



## THE SHY PRINCESS.

A Story For Children.

(Flora Schmals in the 'Strand.')

ter of her shyness should, without fail, become her husband.

So soon as Bashful heard of what had taken place, she withdrew into still stricter retirement, and spent her days and nights in continual weeping.

'By crying, I shall grow as ugly, as possible,' she said to herself; 'and then no one will care to marry me.'

Meanwhile the King's edict travelled far and wide, and a rumor soon spread that no fewer than five Princes had at once set out for the palace. Each of these Princes ruled over a large kingdom, and was considered altogether suitable to mate with the Princess. So there were great preparations made on every side, in order to receive the illustrious visitors with due honor. But the courtiers, each of whom secretly adored the miserable Princess, were already consumed with jealousy; while the ladies, who hoped that the rejected Princes might console themselves by choosing one of them instead, whispered to each other that they were dying of curiosity.

On the day following the arrival of the Princes the Princess Bashful would come of age, when each Prince would be required, successively, to come forward and put his method to the test. Whichever of them could then prevail on the Princess to speak to him should be granted another trial.

Every sort of argument was used to induce the Princess to be present at her birthday reception. But it was not until the actual morning had dawned that she agreed to survey the Princes, upon the condition that she herself might remain in concealment.

Alas! how swollen were poor Bashful's eyes! And as for her throat, it had become parched and burning owing to the salt brine from her tears.

ONCE upon a time, a King and Queen had a daughter, who was the shyest Princess that ever lived. She could not look at anyone without blushing, and if anyone spoke to her, she began to cry.

Her father and mother tried every remedy to cure her, but instead of improving, she seemed to grow gradually worse. The people called her shyness the Princess's unfortunate infirmity, and said she must have been bewitched at her birth.

The unhappy maiden took no pleasure in her life; indeed, every day it became a greater punishment to her. If such a thing had been permitted, she would have shut herself up in a dark room, so that no one could behold her blushes. Truly, the most ardent wish that she had on earth was to hide herself away from her fellow creatures.

Yet it must not be imagined from what has been said, that the Princess Bashful was not pleasant to look upon. So far was this from being the case, that even the critical Court ladies were sometimes heard to admit that their Princess was not without beauty, of a certain kind.

Bashful's face was like a flower

of apple-blossom, that has newly opened, and which still retains its dewy paleness, with the faintest tinge of pink. Her eyes, when they were not lowered, shone like violet-blue stars from out a cloud of glistening golden hair. And with this wonderful hair, which rippled down until it reached the ground, she had been known, on more than one occasion, to veil her blushes.

It was a face that all men must have admired, had they been lucky enough to obtain a glimpse of it. But the princess could never be persuaded to show herself at any of the high Court functions, and if a courtier happened to be anywhere about, she would invariably run away at his approach. This was one reason why the ladies thought so highly of her good sense; for, if the Princess had chosen, she might have thrown them all completely into the shade.

When her twenty-first birthday drew near, the King and Queen, and the whole Court, decided that it was quite time for the Princess to marry. Therefore, a Cabinet Council was held, in order to discuss the important question, from which everyone came away with a severe headache. But as a result, the King issued a proclamation, on the following day, that the Prince who succeeded in curing his daugh-