

THE SAMPO

THE SAMPO

BY

JAMES BALDWIN

Illustrated by N. C. Wyeth

YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

Cover and arrangement © 2006 Yesterday's Classics.

This edition, first published in 2006 by Yesterday's Classics, is an unabridged republication of the work originally published by Charles Scribner's Sons in 1912. For a complete listing of the books published by Yesterday's Classics, please visit www.yesterdaysclassics.com. Yesterday's Classics is the publishing arm of the Baldwin Project which presents the complete text of dozens of classic books for children at www.mainlesson.com under the editorship of Lisa M. Ripperton and T. A. Roth.

ISBN-10: 1-59915-039-5

ISBN-13: 978-1-59915-039-0

Yesterday's Classics
PO Box 3418
Chapel Hill, NC 27515

PROEM

THIS is a tale which the *runolainen* of the far North used to sing in hovel and hall, and which the heroes of primeval times learned by heart and taught to their children. In its original form it was related, not in plain, unvarnished prose, as you shall find it here, but in endless monotonous measures, tuned to the music of the *kantele*. It was made up of numerous stories, songs, folk-melodies, and incantations, with which were interwoven many independent episodes that are neither interesting nor necessary to its completeness. The weaver of tales, who now relates these adventures to modern readers, has chosen to deviate widely from the methods of the ancient story-tellers. He has combined various parts, as pleased his fancy, into one complete harmonious fabric, and, while he has retained much of the original warp and woof, he has added various and many colorings and connecting threads of his own invention. In doing this he has merely exercised the time-honored right of poets and story-tellers—the right to make new cloth out of old.

CONTENTS

I.	MISTRESS AND MINSTREL	1
II.	THE MAID OF BEAUTY	11
III.	THE GRAYBEARD AND HIS SON	18
IV.	THE WICKED HORNET	28
V.	THE TREE OF MAGIC	38
VI.	THE SMITHY	43
VII.	THE TEMPEST	52
VIII.	THE RECIPE	58
IX.	THE CALDRON	64
X.	THE FORGING OF THE SAMPO	74
XI.	THE HOMESICK HERO	83
XII.	THE UNFINISHED BOAT	93
XIII.	THE LAND OF TUONELA	106
XIV.	THE HAG OF THE ROCK	116
XV.	THE HERO'S RETURN	123
XVI.	THE WISDOM KEEPER	128
XVII.	THE LAUNCHING	136
XVIII.	THE MAID OF THE MORNING	141
XIX.	THE UNEXPECTED JOURNEY	149
XX.	THE FRIENDLY RIVALS	159
XXI.	THE BARKING DOGS	164

CONTENTS

XXII.	THE OLD MAN'S WOOING	173
XXIII.	THE FIELD OF SERPENTS	179
XXIV.	THE GREAT PIKE	188
XXV.	THE BRIDEGROOM'S TRIUMPH	196
XXVI.	THE WEDDING FEAST	202
XXVII.	THE HOME COMING	211
XXVIII.	THE SLAVE BOY	214
XXIX.	A DREADFUL VENGEANCE	226
XXX.	THE GOLDEN MAIDEN	232
XXXI.	THE FAMINE	244
XXXII.	THE WEEPING SHIP	249
XXXIII.	THE KANTELE	259
XXXIV.	THE TRIUMPH OF MUSIC	266
XXXV.	THE FLIGHT	275
XXXVI.	THE PURSUIT	286
XXXVII.	THE FATE OF THE SAMPO	292

CHAPTER I

MISTRESS AND MINSTREL

“**Y**OU must rise early in the morning,” said Dame Louhi, the Wise Woman of the North. She stood at the door of her chamber and looked back into the low-raftered hall where her daughter was spinning. Her face was wrinkled and grim, her thin lips were puckered over her toothless mouth, her gray-green eyes sparkled beneath her shaggy eyebrows.

She paused and listened. No answer came from her busy daughter. The day was almost ended. Already the swallows were asleep under the eaves, the reindeer were lying down in their paddock, all the underlings of Dame Louhi’s household had retired to rest. So near was her dwelling to the sea that she could hear the waves lapping on the beach and the ice-floes crunching and grinding and pounding against the shore. But other sounds there were none.

The Mistress, Dame Louhi, grew impatient. She stamped her foot angrily, and loudly repeated her command: “You must rise early in the morning, my daughter.”

THE SAMPO

This time the maiden heard her. She ceased twirling her spindle, and sweetly answered, "Yes, mother, for there is a great deal to be done tomorrow."

The Mistress was satisfied; and as she turned to enter her chamber you should have seen how unlike the mother was the fair daughter whom men called the Maid of Beauty. Nature had given to the maiden all the loveliness that had been denied to the dame. And she was not only surpassingly beautiful, but she was wise and skilful and very industrious. The housekeeping in the roomy dwelling beside the sea would have been shabbily attended to had it not been for her daily care; and the sun would have shone but seldom in the Frozen Land had not the Maid of Beauty encouraged it with her smiles.

So, on the morrow, long before any one else had risen, she was up and bustling hither and thither, attending to this thing and that and putting the house in order. She went out to the sheepfold and sheared six fat lambs. She spun their six white fleeces into snowy yarn, and of the yarn she wove enough cloth for six warm garments.

Then she went into the kitchen and rekindled the fire upon the hearth. She swept the floor and dusted the long benches. She scrubbed the birchwood tables till they were as white and glistening as the frost-covered meadows. She made the rooms neat and tidy and set the breakfast things to cooking. By this time the day was dawning; the sky in the east was becoming flecked with yellow and red; the cock

MISTRESS AND MINSTREL

was crowing, wild ducks were quacking by the shore, sparrows were chirping under the eaves.

The maiden paused and listened—listened long and intently. She heard the joyful sounds of the morning; she heard the cold waves lapping and splashing upon the shore. She looked out of the door and saw the first rays of the sun dancing and glancing upon the uneasy surface of the sea. Away from the shore, she saw the broad meadows lying lonely and still under the lonely sky and beyond them the dark line which marked the beginning of the forest and the rugged land of mountains.

Suddenly, as she looked and listened, she heard a wailing which was not the wailing of the sea. She held her breath and listened again. She heard a cry which was not the cry of a sea-bird.

“Oh, mother,” she called, “what is that strange sound? The wild geese never call so hoarsely; the waves never make such moaning. Listen mother! What can it be?”

Wise old Louhi, grim and toothless, rose quickly and hastened to the door, chattering and mumbling and grumbling. She paused and listened, but the sound seemed very faint. She ran down to the landing-place before the house, and there she listened again. Soon the sound came to her ears, louder and more distinct, and yet hard to make out. Once, twice, thrice she heard the call; and then she knew what it meant.

THE SAMPO

“It is a man’s voice,” she said. “Some hero has been shipwrecked near our shore. He is in distress; he calls for help.”

She leaped nimbly into her boat. She pushed it from the shore and rowed with speed out of the little inlet and around the rocky point which jutted far into the sea. The cries grew louder, the calls were more frequent as she urged her boat forward over the sullen, icy-cold waves.

Soon she saw the shipwrecked man. He was not fighting the waves as she had supposed, but was clinging to the branches of a tree that had been uprooted and carried to sea. Ah, the sad plight of the poor man! He seemed wounded and helpless; his face was gaunt and pale; his eyes were filled with sadness and salt-water; he was shivering with cold and deep despair.

Shouting words of cheer, the Mistress hurried to him. She lifted him from the place of danger and seated him in her boat. Then with steady arms and mighty strokes she rowed homeward, nor did she pause until the boat’s keel grated on the beach before her door.

She carried the stranger into the house; she placed him by the warm fire; she bathed his limbs, his face, his head in tepid water and wrapped him up in soft skins of the reindeer. For three long days—yes, for four summer days—she tended him as though he were her son, and no questions did she ask. Then to her great joy, he sat up and soon grew well and strong.

MISTRESS AND MINSTREL

“Now, friend and fellow of the sea, said the gray woman, “tell me your name. Tell me why and how you have come to our lovely land and to Pohyola, the sweetest of homes.”

The stranger, who also was old and gray, answered, “My name is Wainamoinen, and all the world knows me; for I am the first of minstrels, the prince of wizards, the man whom other men delight to honor. Luckless was the hour when I embarked on a ship to go fishing; still more luckless was it when a storm overturned the vessel. Nine days did the sea toss me—yes, ten days did the waves buffet me—ere I was cast upon these shores.”

“I welcome you, Wainamoinen!” cried the grim Mistress. “Welcome, welcome to this northern land! Your name is well known to me, and long have I honored it. Men call you the sweet singer of Hero Land, and they say that no other songs cheer the dreary hours of winter as yours do. You shall stay here in Pohyola and sing to me and my people. My house shall be your home and this delightful land shall be your country.”

The gray-bearded Minstrel shook his head and sighed. He looked out and saw the lonely meadows and the snowy mountains and the cold gray sea. Then his eyes filled with tears and he wept.

“O singer of Hero Land, why are you so sad?” asked the woman. “Have I not been kind to you? Why, then, do you weep and gaze towards the sea?”

“I weep for my own dear country; I am sick for my home,” answered the Minstrel. “I do not

THE SAMPO

wish to remain in this Frozen Land. I am lonely and heart-broken.”

“Cheer up, cheer up!” said Dame Louhi, trying to look pleasant. “Beautiful Pohyola shall be your country. This comfortable house shall be your home. My fireside shall be your fireside, and my friends shall be your friends.”

But the Minstrel still wept.

“Stay here and be our honored guest,” continued the Mistress. “You shall sleep in the warmest corner, you shall sit at the head of our table. Good food we will give you—choice bacon, fresh salmon from the sea, white cakes of barley, hot from the oven. Stay with us and cheer us with your sweet songs.”

“Nay, nay!” moaned the sad Minstrel. “How can I sing in a strange land? My own country is the fairest; my own home is the dearest; my own table is the sweetest. All that I can ever do in this Frozen Land is to sigh and weep; and I shall sigh and weep till my eyes are out and my voice is gone forever.”

“You are foolish,” then said the unlovely Mistress. “Pohyola is the fairest place in all the world, and you must learn to love it.”

The Minstrel still shook his head and sighed. All his thoughts were with his home land.

The summer passed swiftly, but to Wainamoinen the days were full of loneliness. He wandered over the silent meadows, he went out with the fishermen to catch salmon in the sea, he visited

MISTRESS AND MINSTREL

one place and another in the vast Frozen Land, vainly trying to forget his grief. And not once did he open his lips in song, for there was no music in his heart; and how shall a minstrel sing if his heart is empty?

At length Dame Louhi relented.

“How much will you give me if I send you back to your own country?” she asked. “Come, let us make a bargain.”

“How much will I give?” answered he. “I have nothing here that is my own, but I promise to send you many rich treasures. I will send you gold, I will send you silver.”

“But you claim to be a mighty wizard,” said Dame Louhi. “Show us some of your work in magic.”

“Never was there a greater magician than I,” returned the Minstrel boastfully. “You have but to name some wonderful act and forthwith I will perform it. But first, I must have your promise to send me home. My heart is so full of the thought.”

“Very well, then,” answered the gray woman. “If you will make the magic Sampo for me, I promise to send you home at once. It must be the real, the wonderful Sampo; I will have nothing else.”

“The Sampo! What is that?”

“Do you ask me what is the Sampo? Minstrels from the earliest times have sung of its power, and all the wizards of the North have tried their spells, hoping to make something equally precious and po-

THE SAMPO

tent. And do you, a minstrel and a wizard, ask what it is?"

The Minstrel was cunning, and he answered: "In my own country we call it by another name. If you will describe it I will tell you what that name is and also some strange things which no other minstrel knows."

The Mistress was off her guard. "The Sampo," she said, "is the mill of fortune which wise men, since the beginning of things, have sought to invent. It is the magic mill which grinds out all sorts of treasures and gives wealth and power to its possessor. One has only to whisper his wishes to it, and they will all come true."

"Ah!" answered the Minstrel. "In our country we call it the Stone of the Wise Men."

"That is a good name. And now, if I promise to send you safe home, will you try your magic power and forge me such a mill? Have you the skill to fit it with wheels and levers? Can you hammer into shape a becoming lid for it—a lid of rainbow colors?"

Wainamoinen sat silent for a long time, shaking his head and thinking. Then he said:

"It is a thing so strange and so difficult that I must have time to consider my strength. In three days you shall have my answer."

He went out alone, and for many tedious hours he walked up and down by the seashore pondering upon the subject. He repeated all the magic

MISTRESS AND MINSTREL

runes that he remembered, and recited spells to the winds and the waves and the gray-blue sky, he recalled all the words of power that he had learned from the sages of old. Then, at length, on the third day, he went back to the house where Dame Louhi was still sitting by her fireside.

“I cannot make the Sampo for you,” he said. “My magic is not strong enough; my skill is not of the kind that forges mills of fortune. But I have a friend who can do wonderful things. It was he who shaped the sky that bends above our country; and, surely, to forge the Sampo is no more difficult than that.”

“Ah, that is the man whom I am looking for,” cried the woman eagerly. “What is his name? Will you send him to me?”

“His name is Ilmarinen, and he is dear to me as a brother,” answered the Minstrel. “He is the prince of all smiths, and there is nothing in magic or in smithing that he cannot do. If you will permit me to return to my dear home land, to the Land of Heroes, I will send him to you without delay.”

“But suppose he doesn’t wish to come?”

“Then I will send him against his will. My magic is strong enough to command him.”

“Can I trust you? Do you promise?”

“You have my word, and I will perform,” answered the Minstrel. “Never yet have I failed to do that which I have agreed to do.”

THE SAMPO

“You shall go home, then, quickly,” said the gray woman. “You may promise the skilful smith a rare reward if he will forge the Sampo for me. I will even give him, if he so desire, my daughter for his wife—this I promise.”

Forthwith she hurried to the paddock. She chose the fleetest reindeer and harnessed it to her birchwood sledge. She brought warm furs for the Minstrel to wrap around him. She put the whip and the long reins in his hands.

“Now fare you well, and speed you to your home land!” she said. “Drive swiftly while the sun shines, but remember to keep your eyes upon your pathway, and do not look upward. If you should gaze towards the mountain top or the sky, sad misfortune will befall you. Fare you well, first of minstrels! Send me the wizard, the prince of smiths, and fail not, lest my curses follow you and blight your life.”

The Minstrel cracked his whip joyfully, the reindeer sprang forward, the journey homeward was begun. Merrily did the birchwood runners whistle as they glided over the half-frozen earth. With a glad heart did Wainamoinen speed across the brown meadows and into the silent forest; his face beamed like the sunlight, his eyes glowed like twin stars, and a song was ready to burst from his lips.

CHAPTER II

THE MAID OF BEAUTY

SWIFTLY as a shooting star did the reindeer rush through the forest ways. In his sledge, the Minstrel sat upright and deftly handled the whip and the reins. His eyes were upon the road before him, and all his thoughts were about his home land and his own pleasant fireside so far, far away.

Now he was among the snowy mountains; and now his sledge was skimming along untravelled paths in the deep and shadowy valleys. Suddenly his thoughts were disturbed by a strange sound in the air above him. Was it the song of a bird? Was it the sighing of the wind? Was it the humming of wild bees? Or was it the sound of some distant waterfall?

He listened. Could it be the buzzing of a weaver's shuttle shooting through some loom on the craggy heights above him? It certainly sounded so; and yet it was so loud, so musical. Forgotten, then, was Dame Louhi's latest caution. Quickly the Minstrel checked his reindeer steed; quickly, and in wonder, he lifted his eyes and looked aloft. High in the sky he saw a rainbow, and on it sat the Maid of Beauty, busily weaving with a golden shuttle. Swiftly,

THE SAMPO

to and fro, she drove the shuttle, and the fabric which she wove was wondrously fine. Threads of silver, threads of gold, threads of every brilliant color were mingled in that web of magic. But fairer than that fairy fabric, fairer than all else in that radiant vision was the maiden's radiant face.

Wainamoinen pulled upon the reins with all his might; his steed stopped short upon a hillside. Then he called loudly to the maiden on the rainbow.

"Come hither, come hither, most beautiful one," he said. "Come down and sit in this sledge by my side."

Faster and faster flew the magic shuttle, and the buzzing sounded louder; but the maiden had heard the Minstrel's call. She turned her face towards him and spoke disdainfully.

"Who are you?" she asked. "And why should I sit in your sledge?"

"I am Wainamoinen, chief of singers, master of wizards," answered the hero. "I am now on my way to my sweet home country, the Land of Heroes. I know you would love that land, and I would rejoice to take you thither with me. You shall be the queen of my house. You shall bake my honey cakes, fill my cups with barley-water, sing at my table. All my people will honor you."

The Maid of Beauty looked down from her rainbow seat and laughed.

THE MAID OF BEAUTY

“You are a foolish old man,” she said, “to think that I care for you or for all that you promise. Let me tell you a story.”

“Certainly,” said the Minstrel.

“Well, yesterday I was walking in the meadows of the West. I was picking flowers and making this wreath which you see on my head.



THE MAGICIAN AND THE MAID OF BEAUTY

Suddenly I heard a thrush singing sweetly to his mate and nestlings. I stopped and listened to the little songster, and this is what I heard him sing:

“Summer days are warm and bright;
A maiden’s heart is always light.
Winter days are bitter cold;

THE SAMPO

Beware, beware of the suitor bold—
Beware the more if he is old.”

“That was a very silly bird,” said Wainamoinen, “and I wonder that his mate listened to such foolish chatter.”

“But his song was very pretty,” laughed the maiden.

“I too can sing,” said Wainamoinen. “I am the sweet singer of Hero Land. I am a great wizard. I am a hero. Come with me to my dear home and be my queen.”

The Maid of Beauty looked down from her rainbow throne, and the mountains echoed with her laughter.

“If you are indeed a wizard,” she said, “show me some of your magic arts. Can you split a hair with a knife which has no edge? Can you snare a bird’s egg with a thread too small to be seen?”

“Nothing is easier to one skilled in magic,” answered the hero. And thereupon he picked up a golden hair which the maiden had let fall, and with a blunted knife he split it into halves and quarters. Then from a bird’s nest on the side of the cliff he drew up an egg with a snare too fine for eyes to see.

“Now I have done what you wished,” he said. “Come and sit in my birchwood sledge. Swiftly will we speed to Hero Land, and great honor shall be yours, for you shall be a minstrel’s queen.”

THE MAID OF BEAUTY

“Not yet, not yet, O matchless hero,” she answered, still laughing. “Let me see some more of your wonderful magic. Split this cliff of sandstone with your bare fingers. Then cut a whipstock from the ice in the gorge below you and leave no splinter.”

“Nothing is easier to one skilled in magic,” answered the hero. Then he climbed the tall cliff and split the sandstone with his fingers; and next he leaped upon the river of ice beneath him and cut therefrom a slender whipstock, losing not the smallest fragment.

“You have done well,” said the Maid of Beauty, and she smiled from her rainbow throne. “But I will give you another task. Here is my spindle and here is my shuttle. See, I break them into splinters and I throw the fragments at your feet. If you wish me to go home with you, you must pick up these fragments and build a boat from them. Then you must launch the boat, using neither arm nor foot to set it floating. Is your magic equal to that?”

Wainamoinen stroked his gray beard, for he was puzzled. “Your task is very hard,” he said, “and I am the only person under the sun who can perform it. But perform it I will, and you shall see what a master of magic I am.”

Then he picked up the fragments of the spindle, he took the splinters of the shuttle in his hands, and began to build the fairy boat. But such a task could not be done in a moment. It required time. One whole day he swung his hammer; two whole

THE SAMPO

days he plied his hatchet; three days and more he worked to join the many pieces together.

At length the boat was almost finished. Proudly the Minstrel looked upon it. He hewed it on this side, he shaped it on that, he smoothed it fore and aft; and the Maid of Beauty looked on and smiled. Suddenly the hero's sharp-edged hatchet of iron flew from his grasp. It broke the fairy boat in pieces, undoing the work of many days. It struck the Minstrel's knee, cutting a red gash that was both wide and deep.

A stream of blood gushed forth; it flowed like a crimson torrent down the mountain side; it stained the snow in the forest and the brown grass in the meadows. Great pain fell upon the Minstrel, and yet he was fearless and undaunted. He quickly gathered lichens and mosses from the tree trunks and the rocks, and these he bound upon the wound to stanch the bleeding.

"O cruel hatchet," he cried, "why were you so disobedient, so ungrateful? You may cut the pine tree and the willow; you may cut the birch tree and the cedar; but turn not your edge against your master."

He looked upward. The rainbow had vanished and the Maid of Beauty had fled. Then, too late, he remembered Dame Louhi's caution: "Keep your eyes upon your pathway. If you should gaze towards sky or mountain top, sad misfortune will befall you."

His wound was very painful, so painful that he groaned with anguish. He felt that he must find

THE MAID OF BEAUTY

help, and find it quickly. He looked about for the reindeer which the Mistress had lent him and which had wandered into the woods while he was working magic. When he had found the beast he harnessed it to the sledge again. Then he climbed in carefully, painfully, and sat down on the soft furs. He cracked his whip, he shouted, and the long-legged racer flew swiftly over meadows and forests, over mountains and lowlands.

CHAPTER III

THE GRAYBEARD AND HIS SON

ALL night the Minstrel rode wildly towards the South Country, never looking behind him, never pausing to rest. The day was breaking when he reached the end of the mighty forest. There, on the slope of a barren mountain, the road divided into three paths, and at the end of each path he saw a small house with smoke rising from the chimney. And now his pain increased, and the blood began to pour anew from his deep wound.

Weak and weary, he turned boldly into the lowest pathway and drove his steed up to the little homestead.

“Hail, ho!” he cried; and a piping voice inside answered, “Hail, ho!”

The door was open, and the Minstrel saw a little child sitting on the hearth beside the blazing fire.

“Hail, ho!” he cried again; and the child laughed and said, “Welcome, stranger!”

THE GRAYBEARD AND HIS SON

Wainamoinen sat upright in his sledge; his wound pained him; he was in much distress.

“Is there any one in this house that can heal the wounds of Iron?” he asked.

“No, no,” answered the child. “All gone but me. Drive away, big man! Drive away to some other house.”

The Minstrel pulled the reins and turned his sledge about. He cracked his whip, and the steed leaped forward. Soon he came into the middle pathway, and madly he drove to the second little cottage. He drove right up under the window and looked in. There he saw an old woman resting on a couch, while another woman was spinning by the fire. They were telling pleasant tales of their neighbors and of goblins and ghosts and unnamable things.

“Hail, ho!” cried the Minstrel, not too loudly.

The women jumped up in alarm; but when they saw his pale and weary face they answered, “Welcome stranger! Alight, and rest thyself by our fireside.”

Wainamoinen sat still in his sledge. The blood was pouring in torrents from his wound.

“Tell me,” he said, “is there any one in this house that can stop the flow of blood, that can heal the wounds of Iron?”

“Ah, no!” answered the elder of the two and her three teeth gnashed together. “Naught do we know about blood or iron. Drive away to some other house. Speed thee, rash man!”

THE SAMPO

Again the Minstrel pulled the reins and turned the sledge about in the narrow pathway. Again he cracked his whip, and the steed rushed onward. With furious speed he drove into the upper pathway, and paused not until he reached the highest cottage. There he drew up before the doorway and called as before, but very feebly; "Hail, ho! Hail, ho!"

"Welcome stranger!" was the answer from within. Then an old Graybeard opened the door and repeated, "Welcome, stranger!"

"Welcome, stranger!" echoed the Graybeard's son, peeping over his father's shoulder. "Alight and rest yourself and your steed."

"First tell me," said the Minstrel feebly, "tell me if you can stop this flow of blood and heal this wound of Iron."

"Three magic words may stop the flood, three magic drops may heal the wound," answered the Graybeard.

And the young man added, "Come in and let us see what can be done."

The Minstrel climbed out of his sledge slowly, painfully. He staggered into the house. He lay down upon the couch by the fireside. The wound was bleeding sorely.

"Ah, save us!" cried the Graybeard. "What hero is this? Bring something to catch the flowing blood."

His son ran quickly and fetched a golden goblet; but it was far too small to hold the gushing

THE GRAYBEARD AND HIS SON

blood. He ran for other vessels. Seven pails he brought, then eight, and all were filled to overflowing. The Graybeard shook his head; he lifted his eyes; he clinched his fists. Then he spoke harshly to the crimson flood:

“Hear me, O thou blood-stream! Cease thy flowing. Fill no more pails. Flow not upon the floor. Stay in the veins of this hero and give him strength. Stay in his heart and give him courage. Hear me, O thou blood-stream!”

Forthwith the red stream grew smaller; but still the drops trickled from the wound. All the strength of the Minstrel was gone.

The Graybeard looked upward, he turned his face towards heaven. He spoke in tones that were soft and pleading:

“O thou great Creator, thou lover of heroes! Come down and help us. Stop this rushing red river. Heal this gaping wound. Restore to this hero the strength that is rightfully his.”

Then he grasped the Minstrel’s knee just above the place where the wicked axe had struck it. He pressed the sides of the wound together firmly, gently. The bleeding ceased; and now not even the smallest drop escaped. The Graybeard bound soft bands of linen around the limb, he laid the Minstrel upon his own rude bed, he covered him with the warm robes and bade him rest quietly.

THE SAMPO

“The flow of blood is stanchèd,” he said; “we must now heal Iron’s bitter bite, we must close up the gaping, ugly wound.”

Then turning to his son, he said “Go now to our smithy on the mountain. Take with you a supply of healing herbs, as I have taught you. Bake them, boil them, mix them, brew them into a magic ointment that will heal all manner of wounds. When you have finished the mixture and tested it, bring it hither to me.”

“That I will do, father,” answered the young man; and with a basket on his arm and a glad song rising from his lips, he hastened away.

Half-way up the mountain side he came to a gnarly old oak.

“Friend oak, so good and strong,” he said, “have you any honey on your branches?”

“Look and see,” answered the oak. “Yesterday I had such plenty that the bees came to carry it away.”

The young man gathered many handfuls of slender twigs from the tree, and saw that on each twig was a tiny drop of dew. Then he wandered hither and thither among the rocks, seeking all kinds of healing herbs and putting them in his basket. When, at length, the basket was filled, he went on, whistling, to the little smithy on the mountain top.

Soon a fire was roaring in the furnace. A pot was filled with the herbs and twigs and set to boiling on the coals. The pungent odor of the mixture per-

THE GRAYBEARD AND HIS SON

vaded the air; every corner of the smithy was lit up with the glare of the flames; the smoke rolled in clouds from the smoke hole in the roof.

For three sunny days and three lonely nights the youth stood over the furnace and stirred the magic mixture. He threw fuel upon the flames, he poured fresh spring water into the seething pot. And all the while he sang weird songs and muttered strange charms such as his father had taught him. Then for nine nights he caught the moonbeams and mingled them with the mixture; and for nine days he entrapped the sunlight and added it to the magic ointment.

On the tenth day he looked into the pot and saw that all was of a rich golden color, bright and sparkling, with pretty rainbows mingled here and there in many a curious pattern.

“It is done,” he said. “I will test its power.”

He lifted the pot from the fire and allowed the mixture to cool, still singing his songs of magic. Then he went out to find something that had been wounded and might be healed.

Half-way down the mountain side there was a giant pine tree which the lightning had split from crown to roots. Its two halves gaped wide apart; its torn and broken branches hung dangling in the wind.

“Ah! here is a case to test,” said the young man. Then with the greatest care, he took a small portion of the ointment upon his finger; he smeared

THE SAMPO

it gently upon the trunk and branches of the wounded pine; he sang softly a little song of magic:

“Make it whole and make it strong.
Heal it all its length along;
 Join part to part, restore its heart,
 And make it straight as hunter’s dart.
Thus your magic power show,
And let all men your virtue know.”

As he spoke the last words he clapped his hands together and shouted; and lo! the parts of the pine tree came suddenly into their right places, and it stood there as whole and as beautiful as it had been before the lightning smote it.

“Good!” cried the young man. “The ointment is as it should be. None could be better.”

Then, with the pot balanced carefully on his shoulder, he started homeward. Every now and then, as he went down the slope, he paused to try the healing mixture on splintered rocks and broken boulders; and he smiled as he saw the rough stones knit themselves together and the gaping fissures close up and disappear.

When at length he approached his father’s cottage he heard loud groans within—groans of some one suffering deadly pain. He listened and knew that they came from the wounded Minstrel; he knew that now there was great need of his magic ointment.

THE GRAYBEARD AND HIS SON

Then Graybeard met him at the door. "What news, my son?"

"Good news, my father," he answered. "Never was there better salve than this. I could fuse the hills together with it if I had the mind to try."

The father took the pot and carried it into the house. He dipped his finger gently into the ointment; he touched it to the tip of his tongue.

"The mixture seems perfect," he said. "Now we shall see wonders."

The Minstrel was lying upon the bed and groaning at every breath. True, the bleeding had ceased, but the fever of Iron was upon him. He knew not where he was. He had forgotten his family, his home, and his sweet country. The madness of Iron had clouded his mind.

The Graybeard smeared a little of the ointment on the Minstrel's wounded knee; he stroked the poor man's back, his hands, his head. He waved his palms slowly to and fro before his eyes. And all the while he softly muttered a little song of wisdom and power.

The groans of the wounded man waxed louder and louder. He turned this way and that, seeking ease; but at each moment the pain grew greater, and he writhed in anguish. Then the Graybeard raised his voice and angrily commanded the pain to depart.

"Hear me, pitiless pain!" he cried. "Go away from this house! Depart! Vanish! Leave this worthy

THE SAMPO

stranger and betake yourself to your own place. Hide yourself in the Hill of Tortures. There, if you choose, you may fill the stones with anguish; you may rend the rocks with torment. But now let this hero rest in peace. Depart! Depart! Depart!”

As he uttered the last word the pain vanished. The Minstrel's mind grew clear; he felt his strength returning; he laughed right joyfully and rose from his bed. The wound was healed, the ugly gash had disappeared, every trace of pain had vanished from his body.

“I never felt so well in my life!” he shouted as he danced about the room. Then remembering himself, he threw his arms around the Graybeard's neck and thanked him for his exceeding kindness.

“No thanks are due to me,” said the old man, leading him to a seat by the fireside. “I have done nothing myself; Jumala did it all. Give praises to Jumala, the great Creator, from whom all good things come.”

Thereupon the Minstrel raised his hands towards heaven, and cried, “To thee, O Jumala, the gracious, I humbly offer thanks. To thee I owe my life, my strength, my all—accept my gratitude.”

“Jumala only is good,” said the Graybeard. “He only is merciful and kind. But what shall we say of Iron—of Iron, the spiteful, the treacherous, the wicked? Tell me, my friend, why should Iron bear a grudge against you? Why should he seek to destroy your life?”

THE GRAYBEARD AND HIS SON

Wainamoinen, first of minstrels, answered, "Iron has no grudge against me. He wounded me, it is true, but not purposely. Had it not been for a wicked hornet, Iron would never have harmed me—would never have harmed any one. Blame not Iron. Blame the hornet that made him what he is."

"Pray tell me how that can be," said the Graybeard.

Then, sitting by the pleasant fireside, the Minstrel answered him by telling a story—a story as old as the race of man on earth.

CHAPTER IV

THE WICKED HORNET

THIS is the tale which Wainamoinen, old and truthful, told to the listening Graybeard while the fire blazed and crackled on the hearth between them. It is a tale which he himself had learned from the minstrels of a former age.

The first of all mothers was Air, and she had three daughters. Of these three maidens there is much to be said. They were as lovely as the rainbow after a storm; they were as fair as the full moon shining above the mountains. They walked with noiseless feet among the clouds and showered gifts upon the earth. They sent the refreshing rain, the silent dew, and the nipping frost, each in its season. They gave life to the fields, and strength to the mountains, and grandeur to the sea. And because of their bounty the earth was glad and the stars twinkled for joy.

“What more can we do to make the land fit for men to dwell in?” asked the eldest of the sisters.

And the youngest said, “Let us send down iron—iron of which tools may be made, iron of which sharp weapons may be shaped. For without

THE WICKED HORNET

tools man will not be able to plough, to reap, or to build; and without weapons he cannot defend himself against the savage beasts of the forest.”

So, when the sun was about going down, the sisters went forth in trailing robes of purple and crimson and gold; and in their hands they bore mighty vessels of foaming milk. The eldest sprinkled red milk in the brooks and marshes and along the banks of the rivers. The middle one scattered white milk on the wooded hills and the stony mountains. The youngest showered blue milk in the valleys and by the gray seashore. And on the morrow, where the red milk had been sprinkled, red and brittle ore of iron flecked the ground; where the white milk had been scattered, powdery ore of a yellow hue abounded; and where the blue milk had been showered, flaky masses of crude iron, tough and dark, lay hidden beneath the soil.

Thus came Iron into the world—Iron, the youngest of three brothers. Next older than he was Fire, a raging, dangerous fellow when free, but loving and faithful when held in bonds. Older still was Water, terrible in strength but, when not aroused, as gentle as a mother’s caress.

Years upon years went by, and at length one day Iron set out to visit his brothers. He found Water at home in the deep sea, and by him he was welcomed kindly enough. But when he climbed a mountain to see his second brother he had quite another reception. Fire was in a raging mood. The terrible fellow leaped and roared, and stretched out

THE SAMPO

his long red fingers as though he would devour his visitor.

Iron was so terrified that he turned and fled down the steep slopes, never stopping nor pausing to look behind. He ran on, hiding in clefts and chasms, creeping under rocks, and lurking in the dry beds of mountain torrents. When, by and by, he reached the level plain, he glanced backward. The hills and the whole mountain top were aflame.

Wild with terror, he hurried on, hiding himself in the woods and under the roots of trees, and resting at last in reedy marshes where swans build their nests and wild geese rear their young.

For ages and ages—nobody knows how many—Iron lay hidden in bogs and forests and lonely caverns. Fear of his raging brother made him lurk in lonely places, made him cover up his face. Lazy bears went ambling through the rocky places; wolves rushed madly over the oozy marshlands; and timid deer ran and leaped among the trees. In time the hiding-places of Iron were uncovered. Where the paws of bears had plodded often, where the feet of wolves had pattered, where the sharp hoofs of deer had trodden, there the timid metal, red, gray, yellow, black, peeped shyly out.

At length, into that same land there came a skilful Smith. He carried a hammer of stone in one hand and tongs of bronze in the other; and a song of peace was upon his lips. On a green hillock, where the south wind blew, he built him a smithy, and in it he placed the tools of his craft. His anvil was a block

THE WICKED HORNET

of gray granite; his forge was carefully builded of sand and clay; his bellows was made of the skins of mountain goats sewn together.

The Smith heaped live coals in his forge and blew with his bellows until the flames leaped up, roaring and sparkling, and the smoke rose in dense clouds over the roof of the smithy. "This forge will do its work well," he said. Then he checked the bellows and smothered the flames and raked ashes upon the fire until the red coals slumbered unseen at the mouth of the forge.

Out into the forest the Smith wandered. Closely he scanned the hillsides and the boggy thickets and the paths among the trees. And there, where the bears had trailed and the wolves had rushed and the deer had left their footprints, he found ruddy Iron, dusky Iron, yellow ore of Iron peeping, trembling, hiding. The heart of the Smith was glad. His eyes danced merrily, and he sang a song of magic to the timid metal:

"Iron, Iron, hearken while I call you!
Let no false and foolish fears appall you,
Come from out the crevices that hide you,
Leave the worthless stones that are beside you,
Leave the earth that lies around, above you,
And come with me, for I do dearly love you."

Iron moved not, but timidly answered, "I dare not leave my hiding-places; for Fire, my brother,

THE SAMPO

waits to devour me. He is strong and fierce. He has no pity.”

The Smith shook his head and made reply, still singing:

“No! your brother does not wish to harm you,—
Willingly he never would alarm you.
With his glowing arms he would caress you,
Make you pure and with his kisses bless you.
So come with me, my smithy waits to greet you;
In my forge your brother waits to meet you—
Waits to throw his loving arms around you,
Glad indeed that thus, at last, he’s found you.”

These words made Iron feel much braver; and they were spoken in tones so sweet and persuasive that he was almost minded to obey without another word. But he asked, “Why should I leave these places where I have rested so long? What will become of me after I have made friends with Fire?”

The Smith answered:

“Come with me, for kindly we will treat you.
On my anvil gently I will beat you;
With my tongs, then, deftly will I hold you;
With my hammer I will shape and mould you
Into forms so fair that all will prize you,
Forms so rare that none will e’er despise you:
Axes, knives (so men will wish to use you)
Needles, pins (so women too, will choose you).
Come with me, your brother will not harm you,
Come with me, my smithy sure will charm you.”

THE WICKED HORNET

Hearing this, Iron came out of his lurking-places and without more ado, bashfully followed the cunning Smith. But no sooner was he in the smithy than he felt himself a prisoner. The tongs of bronze gripped him and thrust him into the forge. The bellows roared, the Smith shouted, and Fire leaped joyfully out of the ashes and threw his arms around his helpless younger brother. And bashful, bashful Iron turned first red and then white, and finally became as soft as dough and as radiant as the sun.

Then the tongs of bronze drew him forth from the flames, and twirled him in the air, and threw him upon the anvil; and the hammer of stone beat him fiercely again and again until he shrieked with pain.

“Oh, spare me! spare me!” he cried. “Do not deal so roughly with me. Let me go back to my lonely hiding-places and lie there in peace as in the days of old.”

But the tongs pinched him worse than before, and the hammer beat him still harder, and the Smith answered: “Not so, not so! Be not so cowardly. We do not hurt you; you are only frightened. Be brave and I will shape you into things of great use to men. Be brave and you shall rule the world.”

Then, in spite of Iron’s piteous cries, he kept on pounding and twisting and turning and shaping the helpless metal until at length it was changed into many forms of use and beauty—rings, chains, axes, knives, cups, and curious tools. But it was so soft, after being thus heated and beaten, that the edges of

THE SAMPO

the tools were quickly dulled. Try as he might, the Smith did not know how to give the metal a harder temper.

One day a honeybee strolled that way. It buzzed around the smithy and then lit on a clover blossom by the door.

“O bee,” cried the busy Smith, “you are a cunning little bird, and you know some things better than I know them. Come now and help me temper this soft metal. Bring me a drop of your honey; bring the sweet liquor which you suck from the meadow flower; bring the magic dew of the wildwood. Give me all such things that I may make a mixture to harden Iron.”

The bee answered not—it was too busy with its own affairs. It gathered what honey it could from the blossom, and then flew swiftly away.

Under the eaves above the smithy door an idler was sitting—a mischief-making hornet who heard every word that the Smith said.

“I will help him make a mixture,” this wicked insect muttered. “I will help him to give Iron another temper.”

Forthwith he flew to the thorny thickets and the miry bogs and the fever-breeding marshes, to gather what evils he might. Soon he returned with an armload—the poison of spiders, the venom of serpents, the miasmata of swamps, the juice of the deadly nightshade. All these he cast into the tub of

THE WICKED HORNET

water wherein the Smith was vainly trying to temper Iron.

The Smith did not see him, but he heard him buzzing, and supposed it was the honeybee with sweets from the meadow flowers.

“Thank you, pretty little bird,” he said. “Now I hope we shall have a better metal. I hope we shall make edges that will cut and not be dulled so easily.”

Thereupon he drew a bar of the metal, white-hot, from the forge. He held it, hissing and screeching, under the water into which the poisons had been poured. Little thought he of the evil that was there. He heard the hornet humming and laughing under the eaves.

“Tiny honeybee,” he said, “you have brought me such sweetness. Iron tempered with your honey will be sweet although sharp. Nothing shall be wrought of it that is not beautiful and helpful and kind.”

He drew the metal from the tub. He thrust it back among the red coals. He plied the bellows and the flames leaped up. Then, when the metal was glowing again, he laid it on the anvil and beat it with strong, swift strokes; and as he worked he sang:

“Ding! Ding! Ding-a-ling, ding!
Of Iron, sharp Iron, strong Iron, I sing.
Of Iron, my servant, of Iron, my king—
Ding! Ding! Ding-a-ling, ding!”

THE SAMPO

Forthwith, Iron leaped up, angry and biting and fierce. He was not a soft and ductile metal as before, but iron hardened into tough blue steel. Showers of sparks flew from him, snapping, burning, threatening; and from among them sprang swords and spears and battle-axes, and daggers keen and pointed. Out of the smithy and out through the great world these cruel weapons raced, slashing and clashing, thrusting and cutting, raging and killing, and carrying madness among men.

The wicked hornet, idling under the eaves, rejoiced at the mischief he had wrought. But the Smith was filled with grief, and the music of his anvil became a jangling discord.

“O Iron,” he cried, “it was not for this that I caused you to leave your hiding-places in the hills and bogs! The three sisters intended that you should be a blessing to mankind; but now I greatly fear that you will become a curse.”

At that moment the honeybee, laden with sweets of field and wood, came buzzing into the smithy. It whispered hopefully into the ear of the Smith: “Wait until my gifts have done their work.”

Here the Minstrel paused.

“Is that all?” asked the Graybeard.

“Yes, it is all,” was the answer; “for now I can think of nothing but my dear home land. My sweet country calls me, and I must hasten on my journey.”

THE WICKED HORNET

So, let my sledge be made ready and the steed harnessed before it, and I will bid you good-bye.”

“In the morning you may go,” said the Graybeard.

CHAPTER V

THE TREE OF MAGIC

VERY early in the morning the Minstrel rose from his couch. He opened the door and looked out. The sun was not yet up, but a tinge of yellow in the eastern sky foretold the coming of brilliant day. The stars of the Great Bear were still visible, twinkling dimly above the pine trees. The air was sharp and biting; the frost lay thick on the hilltops and the barren moorland; patches of newly formed ice glared white in the marshes.

“What a fine day for my journey!” said the Minstrel.

Presently the Graybeard’s son brought the red reindeer to the door and harnessed it to the birchwood sledge.

“You will have a fine day for your journey,” he said.

The Graybeard helped the Minstrel into the sledge; he wrapped the robes of fur around him and threw over his shoulders a bearskin cloak that was both ample and warm. Then he packed beneath the seat a store of food for the long journey—eight large

THE TREE OF MAGIC

jars of bread and deer meat, yes, nine great jars of toothsome victuals.

“Farewell, kind host and skilful surgeon!”

“Farewell, great guest! My blessings go ever with you!”

Thus the good-bye words were spoken. Then the Minstrel seized the reins and cracked his long whip. The reindeer leaped forward; the journey was begun.

Swift as the wind the well-built sledge glided on its course. Loudly the birchwood runners rang upon the frozen ground, smoothly they sped over the hoarfrost and the glistening ice. Through fens and woodlands, across the meadows and the moorlands, the red reindeer rushed unwearied, never pausing to rest, never thinking of food.

For one whole day the Minstrel held the reins and shouted urgently to his faithful steed. Yes, for two days and two long, silent nights he sat in the sledge and drove onward with no slackening of speed—so impatient was he to reach his dear home land, to behold his own fireside. The third day came, and still onward flew the tireless reindeer. The fourth day came; it was half gone when the Minstrel uttered a shout so joyful that the woodlands rang with the sound, and the wild geese in the marshes answered it gleefully.

He shouted again and again, for now he was among familiar scenes. Here was the forest road which he had often travelled in his youth and later

THE SAMPO

manhood. Here was the long, rough causeway across the treacherous fen land—he knew it so well that it seemed like the face of a friend. Straight ahead, only three leagues farther, the little village of Wainola was nestling warmly in a wooded glen close by the sea; in that village was the snug cottage which the Minstrel called his home; and in that cottage was the fireside around which his friends were sitting and bewailing his absence. What wonder that he shouted so joyfully!

All at once, however, his joy was dimmed; the memory of something unpleasant came into his mind. A cloud passed over his face, and the last shout died, half-uttered, on his lips. The birchwood runners bumped hard on the rough causeway. The reindeer slackened its speed; it seemed ready to sink in its tracks. The Minstrel's mind was far away; it was with the grim, gray Mistress of the Frozen Land. For suddenly he had thought of the promise he had given her—"I will send you Ilmarinen, the skilfulest of smiths; he will forge the Sampo for you."

In another hour—yes, in half that time—he would meet Ilmarinen face to face. Would he be able to redeem his promise?

"I am a wizard; I can do wonderful things by magic," said the Minstrel to himself. "If my friend, the Smith, will not be persuaded, I will prevail upon him through other means."

Then he chuckled to the reindeer, and the birchwood runners glided more smoothly over the causeway.

THE TREE OF MAGIC

On the farther side of the great fen there was a grove of pine trees, and in the midst of the grove was a green grassy space as round as the moon and as level as the sea. At this spot the Minstrel paused; he brought the reindeer to a sudden stop. He leaped from the sledge and began to draw magic circles upon the ground. He muttered strange words which only wizards and magicians know. He lifted his arms above his head and sang a song so weird and wild that the pine trees shuddered and shrieked.

He ceased; and instantly in the centre of the green space a slender twig sprang out of the ground and grew. It grew and grew, unfolding leaves and buds and blossoms. It grew and grew until it became a flower-crowned tree which seemed to pierce the clouds and sweep the solemn sky. No one knows how tall it might have grown. It might have grown till it touched the stars had not the minstrel bidden it to cease expanding.

Then he sang another song quite different from the first—a song so sweet, so persuasive, that the wild creatures in the forest and the fen came out of their dens and listened to it. The white-faced moon heard, and sat herself down among the branches of the tree of magic. The seven stars of the Great Bear also heard; and they came circling from the sky and began to dance and play amid the leaves and blossoms.

Cunning, indeed, was Wainamoinen, cunning and old; and when he saw the work of his magic, he was pleased beyond measure. He clapped his hands

THE SAMPO

together in triumph; he leaped and danced around the tree like one gone mad. Then he climbed into the sledge and sat down upon the furry robes; he shook the long reins and spoke gently to his steed. Slowly and thoughtfully, as one well contented with himself, he drove onward along the well-known pathway that led towards the village. His sharp gray eyes looked first this way and then that; his ears were open to the slightest sound; all his senses were alert.

CHAPTER VI

THE SMITHY

AS the Minstrel journeyed onward the road gradually became broader and there were more signs of travel. Wainamoinen remembered every object; he knew every shrub and tree and every hummock and bog-hole. A sunny smile overspread his face, and his eyes twinkled for joy; for was he not again in his own dear home land, and would he not soon grasp the hands of his kinsmen and friends whom he had not seen for many months?

At every turn in the road the country became more open, and little by little the forest gave way to the fields. Then in the distance thin wreaths of smoke could be seen rising above the crest of a hill—and the Minstrel knew that at the foot of that hill his own little village of Wainola was nestling in peace and quietude. His heart beat fast and his hands trembled as he thought of the welcome that was waiting for him there.

Suddenly, as he rounded a turn in the road, he came in full view of a grove of poplar trees in the middle of a field. He drove forward slowly, cau-

THE SAMPO

tiously. He approached the field and paused quite near to the grove, listening, smiling as though he expected something. Then suddenly, from among the poplars, came well-remembered sounds—the sound of a hammer, cling-clanging upon an anvil, and the melodious tones of a manly voice singing in unison therewith. The Minstrel had heard that song a thousand times before; nevertheless, it seemed strangely new to him, and he leaned forward to listen to the words:

“Cling, cling, clinkety cling!
With Iron I labor, of Iron I sing;
I heat it, I beat it, I make it ring, ring,
I scold it, I mould it—my hammer I swing—
Cling, cling, clinkety cling!

“Ding, ding, dinkety ding!
O honeybee, hasten, come hither and bring
Your sweets from the wildwood, the flowers
of spring,
Help make of this Iron some beautiful thing—
Ding, ding, dinkety ding!

“Cling, cling, clinkety cling!
Beware of the hornet, beware of his sting,
Beware of the evils he surely will bring;
In all things be gentle, O Iron, my king—
Cling, cling, clinkety cling!”

The Minstrel from his sledge could see the smithy from which the music came—a long, low building of logs in the very centre of the grove. It was dark and dingy and begrimed with smoke, but

THE SMITHY

through the open door the fire of the forge glowed brightly, lighting up the whole interior and revealing even the smallest object; and there, before his anvil, stood the Smith, swinging his hammer and twirling his tongs and thinking only of his pleasant work.

Wainamoinen leaped from his sledge and ran forward; he stood in the doorway and called loudly to his busy friend: "Hail, ho, Ilmarinen! Hail, dearest brother!"

The astonished Smith dropped his tongs; he threw his hammer down; he ran to greet his unexpected visitor.

"O Wainamoinen!" he cried. "Wainamoinen, prince of minstrels, wisest of men, best of friends—welcome, welcome! How glad I am to see you!"

"And how sweet it is to grasp your hand again," said the Minstrel warmly. "Oh, what joy to see home and comrades and country once again!"

Ilmarinen led the Minstrel into the smithy; he made him sit down on the edge of his workbench; and all the time he kept his arm around his neck in loving, brotherly embrace. Each gazed into the other's eyes, and for a time not another word was spoken—the hearts of both were so full of joy.

At length the Smith made out to stammer, "Tell me, my brother, where have you been these many months?"

"Far away from home, Ilmarinen—yes, very far," answered the Minstrel. "I have been tossed on

THE SAMPO

the sea; I have been in many countries; I have seen the whole vast world.”

“Tell me about it,” said the Smith. “You were gone so long that we gave you up as lost. Where have you been these many weeks, these long, long months? Tell me all about it.”

Then, in a few words wisely spoken, the Minstrel told of his shipwreck, and how for eight days—yes, for nine long, wearisome days—he had been carried hither and thither on the crests of the waves.

“I see! I understand!” said the impatient Smith. “Hard, indeed, was your lot, and fraught with danger. Tell me quickly, how did you escape from the seething waters? To what place did the mad waves carry you? On what savage shore were you cast?”

“Have patience, brother, and I will tell you all,” answered the Minstrel. “Never did I think that Fate would carry me to the cold and misty shores of Pohyola, the Frozen Land; but it happened even so. There, for three months—yes, for four long and dismal months—I was forced to tarry. I learned wisdom from the Mistress of that land; and indeed it was she who snatched me from the jaws of the sea and nursed me to health and strength. Never saw I a wiser woman, although she is not strikingly fair. I sat by her fireside; I listened to her words; I ate at her table. On her snowshoes I skimmed hither and thither over her cheerless land. In her boat I went fishing in the quiet inlets of the shore. But no matter where I went, no matter what I did, my heart was

THE SMITHY

always sick for my home land; I sighed for the dear friends I had left behind me.”

“O great Wainamoinen!” cried the Smith, embracing him again. “O cunning magician, sweetest of singers! Tell me now about your escape from that dismal land. Tell me about your journey homeward. I am anxious to hear.”

“There is not much to say,” answered the Minstrel. “The journey homeward was easy—it was delightful. As for my escape—well, I escaped by promising to send you to the Frozen Land, my dear brother.”

“What do you say?” cried the Smith in wonder. “Send me to the Frozen Land! Never will I go—no, not even to please my best friend.”

“Indeed, you *must* go,” said the Minstrel curtly and decisively. “I have promised, and you know the penalty of a broken promise.”

“Nay, nay, great Wainamoinen!” said the Smith. “Is this your love for me, that you cause me to perish in order to save yourself?”

“Calm yourself, young brother,” said the Minstrel soothingly. “You shall not perish. I have arranged it all. You are to do some skilful blacksmithing—use a little of your wondrous magic—and your reward shall be the loveliest wife in the world. The Mistress of Pohyola has promised.”

The Smith spoke quickly, angrily: “You may make bargains for yourself, not for me. I want no wife. My own mother is queen of my house, and

THE SAMPO

none other shall enter my door. Our dear village of Wainola is my home; it is the place of all places; I will never leave it."

"But if you could know how lovely she is—this Maid of Beauty—you would do as I desire, you would go to Pohyola," said the Minstrel with increasing earnestness.

"Never! never!" shouted the Smith, trembling with anger.

"Yes, I am sure you would go," said the cunning Minstrel. "There is no other maiden like unto this daughter of the Frozen Land. She is wise, industrious, brave. Her face is fairer than the moon-light on a midsummer eve; her eyes are like two suns; her lips are like twin berries, red and luscious; her voice is sweeter than the song of the meadow lark. All the young men in the countries of the North have sought to win her."

"And win her they may!" shouted the Smith. "Now say no more about her; change the subject; tell me a new story. I am sick of such twaddle."

"Come, come, dear brother!" said the Minstrel gently, as though conceding all. "Let us not quarrel. You are wise, your judgment is good, and I love you. Forgive me if I have offended you. Come and sit by me again, and we will talk of other things."

The Smith forgot his anger; he threw his arms about the Minstrel's neck and burst into tears.

"There! there!" said his old friend kindly, coaxingly. "Think no more of my words. I was hasty;

THE SMITHY

I was rash. Come now and let us hasten home, for I long to see my own dear fireside—to hear the voices of my kinsmen.”

“Yes, let us go,” said the Smith joyfully; and he hastened to cover the fire in his forge, to put his tools in their places, to remove his sooty apron.

“We will ride together in my birchwood sledge,” said the Minstrel. “My reindeer steed will carry us briskly over the hill. But I wish first to drive back to the end of the causeway and show you a wonderful tree that I saw standing there.”

“I will go with you willingly, gladly,” answered the Smith, “but I know every tree in the forest and the fen, and I call none of them wonderful. Indeed, I passed by the end of the causeway yesterday, and I saw only whispering pines and dwarf oaks and a few stunted poplars.”

“Well, but the tree which I saw there is the most wonderful sight in the world,” said Wainamoinen. “Its topmost branches brush the sky. It is full of gorgeous flowers. The white moon sits on one of its branches; and the seven stars of the Great Bear play hide-and-seek among its leaves and blossoms. I saw it all with my own eyes not an hour ago.”

The Smith laughed loudly, merrily. “Oh, my wise and truthful brother, tell me a story, two stories tell me! Travellers’ tales are wondrous, pleasing; but only fools believe them.”

THE SAMPO

They climbed into the birchwood sledge; they sat down on the furs; they talked of this thing and of that as the reindeer drew them swiftly back towards the fen and the long causeway. The road seemed short to both, and both were surprised when they found themselves in the grove of pine trees beside the green and magic circle.

“Wonderful! wonderful!” cried the astonished Smith as he gazed upward at the flower-crowned tree of magic. “Forgive me, my best of friends, sweetest of minstrels. You spoke the truth; you always speak the truth. I will believe whatever you say, I will do whatever you bid—only, I will never go to Pohyola.”

“Well then,” said the cunning Minstrel, “let us make what we can of this wonderful tree; for it may disappear as suddenly as it came. I am old, my legs are stiff, my arms rheumatic. It is long since I climbed a tree. But you—you are young and nimble, strong and supple, and spry as a squirrel when the nuts are ripening. You can climb and never grow tired.”

“Yes, dear Minstrel, but why should I climb?” asked Ilmarinen.

“To gather those gorgeous blossoms,” answered Wainamoinen; “to pick the rare fruit which you see; and, most of all, to bring down the white-faced moon and the seven golden stars that are playing among the branches. O Ilmarinen, skilfulest of men, if you are not afraid, climb quickly up and fetch down those matchless treasures.”

THE SMITHY

“I am not afraid,” cried Ilmarinen; and he began at once to climb the tree of magic.

CHAPTER VII

THE TEMPEST

WITH painful labor, Ilmarinen climbed from branch to branch. He looked upward and saw the moon with silver face smiling from the topmost boughs. He saw the seven stars of the Bear glittering like gold amid the leaves and blossoms. They seemed almost within his grasp. They beckoned to him, called to him; and he, with right good-will, climbed up, up, towards the moonlight and the starlight.

“Foolish fellow!” he heard a voice whispering. “Foolish fellow! foolish fellow! foolish fellow!”

“Who is it that calls me names—me the prince of all smiths?” he said in anger.

“It is I,” came the answer. “I am the tree which you are climbing—foolish fellow, foolish fellow! The moon which you are after is only a shadow, foolish fellow. The stars are false as jack-o’-lanterns, foolish fellow. Even I, the tree, am a delusion. Save yourself while you may, foolish fellow, foolish fellow!”

THE TEMPEST

The Smith heard, but he heeded not. The moon was just a little above him; the stars were right at his fingers' ends; in another moment he would grasp them all. On the ground far below him, the Minstrel was working his spells of magic, Ilmarinen saw him dancing, heard him singing, but understood him not.

“Come storm wind, come whirlwind,
Come swiftly, I say now;
Pick up the wise blacksmith
And bear him away, now.

“Seize on him, and into
Your flying boat lay him;
Then far to the Frozen North,
Gently convey him.

“Blow storm wind, blow whirlwind,
Let nothing delay you.
Blow swiftly, blow fiercely,
Blow, blow, I pray you!”

Suddenly there was a roaring in the air and in the tree tops, and the sky grew dark and very dark. Then a mighty tempest came hurtling over the land. In a moment the tree of magic melted into nothingness, and the fairy moon and the dancing stars vanished in the murk and gloom. The winds lifted the venturesome Smith in their arms; they laid him softly in their swiftly sailing cloud boat; they hurried him over forests and marsh lands, over mountains

THE SAMPO

and sea, and at the hour of midnight dropped him gently on the frozen shores of Pohyola.

Wise old Louhi, gray and grim and toothless, was standing in her doorway. She heard the roar of the tempest and the shrieks of the night wind. She saw the inky clouds swiftly sailing from the South Land and the gray wolves of the air racing madly over the sea. Then in the misty darkness she heard footsteps; but the watch dogs lay sleeping in the sledgeway, their ears were closed, they did not bark. She listened, and presently a voice—a strange and manly voice—was heard above the storm wind's roar; but still the watch dogs slept and gave no alarm.

The Mistress, grim and fearless, spoke up bravely in the darkness, heeding not the dreadful turmoil. "Who goes there?" she cried. "Who is it that comes on the storm wind's back, and yet so quietly that he does not rouse nor waken my watch dogs?"

Then the voice answered from out the turmoil and the gloom, and a young man tall and handsome stepped into view. "I am a wayfarer and a stranger," he said, "and I am not here through my own choice. Nevertheless, I beg that I may find in this place some shelter till this fearful storm has passed."

"You have no need to ask shelter of me," answered the woman; "for when did the Mistress of Pohyola turn a stranger from her door? When did she refuse to give a wayfarer the warmest place by her fireside?"

THE TEMPEST

Forthwith she led him into her long, low hall; she gave him a seat by the pleasant fire. She brought food in plenty and set it before him. She did everything that would take away his weariness, everything that would add to his comfort.

At length, when he had warmed and rested himself and had satisfied his hunger, she ventured to ask him a question. "Have you ever in all your travels met a minstrel, old and steady, whom men call Wainamoinen?"

"Oh, yes, surely," answered the Smith. "He is an ancient friend of mine, dear as a brother, precious as a father. He has just returned home from a long visit to this North Country. He tells wonderful stories of the good people of Pohyola—pleasant tales of a pleasant land."

"How glad I am," said the Wise Woman. "Now tell me if in all your travels you have ever met a certain smith, young and wondrously skilful, whom men call Ilmarinen."

The stranger leaped to his feet and answered, "Surely, surely, I have often met that famous workman. Indeed I myself am he; I am Ilmarinen, the Prince of Smiths, the maker of beautiful things, the skilfulest of men."

"Then welcome, welcome!" cried Louhi, grim and gray; and she grasped the stranger's hand. "We have been waiting for you a long time. We expect you to forge the Sampo for us. I know you will do so, for Wainamoinen the Minstrel promised me."

THE SAMPO

“The Sampo! the Sampo! What is the Sampo?” stammered Ilmarinen. “The Minstrel spoke of skilful smithing, but he mentioned not the Sampo. Never have I heard that name, although I have travelled wide.”

“Oh, you shall hear enough about it, and you will forge it for us, I know,” said the Mistress, grim but joyful. And then she turned and left him—left him standing by the hearth-side and gazing sadly, thoughtfully, into the flames.

“Now I understand it all,” he softly muttered to himself. “Wainamoinen has betrayed me. He has sent me to this dreary Frozen Land to do a task too great for his skill, too wonderful for his magic. He is old, he is cunning, he has outwitted me; shall I do the thing which he sent me to perform?”

Meanwhile the gray Mistress of the Frozen Land hurried from the long hall. She paused not till she reached her daughter’s chamber. Briskly she went in, and softly she closed the door behind her.

“My child, my beautiful child,” she cried, “he has come at last. He is young and tall and handsome. He will forge the Sampo for us; he will put the wonderful mill together; henceforth we shall want for nothing.”

“Yes, mother,” said the Maid of Beauty.

“Dress yourself, now, fair daughter. Put on your finest raiment and deck your hair with jewels. Don’t forget the golden chain that goes around your neck; nor the belt with copper buckle; nor your ear-

THE TEMPEST

rings; nor the silken ribbons for your hair; nor the jewelled band that goes upon your forehead. And oh, my dear child, do look pleasant, pretty, comely, and let your face be bright and cheerful.”

“Yes, mother,” said the dutiful daughter.