

The Folk- and Fairy-Tales of Ludwig Bechstein: **Brother Saver and Brother Waster**

Once upon a time there was a farmer who had two sons, and he had each one learn a trade, “Because,” he said, “a trade in hand finds gold in every land.” One son became a shoemaker, the other a tailor, and when their apprenticeships were completed they set out to see the world. They were a couple of merry brothers, but the shoemaker wasted all his money on tobacco, snuff and schnaps, while the tailor did not smoke tobacco, did not take snuff, and did not drink schnaps. From time to time he advised his brother to be economical with his money, but the shoemaker laughed at him, saying, “And why should I save? You save, don’t you? A saver needs a spender – so goes the proverb.”

So the good companions wandered on together for a whole year. The tailor had a special purse, and every time his brother spent money on unnecessary things, he put into it the same amount from the common coffers, which were never full, for a rainy day; he did this the whole year through, and it gave him pleasure to see the purse’s little belly becoming ever rounder.

Now one day they had a heated exchange of words, once again about saving and wasting; the tailor boasted about the hoard he had saved, and the shoemaker said, “What you have saved is a mere trifle.” By this time they had come onto a bridge which had handsome, broad, and smooth stones on its parapets, and the tailor wished to convince his brother that saving was a good thing, for the proverbs say, “Make hay, while you may, / For a rainy day,” and, “Youth, be sage, and save your wage! Penury nips in old age.” They took off their knapsacks and the tailor pulled out his purse and counted the lovely silver-groschen and six-kreuzer coins, which had

acquired quite a reddish sheen with being carried around so long, on a capstone; it was a tidy sum, and he was as pleased as Punch with it. The shoemaker watched this with complete indifference, filled a pipe, and was just striking a light when suddenly such a violent gust of wind came their way that the little tailor would have been blown right into the river if the bridge had not had a parapet; but the money – the wind blew it all down into the water. The tailor stood paralysed with horror, but the shoemaker placed the burning tinder in his pipe and asked, with the calmest face in the world, “Well, Brother Saver, how much do you have now?” And the tailor threw back his head and howled, “So much as you-hu-hu-hu! So much as you-hu-hu-hu!”

