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Ephraim Maxham

Daniel Ripley Wing

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The Eastern Mail.

A Family Newspaper....Devoted to Agriculture, Literature, the Mechanic Arts, and General Intelligence.

WATERVILLE, MAINE, THURSDAY, DEC. 4, 1851.

NO. 20.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY MORNING, BY
S. MAXHAM & D. R. WING.

At No. 3-2 Boulevard Block, Main Street.

Advertisements taken in advance, or within one month, \$1.50 per line. If paid within six months, \$1.25. If paid within a year, \$1.00. Most kinds of Country Produce taken in payment. No paper discontinued until all arrearages are paid, except at the option of the publishers.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

To a Spring Flower seen in October.

Why art thou here? The faded leaves
Are strewn companions for a flower
That blooms in April's sunset glow,
And the dew-drops on its petals show
The path of its life, from the first rain
To this late autumn, when the leaves are slain.
The ground with garlands dead is strewn,
The south wind's breath is chilling now,
The clouds no longer are wreathed with gold,
The birds to summer lands are flown,
All things are darkened with decay,
And why that thou shouldst be here to-day?
On the wide world thou bloom'st alone,
And art thou listening to the sigh,
Which every hour that's floating by,
Breathes of the summer's brightest day?
Dost listen to the mournful song
The leaves chant as they wing their way along?
Perchance with thee the flowers are up,
The sweet, dim memories of days
When merrily the sunlight's rays
Played all day in the flower's cup,
And the dew-drops on its petals
Lay like the tears of a happy dream.
What are they whispering, Spring Flower?
Do they not bid thee hasten up,
With the bright, beautiful and gay,
That fade with every dying hour?
Do they not bid thee plume thy wings,
And dwell no more where death's pale spirit sings?
Then linger not, too harsh and cold,
Thy hour is when the May dew flows,
Thy home is 'neath a kinder sky,
Then fly to meet to Autumn's dreary sigh.

STORIES FOR YOUTH.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH.

BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Once upon a time, there lived a very rich man; and his name was Midas. He had a little daughter, whom nobody but himself ever heard of, and whose name I either never knew, or have entirely forgotten. So, because I have odd names for little girls, I choose to call her, Marygold.

This King Midas was fonder of gold than of anything else in the world. He valued his royal crown chiefly because it was composed of that precious metal. If he loved anything better, or half so well, it was the one little maid who played so merrily around her father's footstool. But the more Midas loved his daughter, the more did he desire and seek for wealth. He thought, foolish man! that the best thing he could possibly do for this dear child would be to bequeath her the immense pile of yellow, glistening coin, that had ever been heaped together since the world was made. Thus, he gave all his thoughts and all his time to this one purpose. If ever he happened to gaze for an instant at the gold-lit clouds of sunset, he wished that they were real gold, and that the sun itself were a great ball of gold.

And yet, in his earlier days, before he was so entirely possessed with this insane desire for riches, King Midas had shown a great taste for flowers. He had planted a garden, in which grew the biggest and beautifullest and sweetest roses that any mortal ever saw or smelt. These roses were still growing in the garden, as large, as lovely and as fragrant, as when Midas used to pass whole hours in gazing at them, and inhaling their perfume. But now, if he looked at them at all, it was only to calculate how much the garden would be worth, if each of the innumerable rose petals were thin plates of gold. And though he once was fond of music (in spite of an "idle story" about his ears, which were said to resemble those of an ass), the only music for poor Midas now, was the clink of one coin against another.

At length (as people always grow more and more foolish, unless they take care to grow wiser and wiser), Midas had got to be so exceedingly unreasonable, that he could scarcely bear to see or touch any object that was not gold. He made it his custom, therefore, to pass a large portion of every day in a dark and dreary apartment under ground, at the base of his palace. It was here that he kept his wealth. To this dismal hole—for it was little better than a dungeon—Midas betook himself, whenever he wanted to be particularly happy. Here, after carefully locking the door, he would take a bag of gold coin, or a gold cup as big as a wash-bowl, or an heavy golden bar, or a peck measure of gold dust, and, bring them from the obscure corners of the room into the one bright and narrow sunbeam that fell from the "dungeon-like" window. He valued the sunbeam for no other reason but that his treasure would not shine without his help. And then would he reckon over the coins in the bag; toss up the bar, and catch it as it came down; lift the gold dust through his fingers; look at the funny image of his own face, as reflected in the burnished circumference of the cup; and whisper to himself, "O Midas, rich King Midas, what a happy man I am!" But it was laughable to see how the image of his face kept grinning at him, out of the polished surface of the cup. It seemed to be aware of his foolish behavior, and to have a naughty inclination to make fun of him. Midas called himself a happy man; but he felt that he was not yet quite so happy as he might be. The very tip-top of enjoyment would never be reached, unless the whole world were to become his treasure-room, and be filled with yellow metal which should be all his own.

Now I need hardly remind such wise little people as you are, that in the old, old times, when King Midas was alive, a great many things came to pass, which we should consider wonderful, if they were to happen in our day and country. And on the other hand, a great many things, which we take place now-a-days, which seem not only wonderful to us, but at which the people of old times would have stared with eyes out. On the whole, I regard our own

times as the strangest of the two; but, however that may be, I must go on with my story.

Midas was enjoying himself in his treasure-room, one day as usual, when he perceived a shadow fall over the "heaps of gold," and on looking suddenly up, what should he behold but the figure of a stranger, standing in the bright and narrow sunbeam! It was a young man, with a cheerful and ruddy face. Whether it was that the imagination of King Midas threw a yellow tinge over everything, or whatever the cause might be, he could not help fancying that the smile with which the stranger regarded him had a kind of golden radiance in it. Certainly, although his figure intercepted the sunshine, there was now a brighter gleam upon all the piled-up treasure than before. Even the remotest corner had its share of it, and was lighted up, when the stranger smiled, as with tips of flame and sparks of fire.

As Midas knew that he had carefully turned the key in the lock, and that no mortal strength could possibly break into his treasure-room, he, of course, concluded that his visitor must be something more than mortal. It is no matter about telling you who he was. In those days, when the earth was comparatively a new affair, it was supposed to be often the resort of beings endowed with supernatural powers, and who used to interest themselves in the joys and sorrows of men, women and children, half playfully and half seriously. Midas had met such beings before now, and was not sorry to meet one of them again. The stranger's aspect, indeed, was so good-humored and kindly, if not beneficent, that it would have been unreasonable to suspect him of intending any mischief. It was far more probable that he came to do Midas a favor. And what could that favor be, unless to multiply his heaps of treasure?

The stranger gazed about the room; and when his lustrous smile had glistened upon all the golden objects that were there, he turned again to Midas.

"You are a wealthy man, friend Midas!" he observed. "I doubt whether any other four walls, on earth, contain so much gold, as you have contrived to pile up in this room."

"I have done pretty well—pretty well," answered Midas, in a disconcerted tone. "But, after all, it is but a trifle, when you consider that it has taken me my whole life to get it together. If one could live a thousand years he might have time to grow rich!"

"What!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you are not satisfied?"

Midas shook his head.

"And pray what would satisfy you?" asked the stranger. "Merely for the curiosity of the thing, I should be glad to know."

Midas paused and meditated. He felt a presentiment that this stranger, with such a golden lustre in his good-humored smile, had come hither with both the power and the purpose of gratifying his utmost wishes. Now, therefore, was the fortunate moment, when he had but to speak, and obtain whatever possible, or seemingly impossible thing, it might come into his head to ask. So he thought, and thought, and thought, and heaped up one golden mountain upon another, in his imagination, without being able to imagine them big enough. At last, a bright idea occurred to King Midas.

"It seemed really as bright as the glistening metal which he loved so much."

Raising his head, he looked the lustrous stranger in the face.

"Well, Midas," observed his visitor, "I see that you have at length hit upon something that will satisfy you. Tell me your wish."

"It is only this," replied Midas. "I am weary of collecting my treasures with so much trouble, and beholding the heap so diminutive, after I have done my best. I wish everything that I touch to be changed to gold!"

The stranger's smile grew so very broad, that it seemed to fill the room like an outburst of the sun, gleaming into a shadowy dell, where the yellow autumnal leaves—for so looked the lumps and particles of gold—like strewn in the glow of light.

"The Golden Touch!" exclaimed he. "You certainly deserve credit, friend Midas, for striking out so brilliant a conception. But are you quite sure that this will satisfy you?"

"How could it fail?" said Midas.

"And will you never regret the possession of it?"

"What could induce me?" asked he. "I ask nothing else, to render me perfectly happy."

"Be it as you wish, then," replied the stranger, waving his hand in token of farewell. "To-morrow, at sunrise, you will find yourself gifted with the Golden Touch."

The figure of the stranger then became exceedingly bright, and Midas involuntarily closed his eyes. On opening them again, he beheld only one yellow sunbeam in the room, and all around him, the glistening of the precious metal which he had spent his life in hoarding up.

Whether Midas slept as usual that night, the story does not say. Asleep or awake, however, his mind was probably in the state of a child's, to whom a beautiful new plaything has been promised in the morning. At any rate, day had hardly peeped over the hills, when King Midas was broad awake, and, stretching his arms out of bed, began to touch the objects that were within reach. He was anxious to prove whether the Golden Touch had really come, according to the stranger's promise. So he laid his finger on a chair, by the bedside, and on various other things, but was grievously disappointed to perceive that they remained of exactly the same substance as before. Indeed, he felt very much afraid that he had only dreamed about the lustrous stranger, or else that the latter had been making game of him. And what a miserable affair would it be, if, after all his hopes, Midas must content himself with what little gold he could scrape together by ordinary means, instead of creating it by a touch!

All this while it was only the gray of the morning, with but a streak of brightness along the edge of the sky, where Midas could not see it. He lay in a very disconsolate mood, regretting the downfall of his hopes and kept growing sadder and sadder, until the earliest sunbeam shone through the window, and gilded the ceiling over his head. It seemed to Midas that this bright yellow sunbeam was reflected in rather a singular way on the white covering of the bed. Looking more closely, what was his astonishment and delight, when he found that this linen fabric had been transmuted to what seemed a woven texture of the purest and brightest gold! The Golden Touch had come to him with the first sunbeam!

Midas started up in a kind of joyful frenzy, and about the room, gazing at anything

that happened to be in his way. He seized one of the bedposts, and it became immediately a fluted golden pillar. He pulled aside a window curtain, in order to admit a clear spectacle of the wonders which he was performing; and the tassel grew heavy in his hand—a mass of gold. He took up a book from the table. At his first touch, it assumed the appearance of such a splendidly-bound and gilt-edged volume as one often meets with, now-a-days; but on running his fingers through the leaves, he beheld it was a bundle of thin golden plate, in which all the wisdom of the book had grown illegible. He hurriedly put on his clothes, and was enraptured to see himself in a magnificent suit of gold cloth, which retained its flexibility and softness, although it burdened him a little with its weight. He drew out his handkerchief, which little Marygold had hemmed for him. That was likewise gold, with the dear child's neat and pretty stitches running all along the border, in gold thread!

Somehow or other, the last transformation did not quite please King Midas. He would rather have remained just the same as when she climbed his knee, and put it into his hand. But it was not worth while to vex himself about a trifle. Midas now took his spectacles out of his pocket, and put them on his nose, in order that he might see more distinctly what he was about. In those days, spectacles for common people had not been invented, but were already worn by kings; else, how could Midas have had any? To his great perplexity, however, excellent as the spectacles were, he discovered that he could not possibly see through them. But this was the most natural thing in the world; for, on taking them off, the transparent crystals turned out to be plates of yellow metal, and, of course, were worthless as spectacles, though valuable as gold. It struck Midas as rather inconvenient, that with all his wealth, he could never be rich enough again to own a pair of serviceable spectacles.

"It is no great matter, nevertheless," said he to himself, very philosophically. "We cannot expect any great good, without its being accompanied with some small inconvenience. The Golden Touch is worth the sacrifice of a pair of spectacles, at least, if not of one's very eyesight. My own eyes will serve for ordinary purposes, and little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me."

Wise King Midas was so exalted by his good fortune, that the palace seemed not sufficiently spacious to contain him. He therefore went down stairs, and smiled as he observed that the balustrade of the staircase became a bar of burnished gold, as his hand passed over it, in his descent. He lifted the door latch (it was brass only a moment ago, but golden when his fingers quitted it), and emerged into the garden. Here as it happened, he found a great number of beautiful roses in full bloom, and others in all the stages of lovely bud and blossom. Very delicious was their fragrance in the morning breeze. Their delicate blush was one of the fairest sights in the world; so gentle, so modest, and so full of sweet tranquillity, did these roses seem to be.

But Midas knew a way to make them far more precious, according to his way of thinking, than roses had ever been before. So he took great pains in going from bush to bush, and exercised his magic touch most indefatigably, until every individual flower and bud, and even the worms at the heart of some of them, were changed to gold. By the time this good work was completed, King Midas was so weary, that he went to bed, and as the morning air had given him an excellent appetite, he made haste back to the palace.

What was usually a king's breakfast, in the days of Midas, I really do not know, and cannot stop now to investigate. To the best of my belief, however, on this particular morning, the breakfast consisted of hot cakes, some nice little brook-trout, roasted potatoes, fresh boiled eggs, and coffee, for King Midas himself, and a bowl of bread and milk for his little daughter, Marygold. At all events, this is a breakfast fit to set before a king; and whether he had it or not, King Midas could not have had a better.

Little Marygold had not yet made her appearance. Her father ordered her to be called, and seating himself at the table, awaited the child's coming, in order to begin his own breakfast. To do Midas justice, he really loved his daughter, and loved her so much the more this morning, on account of the good fortune which had befallen him. It was not a great while before he heard her coming along the passage, crying bitterly. This circumstance surprised him, because Marygold was one of the cheerfulness little people whom you would see in a summer's day, and hardly shed a tearful drop of tears in a twelve-month. When Midas heard her sobs, he determined to put little Marygold into better spirits, by an agreeable surprise; so, leaning across the table, he touched his daughter's bowl (which was a China one, with pretty figures all around it), and transmuted it to glistening gold.

Meanwhile, Marygold slowly and disconsolately opened the door, and showed herself with her apron at her eyes, still sobbing as if her heart would break.

"How now, my little lady!" cried Midas. "Pray what is the matter with you, this bright morning?"

"Marygold, without taking the apron from her eyes, held out her hand, in which was one of the roses which Midas had so recently transmuted."

"Beautiful!" exclaimed her father. "And what is there in this magnificent golden rose to make you cry?"

"Ah, dear father!" answered the child, as well as her sobs would let her. "It is not beautiful, but the ugliest flower that ever grew! As soon as I was dressed, I ran into the garden to gather some roses for you; because I know you like them, and like them the better when gathered by your little daughter. But, oh dear, dear me! All the beautiful roses, that smelled so sweetly and had so many lovely blushes, are blighted and spoilt! They are grown quite yellow as you see this one, and have no longer any fragrance! What can have been the matter with them?"

"Poh, my dear little girl, pray don't cry about it," said Midas, who was ashamed to confess that he himself had wrought the change which so greatly afflicted her. "Sit down and eat your bread and milk! You will find it easy enough to exchange a golden rose like that (which will last hundreds of years) for an ordinary one which would wither in a day."

"I don't care for such roses as this," cried Marygold, tossing it contemptuously away. "It

has no smell, and the petals prick my nose!"

The child now sat down to the table, but was so occupied with her grief for the blighted roses that she did not even notice the wonderful transmutation of her China bowl. Perhaps this was all the better; for Marygold was accustomed to take pleasure in looking at the queer figures, and strange trees and houses, that were painted on the circumference of the bowl; and these ornaments were now entirely lost in the yellow hue of the metal.

Midas, meanwhile, had poured out a cup of coffee; and, as a matter of course, the coffee-pot, whatever metal it may have been when he took it up, was gold when he set it down. He thought to himself that it was rather an extravagant style of splendor, in a king of his simple habits, to breakfast off a service of gold, and began to be puzzled with the difficulty of keeping his treasures safe. The cupboard and the kitchen would no longer be a secure place of deposit for articles so valuable as golden bowls and coffee-pots.

Amid these thoughts, he lifted a spoonful of coffee to his lips, and sipping it, was astonished to perceive that the instant his lips touched the liquid, it became molten gold, and the next moment, hardened into a lump!

"Ha!" exclaimed Midas, rather amazed. "What is the matter, father?" asked little Marygold, gazing at him with the tears still standing in her eyes.

"Nothing, child, nothing!" said Midas. "Eat your milk before it gets quite cold."

He took one of the nice little tarts on his plate, and by way of experiment, touched his tail with his finger. To his horror, it was immediately transmuted from an admirably fried brook-trout into a gold fish, though not one of those gold fishes which people often keep in glass globes, as ornaments for the parlor. No; but it was really a metallic fish, and looked as if it had been very cunningly made by the nicest goldsmith in the world. Its little bones were now golden wires; its fins and tails were now thin plates of gold; and there were the marks of the forks in it, and all the delicate, frothy appearance of a nicely fried piece of work, as you may suppose; only King Midas, just at that moment, would much rather have had a real trout in his dish than this elaborate and valuable imitation of one.

"I don't quite see," thought he to himself, "how I am to get any breakfast!"

He took one of the smoking hot cakes, and had scarcely broken it, when, to his cruel mortification, though, a moment before, it had been of the whitest wheat, it assumed the yellow hue of Indian meal. To say the truth, if it had really been a hot Indian cake, Midas would have prized it a good deal more than he now did, when its solidity and increased weight made him fully sensible that it was gold. Almost in despair, he helped himself to a boiled egg, which immediately underwent a change similar to those of the trout and cake. The egg, indeed, might have been mistaken for one of these which the famous goose, in the story-book, was in the habit of laying, but King Midas was the only goose that had anything to do with the matter.

"Well, this is a quandary!" thought he, leaning back in his chair, and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who was eating her bread and milk with great satisfaction. Such a costly breakfast before me and nothing that can be eaten!"

Hoping that, by dint of great despatch, he might avoid what he now felt to be a considerable inconvenience, King Midas next snatched a hot potato, and attempted to cram it into his mouth, and swallow it in a hurry. But the Golden Touch was too nimble for him. He found his mouth full, not of meaty potato, but of solid metal, which so burnt his mouth, that he roared aloud, and jumping up from the table, began to dance and stamp about the room, both with pain and affliction.

"Father, dear father!" cried little Marygold, who was a very affectionate child, "pray, what is the matter? Have you burned your mouth?"

"Ah, my dear child," groaned Midas, dolefully, "I don't know what is to become of your dear father."

And truly, my dear little folks, did you ever hear of such a pitiable case, in all your lives? Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest laborer, sitting down at his crust of bread and cup of water, was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold. And what was to be done? Already, at breakfast, Midas was excessively hungry. Would he be less so, by dinner time? And how ravenous would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of indigestible dainties as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive the continuance of such rich fare?

These reflections so troubled wise King Midas, that he began to doubt whether, after all, riches are the one desirable thing in the world, or even the most desirable. But this was only a passing thought. So fascinated was Midas with the glitter of the yellow metal, that he could still have refused to give up the Golden Touch for so paltry a consideration as a breakfast. Just imagine what a price for one meal's victuals! It would be the same as paying millions and millions of money (and as many millions more as would take forever to reckon up) for some fried trout, an egg, a potato, a hot cake, and a cup of coffee!

"It would be quite too dear," thought Midas. Nevertheless, so great was his hunger, and the perplexity of his situation, that he groaned aloud, and very grievously too. Our pretty Marygold could endure it no longer. She sat a moment gazing at her father, and trying with all the might of her little wits, to find out what was the matter with him. Then, with a sweet and sorrowful impulse to comfort him, she started from her chair, and running to Midas, threw her arms affectionately about his knees. He felt that his little daughter's love was worth a thousand times more than he had gained by the Golden Touch.

"My precious, precious Marygold!" cried he. "But Marygold made no answer."

"Alas, what had he done?" How fatal was the gift which the stranger bestowed! The moment the lips of Midas touched Marygold's forehead, a change had taken place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow color, with yellow tear-drops congealing on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint. Her soft and tender little form grew hard and inflexible, with her father's encircling arms.

O, terrible misfortune! The victim of his insatiable desire for wealth, little Marygold, was a human child no longer, but a golden statue.

Yes, there she was, with the questioning look of love, grief, and pity, hardened into her face. It was the proudest and most woeful sight that mortal ever saw. All the features and tokens of Marygold were there; even the beloved little dimple remained in her golden chin. But, the more perfect was the resemblance, the greater was the father's agony at beholding this golden image, which was all that was left him of a daughter. It had been a favorite phase of Midas, whenever he felt particularly fond of his daughter, to say that she was worth her weight in gold. And now the phrase had become literally true. And now, at last, when it was too late, he felt how infinitely a warm and tender heart, that loved him, exceeded in value all the wealth that could be piled up between the earth and sky!

It would be too sad a story, if I were to tell you how Midas, in the fullness of all his grief and despair, began to wring his hands and bemoan himself; and how he could neither bear to look at Marygold, nor yet to look away from her. Except when his eyes were fixed on the image, he could not possibly believe that she was changed to gold.

But, stealing another glance, there was the precious little figure, with a yellow tear-drop on its yellow cheek, and a look so piteous and tender, that it seemed as if that very expression must needs soften the gold, and make it flesh again. This, however, could not be. So Midas had only to wring his hands, and to wish that he was the poorest man in the wide world, if the loss of all his wealth might bring back the faintest rose color to his dear child's face.

While he was in this tumult of despair, he suddenly beheld a stranger standing near the door. Midas bent down his head, without speaking; for he recognized the same figure which had appeared to him, the day before, in the treasure-room, and had bestowed on him this disastrous faculty of the Golden Touch. The stranger's countenance still wore a smile, which seemed to shed a yellow lustre all about the room, and glistened on little Marygold's image, and on the other objects that had been transmuted by the touch of Midas.

"Well, friend Midas," said the stranger, "pray how do you succeed with the Golden Touch?"

Midas shook his head.

"I am very miserable," said he.

"Very miserable, indeed!" exclaimed the stranger. "And how happens that? Have I not faithfully kept my promise with you?—Have you not every thing that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not every thing," answered Midas. "And I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah! So you have made a discovery, since yesterday?" observed the stranger. "Let us see, then. Which of these two things do you think is really worth the most—the Gift of the Golden Touch, or one cup of clear, cold water?"

"O, blessed water!" exclaimed Midas. "It will never moisten my parched throat again!"

"The Golden Touch," continued the stranger, "or a crust of bread?"

"A piece of bread," answered Midas. "It is worth all the gold on earth!"

The Golden Touch asked the stranger, for your own little Marygold, warm, soft, and loving, as she was an hour ago?"

"O, my child, my dear child!" cried Midas, wringing his hands. "I would not have given that one small dimple in her chin for the power of changing this whole big earth into a solid lump of gold."

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas," said the stranger, looking seriously at him. "Your own heart, I perceive, has not been entirely changed from flesh to gold. Were it so, your case would indeed be desperate. But you appear to be still capable of understanding that the commonest things, such as life within every body's grasp, are more valuable than the riches which so many mortals sigh and struggle after. Tell me, now, do you sincerely desire to rid yourself of this Golden Touch?"

"It is hateful to me," said Midas.

"A fly settled on his nose, and immediately fell to the floor; for it too had become gold." Midas shuddered.

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that glides past the bottom of your garden. Take likewise a vase of the same water, and sprinkle it over any object you may desire to change back again from gold into its former substance. If you do this in earnestness and sincerity, it may possibly rid you of the mischief which your avarice has occasioned."

King Midas bowed low; and when he lifted up his head, the lustrous stranger had vanished.

You will easily believe that Midas lost no time in snatching up a great earthen pitcher (but alas! it was no longer earthen after he touched it), and hastening to the river side. As he scrambled along, and forced his way through the shrubbery, it was positively marvellous to see how the foliage turned yellow behind him, as if the autumn had been there, and no where else. On reaching the river's brink, he plunged headlong in, without waiting so much as to pull off his shoes.

"Poh! poh!" shouted King Midas as his head emerged out of the water. "Well, this is really a refreshing bath, and I think it must have quite washed away the Golden Touch. And now for filling my pitcher."

As he dipped the pitcher into the water, it gladdened his very heart to see it change from gold into the same good honest earthen vessel which it had been before he touched it. He was conscious also of a change within himself. A cold, hard, and heavy weight seemed to have gone out of his bosom. No doubt his heart had been gradually losing its human substance, and transmuting itself into insensible metal, but had now softened back again into flesh.

Perceiving a violet, that grew on the bank of the river, Midas touched it with his finger, and was overjoyed to find that the delicate flower retained its purple hue, instead of undergoing a yellow-blight. The curse of the Golden Touch had, therefore, really been removed from him.

King Midas hastened back to the palace; and, I suppose, the servants knew not what to make of it when they saw their royal master so cheerfully bringing home an earthen pitcher of water. But that water, which was to undo all the mischief that his folly had wrought, was more precious to Midas than an ocean of molten gold could have been! The first thing he did, as you have hardly to be told, was to

sprinkle it by handfuls over the golden figure of little Marygold.

No sooner did it fall on her than you would have laughed to see how the rosy color came back to the dear child's cheek!—and how she began to sneeze and sputter!—and how astonished she was to find herself dripping wet, and her father still throwing more water over her!

"Pray do not, dear father," cried she. "See how you have spoiled my nice frock, which I put on only this morning!"

For Marygold did not know that she had been a little golden statue; nor could she remember anything that had happened since the moment when she ran, with outstretched arms, to comfort poor King Midas.

Her father did not think it necessary to tell his beloved child how very foolish he had been, but contented himself with showing how much wiser he had grown. For this purpose, he led little Marygold into the garden, where he sprinkled all the remainder of the water over the rose-bushes, and with such good effect that about five thousand roses recovered their beautiful bloom.

When King Midas had grown quite an old man, and was fond of telling them this marvelous story, pretty much as I have told it to you. And then would he stroke their glossy ringlets, and tell them that their hair, likewise, had a rich shade of gold, which they had inherited from their mother.

And to tell you the truth, my precious little folks, though King Midas, diligently tending the children, all the while, ever since that morning, I have hated the sight of all other gold, save this.

A RARE DOG STORY.

In 1792, I was then in my nineteenth year, and well remember the circumstance, as a gentleman, whose country seat stood within six miles of my 'cottage on the moor,' kept a fine mastiff dog. By day he was chained up near the house; by night he was loose to range through the garden and inclosures, a terror to evil-doers, but kindly affected to all such as do well. Now, whether it was natural instinct, (for wolves are only wild dogs), or whether he had received some real or supposed affront from the sheep fraternity, I never could learn; for though the dog had a language of his own, and in which he conversed very fluently at times, yet I must confess, I could better understand the language of his eyes (dogs have very expressive eyes), than the language of his lips. Be this as it may, one morning he was accused of having murdered two of his neighbor's sheep. His master, unwilling to 'take up an evil report against his faithful watch-dog, had the trial postponed to Monday next, as they say in court. On the following night, however, another murder was committed. This time the feat was too clear to admit a doubt. Hero was brought in guilty, not by a verdict of his peers, but a conviction of two legged animals, who were too dull to appreciate his motives, and too blind to sympathize with him under the circumstances, neither had they courtesy to ask, as has been the custom in all civilized communities ever since the days of Haman, who himself was strung up fifty cubits, if he had any objection to make against being hung, but straight way they proceeded to execution. His master, while a tear crossed his eye-ball, says, John get a stout piece of rope. Hang Hero behind the barn so as not to be seen from the house. Having spoke thus, he entered—

As the dog was a fine specimen of a mastiff, I have heard some two legged animals receive theirs in the Hall of Justice in the Park. He never opened his mouth; but thinks he there will be a long respite between the sentence and the hanging day. So without speaking a word, he cleared a stone fence five feet high, over hills and dales, over fields and floods he flew, as with the wings of the wind. He never drew up till he entered a city of refuge; here the avenger of blood dared not to enter.

You have read in that book, which all other books were made a man drew a bow at a venture, the unerring eye of Omnipotence became pilot to that shaft, it entered between the joints of his armor, and the proud monarch sunk dead in his chariot. The same unerring eye directed the flight of this dog to the spot, where, after an absence of nearly seven years, he was the means of saving the life of his master, as you will see in the sequel.

It came to pass, when nearly seven years had expired since the fright and flight of Hero (no doubt the poor dog was scared enough when he heard the order for immediate execution), that his late master was sojourning on the borders of Scotland and England; it was winter, and dark in that climate at 5 P. M.

He put up at a tavern by the wayside. As soon as he was dismounted, and went in the stable to see that his horse was cared for, he was followed by a large mastiff dog, who by every means that a dog could invent, endeavored to draw his attention. The gentleman sat down in the hall, the dog by his side, when he began to think there was something strange in the dog's attentions and manners. He put his hand on the head of the dog, and spoke kindly; the dog encouraged him, laid his paw on his master's knee and looked earnestly in his face, recollections arose in the memory of the master, and he exclaimed in surprise! Why! Hero, are you here?—Here was so pleased at the recognition that he almost leaped on his master's back. Whether the landlord was informed of the merits of the case, or not, my informant did not say; at any rate, Hero and his master were never separated from that hour.

Hero followed his master into the bed-room, when seeing him about to undress, he seized the skirt of his coat with his teeth, and drew his master towards a closet; on opening the door, he discovered the corpse of a man suspended against the wall. He saw his danger, and made preparation accordingly. This matter occurred shortly after the return of the army from America, after the war of Independence. Many of the disbanded soldiers took to robbing on the highways, and gentlemen always travelled well armed. He saw that his four pistols were in right trim, piled everything movable in the room against the door, and sat down to await the result. As midnight drew near, a knock at the door, a violent medicine which was standing on the mantelpiece was wanted for one of the family, who was then seriously ill, Dr. Merton, (which was the gentleman's name), informed the landlord that he was prepared with firearms, and would shoot the first man that entered. Presently he distinguished the voices of three men, who after some further parley and a few seconds' rest

