Perronik, the 'Innocent,'

or,

the Quest of the Golden Basin and Diamond Lance

One of the Sources of Stories about the Holy Grail,

A Breton Legend, after Souvestre,

by

Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie.

Comparative Literature Press

182 Monroe Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.

PS3513
.U87 P3
1915

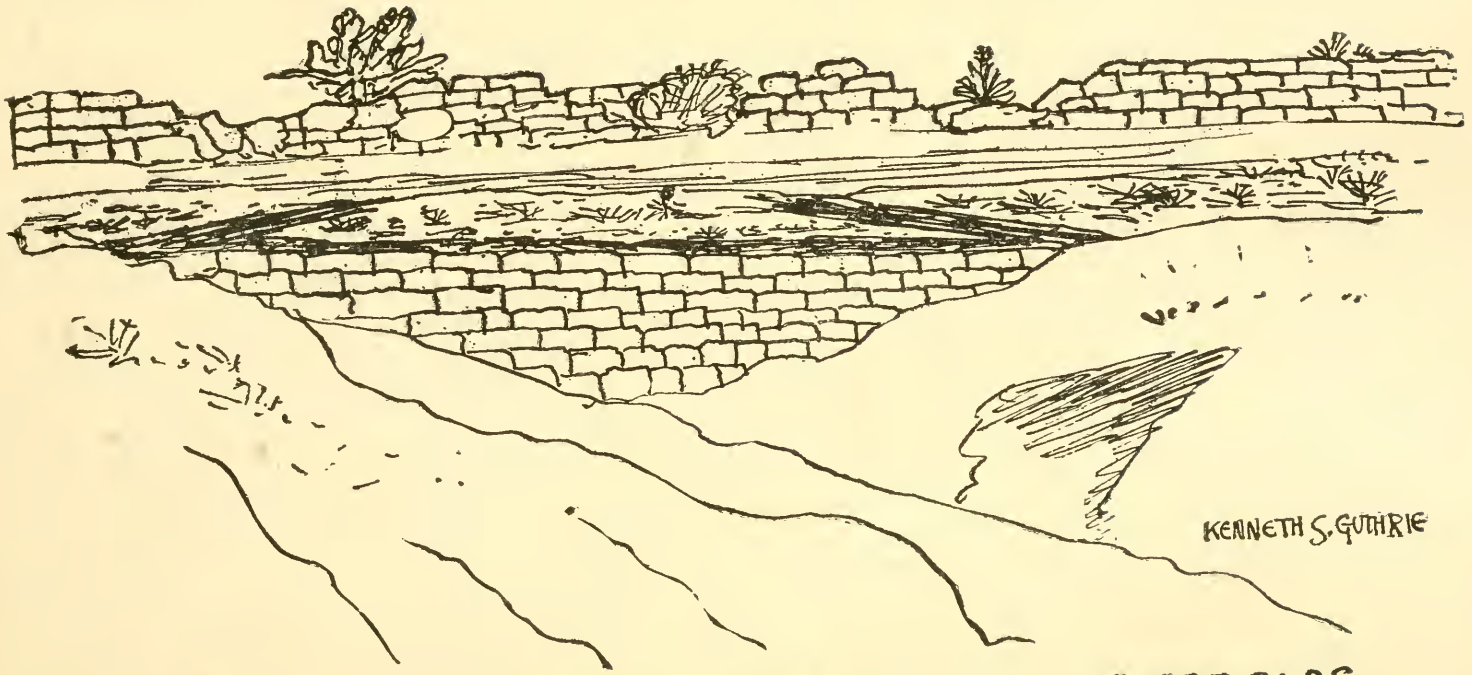
All Rights, including that of Translation Reserved.

Copyright, 1915, by Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie.

$0.55

JUL -8 1915

©CLA401695



WALL-EMPLACEMENTS OF THE CASTLE OF KER-GLAS

INTRODUCTION: LOCATION OF KERGLAS.

The definite location of the Castle of Kerglas was difficult to discover. For several years I asked every French and Breton authority in vain. Even Paul Sebillot inclined to the belief that the whole matter was an invention of Souvwestre's. Then I visited Charles Le Goffic at Rim Rouz en Tregastel; and he thought there were many Kerglas localities, the name meaning merely "house of mourning." He, however, advised me to write to the deputy for Vannes, the Marquis d'Estourbillon, at his Chateau de Porhoet, at Avessac; and from the latter I finally received a letter, forwarded to me in America, that there was such a manoir at two miles from Vannes, on the Elven road, belonging to M. Lepan de Ligny, Avenue Mozart 109, xvi, Paris. Next summer (1914), I made several sketches of it, but while doing so, it became perfectly plain to me that this could not have been the location of the castle, for it was neither on the summit of a hill, nor anywhere near a river. I therefore returned to the highway, and in the quarries on the top of the hill, I found indeed ruined emplacements of walls. Later in the day, in search of photographic reproductions thereof, I visited the interesting shop of M. Alphonse David, 4 rue Emile, "Au Gagne Petit," where this gifted artist in cards, aided by his able wife, received me kindly. To my explanations he listened with incredulity; for, said he, "I own part of those quarries myself, and I never heard of any ruins therein!" I could only insist that the ruins had been still there that very morning; and he told me that the location was ideal for the story, as the Liziec River turns around that hill, and that beyond the Liziec was a wood, and beyond that a pond, and further still a rock, and a forest, and a farmhouse or manoir of good friends of his. After I had partially convinced him, he smiled quizzically. "To think that you would have to come from America to tell me of ruins on my own property, which are the location of a legend you yourself found in a book that I have sold over my counter for twenty years!"

Perronik, the Innocent

CHAPTER I.

PERRONIK, THE "INNOCENT," USES HIS MOTHER-WIT.

Most people grow old, but there have always been some in the history of the world who, though their body grew up, ever remained young in heart. Many are the causes of this; some are physically unable to take part in labor or war; others are debarred by their sex; some, on the contrary, merely manage to preserve their youth by love of nature, the fields and forests, the sea and sky. Then again others, like David of old, remain young in heart because of the fire of religious devotion in their soul; and some remain young not only because they love nature and religion, but because of the influence of holy people, like Samuel, who associated with the reverend Eli; and the Percival of the Holy Grail legends, the companion of his sainted sister. These simple-minded people, however, are by no means fools. They have a great deal of mother-wit, as was shown by David in his fight with Goliath; when the simple-minded youth succeeded where all others failed. Then again, many of them, in times past, acted as singers, bards, or entertainers. We remember that David played before Saul, and by

youthful cheeriness kept away the melancholy moods that darkened that life.

So in Brittany, the extreme north-western corner of France, that juts out into the Atlantic Ocean, there has been, since time immemorial, a class of simple-minded people called "idiots," or "innocents," who were known by the white wands they carried, and the large horn-buttons on their cloaks. They wandered around the country, in the evenings stopping off at the nearest farm-house, sure of being entertained for the night. At supper, they would tell stories, or retail the news of the country-side. In the morning they would not be driven out to work, but be allowed to help the women, or do light helpful offices that required more grace and judgment than muscular effort. When they died, they were sincerely mourned, perhaps not so much for themselves, as for their being considered messengers and helpers from heaven.

It was such an "innocent," by name Perronik, who on a fine spring day knocked at the door of a farm-house a few miles north-west of the dreamy town of Vannes. The farmer's wife responded to his request for food with a bowl of fresh milk. Perronik thanked her, and sat down to enjoy it. "Madam," said he, "this milk is the sweetest, most delicately flavored beverage I ever tasted. I can almost see the thyme-pasture where the cow who gave it must have fed. And you must be a splendid housewife to have kept it so pure!" "I do not deserve much credit," smilingly answered the dame; "but the milk really is good, if I do say it myself. As I see that you are a judge of such things, I will bring you some of my cheese, and I would be glad to have you tell me whether, you think it is good." So she brought out some of her new cheese, cut a generous slice, and gave it to Perronik. The latter tasted it slowly. Then, after the manner of persons who are delivering a weighty judgment, he shut one eye, cocked his head, and clacked his tongue. "I

would not have believed it possible," answered he, "to find any cheese that combines so much smoothness, bouquet and tang. It is a masterpiece, that the country-side will long remember!" and then, to convince himself still more, he accepted another hunk of it, laid it on the brown rye bread, and chewed it meditatively, still expatiating on its merits. "Wait a moment," said the radiant housewife. "Wait till I bring you some of my new sausages! They will taste all the better after the cheese!" Soon she came out of the house with a most luscious specimen of the sausage-maker's art, and Perronik had just given it one good bite when . . . . Here is where our story begins.

CHAPTER II.

PERRONIK BECOMES A SHEPHERD.

Around the bend of the road trotted a large heavy charger, bearing a knight in full armor, with plume and helmet, shield and lance. Resplendent in gay colors, and merrily humming a tune, he stopped in front of the farm-house door, and condescendingly shouted at the respectful peasant woman, "Ho there, woman! Which is the way to the castle of Kerglas?" "Don't go there, my lord, it is dangerous!" tremblingly answered the buxom woman. "Dangerous it may be!" retorted the shimmering knight, "but where else can I get the Golden Basin, and the Diamond Lance?" "You are right," answered the woman, "nowhere else can you get those; but what good will they do you, if you do not return?" "That is where you are mistaken," boasted he. "I expect to return, because I have just been at confession to the holy hermit of Blauvelt; and with his parting benediction, he told me the dangers I should meet; and 'forewarned is forearmed,' you know!" "Well, if you must go," said the kindly dame regretfully, "the road leads over yonder meadow, and through that dark forest!" "Thank you," said the knight; and he was just preparing to leave, when Perronik, who, behind the safe shelter of a wall, had been listening to all that had been going on, and who, on seeing the knight prepare to leave, concluded he had nothing to fear, felt his curiosity get the better of him. "My lord," cried he deferentially, "pray tarry a moment!" "What for?" cried the knight disdainfully. "Would you be willing to tell us what were the dangers of which the reverend

hermit of Blauvelt warned you? It would be very interesting!" pleaded Perronik, who, with a story-teller's genuine interest scented some interesting details. "Do you feel at liberty to tell them to us?" "Of course!" growled the noble knight. "Why should I be afraid to tell them? First, I have to find my way through the Deceptive Forest. Then I must pick the Golden Apple that grows on a tree guarded by a lion—what chance will the lion have with my shield and lance? Then I must get the Nodding Flower which grows on the rock guarded by the three-headed dragon, with the iron ball, with which he attacks his enemies. Then I will come to the Lake of the Scaly Monsters; but what can they do against my armor? Then I must ride through the Forest of the Sirens; and last, I come to the River of Death. Crossing this, I shall be at the foot of the mountain on the summit of which is the castle of Kerglas."

"Thank you, my lord!" bowed the delighted Perronik, and the scornful knight trotted out of sight, shouting his war-cry, and singing about the beautiful eyes of the lady to whom he was to bring back the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance.

Perronik sat down, and was resuming his interrupted gormandizing of the sausage when a distant halloo apprized the mistress of the farm-house that her own lord and master, the farmer, was approaching. She hastened to give him her dutiful greeting, and Perronik modestly stood up expectantly, to meet the man whose hospitality he sought. He had not long to wait before the appearance of the old man, with wrinkled nut-brown skin, blue cloth garments, and large beribboned black felt hat. The latter greeted the "innocent" patronizingly, and invited him to sit down, which Perronik did without further ceremony. The farmer then asked him whether he would be willing to undertake guarding the sheep in the meadow, in exchange for board and lodging. Perronik bowed low, and expressed

himself as delighted with the prospect of employment. So the farmer led the way along the same path the knight had taken to the sweet-grass meadow, where browsed a flock of gentle sheep. The farmer whistled for his dog to guard them, while he himself led Perronik to the edge of the forest, where he cut down a sapling and peeled off its bark, thus transforming it into the white wand characteristic of the "innocents," but which, at the same time, was to serve as shepherd's crook.

So the wandering bard became a shepherd, and like all shepherds, ever since the time of Abel, he cut little reeds, and made flutes of them, and whiled away the time by imitating the song of the many birds that made the forest vocal from early dawn, when they sang their matin chorus, until dusk, when once more they gathered on some high bushes, and after a furious orison, retired to their secret nests, twittering away into sleep. But it was the middle of the day that Perronik especially enjoyed. Then the sheep, exhausted by the heat, would lie down in cool patches of shade. Their bells would be at rest, except for an occasional tinkle when a lamb would start in his dreams, imagining some wasp that had dashed itself at him. The winds had died down, and the birds were resting in their nests, except for an occasional chirp. Then, released from any anxiety, and even from his attempt to call the birds to himself by imitating their song, he would go over in his mind all the wonderful stories he lately had had no opportunity to tell. But chief of all, his mind was ever haunted by the gay knight on the quest of the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance, in the castle of Kerglas. Perronik wondered whether the gay knight had succeeded or failed. Softly he laughed at the knight's self-confidence; for who better than a bard knew that pride goes before a fall? And if the opposite were true, perhaps even he, the simple-minded "innocent," might yet in the same quest succeed.

CHAPTER III.

HOW PERRONIK STARTED ON THE QUEST.

So the peaceful days followed each other. The May flowers came out, and the forest was filled with many perfumes, as the winds blew from favorite nooks of the various flowers. One day Perronik was more than usually longing to have a chance to try those hazards that the knight had told of, when he rubbed his eyes. Was he awake? Was he in a trance? He pinched himself—yea, he was awake, even though around him played all the colors of the rainbow, right in and under the shadows of the trees. Then he heard loud rustling, and in view rode a giant, on an immense charger, and over his shoulder hung the Golden Basin and lay the Diamond Lance, coruscating with all the colors of the rainbow, violet, red, blue, yellow, green, and orange. Poor little Perronik, of course, was very much frightened; and he hid behind the bush, trembling, until the fearsome apparition had passed by. He was just about to return to his favorite couch in the grass, when he heard another irregular rustling. After his last experience he quickly ran back to his hiding place, but nothing very terrible came up the forest-path, only a foal, coal-black like the giant's horse, indeed, but still no more than a festive baby, nibbling here at the succulent clover, then running along, kicking his heels up in the air, and behaving generally in the irresponsible manner characteristic of puppies and kittens. Perronik almost came out, but he saw among the arches of the trees an old man, with white hair flowing over his back,

while a long white beard waved gracefully down to his waist. The old man came forward, and tried to catch the foal; but the rascal would let the old man approach till almost within reach, and then would slip away, and seem to laugh at the patriarch. The latter, however, was not long at a loss. He picked up a stick, and started to draw a magic circle around the foal. The latter was carelessly nibbling at a green shoot, and looked around only when it was too late to escape. Anxiously he hopped around, but the old man relentlessly coiled the magic line around him until the foal no longer could move; when the old man jumped on his back, rubbed out the line in the leaves, and the now frightened foal shot like a bolt through the green under-brush, and disappeared so fast that almost immediately perfect silence once more reigned around him.

This was certainly an extraordinary proceeding, and Perronik long sat still thinking it over. But the afternoon breezes woke up the sheep, and they shifted towards the forbidden river, and Perronik had to run after them. Yet he did not cease to question himself about the whole course of events; and when, during his first leisure, which did not occur before next noon, he again lay on his couch of spear-grass in the shade of the bush, he thought out various solutions. But hardly had he begun to do so, when once more he noticed, playing about him, strange scintillations, such as the light-birds of a mirror in the hands of an inattentive boy at school. Barely had he time to retreat to his hiding place, before he was again almost blinded by the rainbow colors streaming from the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance on the back of the giant on horse-back. And no sooner had he passed, than Perronik again heard the playful colt disporting himself in the forest path. Even at a distance Perronik had already noticed the grey robe of the white-haired patriarch, when suddenly his curiosity spurred him to

action. He picked up a stick, himself started to draw the magic circle around the colt, closer and closer, untli the colt was in his power; and then Perronik quickly turned to bar the passage of the onward rushing old man. "Stop!" shouted Perronik, raising his stick as if to defend the circle he had drawn. The old man halted, but pled with Perronik to let him have his colt. "No indeed," exulted Perronik, "you shall not have your colt, old man, until you have told me the meaning of this strange occurrence, the passing of the giant, and your riding away on the colt!" The old man looked much relieved, and said, "The meaning is simple enough. The giant who just passed along is my younger brother Rogear, who took the Golden Basin and Diamond Lance from me one day while I was asleep; and with their possession I lost the rule of the castle of Kerglas. Therefore when he goes abroad to visit his domain and see to the safety of the Golden Apple and the Nodding Flower, I follow after him, in the hope I may wrest my property back from him in some moment of carelessness of his." "But why do you catch and ride the foal?" insisted the inquisitive Perronik. "Because I myself can no longer return to the castle on foot. My brother stole the black horse away from me, and only the foal knows the short way back to the castle, or can take me safe through the Lake of the Scaly Monsters, or the River of Death, even though I be the magician Bryak! Now that I have answered your impertinent questions, youth, be faithful to your promise, and give me back my foal!" "Very well," assented Perronik, "you may take him, now you have told me your story." For Perronik was a story-teller, and he considered a good story worth even a magic foal. So the old man rushed upon the foal, jumped on him, effaced the magic circle in one place so as to release the frightened colt, and shot off into the forest even quicker than the day before.

Perronik, too, was very happy, and retired to his grassy nook, and reviewed again and again the charming story. It was so full of wonder and human interest, that his mind flew back to the brave knight he had seen confidently ride off on this quest, which must have been uunsuccessful. Then rose up within Perronik, from some mysterious recess in his soul, a thought that made him catch his breath. "What if I should now try my hand at this quest, now that the proud knight has failed, and is out of it? True, I am only an "innocent"; but God loves the innocent; and with His help, perhaps, I might accomplish what was impossible to the knight who trusted alone in his shield and spear! After all, I can do no more than fail; and should I succeed, the glory would be so great, it would be well worth the risk. Yea, I shall try it. But I will need help. Earthly aid there is none, for I have no armor; and after all, the earthly armor of the brave knight seems to have done him but little good. No! I will seek help divine; there lies my only hope!"

CHAPTER IV.

PERRONIK CONQUERS THE LION.

So Perronik prayed all afternoon, and towards evening he drove his sheep into their cote long before sunset, in spite of the plaintive objections of the mother-sheep. Then he sallied forth and made a few preparations; put everything in a "bissac," or bag he could easily sling over his shoulder, hid it in the forest under his favorite bush, and lay down on his couch at the farm with a prayer for divine help. During the night he received assurances of success in a dream; for he saw a Hand beckoning him on to the Golden Basin and Diamond Lance. Then he rose up early, before dawn; went out to the edge of the forest where he could watch the sunrise, and prayed again, till tears dimmed his sight, and he swore to the rising sun that he would start out on the great and holy quest that very day. Then he went about his daily duties, and as soon as he had driven his sheep to the field, he lay down under the trees, and listened to every bird and insect, hoping to receive some helpful suggestion from them. The birds came very near him, for he lay quite still, and their song seemed to be telling him they would help him in his hour of need. Then weariness came over him, and he dozed off into a troubled sleep, from which he suddenly started, when he felt once more playing over him the scintillations he had seen the two days before. Hastily he jumped behind the bush, only just in time to avoid attracting the attention of the scowling giant, who, on that morning, seemed to be, if possible, more ferocious than ever. Then Perronik anxiously peered down the forest-lane for the foal.

This morning the foal had strayed from the forest-path; and suddenly returned to it almost where Perronik stood. The latter indeed barely had time to seize a stick and start his magic circle around the nibbling equine baby; but he succeeded, and drew the circle closer and closer till the foal could no longer move, though he struggled bravely. Perronik had had to work fast, for already he heard the frantic shouts of the magician Bryak, commanding him to desist. But Perronik jumped on to the back of the foal, effaced a little part of the circle, and just as Bryak had caught up with him, Perronik dug his heels into the panting side of the quivering beast, and sped off into the forest so fast that all the trees seemed to fuse into one long lane; and he had hardly managed to readjust himself, after having been dragged through low-hanging branches, when, to his surprise, he saw that the first stage of his journey was over, for, in front of him, hung, on a graceful tree, the Golden Apple of which he had been told.

So glad was Perronik that he never thought of anything else; but he was recalled to stern reality by the fearsome roaring of a giant lion, who bounded into his path, opened his ravenous maw, and crouched for a spring. Now, as all little boys and girls know, "being good is a lonely and hungry job." The bigger the lion, the bigger his appetite; and yet this faithful guardian of the Golden Apple could not hunt. He had to wait till Providence sent him some food, in the shape of people who followed the quest of the Golden Basin and Diamond Lance; and they were few and far between. So you can imagine the poor animal's hunger, and we can excuse his awful excitement, when he saw some prey riding right straight into his jaws, as it were.

Perronik, at first, was struck motionless with terror. But just then he heard one of his favorite bird-friends singing in the branches above him; so he recovered himself, and did some lightning-like thinking. Off he

jumped from the horse; he fell on his knees, extended his hands, in supplication, and cried out most humbly. "Please, Mr. Lion, compose yourself for a minute. Listen to me, for I cannot escape you anyway. Now if you eat me up first, the edge of your appetite will be blunted, and you will not be able properly to relish the delicious larks I have brought you here in my bag. If, on the contrary, you first partake of them, as candy, you will enjoy their delicious flavor to the full. Then, after having done them full justice, you can appease the body of your appetite on me, who cannot escape you any more, even if I tried. Will you not allow me to offer them to you, kind Mr. Lion?"

Even lions, you know, cannot resist courtesy and thoughtfulness; and with an austere nod the huge beast sat down on its haunches, and began licking its chops in anticipation of the feast. So Perronik stood up, carefully opened the mouth of his bag, and held it up before the lion, who thrust his greedy head into it. Hardly had he done so, however, when Perronik drew the bag all the way over it; and imagine the reasonable dismay of the lion when, instead of larks, he found nothing but a mixture of glue and feathers! Of course, he pulled back his head, but with the head came the bag! Then he pawed at it; he lashed his poor inoffensive flanks with his tufted tail; he roared as loud as he could under the distressing circumstances, he danced on his hind legs; he rolled over; he bent himself double, and straightened himself out like a spring when released; he rolled himself into a ball; he dug himself into the ground; but all in vain; and the poor beast would still be struggling even till the present time, had not Perronik, after climbing up the tree and dropping straight down to the ground in his hurry, drawn off his bag, jumped on the foal, and sped away, while the poor misguided lion was still trying to get the sticky feathers out of his eyes, so he could see enough to settle accounts with Perronik; but he was too late.

CHAPTER V.

PERRONIK OUTWITS THE UNSLEEPING DRAGON.

So Perronik sped through the forest till he came up flat against a rock. His late experience made him a little more thoughtful; and he remembered that the Nodding Flower, that grew here, was guarded by a hellish dragon, with four eyes and an iron ball, with which he crushed his opponents. Every six hours one of the four eyes would close in slumber, relieving the others, so the dragon was awake day and night, and there was no hope of overcoming him while off his guard. This, indeed, was a puzzling proposition, and Perronik gingerly picked his way without making a noise to the opposite side of the rock. Even this very light noise had wakened the other three eyes of the hellish dragon; and Perronik was in as great trouble as possible. So he tied the foal where it could browse in sweet clover, and Perronik threw himself down on the grass, and started to think. So Perronik thought, and thought, and thought; but no solution came to him. In despair he gave it up, and fell to enjoying the forest scenery, and relapsed into his favorite occupation, that of listening to the birds. Now if you were listening to birds, could any boy or girl keep from imitating them? So Perronik grew tired. Then, hoping to get some suggestion, he peeped over the rock at the hellish dragon, who lay coiled in his lair beside the coveted flower. Of course, Perronik expected to see the hellish dragon's first eye asleep, as it should

have been. But imagine Perronik's surprise on seeing the second eye also about to close; the eyelid fluttered, and finally came to a rest in complete repose. At first Perronik could not account for this; but he remembered how the eyes of the sheep in his pasture at home behaved exactly like that when he had been whistling particularly well. At first he dismissed the thought as absurd; but, on reflection, he decided that he could prove the point by making an experiment on the third eve. So he lay back and whistled the best he knew. Never had he made such runs, such trills, such cadences, such rhythms, such melodies. First you might have thought he were a lark, then a whippoorwill, then a canary, and finally a nightingale. He would listen to the birds above him, and improve on their bursts and pleadings. Then he looked over the rock again, and indeed, the third eyelid of the hellish dragon was fluttering down, just like that of a sleepy pussy. A few more calls like that of the finch to his mate, and the eye was closed, watching the phantasmagoria of its dreams.

Perronik was beside himself with joy. "This is easy!" almost shouted he to himself! So he settled himself down once more, and started to whistle better than ever. Indeed, he whistled so marvelously, that he surpassed even the birds whom previously he had merely imitated. The birds, who before had listened to his efforts with friendly condescension, now became envious. They fluttered angrily about him, and tried to drown his efforts, by a chorus louder even than that they sang at dusk and dawn. But Perronik only profited by their efforts, because in improving on the suggestions they thus offered, he sang so much better than they that finally their hearts wilted within their little ruffled breasts, and they grew still, hungrily drinking in the magic melodies they heard. Then for the first time Perronik reached his supreme skill in whistling. Even the insects paused on the golden

flowers; the bees stopped humming, and poised themselves gracefully on the buttercups.

But Perronik never forgot he was whistling for a purpose; and once more he peeped over the rock, and to his great delight he saw the hellish monster's fourth eye-lid fluttering just as the former eye-lids had done. So Perronik whistled more gently and drowsily, like the twittering of birds when disturbed by dreams, in their sleep; and then the fourth eye closed with a snap, and for the first time in his long life the hellish monster was entirely asleep. You may well believe that it did not take Perronik very long, noiselessly, to leap over the rock, and pick the Nodding Flower. He fastened it in his cap; picked up his bag, swung it over his shoulder, vaulted onto his impatient foal, and off they sped, showing a clean pair of heels to the wakened monster who stirred uneasily, as if feeling something was wrong, hissing hellishly, out of mere natural spite.

CHAPTER VI.

PERRONIK ESCAPES THE SCALY MONSTERS.

But Perronik, by this time, was far and away; and nothing stopped him till he came to the Lake of the Scaly Monsters. Now, as often happens with dangerous or forbidden things, this dangerous lake was exceedingly beautiful. The blue sky was reflected in its still waters, and the willows by the side seemed to bend down lovingly to touch their perfect reflection in the slimy depths of the treacherous pool. Perronik, however, had not much time to contemplate all these beauties, for by this time, the foal was not only tired but hungry; and when Perronik sought to guide the foal around the lake, the foal impatiently jumped right in and swam, so as to get home the sooner. At first all went well; and Perronik was enjoying the unusual view when his horrified gaze fixed on a circle of still water, around which was a fringe of boiling waves. Then, out of the tranquil pool he saw rising horny scales, and then what he recognized as an opening maw. Imagine the maw of a crocodile, but as big as a whale; then you will forgive brave Perronik for going all white, and trembling. The ferocious row of teeth rose in air; the water began to flow into the enormous black hole. A current set in, and in spite of all the efforts of the plucky foal, Perronik felt himself surely, if slowly, drawn in to the monster's maw. In his extremity he prayed. A bird darted over him, and uttered a piercing shriek, that reminded him of when he had had to protect the lambs when a hawk sailed

overhead. Then he remembered something he had in his bag. He reached in, and pulled out a black bean which, for safety's sake, he had had the good parish priest bless for him, the evening before his departure. This Perronik threw right into the yawning abyss. Now this scaly monster was not a holy scaly monster; and therefore, when he felt the blessed bean tickling his soft palate he felt like vomiting, and in mighty eructations that looked like waterspouts, he tried to eject the bean, which had stuck in the hairs on his inner throat. Unfortunately, however, just as happens to a boy or girl who in eating fish swallows a bone that sticks in the throat, all the branches and sticks which had easily gone down along with the swirl of water, now were turned side-wise; they stuck in his gills, and the more the beast regugitated, the more he choked. Finally he grew green in the face, flapped his monstrous fins, turned a somersault in the air, uttered a plaintive yowl, and careening over on his back, he gave up his wicked ghost. This, however, caused a whirlpool in the water, and Perronik who was circling around in the maelstrom, was, by the last tidal wave, driven onto the opposite shore. The brave little foal, feeling under his little hoofs firm ground, snorted and shook the slimy water out of his eyes and mane. Then he braced himself, galloped up the slope, and dashed for the shelter of the forest.

CHAPTER VII.

PERRONIK ESCAPES SIRENS.

No doubt he would have been going still, had he not, with a sudden jolt that almost made Perronik come a cropper, stood still. Especially because his hairs were wet, did they look strange as they began to stand straight in horror, as the foal gazed on in stupefaction. There lay a heap of skeletons of brave knights, whose armor was strewn around in confusion. Evidently this was the most dangerous of all the hazards of the quest; knights who had escaped all former dangers, still had here fallen before the fatal charms of the enchanted sirens that infested these sylvan retreats. Indeed, through the aisles of the forest Perronik described, approaching forms of beautiful women, golden-haired and starry-eyed, waving their arms in greeting, and chanting weird threnodies. What was the unfortunate Perronik to do? Lions, hellish, dragons, and even scaly monsters could be resisted; but what proper-minded youth can resist the fair charms of a lovely woman? Alas, I fear my story will have to end here; there seems no earthly rescue for our simple-minded "innocent."

Perronik himself realized this; and so he betook himself to prayer. Then suddenly an idea popped into his mind. Just as the swish of the sirens' silken garments began to becloud his reason, just as their perfume made his head whirl, and buzz, as chloroform would have done, an inspiration came into his mind. He reached up, and, in spite of velvet hands that clung

like ivy-vines, he pulled the cap on his head down just far enough to reach over his eyes. Perronik being thus blinded, the sirens were powerless over him; and digging his heels into the sore ribs of the only too willing foal, Perronik, without ever stopping, was carried through the shady groves of the sirens; and not till his foal stopped still with a jerk, and his nose apprised him of the presence of a large body of water, his ears being filled with the omnious rushing of a river, did Perronik dare to push up his cap far enough to see that he had left the sirens' grove far behind, and was standing, by the side of a bush, on the very bank of the rapidly rolling River of Death, on the further side of which loomed up before him, not so very far, the noble mountain bearing the castellated outline of Kerglas itself!

He must cross; that was sure, but how? Of course, Rivers of Death have no bridges or even fords; or of what use would they be? What indeed was our hero to do? So puzzled was he, that he would be standing there till the present moment, but for a most unusual occurrence. From behind the bush sprang a beautiful lady, dressed in black silk, but with a complexion as yellow as sulphur. Perronik would indeed have retreated before her, but she, like a wise woman, did not give him the time. She jumped up on the foal before him, and reached for the reins. Here is where Perronik's presence of mind reasserted itself. He clutched them tight, and only when she saw that she had no more to gain by boldness that, like many another haughty dame, the lady became as meek as butter, and as persuasive as honey. She told him that she knew that he was on the quest of the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance; that he could not get it alone; but that if he had the Golden Apple and the Nodding Flower, and would ferry her over the River of Death which she, unaided, could never cross, she would help him in his quest. While Perronik had his

doubts about the lady, nevertheless, because he had always been trained to be polite to ladies, he agreed to take her over. She, on her part, did not lose any time, but urged the willing foal. He jumped into the icy water, and, in spite of shivering, the brave little beast swam valiantly on, never stopping until he had safely reached the opposite bank. Fearful that the foal might take cold by standing still on leaving the freezing water, Perronik urged him on, and the equine trotted up the hill as fast as he could, neighing in anticipation of the oats he knew were awaiting him in the stables, beside his mother, the giant's black charger who, on her part, must be anxious, by this time, for her offspring's safety. So the horse climbed rapidly to the gate of the frowning castle, where both Perronik and the lady dismounted, and the foal trotted off by himself, neighing and capering, to the stable.

CHAPTER VIII.

PERRONIK ACHIEVES HIS QUEST.

Our two travelers entered into the castle's gate, which, strange to say, they found open. They entered into the courtyard, but neither there did they discover anybody, knight or servant. So the Yellow Lady led Perronik to the main entrance, and up the steps, still deserted, into the vast dining hall of the castle. Here, seated at the festive board, sat only two individuals, the giant, Rogear, and by his side his hoary-haired brother, the magician Bryak, at a lower table.

Now, of course, golden apples and fair ladies have ever, since the beginning of time, been the prey of giants, and who can blame giants for having the good taste to consider them designed for their special benefit? Therefore Rogear the giant, with a vertiginous leap, pounced upon Perronik. Rogear reached out for the Golden Apple; but as he bit into it, he sank into a seat, because it was poisoned; and as he lay hold on the willowy lady, he fell down stark dead; for, be it known, she was nothing less than the "Plague"!

You can easily imagine that Perronik did not dally near her. Swiftly pulling the Nodding Flower out of his cap, he observed in which direction the flower nodded. So he followed it through a large door, down a hall, to a stairway; down this to the lower floor; then by a winding passage into the vaults. Past an iron door he went into a cave. Following a stream, in which he waded, he came into a vast amphitheatre, glistening with salt-formations, in the light of sun-

rays that filtered through some cracks. Then he followed the flower's directions into a passage so narrow he had to crawl on hands and knees; but, at last, he arrived into a chapel; and on the high altar, between ever-burning candles, lay the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance!

Perronik pounced upon them; but he was in such a hurry that the Diamond Lance knocked on the Golden Basin, emitting a peal as clear as that of a sacring-bell. When, however, Perronik came to himself, he found himself back in the meadow, among the sheep he had so long neglected, with the Golden Basin hanging on his back, and the Diamond Lance in his hand.

CHAPTER IX.

PERRONIK BECOMES KING OF JERUSALEM.

Now it is evident that no one who possessed the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance would ever be willing to remain a shepherd. Therefore, after giving the mother-sheep a parting pat, and kissing his favorite lambs farewell, Perronik turned off on to the highway, and betook himself to the picturesque town of Vannes.

Now it chanced, as happens in all well-regulated fairy-tales, that the king of Vannes had a beautiful daughter. At the same time, however, he was being pressed very hard by his enemies who, so far, had driven back all his armies, and defeated all his generals. In desperation, the king had made a proclamation that any one who would overcome his enemies should have the beautiful daughter to wife, and become king in his stead. On entering into Vannes, Perronik read the proclamation, and asked to be led to the king's palace. Having arrived there, he asked for an audience with the king. Only with great difficulty, however, did he succeed in obtaining it. Then the king laughed at Perronik, who offered to accomplish this feat; for Perronik was still garbed as an "innocent," with white staff and horn buttons. Perronik, however, offered to give a demonstration of his powers. He touched the king of Vanne's best knight, who immediately fell down in his tracks, stone dead. Then, Perronik poured some of the water of the golden basin into the dead knight's mouth, whereupon he revived, as full of life and spirits as ever, finishing the word he had had on his lips

when he fell dead. The king of Vannes was convinced, and entrusted all his armies to Perronik. The latter, of course, in the might of the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance, was victorious over the embattled hosts of the enemy, and reduced them to abject submission. Leading their chieftains in chains to the palace of the king of Vannes, the latter gave him his blushing daughter to wife, and set Perronik upon his throne, himself retiring to meditation in a monastery.

Although Perronik was, for a short time, happy as husband of his marvellously beautiful wife, and as king of the good town of Vannes; who could expect the owner of the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance to be satisfied with being king of even Vannes, that beautiful, and famous city? So Perronik demanded the crown of France. Leading his ever-victorious armies, Perronik succeeded even in this, and finally was crowned king of France, and reigned in Paris.

But, although for a brief space of time, Perronik was happy as king of France, the owner of the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance could not be expected to be satisfied with even that dignity. He must become emperor of Rome. And indeed, leading his ever-victorious armies, Perronik achieved this supreme dignity also.

Still, though, for a short space of time Perronik was content with the dominion of the empire of Rome, it would be unreasonable to suppose that the owner of the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance could ever grow satisfied, or cease to sigh for more worlds to conquer. So Perronik started out to conquer Palestine, liberate it from the hated rule of the Saracen. At the head of his ever-victorious armies, indeed, Perronik accomplished this task also, and was crowned king of Jerusalem.

But, strange to say, Perronik was never heard of again. His fate ever remained a mystery; but the best-informed say that one day, while he was asleep, the old magician Bryak deprived him of the Golden Basin and the Diamond Lance, and hid them again in the mountain beneath the castle of Kerglas, where they remain hidden, until they shall once more be found by some younger Perronik who shall restore to Brittany her rightful sovereignty over the world.