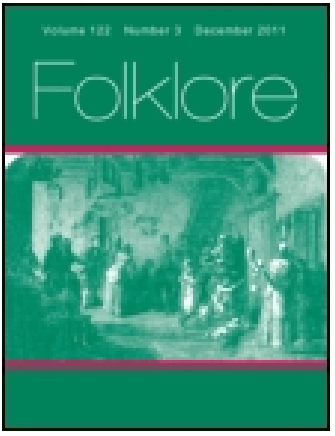

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TOBIT AND JACK THE GIANT-KILLER.

BY FRANCIS HINDES GROOME.

For a long while past I have been making a large collection of Gypsy folktales gathered from many parts of Europe —Turkey, Roumania, Hungary, Poland, England, Wales, Scotland, and Spain.[1] The first on my list is the following, told by an old Gypsy woman of Adrianople to the Gypsiologist and Byzantine antiquary, Alexander G. Paspati, M.D., who died at Athens in the Christmas week of 1891. He printed it and five more more Gypsy stories, in the original Rómani with a French translation, as a supplement to his *Études sur les Tchinghianés ou Bohémiens de l'empire Ottoman*(Constantinople, 1870). My rendering is made from the original.

"A king had three sons. He gave the youngest a hundred thousand piastres; he gave the same to the eldest son and to the middle one. The youngest arose; he took the road; wherever he found poor folk he gave money; here, there, he gave it away; he spent the money. His eldest brother went, had ships built to make money. And the middle one went, had shops built. They came to their father.

"'What have you done, my son?'

"'I have built ships.'

"To the youngest, 'You, what have you done?'

"'I, every poor man I found, I gave him money, and for poor girls I paid the cost of their marriages.'

"The king said: 'My youngest son will care well for the poor. Take another hundred thousand piastres.'

"The lad departed. Here, there, he spent his money; twelve piastres remained to him. Some Jews dug up a corpse and beat it.

"'What want you of him, that you are beating him?'

[1] *Gypsy-Folk-tales* (Hurst and Blackett, 1898, 386 pp.).

"'Twelve piastres we want of him.'

"'I'll give you them if you will let him be.'

"He gave the money; they let the dead man be. He arose and departed. As the lad goes, the dead man followed him. 'Where go you?' the dead man asked.

"'I am going for a walk.'

"'I'll come too; we'll go together; we will be partners.'

"'So be it.'

"'Come, I will bring you to a certain place.'

"He took and brought him to a village. There was a girl, takes a husband, goes to bed; by dawn next day the husbands are dead.

"'I will hide you somewhere; I will get you a girl, but we shall always be partners.'

"He got the girl—a dragon came out of her mouth.

"'And this night when you go to bed, I too will lie there.'

"He took his sword, he went near them. The lad said, 'That will never do. If you want her, do you take the girl.'

"'Are we not partners? You, do you sleep with her; I also, I will sleep here.'

"At midnight he sees the girl open her mouth; the dragon came forth. He drew his sword; he cut off its three heads; he put the heads in his bosom; he lay down; he fell asleep. Next morning the girl arose, and sees the man, her husband, living by her side.

"They told the girl's father: 'To-day your daughter has seen the dawn with her husband.'

"'That will be the son-in-law,' said the father.

"The lad took the girl; he is going to his father.

"'Come,' said the dead man, 'let's divide the money.'

"They took and divided it.

"'We have divided the money; let us also divide your wife.'

"The lad said, 'How divide her? If you want her, take her.'

"'I take her not; we will divide.'

"'How divide?' said the lad.

"The dead man said: 'I, I will divide.'

"The dead man seized her; he bound her knees. 'Do you catch hold of one foot, I'll take the other.'

"He raised his sword to strike the girl. In her fright the girl opened her mouth and cried, and out of her mouth fell a dragon. The dead man said to the lad: 'I am not for a wife, I am not for

any money. These dragons' heads are what devoured the men. Take her; the girl shall be yours, the money shall be yours. You did me a kindness; I also have done you one.'

"'What kindness did I do you?' asked the lad.

"'You took me from the hands of the Jews.'

"The dead man departed to his place, and the lad took his wife, went to his father."

The story has no name, but is clearly identical with the widespread folktale of "The Grateful Dead"—"Der dankbare Todte" of German folklorists, "Le Mort reconnaissant" of French. We have upwards of forty versions and variants, reaching back to the thirteenth century, and extending from Iceland to Sicily, from Armenia and Siberia to Spain and the Hebrides. The Armenian version is thus summarised by Benfey in his Introduction to the *Panchatantra* (Leipzig, 1859), vol. i., pp. 219-221:—

"A well-to-do man, once riding through a forest, comes on some men who have hung up a corpse on a tree, and are beating it cruelly. The dead man, they tell him, owed them money. He pays the debt, and buries him.

"Years go by, and gradually our man grows poor. In his native town lives a rich man with an only daughter, whom he wishes to find a husband for; but she has already had five husbands, all of whom have died on the marriage-night. Wooers have therefore grown shy, and when her father offers her to the impoverished hero, he also hesitates, and demands time to think it over.

"Now one day there comes a man to him, and wants to enter his service.

"'How should I keep a servant, who can hardly keep myself?'

"'But I want no pay, only half your future belongings.'

"They come to terms, and the servant advises him to close with the father's offer. On the wedding-night the servant posts himself with a sword in the bridal-chamber.

"'What wilt thou?'

"'You know by our compact half your future belongings is mine. I don't want the woman just now, but I insist on remaining here.'

"When now the wedded pair have fallen asleep, a serpent creeps out of the bride's mouth to sting the bridegroom to death; but the servant cuts off its head, and draws out its body.

"After some time the servant demands the division of all his master's belongings. The division is made; next he demands also half of the woman.

"'She must be hung up, head downwards, and then I will cleave her right through.'

"Thereupon the second serpent glides out of her mouth.

"'That's the last. Henceforth you can live with your wife safely and happily. But I want nothing of you. I am the spirit of the man whose corpse you once rescued from the shame and torment of beating, and piously buried.'

"Therewith he vanished."

Benfey regarded this Armenian story as a form of the Eastern original, but he could not in 1859 know of Paspati's Gypsy version,[1] or of this from the Russian government of Riazan, cited by Reinhold Köhler in *Orient und Occident*, vol. iii., 1864, pp. 93-103:—

"There once were two brothers, one of whom died, leaving a son called Hans. Hans grew up, but his uncle never troubled himself about him. One day some relations came to Hans and asked him why he sat there so idle and didn't rather do something.

"'I haven't a kopeck.'

"'Ask your uncle to pay you your inheritance.'

[1] Among many lost opportunities there is one I must always regret. In 1872-3 I was living at Göttingen and saw a good deal of Professor Benfey, who showed me uncommon kindness. I had Paspati's book by me, and we often spoke of the Gypsies and their language, but never once of their folktales. For then I knew nothing of folklore and nothing of Benfey as one of the greatest of folklorists.

He did so. The uncle hummed and hawed, and ended by giving him three hundred roubles.

"'There are three hundred roubles; do with them what you will.'

"Hans thanks his uncle, and goes out into the world.

"When he had wandered two weeks he arrived in another government. There he sees people running, and hurries after them. They have caught an infidel and are tearing his veins out.

"'Here, sell him to me,' says Hans.

"'Right gladly.'

"'What do you want?'

"'Three hundred roubles.'

"He gave them all his money, took the infidel, brought him to the priest, and had him baptized. But the poor wretch suffers terribly with his wounds. Hans begs the priest next morning to read a mass. It was done, the infidel received the sacrament, and on the third day died. There was no money left to bury him with. When the merchants and the people heard this they collected a lot of money. The dead man was buried with all honours, and there was a good deal of money left over. But Hans departed and took not a single kopeck.

"As he wanders on he sees all of a sudden an angel come down from heaven.

"'Good man, whither goest thou?'

"'I'm looking for work,' Hans answered.

"'Let's go together.'

"'Good.'

"So they went on further.

"'Wilt thou, good man, have me for an uncle? What we get we'll divide. Hold me in reverence, and what I command thee, do.'

"'Good,' said Hans.

"They came to another country, to a king. This king had a daughter.

"'Now, nephew, go to the market-place, hire yourself out. If anyone takes you, come and tell me that I may go with you.'

"Hans went, and had long to stand idle; no one would take him. Then the king came driving by.

"'Are you a Russian?'

"'Yes, from such and such a government.'

"'Will you become my son-in-law? I like you. I have lately lost a son-in-law.'

"'I can't say,' said Hans. 'I have an uncle; I'll ask him.'

"He went to his uncle and told him the offer. The uncle gave his permission, but the people scolded him.

"'What! send your nephew to certain death. The princess has had six men already, and strangled all of them. That's why the king has picked out a Russian this time.'

"'Don't you interfere, it's God's will.'

"The nephew goes to the king, and the king comes at once to business.

"'Well, how stands it?'

"'The uncle has given me his blessing.'

"'Good,' says the king, 'good,' and forthwith fetches the princess.

"'Does the bridegroom please you?'

"'Yes.'

"'Well, God bless you.'

"The nephew fetches the uncle. The marriage takes place, and a splendid marriage feast. It was time to go to rest. The young pair retired to the bridal chamber, and Hans lies down.

"'Ah!' says he, 'we haven't summoned the uncle.'

"The uncle comes.

"'It s lucky you didn't forget me. Sleep now and take your rest; I will lie down at the threshold.'

"They fall asleep. In the night comes a flying dragon. The uncle sprang up, seized his sword, and cut off its head. But the young pair lay sound asleep. The uncle washed up the blood, swept up the dragon's head, and flung it all into the sea.

"The king sent next morning to enquire.

"'They're up and very well.'

"For two whole months it was nothing but feasting and jollity.

"Then Hans says to the king: 'Little father, let me go home, I shan't be away long.'

"'Good,' said the king.

"They went to choose horses. The uncle lays his hand upon a horse.

"'Take this one.'

"So they chose seven horses. They harnessed four to the coach, and gave the uncle a three-in-hand. Off they started.

"Presently they came to the place where the uncle first appeared to Hans. They baited the horses. Then said the uncle: 'Now, nephew, we agreed to divide everything. Now we must part, let us also divide the wife.'

"The uncle took her, sawed her in half; out of her inside came young flying dragons. The nephew fell down in a swoon; but the uncle cleansed and washed the inwards of the wife, and sprinkled her with water, whereupon she came to life again.

"'Now, nephew,' said the uncle, 'I am well pleased with thee for thy obedience. I have sheltered thee in all thy ways and paths.'

"Then they took leave of one another. But Hans came to his real uncle, and gave him all the gold and silver. In a month he built him a castle, and then returned to his kingdom."

One of our oldest versions of the story is that from the *Tredici Piacevoli Notti* of Giovanni Francesco Straparola (Venice, 1550) xi. 2, of which Grimm's summary, somewhat expanded, runs thus:

Bertuccio, a simpleton, is not to receive what he has inherited from his father, a Piedmontese notary, until his thirtieth year, but on his coming to twenty-five his mother is to give him three hundred ducats to trade with. He gets one hundred from her, goes away, and finds a thief still stabbing a dead man whom he has murdered. Out of compassion the simpleton gives the thief eighty gold pieces, rescues the corpse, and expends the remaining twenty pieces in having it honourably buried. His mother is vexed at his stupidity, but he asks for the other two hundred ducats, goes away, and redeems the daughter of the King of Navarre from two robbers. Afterwards, when she is taken away to her father's court, she tells him that she will marry none but him, and that when he comes after her he must hold his right hand on his head, by which she may know him. He sets out for Navarre on a sorry beast, and on the way meets a knight, who gives him his beautiful horse and splendid apparel, in return for which the simpleton

has to promise that on his return he will share all he has gained with the knight. Thus richly equipped, Bertuccio pleases the king and obtains his beloved. On the way home the knight again meets him and claims the half of everything. Bertuccio duly divides everything; then the stranger knight claims one-half of the bride as well.

"How divide her?" asks Bertuccio.

Says the knight, "We must cleave her in twain."

"Nay, sooner than that, take the whole of her; I love her far too dearly to consent to that."

Then the stranger knight said: "Brother, take wife, clothes, horse, and treasure; I give you all I might claim. And know that I am the spirit of him who was slain by the robbers, and to whom you gave burial."

This said, he vanished.

It is the selfsame story, if somewhat changed, a good deal rationalised, as has often befallen folktales in their westward wanderings. For example, Grimm's "Master Thief," which might quite well have happened, corresponds to the Greek story of "Beauty and the Dragon," where Beauty has to steal, first, the winged horse of the dragon, next, his bell-hung bed-cover, and lastly, the Dragon himself. And Grimm's "Robber Bridegroom," our "Mr. Fox," to which Shakespeare makes reference in *Much Ado about Nothing*, meets us in Greece as the story, not of a robber, but of a vampire. But Ey, in his *Harzmärchenbuch* (Stade, 1862), gives a German version which is more, not less, supernatural than any of the Eastern forms of our story:—

A peasant's son with his small inheritance pays the debts of a dead man, and buries him. There is a princess bewitched by a mountain demon to whom she flies by night. The spirit of the dead man furnishes the peasant's son with a feather-shirt, a rod, and a sword, without, however, any stipulation as to division; and, thus furnished, the hero flies after the princess, flogging her. The demon suggests to the princess what she shall

give the wooer to guess, if he will not lose his head, as nine wooers have lost theirs before him. The hero overhears the demon's suggestions, and answers next day to the princess's questions, "What am I thinking of?" with first "Of thy father's white horse," next "Of thy father's battle-sword," and lastly "Of this," showing her the demon's head, which he has cut off after the princess and he had parted. On the wedding night the bridegroom must dip the princess three times in water; from which she emerges first as a raven, next as a dove, and lastly, the spell quite broken, as a maiden.

This is plainly identical with Asbjörnsen's Norse "Follower" or "Companion," familiar through Dasent's translation, and with the still more familiar "Travelling Companion" of Hans Christian Andersen. These three stories, whilst all of them lacking the proposed division of property, present a number of seemingly new episodes. Not one, however, of those episodes is probably of German, Norwegian, or Danish invention; they can always be paralleled by stories current in India, Persia, or South-eastern Europe. Thus we get the riddling princess in a long Persian story cited by Benfey (*Panchatantra*, vol. i., pp. 445-448), in Hahn's No. 114, "The Princess who would not Wed,"[1] and in another of Paspati's Turkish-Gypsy stories, which matches Campbell's hitherto unmatched Gaelic story of "The Knight of Riddles." The invisible hat of Asbjörn-

[1] This Greek folktale illustrates the old adage that "There is nothing new under the sun." According to so well-informed a work as *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, "an anæsthetic was first employed to deaden the pain of a dentistry operation in 1846 by Mr. Morton, a dentist of Boston." Yet here we find a prince taking a pair of tongs and filling a basket with a soporific herb (*Schlafkraut*), then applying this herb to each of forty-one dragons, and from each extracting a front tooth. "When the dragons woke up the next morning, one dragon remarked the gap in his fellow's mouth, and cried, 'Eh! what! you've lost a front tooth!' And when they came to look, they found that each had lost one, whereupon they were dreadfully frightened, and said: 'The man who can pull out our teeth could cut our throats just as easily'" (*Griechische Märchen*, vol. ii., p. 173).

sen's version is the invisible cap of Indian folk-tales; and in the Polish-Gypsy "Tale of a Wise Young Jew and a Golden Hen," which is closely analogous to "The Grateful Dead," the Jew picks up a beautiful wand, but makes no use of it afterwards.

The division of property, lacking also in the Bohemian, Polish, and Icelandic versions, recurs in Campbell's "The Barra Widow's Son" (No. 32, vol. ii., p. 110). This Gaelic story, replete with Celtic colour, has much closer affinities to Straparola than to Asbjörnsen. Its hero, Iain Mac a Maighstir, in Turkey redeems and buries the corpse of a debtor which two Turks are thrashing with iron flails; he also redeems the King of Spain's daughter, and brings her back to England. She sends him to Spain to reveal her whereabouts to her parents, and they bid him fetch her to them. A great general, a former lover, smuggles himself on board Iain's ship, and on the voyage back from England to Spain deserts him on an island, whereupon the princess goes mad. Iain is rescued from the island by a man in a boat, who asks him if he will give him half his realm, half his wife, and half his children. He returns to Spain; the princess recovers her reason; and the general is "torn amongst horses and burned amongst fires":—

"After the death of the king and queen, Iain was king over Spain. Three sons were born to him. On a night he heard a knocking in the door.

"'The asker is come,' said he.

"Who was there but the very man that took him out of the island.

"'Art thou for keeping thy promise?' said the one who came.

"'I am,' said Iain.

"'Thine own be thy realm, and thy children, and my blessing. Dost thou remember when thou didst pay eight merks for the corpse of a man in Turkey? That was my body. Health be thine; thou wilt see me no more.'"

Older than Straparola is the English "Sir Amadas, a rhymed romaunt," 778 lines long, dating about 1420, and printed by Henry Weber in his *Metrical Romances of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries* (Edinburgh, 1810, vol. iii., pp. 243-275), and in John Robson's *Three Early English Metrical Romances* (Camden Soc., 1842, pp. 27-56). Its hero, reduced to poverty, rides forth with but forty pounds, and finds in a chapel a lady watching the unburied corpse of her husband, a merchant who for a debt of thirty pounds has been kept sixteen weeks above ground, and is to be flung to the dogs. Sir Amadas settles the debt and buries the merchant. As he rides on through the greenwood, he is joined by a white knight on a milk-white steed, who promises to procure him the hand of a neighbouring princess on condition—

> "That euyn to part be-twene vs toe
> The godus thou hase wonun and spedde."

He betakes himself to court, where, by the white knight's counsel, he gives himself out for the owner of a rich stranded ship, and wins the princess's hand. She has borne him a son, when suddenly the white knight reappears—

> "He come in als gay gere,
> Ryȝte as he an angelle were,
> Cladde he was in quite."

He demands half of wife and child. At first Sir Amadas demurs; but at last, convinced by his heroic wife's exhortations, he declares himself ready, and is preparing to divide them with his sword. Thereupon the white knight reveals himself as the spirit of that merchant, releases Sir Amadas from the compact, and vanishes away "as dew in sun."

So we come to "Jack the Giant-Killer," of which the earliest chap-book version (Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1711; London, 1805; Paisley, *c.* 1814) is reprinted in J. O.

Halliwell's *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales* (1849, pp. 67-71) and Mr. Joseph Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales* (1890, pp. 103-106, 237). As was first pointed out by Reinhold Köhler in *Orient und Occident* (vol. ii., 1864, p. 327), the "Grateful Dead" story occurs here in two disconnected episodes:—

"Now it happened in these days that King Arthur's only son asked his father to give him a large sum of money in order that he might go and seek his fortune in Wales, where lived a beautiful lady possessed with seven evil spirits. The king did his best to dissuade his son, but in vain, so at last gave way; and the prince set out off with two horses, one loaded with money, the other for himself to ride upon. Now, after several days' travel, he came to a market-town in Wales where he beheld a vast crowd of people gathered together. The prince asked the reason of it, and was told that they had arrested a corpse for several large sums of money which the deceased owed when he died. The prince replied that it was a pity creditors should be so cruel, and said: 'Go, bury the dead, and let his creditors come to my lodging, and there their debts shall be paid.'

"They came in such great numbers that before night he had only twopence left for himself. Now Jack the Giant-Killer, coming that way, was so taken with the generosity of the prince that he desired to be his servant. This being agreed upon, the next morning they set forward on their journey together, when, as they were riding out of the town, an old woman called after the prince, saying: 'He has owed me twopence these seven years; pray, pay me as well as the rest.'

"Putting his hand to his pocket the prince gave the woman all he had left, so that after their day's food, which cost what small spell Jack had by him, they were without a penny between them. [Then comes a visit to a three-headed giant—a long intermediate episode of no further concern to us than that Jack procures here a coat of darkness, a cap of knowledge, a sword of sharpness, and shoes of swiftness.] Jack soon overtook his master, and they quickly arrived at the house of the lady the prince sought, who, finding the prince to be a suitor, prepared a splendid banquet for him. After the repast was concluded she told him she had a task for

him. She wiped his mouth with a handkerchief, saying: 'You must show me that handkerchief to-morrow morning or else you will lose your head.' With that she put it in her bosom.

"The prince went to bed in great sorrow, but Jack's cap of knowledge informed him how it was to be obtained. In the middle of the night she called upon her familiar spirit to carry her to Lucifer. But Jack put on his coat of darkness and his shoes of swiftness, and was there as soon as she was. When she entered the place of the Old One she gave the handkerchief to old Lucifer, who laid it upon a shelf, whence Jack took it and brought it to his master, who showed it to the lady next day, and so saved his life. On that day she gave the prince a kiss, and told him he must show her the lips to-morrow morning that she kissed last night or lose his head.

"'Oh!' he replied, 'if you kiss none but mine, I will.'

"'That is neither here nor there,' said she. 'If you do not, death's your portion.'

"At midnight she went as before, and was angry with old Lucifer for letting the handkerchief go. 'But now,' quoth she, 'I will be too hard for the king's son, for I will kiss thee, and he is to show me thy lips.'

"Which she did, and Jack, when she was not standing by, cut off Lucifer's head, and brought it under his invisible coat to his master, who the next morning pulled it out by the horns before the lady. This broke the enchantment, and the evil spirit left her, and she appeared in all her beauty. They were married the next morning."

It must surely be evident to the "meanest intelligence" that we have here the English equivalent of the German, the Danish, and the Norse story. True there is no Grateful Dead at all; Jack has to play his part. But that is nothing to the surprising changes presented by other variants of the folktale. A Danish one wanders off into "Puss in Boots," and the Icelandic one into the "Forbidden Room;" in Kennedy's "Jack the Master and Jack the Servant" (*Fictions of the Irish Celts*, pp. 32-38) it is the dead man's brother who plays the dead man's part; and in a Gascon

version the dead man is not really dead, but merely shamming to evade his creditors. Sometimes one gets the burial of a dead debtor, but nothing comes of it, as in Cosquin's "Le Petit Bossu" (*Contes de Lorraine,* No. 19, vol. i. pp. 208-222):—

"The prince came to Pekin. When he passed in front of the hotel where his brothers were stopping, they were standing out on the steps, but were ashamed of him, so went inside. The poor little hunchback alighted at a sorry inn, where he unyoked his horse himself; then he got a porter to show him the city. As they went, he saw a dead man whom they had left without burial. 'Why,' he asked, 'haven't they buried him?'

"'Because he had too many creditors, and couldn't pay them.'

"'And by paying for him could one get him buried?'

"'Yes, certainly.'

"The prince summoned the creditors, paid the dead man's debts, and gave money to bury him with; then he continued his journey."

That is all, the dead man is never once afterwards referred to.

Sometimes, on the other hand, there is no dead debtor, no burial, yet we get the division of property, *e.g.*, in Laura Gonzenbach's Sicilian story, "Of one who with help of St. Joseph won the King's Daughter" (*Sicilianische Märchen,* No. 74, vol. ii., pp. 96-103, 248-250). In this tale which is identical with Asbjörnsen's "Boots and his Crew," the youngest of three brothers builds with St. Joseph's aid a ship that will go by land and sea, and then takes on board a cloud-compeller, a tree-bearer, a stream-drinker, a sharpshooter, and a champion walker. St. Joseph has stipulated that he is to get half of all the lad may win, so on their arrival—

"'Now,' said the saint, 'you have got safe home and must keep your promise, and give me half of all your treasures.'

"'That will I, old father,' said the youth, and divided all the

treasure into two equal shares. Only the golden crown remained, and he drew his sword, cut it through, and gave half also of it to St. Joseph.

"'Old father,' he said, 'now I've shared everything, there's nothing more left.'

"'Nothing more left? You have forgotten the best of all.'

"'The best, old father, I can see nothing that we haven't shared.'

"'And the king's daughter? Did not the compact run that we must share everything that you got?'

"The lad was sore troubled, for he loved the king's fair daughter dearly. But he thought: 'I promised, and must keep my promise;' drew his sword, and was about to cleave the king's fair daughter in twain.

"But: 'Hold,' cried St. Joseph, 'the king's fair daughter is thine, and thine also all the treasures, for I am St. Joseph and need them not. I have helped thee because I knew thy piety and humility, and if ever thou needest me afterwards, apply to me always. I will help thee.'

"Thereon he blessed them both and vanished."

In "Sir Amadas" and in the Gaelic story there is talk of dividing the child as well as the mother; in the Bukowina-Gypsy story of "The Winged Hero" (a version of the Sanskrit "Weaver as Vishnu") the child only is mentioned:—

"The prince screwed his wings, and flew to the fire, and took a brand of it, and started back; and a spark fell on one wing, and the wing caught fire. Just as he was under the mountain the wing fell off, and he flung away the other as well. And he walked round the mountain and could not ascend it. And God came to him and said: 'Why weepest thou?'

"'Ah! how should I not weep? For I cannot ascend the mountain, and my wife has brought forth a child.'

"'What will you give me if I carry you to the top?'

"'I will give you whatever you want.'

"'Will you give me what is dearest to you?'

"'I will.'

"'Let us make an agreement."

"They made one. God cast him into a deep sleep, and her as well; and God bore them to his father's, to his own bed, and left them there and departed.

". . . . The boy grew big, and was playing one day. The emperor and the empress had gone to church, and the nurse too had gone to church, God came disguised as a beggar. The prince said to the little lad: 'Take a handful of money, and give it to the beggar.'

"The beggar said: 'I don't want this money; it's bad. Tell your father to give me what he vowed he would.'

"The prince was angry, and took his sword in his hand, and went to the old man to kill him. The old man took the sword in his own hand and said: 'Give me what you vowed to me; the child, you know, when you were weeping under the mountain.'

"'I will give you money, I will not give you the child.'

"God took the child by the head, and the father took him by the feet, and they tugged, and God cut the child in half.'

"'One half for you, and one half for me.'

"'I don't want him now you've killed him. Do you take him.'

"God took him, and went outside and put him together, and he was healed and lived again.

"'Do you take him now.'

"For God cut off his sins."

One could go on almost for ever with these variants; those who would follow them further may consult the works already referred to, and also Simrock's *Der Gute Gerhard und die dankbaren Todten* (Bonn, 1856), Reinhold Köhler in Pfeiffer's *Germania* (vol. iii., pp. 199-209), W. R. S. Ralston in *Fraser's Magazine* (November, 1872), and Professor T. C. Crane's *Italian Popular Tales* (1885, pp. 131-5, 350-1). The strange thing is that none of these folklorists—Benfey, Köhler, Hahn, Ralston, Crane, Cosquin—has noticed the striking resemblance between our folktale and the Book of Tobit, a story two thousand years old, so older far than any we have cited.

Tobit, a righteous Jew, is carried captive to Nineveh. He gives many alms to his brethren, bread to the hungry, and clothes to the naked (*cf.* Gypsy version); "and if I saw any of my nation dead or cast about the walls of Nineve, I buried him." So his goods are taken from him. Yet again one day he leaves his meat to go and bury a strangled Jew. That same night he was blinded by the droppings of sparrows. He sends his son Tobias to Rages in Media to recover ten talents of silver entrusted to a friend; and Tobias finds a travelling companion, who really is "Raphael, that was an angel." On the way Tobias catches a fish (a crocodile, say the commentators, but query, rather a dragon or *râkshasa*?), and by Raphael's advice takes its heart and liver and gall. They lodge near Rages with Tobias's cousin Raguel, whose daughter, Sara, has had seven husbands. Asmodeus, the evil spirit, has killed them all before they have lain with her, and her maids reproach her with having strangled them (*cf.* the Russian version). Raguel offers Sara's hand to Tobias (*cf.* Armenian and Russian versions); and Tobias, by Raphael's advice, makes a fumigation with the heart and the liver of the fish, which drives Asmodeus into the utmost parts of Egypt. Next morning Raguel sends to inquire if Tobias is alive, and learns he is (*cf.* Gypsy and Russian versions). After recovering the ten talents Tobias returns home with Sara and Raphael (*cf.* Gypsy and Russian versions), cures his father's blindness with the fish's gall, and *offers to Raphael half of all that he has brought* (chap. 12, vv. 2, 5; *cf.* most versions).

"'But I,' is the answer, 'am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels . . . . Now therefore give God thanks, for I go up to him that sent me.'

"And when they arose they saw him no more" (*cf.* Gypsy, Armenian, Straparola's, Gaelic, Old English, and other versions).

Plainly the folktale is not derivable from the Book of Tobit;[1] no, the Book of Tobit becomes rightly intelligible only by means of the folktale. The burial of the dead

[1] Laura Gonzenbach gives as a Sicilian folktale "The History of Tobià and Tobiòla" (No. 89, vol. ii., pp. 177-181), which must be borrowed directly from the Book of Tobit. Reinhold Köhler, who annotated her stories so admirably has, rather strangely, no note upon this one. The source, perhaps, seemed too self-evident.

by Tobit has no more apparent connection with the subsequent narrative than the burial of the dead debtor has in our "Jack the Giant-Killer;" and the proposed division of property pre-demands an original compact. Then consider that in the Russian version, as also in "Sir Amadas," the Grateful Dead returns as an angel, and that in Hahn's Greek folktale, "Faith's Recompense" (No. 53, vol. i., p. 295), the old saint, relinquishing his covenanted share, stays the hero's hand as he would cleave the bride, and cries: "Hold, I am one sent by God." Is it not likely, more than likely, certain, that in the original form the angel Raphael must have been the grateful spirit of a dead man buried by Tobit? Even Tobias's unnecessary dog, which has sorely puzzled the commentators, can be matched from the Slovak-Gypsy story of "The Dragon," whose hero, the Wanderer, "had such a big dog; whatever one thought of, that dog immediately knew." That knowing dog is never once heard of afterwards; but often, as in Hahn's "Twin Brothers" (No. 22, vol. i., p. 170), a dog proves decidedly helpful.

The conclusions to be drawn from my discovery—if such it be—seem sufficiently obvious. But they lie quite beyond my *fach*; I therefore leave it for the Higher Critics to draw them.[1]

Post-scriptum.—Since writing this article, I have come

[1] The late Professor Stephens, in his edition of *Sir Amadace* (Copenhagen, 1860), was the first to point out the connection between the story of Tobit and that of *The Grateful Dead*. He gives a list of variants; but Mr. Groome's paper is welcome, as extending the list and pointing out the various changes the tale has undergone. It may be added that Cicero (*De Divin.*, l. i.) relates a story of Simonides, who, travelling, paid for the obsequies of a man whom he found dying. Shortly afterwards the dead man appeared to him in a dream and warned him not to sail in a certain ship, as he intended. Simonides complied with the advice. The ship was wrecked, and all on board were lost. The story of Tobit was very popular in the East, under the name of *Chikâr the Wise*. *See* Lidzbarski, *Geschichten und Lieder aus den neu-aramäischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, p. 3, and Mr. Conybeare's review of it, *ante*, p. 165. Dr. Dillon, in the *Contemporary Review* for March last, has given another version.—ED.

on the following passage in Madame Darmesteter's *Life of Renan* (1897, p. 251):—"That night he told us the story of the Babylonian Tobias. Rash and young, this Chaldæan brother of our Tobit, discouraged by the difficult approaches of prosperity, had entered into partnership with a demi-god or Demon, who made all his schemes succeed and pocketed fifty per cent. upon the profits. The remaining fifty sufficed to make Tobias as rich as Oriental fancy can imagine. The young man fell in love, married his bride, and brought her home. On the threshold stood the Demon: 'How about my fifty per cent?' The Venus d'Ille, you see, was not born yesterday. From the dimmest dawn of time sages have taught us not to trust the gods too far."

Unluckily there seems to be no authority whatever for this alleged Chaldæan version, which should obviously come closer to the folk-tale than to the Book of Tobit. At least Professor Sayce writes me:—"The passage in Madame Darmesteter's *Life of Renan* must be based on an error, for no such story—so far as I know—has ever been found on a cuneiform tablet. It may have originated in a mis-translation of one of the contract tablets; but, if so, the mis-translation must have appeared is some obscure French publication, perhaps a newspaper, which I have not seen."

Alack! and yet our folk-tale remains perhaps the oldest current folk-tale in the world.