



# CINDERELLA.

FROM A PAINTING BY J. W. CHAMPNEY.

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## CINDERELLA.

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.

SHE did not live in the days of fairies and giants, when pumpkins could be changed into chariots, and rats and mice to prancing steeds and liveried footmen.

But it did not matter much. She sat by the great fire-place in the kitchen and dreamed day-dreams about fairy-land and its beautiful sights and wonderful transformations, and when she took off her wooden shoes and warmed her little bare foot by the blaze on the hearth, she sometimes dreamed of a glass slipper, and a Prince, with long white waving plumes, to try it on. And it always fitted her. Of course, if it had not, there would have been no sense in dreaming about it.

She was a little French girl, and she lived in an old farm-house, where they burned brushwood under the great iron pot that hung in the fire-place, and where the great mantel-piece, so high up that she had to stand on a chair to reach it, was crowded with curious old pitchers and glasses and plates and jugs that nobody used, and where the carved doors, and, indeed, almost everything about the place but the people who lived there, looked nearly old enough to have come down from fairy days.

There, before the fire, with the two heads on the ends of the andirons for company, she would sit for hours and dream day-dreams. The two heads on the andirons were so very attentive and still that they seemed as if they were listening to what she was thinking, and, although the backs of their heads must have been very hot, they never interrupted her.

She wished she *had* lived in the old days and had had a fairy godmother. Old Mère Christine was her godmother, and a very good and kind one

she was too, but she had no magic wand and could not change her red bodice and woolen skirt into beautiful silken robes, nor could she make a splendid chariot out of a pumpkin. The only thing at all magical that she could do was to turn flour and butter into delicious little cakes, and a rolling-pin was all the wand she had.

Her two sisters, too, were not so very cross, and they did not make her do all the work. Lizette was married, and had her baby to attend to, but she was nearly always busy at something about the house; and Julie was very industrious.

And as to the Prince, she had never seen him at all.

So she had to dream about all the bad things as well as the good things that happened to the real Cinderella, so long, long ago.

She was sitting before the fire one day, watching the fire to keep it lively under the pot, and thinking about the days when there were kind fairies and goblins to make fires for good little girls and to hang up magical pots, out of which they might scoop anything good to eat that they might fancy; and so she gradually got to thinking about her favorite old story of Cinderella.

She sat like her beloved heroine in the castle kitchen, and in her mind she saw her cruel sisters pass down the grand staircase, dressed in their rich silks and satins, and proudly get into their coaches and drive away to the parties and balls, in which their hearts delighted.

She saw her wicked stepmother as she shook her fist at her, whenever she dared venture to look out at that dismal ashy kitchen, where everything seemed as if the cooking were always just over, and



the fire-place was always filled with cinders and cinders and cinders, which had to be taken up all the time.

And she saw her dear, delightful fairy godmother change everything that was miserable into things that were rich and soft and golden, and then send her off in the magical pumpkin chariot to the ball. (Whenever she thought of this chariot, she had in her mind a picture of an old yellow carriage that belonged to old Monsieur Bopindot, who used to be Mayor of the neighboring town. It was a big round coach, not unlike a pumpkin in shape, and it had to be very low, because Monsieur Bopindot was so round and fat that he could not step very high. She could not imagine this carriage going to a king's ball, and she did not like to have it come into her Cinderella story. But it would do it.)

And then she saw all the richly dressed lords and ladies at the ball, and saw the lights and the jewels and the splendid halls; and just as she was about to step in and join the happy throng she stopped suddenly in her dream.

The Prince was knocking at the door!

She sprang to her feet. What would he think of her in such a dress, and barefooted?

But it would not do to keep him standing at the door. So she ran and opened it. Old Pierrot, the gardener, was standing there in his dirty blue blouse and with his great wooden shoes all covered with garden mold.

He had come to borrow a spade, he said, with his cap in his hand,—if the ladies were not going to use their spade to-day.

"Oh, Pierrot!" called down Lizette from an

upper window, "what a man you are! A gardener, and coming to borrow a spade! Don't you know that you ought to get a spade for yourself? You can't do business that way, Pierrot."

But Pierrot said that he had a spade, and a very good one, but he had lent it to his neighbor Jacques, who was using it now; and, as he did not wish to take it away from Jacques, he thought he would come and borrow the ladies' spade, if they were not going to use it.

"You had better go get your own spade," said Julie from the stairs. "I don't know where in the world ours is, and I'm sure I have n't time now to stop and look for it."

Poor Pierrot looked sadly down at his wooden shoes. There was a piece of work that he ought to do that afternoon, and he could not go and take his spade from poor Jacques.

"I'll go look for the spade for you, Pierrot," said Cinderella. "We have n't used it for ever so long, and I don't know where it is, but I'm sure I can find it if you will wait a little while."

And thus she put on the glass slipper, and it fitted exactly.

To be sure the Prince was only old Pierrot, and the sisters were not very cruel, and there was no fairy godmother at all, and the fitting of the slipper was only a trial of good-nature, but it was all better than a fairy tale.

Prince Pierrot was happy as he walked away with the spade, and Cinderella was happy as she came back to the fire, and when they saw what the little girl had done, the two sisters felt sorry that the slipper had not fitted them.

## COLORADO SNOW-BIRDS.

BY H. H.

I'LL tell you how the snow-birds come,  
Here in our Winter days;  
They make me think of chickens,  
With their cunning little ways.

We go to bed at night, and leave  
The ground all bare and brown,  
And not a single snow-bird  
To be seen in all the town.

But when we wake at morning  
The ground with snow is white,  
And with the snow, the snow-birds  
Must have traveled all the night;

For the streets and yards are full of them,  
The dainty little things,  
With snow-white breasts, and soft brown heads  
And speckled russet wings.

Not here and there a snow-bird,  
As we see them at the East,  
But in great flocks, like grasshoppers,  
By hundreds, at the least.

They push and crowd and jostle,  
And twitter as they feed,  
And hardly lift their heads up  
For fear to miss a seed.