

There were once a young husband and wife, and their names were Fred and Kate. Fred had saved a very pretty sum of money, and he changed it all to gold, and said to Kate, "Do you see these yellow counters? I am going to make a hole in the stable underneath the cows' manger and bury them; see that you do not meddle with them, or it will be the worse for you." And she said, "Oh no, Fred, certainly I won't." Now, one day when Fred was away, there came some peddlers' to the village, with earthen pots and basins to sell, and they asked the young wife if she had nothing to give in exchange for them. "O good men," said Kate, "I have no money to buy anything with, but if you had any use for yellow counters, I might do some business with you." "Yellow counters! Why not? We might as well see them," said they. "Then go into the stable and dig under the cows' manger, and you will find them; but I dare not go near the place." So those rogues went and dug, and found the gold accordingly. And they seized it quickly, and ran off with it, leaving the pots and pans behind them in the house. Kate thought she must make some use of her new possessions, so, as she had no need of them in the kitchen, she spread them out on the ground, and then stuck them, one after another, for ornament, on the fence which ran round the house. When Fred came home and saw the new decorations, he said, "Kate, what have you been doing?" "I bought them every one, Fred, with those yellow counters that were buried under the manger, and I did not go there myself; the peddlers' had to dig them up for themselves." "O Kate!" cried Fred, "what have you done? They were not counters, but pure gold, and all our capital; you should not have done so." "Well, Fred, I did not know; you should have told me that before," answered Kate. Then Kate stood still a little while to consider, and at last she said, "Listen, Fred, we may be able to get the gold back again. Let us run after the thieves."