

## THE PIED PIPER.

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Would you hear a story of the long, long ago ? It may not be altogether true, but it has been told so often, that we seem to think it true.

The little village of Newtown was sadly troubled with rats. There wasn't a barn or a stable, a store-room or cupboard but they ate their way into it. The bread and the cheese, the fruit and the vegetables, all disappeared. And in addition to all this, the rats kept up such a scratching and squeaking, that the poor people couldn't get half their sleep.

They tried cats, but the rats chased them away. They tried poison, but it nearly brought on a plague when so many rats died. They tried traps, but it was of no use. Every day seemed to bring a fresh army of the little pests.

The mayor and the council were at their wits' end. They had almost decided that the best thing to be done was for everybody to leave the village. Just then there came along the most peculiar looking fellow you ever saw. He was tall and thin, and had keen piercing eyes. But the funny thing about him was his coat. It was made of patches of cloth of all colors. His hat was no better. Even his trousers and his stockings were of the same kind.