who could get nowhere else sat down on the sand and cuddled her feet — for no one, you know, wears shoes in the water, except old bathing-women, who are afraid of the water-babies pinching their horny toes. Tom stood staring at the other water-babies; for he could not understand what it was all about.

"And who are you, you little darling?" she said.

"Oh, that is the new baby!" they all cried, pulling their thumbs out of their mouths; "and he can't remember having any mother." So saying, they all put their thumbs back again, for they did not wish to lose any time.

"Then I will be his mother, and he shall have the very best place."

She took Tom in her arms, and kissed him, and patted him, and talked to him, tenderly and low, such things as he had never heard before in his life; and Tom looked up into her eyes, and loved her, and loved, till he fell fast asleep.

When he woke, she was telling the children a story. And, as she went on, the children took their thumbs out of their mouths and listened quite seriously; and Tom listened too, and never grew tired of listening. He listened so long that he fell fast
asleep again, and, when he woke, the lady was holding him still.

"Don't go away," said little Tom. "This is so nice. I never had any one to cuddle me before."

"Don't go away," said all the children; "you have not sung us one song."

"Well, I have time for only one. So what shall it be?"

"The doll you lost! The doll you lost!" cried all the babies at once.

So the strange fairy sang: —

I once had a sweet little doll, dears,
   The prettiest doll in the world;
Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,
   And her hair was so charmingly curled.
But I lost my poor little doll, dears,
   As I played in the heath one day;
And I cried for her more than a week, dears,
   But I never could find where she lay.

I found my poor little doll, dears,
   As I played in the heath one day:
Folks say she is terribly changed, dears,
   For her paint is all washed away,
And her arm trodden off by the cows, dears,
   And her hair not the least bit curled:
Yet, for old sakes' sake she is still, dears,
   The prettiest doll in the world.
"Now," said the fairy to Tom, "will you be a good boy, and torment no more sea-beasts, till I come back?"

"And you will cuddle me again?" said Tom.

"Of course I will, you little duck. I should like to take you with me and cuddle you all the way, only I must not;" and away she went.

So Tom really tried to be a good boy, and tormented no sea-beasts after that as long as he lived; and he is quite alive, I assure you, still.
VI

You may fancy that Tom was quite good, when he had everything that he could want; but you would be very much mistaken. Being comfortable is a good thing, but it does not make people good. Indeed, it sometimes makes them naughty.
And I am very sorry to say that this happened to Tom. For he grew so fond of the sea-lollipops that his foolish little head could think of nothing else, and he was always longing for more, and wondering when the strange lady would come again and give him some, and whether she would give him more than the others. He thought of nothing but lollipops by day, and dreamed of nothing else by night—and what happened then?

He began to watch the lady to see where she kept the sweet things; and began hiding, and sneaking, and following her about, and pretending to be looking the other way, or going after something else, till he found out that she kept them in a beautiful mother-of-pearl cabinet, away in a deep crack of the rocks.

He longed to go to the cabinet, and yet he was afraid. Then he longed again, and was less afraid; and at last, by continual thinking about it, he longed so violently that he was not afraid at all. One night, when all the other children were asleep, and he could not sleep for thinking of lollipops, he crept away among the rocks and got to the cabinet, and behold! it was open.

But, when he saw all the nice things inside, instead of being delighted, he was quite frightened and wished
Tom and the cabinet of lollipops
he had never come there. Then he thought he would touch them, and he did; and then that he would taste one, and he did; and then that he would eat one, and he did; and then that he would eat two, and then three, and so on. Then he was terrified lest she should come and catch him, and began gobbling them down so fast that he did not taste them, nor have any pleasure in them. Then he felt sick, and concluded he would have only one more; and then only one more again; and so on till he had eaten them all up.

All the while, close behind him, stood Mrs. Bedone-bysayoudid.

Some people may say, "But why did she not keep her cupboard locked?" Well, it may seem a very strange thing, but she never does keep her cupboard locked; every one may go and taste for themselves, and fare accordingly. It is very odd, but so it is; and I am quite sure that she knows best. Perhaps she wishes people to learn to keep their fingers out of the fire by having them burned.

She took off her spectacles, because she did not like to see too much; and in her pity her eyes filled with big tears.

All she said was, "Ah, you poor little dear! you are just like all the rest."
But she said it to herself, and Tom neither heard nor saw her.

What did the strange fairy do when she saw all her lollipops eaten? Did she fly at Tom, catch him by the scruff of the neck, hold him, hump him, hit him, poke him, pull him, pinch him, pound him, put him in the corner, shake him, slap him, set him on a cold stone to reconsider himself, and so forth?

If she had, she knew quite well Tom would have fought, and kicked, and bit, and said bad words, and turned again that moment into a naughty little heathen chimney-sweep, with his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him.

Did she question him, frighten him, threaten him, to make him confess? Not a bit. If she had, she would have tempted him to tell lies in his fright; and that would have been worse for him, if possible, than even becoming a heathen chimney-sweep again.

No. She just said nothing at all about the matter, not even when Tom came next day with the rest for sweet things. He was horribly afraid of coming, but he was still more afraid of staying away lest any one should suspect him. He was dreadfully afraid, too, lest there should be no sweets — as was to be expected, he having eaten them all — and lest then the fairy
should inquire who had taken them. But, behold! she pulled out just as many as ever.

When the fairy looked him full in the face he shook from head to foot. However, she gave him his share like the rest, and he thought within himself that she could not have found him out.

But, when he put the sweets into his mouth, he hated the taste of them, and they made him sick; and terribly sick he was, and very cross and unhappy, all the week after.

When next week came he had his share again, and again the fairy looked him full in the face, but more sadly than she had ever looked before. He could not bear the sweets, but took them.

And, when Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby came, he wanted to be cuddled like the rest, but she said very seriously, "I should like to cuddle you, but I cannot, you are so horny and prickly."

Tom looked at himself, and he was all over prickles, which was quite natural, for you must know that people's souls make their bodies, just as a snail makes its shell. Therefore, when Tom's soul grew all prickly with naughty tempers, his body could not help growing prickly too, so that nobody would cuddle him, or play with him, or even like to look at him.
What could Tom do now but go away and hide in a corner and cry? For nobody would play with him, and he knew full well why.

He was so miserable all that week that, when the ugly fairy came, and looked at him once more full in the face, more seriously and sadly than ever, he could stand it no longer and thrust the sweetmeats away, saying, "No, I don't want any; I can't bear them," and then burst out crying, and told Mrs. Bedoney-asyoudid every word as it happened.

He was horribly frightened when he had done so, for he expected her to punish him very severely. But, instead, she only took him up and kissed him.

"I will forgive you, little man," she said. "I always forgive every one the moment they tell me the truth of their own accord."

"Then you will take away all these horrid prickles?"

"That is a very different matter. You put them there yourself, and only you can take them away."

"But how can I do that?" asked Tom, crying afresh.

"Well, I think it is time for you to go to school; so I shall fetch you a schoolmistress, who will teach you how to get rid of your prickles." And she went away.

Tom was frightened at the notion of a schoolmistress, for he thought she would certainly come with
a birch-rod or a cane; but he comforted himself, at last, that she might be something like the old woman in Vendale — which she was not in the least; for, when the fairy brought her, she was the most beautiful little girl that ever was seen, with long curls floating behind her like a golden cloud, and long robes floating all round her like a silver one.

"There he is," said the fairy; "and you must teach him to be good."

"I know," said the little girl; but she did not seem quite to like the task, for she put her finger in her mouth, and looked at Tom under her brows; and Tom put his finger in his mouth, and looked at her under his brows, for he was horribly ashamed of himself.

The little girl seemed hardly to know how to begin; and perhaps she would never have begun at all, if Tom had not burst out crying, and begged her to teach him to be good and help him to cure his prickles. At that she grew so tender-hearted that she began teaching him as prettily as ever child was taught in the world.

She taught Tom every day in the week; only on Sundays she always went away home, and the kind fairy took her place. And, before the fairy had taught Tom many Sundays, his prickles had vanished quite away and his skin was smooth again.
"Dear me!" said the little girl; "why, I know you now. You are the very same little chimney-sweep who came into my bedroom."

"Dear me!" cried Tom. "And I know you, too, now. You are the little white lady whom I saw in bed." And he jumped at her, and longed to hug and kiss her; but did not, remembering that she was a lady born. So he only jumped round and round her, till he was quite tired.

Then they began telling each other all their story — how he had got into the water, and she had fallen over the rock; and how he had swum down to the sea, and how she had flown out of the window, and how this, that, and the other, till it was all talked out; and then they both began over again, and I can't say which of the two talked fastest.

Then they set to work at their lessons again, and both liked them so well that they went on till seven full years were gone.

You may fancy that Tom was quite content and happy all those seven years; but the truth is, he was not. He had always one thing on his mind, and that was — where little Ellie went when she went home on Sundays.

"To a very beautiful place," she said.
But what was the beautiful place like, and where was it?

All that good little Ellie could say was that it was worth all the rest of the world put together. And of course that only made Tom the more anxious to go likewise.

"Miss Ellie," he said at last, "I will know why I cannot go with you when you go home on Sundays, or I shall have no peace, and give you none either."

"You must ask the fairies that."

So when the fairy, Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid, came next, Tom asked her.

"Little boys who are only fit to play with sea-beasts cannot go there," she said. "Those who go there must go first where they do not like, and do what they do not like, and help somebody they do not like."

"Why, did Ellie do that?"

"Ask her."

Ellie blushed, and said, "Yes, Tom; I did not like coming here at first; I was so much happier at home, where it is always Sunday. And I was afraid of you, Tom, at first, because — because —"

"Because I was all over prickles? But I am not prickly now, am I, Miss Ellie?"
"No," said Ellie. "I like you very much now; and I like coming here, too."

"Perhaps," said the fairy to Tom, "you will learn to like going where you don't like, and helping some one that you don't like, as Ellie has."

But Tom put his finger in his mouth, and hung his head down; for he did not see that at all.

So when Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby came, Tom asked her; for he thought, "She is not so strict as her sister, and perhaps she may let me off more easily."

But she told him just what the first fairy did.

Tom was very unhappy at that; and, when Ellie went home on Sunday, he fretted and cried all day, and did not care to listen to the fairy's stories about good children, though they were prettier than ever. Indeed, the more he heard, the less he liked to listen, because they were all about children who did what they did not like, and took trouble for other people, and worked to feed their little brothers and sisters, instead of caring only for their play; and Tom ran away and hid among the rocks.

When Ellie came back, he was shy with her, because he fancied she looked down on him and thought him a coward. And he grew quite cross with her, because she was superior to him and did what he could
not do. Poor Ellie was quite surprised and sad; and at last Tom burst out crying; but he would not tell her what was really in his mind.

All the while he was eaten up with curiosity to know where Ellie went; so that he began not to care for his playmates, or for the sea-palace or anything else. He grew so discontented with everything round him that he did not care to stay, and did not care where he went.

"Well," he said at last, "I am so miserable here, I'll go, if only you will go with me?"

"Ah!" said Ellie, "I wish I might; but the worst of it is that the fairy says you must go alone, if you go at all. Now don't poke that poor crab, Tom" (for he was feeling very naughty and mischievous), "or the fairy will have to punish you."

Tom was very nearly saying, "I don't care if she does;" but he stopped himself.

"I know what she wants me to do," he said, whining most dolefully. "She wants me to go after that horrid old Grimes. I don't like him, that's certain. And if I find him he will turn me into a chimney-sweep, I know. That's what I have been afraid of all along."

"No, he won't—I know as much as that. Nobody can turn water-babies into sweeps, or hurt them at all, as long as they are good."
"Ah," said naughty Tom, "I see what you want; you are persuading me to go, because you are tired of me and want to get rid of me."

Little Ellie opened her eyes very wide at that, and they were brimming over with tears.

"Oh, Tom, Tom!" she said, very mournfully—and then she cried, "Oh, Tom! where are you?"

And Tom cried, "Oh, Ellie, where are you?"

For neither of them could see each other—not the least. Little Ellie vanished quite away, and Tom heard her voice calling him, and growing fainter and fainter, till all was silent.

He swam up and down among the rocks, into all the halls and chambers, faster than ever he swam before, but could not find her. He shouted after her, but she did not answer; he asked all the other children, but they had not seen her; and at last he went up to the top of the water and began crying and screaming for Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid—which perhaps was the best thing to do—for she came in a moment.

"O dear, O dear!" said Tom. "I have been naughty to Ellie, and I have killed her."

"Not quite that," said the fairy; "but I have sent her home, and she will not come back for I do not know how long."
At that Tom cried bitterly.

"How cruel of you to send Ellie away!" sobbed Tom. "However, I will find her again, if I go to the world's end to look for her."

The fairy did not slap Tom, and tell him to hold his tongue: but she took him on her lap very kindly, just as her sister would have done, and put him in mind how it was not her fault, because she was wound up inside, like watches, and could not help doing things whether she liked to or not. Then she told him how he had been in the nursery long enough, and must go out now and see the world, if he intended ever to be a man; and how he must go all alone by himself, as every one else has to go. She told him how many fine things there were to be seen in the world, and what an odd, pleasant, orderly, respectable, well-managed, and, on the whole, successful sort of a place it was, if people would only be tolerably brave and honest and good in it; and then she told him not to be afraid of anything he met, for nothing would harm him if he remembered all his lessons and did what he knew was right. At last she comforted Tom so much that he was quite eager to go, and wanted to set out that minute. "Only," he said, "if I might see Ellie once before I went!"

"Why do you want that?"
"Because — because I should be so much happier if I thought she had forgiven me."

And in the twinkling of an eye there stood Ellie, smiling, and looking so happy that Tom longed to kiss her, but was afraid it would not be respectful, because she was a lady born.

"I am going, Ellie!" said Tom. "I am going, if it is to the world's end. But I don't like going at all, and that's the truth."

"Pooh! pooh! pooh!" said the fairy. "You will like it very well indeed, you little rogue. Come here, and see what happens to people who do only what is pleasant."

She took out of one of her cupboards (she had all sorts of mysterious cupboards in the cracks of the rocks) the most wonderful waterproof book, full of photographs; and her photographs did not merely represent light and shade, but color also, and the children looked with great delight for the opening of the book.

On the title-page was written, "The History of the famous nation of the Doasyoulikes, who came away from the country of Hardwork, because they wanted to play on the Jews'-harp all day long."

In the first picture they saw these Doasyoulikes living in the land of Readymade, at the foot of the
Happy-go-lucky Mountains, where flapdoodle grows wild.

They lived very much such a life as those jolly old Greeks in Sicily, and really there seemed to be great excuses for them, for they had no need to work.

Instead of houses, they lived in beautiful caves, and bathed in the warm springs three times a day.

They were very fond of music, but it was too much trouble to learn the piano or the violin; and as for dancing, that would have been too great an exertion. So they sat on ant-hills all day long, and played on the Jews' harp; and, if the ants bit them, why they just got up and went to the next ant-hill, till they were bitten there likewise.

And they sat under the flapdoodle trees, and let the flapdoodle drop into their mouths; and under the vines, and squeezed the grape-juice down their throats; and, if any little pigs ran about ready roasted, crying, "Come and eat me," as was their fashion in that country, they waited till the pigs ran against their mouths, and then took a bite, and were content, just as so many oysters would have been.

They needed no weapons, for no enemies ever came near their land; and no tools, for everything was ready-made to their hand.
There were never such comfortable, easy-going, happy-go-lucky people in the world.

"Well, that is a jolly life," said Tom.

"You think so?" said the fairy. "Do you see that great peaked mountain there in the picture with smoke coming out of its top?"

"Yes."

"And do you see all those ashes, and slag, and cinders, lying about?"

"Yes."

"Then turn over five hundred years, and you will see what happens next."

And behold the mountain had blown up like a barrel of gunpowder, and then boiled over like a kettle; whereby one-third of the Doasyoulikes were blown into the air, and another third were smothered in ashes; so that there was only one-third left.

"You see," said the fairy, "what comes of living on a burning mountain."

"Oh, why did you not warn them?" said little Ellie.

"I did warn them all that I could. I let the smoke come out of the mountain; and wherever there is smoke there is fire. And I laid the ashes and cinders all about; and wherever there are cinders, cinders may be again. But they did not like to face facts,
my dears, and so they invented a cock-and-bull story that the smoke was the breath of a giant whom some god or other had buried under the mountain; and that the cinders were what the dwarfs roasted the little pigs whole with, and other nonsense of that kind. When folks are in that humor, I cannot teach them, save by the good old birch-rod."

Then she turned over the next five hundred years, and there were the remnant of the Doasyoulikes, doing as they liked, as before. They were too lazy to move away from the mountain; so they said, "If it has blown up once, that is all the more reason that it should not blow up again."

They were few in number, but they only said, "The more the merrier, but the fewer the better fare."

However, that was not quite true, for all the flapdoodle trees were killed by the volcano, and they had eaten all the roast pigs. So they had to live very poorly on nuts and roots which they scratched out of the ground with sticks. Some of them talked of sowing corn, as their ancestors used to do before they came into the land of Readymade; but they had forgotten how to make ploughs (they had forgotten even how to make Jews'-harps by this time), and had eaten all the seed-corn which they brought out of the land of
Hardwork years since; and of course it was too much trouble to go away and find more. So they lived miserably on roots and nuts, and all the weakly little children died.

"Why," said Tom, "they are no better than savages."

"And look how ugly they are all getting," said Ellie. "Yes; when people live on poor vegetables instead of roast beef and plum pudding, their jaws grow large, and their lips grow coarse."

She turned over the next five hundred years. And there they were all living up in trees, and making nests to keep off the rain. And underneath the trees lions were prowling about.

"Why," said Ellie, "the lions seem to have eaten a good many of them, for there are very few left now."

"Yes," said the fairy; "you see it was only the strongest and most active ones who could climb the trees, and so escape."

"But what great, hulking, broad-shouldered chaps they are," said Tom; "they are a rough lot as ever I saw."

"Yes, they are getting very strong now, for the ladies will not marry any but the strongest and fiercest gentlemen, who can help them up the trees out of the lions' way."
Water-Babies

She turned over the next five hundred years. And in that they were fewer still, and stronger, and fiercer; but their feet had changed shape very oddly, for they laid hold of the branches with their great toes, as if they had been thumbs.

The children were very much surprised, and asked the fairy whether that was her doing.

"Yes, and no," she said, smiling. "It was only those who could use their feet as well as their hands who could get a good living, or, indeed, get married; so that they got the best of everything and starved out all the rest; and those who are left keep up a regular breed of toe-thumb-men."

"But there is a hairy one among them," said Ellie. "Ah!" said the fairy, "that will be a great man in his time, and chief of all the tribe."

When she turned over the next five hundred years, it was true.

For this hairy chief had had hairy children, and they hairier children still; and every woman wished to marry a hairy husband, and have hairy children too; for the climate was growing so damp that none but the hairy ones could live. All the rest coughed and sneezed, and had sore throats, and died before they could grow up to be men and women.
Then the fairy turned over the next five hundred years. And they were fewer still.

"Why, there is one on the ground picking up roots," said Ellie, "and he cannot walk upright."

No more he could; for in the same way that the shape of their feet had altered, the shape of their backs had altered also.

"Why," cried Tom, "I declare they are all apes."

"Something fearfully like it, poor foolish creatures!" said the fairy. "They are grown so stupid now that they can hardly think, for none of them has used his wits for many hundred years. They have almost forgotten, too, how to talk. For each stupid child forgot some of the words it heard from its stupid parents, and had not wits enough to make fresh words for itself. Besides, they are grown so fierce and suspicious and brutal that they keep out of each other's way, and mope and sulk in the dark forests, never hearing each other's voice, till they have forgotten almost what speech is like. I am afraid they will all be apes very soon."

In the next five hundred years they were all dead and gone, by bad food and wild beasts and hunters, except one tremendous old fellow who stood full seven feet high; and a hunter came up to him, and shot
him as he stood roaring and thumping his breast. He remembered that his ancestors had once been men, and tried to say, "Am I not a man and a brother?" but had forgotten how to use his tongue; and then he had tried to call for a doctor, but he had forgotten the word for one. So all he said was "Ubboboo!" and died.

That was the end of the great and jolly nation of the Doasyoulikes. And, when Tom and Ellie came to the end of the book, they looked very sad and solemn.

"But could you not have saved them from becoming apes?" said little Ellie.

"At first, my dear; if only they would have behaved like men, and set to work to do what they did not like. But the longer they waited, and behaved like the dumb beasts, who only do what they like, the stupider and clumsier they grew; till at last they were past all cure, for they had thrown their own wits away."

"And where are they all now?" asked Ellie.

"Exactly where they ought to be, my dear," said the fairy solemnly, half to herself, as she closed the wonderful book. "Folks say that I can make beasts into men by circumstance, and selection, and competition, and so forth. Well, perhaps they are right; and perhaps, again, they are wrong. But
let them recollect this, that there is a downhill as well as an uphill road; and, if I can turn beasts into men, I can, by the same laws of circumstance, and selection, and competition, turn men into beasts. You were very near being turned into a beast once or twice, Tom. Indeed, if you had not made up your mind to go on this journey and see the world, I am not sure but that you would have ended as an eft in a pond."

"O dear me!" said Tom; "sooner than that, and be all over slime, I'll go this minute."
“Now,” said Tom, “I am ready to be off, if it’s to the world’s end.”

“Ah!” said the fairy, “that is a brave, good boy. But you must go farther than the world’s end, if you want to find Mr. Grimes; for he is at the Other-end-
of-Nowhere. You must go to Shiny Wall, and through the white gate that never was opened; and then you will come to Peacepool and Mother Carey's Haven, where the good whales go when they die. And Mother Carey will tell you the way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere, and there you will find Mr. Grimes."

"O dear!" said Tom. "But I do not know my way to Shiny Wall, or where it is at all."

"Little boys must take the trouble to find out things for themselves, or they will never grow to be men. You must ask all the beasts in the sea and the birds in the air, and if you have been good to them, some of them will tell you the way to Shiny Wall."

"Well," said Tom, "it will be a long journey, so I had better start at once. Good-by, Miss Ellie; you know I am getting to be a big boy, and I must go out and see the world."

"I know you must," said Ellie; "but you will not forget me, Tom. I shall wait here till you come."

She shook hands with him, and bade him good-by. Tom promised not to forget her, but his little whirl-about of a head was so full of the notion of going out to see the world that he forgot her in five minutes.
He asked all the beasts in the sea, and all the birds in the air, but none of them knew the way to Shiny Wall. For he was still too far south.

Then he met a ship, larger than he had ever seen before—a gallant ocean-steamer, with a long cloud of smoke trailing behind. He wondered how she went without sails, and swam up to her to see. A school of dolphins were running races round and round her, going three feet for her one, and Tom asked them the way to Shiny Wall: but they did not know. Then he tried to find out how she moved. At last he saw her screw, and was so delighted with it that he played under her quarter all day, till he nearly had his nose knocked off by the fans and thought it time to move. Then he watched the sailors on deck, and the ladies with their bonnets and parasols.

At last there came out into the quarter-gallery a very pretty lady, in deep black widow's mourning, and in her arms a baby. She leaned over the rail, and looked back toward England; and as she looked she sang.

Her voice was so soft and low, and the music of the air so sweet, that Tom could have listened to it all day. But as she held the baby over the rail, to show it the dolphins leaping and the water
gurgling in the ship's wake, lo and behold! the baby saw Tom.

He was quite sure of that; for when their eyes met, the baby smiled and held out its hands; and Tom smiled and held out his hands too; and the baby kicked and leaped as if it wanted to jump overboard to him.

"What do you see, my darling?" said the lady; and her eyes followed the baby's till she too caught sight of Tom, swimming about among the foam-beads below.

She gave a little shriek and start; and then she said, quietly, "Babies in the sea? Well, perhaps it is the happiest place for them;" and waved her hand to Tom, and cried, "Wait a little, darling, and perhaps we shall go with you."

At that an old nurse came out and talked to her, and drew her in. Tom turned away northward, sad and wondering, and watched the great steamer slide away into the dusk, and the lights on board peep out one by one, and die out again, and the long bar of smoke fade away into the evening mist, till all was out of sight.

He swam northward day after day, till at last he met the King of the Herrings, with a curry-comb growing
out of his nose, and a sprat in his mouth, and asked him the way to Shiny Wall.

The King of the Herrings bolted his sprat head foremost, and said: "If I were you, young gentleman, I should go to the Allalonestone, and ask the last of the Gairfowl.¹ She is of a very ancient clan, very nearly as ancient as my own; and knows a good deal which these modern upstarts don't."

Tom asked his way to her, and the King of the Herrings told him very kindly, for he was a courteous old gentleman, though he was horribly ugly and strangely bedizened.

But, just as Tom had thanked him and set off, he called after him, "Hi! I say, can you fly?"

"I never tried," says Tom. "Why?"

"Because, if you can, I should advise you to say nothing to the old lady about it. There; take a hint. Good-by."

Away Tom went for seven days and seven nights due northwest, till he came to a great codbank, the like of which he had never seen before. The great cod lay below in tens of thousands and gobbled shell-fish all day long; and the blue sharks roved above in hundreds and gobbled the cod when they came up.

¹ The gairfowl were the great auks.
So they ate, and ate, and ate each other, as they had done since the making of the world; for no man had come there yet to catch them.

There he saw the last of the Gairfowl standing on the Allalonestone. And a very grand old lady she was, full three feet high, and bolt upright, like some old Highland chieftainess. She had on a black velvet gown, and a white apron, and a large pair of white spectacles, which made her look rather odd: but it was the ancient fashion of her house.

Instead of wings, she had two little feathery arms, with which she fanned herself, and complained of the dreadful heat; and she kept on crooning an old song to herself, which she learned when she was a little baby-bird, long ago —

"Two little birds they sat on a stone,
One swam away, and then there was one,
With a fal-lal-la-lady.

"The other swam after, and then there was none,
And so the poor stone was left all alone;
With a fal-lal-la-lady."

Tom came up to her very humbly, and made his bow; and the first thing she said was —

"Have you wings? Can you fly?"
“O, dear, no, ma’am; I should not think of such a thing,” said Tom.

“Then I shall have great pleasure in talking to you, my dear. It is quite refreshing to see anything without wings. They must all have wings, forsooth, now, every new upstart sort of bird. What can they want with flying, and raising themselves above their proper station in life? In the days of my ancestors no birds ever thought of having wings, and did very well without; and now they all laugh at me because I keep to the good old fashion. Why, the very marrocks and dovekies have got wings, the vulgar creatures, and poor little ones enough they are; and my own cousins too, the razor-bills, who are gentle-folk born and ought to know better than to ape their inferiors.”

So she was running on, while Tom tried to get in a word edgeways; and at last, when the old lady got out of breath and began fanning herself again, he asked if she knew the way to Shiny Wall.

“Shiny Wall? Who should know better than I? We all came from Shiny Wall, thousands of years ago, when it was decently cold, but now, what with the heat, and what with these vulgar winged things who fly up and down and eat everything, so that gentle-people’s hunting is all spoiled, and one really cannot
get one's living, nor hardly venture off the rock for fear of being flown against by some creature that would not have dared to come within a mile of one a thousand years ago—what was I saying? Why, we have quite gone down in the world, my dear, and have nothing left but our honor. And I am the last of my family. A friend of mine and I came and settled on this rock, when we were young, to be out of the way of low people. Once we were a great nation and spread over all the Northern isles. But men shot us, and knocked us on the head, and took our eggs—why, if you will believe it, they say that on the coast of Labrador the sailors used to lay a plank from the rock on board the thing called their ship, and drive us along the plank by hundreds, till we tumbled down into the ship in heaps; and then, I suppose, they ate us, the horrid fellows! Well—but—what was I saying? At last, there was none of us left, except on the old Gairfowl-skerry, just off the Iceland coast, up which no man could climb. Even there we had no peace; for one day, when I was quite a young girl, the land rocked, and the sea boiled, and the sky grew dark, and all the air was filled with smoke and dust, and down tumbled the old Gairfowl-skerry into the sea. The dovekies and marrocks, of course, all flew away; but we were
too proud to do that. Some of us were dashed to pieces, and some drowned; and those who were left got away to Eldey, and the dovekies tell me they are all dead now, and that another Gairfowlskerry has risen out of the sea close to the old one, but that it is such a poor flat place that it is not safe to live on: and so here I am left alone."

"If you only had had wings!" said Tom; "then you might all have flown away too."

"My dear, a gentleman came hither with me, and after we had been here some time he wanted to marry — in fact, he actually proposed to me. Well, I can't blame him; I was young and very handsome then, I don't deny: but I felt it my duty to snub him, and howk him, and peck him continually, to keep him at his proper distance; and, to tell the truth, I once pecked him a little too hard, poor fellow, and he tumbled backward off the rock, and — really, it was very unfortunate, but it was not my fault — a shark coming by saw him flapping, and snapped him up. And since then I have lived all alone —

With a fal-lal-la-lady.

And soon I shall be gone, my little dear, and nobody will miss me; and then the poor stone will be left all alone."
"But, please, which is the way to Shiny Wall?" said Tom.

"Oh, you must go, my little dear—you must go. Let me see—I am sure—that is—really, my poor old brains are getting quite puzzled. Do you know, my little dear, I am afraid, if you want to know, you must ask some of these vulgar birds, for I have quite forgotten."

And the poor old Gairfowl began to cry tears of pure oil; and Tom was quite sorry for her, and for himself, too, for he was at his wit's end whom to ask.

But there came by a flock of petrels, who are Mother Carey's own chickens; and Tom thought them much prettier than Lady Gairfowl, and so perhaps they were; for Mother Carey had had a great deal of fresh experience between the time that she invented the Gairfowl and the time that she invented them. They flitted along like a flock of black swallows, and hopped and skipped from wave to wave, lifting up their little feet behind them so daintily, and whistling to each other so tenderly, that Tom fell in love with them at once, and called to them to know the way to Shiny Wall.

"Shiny Wall? Do you want Shiny Wall? Then come with us and we will show you. We are Mother
Carey's own chickens, and she sends us out over all the seas to show the good birds the way home."

Tom was delighted, and swam off to them, after he had made his bow to the Gairfowl. She would not return his bow, but held herself bolt upright, and wept tears of oil as she sang:

"And so the poor stone was left all alone;
With a fal-lal-la-lady."

But she was wrong there; for the stone was not left all alone; and the next time that Tom goes by it he will see a sight worth seeing.

The old Gairfowl is gone, but there are better things come in her place, and when Tom comes he will see the fishing-smacks anchored there in hundreds, from Scotland, and from Ireland, and from all the Northern ports. The men will be hauling in the great cod by thousands, till their hands are sore from the lines; and they will be making cod-liver oil and salting down the fish; and there will be a man-of-war steamer there to protect them, and a lighthouse to show them the way; and you and I, perhaps, shall go some day to the Allalonestone, and we shall hear the sailors boast that it is not the worst jewel in the English monarch's crown, for there are eighty miles of cod-bank and food for all the poor folk in the land. Then
we shall not be sorry because we cannot get a Gairfowl to stuff, much less find Gairfowl enough to drive them into stone pens and slaughter them, as the old Norsemen did, or drive them on board along a plank till the ship was victualled with them, as the old English and French rovers used to do.

Now Tom was all agog to start for Shiny Wall, but the petrels said no. They must go first to Allfowlsness, and wait there for the great gathering of all the sea-birds, before they start for their summer breeding-places far away in the Northern isles; and there they would be sure to find some birds which were going to Shiny Wall: but where Allfowlsness was, he must promise never to tell, lest men should go there and shoot the birds, and stuff them, and put them into stupid museums, instead of leaving them to play and breed and work in Mother Carey's water-garden, where they ought to be.

So where Allfowlsness is nobody must know; and all that is to be said about it is that Tom waited there many days; and as he waited he saw a very curious sight. On the rabbit burrows on the shore there gathered hundreds and hundreds of hoodie-crows. And they made such a noise that Tom came on shore and went to see what was the matter.
There he found them holding their great caucus, which they hold every year in the North; and all their stump-orators were speechifying, and for a platform the speaker stood on an old sheep's skull.

They cawed and cawed, and boasted of all the clever things they had done; how many dead bullocks they had eaten, and how many young grouse they had swallowed whole, and how many grouse-eggs they had flown away with stuck on the point of their bills, which is the hoodiecrow's particularly clever feat, of which he is as proud as a gipsy is of doing the hokanybaro; and what that is I won't tell you.

At last they brought out the prettiest, neatest young lady-crow that ever was seen, and set her in the middle, and all began abusing and rating, and bullyragging at her, because she had stolen no grouse-eggs and had actually dared to say that she would not steal any. She was to be tried publicly by their laws (for the hoodies always try some offenders in their great yearly parliament). There she stood in the middle, in her black gown and gray hood, looking as meek and as neat as a Quakeress, and they all bawled at her at once.

It was in vain that she pleaded —
That she did not like grouse-eggs;
That she could get her living very well without them;
That she was afraid to eat them, for fear of the gamekeepers;
That she had not the heart to eat them, because the grouse
were such pretty, kind, jolly birds;
And a dozen reasons more.

For all the other crows attacked her, and pecked
her to death before Tom could come to help her;
and then flew away very proud of what they had done.

Was not this a scandalous transaction?

But the fairies took the good crow and gave her
nine new sets of feathers, and turned her at last into
the most beautiful bird of paradise with a green velvet
suit and a long tail, and sent her to eat fruit in the
Spice Islands where cloves and nutmegs grow.

Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid settled her account with
the wicked hoodies. For, as they flew away, what
should they find but a dead dog—on which they all
set to work, pecking and gobbling and cawing and
quarrelling to their hearts’ content. But the moment
afterward they all threw up their bills into the air,
and gave one screech; and then turned head over
heels backward, and fell down dead, one hundred and
twenty-three of them at once. For why? The fairy
had told the gamekeeper in a dream to fill the dead dog full of strychnine; and so he did.

After a while the birds began to gather at All-fowlsness in thousands and tens of thousands, blackening all the air; swans and geese, and eiders, divers and loons, auks and razorbills, petrels and terns, with gulls beyond all naming or numbering; and they paddled and washed and splashed and brushed themselves on the sand, till the shore was white with feathers; and they quacked and clucked and gabbled and chattered and screamed and whooped as they talked over matters with their friends, and settled where they were to go and breed that summer, till you might have heard them ten miles off; and lucky it was for them that there was no one to hear them but the old keeper, who lived all alone on the Ness in a turf hut thatched with heather and fringed round with great stones slung across the roof by ropes, lest the winter gales should blow the hut right away. But he never minded the birds nor hurt them, because they were not in season. Indeed, he minded but two things in the whole world, and those were his Bible and his grouse; for he was as good an old Scotchman as ever knit stockings on a winter’s night: only, when all the birds were going, he toddled out and took off his cap
to them, and wished them a merry journey and a safe return; and then gathered up all the feathers which they had left, and cleaned them to sell and make feather-beds for stuffy people to lie on.

Then the petrels asked this bird and that whether they would take Tom to Shiny Wall: but one set was going to the Shetlands, and one to Norway, and one to Spitzbergen, and one to Iceland, and one to Greenland; but none would go to Shiny Wall. So the good-natured petrels said that they would show him part of the way themselves, but they were only going as far as Jan Mayen’s land; and after that he must shift for himself.

Then all the birds rose up and streamed away in long black lines, north, and northeast, and northwest, across the bright blue summer sky; and their cry was like ten thousand packs of hounds, and ten thousand peals of bells. Only the puffins stayed behind, and killed the young rabbits and laid their eggs in the rabbit-burrows.

As Tom and the petrels went northeastward it began to blow right hard; for the old gentleman who looks after the big copper boiler in the Gulf of Mexico had got behindhand with his work. So Mother Carey had sent an electric message to him
for more steam; and now the steam was coming, as much in an hour as ought to have come in a week, puffing and roaring and swishing and swirling, till you could not see where the sky ended and the sea began. But Tom and the petrels never cared, for the gale was right abaft, and away they went over the crests of the billows as merry as so many flying-fish.

At last they saw an ugly sight — the black side of a great ship, water-logged in the trough of the sea. Her funnel and her masts were overboard, and swayed and surged under her lee; her decks were swept as clean as a barn floor, and there was no living soul on board.

The petrels flew up to her and wailed round her; for they were very sorry indeed, and also they expected to find some salt pork; and Tom scrambled on board of her and looked round, frightened and sad.

And there, in a little cot lashed tight under the bulwark, lay a baby fast asleep; the very same baby Tom had seen in the singing lady's arms.

He went up to it and wanted to wake it; but behold, from under the cot out jumped a little black and tan terrier dog, and began barking and snapping at Tom and would not let him touch the cot.

Tom knew the dog's teeth could not hurt him; but
at least it could shove him away, and did; and as they were struggling there came a tall green sea, and walked in over the weather side of the ship and swept them all into the waves.

"Oh, the baby, the baby!" screamed Tom; but the next moment he did not scream at all, for he saw the cot settling down through the green water, with the baby smiling in it fast asleep; and he saw the fairies come up from below and carry baby and cradle gently down in their soft arms; and then he knew it was all right, and that there would be a new water-baby in St. Brandan's Isle.

And the little dog?

Why, after he had kicked and coughed a little, he sneezed so hard that he sneezed himself clean out of his skin, and turned into a water-dog, and jumped and danced round Tom, and ran over the crests of the waves, and snapped at the jelly-fish and the mackerel, and followed Tom the whole way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere.

Tom and the petrels went on till they began to see the peak of Jan Mayen's Land, standing up like a white sugar-loaf, two miles above the clouds.

And there they fell in with a whole flock of molly-mocks who were feeding on a dead whale.
On the deck of the wrecked ship
"These are the fellows to show you the way," said Mother Carey's chickens; "we cannot help you farther north. We don't like to get among the ice pack for fear it should nip our toes: but the mollys dare fly anywhere."

So the petrels called to the mollys: but the mollys were so busy and greedy, gobbling and pecking and spluttering and fighting over the blubber, that they did not take the least notice.

"Come, come," said the petrels, "you lazy, greedy lubbers, this young gentleman is going to Mother Carey, and if you don't attend on him, you won't earn your discharge from her, you know."

"Greedy we are," says a great fat old molly, "but lazy we ain't; and, as for lubbers, we're no more lubbers than you. Let's have a look at the lad."

And he flapped right into Tom's face, and stared at him in the most impudent way (for the mollys are audacious fellows), and then asked him where he hailed from and what land he sighted last.

When Tom told him, he seemed pleased, and said Tom was a plucky one to have got so far.

"Come along, lads," he said to the rest, "and give this little chap a lift over the pack for Mother Carey's sake. We've eaten blubber enough for to-
day, and we’ll work out a bit of our time by helping the lad.”

So the mollys took Tom up on their backs, and flew off with him, laughing and joking — and oh, how they did smell of train oil!

“Who are you, you jolly birds?” asked Tom.

“We are the spirits of old Greenland skippers who hunted whales hundreds of years agone. But, because we were saucy and greedy, we were all turned into mollys to eat whale’s blubber all our days. But lubbers we are none, and could sail a ship now against any man in the North Seas. And it’s a shame of those black imps of petrels to call us so; but, because they’re her Grace’s pets, they think they may say anything they like.”

“And who are you?” asked Tom of him who had spoken, for he saw that he was the king of all the birds.

“My name is Hendrick Hudson, and a right good skipper was I; and my name will last to the world’s end, in spite of all the wrong I did. For I discovered the Hudson River, and I named Hudson’s Bay; and many have come in my wake that dared not have shown me the way. But I was a hard man in my time, that’s truth, and stole the poor Indians off the coast of Maine, and sold them for slaves down in
Virginia; and at last I was so cruel to my sailors, here in these very seas, that they set me adrift in an open boat, and I never was heard of more. So now I'm the king of all mollys, till I've worked out my time."

Now they came to the edge of the ice pack, and beyond it they could see Shiny Wall looming through mist and snow and storm. But the pack rolled horribly upon the swell, and the ice giants fought and roared, and leaped on each other's backs, and ground each other to powder, so that Tom was afraid to venture among them lest he should be ground to powder too. He was the more afraid when he saw lying among the ice pack the wrecks of many a gallant ship; some with masts and yards all standing, some with the seamen frozen fast on board.

But the good mollys took Tom and his dog up, and flew with them safe over the pack and the roaring ice giants, and set them down at the foot of Shiny Wall.

"Where is the gate?" asked Tom.

"There is no gate," said the mollys.

"No gate?" cried Tom aghast.

"None; never a crack of one, and that's the whole of the secret, as better fellows, lad, than you have found to their cost; and if there had been they'd have killed by now every whale that swims the sea."
“What am I to do, then?”

“Dive under the floe, to be sure, if you have pluck.”

“I’ve not come so far to turn back now,” said Tom; “so here goes for a header.”

“A lucky voyage to you, lad,” said the mollys. “We knew you were one of the right sort. So good-by.”

“Why don’t you come too?” asked Tom.

But the mollys only wailed sadly, “We can’t go yet, we can’t go yet,” and flew away over the ice pack.

So Tom dived under the great white gate which never was opened yet, and went on in black darkness at the bottom of the sea for seven days and seven nights. And yet he was not a bit frightened. Why should he be? He was a brave English lad, whose business is to go out and see all the world.

At last he saw the light, and clear water overhead; and up he came a thousand fathoms, among clouds of sea-moths which fluttered round his head. There were moths with pink heads and wings and opal bodies that flapped about slowly; moths with brown wings that flapped about quickly; yellow shrimps that hopped and skipped most quickly of all; and jellies of all the colors in the world that neither hopped nor skipped, but only dawdled and yawned and would
not get out of his way. The dog snapped at them till his jaws were tired; but Tom hardly minded them at all, he was so eager to get to the top of the water and see the pool where the good whales go.

And a very large pool it was, miles and miles across, though the air was so clear that the ice cliffs on the opposite side looked as if they were close at hand. All round it the ice cliffs rose, in walls and spires and battlements, and caves and bridges and galleries, in which the ice-fairies live and drive away the storms and clouds, that Mother Carey’s pool may lie calm from year’s end to year’s end. The sun acted policeman, and walked round outside every day, peeping just over the top of the ice wall to see that all went right; and now and then he played conjuring tricks, or had an exhibition of fireworks, to amuse the ice-fairies. For he would make himself into four or five suns at once, or paint the sky with rings and crosses and crescents of white fire, and stick himself in the middle of them and wink at the fairies; and I dare say they were very much amused.

There the good whales lay, the happy sleepy beasts, on the still oily sea. They were all right whales, you must know, and razor-backs, and bottle-noses, and spotted sea-unicorns with long ivory horns. But the
sperm whales are such raging, ramping, roaring, rumbustious fellows, that, if Mother Carey let them in, there would be no more peace in Peacepool. So she packs them away in a great pond by themselves at the South Pole; and there they butt each other with their ugly noses day and night from year's end to year's end.

But here there were only good quiet beasts, lying about and blowing every now and then jets of white spray, or sculling round with their huge mouths open for the sea-moths to swim down their throats. There were no sword-fish to stab their stomachs, nor sharks to bite lumps out of their sides, nor whalers to harpoon and lance them. They were quite safe and happy there; and all they had to do was to wait quietly in Peacepool, till Mother Carey sent for them to make them out of old beasts into new.

Tom swam up to the nearest whale and asked the way to Mother Carey.

"There she sits in the middle," said the whale.

Tom looked; but he could see nothing in the middle of the pool but one peaked iceberg, and he said so.

"That's Mother Carey," said the whale, "as you will find when you get to her. There she sits making old beasts into new all the year round."
"How does she do that?"

"That's her concern, not mine," said the old whale, and yawned so wide (for he was very large) that there swam into his mouth 943 sea-moths, 13,846 jelly-fish no bigger than pins' heads, and forty-three little ice-crabs, who gave each other a parting pinch all round, tucked their legs under their stomachs, and determined to die decently.

"I suppose," said Tom, "she cuts up a great whale like you into a whole shoal of porpoises?"

At which the old whale laughed so violently that he coughed up all the creatures, who swam away very thankful at having escaped out of that terrible whalebone net of his; and Tom went to the iceberg, wondering.

When he came near it, it took the form of the grandest old lady he had ever seen — a white marble lady, sitting on a white marble throne. And from the foot of the throne there swam away, out into the sea, millions of new-born creatures of more shapes and colors than man ever dreamed. They were Mother Carey's children, whom she makes out of the sea-water all day long.

He expected, of course — like some grown people who ought to know better — to find her snipping,
piecing, fitting, stitching, cobbling, basting, hammering, polishing, moulding, measuring, clipping, and so forth, as men do when they go to work to make anything.

But, instead of that, she sat quite still with her chin on her hand, looking down into the sea with two great grand blue eyes as blue as the sea itself. Her hair was as white as the snow — for she was very very old — in fact, as old as anything which you are likely to come across, except the difference between right and wrong.

When she saw Tom, she looked at him very kindly. "What do you want, my little man? It is long since I have seen a water-baby here."

Tom told her his errand and asked the way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere.

"You ought to know yourself, for you have been there already."

"Have I, ma’am? I’m sure I forget all about it."

"Then look at me."

And, as Tom looked into her great blue eyes, he recollected the way perfectly.

"Thank you, ma’am," said Tom. "Then I won’t trouble your ladyship any more."

"And now, my pretty little man," said Mother Carey, "you are sure you know the way to the Other-end-of-Nowhere?"
Tom thought; and behold, he had forgotten it utterly.

"That is because you took your eyes off me."

Tom looked at her again and recollected; and then looked away and forgot in an instant.

"But what am I to do, ma'am? For I can't keep looking at you when I am somewhere else."

"You must do without me, as most people have to do for nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of their lives; and look at the dog instead; for he knows the way well enough and will not forget it. Besides, you may meet some very queer-tempered people there who will not let you pass without this passport of mine, which you must hang round your neck and take care of; and, of course, as the dog will always go behind you, you must go the whole way backward."

"Backward!" cried Tom. "Then I shall not be able to see my way."

"On the contrary, if you look forward, you will not see a step before you and be certain to go wrong; but, if you look behind you and watch carefully whatever you have passed, and especially keep your eyes on the dog, then you will know what is coming next as plainly as if you saw it in a looking-glass."
Tom was very much astonished; but he obeyed her, for he had learned always to believe what the fairies told him.

"My dear child," said Mother Carey, "I will tell you a story which will show you that I am perfectly right.

"Once on a time, there were two brothers. One was called Prometheus, because he always looked before him and boasted that he was wise beforehand. The other was called Epimetheus, because he always looked behind him and did not boast at all; but said humbly, like the Irishman, that he had sooner prophesy after the event.

"Well, Prometheus was a very clever fellow, of course, and invented all sorts of wonderful things. But, unfortunately, when they were set to work, to work was just what they would not do: wherefore very little has come of them, and very little is left of them.

"But Epimetheus was a very slow fellow, and went among men for a clod, and a muff, and a milksop, and a slowcoach, and so forth. Very little he did for many years: but what he did he never had to do over again.

"And what happened at last? There came to the two brothers the most beautiful creature that ever
was seen, Pandora by name; which means, All the gifts of the Gods. But, because she had a strange box in her hand, this fanciful, suspicious, prophesying Prometheus, who was always settling what was going to happen, would have nothing to do with pretty Pandora and her box.

"But Epimetheus took her and it, as he took everything that came, and married her. And they opened the box between them, to see what was inside; for, else, of what possible use could it have been to them?

"And out flew all the ills which flesh is heir to; all the children of the four great bogies, Self-will, Ignorance, Fear, and Dirt — for instance:

Measles                     Famines
Scarlatina,                Quacks,
Idols,                     Unpaid bills,
Whooping cough,            Despots,
Wars,                      Demagogues,
And, worst of all, Naughty Boys and Girls.

But one thing remained at the bottom of the box, and that was Hope.

"So Epimetheus got a great deal of trouble, but he got the three best things in the world into the bargain — a good wife, and experience, and hope: while Prometheus had just as much trouble, and a great deal
more of his own making; with nothing besides save fancies spun out of his own brain, as a spider spins her web out of her stomach.

"Prometheus kept on looking before him so far ahead, that, as he was running about with a box of matches (which were the only useful things he ever invented, and do as much harm as good), he trod on his own nose and tumbled down, whereby he set the Thames on fire. So he had to be chained to the top of a mountain, with a vulture by him to give him a peck whenever he stirred, lest he should turn the whole world upside down with his prophecies and his theories.

"But stupid old Epimetheus went working and grubbing on, with the help of his wife Pandora, always looking behind him to see what had happened, till he really learned to know now and then what would happen next; and understood so well which side his bread was buttered, and which way the cat jumped, that he began to make things which would work, and go on working, too; to till and drain the ground, and to make looms, and ships, and railroads, and steam ploughs, and electric telegraphs; and to foretell famine, and bad weather, and the price of stocks; till at last he grew rich and fat; and people thought twice before they meddled with him, but only once before they asked
him to help them; for, because he earned his money well, he could afford to spend it well likewise.

"His children are the men of science, who get good lasting work done in the world; but the children of Prometheus are the fanatics, and the bigots, and the noisy windy people, who go telling silly folk what will happen, instead of looking to see what has happened already."

Tom was very sorely tried; for though, by keeping the dog to heels (or rather to toes, for he had to walk backward), he could see pretty well which way the dog was hunting, yet it was much slower work to go backward than to go forward. But, what was more trying still, no sooner had he got out of Peacepool than there came running to him all the conjurors, fortune-tellers, and astrologers, as many as were in those parts, bawling and screaming at him, "Look a-head, only look a-head; and we will show you what man never saw before, and right away to the end of the world!"

But I am proud to say that Tom never turned his head round once all the way from Peacepool to the Other-end-of-Nowhere: but kept his eye on the dog, and let him pick out the scent, hot or cold, straight or crooked, wet or dry, up hill or down dale; by which means he never made a single mistake.
As soon as Tom had left Peacepool, he came to the white lap of the great sea-mother, ten thousand fathoms deep; where she makes world-dough all day long, for the steam-giants to knead, and the fire-giants to bake, till it has risen and hardened into mountain-
loaves and island-cakes. There Tom was very near being kneaded up in the world-dough and turned into a fossil water-baby; which would have astonished the geologists some hundreds of thousands of years hence.

For, as he walked along in the silence of the sea-twilight on the soft white ocean floor, he was aware of a hissing, and a roaring, and a thumping, and a pumping, as of all the steam-engines in the world at once. And, when he came near, the water grew boiling-hot; not that that hurt him in the least, but it grew as foul as gruel, and every moment he stumbled over dead shells, and fish, and sharks, and seals, and whales, which had been killed by the hot water.

At last he came to a great sea-serpent, lying dead at the bottom; and, as he was too thick to scramble over, Tom had to walk round him three-quarters of a mile and more, which put him out of his path sadly; and, when he got round, he came to the place called Stop. And there he stopped just in time.

For he was on the edge of a vast hole in the bottom of the sea, up which was rushing and roaring clear steam enough to work all the engines in the world at once; so clear, indeed, that it was quite light at moments; and Tom could see almost up to the top of
the water above, and down below into the pit for nobody knows how far.

But, as soon as he bent his head over the edge, he got such a rap on the nose from pebbles that he jumped back; for the steam, as it rushed up, rasped away the sides of the hole, and hurled up into the sea a shower of mud and gravel and ashes which spread all around, and sank and covered in the dead fish so fast that, before Tom had stood there five minutes, he was buried in silt up to his ankles, and began to be afraid that he should be buried alive.

Perhaps he would have been, but, while he was thinking, the whole piece of ground on which he stood was torn off and blown upward, and away flew Tom a mile up through the sea, wondering what was coming next.

At last he stopped — thump! and found himself tight in the legs of the most wonderful bogy which he had ever seen.

It had I don’t know how many wings, as big as the sails of a windmill, and spread out in a ring like them; and with them it hovered over the steam which rushed up. And for every wing above, it had a leg below, with a claw like a comb at the tip, and a nostril at the root; and in the middle it had no stomach and one eye;
and as for its mouth, that was all on one side. It was a very strange beast; but no stranger than some dozens which you may see.

"What do you want here," it cried quite peevishly, "getting in my way?" and it tried to drop Tom; but he held on tight to its claws, thinking himself safer where he was.

So Tom told him who he was, and what his errand was. And the thing winked its one eye, and sneered: "I am too old to be taken in in that way. You are come after gold — I know you are."

"Gold! What is gold?" And really Tom did not know; but the suspicious old bogy would not believe him.

But after a while Tom began to understand a little. For, as the vapors came up out of the hole, the bogy smelt them with his nostrils, and combed them and sorted them with his combs; and then, when they steamed up against his wings, they were changed into showers and streams of metal. From one wing fell gold, and from another silver, and from another copper, and from another tin, and from another lead, and so on, and sank into the soft mud, and hardened there. Whereby it comes to pass that the rocks are full of metal.
But, all of a sudden, somebody shut off the steam below, and the hole was left empty in an instant; and then down rushed the water into the hole, in such a whirlpool that the bogy spun round and round as fast as a teetotum. But that was all in his day's work, so all he did was to say to Tom, "Now is your time, youngster, to get down, if you are in earnest, which I don't believe."

"You'll soon see," said Tom, and away he went, and shot down the rushing cataract.

When he got to the bottom, he swam till he was washed on shore safe upon the Other-end-of-Nowhere, and he found it, to his surprise, much more like This-End-of-Somewhere than he had been in the habit of expecting.

First he went through Waste-paper-land, where all the stupid books lie in heaps, like leaves in a winter wood; and there he saw people digging and grubbing among them.

Then he went by the sea of slops to the mountain of messes, and the territory of sweetmeats, where the ground was very sticky, for it was all made of bad molasses candy, and full of deep cracks and holes choked with windfallen fruit, and green gooseberries, and sloes, and crab-apples, and whinberries, and hips
and haws, and all the disagreeable things which little children will eat, if they can get them. But the fairies hide them out of the way in that country as fast as they can, and very hard work they have, and of very little use it is. For, as fast as they hide away the old trash, foolish and wicked people make fresh trash full of poisonous paints.

Next he saw all the little people in the world, writing all the little books in the world, about all the other little people in the world. And all the rest of the little people in the world read the books. But Tom thought he would sooner have a jolly good fairy tale, about Jack the Giant-killer or Beauty and the Beast, which taught him something that he didn’t know already.

Next he came to the centre of Creation. And there he found all the wise people instructing mankind in the science of spirit-rapping, while their house was burning over their heads: and, when Tom told them of the fire, they held an indignation meeting forthwith, and unanimously determined to hang Tom’s dog for coming into their country with gunpowder in his mouth. Tom couldn’t help saying that he would have called for the fire-engines before he hanged other people’s dogs. But it was of no use, and the dog was hanged. They failed in one little particular, viz.
that the dog would not die, being a water-dog, but bit their fingers so abominably that they were forced to let him go, and Tom likewise.

Then came Tom to the Island of Polupragmosyne (which some call Rogues' Harbor). There every one knows his neighbor's business better than his own, and a very noisy place it is, considering that the inhabitants are always making wry mouths and crying that the fairies' grapes were sour.

There Tom saw ploughs drawing horses, nails driving hammers, birds' nests taking boys, monkeys shaving cats; and, in short, every one set to do something which he had not learned, because in what he had learned, or pretended to learn, he had failed.

When he got into the middle of the town, they all set on him at once to show him his way; or rather, to show him that he did not know his way; for, as for asking him what way he wanted to go, no one ever thought of that.

But one pulled him hither, and another poked him thither, and a third cried, "You mustn't go west, I tell you; it is destruction to go west."

"But I am not going west, as you may see," said Tom. And another, "The east lies here, my dear; I assure you this is the east."
“But I don’t want to go east,” said Tom.

“Well then, at all events, whichever way you are going, you are going wrong,” cried they all with one voice—which was the only thing they ever agreed about; and all pointed at once to all the thirty-and-two points of the compass, till Tom thought all the sign-posts in England had gotten together and fallen to fighting.

Whether he would have ever escaped out of the town, it is hard to say, if the dog had not taken it into his head that they were going to pull his master in pieces, and tackled them so sharply that he gave them some business of their own to think of at last; and while they were rubbing their bitten calves, Tom and the dog got safely away.

On the borders of that island he found Gotham, where the wise men live; the same who dragged the pond because the moon had fallen into it, and planted a hedge round the cuckoo to keep spring all the year. And he found them bricking up the town gate, because it was so wide that little folks could not get through. So he went on; for it was no business of his; only he could not help saying that in his country, if the kitten could not get in at the same hole as the cat, she might stay outside and mew.
But he saw the end of such fellows when he came to the island of the Golden Donkeys, where nothing but thistles grow. There the people were all turned into donkeys with ears a yard long for meddling with matters which they do not understand. And donkeys they must remain till the thistles develop into roses. Till then, they must comfort themselves with the thought that the longer their ears are, the thicker their hides; and so a good beating doesn’t hurt them.

Then came Tom to the great land of Hearsay, in which are no less than thirty kings, besides half a dozen Republics.

There he fell in with a deep, dark, deadly, and destructive war, waged by the princes and potentates of those parts. All their strategy and art military consisted in the safe and easy process of stopping their ears and screaming, “Oh, don’t tell us!” and then running away.

So when Tom came into that land, he found them all, high and low, man, woman, and child, running for their lives day and night continually, and entreat­ing not to be told they didn’t know what; only the land being an island and they having a dislike of the water, they ran round and round the shore for ever, which was hard work, especially to those who had business
to look after. But before them, as bandmaster and leader, ran a gentleman shearing a pig; the melodious strains of which animal led them, if not to conquest, still to flight; and kept up their spirits mightily with the thought that they would at least have the pig's wool for their pains.

And running after them, day and night, came such a poor, lean, seedy, hardworked old giant, as ought to have been cockered up, and had a good dinner given him, and a good wife found him, and been set to play with little children; and then he would have been a very presentable old fellow after all; for he had a heart, though it was considerably overgrown with brains.

He was made up principally of fish bones and parchment, put together with wire and balsam; and smelt strongly of spirits, though he never drank anything but water. He had a great pair of spectacles on his nose, and a butterfly-net in one hand, and a geological hammer in the other; and was hung all over with pockets full of collecting boxes, bottles, microscopes, telescopes, barometers, forceps, photographic apparatus, and all other tackle for finding out everything about everything, and a little more too. And, most strange of all, he was running, not forwards but backwards, as fast as he could.
Away all the good folks ran from him, except Tom, who stood his ground and dodged between his legs; and the giant, when he had passed him, looked down and cried, as if he was quite pleased and comforted,—

“What? Who are you? And you actually don’t run away like all the rest?” But he had to take his spectacles off, Tom noticed, in order to see him plainly.

Tom told him who he was; and the giant pulled out a bottle and a cork instantly, to collect him with.

But Tom was too sharp for that, and dodged between his legs and in front of him; and then the giant could not see him at all.

“No, no, no!” said Tom, “I’ve not been round the world, and through the world, and up to Mother Carey’s haven, besides being caught in a net and called a Holothurian and a Cephalopod, to be bottled up by any old giant like you.”

When the giant understood what a great traveller Tom had been, he made a truce with him at once, and would have kept him there to this day, so delighted was he at finding any one to tell him what he did not know before.

“Ah, you lucky little dog!” said he at last, for he was the pleasantest, honestest, kindliest old giant that ever turned the world upside down without
intending it—"Ah, you lucky little dog! If I had only been where you have been, to see what you have seen!"

"Well," said Tom, "if you want to do that, you had best put your head under water for a few hours, as I did, and turn into a water-baby, and then you might have a chance."

"Turn into a baby, eh? If I could do that, and know what was happening to me for but one hour, I should know everything then and be at rest. But I can't; I can't be a little child again; and I suppose if I could it would be no use, because then I should know nothing about what was happening to me. Ah, you lucky little dog!" said the poor old giant.

"But why do you run after all these poor people?" said Tom, who liked the giant very much.

"My dear, it's they that have been running after me, father and son, for hundreds and hundreds of years, throwing stones at me till they have knocked off my spectacles fifty times, and calling me a turbaned Turk, who beat a Venetian and traduced the state—goodness only knows what they mean,—and hunting me round and round—though catch me they can't, for every time I go over the same ground I go the faster and grow the bigger. All I want is
to be friends with them, and to tell them something to their advantage, only somehow they are strangely afraid of hearing it. But I suppose I am not a man of the world, and have no tact."

"Why don't you turn round and tell them so?"

"Because I can't. You see, I am one of the sons of Epimetheus, and must go backwards, if I am to go at all."

"But why don't you stop and let them come up to you?"

"Why, my dear, only think. If I did, all the butterflies and cockyolybirds would fly past me, and then I should catch no more new species, and should grow rusty and moldy, and die. And I don't intend to do that, my dear; for I have a destiny before me, they say, though what it is I don't know, and don't care."

"Don't care?" said Tom.

"No. Do the duty which lies nearest you, and catch the first beetle you come across, is my motto; and I have thriven by it for some hundred years. Now I must go on. Dear me, while I have been talking to you at least nine new species have escaped me."

And on went the giant, behind before, till he ran into the steeple of the great idol temple (for they are
all idolaters in those parts), and knocked the upper half clean off, hurting himself horribly about the small of the back.

But little he cared; for as soon as the ruins of the steeple were well between his legs, he poked and peered among the falling stones, and shifted his spectacles, and pulled out his pocket-magnifier, and cried: "An entirely new Oniscus, and three obscure Podurellæ! This is most important!"

And down he sat on the nave of the temple to examine his Podurellæ. Whereon the roof caved in, smashing the idols, and sending the priests flying out of doors and windows like rabbits out of a burrow when a ferret goes in.

But he never heeded; for out of the dust flew a bat, and the giant had him in a moment.

"Dear me! This is even more important! Here is a cognate species to that which Macgilliwaukie Brown insists is confined to the Buddhist Temples of Little Thibet."

And having bagged his bat, up he got, and on he went; while all the people ran, being in none the better humor for having their temple smashed for the sake of three obscure species of Podurella, and a Buddhist bat.
“Well,” thought Tom, “this is a very pretty quarrel, with a good deal to be said on both sides. But it is no business of mine.”

The giant ran round after the people, and the people ran round after the giant, and they are running unto this day for aught I know; and will run till either he, or they, or both, turn into little children. Then, as Shakspeare says —

“Jack shall have Jill
Nought shall go ill
The man shall have his mare again, and all go well.”

Then Tom came to a very famous island, which was called, in the days of the great traveller Captain Gulliver, the Isle of Laputa. But Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid has named it over, the Isle of Tomtoddies, all heads and no bodies.

When Tom came near it, he heard a grumbling and grunting and growling and wailing and weeping and whining. When he came nearer, he began to hear words among the noise. It was the Tomtoddies’ song which they sing morning and evening, and all night too, to their great idol Examination —

“I can’t learn my lesson: the examiner’s coming!”

And that was the only song they knew.
When Tom got on shore the first thing he saw was a great pillar, on one side of which was inscribed, "Playthings not allowed here;" at which he was so shocked that he would not stay to see what was written on the other side. Then he looked round for the people of the island; but instead of men, women, and children, he found nothing but turnips and radishes and beets, without a single green leaf among them, and half of them burst and decayed, with toad-stools growing out of them. Those which were left began crying to Tom in half a dozen different languages at once, and all of them badly spoken, "I can't learn my lesson; do come and help me!"

And one cried, "Can you show me how to extract this square-root?"

And another, "What is the latitude and longitude of Snooksville, in Noman's County, Oregon, U.S.?

And another, "What was the name of Mutius Scævolia's thirteenth cousin's grandmother's maid's cat?"

And another, "How long would it take a school-inspector of average activity to tumble head over heels from London to York?"

And another, "Can you tell me the name of a place that nobody ever heard of, where nothing ever happened, in a country which has not been discovered yet?"
And another, "Can you show me the cause why crocodiles have no tongues?"

And so on, and so on, and so on.

"What good on earth would it do you if I did tell you?" quoth Tom.

Well, they didn't know that; all they knew was the examiner was coming.

Then Tom stumbled on the hugest and softest nimblecomequick turnip you ever saw, and it cried to him, "Can you tell me anything at all about anything you like?"

"About what?" says Tom.

"About anything you like; for as fast as I learn things I forget them. So my mamma says that my intellect is not adapted for methodic science, and says that I must go in for general information."

Tom told him that he did not know general information, nor any officers in the army; only he had a friend once that went for a drummer: but he could tell him a great many strange things which he had seen in his travels.

So he told him, while the poor turnip listened very carefully; and the more he listened, the more he forgot, and the more water ran out of him.

Tom thought he was crying, but it was only his
poor brains running away from being worked so hard; and, as Tom talked, the unhappy turnip streamed down all over with juice, and split and shrank till nothing was left of him but rind and water; whereat Tom ran away in a fright, for he thought he might be taken up for killing the turnip.

But, on the contrary, the turnip’s parents were highly delighted, and considered him a saint and a martyr, and put up a long inscription over his tomb about his wonderful talents, early development, and unparalleled precocity.

Tom was so puzzled and frightened with all he saw that he was longing to ask the meaning of it; and at last he stumbled over a respectable old stick lying half covered with earth. But a very stout and worthy stick it was.

"You see," said the stick, "they were as pretty little children once as you could wish to see, and might have been so still if only they had been left to grow up like human beings, and then handed over to me; but their foolish fathers and mothers, instead of letting them pick flowers, and make dirt pies, and dance round the gooseberry bush, as little children should, kept them always at lessons, working, working, working, learning weekday lessons all weekdays, and
Sunday lessons all Sunday, and weekly examinations every Saturday, and monthly examinations every month, and yearly examinations every year, everything seven times over, as if once was not enough, and enough as good as a feast — till their brains grew big, and their bodies grew small, and they were all changed into turnips with little but water inside; and still their foolish parents actually pick the leaves off them, as fast as they grow, lest they should have anything green about them."

"Ah!" said Tom, "if dear Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby knew of it she would send them a lot of tops, and balls, and marbles, and ninepins, and make them all jolly."

"It would be no use," said the stick. "They can't play now if they tried. Don't you see how their legs have turned to roots and grown into the ground, by never taking any exercise, but moping always in the same place? But here comes the Examiner-of-all-Examiners. So you had better get away, I warn you, or he will examine you, and your dog into the bargain, and set him to examine all the other dogs, and you to examine all the other water-babies. There is no escaping out of his hands, for he can go down chimneys and through keyholes, upstairs, downstairs,
in my lady’s chamber, examining all little boys, and the little boys’ tutors likewise. But when he is thrashed — so Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid has promised me — I shall have the thrashing of him; and if I don’t lay on with a will it’s a pity.”

Tom went off, but rather slowly and surlily, for he was somewhat minded to face this same Examiner-of-all-Examiners, who came striding among the poor turnips, binding heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and laying them on little children’s shoulders, and not touching the same with one of his fingers; for he had plenty of money, and a fine house to live in; which was more than the poor little turnips had.

But when he got near, he looked so big and burly and dictatorial, and shouted so loud to Tom to come and be examined, that Tom ran for his life, and the dog too. And really it was time; for the poor turnips, in their hurry and fright, crammed themselves so fast to be ready for the Examiner, that they burst and popped by dozens all round him, and Tom thought he should be blown into the air, dog and all.

He went down to the shore, jumped into the sea, and swam on his way. Next he came to Oldwives-fabledom, where the folks were all heathen. And there
he found a little boy sitting in the middle of the road, and crying bitterly.

"What are you crying for?" said Tom.

"Because I am not frightened as I wish to be."

"Not frightened? You are a queer little chap: but, if you want to be frightened, here goes — Boo!"

"Ah!" said the little boy, "that is very kind of you; but I don't feel that it has made any impression."

Tom offered to upset him, punch him, stamp on him, hit him over the head with a brick, or anything else whatsoever which would give him the slightest comfort.

But he only thanked Tom very civilly, in fine long words which he had heard other folk use, and which, therefore, he thought were fit and proper to use himself; and cried till his papa and mamma came, and sent off for the Powwow man immediately. And a very good-natured gentleman and lady they were, though they were heathen; and talked quite pleasantly to Tom about his travels, till the Powwow man arrived with his thunderbox under his arm.

A well-fed, ill-favored gentleman he was. Tom was a little frightened at first, for he thought it was Grimes. But he soon saw his mistake, for Grimes always looked a man in the face, and this fellow never
did. When he spoke, it was fire and smoke; and when he sneezed, it was squibs and crackers; and when he cried, it was boiling pitch; and some of it was sure to stick.

“Here we are again!” cried he. “So you can’t feel frightened, my little dear—eh? I’ll make an impression on you! Yah! Boo! Whirroo! Hulla-baloo!”

And he rattled, thumped, brandished his thunder-box, yelled, shouted, raved, roared, stamped, and danced; and then he touched a spring in the thunder-box, and out popped turnip-ghosts and pasteboard bogies and spring-heeled Jacks, with such a horrid din, clatter, rattle, and roar, that the little boy turned up the whites of his eyes and fainted right away.

At that his poor heathen papa and mamma were as much delighted as if they had found a gold mine; and fell down on their knees before the Powwow man, and gave him a palanquin with a pole of solid silver and curtains of cloth of gold, and carried him about in it on their own backs; but as soon as they had taken him up, the pole stuck to their shoulders, and they could not set him down any more, but carried him on, willy-nilly, which was a pitiable sight to see; for the father was a very brave officer and wore two
swords, and the mother was as pretty a lady as ever had pinched feet like a Chinese. But you see they had chosen to do a foolish thing just once too often; so, by the laws of Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid, they had to go on doing it whether they chose or not.

"Now then," said the Powwow man to Tom, "wouldn't you like to be frightened, my little dear? For I can see plainly that you are a very wicked, graceless boy."

"You're another," quoth Tom, very sturdily. And when the man ran at him, and cried "Boo!" Tom ran at him in return, and cried "Boo!" likewise, right in his face, and set the little dog upon him; and at his legs the dog went.

At which, if you will believe it, the fellow turned tail, thunderbox and all, with a "Woof!" and ran for his life, screaming, "Help! thieves! murder! fire! He is going to kill me! I am a ruined man! He will murder me and destroy my precious thunderbox, and then you will have no more thunder-showers in the land. Help! help! help!"

At which the papa and mamma and all the people of Oldwivesfabledom flew at Tom, shouting, "Oh, the wicked, impudent, hard-hearted boy! Beat him, kick him, shoot him, drown him, hang him, burn him!"
and so forth: but luckily they had nothing to shoot, hang, or burn him with, for the fairies had hid all the killing-tackle out of the way a little while before. They could only pelt him with stones; and some of the stones went clean through him and came out the other side. But he did not mind that a bit; for the holes closed up again as fast as they were made, because he was a water-baby. However, he was very glad when he was safe out of the country, for the noise there made him all but deaf.

Then he came to a very quiet place called Leave-heavenalone. There the sun was drawing water out of the sea to make steam-threads, and the wind was twisting them up to make cloud-patterns, till they had worked between them the loveliest wedding veil of lace, and hung it up in their palace for any one to buy who could afford it; while the good old sea never grudged, for she knew they would pay her back honestly. So the sun span, and the wind wove, and all went well with the great steam-loom.

At last, after innumerable adventures, he saw before him a huge building.

Tom walked toward this building, wondering what it was, till he saw running toward him, and shouting “Stop!” three or four people, who, when they came
nearer, were nothing else than policemen's clubs, running along without legs or arms.

Tom was not astonished. He was long past that. Besides, he had seen creatures in the water move nobody knows how, without arms, or legs, or anything to stand in their stead. Neither was he frightened; for he had been doing no harm.

So he stopped; and, when the foremost club came up and asked his business, he showed Mother Carey's pass. The club looked at the pass in the oddest fashion, for it had one eye in the middle of its upper end, so that when it looked at anything, being quite stiff, it had to slope itself, and poke itself, till it was a wonder it did not tumble over.

"All right—pass on," it said at last. Then it added, "I had better go with you, young man."

Tom had no objection, for such company was both respectable and safe; so the club coiled its thong neatly round its handle, to prevent tripping itself up—for the thong had got loose in running—and marched on by Tom's side.

"Why have you no policeman to carry you?" asked Tom, after a while.

"Because we are not like those clumsy-made clubs in the land-world, which cannot go without having
a whole man to carry them about. We do our own work for ourselves, and do it very well, though I say it who should not."

"Then why have you a thong to your handle?" asked Tom.

"To hang ourselves up by, of course, when we are off duty."

Tom had got his answer and had no more to say, till they came to the great iron door of the prison. There the club knocked twice with its own head.

A wicket in the door opened, and out looked a tremendous old brass blunderbuss charged up to the muzzle with slugs. This was the porter; and Tom started back a little at the sight of him.

"What case is this?" he asked in a deep voice, out of his broad bell mouth.

"If you please, sir, it is no case; only a young gentleman from her ladyship, who wants to see Grimes, the master-sweep."

"Grimes?" said the blunderbuss. And he pulled in his muzzle, perhaps to look over his prison-lists.

"Grimes is up chimney No. 345," he said from inside. "So the young gentleman had better go on to the roof."

Tom looked up at the enormous wall, which seemed at least ninety miles high, and wondered how he
should ever get up; but, when he hinted that to the club, it settled the matter in a moment. For it whisked round, and gave him such a shove behind as sent him up to the roof in no time with his little dog under his arm.

There he walked along, till he met another club, and told it his errand.

"Very good," it said. "Come along, but it will be of no use. He is the most unremitting, hard-hearted, foul-mouthed fellow I have in charge, and thinks about nothing but beer and pipes, which are not allowed here, of course."

So he walked along over the roof, and very sooty it was, and Tom thought the chimneys must want sweeping very much. But he was surprised to see that the soot did not stick to his feet, nor dirty them in the least. Neither did the live coals, which were lying about in plenty, burn him; for he was a water-baby.

At last they came to chimney No. 345. Out of the top of it, his head and shoulders just showing, stuck poor Mr. Grimes; so sooty, and bleared, and ugly, that Tom could hardly bear to look at him. And in his mouth was a pipe; but it was not lighted, though he was pulling at it with all his might.

"Attention, Mr. Grimes," said the club; "here is a gentleman come to see you."
But Mr. Grimes only said bad words, and kept grumbling, "My pipe won't draw. My pipe won't draw."

"Keep a civil tongue and attend!" said the club, and popped up, hitting Grimes such a crack over the head with itself that his brains rattled inside like a dried walnut meat in its shell. He tried to get his hands out and rub the place, but he could not, for they were stuck fast in the chimney. Now he was forced to attend.

"Hey!" he said, "why, it's Tom! I suppose you have come here to laugh at me, you spiteful little atomy?"

Tom assured him he had not, but only wanted to help him.

"I don't want anything except beer, and that I can't get; and a light to this bothering pipe, and that I can't get either."

"I'll get you one," said Tom, and he took up a live coal and put it to Grimes's pipe; but it went out instantly.

"It's no use," said the club, leaning itself against the chimney and looking on. "I tell you, it is no use. His heart is so cold that it freezes everything that comes near him. You will see that presently, plain enough."
"Oh, of course, it's my fault. Everything's always my fault," said Grimes. "Now don't go to hit me again" (for the club started upright, and looked very wicked); "you know, if my arms were only free, you daren't hit me then."

The club leaned back against the chimney and took no notice of the insult, like a well-trained policeman as it was.

"But can't I help you in any other way? Can't I help you to get out of this chimney?" said Tom.

"No," interposed the club; "he has come to the place where everybody must help themselves; and he will find it out, I hope, before he has done with me."

"Oh, yes," said Grimes, "of course it's me. Did I ask to be brought here into the prison? Did I ask to be set to sweep your foul chimneys? Did I ask to have lighted straw put under me to make me go up? Did I ask to stick fast in the very first chimney of all, because it was so shamefully clogged up with soot? Did I ask to stay here — I don't know how long — a hundred years, I do believe, and never get my pipe, nor my beer, nor nothing fit for a beast, let alone a man."

"No," answered a solemn voice behind. "No more did Tom, when you behaved to him in the very same way."
Mr. Grimes in the chimney
It was Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid. And, when the club saw her, it started bolt upright—and made a low bow. And Tom made his bow too.

“Oh, ma’am,” he said, “don’t think about me; that’s all past and gone, and good times and bad times and all times pass over. But may not I help poor Mr. Grimes? Mayn’t I try to get some of these bricks away, that he may move his arms?”

“You may try, of course,” she said.

So Tom pulled and tugged at the bricks, but he could not move one. Then he tried to wipe Mr. Grimes’s face, but the soot would not come off.

“Oh, dear!” he said, “I have come all this way, through all those terrible places, to help you, and now I am of no use at all.”

“You had best leave me alone,” said Grimes. “You are a good-natured, forgiving little chap, and that’s the truth; but you’d best be off. The hail’s coming on soon, and it will beat the eyes out of your little head.”

“What hail?”

“Why, hail that falls every evening here; and, till it comes close to me, it’s like so much warm rain: but then it turns to hail over my head, and knocks me about like small shot.”
"That hail will never come any more," said the strange lady. "I have told you before what it was. It was your mother's tears, those which she shed when she prayed for you by her bedside; but your cold heart froze it into hail. But she is gone to heaven now, and will weep no more for her graceless son."

Then Grimes was silent awhile, and he looked very sad.

"So my old mother's gone, and I never there to speak to her! Ah! a good woman she was, and might have been a happy one in her little school there in Vendale, if it hadn't been for me and my bad ways."

"Did she keep the school in Vendale?" asked Tom. And then he told Grimes all the story of his going to her house, and how she could not abide the sight of a chimney-sweep, and then how kind she was, and how he turned into a water-baby.

"Ah!" said Grimes, "good reason she had to hate the sight of a chimney-sweep. I ran away from her and took up with the sweeps, and never let her know where I was, nor sent her a penny to help her, and now it's too late — too late!"

And he began crying and blubbering like a great baby, till his pipe dropped out of his mouth, and broke all to bits.
"O dear, if I was but a little chap in Vendale again, to see the clear brook, and the apple-orchard, and the yew-hedge, how different I would go on! But it's too late now. So you go along, you kind little chap, and don't stand to look at a man crying, that's old enough to be your father and never feared the face of men. But I'm beat now. I've made my bed, and I must lie on it. Foul I would be, and foul I am, as an Irishwoman said to me once; and little I heeded it. It's all my own fault, but it's too late." And he cried so bitterly that Tom began crying too.

"Never too late," said the fairy in such a strange soft new voice that Tom looked up at her; and she was so beautiful for the moment that Tom half fancied she was her sister.

No more was it too late. For, as poor Grimes cried and blubbered on, his own tears did what his mother's could not do, and Tom's could not do, and nobody's on earth could do for him; for they washed the soot off his face and off his clothes; and then they washed the mortar away from between the bricks; and the chimney crumbled down; and Grimes began to get out of it.

Up jumped the club, and was going to hit him on
the crown a tremendous thump, and drive him down
again like a cork into a bottle. But the strange lady
put it aside.

"Will you obey me if I give you a chance?" she
asked Grimes.

"As you please, ma'am. You're stronger than me,
that I know too well, and wiser than me, I know too
well also. And, as for being my own master, I've
fared ill enough with that as yet. So whatever your
ladyship pleases to order me; for I'm beat, and that's
the truth."

"Be it so then—you may come out. But remem-
ber, disobey me again, and into a worse place still
you go."

"I beg pardon, ma'am, but I never disobeyed you
that I know of. I never had the honor of setting eyes
on you till I came to these ugly quarters."

"Never saw me? Who said to you, 'Those that
will be foul, foul they will be'?"

Grimes looked up; and Tom looked up too; for
the voice was that of the Irishwoman who met them
the day that they went out together to Harthover.
"I gave you your warning then. Every bad word
that you said—every cruel and mean thing that you
did—every time that you got tipsy—every day
that you went dirty — you were disobeying me, whether you knew it or not."

"If I'd only known, ma'am — "

"You knew well enough that you were disobeying something, though you did not know it was me. But come out and take your chance. Perhaps it may be your last."

So Grimes stepped out of the chimney, and really, if it had not been for the scars on his face, he looked as clean and respectable as a master-sweep need look.

"Take him away," said she to the club, "and give him his ticket-of-leave."

"And what is he to do, ma'am?"

"Get him to sweep out the crater of Etna; he will find some very steady men working out their time there, who will teach him his business; but mind, if that crater gets choked again, and there is an earthquake in consequence, bring them all to me, and I shall investigate the case very severely."

So the club marched off Mr. Grimes, who looked as meek as a drowned worm.

And for aught I know, he is sweeping the crater of Etna to this very day.

"Now," said the fairy to Tom, "your work here is done. You may as well go back."
"I should be glad enough to go," said Tom, "but how am I to get up that great hole, now the steam has stopped blowing?"

"I will take you up the back stairs: but I must bandage your eyes first; for I never allow anybody to see those back stairs of mine."

"I am sure I shall not tell anybody about them, ma'am, if you bid me not."

"Aha! So you think, my little man. But you would soon forget your promise if you got back into the land-world. For, if people only once found out that you had been up my back stairs, you would have all the fine ladies kneeling to you, and the rich men emptying their purses before you, and statesmen offering you place and power; and young and old, rich and poor, crying to you, 'Only tell us the great back stairs secret and we will be your slaves; we will make you lord, king, emperor, bishop, pope, if you like — only tell us the secret of the back stairs. For thousands of years we have been paying, and obeying, and worshipping quacks who told us they had the key of the back stairs, and could smuggle us up them; and, in spite of all our disappointments, we will honor, and glorify, and adore you likewise, on the chance of your knowing something about the back stairs, that
we may all go on pilgrimage to it; and, even if we cannot get up it, lie at the foot of it, and cry, — "O back stairs, precious back stairs, etc., save us from the consequences of our own actions, and from the cruel fairy, Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid!" Do not you think that you would be a little tempted then to tell what you know, laddie?"

Tom thought so certainly. "But why do they want so to know about the back stairs?" asked he.

"That I shall not tell you. Come — now I must bandage your eyes."

So she tied the bandage on his eyes with one hand, and with the other she took it off.

"Now," she said, "you are safe up the stairs," Tom opened his eyes very wide, and his mouth too; for he had not, as he thought, moved a single step. But, when he looked round him, there could be no doubt that he was safe up the back stairs, whatsoever they may be.

The first thing which Tom saw was the black cedars, high and sharp against the rosy dawn; and St. Brendan's Isle reflected double in the still broad silver sea. The wind sang softly in the cedars, and the water sang among the caves; the sea-birds sang as they streamed out into the ocean, and the land-birds as they built
among the boughs; and the air was so full of song that it stirred St. Brandan and his hermits, as they slumbered in the shade; and they moved their good old lips, and sang their morning hymn amid their dreams. But among all the songs one came across the water more sweet and clear than all; for it was the song of a young girl's voice.

And as Tom neared the island, there sat upon a rock the most graceful creature that ever was seen, looking down, with her chin upon her hand, and paddling with her feet in the water. And when they came to her she looked up, and behold it was Ellie.

"Oh, Miss Ellie," said he, "how you are grown!"

"Oh, Tom," said she, "how you are grown, too!"

And no wonder; they were both quite grown up—he into a tall man, and she into a beautiful woman.

"Perhaps I may be grown," she said. "I have had time enough; for I have been sitting here waiting for you many a hundred years, till I thought you were never coming."

"Many a hundred years?" thought Tom; but he had seen so much in his travels that he had quite given up being astonished; and, indeed, he could think of nothing but Ellie. So he stood and looked at Ellie,
and Ellie looked at him; and they liked the employment so much that they stood and looked for seven years more, and neither spoke nor stirred.

At last they heard the fairy say: "Attention, children. Are you never going to look at me again?"

"We have been looking at you all this while," they said. And so they thought they had been.

"Then look at me once more," said she.

They looked — and both of them cried out at once, "Oh, who are you, after all?"

"You are our dear Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby."

"No, you are good Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid; but you are grown quite beautiful now!"

"To you," said the fairy. "But look again."

"You are Mother Carey," said Tom, in a very low, solemn voice. "But you are grown quite young again."

"To you," said the fairy. "Look again."

"You are the Irishwoman who met me the day I went to Harthover!"

And when they looked she was none of them, and yet all of them at once.

"You may take him home with you now on Sundays, Ellie," she said. "He has become fit to go with you, because he has done the thing he did not like."
So Tom went home with Ellie on Sundays, and sometimes on weekdays, too; and he is now a great man of science, and can plan railroads, and steam-engines, and electric telegraphs, and so forth; and knows everything about everything, except why a hen’s egg doesn’t turn into a crocodile, and two or three other little things. And all this from what he learned when he was a water-baby underneath the sea.

And that is the end of my story.
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