

"Why, under your bundles. Only they had no mouths with which to tell me. We have made a mistake: we have been like some one sitting on hidden treasure and asking for alms. But it's good that we have found them now. It shows my poor old woman did put them in."

"Mosh Nichifor, you are feeling remorse in your heart."

"Well, yes, young lady. I see I am at fault. I must sing a song of penitence:

Poor old wife of mine!
Be she kind or be she harsh,
Still her home is mine."

And so saying old Nichifor rolled up his sleeves, cut a beech stick, and made a wonderful axle-pin. Then he set it in position, put the wheel in place, harnessed the mares, quietly took the road and said:

"In you get, young lady, and let's start."

As the mares were refreshed and well rested they were at Peatra by middle day.

"There you will see your home, Mistress Malca."

"Thank God, Mosh Nichifor, that I came to no harm in the forest."

"The fact is, young lady, there's no doubt about it, there's no place like home."

And while they were talking they reached the door of Itzic's house. Itzic had only just come back from the school, and when he saw Malca he was beside himself with joy. But when he heard all about the adventures they had met with and how the Almighty had delivered them from danger he did not know how to thank old Nichifor enough. What did he not give him! He himself marvelled at all that was given him. The next day old Nichifor went back with other customers. And when he reached home he was so gay that his old woman wondered what he had been doing, for he was more drunk than he had been for a long time.

From now on Malca came every two or three weeks to visit her parents-in-law in Neamtzu: she would only let old Nichifor take her back home, and she was never again afraid of wolves.

A year, or perhaps several years, after, over a glass of wine, old Nichifor whispered to one of his friends the story of the adventure in the "Dragon" Wood, and the fright Mistress Malca got. Old Nichifor's friend whispered it again to some friends of his own, and then people, the way people will do, began to give old Nichifor a nickname and say: "Nichifor, the Impostor: Nichifor, the Impostor:" and even though he is dead the poor man has kept the name of Nichifor, the Impostor, to this very day.

COZMA RACOARE

By M. SADOVEANU

He was a terrible man, Cozma Racoare!

When I say Cozma, I seem to see, do you know, I seem to see before me, a sinister-looking man riding upon a bay horse; two eyes like