

disclosed by the shrill bell-like ringing of their bridles. When the little men find their steeds jaded, they do not scruple to continue their pleasure at the expense of mortals. They steal horses and ride them almost to death. The animals are found in the morning in their stalls panting and fleeced with foam, with their manes and tails matted and twisted. The shrewd reader will guess that the fairies often had to bear the blame, which belonged to careless grooms.

A sailor, on the Isle of Man, who was riding to visit his sister, was invited by a party of jolly fairies who were hunting to join them in their excursion. Not being aware of the nature of the little men, who made a gay appearance, as they swept by in green dresses, riding to the music of a mellow horn, Jack followed on, delighted, and only learned his danger when he arrived at his sister's house.

These diminutive huntsmen used to seize upon the horses which English residents brought over to the Isle of Man, and ride them without ceremony. A gentleman of the island attributed the loss of half a dozen capital hunters, to the little men in green.

Sometimes they were more honest, and paid good money for horses, to which they took a fancy. A man who had a fine horse to sell, was once riding his steed among the mountains, when a dapper little gentleman stepped up and examined it. He made the animal show his paces, and, after some haggling about the price, bought him. All this was well enough; but when the seller dismounted the purchaser having fixed himself in the saddle, sank through the earth with his bargain. The man who beheld all this, was somewhat startled, but as there was no mistake about the hard red gold which he had received from the fairy horseman, he put it in his pocket and marched off.

The Brownies were singular beings. The Brownie attached himself to some family, performing menial offices with

a good grace, like a hired servant. But unlike a servant, he did not labor in the hope of wages; on the contrary, an offer of recompense drove this delicate gentleman away. He was foud of stretching himself at length before the fire like a dog, and this appeared to give him the highest satisfaction.

An amusing anecdote is told concerning this habit. A Brownie who had attached himself to a certain house, used to hover round the kitchen, uneasy if the servants sat up late, which prevented him from occupying his place upon the hearth. Sometimes the impatient Brownie appeared at the door, and admonished the servants in the following terms—"Gang a' to your beds, sirs, an' dinna put out the wee grieshoch"—thus anglicised, "Go to your beds, all of you, and don't put out the embers." The Brownie left the hearth at the first crow of the cock.

The inhabitants of Germany believe to this day, that there exists a race called the *Stille Volke*, the silent people. To every family of eminence, a family of the *Stille Volke* is attached, containing just as many members as the mortal family. When the lady of the mortal family becomes a mother, the queen of the *Stille Volke* enjoys the same blessing, and the silent people endeavour to ward off any injury which threatens those whom they protect.

It would be impossible to enumerate all the different sprites with which superstition has filled the woods, waters, hills, and valleys of Europe. A few of the agreeable elves have been touched upon. It is not worth while to present the darker features of a gloomy superstition, to the contemplation of the young. The Kelpies and the Wild Huntsmen have found no place in this sketch.

The legends of the Irish are generally gay, exhibiting the character of that poor, but pleasant people. The Irish fairies are spruce little gentlemen, and merry little ladies, who trip it away with blithe hearts.