



## **BRUCE AND THE SPIDER**

Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, was hiding in a hut in the forest. His enemies were seeking him far and wide.

Six times he had met them in battle, and six times he had failed. Hope and courage were gone.

Bruce had given up all as lost. He was about to run away from Scotland, and to leave the country in the hands of his enemies.

Full of sorrow, he lay stretched on a pile of straw in the poor woodchopper's hut. While he lay thinking, he noticed a spider spinning her web.

The spider was trying to spin a thread from one beam of the cottage to another. It was a long way between the beams, and Bruce saw how hard a thing it was for her to do.

"She can never do it," thought the king.

The little spider tried it once and failed. She tried it twice and failed. The king counted each time. At length she had tried it six times and had failed each time.

"She is like me," thought the king. "I have tried six battles and failed. She has tried six times to reach the beam and failed."

Then starting up from the straw, he cried, "I will hang my fate upon that little spider.

If she swings the seventh time and fails, then I will give up all for lost. If she swings the seventh time and wins, I will call my men together once more for a battle with the enemy."

The spider tried the seventh time, letting herself down upon her slender thread. She swung out bravely.

"Look! look!" shouted the king. "She has reached it. The thread hangs between the two beams. If the spider can do it, I can do it."

Bruce got up from the straw with new strength and sent his men from village to village, calling the people to arms.

The brave soldiers answered his call and came trooping in.

At length his army was ready to fight, and when the king led them in a great battle against the enemy, this time, like the spider, Bruce won.

God often uses the things He created to teach us lessons.

*Scottish Tradition*