



The Spinning Woman.

E. Archer

ONCE upon a time there stood an old palace in the midst of a garden. It was a king's palace, in fact it belonged to the king of the land, but he had quite given up coming to it. There were strange tales about the place.

Some people said they could always hear a sound of spinning—spinning—spinning. The king could not hear it himself, but then he was a little deaf. Moreover, he wore so many jewelled chains about him that they made a clinking sound wherever he went. Still for all that, it was very annoying.

Sometimes grand foreign princes and ambassadors would visit him, for he

was a very great king; and just when he thought he was distinguishing himself in brilliant conversation, one or other would perhaps say, "What is that? It sounds like a spinning-wheel."

Then the king had to make all sorts of excuses, for he did not like to contradict a foreign prince.

Besides, you never knew who might hear it. The girl in the scullery, who washed the greasy pots and pans, often said she heard it; whereas the grand court lady who set all the fashions could never hear a sound of it. Yes, it really was very annoying; but there was worse than all this.

The king had one son whom he loved