



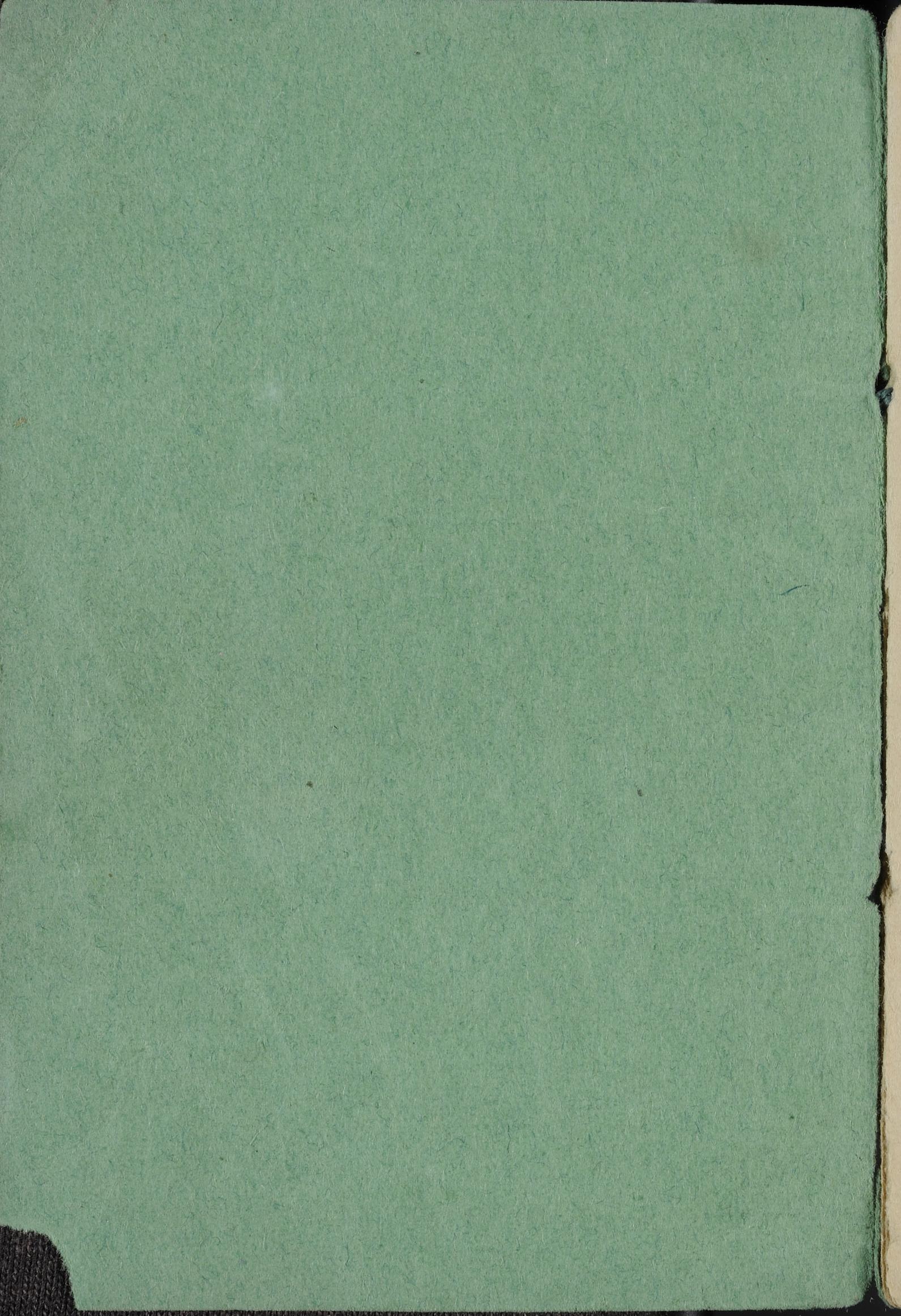
NEW HISTORY
OF THE
Life and Adventures
OF
TOM THUMB.



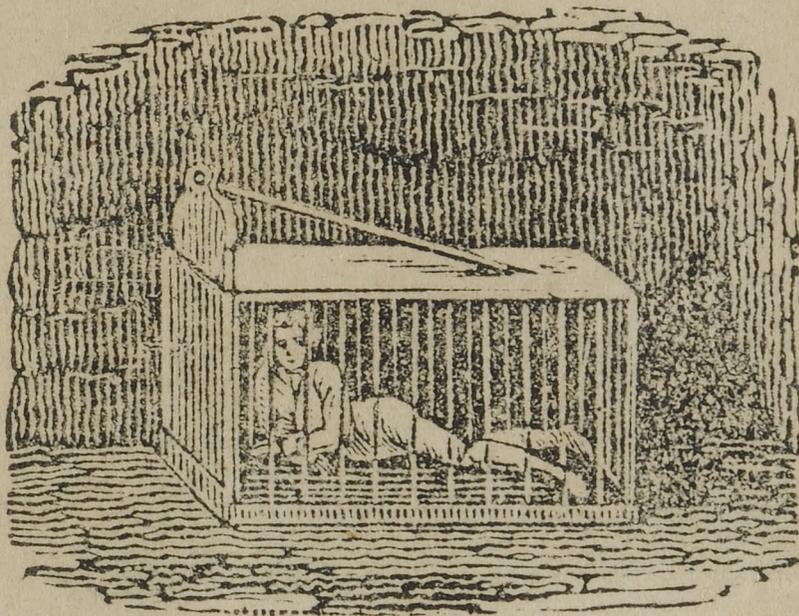
NEW HAVEN.
PUBLISHED BY S. BABCOCK.

1850.





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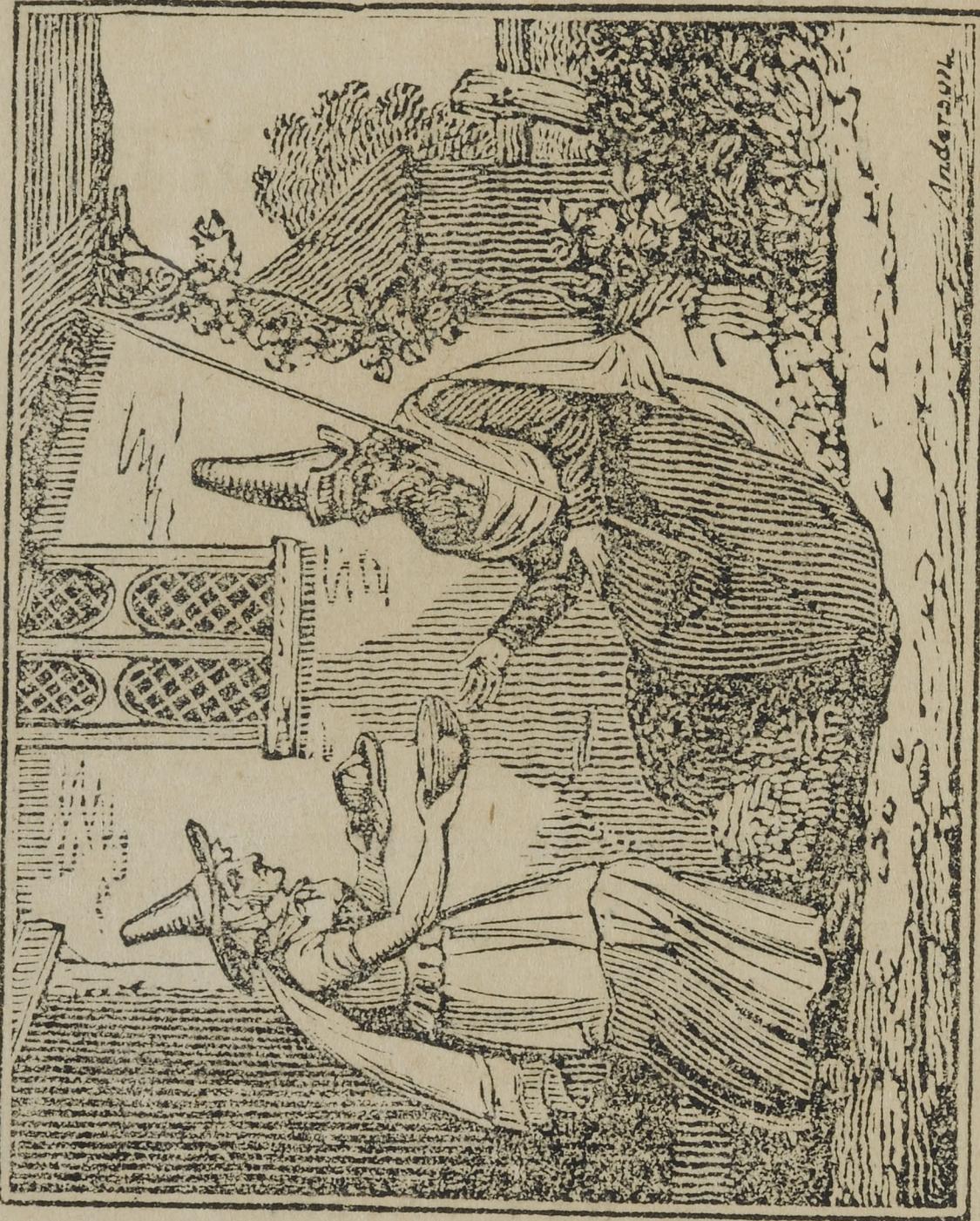


His shirt was made of a butterfly's wing,
His boots were made of a mouse's skin,
His coat was wove of thistle down,
An oak-leaf hat he had for his crown,
A tailor's needle hung by his side,
And a mouse for a horse he used to ride.

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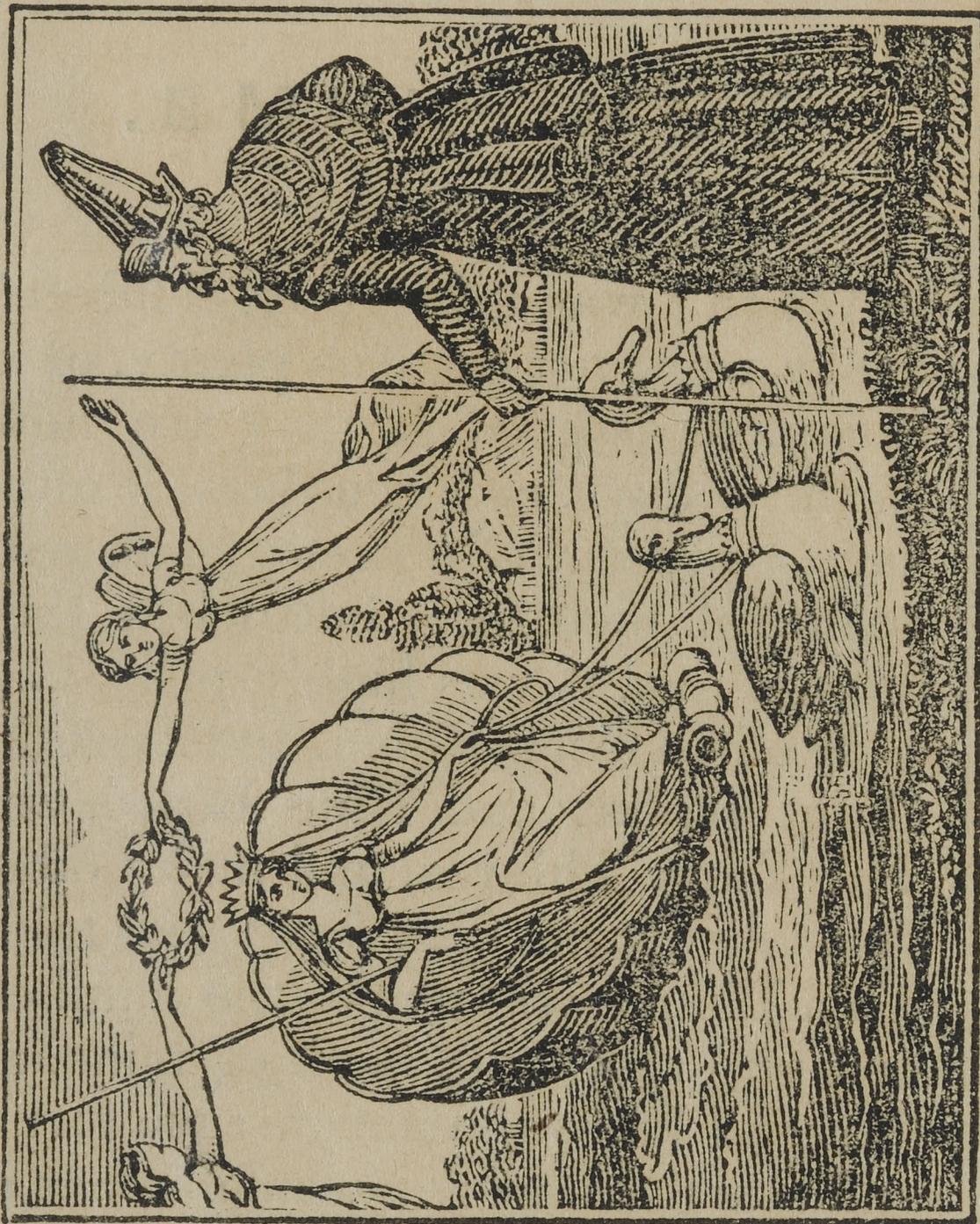
NEW HISTORY
OF THE
LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
T O M T H U M B .



When I was a little boy, children's books were not quite as plenty, or as cheap, or as *good* as they are now. In those days, children did not often have a present of a pretty book with beautiful pictures; but when they did get one, it was highly prized.

We had Cock Robin, and Jack the Giant Killer, and Blue Beard, and The Forty Thieves, and many other *amusing* but not very *instructive* tales. Tom Thumb was one of the number, and was a favorite book of mine, although I knew the story was not true, and that there were no such beings as magicians and fairies. Perhaps my little readers would like to know what kind of stories we old folks read when we were such little bodies as

4 MERLIN AND THE FAIRY QUEEN.



you are now. I think I remember enough of Tom Thumb to be able to tell you the story.

Once on a time, Merlin, a famous magician, was traveling, and being weary, he stopped at a plowman's cottage to ask for some refreshment. The plowman's wife kindly brought him a bowl of milk, and a wooden plate of good brown bread, which she urged him to partake of.

Merlin could not help seeing, that the honest couple looked quite sad and sorrowful; so he asked the cause, and learned that they had no children; the wife declaring, with tears in her eyes, that she should be happy if she had a son, even if he were no bigger than his father's thumb!

Merlin was much amused with the idea of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb, and sending for the queen of the fairies, he told her of the desire of the plowman's wife. The queen was no less pleased than Merlin, and she said the wish should be granted.

6 THE PEDLER AND THE PUDDING.



Accordingly, the plowman's wife had a son, who was just the size of his father's thumb, and was named by the queen, TOM THUMB.

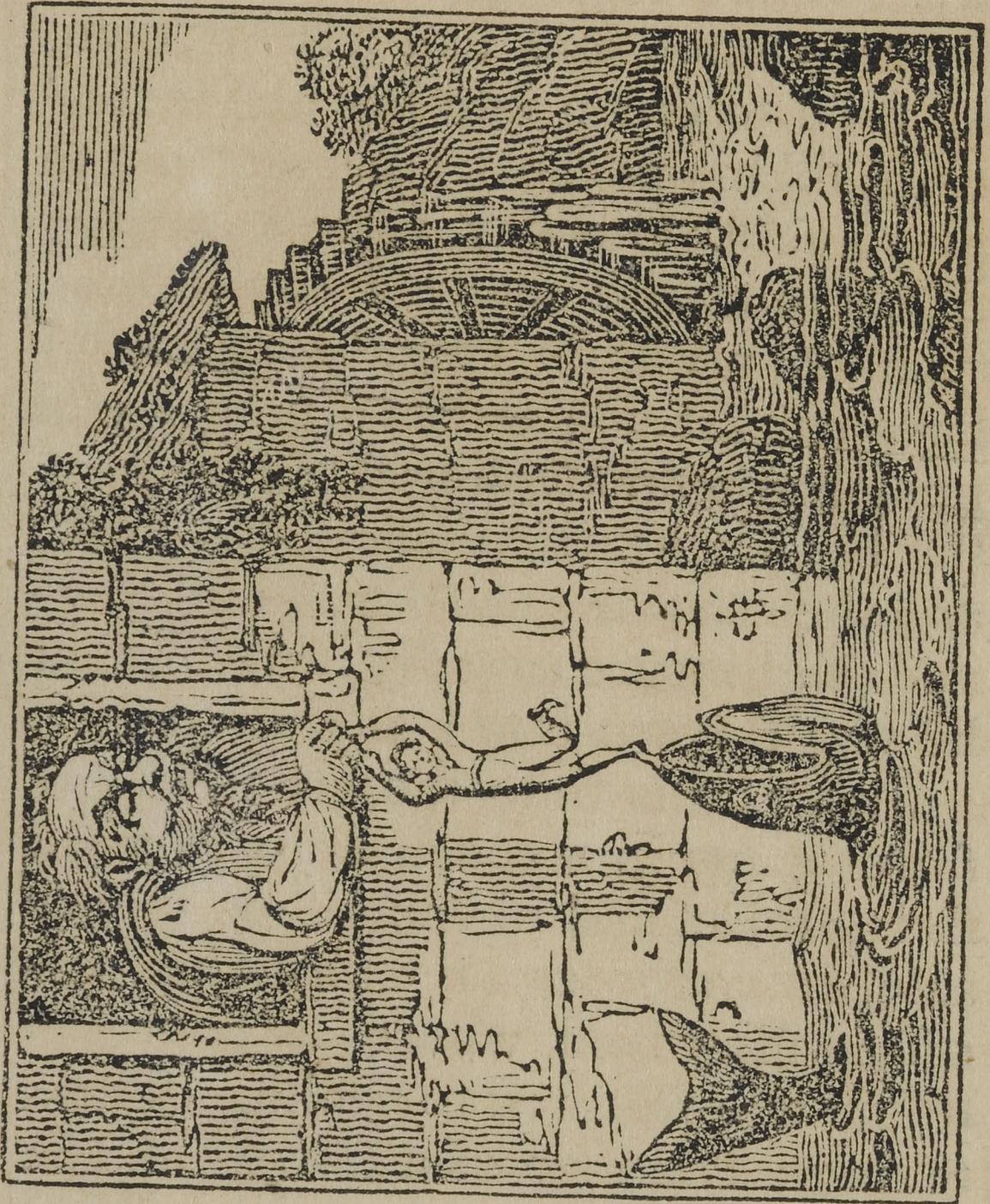
One day his mother was making a pudding, and that he might see how it was made, Tom climbed on the top of the bowl; but his foot happening to slip, he fell over head and ears into it, and his mother not seeing him, she stirred him into the batter, and then popped the whole into the pot.

The hot water made Tom kick and struggle, and his mother, seeing the pudding jump up and down in the pot, thought it was bewitched. A pedlar going by at that moment, she gave him the pudding, which he put in his pack and then walked on. As soon as Tom could get the batter out of his mouth, he began to cry out. This so frightened the pedler that he flung the pudding over a fence, and took to his heels. The pudding was broken by the fall, and poor Tom crawled out and ran home.



Tom never was any bigger; but as he grew older he grew cunning and sly. When he played with boys for cherry-stones, and had lost his own, he used to creep into his playmates' bags, fill his pockets, and come out to play again. One day, as he was doing this, the owner chanced to see him. "Ah, ha, my little Tom," said he, "I have caught you at last; now I will punish you for stealing." So he drew the bag-string tight about his neck, and then shaking the bag, Tom's legs and thighs were so sadly bruised, that he was thrown into a raging fever.

Just at this time the queen of the faires came in a coach drawn by six flying mice, and placing Tom by her side, drove through the air to her palace in fairy land, where she kept him till he was restored to health. Then, taking advantage of a fair wind, she blew him straight to the court of king Arthur. But just as Tom was about to land in the palace-yard, the king's cook happened to pass with a huge

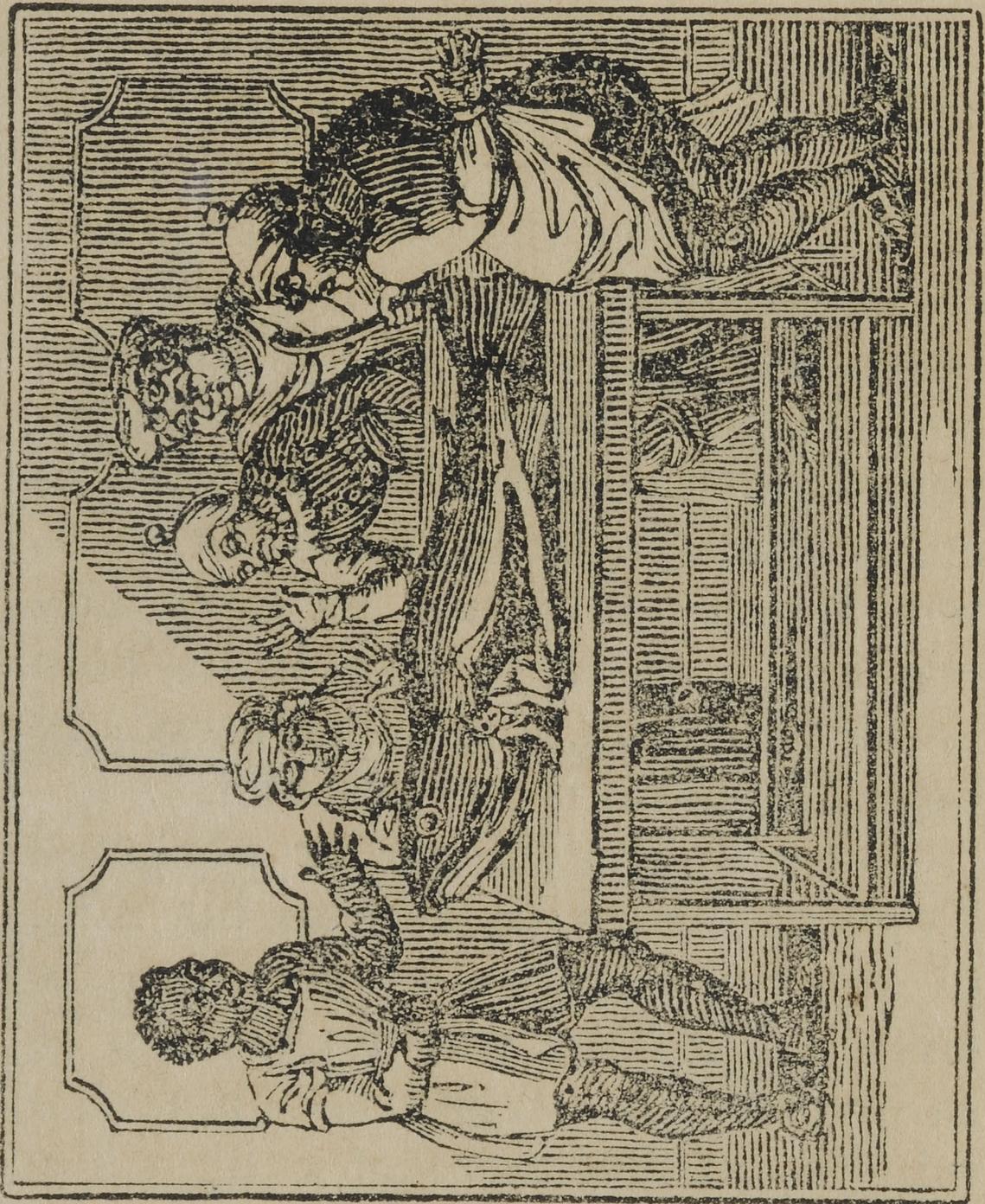


bowl of soup, into which Tom fell plump, and splashed the hot soup all in the cook's face and eyes.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" cried Tom, half scalded and half drowned in his hot bath; "murder! murder! murder!" bellowed the cook, who was a cross, red-faced old fellow, and supposed Tom had done all this mischief on purpose. Determined to be revenged on the little fellow for the imaginary insult, he urged his brother, who was a miller, and as cross and cruel as himself, to take little Tom home with him, and put him where he could do no more mischief.

Accordingly, the miller pocketed Tom, and carrying him to his mill, dropped him from a window into the river. But Tom was not born to be drowned. A large salmon swimming by at that moment, caught him in its mouth and swallowed him without any trouble.

The salmon was soon caught, and being a fine large fish, was presented

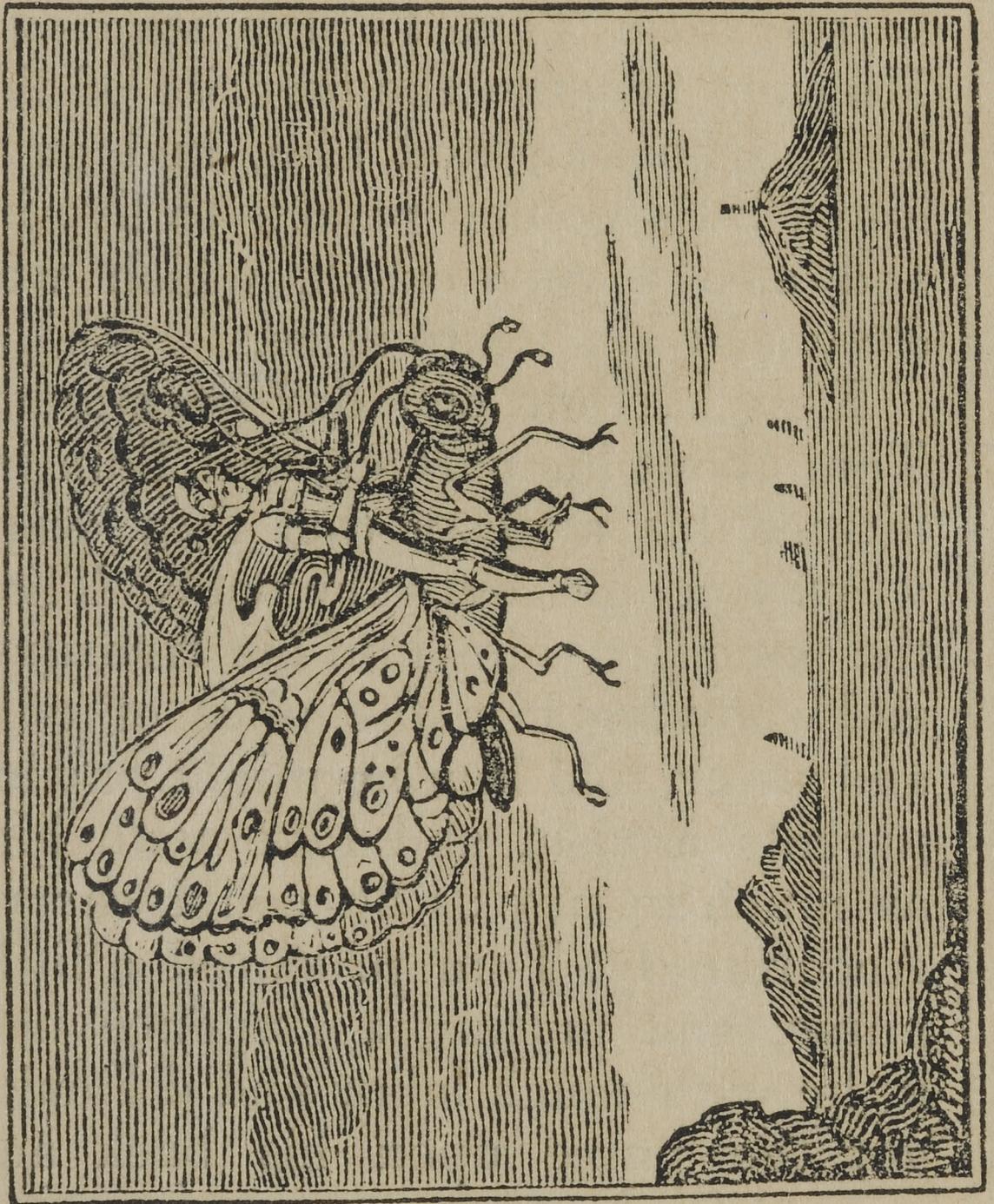


to the king, who ordered it to be dressed immediately. When it was cut open, every body was delighted to see little Tom Thumb step out. He soon became the favorite of the king, who knighted him, and gave him a little golden palace to live in, and also a tiny coach, which was drawn by six white mice.

King Arthur one day questioned Tom about his parents, and Tom informed his majesty that they were worthy people, but very poor. Then the king led him into his treasury, and showing him the piles of gold and silver, told him he might pay his parents a visit, and take with him as much money as he could carry! Accordingly, Tom procured a little purse, and putting a sixpence into it, he with much labor and difficulty got the purse upon his back and started for home.

His mother met him at the door, where he arrived almost tired to death, having traveled nearly half a

14 TOM RIDING ON A BUTTERFLY.



mile, with a huge sixpence on his back. His parents were delighted to see him, especially as he brought such an amazing sum of money.

Tom remained at home for some time; but at last getting weary of his humble life, he watched for an opportunity to reach king Arthur's court again. One day he sauntered out into the fields, and seeing a butterfly seated on the ground, he ventured to get astride of him. The butterfly soon took wing, and mounting into the air with Tom on his back, flew from field to field, till at last he reached the king's court.

The king, queen, and nobles, all tried to catch the butterfly, but could not. At last poor Tom, having no saddle or bridle, slipped off and tumbled into a watering-pot, where he was nearly drowned before he could be taken out. But he soon recovered from this mishap, and once more became the pride and ornament of king Arthur's court.

At last, a huge spider one day attacked him, and though he drew his sword and fought well, yet the spider's poisonous breath at last overcame him.

King Arthur and his whole court went into mourning for little Tom Thumb. They buried him under a rose-bush, and raised a white marble monument over his grave, with this epitaph on it, in letters of gold :

Here lies Tom Thumb, a gallant knight,
Who died by a cruel spider's bite.
He was well known in king Arthur's court,
Where he afforded pleasant sport ;
He rode at tilt and tournament,
And on a mouse a hunting went.
Alive, he filled the court with mirth ;
His death to general grief gave birth.
Good people, tears of sorrow shed,
And cry, Alas ! Sir Tom is dead !

Now, my little readers, which do you like best,—*true stories, moral and instructive* stories, or stories like the wonderful adventures of

TOM THUMB?



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