

"No," answered Florian in a low voice, and he hung his head.

"Oh, find him, find him for my sake!" she cried imploringly, and then she hastened away.

The next day Florian set out again, and again he met the crane. "Do you now wish me to find the prince for you?" asked the bird. Florian thought of the princess and her radiant golden hair.

"No!" he cried fiercely, and was gone.

That evening, under the oak tree, he met the princess again.

"Have you found the prince?" she asked.

"There is only one day left of the four my father allotted."

Florian answered in a low voice, "I have not found him."

The princess' eyes filled with tears, but she said never a word and withdrew.

The next day Florian went to the wood where the crane dwelt. The bird flew to him.

"For the last time I ask you. Shall I find the prince for you?" it said. Florian thought of the beautiful soul of the princess, and he thought of the tears in her eyes, and he thought of the lonely old King Maurice, and his heart was filled with remorse.

"Yes, yes," he cried; "find the prince. Beatrice shall wed him, and I—but I am nothing. Find the prince, good crane."

"Very well," answered the bird. "When you get to the oak tree the prince will be there."

So Florian hurried back to the oak tree, but no one was there. "I must wait for the prince," he sighed. He sat down on the ground and lifted his hands to his breast. They touched the locket, and instantly it sprang open.

"True," he said sadly, "I have made a sacrifice, but what profits it?" Then he unfastened the chain, and lifting the locket examined it. What was his amazement to find inside a ruby, red as a poppy, pure as a crystal. Then, as he looked upon it, he saw growing clear within the face of Princess Beatrice.

"The magic ruby!" he cried. "I myself am the missing Prince Eustace!"

Then the princess came swiftly through the trees.

"My prince!" she cried. "You are the Prince Eustace, and now I can tell the secret which has preyed upon me for so long. My fairy godmother, who loved me well, determined that I should wed no unworthy prince, and fearful that you should be spoiled by the luxuries of the court, carried you away to live unknown in a distant land. Now she has proved your worth and your great unselfishness. For she was the crane who spoke to you, and I who knew her secret was forbidden to speak, for she declared I should never wed you if you did not prove yourself noble and generous."

The prince's heart leaped with joy, but he trembled when he thought how nearly he had missed this happiness.

And so the prince and princess went quickly to the courts of their fathers, and the good King Maurice rejoiced to find his son in the person of this manly, noble youth, celebrated their marriage with great rejoicing and splendor.

And ever afterward they lived happily.

The Superstitious Rooster.

"I don't believe in your superstitions," said Mr. Hog, looking very wise and scratching his head with his left hind foot.

"Well, I do," replied Mr. Shanghai, shaking himself as he rose from the sand.

"I know they come true."

"What do?" queried Hog.

"Oh, signs and omens," said Shanghai, looking wise as he shifted his position from one foot to the other. "Why, there was Mrs. Cochon, who sat on thirteen eggs and hatched them all. Of course nothing but bad luck could follow that number, and they all died but one, and he became a suicide."

"You don't say so? How was that?"

"Oh, he jumped into a hay cutter by mistake and got fed to the cows."

"And then there was Bill, the Plymouth Rock rooster, who had his head cut off and was boiled for soup on Friday, and you know that's bad luck—to have a thing like that occur on Friday."

"Yes," Shanghai went on, "and omens help me out too. Now, for instance, no darky will ever steal a chicken in the full of the moon."

"Won't they, though!"

"No, they won't. They only come in the dark of the moon, same as when they go after the left hind foot of the graveyard rabbit. So you see I know when to sleep peacefully and am not afraid in full moonlight."

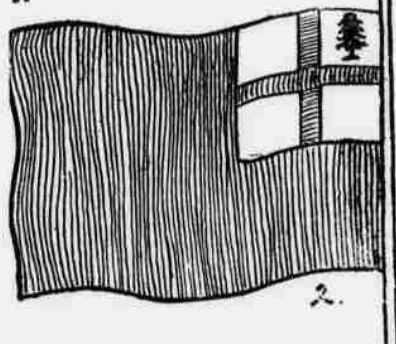
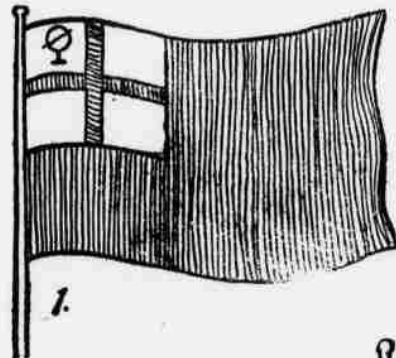
"Would you trust yourself with that idea?" asked Hog in doubtful tones.

"Most certainly," replied Shanghai, with assurance.

"I wouldn't," said Hog, "and don't you pin your safety on such nonsense."

He was right, for when he woke at midnight the full moon was shining, and in its light he saw poor Shanghai, with his head sticking out of a big bag, carried by Sam Slick, of amber hue, who was making tracks for the woods.

MORAL—Superstitions and omens don't always work.



OUR FIRST FLAGS.

No. 1 shows the flag of the Federated Colonies, afterwards United States flag. The body of the flag was red, the square in the corner white with cross-bars of red. The globe was yellow.

No. 2 shows the flag carried at Bunker Hill June 17, 1775. The body of the flag was blue, the corner square white, with red cross-bars. The evergreen-tree was very dark green.



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