

THE KING OF NO-LAND.

BY H. L. YARBROOK. (Continued.) III. DEEP IN THE EARTH LIES THE GOLD HIDDEN IN DARKNESS AND PRECIOUS TREASURES ARE FOUND IN HIDDEN PLACES.

This conversation, they arrived at the village, and halted at a snug cottage, which bore signs of decay. The doorway was so low that Coltfoot, who was a six foot man, had to stoop his head upon entering; a little girl, who looked like a wise little woman, and yet was not more than six years of age, was sitting in a low chair, hushing a baby to sleep. The baby may have been three months old, and the nurse might have been her mother, so womanly were her years.

Another little girl, two or three years younger than the nurse, was also in the room, which was clean and very poorly furnished. A few paper pictures, cut from cheap prints, were pasted on the walls, and three violins were hanging in a corner. The children looked at Coltfoot, and smiled a welcome, starting bashfully at his entrance.

"Well, little ones," said Coltfoot, "and how is mother this morning?" "That is good," he said, rubbing his hands together. "I've got some nice roses for you." A thin violin, from an inner room, which was the only other room in the cottage, asked him where they were.

"I am Lucerne," she said, standing by the Prince's side, and gazing at him. "And baby's name is Daisy," added Coltfoot; "and our little mother here is Iris."

"Iris is a little woman," continued Coltfoot, tenderly, "and does everything in the house, and is quite wise. She can scrub and cook and mend, and she can do anything else that you wish to see her do."

"That was surely wrong," observed Sasfras. "I'm sure, but you must not blame the man. He worked from morning to night, and earned the barest pittance for his bread. He had no extravagance and no vices; he was not even a beer drinker. In this respect, he was wise to the state, and useless to those voracious creatures who dwell here, and whose appetites grow by what they feed on."

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