



THE SHY PRINCESS.

A Story For Children.

(Flora Schmals in the 'Strand'.)

(Continued.)

hand, as if the vision of so much beauty had dazzled them.

But a white hand was outstretched to raise him from the ground. Then, as everybody remained speechless with surprise, it was the Princess Bashful who addressed him first.

'Prince Valiant,' she said, and her voice resembled the sound of the evening breeze when it plays over the surface of the running water, 'I have been told of all the great and generous deeds you have performed. I have been assured that you love me truly. But how can that be, when you had never seen me?'

'It is because in my own land,' said the Prince, 'I had been told how shy you were.'

Whereupon the Princess laughed right merrily. And though her blushes rose fast and furious, they no longer distressed her as of old, and the Prince came forward and kissed both her hands.

Then the King gave out that as the Princess Bashful was cured of her shyness, the marriage should take place on the morrow.

THE END.



HE Prince now spoke clearly, and held himself very erect, having indeed resolved to meet failure itself in the way that a brave knight should do.

Of course, no one made any attempt to solve the riddle. It touched, just as the first had done, upon much too delicate ground.

'We give it up,' said the King, at length, acting as spokesman for the rest.

'The Princess will tell you the answer herself,' murmured the Prince, doffing his hat, and falling on one knee.

This was a turn in the tide of events which caused universal disappointment. The King's brow swiftly clouded over again. Tears rushed into the Queen's eyes, and a sob rose in her throat. Yesterday all had promised to go so well, but now there seemed to have come an end to everything.

So spoke the Prince, and continued kneeling, until the King was on the point of bidding him rise and go forth. But just as he began to despair, a wonderful thing happened. There was a movement behind the screen which caused it to shake slightly. Another moment, and out

stepped the Princess Bashful, who looked enchantingly fair and sweetly gracious.

She was clad in a robe of wondrous blue-green that shimmered like the waves of the sea. Her bright eyes sparkled like dew-drops through their tears, and her hair fell round her in a golden shower.

The Prince bent still lower before her, shading his eyes with his

