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FAIRY TALES AND STORIES

BY
HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

TRANSLATED BY
DR. H. W. DULCKEN



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ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES.



THE SILVER SHILLING.

THERE was once a Shilling. He came out quite bright from the Mint, and sprang up, and rang out, "Hurrah! now I'm off into the wide world." And into the wide world he certainly went.

The child held him with soft warm hands; the miser clutched him in a cold avaricious palm; the old man turned him goodness knows how many times before parting with him; while careless youth rolled him lightly away. The Shilling was of silver, and had very little copper about him: he had been now a whole year in the world—that is to say, in the country in which he had been struck. But one day he started on his foreign travels: he was the last native coin in the purse borne by his travelling master. The gentleman himself was not aware that he still had this coin until he came across it by chance.

"Why, here's a shilling from home left to me," he said. "Well, he can make the journey with me."

And the Shilling rattled and jumped for joy as it was thrust back into the purse. So here it lay among strange companions, who came and went, each making room for a successor; but the Shilling from home always remained in the bag, which was a distinction for it.

Several weeks had gone by, and the Shilling had travelled far out into the world without exactly knowing where he was, though he learned from the other coins that they were French or Italian. One said they were in such and such a town, another that they had reached such and such a spot; but the Shilling could form no idea of all this. He who has his head in a bag sees nothing; and this was the case with the Shilling. But one day, as he lay there, he noticed that the purse was not shut, and so he crept