GERMAN STORIES RETOLD (GRIMMS MÄRCHEN): EDITED FOR SCHOOL USE

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649429196

German Stories Retold (Grimms Märchen): Edited for School Use by James R. Kern & Minna M. Kern

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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NEW YORK -:- CINCINNATI -:- CHICAGO

AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

German Stories Retold

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INTRODUCTION

THE MÄRCHEN were written by two brothers, Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm. The tales were not original with them. They are the fireside stories of the common people handed down from generation to generation.

The Grimm brothers visited the peasants, had them relate the tales, and then compiled them in a volume entitled *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, known to English readers as *Grimms' Stories*. The *Märchen* became very popular and have been translated into many languages.

Jakob Ludwig Karl Grimm (1785—1863) and Wilhelm Karl Grimm (1786—1859) were born in Hanau, in Hesse-Nassau. They attended the Hochschule at Marburg and studied law, but spent their lives for the most part as professors and authors, mainly at Göttingen and Berlin.

The elder Grimm was an eminent philologist, while his brother was chiefly interested in editing the classics of the Middle Ages; yet both worked together on the *Märchen* and on the beginning of a *German Dictionary*, one of the most extensive dictionaries of any modern language. Other works of the elder Grimm are his *German Grammar*, his *History of the German Language* and *German Mythology*. An independent work of the younger Grimm is *German Hero Legend*.

In the arrangement of this work, the beginner is looked upon as a child in the language. His reading should be graded for him as it is for children who are learning to read their mother tongue. The best way to do this is to rewrite stories. Fireside tales such as Grimms' furnish such a foundation and readily admit of suitable additions.

In the first few stories the sentences are simple and short; common words and expressions are used until the learner grows accustomed to the natural flow of the language. New words, new expressions and longer sentences have been introduced as gradually as possible. In this way the beginner can easily do a large amount of reading.

As an aid to fix the language more firmly in the memory and to cultivate conversation and narration, questions are given on each story. The answer to each question should be a complete sentence. The aim is to help the learner to make a practical use of what he is learning. In this way come acquisition and ability.

It has been deemed advisable to include two of the less difficult stories unchanged. They are *Frau Holle* and *Der Zaunkönig und der Bär*. The authors' pleasing style will doubtless be much enjoyed.

The vocabulary has been made complete and contains all the assistance needed for an intelligent interpretation of the text, thus making a formal body of notes unnecessary.

CONTENTS

I. Der süße Brei

Es war einmal ein kleines Mädchen. Es hatte keinen Vater. Es hatte nur eine Mutter. Die Mutter war Witwe, eine arme Witwe. Doch hatten sie eine Wohnung, ein kleines Haus. Sie hatten auch Kleidung, aber keine schöne Kleidung. Sie waren also arm, sehr arm, und jetzt hatten sie nichts mehr zu essen.

Sie wohnten in einer kleinen Stadt. Nahe bei der Stadt war ein großer Wald. Das Haus stand nahe bei dem Walde. Es war im Frühling. Alles im Walde war schön. Ja, der schöne Frühling war wieder da, aber die Mutter hatte kein Brot mehr im Hause. Sie hatte zwar einen kleinen Garten, aber kein Gemüse stand darin. Und die kleine Tochter war hungrig, so hungrig. Auch die Mutter war sehr hungrig. Sie war auch sehr unglücklich.

Eines Tages ging das Mädchen in den Wald. Da spielte es oft. Da vergaß es den Hunger. Und heute war es sehr glücklich. Es spielte, es lief, es ging weiter in den Wald hinein. Auf einmal sah es eine alte Frau. Sie begrüßte das Kind freundlich. Sie wußte schon von seinem Hunger. Da gab sie ihm ein Töpfchen. Das Mädchen brauchte nur zu sagen: „Töpfchen, koche!“ dann kochte es süßen Brei; und wenn es sagte: „Töpfchen, steh',“ so kochte es nicht mehr.