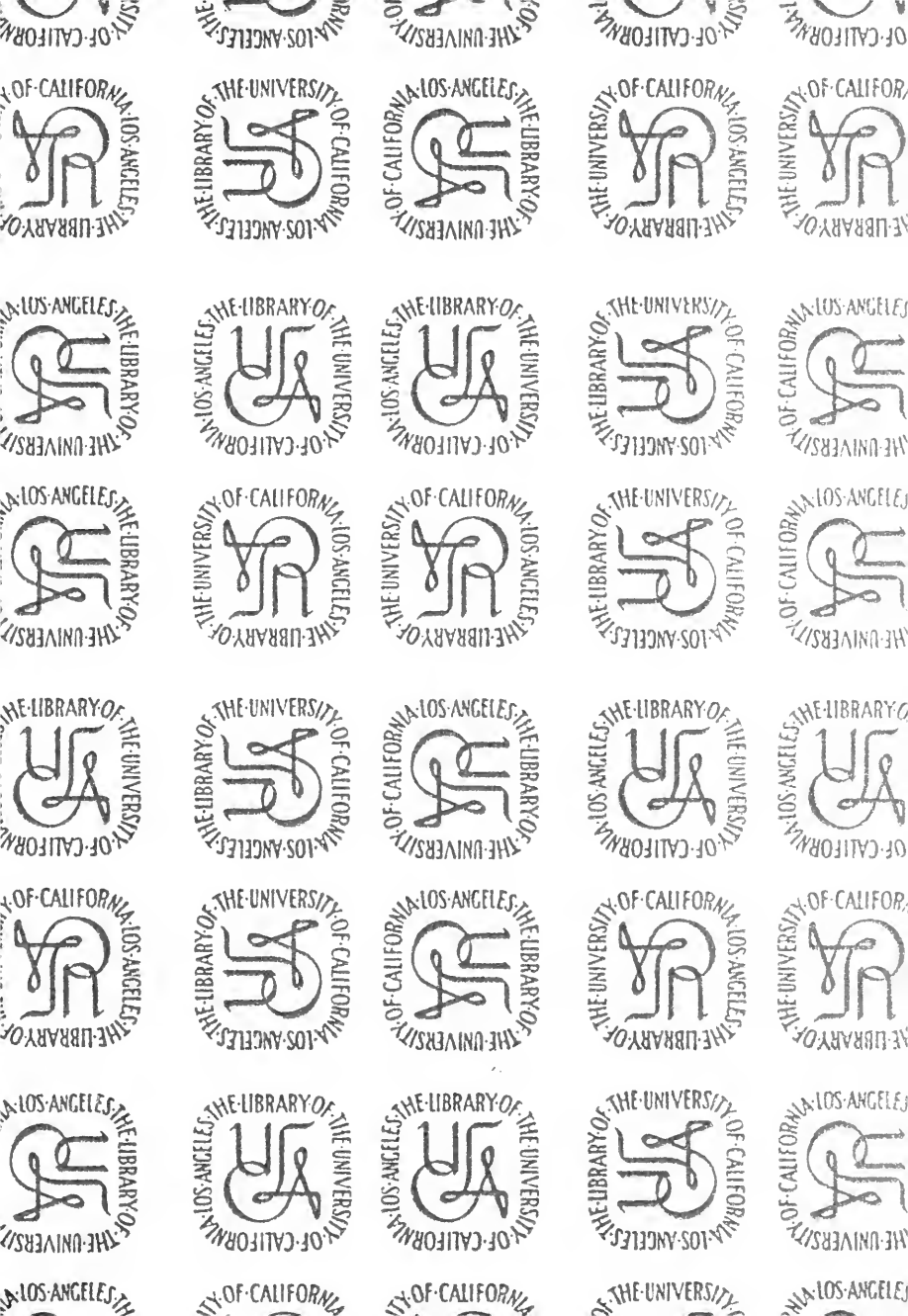
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KING LONG BEARD
OR ANNALS OF THE GOLDEN DREAMLAND

BOOKS ILLUSTRATED BY
CHARLES ROBINSON

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES,
BY R L STEVENSON
THE CHILD WORLD.
BY GABRIEL SETOUN
MAKE-BELIEVE
BY H D LOWRY
LULLABY-LAND
BY EUGENE FIELD
KING LONGBEARD
BY BARRINGTON MAC GREGOR.

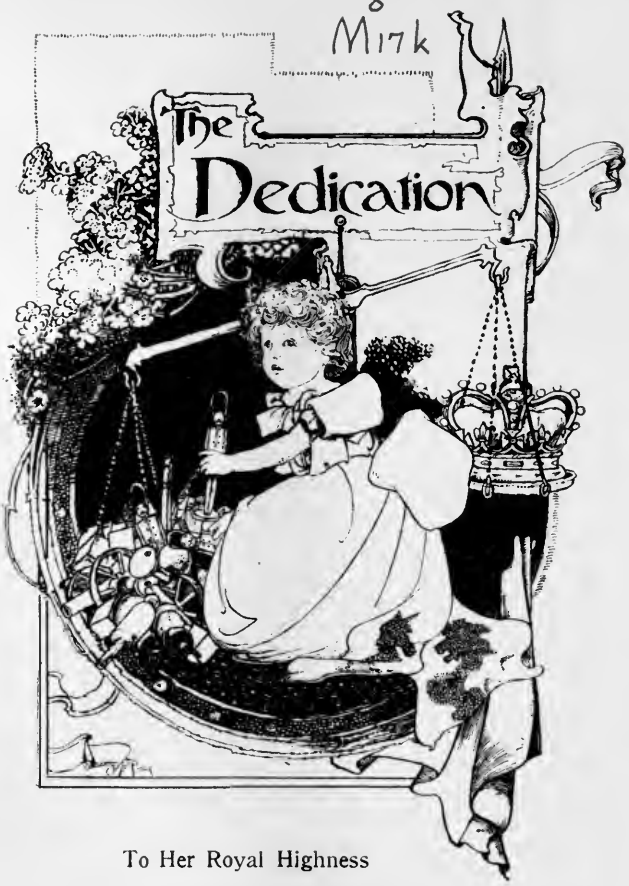
KING LONG BEARD

OR ANNALS OF THE GOLDEN DREAMLAND.

A Book of Fairy Tales, written by BARRINGTON-MAC-GREGOR *and illustrated by* CHARLES ROBINSON.

JOHN LANE
THE BODLEY HEAD
LONDON AND NEW YORK

·1898·



To Her Royal Highness

VICTORIA MARY, DUCHESS OF YORK,

to whom this book, by her gracious permission,

is gratefully dedicated.

THIS IS A DAY OF GREAT EVENT
IN THE GOLDEN LAND OF DREAMS;
FOR THE KING HAS LAID DOWN HIS SCEPTRE AND CROWN
BY THE BRIDGE OF THE RAINBOW BEAMS;

AND DOWN HE IS COME TO THE WORLD BELOW
TO WALK AMONG MORTAL WIGHTS,
LIKE THE CALIPH OF OLD OF WHOM WE ARE TOLD
IN THE BOOK OF ARABIAN NIGHTS:
AND DOWN IN THE WORLD HE HAS SOUGHT, AND FOUND
IN THE SOVEREIGN ISLES OF THE SEA,
A PRINCESS RARE, WITH A CHILD SO FAIR,
THAT OF DREAMLAND THEY BOTH MIGHT BE.

THE CHILD HE SITS BY A BALANCE THAT WEIGHS
AS THOSE OF THE DREAMLAND WEIGH,
FOR THE SCALE COMES DOWN TO OUTBALANCE THE CROWN
WITH THE TOYS OF THE BRIGHT TO-DAY.
HE SEES THEM ALL IN THE WONDROUS LIGHT
THAT SHINES FROM THE DREAMLAND FAR,
AND IT MAKES THEM SEEM WHAT HIS HEART WOULD DEEM,
INSTEAD OF JUST WHAT THEY ARE.
AND THE KING OF THE DREAMLAND WATCHES HIM PLAY,
AS WHEN HE WAS A DREAMLAND ELF,
AND HE LAUGHS FOR JOY IN THE GLEE OF THE BOY
AS HE STILL WERE A CHILD HIMSELF.

THEN HE LOOKS FROM THE CHILD TO THE MOTHER'S FACE
THAT IS LIT WITH A TENDER LOVE.
"NOW HERE," QUOTH THE KING, "IS THE PLACE TO BRING
"THE TALES OF MY COURT ABOVE.
"FOR HERE, IN THE HEART OF THE UNDERWORLD,
"IS THE HOPE OF THE NOBLEST RACE
"THAT EVER MIGHT STAND ON ITS CHOICEST LAND,
"OR SAIL ON ITS OCEAN'S FACE!"
SO BACK HAS HE NOW TO THE DREAMLAND FLOWN;
AND SITS IN THE DREAMLAND HALLS,
AND THERE FOR THE SCRIBES OF THE ELFIN TRIBES,
THAT WRITE FOR THE COURT, HE CALLS.

HE BIDS THEM SIT DOWN AND WRITE WITH SPEED
THE TALES OF THE DREAMLAND BRIGHT;
THEN DOWN THROUGH THE AIR TO THE PRINCESS RARE
DESCEND WITH THE PAGES WHITE.
AND HE BIDS THEM SAY TO THE PRINCESS RARE,
WHAT HE SAYS TO ONE AND ALL—
THAT HE WHO WOULD RISE TO OUTWIT THE WISE
AT THE CHILDREN'S FEET MUST FALL;
FOR THEIRS IS THE LIGHT OF THE DREAMLAND TRUE,
AND THE WISDOM UNDEFILED;
AND THE WORLD AT ITS BEST SHALL BE LED TO ITS REST
BY THE HAND OF A LITTLE CHILD.

BARRINGTON MACGREGOR.

DRUMTOCHTY.
December 1897.

A Book of Fairy Tales needs no Preface: so this is not one.

I merely wish to acknowledge the help I have been given by some of the Dreamland Princesses, who not only took some of the stories down from dictation (and that not like "ignorent rabets"), but also made me fair, if not fairy, copies of the same. And especially to the "Princess Elsie," who supplied me herself with a great part of "The Abduction of the Professor."

BARRINGTON MACGREGOR

Drumtochty, 1897

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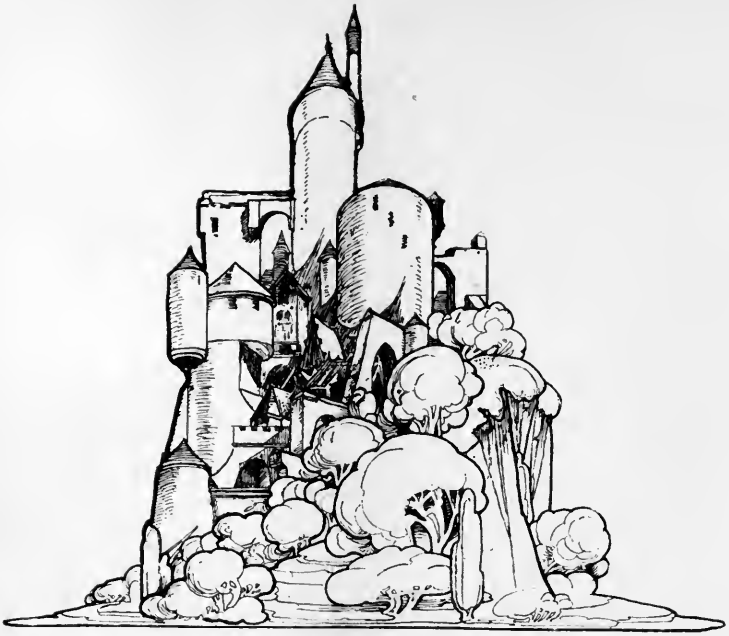


How King Longbeard came by his Name

REAMLAND is where the baby flowers are born. No one, except those who live there, knows exactly where it is ; but every one knows it is a land of golden beauty. In its centre is a valley, surrounded by lofty mountains, through which runs a river of liquid silver, as transparent as crystal. This river comes into the valley out

of a cavern in the side of one of the mountains, and nothing wicked can swim in it: and that is well, for though almost all the inhabitants of Dreamland themselves are lovely and good, still a few of them turn out badly at times; and they have some unpleasant neighbours—wild beasts that live in the forests on the mountain-tops, and occasionally strange birds and other creatures, that find their way thither from the wilds of Nightmaria, which is not very far off. King Longbeard's Castle stands close by the cavern, at the foot of a precipice, and the silvery water washes its walls. And King Longbeard is King of all that country.

In the winter, when the snowflakes come softly floating down through the air, you need not believe any of the tales that people tell to account for them. Nurses talk about "plucking geese in fairyland," and wise men about "refrigeration" and "crystallisation," and such ugly words; but, all the while, it is just King Longbeard driving the cold away from the baby flowers. And in summer, when you find the sun shining too fiercely, it is because King Longbeard will not allow it to shine so in the golden land of dreams, for fear the baby flowers should be scorched. They are so tender, and have to be taken such con-

tinual care of! All day long, and all through the night, they lie in the most exquisite little cradles, or hammocks, made of a substance called dream-silk, which is spun by magnificent diamond spiders, specially kept for the purpose. Each baby flower has a nurse to look after it, in the form of a large bee, whose body is of a

rich turquoise blue, banded with blue of a darker shade; and these lovely bees sing to their charges, and feed them with honey, till the time comes for each to be carried off by the fairies to some garden down here. And that is why the flowers have honey, and why they laugh so when our bees, who know nothing about Dreamland, come and ask them to give it back again: which, however, they always do.

Longbeard is a strange name for the King, whose face is nearly as smooth as your own: but still it is a very appropriate one, seemingly, when one knows why it was given to him.

It happened in this way. There were three baby flowers hanging in their cradles near each other in the Castle garden. Two of them were good and lovely; one of a deep blue, the other of a pale yellow—but I need not describe them, for you know them well, one being a blue-bell and the other a primrose. And the third flower, which was a dandelion, was jealous of the other two, because they were not only beautiful, but were also favourites of King Longbeard's children. And one day he heard them talking together, and Primrose said to Blue-bell, "How did you come here?"

And Blue-bell answered, "My mother dropped me in a little seed on the ground below, and a fairy picked me up and carried me hither."

"That's exactly how I came here myself," said Primrose.

But when Dandelion heard them say this he laughed rudely, and said, "Then I must be of far greater importance than either of you, for I came flying through the air in a bright fairy chariot, with a great star of dream-silk shining over me."

But Blue-bell and Primrose took no notice of his conceited talk. So Dandelion grew very angry, and lay back in his cradle, shaking with rage, and thinking of all kinds of plans for being revenged on them for what he considered an insult. And the next night, when all the other baby flowers were fast asleep, and their blue bees humming drowsy songs over them, there came along a fierce tiger-wasp, from a nest on the border of the mountain forest, where he had fed on poppy, and aconite, and

black hellebore, and all kinds of poisonous plants. And, as he flew by, the Dandelion called him, and said, "Hullo! Tiger-wasp, I want you to help me."

"Oh! is that you? What's-o'clock?" said the Wasp.

"Yes," said the Dandelion. "I'm glad you've happened to pass just now, as I want you to do something for me."

"Anything you like in the way of mischief, old Rabbit-meat," replied the Wasp. "What is it?"

"I wish you wouldn't call names," said the Dandelion; "but, all the same, I want you to get rid of that conceited pair, Blue-bell and Primrose. You might do it by stinging their blue bees — not enough to kill them, you know, but just so as to poison their honey."

"I couldn't undertake a pleasanter job," said the Wasp.

Now the Tiger-wasp was on his way home from doing terrible mischief, for he had, out of mere wanton cruelty, gone that night to the snowdrop's cradle and stung its blue bee to death. And that is the reason why the snowdrops come out so early now: they are looking for the bees; but they never find them, and so

they always stand hanging down their heads sadly. And now the cruel insect was glad to find some more harm ready to his hand, or rather to his sting; and so he prepared to attack the bees who nursed the flowers Dandelion hated so, and grew so excited at the prospect that his sharp buzzing sounded like some threatening song.

If he had been able to keep quiet, he might have effected his purpose; but both Primrose and Blue-bell heard him, and, even in their sleep, cried out so loudly that King Longbeard heard them in his Castle, and, rising hastily, came out to see what was the matter with his baby flowers. And, just as he reached the bed where they were, he too heard the shrill buzzing, and saw the Tiger-wasp flying off in the moonlight. When he saw him, he knew there was some mischief abroad; and so, after seeing that the flowers were safe, and their bees unhurt and at their posts, he called his

nightingale, that sings all night when the flowers are happy, and said, "Night-singer mine, fly before me, and show me the way to where the queen of the tiger-wasps dwells."

So the bird flew before him, and led the way through the garden, and up the hill-side, to the edge of the great forest. As they drew near, several wild animals rushed out of the jungle, as if to attack the King: but when they saw him, and recognised who he was, they turned tail and fled back again. After a long and difficult climb the King came at length to the wasp's nest, and then he fearlessly plunged his hand right into the centre and drew the wasp-queen out; and when he did so, all the other wasps in the land came flying to protect her. The King then turned to descend the mountain, and as he had at times to use both his hands in climbing down he placed the insect on his chin; and all her subjects swarmed about her, until they hung like a long, golden-brown beard, reaching nearly to the ground. So he came down, until he arrived at the bank of the river of silver, where he knelt, and bent over till the water touched his face. And then all the wicked wasps were washed away to be drowned.

But the Tiger-wasp who had helped Dandelion in his conspiracy called out as the stream was carrying him away, "Oh, King! King! if you'll spare me just this once, I will bring you to the real mischief-maker."

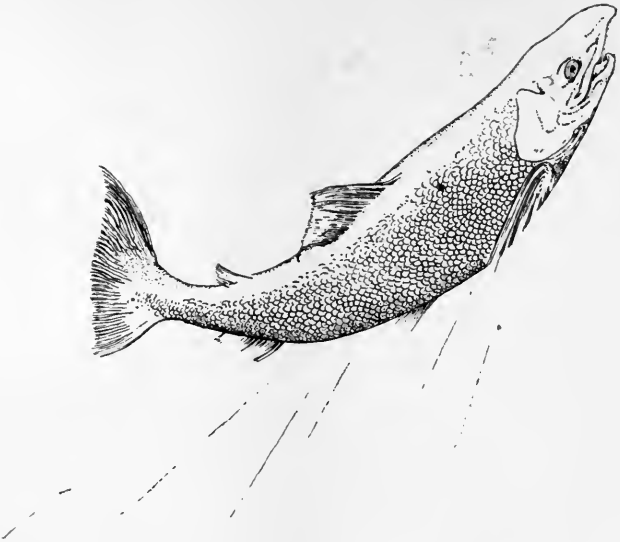
If the King had known what he had done to the snowdrop's blue bee I don't think he would have listened to him, but, as it was, he desired his nightingale to fly down and pick the miserable insect out of the water. The bird did so at once, and then the wasp brought the King straight to where his fellow-conspirator lay.

When the Dandelion saw the King he fell into great terror, and cried out for mercy. Then the King, in the great kindness of his heart, pitied and forgave him. "But," he said, "you must both of you—Dandelion and Tiger-wasp—go away into the great world below, where people will hate you as much as they will love your intended victims, Primrose and Blue-bell."

Then the Dandelion and the Wasp went; but they both despised the King's clemency, and became even more jealous than ever—so much so that each of them turned bright yellow for ever and a day. And the King, though he had been very badly stung, yet did not mind

the pain, because he had saved the baby flowers that he loved so well. And this is how he, in spite of his smooth face, came to be called "King Longbeard."


THE
SPOTTED
MIMULUS



The Spotted Mimulus

WHEN the mimulus, long ago, slept in his cradle in the golden Dream-land, he was not spotted with yellow and red, as he is now, but was all of one rich madder-brown colour, that had a depth in it such as you may see in the eyes of a faithful dog. His cradle was near King Long-beard's river of silver; so near that he could look over into the water, and see the splendid

red and gold fishes darting through it at their play. Sometimes one of them would rise to the surface and suck in one of the gauze-winged flies, that were tempted to float there by the reflection of the sky they loved; and the mimulus, at such times, felt sorry for the fly. But he was very curious to know how the fishes lived down there in the silver stream, where they could have no blue bees to hover over them, and sing them to sleep, and feed them with honey; and, what was worse, no air to breathe.

You would not think the mimulus knew much about breathing, but he did. And he knew as little about fishes as you know about him, for fishes all have plenty of air to breathe; air that they find in the water that runs through their gills. And the flowers breathe, too, through hundreds and thousands of tiny mouths, each just big enough for a fairy to kiss; which shows how small some fairies are.

And one summer evening — though why I should say summer I don't know, for it is always summer in Dreamland — one evening one of the fish missed the fly it rose after, and the mimulus heard it say, "Just my luck!" in such a disappointed tone, that he felt more sorry for it than he would have done for the fly if it had been caught. In Dreamland they can

all talk to each other, and every flower speaks through its thousand tiny mouths at once, and that is why their voices are so utterly sweet—like the Hallelujah Chorus in a whisper.

So, as the mimulus could speak, he leant over the edge of his cradle, and said to the fish, "Do you always miss the flies like that?"

The fish was rather surprised to hear himself addressed by the baby flower; but he answered, speaking in the language of flowers, "No, I hardly ever miss them. But I am not at all myself this evening."

"Who are you, then?" asked the Mimulus, a little puzzled.

"It's not quite as easy to understand as it might be," replied the Fish; "but it means that I'm quite different, without being anybody else, you know—at least, not *yet*."

"I'm sure that's not any simpler," said the Mimulus.

"It's as simple as ever I can make it," said the Fish. "You see, this is a very sad evening for me. It is my last in this beautiful river of silver, and the thought of that upsets me so, that I can't even catch flies as I usually do."

"Why," said the Mimulus, "what are they going to do with you?"

"I don't know what they will do *without*

me," said the Fish; "but I have had notice that to-morrow I must go down below, and become a trout. That will be more different than ever."

"A trout!" exclaimed the Mimulus; "pray, what is that?"

"I'm sure I don't exactly know," replied the Fish; "but it appears to be something spotted."

But the mimulus lay back in his cradle and thought, "How stupid of that fish to be sorry that he is going to see the great world down below! I wish I were going down to-morrow. I wish I were going to be something spotted." And presently his blue bee came to feed him, and he refused to take his honey; and when the bee asked what was the matter he only answered, "I want to be spotted." And this puzzled the good bee so that it had to sit down on the edge of the cradle and comb its fur with the comb all bees carry, for five minutes and forty-five seconds.

And meanwhile a great moth, in a buff over-

coat, came crawling up one of the golden rods that the cradle hung on and said, "Hullo! what's the matter?"

And the Mimulus said, "I want to be spotted!"

"Like me?" said the Moth, and it threw open its overcoat, showing itself all speckled with brown and gold; and then it gave a great laugh and flew away into the night.

And when the sun rose next morning the mimulus found that the moth had shaken off hundreds of its feathers over and about the cradle, every one of them shaped like a little spade or trowel, and the fairies had been amusing themselves by gathering them up and sticking them in patterns over his own red-brown coat. And when he saw that he cried out for joy, "I'm spotted! I'm spotted!" so loudly that King Longbeard, who had been sitting up all night nursing a sick violet, was quite annoyed by the disturbance.

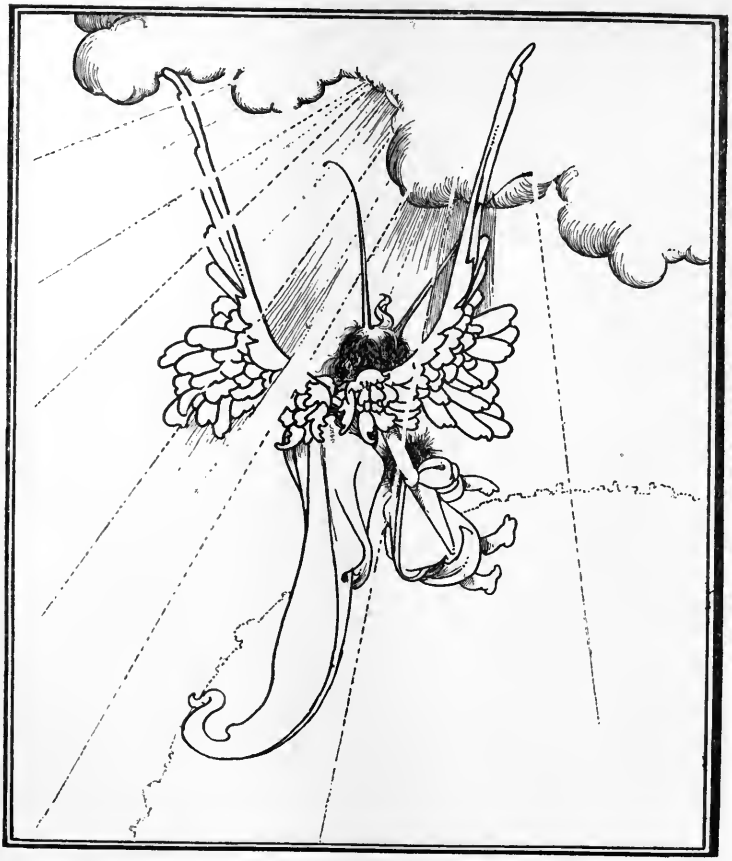
It was against all the rules and regulations of the nursery-garden for a flower to show any sort of unbecoming excitement. And so the King called for his robin-redbreast, who always takes the first *solo* at his Morning Concerts, and said, "Robin mine, what flower is that, making such a noise?"

And the Robin answered, "Please, your Majesty, I think it is the Mimulus in the cradle nearest the river."

So the King said, "Fly away, then; and tell him to be quiet."

Away the robin flew, and gave the King's order, but the silly mimulus only grew more and more excited and noisy; and so the King, finding that nothing else could be done with him, had him taken out of his cradle and given to one of the fairy-guards, who took him off, without his breakfast, to the lower world, and handed him over to the gardeners.

Of course, people who think themselves wise, will tell you that it is all nonsense about the



flowers coming from a Dreamland above the sky, and that all flowers worth having are grown by gardeners here from seeds or cuttings. But if

you want to be really happy, you must not listen to such overwise people. Gardeners are the baby-flowers' ogres. When King Longbeard turned the wicked dandelion out of Dreamland, a gardener got hold of him; and this gardener and another ogre, called a botanist, decided that he was quite too vulgar even for a ribbon-garden. So they took him and pressed him flat between the leaves of a book, and wrote over him these two awful words—

"LEONTODON TARAXACUM,"

and after that the doctors got him, and that was the end. I am sure that if the mimulus had known that, he would have been more careful.

When the mimulus first found himself shut up in a garden, he felt more glad than sorry, because he had had no breakfast; any flower that has to be sent down before breakfast being too weak to go anywhere alone. The gardeners fed him, at least; though what they gave him was very different from what he had been used to, and though he might remain in the garden for years, and years, and years, he never could forget his dear blue bee, and the honey it used to feed him on. In the winter they put him into a gaudy red earthen pot, which he hated, because it did not suit his complexion; but in

the summer they set him out in a bed, which he liked better, though it was not at all like his own old cradle of dream-silk. And, on the whole, he began to grow reconciled to the life, and became quite hardy and strong. But one day an awful thing happened. One of the gardener-ogres came and looked at him, and shook his head, and said in a gruff voice, "There's too muckle o' this mimulus here, whatever." And then he tore the poor plant out of his bed, and sent him flying right over the wall of the garden, where he fell down all limp and helpless, and grew weaker and fainter, and weaker and fainter, until at last he knew nothing.

Now close by where he fell there passed a beautiful little river, that ran down, night and day, to keep the sea from forgetting the mountains: and this river belonged to a water-fairy named Bervie. They have called a town after her now—but that's neither here nor there, but in Kincardineshire, and so we'll leave it there. Well, this fairy was going along her river bank, as she did every day, and she came past the wall of the garden just as the mimulus fell fainting outside it; and being a good fairy—though I need not tell you that, for have I not said she was a water-fairy?—she flew to aid him. And so the first thing the mimulus be-

came conscious of was, that he was planted in a rich, soft, red-brown earth, nearly of his own birth-given colour: and through it there came tiny threads of bright, clear water, almost like the silver water of Dreamland, full of life for his thirsty roots. And over his head there was a lovely bower of golden broom, that was full of the humming of bees, deep and true as the singing of a Gospel; and it reminded him of his dream-silk cradle: and as he wondered and gazed, he heard sounds of the music that only those that are loved of the fairies hear.

And then, dancing, dancing down from the sky where King Longbeard lives, came a troop of the gauze-winged flies who wear brown jackets in March, and shine in rainbow and scarlet through summer. An awful Philistine caught one once, and called it a *Detached Badger;* and so his name is written down in the blackest of all Black Books: but other folk call them Red Spinners. So these flies came—(you can only imitate them with a body of alternate music and singing, two strands of a phœnix feather for tail, hackles from the Simorg of Kaf, and wings of woven dream-silk—and of that only the *shot-silk* will do)—they came dancing down to welcome the mimulus. But one of them came just the least little bit too far, and

touched the water with the tip of one of its wings; and then up from the depths of the stream there came a flash of silver and brown, and on the surface appeared a magic ring that

"By wide spreading did increase to nought."

And out of the centre of the ring, as the fly darted upwards again, there came a small and dejected voice, that said, "Just my luck!"

When the mimulus heard that, he nearly jumped out of his new bed. Because, whether you are a Scotsman or a Maori, when you are at the other side of nowhere, the sound of a voice that you know comes like an arrow feathered with the plumes that grow nearest the heart of a stork. For a stork is the very paragon of home birds, and the nearest thing to a Dutchman. And when the mimulus heard the voice, he knew it came from his old neighbour, the fish that had gone below to be a trout; and the sound of it did him as much good as all the fairy's kindness; and so he called out, just as he had done in Dreamland, that memorable evening before his banishment, "Do you always miss the flies like that?"

When the trout, in his turn, heard him speak, he recognised his voice at once; and so he flashed up again from the bottom of the river,

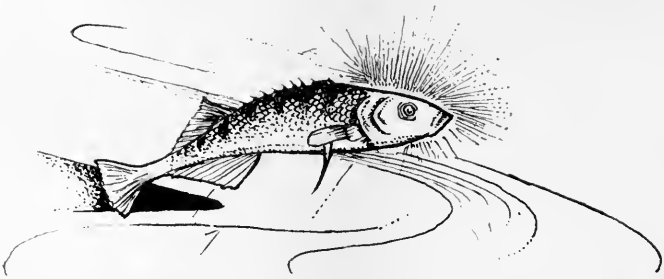
so fast that he flew out into the air, where he had just time to catch sight of the mimulus. And as he fell back into the water again he shouted out, "Why, he's as spotty as I am! What a guy!" And then away he dashed down the stream like a shooting-star. But this made the mimulus very angry; for, as every angler can tell you, it's not a pleasant thing to be laughed at by a trout. And so he called the wind-elves that made ripples on the water's face, and asked them to help to find him; and the wind-elves came and asked which way the trout had gone.

"Down towards the sea," said the Mimulus.

"Then," said the Wind-elves, "we and the river will take you downwards to look for him. But remember, if once you come down, you can never go back again; and you will never see Kerloch, or feel the mountain-joy."

All this happened long, long ago. But, if you go down by Bervie Water on a fine summer day you may still see the trouts dashing up and down through the pools, and the foolish mimulus standing with its feet in the edge of the stream, anywhere between the sea and the place where the garden was, looking for its old acquaintance from King Longbeard's Dreamland.


THE
BIRTHDAY
CROWN.



The Birthday Crown

THE walls of King Longbeard's Castle rose up out of the very waters of that beautiful river of silver of which we have heard so much. The Castle had an inner and an outer court, and if you passed out by the great gate of the latter, you would come at once upon perhaps the most wonderful bridge that ever was built, and certainly the most beautiful; for though the great Forth and Brooklyn Bridges are very wonderful indeed, they are built of iron, and are very ugly besides; and though there are great and beautiful bridges of stone in

Germany and Austria, they are none of them to be compared with this bridge, built of magnificent rainbows. It led from the Castle gate into the King's gardens, where the baby flowers were nursed.

The King had a tiny daughter, whom he loved beyond almost everything else in Dreamland. He loved the wild flowers and the blue bees that took care of them, and the birds that sang in the woods. He loved his people, and all his sons and daughters, of whom he had a great many; but, next to the Queen, he loved the Princess Monica best. And when her birthday came round he called for all the fairies of Dreamland, and told them to build her a summer-house in the garden. Down here we build our houses of timber, and wood, and stone; but this house was built of fairy stories, with windows of poems instead of glass. And as the fairies built, all the birds came and sang to them; and the blue bees took turns to leave their charges and see how the work went on; and even the fishes in the river of silver popped up their heads out of the water, and cried, "We wish we could build like that!"

Seventy times that day the Princess Monica danced in and out, over the rainbow bridge, to see the fairies at work, with her birthday crown

on her head. Every year she had a new crown, more lovely than you can imagine, for it was made up of all the kind deeds she had done, and all the sweet words she had spoken during the past three hundred and sixty-five days. But the seventieth time she crossed the bridge was just as the fishes cried out; and it made her laugh so much that she shook the crown from her head and it fell into the water, where it sank out of sight. Back she ran into the Castle, and told her father what had happened.

"Oh, papa!" she said; "do you know?—the little fisses have shouted my buffday crown off!"

"What do you mean, darling?" asked her father.

"I mean, they wanted to build houses for their own selves, and so they shouted, and it was *so* funny! I didn't know fisses could shout."

"Didn't you, my pet?" said her father.

"But what about the crown? You haven't lost it, surely?"

"I fink it losted itself. 'Cos, you know, when the fisses shouted, I *had* just to jump and dance to let all my laughs out: and then it just tumbled off, and rolled into the water. I fink the little fisses ought to be very happy, playing with it."

"But, my 'Possum," said the King, "that will never do. It is much too valuable for fishes to have for a plaything. Come along with me, and we will see what can be done to get it back for you."

So he took her hand, and they both went out and stood on the bridge, and the King called for his trumpeter-gnat, and said to him, "Herald mine, fly down to the silver water and make proclamation to the fishes that whoever finds the Princess's crown shall be given the three things he wishes for most."

When the fishes heard the gnat's message

they were all greatly excited. But though they swam up and down, and searched in every place they knew, they could not find the crown, for the river ran so fast and strong that it had swept it away for miles. Down it had gone, past the nursery-garden, past the fields where the grass grows that makes hay for the horses of the sun, and so it was borne into the whirling rapids, and at last into the depths of the slumber-pool, where it lay at the bottom.

Up and down the river swam the fishes of crimson and gold; but none of them dared venture into the whirling rapids, and so they all came sadly back. But among them there was one little fish, whose coat was all of a dull brown, without so much as a crimson spot or a silver scale; and when he saw the rest come back, he said, "Perhaps I could find the crown. I am so small, and my coat is so dull, that nobody cares for me; and if I *am* dashed to pieces in the rapids, it will not matter to any one." The crimson and gold fishes laughed when they

heard him say this; but he only laughed back again, and set off down the river. As he went along he heard a noise above him, and looking up, he saw something struggling on top of the water. He thought it might be a fly that was good to eat, and so he shot up to see; but when he got there, he found it was one of the blue bees that had fallen in and was drowning. So he lifted the bee gently on his back and swam with it to the bank, where he landed it safely.

"Little brown fish," said the Bee, "I thank you for saving my life: and tell me now what I can do for you in return?"

"Oh," said the Fish, "help me to find the Princess Monica's crown."

"That will not be hard to do," said the Bee. "All that it needs is a brave heart. The crown lies at the bottom of the slumber-pool; and if you make your way down there, I will come and help you."

"But how shall I pass the whirling rapids and the falls in safety?" said the Fish.

"Hold your breath, keep your tail quiet, and let yourself go," said the Bee, "and leave the rest to me." And then away he flew.

So then the little brown fish swam on down the river; and when he came to the whirling waters he shut his gills tight, and stiffened his tail, and wondered what would come next. The rapids took him and dashed him about, and bruised him sorely on the rocks, so that when at last he was swept over the falls into the slumber-pool he was quite senseless, and floated up on his back to the top of the water as if he were dead.

But the blue bee was there before him, hovering over the pool; and when it saw him come to the top it dropped a drop of its honey into his open mouth, and then all his life and strength came back, so that he danced through the water with joy. And then, at the bottom, perfect and unbroken, he saw the object of his search—the Princess Monica's beautiful birthday crown. So he dived down; and now the honey had made him so strong that, small as he was, he carried the crown to the top with ease. But how to get it up the falls, and back to the castle—that was the question.

But the blue bee was there, and it was not alone. With it were twenty splendid dragon-

flies, radiant in armour of green and gold, and each bore in its mouth one of the diamond spiders that King Longbeard keeps to spin the dream-silk for the tiny cradles. And they came down round the crown in a fairy ring, and every spider laid hold of a point of the crown with a thread of dream-silk, and when the blue bee counted "One, two, three!" away the dragon-flies flew with the crown into the air, and hung with it quivering over the crest of the falls.

"Alas, poor me!" said the little brown fish; "the crown is gone, and I shall never get home again! Blue bee, blue bee, come and help me!" The bee had not gone far off, but only to one of the lower pools; and at once it came back, and beneath it, rushing through the water, came Salmo Salar, king of all the fishes that swim.

The little fish was terribly frightened when it saw him coming; but the bee flew down to him and said, "Be brave, little fish. The salmon is a friend of mine, and has come to your aid; and so, when he opens his mouth, swim fearlessly in." The little fish did so; and then the salmon put forth all his magnificent strength, and, with one mighty spring, leaped to the top of the falls, and darted up through the whirling rapids to the smooth-flowing water above.

Then he opened his mouth, and the little brown fish swam out, and was astonished at the sight that he saw. For all the red and gold fish had come down to meet him and escort him back; and up in the air above the blue bee had arranged a triumphal procession. First went King Longbeard's own trumpeter-gnat to herald their coming; next came a band of the sweetest singing-birds that could be found in all Dreamland; then, in the midst of a perfect cloud of fairies, came the twenty dragon-flies with their diamond spiders, bearing the rescued crown; and after them came, two and two, all the blue bees that could be spared from duty, with the little fish's friend and helper bringing up the rear.

When they arrived at the Castle, the King and Queen, with all their children and all their Court, were standing out on the rainbow bridge to receive them; and King Longbeard took the crown from its bearers and replaced it tenderly on the Princess Monica's head. Then he and

she went down to the side of the water, and the king called out, "Little brown fish, come and receive your reward." So the little brown fish swam up to the bank.

"Now," said the King, "name your three wishes."

"First," said the Fish, "I would like to be as brave as you are."

"You are brave already," said the King, "but you shall be the bravest of all the fishes."

"Then," said the Fish, "I would like to be as kind-hearted as the Princess Monica."

"You are kind-hearted already," said the King, "but you shall be more loving than all the other fishes."

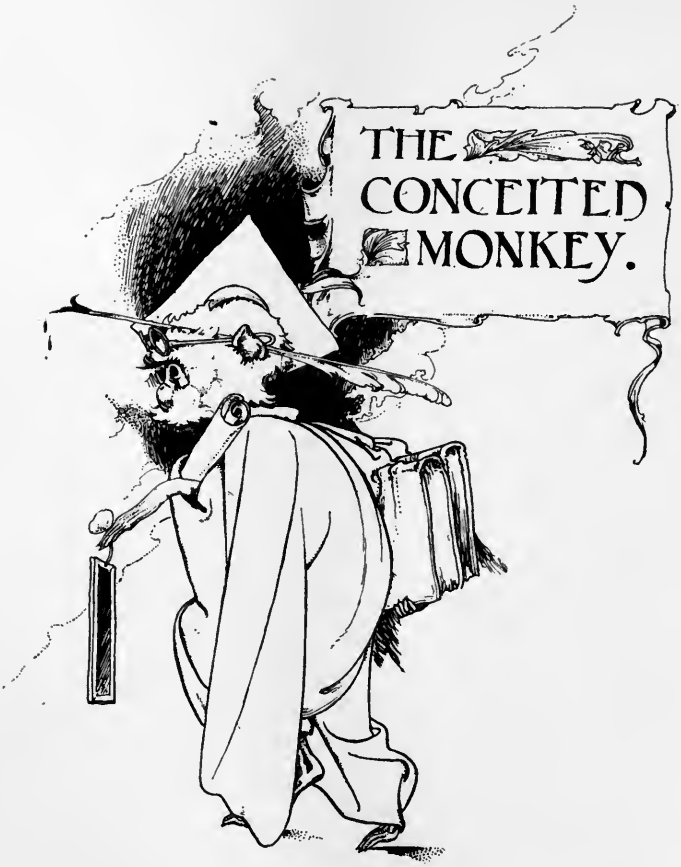
"And then," said the Fish, "I would like to be able to build a house."

When he said that, a sparrow in the band laughed so rudely that King Longbeard looked at him with anger, and then all his golden feathers fell off, and he lost his voice, and was sent down below, where he felt so mean that he never said anything but—"Cheap! cheap!" to the end of his days.

But the King said to the little brown fish, "You *shall* build houses—beautiful houses, such as none of the other fishes will be able to build; and, more than that, you shall be the

most beautiful fish that swims in the northern rivers. You shall be clothed with an armour of gold, such as the sparrow has lost, and from each of your scales shall shine all the seven colours of my rainbow bridge; and your heart shall be filled with love for your wife and young ones, and the fins of your back shall rise into swords to drive away all who would hurt them."

And all this latter part of my story has come *really true*. For when the turn of the little fish came to leave the river of silver, and come down into the lower world, it did not become a trout, like most of its more pretentious companions, but a stickleback. And to this day it is unapproachable in its rainbow beauty, and we can do nothing but wonder at its nest-building powers, and the courage and devotion it shows in defending its family against all intruders.


THE
CONCEITED
MONKEY.

The Conceited Monkey

HIGH up on the hills that shut in the valley of Dreamland, is a wild and extensive forest, which (as I have already told you) is infested by wild beasts of all kinds, some of which, now and then, come down into the lower-lying country, and try to make trouble for the peaceful folk who live there. The monkeys are the

most forward and annoying of all. Each of them thinks all monkeys wiser than the rest of the world, and himself the wisest monkey of the lot—as, indeed, he certainly is. They are not generous enough to give all the trouble away to their neighbours: no, they keep plenty of it to use among themselves. And they cannot be complimented on living happily together, since the wisest monkey is always on the look-out to cheat and get the better of the others. This is a most unhealthy state of affairs, and brings on an illness known as "swelled head," which its victim always thinks something to be proud of, as it feels just like having a feather in one's cap.

There had been a jolly row in monkey society. The aforesaid wisest monkey had just come home from a long visit to India, where he had been made a great deal of, and gave himself more airs than ever in consequence. The others had borne a great deal from him, in the way of bragging of his accomplishments. He had learnt reading, writing, arithmetic, short-hand, freehand drawing, cookery, and slojd; had been round the world; and had passed the seventh standard. Never was such a learned monkey!

The trouble began with his wanting to set

up a school in the forest. He gave out the idea cautiously at first; but we all know what becomes of even the most solemn secret, when once a monkey gets hold of it; and so the very next day the rest of the tribe held a caucus (*i.e.*, a meeting where every one takes the chair, and all speak at the same time), and decided that they were quite educated enough already. The other wisest of all monkeys got up and told him so.

"Very well," said the would-be schoolmaster, whose name, by the way, was Hanuman—"Then I won't tell you about what I saw in India."

This appeal to their curiosity was too much, and so the caucus returned to its deliberations, and they withdrew their opposition so far as to agree to take a trial lesson from him. There was some discussion as to the subject, which was ended by the other wisest monkey remarking that since Professor Garner had been speaking disparagingly of monkey-talk, they had

better go in for elocution. This was received with cheers, and Hanuman was invited to begin at once.

"I thought you'd come round!" he complacently observed. "Now, sit down, all of you, in front of me, and I'll begin with a recitation. It's a little thing of my own, called

"AN ODE TO A-RUM SHRUB.

"The poppies in the hedgerows twine;
The figs are ripening on the vine;
And the carnations columns tall
O'ertop the violets on the wall;
While, down the path, its petals red
Doth the majestic snowdrop shed;
And, where the emerald dahlia creeps,
And laurestinus shyly peeps,
The lily of the valley throws
Its burly shade across the rose,
Whose airy tendrils clasp the while
The fairy Lily of the Nile."

Here Hanuman stopped for applause. An

old baboon got up and walked away, followed by a few marmozets; and an elderly spider-monkey in the second row remarked, "How sweetly pretty!" Hanuman went on—

"O, Rose and Lily—one, yet two!
Alike in perfume, form, and hue:
Bright twins of nature and of art;
So hard to name when seen apart,
And yet betraying to each sense,
When joined, a subtile difference
That makes each, each—How is it ye,
Like proverbed Love and Poverty,

In mutual elusive flight
Escape from one another's sight
So oft, that e'en to join your names,
A poet's utmost licence shames?"

"I'm sorry to interrupt," said the other wisest monkey, "but I must ask one question."

"Ask away," said Hanuman.

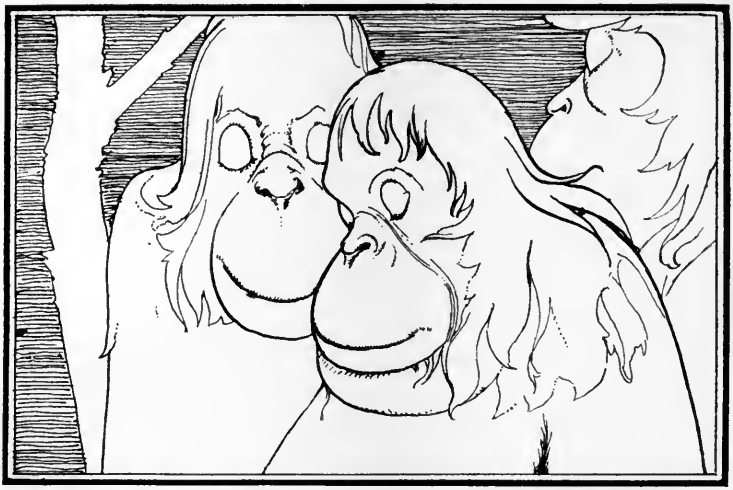
"Have *you* got a licence?" said the other wisest.

"Of course I have," said Hanuman. "How do you suppose I could write poetry without one?"

No reply to this was forthcoming, and so the orator went on again—

"The lily of the valley flings
Its massive boughs in eddying rings;
The turncap lily's fruitage rare
Pervades the circumambient air;
The treasured lily of Japan
Spreads like a raven's diamond fan;
And the rathe water-lily's flowers
Raise their long spears amid the bowers;
But memory bids me still recall
The tiniest flow'ret of them all,
And brings, to crown the sylvan pile,
The fairy Lily of the Nile."

Here the younger portion of his audience



rushed off in pursuit of a passing squirrel. But Hanuman went perseveringly on—

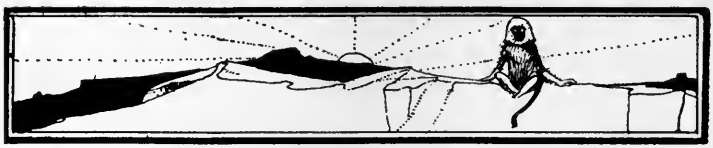
"O fairy Lily! Thou whose spots
Show ruddier than the apricot's,
I love to pluck thee, and to think
How, oft on Boreal Nilus' brink,
The ibis, lost in rapture, sips
Rich draughts of nectar from thy lips;
Or how, in Cleopatra's vest
Thy starry calyx used to rest,
And reproduce, with pigments rare,
The ebon glories of her hair,
That now repeat themselves again
In thy pale leaflets' golden rain."

By this time none of the monkeys remained but three grey-headed ourang-outangs, who were fast asleep, and the spider-monkey mentioned above. Still Hanuman plunged boldly into his last verse—

> "Give me no poppy's clambering trail;
> The whorls of figs will not avail,
> Nor the carnation's dainty bell,
> Nor scarlet pansy-leaves, to tell
> The myriadth part of what my soul
> Would say. But long as snowdrops roll
> Their moss-grown stamens, and below
> The rhododendron-bulbs o'erflow,
> And dahlias hide their glimmering eyes,
> So long my careworn heart will prize
> Beyond the Rose's turquoise smile
> The fairy Lily of the Nile."

"I should *so* like you to write those verses in my album," remarked the Spider-monkey, with a coquettish air.

"No, thank you, ma'am," replied Hanuman; "I leave that sort of thing to those who have nothing better to do. It seems to me I'm being thrown away here. They don't get anything out of me about India, however." And then he walked away in a state of profound disgust. He did not notice where he went, until he



found himself on the edge of a great cliff, that rose some hundreds of feet in an almost sheer precipice, close behind King Longbeard's Castle, and was looking down into the Royal gardens. He could see the Castle standing below him, and the river of silver pouring from the cave and flowing by its walls, and the rainbow bridge that spanned it and led into the nursery-garden: and up through the air came a sound of the singing of thousands of birds, and, clearly to be heard through all, though not so loud, the humming of the wonderful blue bees. Sweeter, too, than the music of either birds or bees, came up the merry songs of a troop of children, who were playing in one of the fields by the river-side. It was the Princess Elsie's birthday, and she was keeping it in company with her sisters and a number of child-fairies. A party of the King's workmen were busily employed in the meadows farther down the river, making hay for the horses of the sun; and, as the children sang, they joined in, and sang the

same songs, with voices stronger than theirs, but just as sweet.

Hanuman sat and listened, not at all because he in the least enjoyed the beauty and sweetness of it, but because he wanted to understand what it all could mean. This, however, he could not do, even though he was (as I have said) the wisest of all the monkeys—wiser, in his own estimation, than even King Longbeard himself. A cousin of his, who had gone to live in Yorkshire, had sent him a most beautiful book for a present, with quantities of pictures of mill-chimneys, and coal-pits, and back-to-back houses, and excursions to Blackpool, besides advertisements of soap, and pills, and cocoa—enough to make a Christmas Annual. And so, as he sat on the top of the cliff, and looked down into Dreamland, he thought nothing of its peaceful loveliness, or of the happiness of those who lived there; but only of what a stupid, useless, behindhand sort of place it must be—so utterly unlike the wonderful world revealed to him by his picture-book. "Why," he said to himself, "they know nothing—absolutely nothing. I do believe those fellows down there never heard of such a thing as a strike in their lives, or of a school-board, or a caucus? Could one of them calculate the odds on a

dog-race, or tell how to suppress a football referee?"

And then a great idea came into his mind: and it was this—that he himself would go down and set up a school in Dreamland.

Now in the midst of the forest was a shop, kept by a fussy old magpie, and furnished with one of the most extraordinary collections of pickings and stealings you can imagine. She had rags, bones, and old bottles for sale; second-hand books, and fourth- and fifth-hand clothes; peppermint rock, and sham jewellery, besides an indescribable assortment of articles that no inland bird or beast would ever, in its right senses, think of using: and this was probably the reason why she had had a board put up over her door with "PICA CAUDATA, DEALER IN MARINE STORES," inscribed upon it in the reddest of red letters. And it was to her that our monkey, having decided on the profession of schoolmaster, went for his outfit.

First of all, he bought a college cap and gown; and the latter was not of a dingy black, such as they wear in the English Universities, but of a lovely Aberdeen red: and the magpie assured him that it, and the cap with its red silk tassel, made him look as pretty as one of those sweet girl-students we meet in the streets

of the Granite City. Then he bought a pen, which he stuck behind one ear, and a quire of copy-paper, and a slate and pencil, and a small piece of sponge, and a large piece of chalk, and a copy of "Butter's Spelling," and one of "Hamilton on Quaternions"; and with these he started off into Dreamland.

When he got there he made his way to an open piece of ground that lay between the gardens and the hay-fields, in the middle of which stood a tall beech-tree, and to the trunk of this tree he fastened a sheet of paper, on which he had written:

"Knowledge is power."—*Lytton.*
"Man, know thyself."—*Out of my own head.*

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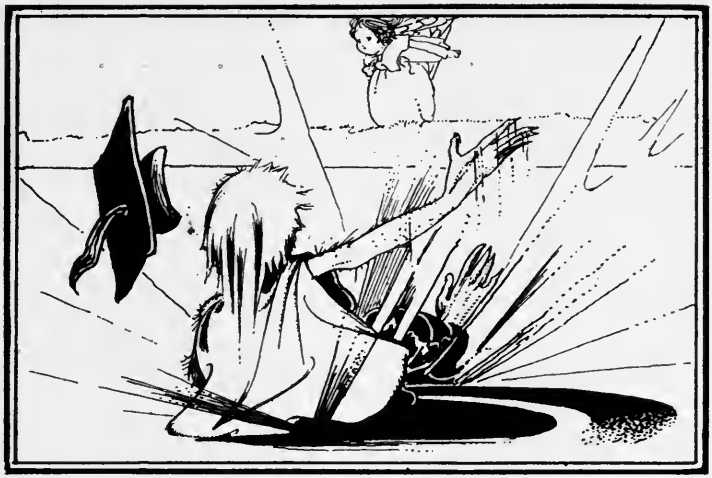
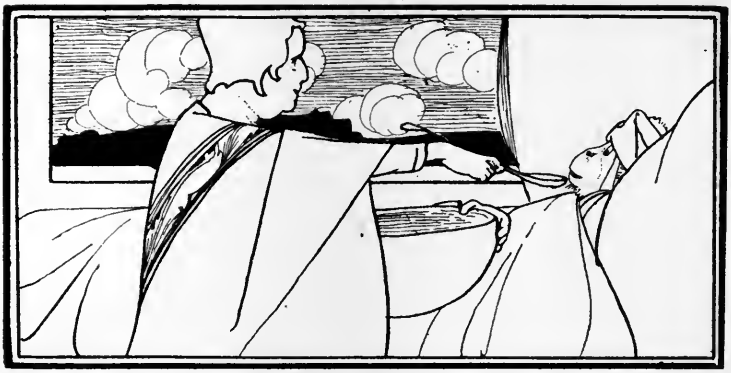
"And if that is not a fine, attractive advertisement," said the monkey to himself, "I should like to know what is:" and as he said so he struck his arms akimbo, put his head on one side, and walked backwards to admire his handiwork. But he forgot that the river ran not far behind him, and so in he tumbled with a splash and a yell that was heard by the Princesses and their fairy companions. They ran and flew to the spot as fast as they could, but the current was so strong that it swept the poor monkey off down the stream, and he would have



been speedily drowned—for nothing that is not perfectly true can swim in that silver water—if one of the haymakers in the field below had not jumped in and rescued him.

The man bore the poor Professor, miserably draggled, and more dead than alive, to where the Princesses were standing. The Princess Geraldine, who was the eldest, desired him to be carried into the Castle, because every living thing in distress has a claim on King Longbeard's kindness ; while she bade a messenger-fairy fly on before to make all ready to receive him, and to prepare a warm draught of nectar



for the haymaker. So the first thing the monkey knew was that he found himself snugly tucked into a comfortable bed, while a good-natured looking old fairy fed him with ambrosia out of a golden basin. (I should tell you that both nectar and ambrosia are made by the blue bees, and are what the fairies themselves live on.) His college cap had been lost in the river, and his pen had shared the same fate; the rest of his school apparatus he had left on the grass under the beech-tree, but he could see his red gown hanging before the fire to dry.

"Well," he thought to himself, "these are fine doings! Here I am on a genuine feather-bed, between cambric sheets, under a silk counterpane, fed out of a golden basin with the

jolliest stuff I ever tasted. What an important person I must be!"

Just at that moment the door opened, and the King's physician came in—a handsome, pompous-looking old gentleman, dressed in a richly laced coat, with a three-cornered hat, and carrying an enormous gold-headed cane. He came over to the bed, pulled out his jewelled watch, and felt the monkey's pulse: then he opened his thermometer-case, and took his patient's temperature by putting the little glass tube under his armpit. This last operation rather frightened the Professor, who had never seen it done before, and thought the arm was going to be cut off; but as the physician only went on to look at his tongue, and give the nurse directions about his diet, and then bustled off out of the room, he recovered his spirits, and thought to himself, "What a *very* important person I must be! I hope he won't expect a fee from me!"

And not long after there came a gentle knock at the door, and the nurse said, "Come in." So in came the Princess Elsie, leading by the hand her little sister Princess Monica.

"Monica wanted to see the sick monkey, nurse; and papa said I might bring her," said the elder girl.

"Want see sick mukkey, Nurnie," echoed the little one.

"Yes, my darlings," said the Fairy; "come and look at him, but don't stay long."

When the monkey heard that, and guessed who his visitors were, he half-closed his eyes and tried to smile and look interesting, but failed so dismally in the attempt that Princess Elsie drew back, thinking, "What a dangerous, ugly beast!" But she said aloud, "Poor fellow, I am glad he was not drowned. I must send him some of my birthday cake as soon as he is well enough to eat it."

"N'yum-n'yum!" thought the Monkey, but he said nothing.

But the little Princess Monica had such a tender heart that she loved all animals, even the ugliest and fiercest: so she put out her wee handie and stroked the Professor's fur, and said, "Nice mukkey, p'etty mukkey! Mukkey sick, me sorry!" And then they went away, and as the door closed behind them the monkey thought, "What a VERY important person I must be! I hope they won't expect free education from me!"

They had not long been gone when another knock was heard at the door, and there entered no less a person than King Longbeard himself.

He had not on his golden crown or robes of state, but he looked so majestic, and the fairy nurse curtseyed so low before him, that the monkey knew who he must be; so he said to himself, "This is going to be a big thing," and straightened himself out very stiffly, closed his eyes, and called up his most intellectual expression.

Now there was nothing more common than for the King to pay such a visit, for the whole business of his life was to strengthen the weak, and help the feeble, and set right what he found going wrong; and it was no unusual thing for him to sit up whole nights if any of his dearly loved flowers, whom he trained for their life on earth, were out of sorts. So, of course, he came to look after his accidental guest; and as soon as he saw him he knew that the dip in the river had done him more good than harm, and that all that ailed him was an attack of "swelled head," which never kills anybody—and more's the pity! So when he saw this, knowing that the Professor's illness was incurable, he gave a great sigh, and the monkey hearing him, thought, "Dear me! His Majesty is deeply concerned. What a VERY important person I must be! I wonder what he can think he's going to get from me—gratitude, perhaps.

Well, I *might* pay fees, and I *could* give education, but gratitude—that would be too much; besides, I never had any. It's clear I must make the best of present opportunities."

And then, as the nurse went over to the door to open it for the King, the monkey grabbed the golden basin, made one spring out of bed, through the open window, and away he scrambled up the carved stonework of the castle wall, till he reached the roof. But when he got there he found he had reckoned without his host; for, instead of being able to climb from the roof to the rocks behind, as he had hoped, he saw that the only way into or out of the castle for man, beast, creeping thing, or climbing thing, was over the rainbow bridge, and so he was a prisoner.

Then the King came out into the courtyard below and sent a page to summon his gardeners; and they came, bringing pots, and in the pots were ivy, and vines, and jasmine, and clematis, and all sorts of climbing plants. The wild convolvulus came to help, too. "And now," it said, "they sha'n't call me 'Bindweed' for nothing." And then up the castle wall crept all the plants; and the monkey, as he saw them coming, shivered and chattered, and when they came up to him bit and tore at them. But

they soon overpowered him, and bound him fast hand and foot with the wild convolvulus, and lowered him down to the courtyard, where he was seized by the fairy guards.

King Longbeard's sentence on him was, that he should be chained to a pole for the rest of his life, and placed between the beech-tree where he had tried to keep school, and the river where he had tumbled in.


THE
ABDUCTION
OF THE
PROFESSOR.

The Abduction of the Professor

CHAPTER I

THERE was great excitement in Dreamland—the Professor had broken loose!

Mick, the Irish haymaker, who had rescued him from a watery grave, and had been entrusted by King Longbeard with the care of the monkey, his kennel and his food, had come one morning to look after his charge, and

found only a fragment of broken chain left as a "P.P.C." This (not the bit of chain, but the desertion) he took very much to heart, for, as he said, "he couldn't blame the baste for amnestyin' himself, av he had the chance; but he might ha' guv his owld friend some notice that he wor goin' away unexpected."

However, the Professor was gone, and had left no address; nor was any trace to be found of the direction that he had taken. The most experienced trackers of Prince Robert's hunting-party, with their finest-nosed hounds, were set to work in vain; not a crushed blade of grass, nor a trace of scent, could be detected beyond the circle that marked the sweep of the chain that, with its occupant, had so singularly disappeared; and at last even the fairies gave the problem up as insoluble.

But if you had been there the night preceding Mick's discovery, you might have seen a wonderful sight. In the bright moonlight something that looked like a small black cloud

rose from behind one of the distant mountains, and came floating towards the centre of Dreamland; and, as it came nearer, you might have seen it take the form of an enormous bird—none other, indeed, than the great Roc himself. On he came, flying swiftly and steadily; and crooning a strange, low, monotonous song, in the key of double-X-flat minimus; and every fairy, and wind-elf, and water-sprite that heard it, just rolled over, and went fast asleep where he (or she) lay; and even the blue bees in the garden stopped humming, and settled down on the cradles of the baby flowers; and the nightingales and owls tucked their heads under their wings, a feat of gymnastics, by the way, which the latter performed on this occasion only; and all the horses and cattle, and all other animals, became hypnotised too. But Professor Entellus Hanuman Semnopithecus kept wide awake.

And the Roc came on, and flew down, and

perched on the beech-tree by the Professor's pole, and cocked his head on one side, and looked almost as wise as the monkey himself. Being such a very large bird, and having exerted himself so much between flying and singing, he was rather out of breath when he arrived; and so Hanuman, who knew him well, having often met him in the East, spoke first.

"Rather puffed, old cock, eh?" was his first remark.

"Eh! what? I don't quite understand you," panted the Roc.

"You don't seem in first-rate training—now do you, honour bright?" said the Monkey.

"Never was in a train in my life," said the bird; "don't believe in such things."

"I meant that you seem short in the wind," explained Hanuman.

"If you'd been as long in the wind as I have," said the Roc, "you'd have a different tale to tell."

"Thank you," said the Monkey; "but I prefer my tail as it is."

"I mean," said the Roc, "you'd have another song to sing."

"I'm sure I can sing as well as you, any day," said the Monkey.

"Ah! but not at *night*," said the Roc.

"That does make some difference, certainly," said Hanuman; "but at night I give recitations. That's much more fashionable nowadays."

"*Nights*, you mean, don't you?" said the Bird. "But you can't recite really, can you?"

"Can't I? rather!" exclaimed the Professor. "Just you listen, and I'll show you what I can do. There's no charge for admission: but a collection will be made to defray expenses."

"I sha'n't put anything in," said the Roc.

"You won't put me out, though," said the Professor. And then he began:

"Prince Ziggledizee, of the Zwang-ti-Zwang,
He rode on his polyglot horse, and sang;
He sang, as he rode on his polyglot horse,
'Oh, I'm the Commander of all the Force,
And all the Force is commanded by me—
Of the Zwang-ti-Zwang, Prince Ziggledizee!'
And the sound of his singing became so loud
That we all of us feared he was growing too proud:
For we hold that humility, hunger, and grief
Are the things that suit a Commander-in-chief.

"Prince Ziggledizee, of the Zwang-ti-Zwang,
He rode on his polyglot horse, and sang;
He sang, as he rode on his polyglot horse,
'I'm full of potatoes and lobster sauce.

Of sauce and potatoes I'm full, you may see—
Of the Zwang-ti-Zwang, Prince Ziggledizee!'
And the sound of his singing, it fell so flat
That every one feared he would soon grow fat:
And we know that humility, hunger, and grief
Are just what befit a Commander-in-chief.

"Prince Ziggledizee, of the Zwang-ti-Zwang,
He rode on his polyglot horse, and sang;
He sang, as he rode on his polyglot horse,
'I never was sorry, I've no remorse,
Regret and repentance are strangers to me—
Of the Zwang-ti-Zwang, Prince Ziggledizee.'
And the sound of his singing, it echoed so jolly,
We deemed it the most reprehensible folly:
Since surely humility, hunger, and grief
Are the signs of a true Commander-in-chief.

"Prince Ziggledizee, of the Zwang-ti-Zwang,
He rode on his polyglot horse and sang;
He sang, as he rode on his polyglot horse,
Till his throat was sore, and his cold grew worse,
And the Force mutineered, and the lobsters rose,
And he couldn't get any more po-ta-toes;
And the sound of his singing grew faint and low,
Till it seemed the expression of uttermost woe.
Then we gave him a medal, and tenpenny nails,
And a rhubarb pie, and the Game of Squails,
And rejoiced that humility, hunger, and grief
Had o'ertaken at last the Commander-in-chief."

"I don't think much of that," said the Roc.

"There's *not* much of it," said Hanuman. "It's your turn now. What can you recite?"

"What will you have?" asked the Bird. "'The boy stood on the burning deck'? I know that best. Then there's 'Mark Antony,' you know, and 'Curfew,' and 'Betsy and I.' Shall I give you them all? I'd much rather sing, though. Shall I give you 'Sweet Marie'?"

"Not if it's like what you were singing just now," said the Monkey. "What did you say its name was—'Roc me to sleep,' eh?"

"Nothing of the kind," answered the Bird indignantly. "It's a composition of my own, and it's called 'Comatose Hypnostatics.'"

"You *don't* mean to say so, *really* now!" exclaimed the Monkey. "Are there words to it?"

"Of course there are," said the Bird. "Just you listen." And then he began to sing in the same strange key:

"*Oom mâni padh mi oom!*
Sleep in the surges' boom:
Sleep in the dungeon's gloom:
Sleep in the darkened room:
Sleep in the inmost tomb:
Sleep in the ages' loom!
Oom mâni padh mi oom!"

and by the time he had got that far, Professor Entellus Hanuman Semnopithecus had curled himself up into a complicated tangle with his chain, and gone fast asleep too. Then the bird hovered quietly down, bit the chain off close by the pole, picked up the monkey in his beak, and flew off with him in the direction whence he had come.

Hence the excitement and puzzlement in Dreamland: for not one of the sleepers, from the King down to the humblest bee, had suspected that their sleep had been anything but natural repose, or could recall any remembrance of the strange song of the Roc. The only odd thing, besides the monkey's disappearance, was the unusual stiffness every owl in the place felt about the neck, which, however, was ascribed to rheumatics. As for Mick, he not only took to heart the slight he thought Hanuman had put upon him, but felt also as if he himself were somewhat to blame for his friend's disappearance, though, indeed, King Longbeard had in no way made him responsible for his safe custody; and so, though every one else soon forgot about the occurrence, he went about for some weeks looking the very picture of unhappiness.

One evening, as he was coming home from his work, he was surprised to see a handsome

THE ABDUCTION.

stork walking towards him with a dignified air, carrying a paper in his beak. The bird came straight to meet him, and held out the paper, as though he wished him to take it. Mick did so, saying as he unfolded it, "Arrah! what's this now? I hope 'tis not his bill this quadhruped's sarvin' me wud."

"Certainly not," replied the Stork. "I prefer to keep my bill for my own use. But I think you will find that rather an important letter."

"That's accordin' to what does be in it," said Mick; and then he read as follows:

"DEAR MICHAEL,

This comes hopping to find you well as it leaves me in good helth and spirrits, being miserably tied up in the dark end of a rabit hole which is worse than a pole and kenel in dreemland and I wish I was back agen, and woudl be thankfull if you come and reskew me which I have kindly toled

the barer to show you the way as nose it well all here joins in affekshnt rembrances to all enquring frends for I ham very retchid hopeing you are the same I am your afeeshonet frend

"PROFESSOR ENTELLUS HANUMAN
SEMNOPITHECUS, A.P.E.

(he rote this hisself.)

"P.S. I did for that old rock.

"P.S. secondly. He wants me to say this is Dick tated to a ignorent rabet which he tawt me his own self and pleas escuse bad riting yours truly, Frisky."

"Hurroo!" exclaimed Mick; "here's luck! How did ye come acrass his Riverence, honey?" he said to the Stork.

"Well," said the Bird, "it was this way. The other day, I went for a walk, when, turning down an alley among the trees, I passed in front of a little house, in one of whose windows a placard with 'To LET' had been up for a

long time. To my surprise, this had been taken down, and I thought I heard sounds of life within. I'm not what you'd call inquisitive, you know, but for all that, I put my ear to the keyhole of the front door, and heard a sort of low, hasty muttering. Some creature was saying to itself, hurriedly, 'Lay the table! Yes, I must lay the table. Tea!—that's a noun, common—singular? Very singular! Masculine gender? Yes—that's a conjunctional sentence—"lay the table *and* the tea will appear." Verb, transitive? No, you can't make the tea *appear* anything. Yes, you can! It appears too long drawn.'

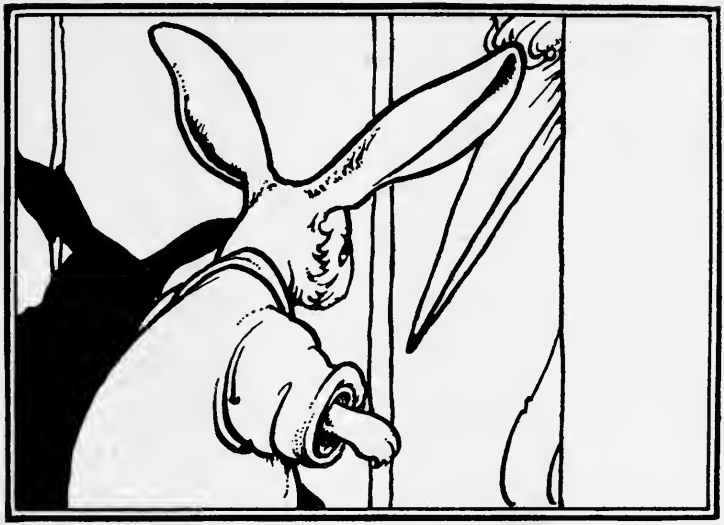
"My curiosity was so excited, that I knocked at the door.

"'A knock!' said the voice inside. 'Knock—adjective, demonstrative—noun, common, plural, feminine—I can't wait.' A sound of busy, pattering feet followed; and a rabbit, dressed in a short coat, opened the door.

"'I beg your pardon,' I said; 'but may I ask who you are?'

"'Nonsense!' he replied; 'you can't *are* anybody, can you, stupid head? It *can't* be transitive.'

"'I never said it was,' said I, rather taken aback.



"'Then come in,' said he. '*In*'s a preposition, you know. But if you come into my house, you must come into the sentence, too, I suppose.'

"'What have you been sentenced for?' I asked, feeling rather puzzled.

"'I've not been sentenced for anything,' replied the rabbit, 'but only put into analysis.'

"'I think I understand,' said I. 'You live in a sort of sentence, to be parsed and analysed.'

"'Yes,' he said; 'I'm a word in parsing—"Rabbit"—noun, common, neuter gender——'

"'I beg your pardon,' said I; 'but isn't it masculine?'

"'So much for your good grammar!' said my host. 'I have different parts——'

"'Of speech?' said I.

"'No, of course not. Of *rabbit*—nose—verb, transitive, active, *very* active, quite lively in fact!'

"'Are you *quite* sure it's transitive?' said I, feeling just a little dazed.

"'Yes, I am,' he replied, indignantly. 'Can't you nose something? I'm sure the Professor knows a lot.'

"'What Professor?' said I.

"'You shouldn't say "what,"' said the Rabbit; 'you should say "who." He's not feminine, you know.'

"'Well, who on earth is he?' said I.

"'Wrong again!' exclaimed my host triumphantly. 'He's not on earth, but down at the bottom of my deepest burrow.'

"'And pray, what may he be doing there?' I asked.

"'Doing? Adjective, imperative mood; as "sitting, standing, teaching, reading, writing

—howling" sometimes. He's a monkey, you know.'

"'I would like to see him,' said I.

"I'll fetch him,' said the Rabbit: and he left the room. Presently I heard a clanking sound, and my host returned, towing behind him, at the end of a chain, the most dilapidated specimen of a monkey I ever set eyes on. It came shambling in, blinking as if unaccustomed to daylight.

"'I've got him here,' said the Rabbit; 'but he says he wants to be rescued. I wish he could be—could, should, or would—conditional. He's rather out of condition, isn't he? That's why *I* can't do it, you see. Could *you* rescue him, do you think?'

"'I *think*,' I said; 'but I don't think I could.'

"'Or would?—or should?' said the Rabbit anxiously. 'You see, he has been cast away,

and so he *must* be rescued. That's why I keep him in the dark.'

"'The dark what?' said I.

"'I declare, I never thought of that before!' said my host. 'How should I parse that, Professor?'

"The poor monkey put on quite an air of dignity, drew himself up, and said to the Rabbit, 'This is not the time for parsing. It's *dictation* now. Take your pen, ink, and paper, and sit down.'

"To my surprise, the Rabbit meekly obeyed him; and the Monkey dictated the letter I've just given you. Then he turned to me, and asked me if I knew Dreamland well. I said I did: so he gave me your description, and told me where to find you; and here I am."

"That's a wondherful story!" exclaimed Mick: "an' sure 'tis meself 'll go an' riscue his Riverence wudout fail. But what he manes be a *rock*, I can't tell at-all-at-all. Is it far off to where he is, yer honour?"

"Just at the other side of the next hill," replied the Stork. "It's only a few miles. I'll show you the way, if you like."

"Then we'll lose no time about it," said Mick. So off they started, the Stork leading the way, in the direction in which the Roc had flown.

CHAPTER II.

THE Bird led Mick up the mountain side, and into the forest, where he felt at first rather timid at hearing the cries of all kinds of wild animals echoing round him. But the Stork told him he need have no fear, as they were all friends of his own, and none of them would harm him. He was somewhat reassured by this; still he could not help shuddering now and then, as some retreating snake rubbed against his leg, or the eyes of one of the great cats glared at him from the darkness of a thicket. He pushed on bravely, however; following his guide along intricate paths, which, after a few miles, became wider and straighter, until they opened out into green, grassy glades, with pretty miniature houses set here and there by their sides. Before one of these houses the Stork halted, and said to Mick, "Here we are at last! This is the Rabbit's residence. If you wait here, I will go and reconnoitre."

So saying, he left Mick standing at the gate, while he himself went and knocked at the door.

A light appeared at one of the upper windows, which was cautiously opened, and a furry head, with a pair of long ears, peeped out.

"Who's there?" asked the Rabbit.

"It's me," said the Stork.

"Who's *me?*" asked the Rabbit.

"You should say, 'Who am I?'" said the Stork: "Haven't you learnt grammar yet?"

"Oh, I'm out of grammar long ago," said the Rabbit.

"And what are you in now, Frisky?" said the Stork.

"I'm in a state of anxiety at present," replied the Rabbit. "I was in bed, before that, having such a lovely dream, when you knocked, about a camel and a polypus."

"I never knocked a camel about, or a polypus either," said his visitor, indignantly.

"I never said you did," said Frisky; "but that's what I dreamt."

"That I knocked about a——!"

"No, no! you weren't in the dream at all. Only the others. I'll tell you all about it." And then Frisky leant his arms on the window-sill, and began:

THE CAMEL AND THE POLYPUS

A Camel, one fine summer day,
  Lay sleeping on a pentacle,
When up there swam a Polypus
  And touched him with a tentacle.
The Camel stirred, and wagged his tail,
  And said, "Pray, do not tickle me!
If I should tumble in the sea,
  I fear the salt would pickle me."
"Oh, no!" the Polypus replied;
  "You're very much mistaken. You
Would be asphyxiated just
  Enough to rouse and waken you.
I often wonder how you sleep
  So much in my society!"
"I find your talk," the Camel said,
  "Conducive to slumbriety;
Without your company, I might
  As well get up and walk about;
While *you* would, if I went away,
  Have nothing left to talk about."
And then he curled his neck and legs,
  And calmly went asleep again.
The Polypus swam gaily back,
  To frolic in the deep again.

"That's very nice, Frisky," said the Stork. "But you'll let me in now, won't you?"

"There's some one else, too," said Frisky. "One and one is two, you know; and twice

two is four. But he can't be four—I've never seen him before."

"That's why he stays behind," said the Stork. "He's the man come to rescue the Professor."

"I don't see how he's to do it," replied Frisky. "He's much too big. Do you think I could reduce him?"

"I think not," said the Stork.

"Not if I put him down on my slate? I'm in arithmetic just now; but I can draw beautifully. Freehand, you know. The Professor taught me."

"It can't be done," said the Stork, decisively. "You had better just bring the monkey out to him."

"I can't," replied Frisky. "That would be rescuing him myself." And he shut the window with a bang.

The Stork knocked again; and this time the Rabbit opened the door.

"What is it now?" he inquired.

"The same as before," replied the Stork.

"Now, that's too bad," said Frisky. "It's just like a circulating decimal; but it must go down too." And he began scribbling diligently on a large slate which he carried. "I can't make it come right."

"Suppose you try the rule of three?" said the Stork.

"Which three?" asked Frisky.

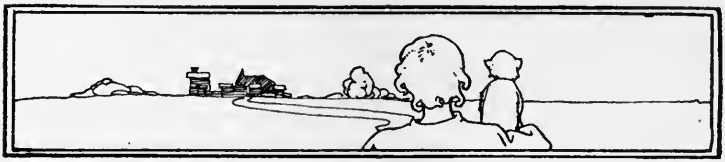
"This Irishman, yourself, and me," said the Stork.

"The Irishman can't come in," said Frisky. "He's altogether out of proportion, you know. But I'll go and ask the Professor what rule to work it by," he added, disappearing into the back part of his premises. In less than a minute he returned, dragging the monkey's chain after him.

"How stupid of me!" he cried. "It can be done by chain rule, of course. Tell your friend to come and pull."

Mick needed no further invitation, but took the chain in his hand, and gently drew his former *protégé* out of the house. The Professor was as glad to see Mick as Mick was to see him, and leaped into his arms, chattering with delight; and his rescuers at once started on their return journey. The last they saw of Frisky was that intellectual rabbit standing on his head in the doorway, kicking his heels in the air, violently, and shouting, "I've broken up at last! No more fractions! Hurrah for the holidays!"

When they arrived at the pole, the stork

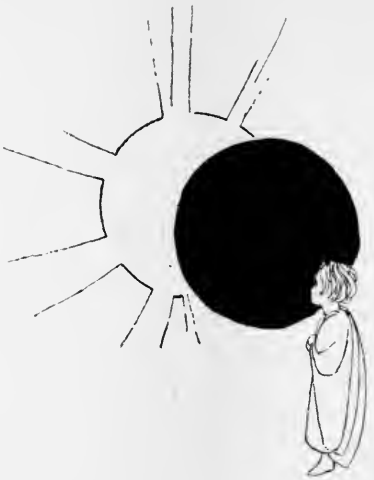


bade them farewell, and sailed away into the air; and Mick, having made the Professor quite comfortable in his kennel, went home.

But while they returned through the forest, the Professor had told the Irishman of his adventures; and this was what had happened: The shock of being caught up and borne swiftly away into the sky had thoroughly awakened the Monkey, who, on realising his terrible position, had struggled so violently that the Roc let him drop to the full length of his chain, retaining the other end in his beak. Hanuman had at once swarmed back up the chain, and clutching at the bird's feathers, climbed on top of his neck, and then, drawing up the chain after him, let himself drop on the other side. This manœuvre he had repeated three or four times, and at last so throttled his captor that the great bird pitched in his flight, and fell headlong on the ground, about a mile beyond the Rabbit's house, fracturing his skull, and dying at once. Hanuman, whose fall had been

broken by the Roc's feathers, had lain insensible for a time, and, on reviving, found himself still so weak, that Frisky, who happened to pass that way, made him an easy prisoner. "And, not content with shutting me up in the dark," he added, "that idiot insisted on my giving him free education, adding insult to injury. But no matter now—he thinks that seven sevens are thirty-two, that Bahia is on the East Coast of Africa, and that there are two 'r's' in *parallel;* and he can't remember the date of Magna Charta for five minutes. Besides, I spilt the inkbottle all over the carpet when you were pulling me out. I'm comfortably avenged."


THE
DANDELION
CL°CK



The Dandelion Clock

CHAPTER I.

THIS is going to be a short chapter. That wicked Dandelion, whom King Longbeard drove out of Dreamland, in punishment for his cruel attempt to hurt the two lovely babies, Bluebell and Primrose, was not utterly and altogether bad. He had some redeeming points in his character, as the doctors found, when they

got hold of him; and the chief of these was that, after they had had their own way with him, and under the very ugly name they called him, he was very useful in helping them to cure people of biliousness.

Now this is somewhat remarkable; because I have always heard that biliousness is supposed to make people both ill-tempered and jealous: and jealousy and ill-temper, as we have seen in our first story, were Dandelion's own two worst faults; and so this is perhaps an illustration of what they call *homœopathy*.

But the first time that Dandelion showed that he could be at all useful, was when eclipses of the sun were first invented, and while he was still a tiny baby flower, nursed in his dream-silk cradle. And here is the history of the whole affair.

CHAPTER II.

I HAVE spoken already of those beautiful meadows, belonging to King Longbeard, that lay along beside the river of silver. The hay that was made in those meadows was considered much too precious to be given for the food of any ordinary animals, and was reserved

for the horses of the sun. And here I must tell you that—no matter what the astronomers and other wise-heads may say to the contrary—the sun is a great chariot of fire, that is driven every day across the rainbow bridge that leads into the Royal Castle of Dreamland. The chariot is drawn by six horses, whose names are "Hydrogen," "Sodium," "Ferrum," "Titanium," "Helium," and "Argon"—the last-named being a dark horse, and very lazy. Its driver has been known by a great many different names at different times: sometimes they called him "Phœbus," sometimes "Balder"; but at this time they called him "Ike-Te-Mauï" (which you must pronounce *Eekeh-Teh-Mow-wee*); and he spends every night at his grandmother's house, as any New Zealand aboriginal native can tell you. It was this very Ike-Te-Mauï who made the celebrated Cloak of Darkness, Shoes of Swiftness, and Sword of Sharpness, by means of which the great Giant-Killer won his victories; for he is a cunning artificer in wood, and in metals, and in the hides of beasts and the fibres of plants, as well as the most skilful and fearless of all charioteers. And for this reason, as well as for many others, all the wicked giants hated him with a bitter hatred: and among them was our old nursery

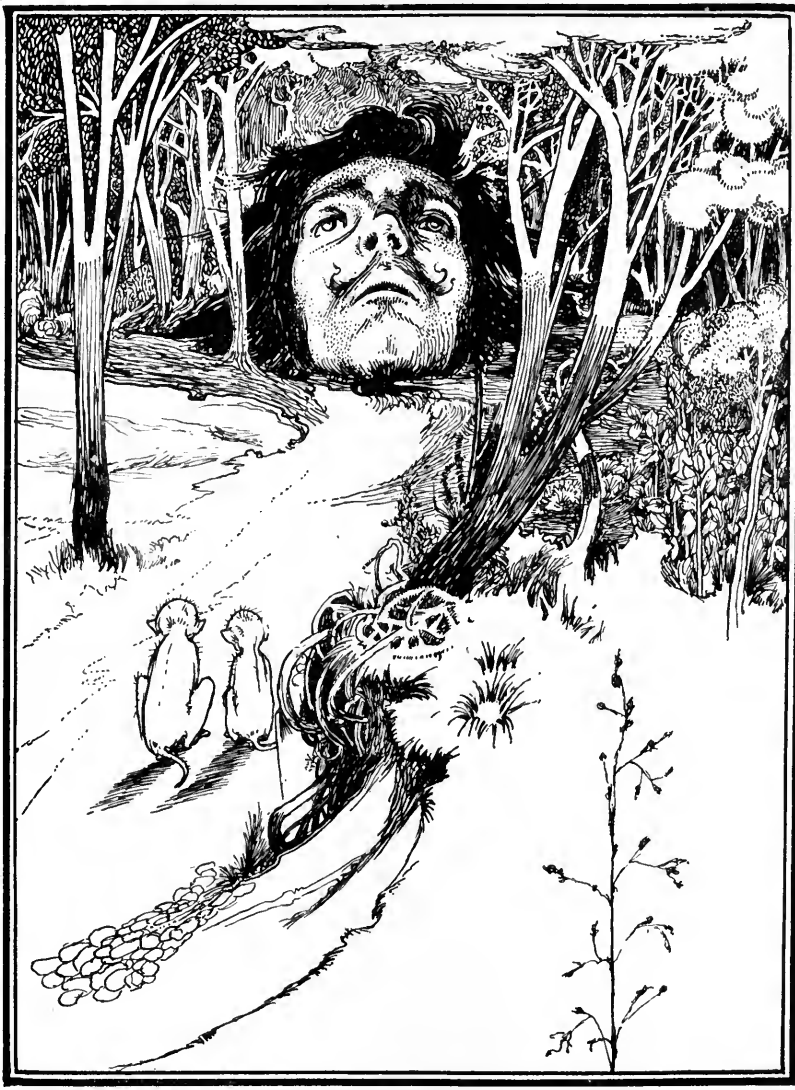
acquaintance, Blunderbore; who, it turns out, was a great friend of that intelligent animal, Professor Entellus Hanuman Semnopithecus.

"But," I think I hear you say, "wasn't Blunderbore killed by Jack, long before this?"

No—not quite. When Jack cut off his head it fell into the very forest in which the Professor had been brought up, and lived on there, as did gnomes, and trolls, and troglodytes, and poulpicans, and many other strange and disagreeable things; and the monkeys admired it greatly, and gave it the name of "Rahû," which (I suppose) is the *Garnerese* for Blunderbore. One of the favourite amusements of the monkeys in the forest used to be making bridges, by hanging on to each other's tails in a chain, and swinging across from tree to tree, to the tune of

"Here we go in a flung festoon!"

And when they had made a good bridge of this kind, Rahû would come and roll himself over it from end to end: and all the other animals in the forest would gather round, and sit looking on; and if he did it well, the peacocks would shout out those two mystical Sanskrît words, "Ang! Koor!" and then he would do it again. Indeed, these birds got so accustomed to utter-

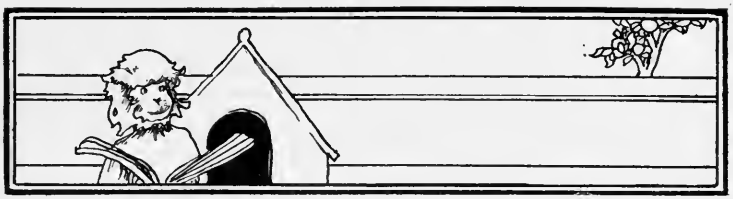


'THE MONKEYS ADMIRED IT GREATLY.'

ing this cry, that after a while they could say nothing else: and they use it now when they want rain. Just you listen, and see if they don't.

And here I may remark that the Professor felt aggrieved against the King, not only on account of the imprisonment that had been so justly awarded him, but also because his Majesty's bridge of rainbows was so very much more beautiful than anything he and his brother monkeys could make. And as Hanuman hated the good King, so Rahû hated Ike-te-Mauï for being the maker of the sword that had so thoroughly amputated his own precious majority; and indeed he had a shrewd suspicion that this same Mauï was none other than his old enemy, Jack the Giant-Killer, in disguise. So one bright moonlit night, about a week after the Professor had been chained up, Rahû came rolling quietly down the mountain side, to condole with him.

By this time, Hanuman, with the usual adaptability of monkeys, had become somewhat reconciled to his new mode of life. It is true that he missed the freedom of his native woods, but his captivity had its compensations. He was given plenty to eat and drink, and the wooden box, or kennel, which had been pro-



vided for his sleeping-place, was kept clean, and comfortably furnished with the best moss-litter: and as the weather in Dreamland is always fine, and there are no cold nights, he was as well off as any imprisoned monkey could hope to find himself. He was a continual source of amusement to the Royal children, the fairies, and all King Longbeard's servants, one of whom—a haymaker (you remember)—had rescued him from a watery grave; and whatever spark of gratitude Hanuman possessed he showed to this man, who was an Irishman.

Mick, on his part, entertained a deep respect for the Professor, whom King Longbeard had put under his especial care. "Musha!" he would say to his fellow-workmen, "'tis a wondherful power o'larnin' that monkey has, entirely. Sure, I believe he's as knowledgeable as the whole o' Trinity College. When I do be clanin' out his box in the mornin', he keeps insinsin' me into the histhory of all the ancient Greeks

an' Romans, from Abraham down to Juggernaut. I only wish yees could hear him, some day." And thus Hanuman's fame spread and increased, and his self-conceit was pleasantly ministered to.

The day before Rahû's visit, the Princess Monica had been to see him, and had left him her disused copy of "Reading without Tears"; and Rahû found him sitting in front of his kennel, in the bright moonlight, turning over the pages with what Mick would have described as "the dignity of a full-officer." He pretended not to hear any one coming, but went on reading aloud—

"P is like a man with a pack on his back.

"Ten men met in a den.

"Mat is so fat he can-not run."

Rahû was greatly amused at this, and so he did not interrupt him at once, and the monkey went on: "Here is the gro-cer's cart at the door.

"What has it got?

"A pack-et of rice for Ann.

"A pack-et of cur-rants for Jane——"

"Bravo, Hanuman!" exclaimed Rahû; "*Ang Koor!* as our friends, the peacocks, used to say. What is that wonderful production you have got hold of?"

"Rahû! by all that's unexpected," said the Professor. "My dear fellow, I'm delighted to see you. How are you? The book—eh? Oh, its 'Max Müller on the Rig-Veda.' Awfully clever, you know! Sorry you can't read, or I'd lend it you with pleasure." So saying, he shut the book, and sat down upon it.

"Thanks, all the same," replied Rahû; "but it's more in your way than in mine. How are you, though, old chap? You seem to have got yourself into a pretty fix."

Then Hanuman told him of all his troubles; and, the more he talked, the more excited Rahû became, until at last he declared his determination at all hazards to "go for" Mauï, who (he was sure) had instigated all King Longbeard's tyrannical cruelty.

Now, among other things, the Professor told him how, as he lay sick in the Castle, he had noticed a drawer in a bureau, in a corner of the bedroom they put him in, labelled "Cloak of

Darkness"; and how he had no doubt that King Longbeard had stowed away that marvellous garment there, when the Giant-Killer was put into a story-book, and sent down to amuse the children of the lower world.

"Oh!" exclaimed Rahû; "if I could only get hold of that——"

"You would have nothing to put it on," said the Monkey.

"Don't be impertinent," said Rahû.

"If you really think you could make any use of it," said the Professor, "I suppose we might be able to get it. I noticed that they seemed to keep the window of that room always open—at all events, they never shut it after I climbed out; and so, if you want it, all you have to do is to send Peter to fetch it for you."

"Peter who?" asked Rahû.

"Oh, Peter Pussy, or whatever you call him. Our friend Leather-flapper, you know."

"Pteropus Leatherwings?" said Rahû.

"Yes. He's the chap I mean. It's in the top drawer, at the left-hand side, of the bureau next the fireplace; and I'm sure the drawer can't be locked, for I specially noticed it had no keyhole. Peter will have no difficulty."

"That's a grand idea!" said Rahû. "Verily,

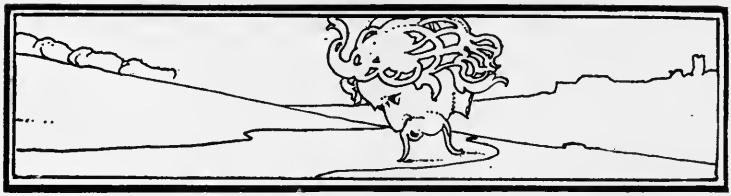
'brother, thy tail hangs down behind.' I'll be off, and see after the job at once."

So away he went up the hill again, walking upon the tips of his whiskers, and looking like some hideous, two-legged, hairy spider. And when he got back into the forest, he called for this "Leatherwings" they had been talking about, who was a great, fruit-eating bat; and who accepted the commission willingly. Off he flew to the Castle, where he found both the windows open, and the drawer unfastened, as Hanuman had said; so that he had no difficulty in stealing what he had been sent for, and was back again in half-an-hour. And thus the Cloak of Darkness, that had been Jack's, came into the possession of the wicked head, that had been Blunderbore's.

CHAPTER III.

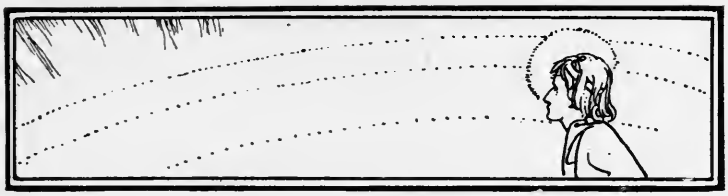
SHORTLY before noon the next day, when the chariot of the sun was due at the top of the rainbow bridge, Rahû, with the Cloak of Darkness about him, came invisibly down from the forest, and set himself in the middle of the roadway, holding his mouth wide open.

It was a lovely day, and all the creatures in



the Royal gardens were as happy as they could be: and the blue bees were humming, not drowsily, as at night, but gaily and sweetly; and the birds were singing with all their might; when, without any warning, a strange and peculiarly unpleasant darkness began to creep over everything. The baby flowers began to close their eyes, thinking that it was the twilight come too soon; and they cuddled down in their cradles to go asleep. Then the birds stopped singing, and the bees stopped humming; and at last the birds came fluttering down out of the trees, with their wings drooping, and all their feathers ruffled, uttering cries of terror. And well indeed might they all be disturbed, for a dreadful thing was happening—the sun was being put out!

And presently, up on the rainbow bridge, nothing could be seen of Ike-te-Mauï, his chariot, or his horses, except parts of the waving manes and tails of the latter, which had turned



as red as if they had been dipped in blood. It was now utterly dark, but for the stars, all of whom came out to see what could be the matter; and the feeling of terror was not confined to the birds, but was shared in by the fairies too; and even the Royal children were greatly frightened. They, with their mother and father, had been taking a long walk, and were now returning through the gardens.

The King, doing his best to reassure them, hurried on to the bridge, to find out the cause of it all; but before he could get there the sun had shone out as brightly as ever, and all the fright was over. He heard a great deal of angry talking going on; but he could not see who the speaker was, for the only other person visible was Ike-te-Mauï, who was at the top of the bridge, trying to soothe his startled horses.

Now, the angry talk came from Rahû, who, forgetting that, if he could not be seen, he might nevertheless be heard, was rating himself

for having been a fool. He had intended to swallow Mauï, and indeed had to a certain extent succeeded; but he might have known that all would be of no avail, as chariot, horses, and driver must of course come out of his throat, where the operation had been performed. And besides, he had burned his tongue badly, and scalded the roof of his mouth: the sun being much warmer than a hot potato—the hottest thing he had ever tasted before: and so he was using language that neither I would like to write, nor you to read, but chiefly expressive of an earnest wish that he had his legs back again, wherewith to give himself the kicking he felt he richly deserved. So when King Longbeard heard that, he began to understand the state of affairs; and, running to the spot he heard the sound proceeding from, he supplied the speaker's deficiencies with such a well-aimed kick that Rahû, dropping the Cloak of Darkness, bounded over the parapet of the bridge like a football, and came down with a splash into the river of silver, which washed him away for good and all.

Then the King went back into the gardens to meet his children, and reassure his frightened subjects. First he went to where the Queen and the Princesses were, and explained to them

what had caused the darkness, and told the little ones they might go on with a game they had been going to play.

"But, papa," said the Princess Marian, "how can we go on, when *everything* has stopped?"

"What do you mean, darling?" asked the King.

"Look up at the bridge, papa," said the Princess.

So King Longbeard looked up, and, sure enough there, on the very top of the rainbow arch, was the chariot of the sun standing perfectly still, and both Ike-te-Mauï and his horses looking as if they had been carved out of enormous blocks of diamond.

"What is the matter with you, Mauï?" shouted the King. "Surely that foolish Rahû has not petrified you."

"I'm not frightened, your Majesty," replied Mauï, "but I've lost my time."

"Then don't lose any more of it," said the King, "but go on at once."

"I can't, please your Majesty," answered the perplexed charioteer.

"Why not?" asked the King.

"Because I don't know *when* it is," was the reply.

"When *what* is?" asked King Longbeard, who was beginning to grow just a little angry.

"*Now*, your Majesty," was all the unfortunate Mauï could say.

"I know what he means, papa," put in the Princess Marian. "It is that that horrid Rahû has perplexed him so much that he cannot tell what time of day it is for himself, much less mark it for other people."

"Then we must try to find it out for him," said the King. But, at the same time, he knew that would probably be anything but an easy undertaking, since all the clocks and watches in Dreamland had stopped with the sun. He was puzzling his brain over the matter, when he heard a sharp-sounding little voice, from near the ground beside him, saying, "If it please your Majesty, may I say something?"

The King stooped down, and saw that the voice came from a snow-white baby dandelion, who was standing bolt upright in his cradle.

"Well, little one, what is it you want to say?" he asked.

"Oh, if you please, King," said the Dandelion, "if you will only send for my old mother, she will be able to tell you the right time at once. She lives up on the mountain, close by the

wood yonder; and one of the gardeners can easily fetch her."

So King Longbeard called for one of his fairy gardeners, who (as a fairy) was not obliged to stand still when the sun stopped, and sent him to fetch the old plant. And, when she came, the King asked her if it were really true that she could tell what the true hour was.

"Yes, your Majesty," said the old Dandelion, who was very thin and tall, and had a wonderful head of grey hair, that looked just like dream-silk. "If the charming Princess, here, will just hold me in her hand, and blow very hard upon my head, some of my hair will come off with each puff. She must go on blowing till I am left quite bald: and the number of puffs she has to give will be exactly that of the hour."

So then the Princess Marian took the old plant up in her hand, and blew hard upon her once, twice, thrice—up to twelve times; and with every breath some of the grey hair came off; and every separate hair opened out into a beautiful star of dream-silk, from which hung a tiny dandelion-seed, that floated away into the gardens to give occupation to another cradle and a fresh blue bee; and at the twelfth puff, lo and behold! the old lady's head was quite bald!

"It's twelve o'clock, papa," said the Princess.

"Twelve o'clock!" shouted King Longbeard to Ike-te-Mauï. "Drive on!"

So Mauï drove on: and then the King turned to the dandelions; but, to his great sorrow, he found that the old mother, immediately on losing her hair, had shrivelled up and died, and thus he could not reward her as he intended. But he said to the baby-flower, "In remembrance of the help you have given me, your face shall always bear the image of the wheels of the chariot of the sun." And the dandelion blushed up with a lovely rose colour, that he only lost through his subsequent bad conduct.

Then the Princesses went back to their play.

THE FAIRIES' SURPRISE.

The Fairies' Surprise

HEN the Princess Monica was born, she was provided with a Fairy Godmother, like all other fairy-tale princesses; and hers used to appear at opportune times, and get her out of difficulties, just as theirs did for them; and she used to bring her glass slippers, and pumpkin coaches, and things of that sort, when-

ever necessary. It was she who gave her the beautiful birthday crown, of whose adventures we have heard, and who designed and superintended the building of the summer-house in the garden. Sometimes she used even to help her with her lessons: and indeed, she was so powerful that she could have altered the Multiplication Table itself, and made four sevens *thirty-five*, instead of *twenty-eight*, to bring a troublesome sum right—not that she ever actually did so; but she *could* have done it. Her name was Blandina, and her home was in the Fourth Dimension of Space, where King Matthew Mattics reigns, and where they amuse themselves by turning india-rubber balls inside out without opening them, tying knots on cords held at both ends, without letting them go, and similar foolishness.

Now, in Dreamland, as in other places, there were unfortunately imps of mischief, as well as the good fairies; and if it had not been for the watchfulness of the latter, the former would often have done a great deal of mischief indeed. One of these sprites, and almost the most troublesome of all, was named Puck; and he lived in a big book, that stood on one of the shelves of King Longbeard's library. It was called *Shakespeare*, after the name of the man that

was supposed to have written it. At night, this mischievous Puck used to come creeping out from between its leaves, and run up the chimney to make his way to the Castle roof, where he would call the first bat from the bat-stand, jump on his back, and fly off to meet the other elves in some garden or field. There they would hold regular conspiracies, and arrange tricks to play on the Dreamland folks, the flower-babies, and the blue bees; but as the good fairies were always on the watch to prevent any real harm being done, it did not matter very much. Towards morning, as the twilight came, Puck would find his bat, and ride him home again to the roof, where, I am sorry to say, they sometimes had a dispute about the fare; and once, indeed, Puck went nearly so far as to take the bat's number, which would have been very painful indeed for both parties, and would have greatly annoyed the King, who disliked to see numberless bats flying about the place.

The night following the day of the birthday crown adventure, Puck and his friends were hard at work in one of the fields, conspiring. They sat, as usual, on a set of little toadstools, that grew in a ring; and they were not a bit sorry or ashamed of themselves for having kicked the rightful owners off to catch cold in the damp grass—which, by-the-way, is the reason why toads are too hoarse to sing. It was the Princess Monica's beautiful summer-house that the wicked elves were plotting against. They thought that they should have been invited to take a share in the fun of building it; but that, of course, would never have answered, as they would have made some of the stories begin at the wrong end, put blank verse in the windows, or played some other trick with the architecture. Nevertheless, they considered themselves very badly used, and sat and grumbled, until they worked themselves up into a fine state of virtuous indignation. Puck, who presided, occupied a big mushroom in the

middle of the ring, and pretended to be the most indignant of all; which was perfectly absurd, as the summer-house had to be built in the day-time, when he, and several of his companions, had to be on duty as characters in the big Shakespeare.

"Friends, and fellow-leprechauns," he said; "we can all see now that, unless we assert ourselves, things will certainly come to a critical pass——"

"Like Leonidas, at the battle of Thermopylæ," put in an elderly sprite, in spectacles.

"You shut up!" said the orator. "No one believes that now. But things, I say, will come to a critical pass——"

"You've said that already," remarked a juvenile elf, who wore a very high collar.

"And," continued Puck, not deigning to notice his interruption, "the question now before the house is, Are the rights of the Dreamlandish working-elf to be respected, or are they not?"

"I don't think that's the question at all," said the sprite in spectacles.

"Will the honourable member kindly explain what he means by contradicting the chair?" said Puck.

"I wasn't contradicting any chair," said the elderly one, "or mushroom either. But what I say is this: the other night, when I went to see you, and the bat flew away with my glasses, so that I crept in at the wrong page, I read, 'To be, or not to be? that is the question.' And so I maintain that those blue bees are to blame for all the trouble."

"Here! Here!" exclaimed all the other conspirators, tumbling off their seats, and engaging in a game of "General Post Delivery," until Puck found himself supplanted in the seat of honour by the juvenile elf with the collar, and left with only a very feeble and battered toadstool to climb upon. However, he soon set that right by pulling the usurper down, and giving him to a large toad to play with.

"Now," he said, "we will proceed to business. The bees must certainly be got rid of first; and then all those windows must be smashed. I object to them on principle, because I am principally in blank verse myself. And then they know nothing about rhyme—those poets! Why,

I had an instance of it myself lately, the account of which I will read you——"

"Sing it!" shouted the elf with the collar, whereupon the large toad swallowed him.

Puck then took a little memorandum-book out of his left ear, and read as follows:

One day, as all the woods with song
  Were jubilantly ringing,
I saw a thrush, who left the throng,
  And seemed averse to singing.

I followed him, and asked him what
  On earth could be the matter,
And why he sought that lonely spot,
  And hushed his merry chatter.

"Pray, where are all the notes that rush
  To fill your throat melodious?"
"I cannot sing," replied the thrush;
  "And life is simply odious.

"This morning I was full of glee,
  And sang my best to show it;
When someone passed below my tree—
  The sort they call a 'poet.'

"He had a little pocket-book,
  He held a little pencil,
And with a very solemn look
  He handled that utensil.

"He scribbled, and I saw his eye
Cast oft in my direction,
And then his notes he held for my
Intelligent inspection.

"I fluttered down, and there beheld
What made me feel conceited.
I was his theme! My bosom swelled—
My triumph seemed completed.

"But, as I read, I felt my pride
Evaporate in gushes,
For *bushes* was the word he tried
To bring to rhyme with *thrushes!*

"I argued, but he talked a lot
Of 'visual reciprocity,'
Of Tennyson and Walter Scott,
Rebuking my precocity.

"And so, at last, I left him there,
And came away disgusted.
Those poets' rhymes, I do declare
Are never to be trusted!"

This was received with great applause by all the elves. And then they agreed that they would begin at once, and play a very unprincipled trick indeed upon the first blue bee they could find.

So off they set towards the King's garden,

where the summer-house had been built. When they got there the moon was shining brightly, and out of the storied walls of the house were peeping the faces of hundreds of old friends of ours. There were Sinbad and Bluebeard, Riquet and Rumpelstiltskin, Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-killer, Silverhair and Cinderella. At one window twinkled a "little star," at another were a Walrus, a Carpenter, and a Jabberwock, and at a third a Young Lady of Ryde flirted with an Old Man in a Tree. Outside this window a large blue bee was hovering and humming over a tiny green plant that lay in a cradle of dream-silk.

"It's a horrible brute, isn't it?" the Old Man was saying as they came up.

"Does it buzz?" the Young Lady asked, with an air of concern.

"Yes, it duzz," he replied, sadly; "and has bored me terribly. There's a hole right through me, from one side to the other! I would give a good deal to get rid of it."

"Just what we mean to do," remarked Puck to his fellow-conspirators. "Have you the tar ready, Cobweb?" he asked.

"Ready, and made of the best spiders' glue," replied the imp addressed.

"And the feathers, Moth?" said Puck.

"Ready," said another elf in a brown overcoat, who was none else but our old friend that had helped the mimulus to his spots.

And then the whole band crept round by the shaded side of the summer-house.

Meanwhile, a wonderful thing was going on in the cradle under the window. The plant that lay in it was growing at an unusual rate, so that, if you had been there, you might have seen its stem lengthen, and its leaves open into blades of grass, and its lovely flower-stalks stretch out, each as fine as a butterfly's horn, and bearing a little ball of blossom at its end. It was the fairy Blandina who was accomplishing this, with the help of a company of ants, who kept supplying her with formic acid for the purpose. What formic acid has to do with the matter I can't explain ; so you had better ask a philosopher, and then—come and tell *me*. And so the plant grew, and grew ; and at last it stood upright ; and then Puck and the rest came on, hidden in the shadow, while their whispers were drowned in the joyful hum of the guardian bee, that grew louder and more triumphant, as he saw the rapidly developing beauty of his charge.

"You to the right, Cobweb, with the tar," whispered Puck ; "and you to the left, Moth,

with your feathers; while I jump on his back. Mind you don't begin till I get him down. I don't want to be splashed. Now then—one, two, three!——"

But just as he was going to leap, Blandina touched the plant with her magic wand, and from every tiny flower-ball sprang a glow of intensest light, brightly illuminating the garden around, and startling Whittington's Cat and Puss-in-Boots, who were on the point of commencing a rival serenade to the White Cat from the roof, so that each rushed back, pell-mell, into his proper story—as he thought—but somehow they got exchanged, and will never come right again until after the Pantomime. All the light that lit the garden did not come from the same plant; for there had been many others like it growing as rapidly in front of the summer-house, and now they all flashed out in a double row of splendour, that reached to the foot of the rainbow bridge. It was an illumination-surprise that Blandina had arranged for her little Goddaughter.

King Longbeard had gone to bed at his usual time that evening, but found that, for some reason, he could not sleep. The Princess Monica told him next day that he must have eaten too much of her birthday cake; but we

know that was absurd, because Kings or Queens never make such mistakes as that. However it was, he lay awake a long time, listening to his nightingale singing in a great Persian rose-tree, close by his window, and thinking of all the interests of his beloved Dreamland ; and I suppose it was this that brought Shakespeare and the "Midsummer Night's Dream" into his mind—at all events, he lay, trying to remember all about Oberon and Titania, until at last he thought he must get the book, and see for himself. As he did not wish to disturb the Queen or the Household, he just struck a light, and went quietly to the great library, where he took down from a shelf the volume he wanted. He turned over the pages until he came to where Puck speaks of "putting a girdle round the earth in forty minutes"; but, to his astonishment, the place was blank! Puck had disappeared from the play, and so had Cobweb, Moth, Peasblossom, Mustardseed, and their fellows. Oberon and Titania were both there,

however, and so the King asked them what had become of the others.

"Oh," said Oberon, "that is what Puck does every night. When you are asleep, he is off all over the place with the other imps."

"But why don't you keep him in better order?" said the King.

"He can't be kept in order," replied Oberon, "and indeed I am only too glad to get rid of the troublesome crew sometimes. The only peaceful time Tita and I ever have together, is when those mischief-makers are out. I wish you hadn't come to disturb us. Do shut the book, and go back to your bed, like a good fellow."

You see, Oberon could speak thus to King Longbeard, because he had been a King too. He was King of the Fairies in Shakespeare's time, and Titania was Queen; before Shelley established Queen Mab on the Fairyland throne.

King Longbeard was greatly amused, and

good-naturedly shut the book. "But," he said, "it doesn't seem to be always a good fellow's way to stay in his bed all night—not Robin Goodfellow's, at least." (Now *Robin Goodfellow* was one of Puck's best known nicknames). And then he slyly put the book back in its place, but upside down, to puzzle the truants on their return. He was doing this, when the double row of fairy lights flashed out through the garden, and shone so brightly in through the stained glass of the library windows, that he hurried back to his own room, where he could look out to see what it might be.

It was a lovely sight he saw: for though the tiny lanterns of that wonderful grass all danced and twinkled in the soft night air, like so many living stars, still their combined light was steady and clear, and so white that the colours of the flowers, and the hues of the fairies' robes, and the jewelled blue of the bees, and the seven melting tints of the rainbow bridge, all shone as brightly as in the sunlight. And as the King and Queen looked out, they saw a troop of fairies fly up to the Princess Monica's window, and heard them begin to sing to her. And this is what they sang:

THE FAIRIES' SURPRISE.

"O tiny Queen of Babyland,
Sweet are thy dreams to-night!
Yet wake at the sound of our voices, and
Look out from thy curtains white;
For a sweeter dream there never can be,
Than the bright surprise we have made for thee."

And as they sang, the Princess's window opened, and in answer to the fairies' invitation came her ringing cry of utter delight at the scene before her. Then all the Castle woke up; and it was not long before the King and Queen, with all their children and courtiers, were gathered on the golden terrace above the bridge, watching the continually changing effects of the illumination. But in the library, Puck and his companions were having a very unhappy time of it, trying to get back into the Shakespeare volume; which they found anything but easy to do, owing to the trick the King had played on them.

Now all this happened "once upon a time"; but still, if you are as good as a Dreamland Prince or Princess, and will go out, on the night of the Princess Monica's birthday to where the quaking fairy-grass grows, you may see all the little flower-balls lit up at the end of their slender stalks, like so many wee electric

lights. But you must go on that night, and no other; and you may know the right night by its being Tib's Eve, with a blue moon shining, as marked in the Greek Kalendar. At other times the little flowers hang like brown Chinese lanterns, waiting for the fairy Blandina to come along and light them up.

ALL ABOUT A SNOWFLAKE.

All about a Snowflake

AIRLAND is the next kingdom to Dreamland, and is as full of wonderful beings as Dreamland itself; and these beings have a great deal to do with the happiness and unhappiness of the trees and flowers, after they have been carried down from their dream-silk cradles, to grow in the woods and gardens below. What

I am going to tell you about happened down here, in the same part of the world that the spotted mimulus was sent to.

Not far from the river that takes its name from the fairy, Bervie, there is a beautiful little village, called Auchinblae: and close by it run two streams, that join just at the bottom of the street; and one is called the Luther (which you must not pronounce like the German name, but with a *u* like that in *butter*), and the other the Back-Burn. Both come down between the Hershaw and Strath Finella—two hills; the latter quite a mountain, or group of mountains; and the Luther comes from the Annahar mountain, through Drumtochty. This is the *real* Drumtochty, whose name has been borrowed for another place, though its beauty cannot be. There is the Annahar Glen, too, above which stood, a couple of years ago, the lovely Annahar woods; and here the doings of the Airland beings come in; for if the wind-elves of the Luther had not quarrelled with

those of the Back-Burn, the latter need not have called for the great blast of Kerloch to help them. Then the Storm-Maker, who works in the north-west, would not have looked over the Grampian wall, and the trees of Annahar would still be standing.

It was all about a snowflake that the dispute began. Snow is no rarity in that part of the world; but such a lovely flake as this one had seldom danced down the brae of Auchinblae. She wore, sparkling on her breast, the star of the Order of the Six-pointed Deodara, which King Longbeard gives for distinguished beauty and the Cognoscenti worship with a microscope and a black hat; yet for all that, she was not happy, because she could not make up her mind whither she would go. She had seen all that she could of Drumtochty, and of Glen Farquhar (through which she had been blown afterwards); and now that she had to leave Auchinblae, the difficulty of a choice between Arbuthnott and Monboddo had to be faced.

The wind-elves had all fallen wildly in love with her; and those of the Luther tried to sweep her away towards Arbuthnott, while the Back-Burn elves tried to carry her in the direction of Monboddo; and this was very foolish of them to try at all—much more so to make a disturbance about; for every one knows that if either party had won her she must eventually have been drowned in the Luther, and buried at Marykirk.

As it was, they fought so fiercely that they forgot all about the beautiful snowflake herself; and so, when she reached the foot of the brae she fell into the roadway, and vanished, not into thin air, but into pure water. Some day, King Longbeard will send a sunbeam to find her, and take her away along the swallows' path to the southern vine-land, where she will undergo a wonderful change, and become the bride of a prince.

The fight went fiercely on, and all the wind-spirits and other Airland beings within hearing came to join in, or to watch it. Fordoun Hill rises over Auchinblae, and on it stood the lookers-out of the King of Airland; and when they heard the tumult, they went and told the lonely Watcher that sits in the hollow of Strath Finella; and he leaped up, and shook himself,

and rushed down so suddenly into the Mearns, that all the breezes sleeping there gathered themselves together into a gale, and fled shrieking off to sea. And the sea-birds met them, and said, "Make way for us! we must pass." So the winds made way, and they passed swiftly through, going on up to Kerloch, and bringing the message of the Back-Burn elves. And then the great blast of Kerloch came roaring down Glenbervie, and swept up round the Hershaw. And at last, as I have told you, the Storm-Maker of the north-west raised his head and looked over the Grampians; and when he did so, all the trees of Annahar, and thousands more in all the country round, fell as if mown by a scythe.

Many of them came down and dipped their heads and arms into the burn of the Annahar Glen. The Storm-Maker did not love to see them fall, for each as it fell broke a string of the great harp on which he praises God: and though he knew it was the work given him to do, he wept bitterly, and his tears mixed with the water of the burn, that joined in his mourning, turning their bright leaping into one long turbid cataract that poured down into Drumtochty. And the flood swept away all the stems it could carry, and tore off the branches

that tried to hold it back, and dashed them from side to side of its rocky channel. Wilder and wilder it grew, till it gathered strength to tear great boulder stones out of the foot of the Mid-Shank, and hurl them down the kelpies' stairs.

In Drumtochty, the wee burnie from the Friars' Glen was swollen, too, with the Storm-Maker's tears, and when it met the Luther, both were so disturbed that they lost their way, and wandered over the fields, until after the Broomie Brae and Galloquhine; but below this the Luther recovered herself, and went into the flax trade, as was her custom in those times.

But up in Annahar all was terror and wild distress. The trees on the mountain-side called to their brothers and sisters in the glen; but the hazels and the rowans flung their long arms about, and cried, "We cannot help you!" And the birches tossed their lichened hair, and wailed, "We cannot help you!" And the blaeberry and cranberry brush shuddered all

over, and moaned, "We cannot help you!" And so the darkness came on, and all that night rank after rank of pine, and larch, and spruce yielded and fell down in death; and still the Storm-Maker wept on.

King Longbeard sat at his castle window and looked out into the earth below. He saw all the distraction, and yet he was not sad; for he knew the time was come for thousands of gallant young fir trees to leave their cradles in Dreamland and go down into the world. There they would have a grand work to do—"builders with the sword"; and it was decreed that all who should meet and love them in their youth should share of their courage, and steadfastness, and strength of hope. And though the Storm-Maker might weep over the fall of their elders, yet even his tears should be the fewer until the sword-builders should have brought back the clothing of the hills again.

But at last the King spoke; and his voice sounded through Airland, so that the King of

Airland heard. King Longbeard said, "Is it not enough, O King?"

And the other answered, "O King, it is enough!" And he laid his hand on his silver bell; and, as it sounded, the Storm-Maker knew that his task was over, and hid his head beneath a mantle of crimson; and the cranberries and the blaeberries ceased their shuddering, and the birches, and rowans, and hazels stood still and listened; while the lonely Watcher of Strath Finella came back up from the Mearns, and cried across to Kerloch that he had seen the message of the sun in the east, and once more there would be day.

And as that day went on there came a very great calm.

But, when it was evening, there flew down a great brown owl out of Dreamland, and he came and sat on Saint Palladius' Seat, where once a great Apostle sat looking down into Drumtochty. And the owl hooted out, "Whoo-hoo! What a time we have been having!"

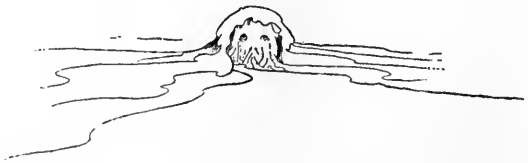
And when he had called this out three times, then another owl from Buck Neuk shouted back, "Whirr-ha-ha! Do you know what it was all about?"

So the first owl hooted, "Whoo-hoo! No; how should I? What was it?"

'IS IT NOT ENOUGH, O KING?'

And the Buck Neuk owl answered back again, "Whirr-ha-ha! All about a snowflake!"

Then the old owl on Saint Palladius' Seat laughed heartily, as the wise laugh, and cried, "Beauty! beauty! beauty!—'tis always the way of the world!"



The Horoscope

CHAPTER I

PRINCE ROBERT, the eldest son of King Longbeard, was in every respect what a Dreamland Prince ought to be; and if you don't know what that is, why, I must try to tell you. In the first place, he was sometimes tall, and sometimes short; one day his hair would be golden, another day brown; his eyes, too, were brown,

blue, or black, but never twice of exactly the same shade, though they always changed together. Still, he was always handsome, brave, and strong. In the next place, he needed no cloak of darkness, shoes of swiftness, or sword of sharpness; for he had three powers given him at his birth: he could become visible or invisible at will; and could wish himself into any part of Dreamland in an instant; and if any evil being should try to hurt him, he had only to speak a word, and its head would drop off. Lastly, he knew every language spoken in his father's kingdom, including those of the fairies, as well as of all animals and plants. But it was written in the great Horoscope that had been made when he was born, that if he should ever go outside the borders of Dreamland, he must lose all his remarkable gifts and qualities, and become like an ordinary mortal, until his return thither.

This Horoscope itself was a very strange production. It had been written by a venerable-looking old astrologer, who had made his appearance at the Castle, mysteriously, the day before Prince Robert's birth, and disappeared as mysteriously, the day after. He had come as a poor old man, leaning on a staff, and asking alms, and had charmed King Longbeard so

much with his conversation, and shown so much wisdom and goodness, that he had been allowed to spend the night (at his own request) in the royal gardens. At the hour the Prince was born, he had been seen to strike his staff into the earth, where it turned into a magnificent astronomical telescope; and, although it was already broad daylight, every star in the sky had shone out for a time with a splendour that the sunlight could not hide. When the old astrologer had made his observations, the telescope had become a staff in his hand again, and, after writing his calculation on a sheet of vellum in the King's study, he had suddenly vanished. Now, on this sheet, everything concerning Prince Robert, up to the end of his twenty-first year, had been clearly inscribed; but with regard to the rest, though by looking

indirectly you could see that the vellum was covered with clear writing, when you turned your eyes full upon it, it seemed to become hidden and confused in a mist, and you could see nothing intelligible. But as time passed, and the Prince finished his twenty-first year, then, day by day, line after line became legible, showing that all that had just happened had been foretold. It really was most tantalising; and many and many a time King Longbeard had tried in vain to penetrate the mystery.

The many and frequent changes the Prince went through made it very difficult for people to recognise him at times, and, indeed, it would have often been impossible to do so, were it not for his voice. That never changed. Though its compass and expressiveness were great, it had a tone that could never be mistaken; it was rich and full as a Cathedral bell, and sweet as the A string of a Stradivarius violin. And it had a very wonderful power; for if its owner stood by one of the large garden ponds, and sang one of his low notes, ripples would come all over the surface of the water, and group themselves into the most beautiful patterns, and quiver and dance; and each ripple would suddenly shiver all over with thousands of tiny riplets, and shine in rainbow colours, making

the whole pond seem like a mass of brilliant jewel-work.

He was a great favourite with all the Dream-land folk; but some of the wicked elves hated him, and were determined, if possible, to injure him. The worst of these was one called Bogolfie, who lived in a whin-bush on the side of one of the mountains. The Prince had made him very angry by his skill in striking a small ball with a crooky-topped stick, so that it should fly through the air and fall into one or another of eighteen small holes dug in very uneven ground. This thing Bogolfie hated, and made it the aim of his life to prevent; but he never dared to show himself openly to Prince Robert, for fear the Prince should say that awful word, "*Fore!*" and his own precious head should drop off. So he thought and thought; and at last made up his mind to go and consult the great wizard Gorillobeägrûgrû,

who dwelt in the depths of the forest, beyond the mountains. And that very night he set off to the wizard's cave, where they two hatched a terrible conspiracy.

Prince Robert was very fond of all kinds of games and sports, especially of hunting, and often used to spend days and nights pursuing game and killing wild beasts in the Dreamland forests, secured from any harm by his wonderful powers. And though he knew that, if he ventured over the frontier, his gifts would desert him; nevertheless he was often tempted to do so, that he might know the risk of real danger, without which even the most exciting wolf-hunt seemed tame. Now at the very time that Bogolfie went off to plot with Gorillo-beägrûgrû, the Prince had been arranging for an expedition against some grizzly bears that had been seen in one of the forests, on the mountain that divided Dreamland from the neighbouring kingdom of Nightmaria. And

the next evening it happened that he strolled into his father's study, where he found the King with the Horoscope spread on a table before him, once more vainly endeavouring to penetrate the mysterious veil of confusion.

"It's of no use, Dad," he said affectionately. "Why should you worry yourself about anything so hopeless?"

"So it has always seemed, my boy," said the King; "but to-night I am more eager than ever to discover something from it if possible; for when I came into the room, I found that some one had taken the vellum from its case, and left it here unrolled, and as I came over to the table, it seemed as though some drawing or painting, that had never been there before, faded away into the mist. And I must confess that, for the first time in my life, I feel an uneasiness about your hunting in a new district."

"Oh, nonsense, Dad! You know how well protected I am; and you know that nothing could tempt me to go near the boundaries—not even the grizzliest grizzly that ever grizzled. Put away that useless thing, and don't mind it; it can do nothing but make you 'wise after the event.'"

King Longbeard rose, folded up the sheet, returned it to its case, and left the room.

"I wonder what the dear old man means by this vanishing picture" said the Prince to himself. "Come along, old Horror-scope, and let me see if you are going to yield up any of your secrets at last."

So saying, he opened the sheet of vellum; and just as he spread it on the table, out of the mist that concealed the prophecy of his future, there flashed, for an instant, the vision of a most beautiful face—so beautiful, that it excelled in loveliness all the lovely faces of his sisters, or even of the still lovelier fairies that thronged the Dreamland Court. She must surely be a Princess herself, he thought; and he felt as if he would give all that he possessed, all his wonderful powers, all his hopes of other happiness, even, to see her in reality. And long into the night he sat before the outspread scroll, trying to penetrate the mist into which his vision had faded. It was morning before he retired to his room, to rest awhile before starting for the chase, and when at last he fell into a light sleep, it was only to dream again and again of the beautiful Princess. But dreaming in Dreamland is different from our dreaming here, and always comes true; so when he awoke, it was with a delightful anticipation, for in those dreams he had always ended by finding himself

flying through mid-air, with her by his side. It was with eagerness that he sprang from his couch, and soon after, rode off with his attendants up the mountain-side.

When he was hunting, Prince Robert never would use any of his strange powers, unless he found it absolutely necessary in self-defence. He preferred to run down his quarry, bring it to bay, and attack and vanquish it as others did ; but this day he had several times to hide himself in invisibility, wish himself into a place of safety, and utter the magic words that deprived bear after bear of head and life. At last he was beginning to feel a little tired, when, out of a thicket beside him, rushed a larger bear than any he had hitherto encountered. He at once prepared himself for an attack, when, to his surprise, instead of charging at him, the beast suddenly turned tail, and fled, with the speed of an express train, up the mountain. The Prince's horse toiled after him in vain, and

Prince Robert himself became so excited, that he wished at any cost to overtake the bear, so long as he should not go beyond the boundary of Dreamland. In an instant he found himself beyond the forest, at the edge of a vast expanse of snow, which sloped off in an unbroken sheet into the far distance; while immediately before him rose a rocky precipice, in the face of which opened a dark cave, into which he saw the brute's hind quarters just disappearing. He had left his horse, as well as his attendants, far behind, and knew that his wisest course would be to return, or at least wait for their arrival; but the ardour of the chase was full upon him, and so he determined to enter the cave at once. To do so, he had to reduce his height, that he might pass in easily, and then, to make known his whereabouts, he uttered a view-halloo with the full power of his lungs. As he waited, listening for the answering sound of his huntsmen's horns, he was astonished to hear a voice as sweet as his own, but belonging to a girl, say, "Did you call me, Prince?" and out of the cave stepped a maiden, robed in silken gauze, with the very same lovely face he had seen for an instant in the Horoscope.

Prince Robert was lost in astonishment; but

he at once doffed his cap and made the damsel a profound bow.

"I did not call you, Princess," he replied; "nor did I expect to see you here. But will you tell me who you are, whence you come, and —and—what has become of the bear?"

"I am not a Princess," she said gently. "I come from Iceland, and they call me Tobogganina."

"What a horrid name to give you!" exclaimed the Prince.

"As for the bear," she continued, with a silvery laugh, "you shall see him again in good time. Do you like tobogganing, Prince?"

"Next to hunting," he replied; "but why do you ask?"

"Look at that snow-slope," she said. And then, running back into the cave, she appeared again, drawing a toboggan after her, the frame of which was of ivory, and its runners shod with burnished gold. It was cushioned with the richest furs.

"Jump in beside me, Prince," she cried, "and off we go—never mind where! I'll do the steering." So saying, she advanced to the edge of the slope, and seated herself.

The Prince was beside himself. Such a vision as she presented, half buried in the furs,

he could not have imagined. He threw himself on the sledge, and immediately they shot forward, downward, over the snow. His first thought was that his dream of the morning was realised, and he turned to gaze on his companion; but what was his horror to behold, instead of the beautiful maiden, a hideous monster, with the body of a bear, the head of an ape, and eyes like a pair of lurid crimson furnaces!

Prince Robert sank back in a swoon, for he found himself in the power of the evil Gorillo-beägrûgrû, and being hurried at lightning speed into the heart of Nightmaria.

CHAPTER II

Now I have already told you that, though the Horoscope no longer revealed the future of Prince Robert's life, yet everything of importance that happened to him could be read in it as soon as it actually took place. So, when he was away from home, the King would often open it, that he might read the assurance of his son's safety; and he usually did this the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning. The King's loving nature was always

deeply moved at any sorrow or misfortune that might occur to any person or thing that came in contact with him, and, therefore, you may imagine his grief when, that night, he unrolled the vellum, and read of the Prince's terrible danger. He could do nothing. If it had been in Airland, or down on Earth, that the Prince was confined, all might have been (at least) hopeful; but in Nightmaria he had neither power nor influence. No one in the Castle slept that night, except the younger children; all were gathered round King Longbeard, watching the Horoscope, and eagerly longing to see some change come in the mist, showing a corresponding change in the Prince's fortunes. But no; all night it lay there, telling nothing but how the Prince had been carried off by Gorillobeägrûgrû, and imprisoned in the Castle of King Fuseliwiertz of Nightmaria.

Then the hours of the morning passed slowly on, and presently the sweet little Princess Monica danced into the room, and ran up to her father, putting her arm round his neck with a "good morning" kiss. And, as she did so, she whispered into his ear, "Oh, Papa, I have had such a delightful dream!"

"Have you, my 'Possum?" said the King, stroking her hair tenderly. "'Possum" was a

pet name her brothers had given her, because of her bright, soft eyes.

"Yes, Papa," said the Princess; "all about Bob."

"Tell it then, darling," said the King, anxiously; for he knew the dream must mean something.

"I thought an old man—oh, such an old man!—came here; and he had a funny, long white beard, and cloak: and you brought him in; and he took a great box from under his cloak, and opened it; and out jumped Bob, looking just as he does when he makes himself very small; and he had such a lovely lady with him!"

"Who had? Bob or the old man?" asked the King.

"Oh, Bob, *of course!*" replied the Princess.

"Well, we shall hope for some good news soon," said her father, turning to the Horoscope again.

Princess Monica danced away to a window that commanded a view of the approach to the Castle, where she stood and looked out. Suddenly she clapped her hands, and cried out:

"Oh, Papa, here he is! He's coming!"

"Not Robert, surely?" exclaimed the King, leaping to his feet.

"No, but the old man—*my* old man," said the Princess. "Isn't he funny?"

All the courtiers made way for King Longbeard, who went to the window: and there, sure enough, he beheld, coming slowly over the rainbow bridge, the very same astrologer who had visited the Castle nearly twenty-two years before, and drawn up the mysterious Horoscope.

I need hardly tell you that his coming was the cause of great excitement. The King himself received him at the great entrance-door, and conducted him to a room where a plentiful breakfast was set before him: for the old man steadfastly refused to give any information, even to his host, until his hunger should be satisfied. But when he had eaten and drunk heartily, he turned to the King, and demanded that the Horoscope should be brought to him. This was done immediately, and, having spread it before him, he said, "Though this is my work, what I wrote on the obscured part I cannot tell. It has been blotted from memory, as well as from sight, by some power stronger than mine; and I am warned that, should I construct a fresh one, the same thing would happen again. All that I now can do is to call another science to my aid."

So saying, he took from beneath his cloak a small black box, which he placed on a table.

"Now," said he to the King, "we two must be left alone, and the room must be darkened."

This was done; and then the King, who stood by the table, saw a strange light, of a deep violet colour, begin to play over the surface of the vellum. It seemed to proceed from a glass tube, which the astrologer held in his hand, and which was connected with the box by a fine thread of wire from each end. The King looked on, expecting to see some change in the obscuring mist, but none came.

"Have patience," said the astrologer, who seemed able to read his thoughts. "And now," he continued, "I must ask you to leave me alone here for half-an-hour, and promise me two things. The first is, that you will on no account reveal to any one what I shall show you on your return; the second, that you will, if you ever see Prince Robert again, grant him the first request he may make of you."

"I promise," said the King, who felt that he would give anything to see his son again.

Then he left the room; and the half-hour he had to wait seemed an age to him. But when it was over, and he came back again, the astrologer showed him a perfectly clear photograph of all the clouded part of the Horoscope, taken by means of that wonderful violet light, whose rays had penetrated even the magic mist. His joy at what he read was so great that, though he was bound to keep the old man's secret, he (with his permission) ordered the Castle and its grounds to be splendidly decorated, and a magnificent banquet and illuminations to be prepared for that evening. Every one shared in King Longbeard's joy, for they all knew then that it must be well with Prince Robert. But the old astrologer vanished as he had done before.

Now we must return to the Prince himself, whom we left being carried down the slope of snow in the wizard's toboggan.

On they rushed, Gorillobeägrûgrû and his victim, faster and faster, until they came to where the slope ended in a fearful precipice. The Prince was still unconscious. Had he recovered sooner, he might have slain the wizard with a word, and saved himself with a wish; but the precipice was the boundary of Dreamland, and when he came to his senses, he found himself flying through the air with his hideous

captor. The toboggan he saw now to be made of bones, and instead of the rich furs were clammy skins, wrinkled and spotted like "goose-flesh"; and, on shooting from the snow into the air, it had put forth a pair of great wings, like those of a bat, with which it flapped heavily onward toward a Castle that stood on an island, in a lake of pitchy blackness. This was the abode of King Fuseliwiertz.

As soon as their strange vehicle touched the island the enchanter leaped out, and, seizing Prince Robert in his shaggy arms, partly carried, partly dragged him to the door of the castle, where he uttered a horrible noise, compounded of a bellow and a howl. At this sound the great door creaked itself slowly open, and the wizard bore his prisoner within. The hall they entered was a long, narrow tunnel, faintly illuminated by a greenish, phosphorescent light. This light, the Prince saw to his horror, proceeded from the heads of a number of creatures that stood at intervals on each side of the passage. They were like gigantic earth-worms, each as large as a man, and reared upright on its tail, on which it turned and writhed about without leaving its place. Those in front of them kept continually bending over and biting savagely at each other; but as Gorillobeägrûgrû

'TOBOGGANNING'.

passed onward they raised themselves to make way for him, returning immediately to their former occupation when he had gone by.

At the end of the passage the wizard turned sharply to the left, and carried the Prince into a small dungeon that seemed in utter darkness.

"There," he growled, throwing him roughly on the floor, "no need to chain you and lock you in. Stir but one step out of this and our slimy friends outside will save you the trouble of going any further. Nothing could save you from them but the constant repetition of a charm, the knowledge of which I prefer to keep to myself at present. Presently, *when I feel hungry*, I'll come back and see how you are getting on." And with that he shut the door and went away.

Now, indeed, the Prince gave himself up for lost, and once more fainted. How long he was insensible he never knew, but when he came to himself it was only to encounter a fresh horror, for he saw that a faint light, such as lit the tunnel, was beginning to come from a hole in the dungeon wall, immediately over the door. It grew slowly brighter, and soon he was able to see by it that one of the gigantic worms had succeeded in crawling through an opening left for air, and was beginning to descend the face of

the wall. It had nearly reached the door, when that was thrown open, and the wizard entered.

"Now, supper," he said to the Prince; "I hope you are ready for me, since I am ready for you."

The Prince seemed petrified with terror; not, however, at the glaring eyes and gnashing teeth of the monster that was advancing on him, but at the action of the worm. Gorillobeägrûgrû, not suspecting its presence, had ceased to repeat his charm, and, therefore, as soon as he stepped forward it dropped upon him without warning, and fixed its teeth in the back of his neck. He turned to fly, but that could not have availed him had not Prince Robert, whose hunting instincts returned full upon him at the sight, sprung forward, and with a single sweep of his *couteau-de-chasse* cut the fearful thing open from end to end.

In an instant a brilliant light shone round the Prince, the walls of the dungeon vanished, and he found himself standing in full daylight at

the very spot whence he had started on his headlong ride; while before him, lovelier than ever, stood once more the maiden of his Horoscope and dream!

"Prince," she said, "I have to thank you for my deliverance from the most horrible enchantment. By an evil accident that vile wizard obtained power over my parents to make them lend me to him for a month in every year, during which time he used me, as you have seen, but sorely against my will, for luring travellers into his clutches. But this power was to cease as soon as he should find one who, in return for the worst possible harm, should do him an unexpected service. Then he himself should vanish into nothingness, and all his evil be undone. You have done him that service, Prince, and, in doing so, have saved both yourself and me."

"I couldn't help it," said the Prince. "The beggar's eyes looked so horribly *human*, you know, when that thing fastened on him. I just *had* to cut it up."

"That shows your kind heart, Prince," said the girl. "You are just like your father."

"Now, really, Miss Tobogganina," began the Prince. But she interrupted him with a merry laugh.

"That's not my name at all," she said; "my

real name is Ernestine, and my father is the King of Airland."

"Then, lovely Princess," replied Prince Robert, "I wish you and I were at my father's castle." And scarcely had he uttered the words when he found himself, with his fair acquaintance, at the foot of the rainbow bridge, across which his father, mother, brothers, and sisters were coming to meet them.

"Oh, father dear," said the Prince, throwing himself into King Longbeard's arms, "may I——?" But I have never heard what it was that he had to ask. All I *do* know is that there was a great wedding in Airland a few days later, and that the Princess Monica was one of the bridesmaids, while the Princess Ernestine was not.

King Longbeard knows all the hidden part of the Horoscope now, and is very happy over it.


THE
RAID OF THE
AIRLAND
PRINCES.

The Raid of the Airland Princes

CHAPTER I.

ONE morning—and you may be perfectly sure this is true, because it was a Saturday morning—as King Longbeard was looking out of his library window, he saw seven purple swans flying slowly over the trees from the south-east, and when they came near they sailed down in great spiral sweeps

through the air and dropped on the silver river. Then they arched their necks, set up their wings, and swam with strong strokes of their feet up to the rainbow bridge; and when they had passed under it they sat upon the water as though they were quite still, yet all the time they had to keep on paddling with their feet, because the current ran so swiftly.

When the King saw them he knew that they were come with news from the city of Soporia.

Soporia is the chief town of the Land of Nod, where the Williwinkies live, and it belongs to Dreamland, and is governed by an uncle of King Longbeard, named Morpheus, who acts as Viceroy, under the title of Grand Sandman.

And now King Longbeard knew that something very important must have happened at Soporia, or else his uncle would not have sent seven swans to bring the news. Six would have been plenty in all ordinary circumstances. So he called his Lord Chamberlain and the Chief Cook, and went out on the bridge to receive his uncle's message.

Perhaps you will want to know why the King called the Chief Cook to go with him.

Well—so do I.

You see, I am not obliged to account for everything in these stories, which is a great

relief to my mind. If I were to try to account for the Cook it might result in a cooked account, and that we must all try to avoid.

When King Longbeard came out upon the bridge, each of the swans raised its head as high as it could, and out of its mouth shot a thread of quivering gold, that flew up through the air until its end fell into the Lord Chamberlain's hand. Then the Lord Chamberlain took from under his cloak what seemed like a square box,

with a hole in its lid, and a handle at one side like the handle of a barrel-organ; and he put the ends of the seven golden threads in at the hole, and turned the handle round and round. Soon all the threads were wound in, and the swans rose into the air, disappearing in the direction they had come from. Then the King, with his attendants, came back into the Castle. The Cook went back to the kitchen, and King Longbeard took the Lord Chamberlain into his study. There, the latter placed his box on a table, and began to turn the handle as fast as ever he could.

Then, from the box, there came the sound of a voice—or, rather, of seven voices singing in perfect unison; and every word was distinct. And this is what the King heard:

Up through the red of the sunrise,
  Up through the glow of its gold,
Riding on dragon-winged horses,
  Three Princes of Airland, bold—
    Soporia! Soporia!
  Flashed they into Soporia.
Gay were the plumes that their helmets bore;
Gay were the trappings their horses wore;
Gay was their laughter. Each word they spoke
Rang like a trumpet, and rudely awoke
    Soporia! Soporia!

Up to the doors of the Castle,
Up to the Sandman's hall,
Spurred they their dragon-winged horses.
Loudly they gave their call—
"Soporia! Soporia!
No more sleep in Soporia!"
Pale grew the cheek of the Viceroy then;
Pale grew the lips of the Viceroy's men;
Pale were their faces; for, no mistake,
The city of slumber was wide awake.
Soporia! Soporia!

"Bring us some food for our horses;
Bring us some wine for ourselves;
Then will we tell you our errand.
Rouse ye, you pitiful elves!
Soporia! Soporia!
We'll be kings in Soporia!"
Blundered the servants like daylight owls.
Blundered the Sandman. Like hunted fowls
Blundered the citizens, one and all.
What in the world had occurred to appal
Soporia? Soporia?

Then, when the horses were foddered;
Then, when the Princes had quaffed,
Called they the Viceroy before them;
Loudly and long they laughed.
"Soporia! Soporia!
Why have we come to Soporia?

We want some excitement to vary our lives.
We want some Princesses to win for wives.
We want King Longbeard to know that he
Must hurry down here, with Princesses three."
Soporia! Soporia!

"Send him our message directly;
Send him our strict command.
Tell him we brook no refusal—
Peril of life and land!
Soporia! Soporia!
Here we are in Soporia!"
Come, then, O King, in thy kingly grace.
Come, then, and answer them face to face.
Come, and get rid of this threefold pest,
That has startled thy city of peaceful rest,
Soporia! Soporia!

When the King heard the insolent message of the Airland Princes he drew himself up, and his face flushed with anger, and his eyes flashed fire, so that the Lord Chamberlain was almost afraid to look at him, and dared not speak a word.

At last the King said, "Typhonio, Simoomio, and Cyclonio—those are they, without doubt. Three of the very worst fellows going. They must be mad to do such a thing; though, indeed, they are wild enough for anything. But

we must bring them to their senses. Go, my Lord Chamberlain, and order the Commander-in-Chief to draw up three regiments of infantry, and one of cavalry, on the Parade Ground, and have them in readiness to march for Soporia in an hour's time. Let them parade in full dress, with their bands; and each man must carry twenty-one rounds of blank cartridge."

So the Lord Chamberlain went off; and the King went to breakfast.

And all this time the Chief Cook was sitting on the edge of the dresser, saying to himself, "I wonder what he wanted me out on the bridge for!"

CHAPTER II

Now, these three wild Princes, though they were very terrible in their own country, had lost all their power of doing harm by coming into Dreamland. All they could do was to make a noise, which, certainly, was very disagreeable to the sleepy folk. But they were so used to having their own way, both in Airland and down on the earth, that they never thought any power in Dreamland could thwart them; and so they sent their insolent message to King Longbeard.

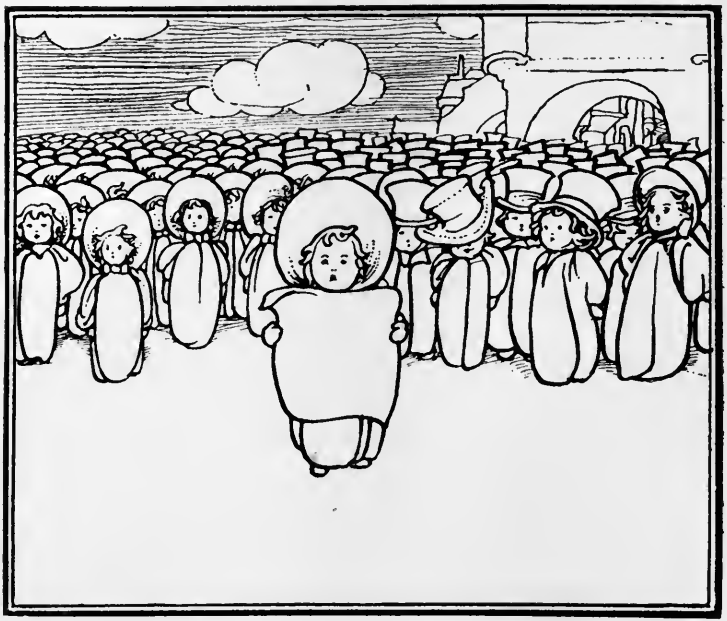
The Grand Sandman was always so sleepy that he hardly ever knew the difference between what was real and what was not, and so he had been terribly upset. When the three Princes galloped their horses into the great hall of his castle, and threatened to blow him, his city, and all the Williwinkies over the edge of the horizon unless their message was sent on, he was so frightened that he forgot to ask them if they really knew the use of the globes. And then he trembled so violently, and scattered so much unnecessary sand, that all the children down below began to rub their eyes, and thought it was P.M. and not A.M.

Do you remember that morning?

It was the morning that you did not want to get up when Isabella Jane called you.

Well, when the Sandman had done trembling, he called the seven purple swans, and sent them off to tell the King; and you know how they told him.

When King Longbeard had finished his breakfast, he sent round to the stables for his black charger Achilles, and rode off, with his body-guard of fairy knights, who always attended him on state occasions. When he arrived at the Parade Ground he found his soldiers drawn up, as he had ordered; and so



he placed himself at their head, with the Commander-in-Chief at his left hand, and all the bands struck up a march together, and away they went along the road to Soporia.

They had not many miles to go; and, as soon as they came within sight of the city, the Williwinkies came out by thousands to meet them, and very miserable they all looked. Their eyes were red, and their hair was full of fluff from

their blankets and feathers from their pillows. They wore their night-gowns, and all the men had on tall silk hats and the women coal-scuttle bonnets. And when they saw the King the men took off their hats and sat upon them as a mark of respect, while the women gave three feeble cheers, that sounded more like snores than anything else. The good King found himself rather perplexed between pity for, and amusement at them ; but the latter feeling gained the day when one of the women, pushed forward by her sisters, stepped in front of his horse, and began to read an address of welcome.

"May it please your most gracious Maj——," she began ; but, on getting so far, she went fast asleep, with her mouth wide open. King Longbeard laughed until he nearly rolled off his horse ; and then, turning to the Commander-in-Chief, he desired him to halt the soldiers where they were, while he himself rode on to the Castle of Soporia to confront the intruders. So on he rode into the city, which was gaily illuminated to receive him. Every window-sill had at least one boxful of night-lights burning in saucers, though it was broad daylight ; the shutters being up in the shop windows had not prevented the loyal tradesmen from leaving the gas burning inside ;

and a triumphal arch of stable lanterns and hot-water bottles had been erected in front of the Castle.

When the King and his body-guard of knights rode through this arch, they would have laughed still more at the absurd scene before them if their powers of laughing had not been already well-nigh exhausted. In the middle of the lowest step of the flight that led up to the Castle door sat the Viceroy, fast asleep. He was leaning a little forward, nursing a large blue cotton umbrella, and holding on with both hands to the handle of the bell-pull, whose chain, passing over his shoulder, still reached back to its hole in the door-post. The trampling of the horses roused him a little, and, without awakening enough to become conscious of their presence, he threw himself forward, giving the chain a violent tug, which, however, had no effect on the bell within. On the other hand, the chain itself broke, and the would-be ringer was pitched head-foremost at the very feet of King Longbeard's horse; and it was well for him that that noble beast's temper was so perfect that it only moved gently to one side, and allowed the now thoroughly awakened Viceroy to scramble to his feet. When he saw who had arrived, his face assumed a most

comical expression of mingled bewilderment and satisfaction: he opened his mouth once or twice as if he were going to welcome his nephew, but all he succeeded in giving vent to was an enormous yawn.

"Well, Uncle Morpheus," said the King; "here I am, as you have sent for me. You seem to be in a good deal of difficulty, judging from the look of things."

"Difficulty is not the word for it, your Majesty," said the Grand Sandman, again yawning violently. "It's sheer distraction. My goodness! look at this bell-pull—new last week, and cost seven-and-sixpence! Do you think we can afford a new one?"

"No matter about the bell-pull, uncle, but let us hear about these troublesome intruders. How do you come to be out here all by yourself?"

"Well, you see, your Majesty, I was just having a nap after dinner——"

"But it's not dinner-time yet," said King Longbeard.

"After *yesterday's* dinner," said the Sandman, trying to look offended at the interruption, but spoiling his dignity by another fearful yawn. "And so the populace—isn't that what you call them?"

"The Williwinkies?" said the King.

"Yes, with pleasure," said the Sandman; "the Williwinkies. They all wanted to go to meet you in their go-to-meeting hats and bonnets. I hope you admired them. It was *I* who chose them, you know. The traveller came round with samples, and——"

"Yes, my dear uncle," put in the King; "very nice indeed. But about these fellows from Airland?"

"Oh, certainly!" said the Sandman. "You see, I came to the door to see them off—the populace, that is—and all the servants had a week's holiday to go with them; and then they banged the door behind me and wakened me up—these Airland fellows, that is—and I couldn't finish my nap. So I rang, and rang, and rang, and it was all no use."

"Then there's no one in the Castle now but the Airland Princes?" asked the King.

"No one but the Airland Princes," said the Sandman solemnly; "and, as you see, they have pulled down all the blinds, so that you can't see my illuminations. Why, I had a wax candle in every window—real wax, you know; and a Japanese lantern hung up in the hall! What do you think of that? And, now, I'm sure, they have blown every one of them out. How unfortunate!"

"Most unfortunate indeed," said the King, kindly hiding his amusement. "But now we must bring these mad fellows to their senses."

"I can't understand how they were ever allowed to come here," said the Viceroy. "You and their father have always been on such good terms; especially since my grand-nephew's marriage."

"Their father has very little control over these lads, at the best of times, uncle; and when they break out, as they have done now, he can do nothing with them. But they shall soon find I am not to be trifled with. Herald mine!" cried the King to his Trumpeter-Gnat, who was flying overhead, "go back to the Commander-in-Chief, and bid him bring the troops up here at once. Let the cavalry line three sides of the square before the Castle, and let the infantry be drawn up in front of them in three columns."

Away flew the gnat; and in a short time the King's troops marched into the square to the sound of their bands, and drew up as they had been directed. The Williwinkies, unable to follow them into the square itself, swarmed up to the roofs and windows of the neighbouring houses, where most of them fell asleep even before the music stopped. Then, by the King's

order, the great Trumpeter-Gnat flew up into the air before the principal windows of the Castle, and made the following proclamation:

"O yes! O yes! O yes! Typhonio, Simoomio, and Cyclonio! Whereas you three have intruded into this Castle of Soporia, in the Land of Nod, in the realms of his most gracious Majesty Longbeard, King of Dreamland; and whereas you have compelled the Viceroy of Soporia to send to the said King a most insolent message on your behalf; I now call upon you, in the name of his Majesty, to come forth and surrender yourselves, that justice may be done upon you."

But there was no answer of any sort from the Castle.

"Do you think, your Majesty," said the Sandman, "that if I were to throw a handful of gravel at the windows——"

"Nonsense! my dear Uncle Morpheus," said the King; "it would be quite useless."

"It always wakens *me*," said the Viceroy to himself, rather sulkily.

Then the King commanded that the proclamation should be repeated three times, and that after each repetition seven volleys of blank cartridge should be fired by the troops, which was done accordingly.

CHAPTER III

At the first volley fired by the troops, the Williwinkies all sat straight up, and began rubbing their eyes. At the second those on the house-tops began scrambling down as fast as they could, and at the third a regular panic set in, and they rolled higgledy-piggledy into the gutters, where they lay with their heads downwards. Then, when the seventh volley had been fired, and the Gnat began his second repetition of the proclamation, they all disappeared from both house-tops and windows, and the city looked as if it were undergoing a siege.

Twenty rounds of blank cartridge had been discharged without further effect, and the soldiers were loading for the twenty-first, when the blind of one of the principal windows of the Castle was pulled to one side, and a yellowish face peeped out for an instant. The twenty-first round was fired; and then the window itself was flung violently open, and three young men, mounted on winged horses, rode out on a large balcony that overhung the front door.

On seeing them, the King rode forward to address them; but the one who had looked from behind the curtain, who had the appearance of a Chinaman, shouted out, "Hi! you

'CYCLONIO.'

man! you piecy King Longbea'd, why you makee so muchee bobbely? Why you no makee bling one piecy plincess topside? You makee go catchee plincess, chop-chop, else me blow you out allee same one piecy candle!"

"Mashallah!" exclaimed the second Prince, who wore the burnoose and had the swarthy face and reckless bearing of an Arab of the desert—"Mashallah, thou beardless infidel, hast thou dared to come hither without a princess to lighten my harem? Bring her hither at once, or by Muhummad, I will scorch thee to a cinder. Look sharp now! Mashallah! Bismillah! also Allah Akbar!"

"Pale-face," cried the third, who sat like a statue on his horse, so that not even a feather of his eagle plume could be seen to move; "where is the squaw for my wigwam? Bring her, or there will be big medicine, and I guess your scalp will be fixed. Gee-hoshaphat! Pig-that-stands-on-the-tip-of-his-tail has spoken. Wah!"

"Typhonio, Simoomio, and Cyclonio," replied King Longbeard, "I will just give you while the big drum beats ten; and if by that time I see anything of you on this side of the wall of Airland, you will dearly rue having ever crossed it."

The three Princes gave a yell of defiance. They struck their spurs deep into their horses' flanks, and leaped over the parapet of the balcony into the air. At the same time a change came over them. Typhonio was enveloped in a lurid mist, like a thunder-cloud, out of which broke flashes of vivid lightning, and whose edges frothed like the foam of the sea. About Simoomio the air took a darkening, ruddy glare, and fiery blasts, laden with sand, darted from him on every quarter. Cyclonio's horse began spinning round so fast that it was impossible to discern head or tail, while a frozen cataract of hail and snow rose fountain-like on all sides of him, and poured down into the square beneath.

At the same time, King Longbeard's fairy knights rose swiftly into the air on their horses, and formed a ring about the three, while the Viceroy, unfurling his umbrella, went and sat down in his former seat on the door-step. And then, at a word from the King, the circle of fairy knights closed in upon their challengers. All became dark as midnight, and the square was only faintly illumined by the night-lights that still flickered on the window-sills, and the lanterns in the triumphal arch, with the fast-following flashes from Typhonio's thunder-cloud.

Stroke after stroke resounded from the big drum of the centre column of infantry. One!—two!—three!—The air grew darker, and the lightning flashed more vividly. Four!—five!—The scorching sand hissed as it mingled with the snow and hail. The Viceroy, half choking, staggered from his place, drew a box of cough-lozenges from his pocket, and offered one to the King, who graciously accepted it. Six!—seven!—It seemed to grow a little lighter. Eight!—With a rush like that of a rocket, one of the winged horses burst forth from the *mêlée*, and disappeared into the east, leaving a trail of fire behind him. Nine!—Another rushing swoop to the southward, and the sand ceased to fall. Ten!—One last headlong flight to the west; and then the glorious light of day shone out, as the squadron of fairy knights descended, unharmed and victorious, into the square.

During the latter part of the fight the Grand

Sandman had been standing in a corner of the porch, with his face to the wall, like a naughty boy, because, as he said, he was a man of peace; but as soon as he found that it was all over, he came out of his retreat, and his first remark, as soon as he saw the effect of Prince Cyclonio's means of attack, was, "Oh dear, what a mess!" And certainly the ground was a good deal cut up by the torrents of hail that had fallen, and puddles of half-melted snow were plentiful just about the Castle steps. But King Longbeard put his hand to his mouth and gave a peculiar whistle; and in less time than it takes to tell it, there came a band of fairy workmen and put the whole place in perfect order again. The same useful helpers soon repaired the Castle bell, got the door open, and helped the Williwinkies, who were almost paralysed with terror, to undress and go to bed.

The last thing the King saw, as he rode away with his soldiers and knights, was the Viceroy diligently sweeping together all that he could find of Prince Simoomio's sand, and putting it into the folds of his umbrella, because, as he said, it was sure to come in handy, some time or another. And when the expedition returned to the royal Castle of Dreamland, they found what, after all, was the most serious result of

the whole affair; for meal-times had been utterly upset, as the chief Cook had sat all day, and was still sitting, on the edge of the kitchen dresser, saying to himself, "I wonder what in the world His Majesty wanted me out on the bridge for!"

So the King sent him to Soporia, to cook for the Williwinkies, where he lived happily ever after.

AT THE GATE OF DREAMLAND.

At the Gate of Dreamland

THE Dreamland flowers—the baby flowers of Dreamland — how lovely they are! Even as our babies are so much lovelier than ourselves, so are those of the flowers in comparison with them. I think babies are the loveliest of all God's creatures: their sweetness is such that, when one tries to tell it, there seem to come

tiny fingers out of the unseen, and touch one's lips with silence. And this is how I cannot tell you one half the beauty of those little ones that King Longbeard loves so well.

All Dreamland loves them, too; and when the birds first flew out into Airland, and began to sing to the wind-elves, their songs were all about them; and they told how, as soon as the King saw that the babies were strong enough, he would send them down, through Airland, in charge of the fairies. So the wind-elves were full of curiosity about them, and kept asking, "When are they coming? Oh! when are they coming, that we may help to carry them down to their places in the gardens of earth?"

It was just at the close of Autumn, and the Frost-Queen had come earlier than usual to pay her annual visit to the Court of Airland. She was a very melancholy being; for a spell had been laid upon her, that every living creature she kissed should die; and so she always wore deep mourning; but, as she came from Japan, where they wear white for mourning, she wore white too. She came, flying before the sun, on the back of a wild East-wind, and found the birds still singing their flower-songs; and she joined with the wind-elves, and asked,

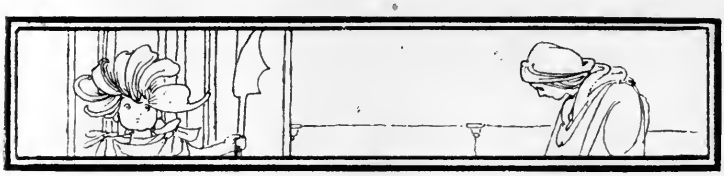
"When are they coming? Oh! when are they coming, that I may kiss them?"

Now, the swallows heard what she said, and so they went and told the nightingales, for they knew how a kiss from the Frost-Queen meant death; and then both swallows and nightingales flew away, back into Dreamland, and told King Longbeard how she had been speaking of his loved ones. So the King said, "I know the Frost-Queen well, and must guard my flowers against her. She is very bold and reckless, and may even try to force her way in here." And then he ordered extra sentinels to be posted at the gate that led into Airland, to whom he gave a special command and message for her, in case she should present herself.

When the Queen saw the nightingales and swallows fly away, she turned to the blackbirds, and the thrushes, who had remained to meet her, and asked them to sing to her again; but they could not, because she looked so sad that it frightened them. However, they found a

robin-redbreast, who was such a happy-go-lucky little fellow that he was not afraid of any one or anything, and sent him to sing for her. There was one subject he was never tired singing of, namely, children's love; because he knew more about it than any other bird; and so he sang about that to the Frost-Queen, with the result of raising a great strife in her heart—a strife between love and death. For the more his song told her of the flower-babies and their loving ways, the more she longed to embrace them; but, at the same time, the more she realised how terrible to them her kiss would be. And so it went on for many days; but in the end love conquered, and she said to the robin, "Now, if I can only see them afar off, I shall be content."

Then she drew her white robe of mourning more closely round her, and rose up through the clouds, till she came near the place where the river of silver water pours forth into the air, beneath the wall of Dreamland. It rushes out in a rich cataract of beauty, that they call the *Cloud-fall;* for the whole volume of the water is dashed at once into the finest spray; and it is this spray that gives every cloud its silver lining. Then she passed along, outside the wall, till she came to the Dreamland gate, where King Longbeard had posted his sentinels, who



now stood on the towers of the gateway, and looked down on her; and when she saw them, she knew them at once, for they were none other than the great golden chrysanthemums, whom all Japan delights in. So she was glad when she saw them, for she knew their nobleness of mind, and how well they deserve the name men give them, of "the honourable Chrysanthemum"; and so she felt full of hope; but the gate was shut, and so she drew her robe of mourning still more closely around her, as an outward answer to it. Then she called to the sentinels, and said, "O honourable ones! I have heard of the beauty and sweetness of the baby flowers, and my heart has been full of longing for them; but then I thought how my kiss must only bring them death, and so there was a great strife in my heart. Now, love has conquered, and I no longer wish to kiss them. All I ask is, that I may come in and see them, and hear the wonderful songs that the blue bees sing, as they watch over them."

When the chrysanthemums heard her, they consulted together as to what answer they should make; for their orders from King Longbeard were strict, that she must not be admitted, still they wished to treat her with all possible kindness and courtesy. At last they replied—and their voices came sweetly through their myriad mouths—"O Queen, we must not allow you to come inside the gate; but, since it is as you say, and love has conquered in your heart, we will open the doors; and you may come up, and stand in the gateway, and see what can be seen from here."

Now, though she was a queen, and not accustomed to meet with refusals, when she heard their answer, instead of showing any annoyance at it, she folded her arms on her breast, and bowed her head; and when the sentinels saw it, they said, "Now, indeed, we know that you are speaking the truth to us; and we honour you for it, O Queen. And when the time comes for us to leave our service here, and go down into the gardens of earth, some of us will be near you always."

And here it may interest you to know, that it was because of this promise that so many of the chrysanthemums were allowed to become winter flowers.


THE FROST QUEEN.

Then the sentinels came down from the towers, and threw the gate wide open; and the Frost-Queen came up, and stood in the entrance and looked into Dreamland; but because of the strength of the new love in her heart, she made no attempt to go any farther in. Away from the gateway, the road lay through a thick bower of trees, that met in an arcade overhead; and the Castle and its gardens were hidden in the distance, far up the valley; and so at first she thought she should see nothing. But one of the sentinels said to her, "Pluck one of my leaves, O Queen, and rub it on your eyes."

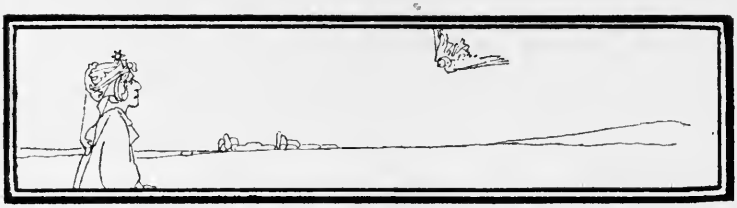
She did so; and, in a moment, the trees and the distance became as nothing, and she saw clearly all she had desired to see. Before her lay open the whole story of baby-life; and she spread out her hands, with a cry of wonder, so that the robe of white mourning fell from her shoulders and floated out into Airland; and the dwellers on earth saw the sun himself dazzled with the crimson flush of her beauty, and said, "What a wonderful sunset! It looks like a hard frost coming on." But they did not know what they were talking about.

And when she had gazed her fill, and drunk in with her ears the distant music of the bees, she turned to the sentinels, and said, "O

honourable ones, it is indeed as the robin sang to me; and though I can never escape the spell by which I am bound, yet my life will henceforth be the happier for what I have heard and seen to-day. And now I must go back; but if there is anything in all my treasures wherewith I can reward you, speak, and it shall be yours."

Then the Chrysanthemums replied, "Our reward, O Queen, is only in your happiness and our own duty. But we have a charge for you from our King, which he desires that you will show your gratitude in carrying out. It is that when you return to Airland, you will go to the houses that men build for themselves on earth; and, as the inhabitants sleep, paint on their window-panes pictures of the flowers of Dreamland, such as you have seen, that all may know of their loveliness."

"I would gladly do so," replied the Frost-Queen; "but, alas, the flowers are not for me to paint! I must only visit the houses of men, clad in my mourning-robe of white; and whenever I pass through Airland towards earth, the wind-elves, and the cloud-spirits, and the other servants of the King of that country, take all my colours to deck themselves with, and leave me none to use below."



"That is a serious difficulty," said the Chrysanthemums; "and we must report it to our Royal Master. We suppose the flowers cannot be done; but could you not, at least, try the leaves?"

"Do you not understand?" said the Frost-Queen. "Green would be as impossible for me as any other colour. Whatever I do must be done in white, my colour of mourning. In the white sadness of my tears," she added, with a sorrowful smile; "for, now that I have seen the baby-flowers, I shall weep all the more, because I may never kiss them; even though my life be the happier for having seen them."

"Now that we think of it," replied the Sentinels, "King Longbeard did not say anything definite about its being done in colours. If you can draw the leaves and flowers in white, that will satisfy him."

Then the Queen bid the sentinels farewell, and turned to come down through Airland; but

first she called to the wind-elves, and begged them to find her robe that had floated away. So the elves went to look for it, and searched for a long time without being able to find it. Some of them flew down to where the Storm-maker was at work, and asked him if he had seen it; but he laughed at them, and said, "I have white robes here, enough for all the mountains, and to spare. What should I want with the Frost-Queen's?" And others went to the Watcher on Strath Finella, and asked him; and he, too, laughed at them, and said, "I am robed in white myself, and I see a white robe on Kerloch, besides the many that hang on the Grampians. I am making, even now, a robe to spread over the Mearns. What should I know of the Frost-Queen's?" But at last there came a heron, flying from the West, and said, "I saw the Frost-Queen's robe fly out into the air; and there came a flock of doves, and carried it away, over the wall of Dreamland."

And that, indeed, was what had become of it. King Longbeard had sent his messenger-doves to fetch it, and, when they brought it, had placed on it the star of his Order for Beauty —the six-pointed Deodara, and directed the pattern of it to be embroidered all over the robe; and that then the robe and star should

be taken back to the gate. And so, just as the wind-elves returned from the search, the doves came flying to the Queen with their burden.

When the Frost-Queen saw the decoration she cried out, "Now I begin to understand all that is meant by the victory of love: for I lost my robe when the love of the flower-babies cured me of selfishness, and now it is come back to me—no longer a robe of mourning, but of joy! Henceforward I will use it for the life of the flowers of earth, to shield them from the deadly enchantment of my kisses. If ever I am tempted to kiss them again, I will draw this lovely robe between my lips and theirs, and so they shall have no harm."

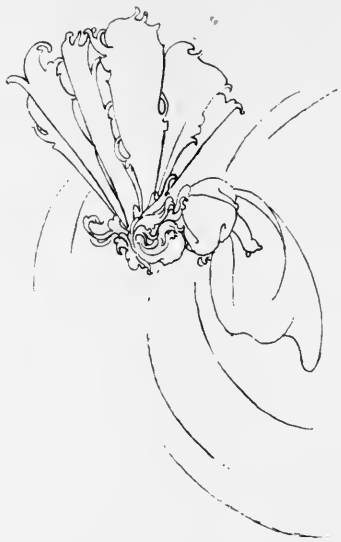
Then the doves flew back to the Castle, and told King Longbeard; and he came down to the gate himself; but when he arrived there, the Frost-Queen was gone, and the golden-starred sentinels stood watching after her as she took her flight down to the lower regions. And the King stood with them, watching too; and saw how she lighted on the earth, in a place where there were fairy gardens, and young plants not long sent down from Dreamland. And she lay down among these to rest; but before she did so she drew her robe over her face, that not even her breath might reach them.

Two children were passing by, and they saw her, but did not understand, and said, "What a beautiful fall of snow!"

The King laughed when he heard them; but his face grew grave again, for he was sorry for the Frost-Queen, and that not even his power could take away the spell that had been laid on her. And the children went into a house, near where she lay, and came out again, full of glee, with tools in their hands. They went to where a corner of her robe was spread over a newly-descended rose; and they rolled the soft, starry whiteness together, and beat and crushed it into a hideous shape of human deformity, with two pieces of coal for eyes.

Then the Frost-Queen's breath came to the rose's resting-place, and it died. And King Longbeard said, "Ah me!" and closed the gate of Dreamland.


THROUCH THE
BATTLEDORE.



Through the Battledore

CHAPTER I

THERE was a great day of rejoicing in Dreamland: the Princess Monica's birthday had come round again. It was exactly a year since she had lost her crown, and had it brought back by the brave little fish that turned into a stickleback; and now she had been given her new crown, made, as before, of everything that

had won fresh love for her through the past twelve months. It was even more beautiful than the other, and thickly set with rare jewels; and out of it rose a plume of the loveliest white feathers, that bent over and shaded her sweet little face.

Every one and everything in Dreamland loved her so, that they rejoiced more on her birthday than on those of the other Royal children; and her brothers and sisters joined so sincerely in that love, that they never felt in the least degree jealous of her, but their hearts were rather the fuller of gladness to see her so well appreciated. But, as we have seen, there were mischievous elves about, and at times even worse beings, who did not care so much for beauty and goodness; and King Longbeard, with all his power, and the good fairies, with all their watchfulness, were not able to keep the kingdom free from these intruders.

The worst of them all was an ugly little troll, whose name was Microbacterion, who lived in Nightmaria, when he was at home, but who spent most of his time prowling about in search of mischief. He used to travel underground, and burrowed along a hundred times as fast as any mole. Fortunately, he could do no real harm, except to those who were careless and

slovenly, and delighted in ugly things; but he was something of an enchanter, and could play strange tricks on even the good fairies, if he caught them napping. And this is how he contrived to bring a greater anxiety upon the Court of Dreamland than even Prince Robert's disappearance had caused.

The younger children, with a party of their fairy playfellows, were having some games under a group of trees in the Castle park, and the Princesses Marian and Elsie had driven a shuttlecock backwards and forwards nearly two hundred times between their battledores, when a sudden puff of wind caught the feathers and carried it away over some rhododendron-bushes. The girls ran to look for it, but could not find it, and none of the others had seen where it fell. The Princess Elsie, however, found, lying beneath an oak-tree, another shuttlecock, larger and handsomer than the one they had lost, and this they took to continue the game with. But misfortunes were not over. The wind came

again; and this time, just as the Princess Marian was making a harder stroke than usual, blew the shuttlecock so violently against the parchment of her battledore, that it burst it open, slipped through, and then, to her amazement, disappeared as utterly as the first one had done.

Both the Princesses cried out, and all the fairies came running or flying to them. And when they told what had happened, the fairy Blandina said, "There must be some mischievous sprite about here, without our knowing it. I think we had better go into the gardens for the present, at least. Come along, dears. Come, Monica! Why—where is she?"

"I saw her lying on the grass just now," said another fairy; "she seemed as if she were going asleep."

"Whereabouts was she?" asked Blandina.

"Under that oak-tree," said the fairy; pointing to where the second shuttlecock had been found.

"Oh!" cried the Princess Elsie; "she was not there just now."

"Then she must be lost," exclaimed the others.

And then began a most anxious search. The Princesses called, "Monica! Monica! 'Possum,

darling, come to us! Oh, come to us!" But there was no answer.

And the fairies flew high and low, in, out, and about, among the trees; but not a trace could be found of the little one.

And at last the King was sent for; and he and the Queen, and all who were with them, joined in the search; but it was useless. The Princess Monica was lost indeed.

When they were all weary, and the evening was coming on, they were standing round the oak-tree; and the King, almost worn out with grief and anxiety, leant his head sadly against its trunk. He had hardly done so, however, when he heard a voice, that seemed to come from the heart of the tree, shrilly singing in his ear,

"Don't despair, most gracious King;
But form the mystic fairy-ring!"

At once King Longbeard started forward. "Fairies! my fairies!" he cried; "at last you can help me. Form one of your beautiful rings here at once, with all your proper ceremonial."

Then all the fairies came out on the grass, led by Blandina, and stood in a ring; but they felt too sad to dance and sing as usual. Then the King went back to the tree, and put his ear to

the bark again, and listened. And again he heard the voice singing:

"Bring the broken battledore,
And place it on the grassy floor!"

So he called the Princess Marian, who brought her battledore, and laid it down in the midst of the fairies. Then he listened once more; and, this time, the voice sang:

"Bid them dance the magic round.
'Tis thus the lost one shall be found!"

Then the King called to the fairies to begin their dance, for he had had a message of joy. And so that wonderful dance began, that men have often dreamt of, and tried to paint in their pictures, but never have seen. And as the dancers went round and round, the hoop of the battledore began to enlarge itself, and it grew bigger and bigger, until, out of the hole in the parchment, leaped the Princess Monica, into the middle of the fairy ring.

I need hardly tell you what a tumult of joy welcomed her; but you will like to hear what had happened to her, and where she had been. But this must begin another chapter.

CHAPTER II

When the little Princess ran away from her companions, and lay down to rest beneath the oak-tree, she could not have known that at that very moment, burrowing about beneath that very spot, was the mischievous troll, Microbacterion. If she had, she would not have closed her eyes and given way to the sleepiness that had come over her. But she went off as soundly as Bo-peep herself; and then, out of an earthworm's hole, popped her tiny enemy. He crawled up a stem of grass that brought him close to her ear, and then he whispered to her words that, if I were to write them down here, would make my book too small to be seen without a microscope. Through her sleep she heard them; and then she began to grow smaller and smaller, and to change so in appearance, that at last she looked just like a shuttlecock, with the plumes of her crown for its feathers. And then, as we know, her sisters took her to play with, and it ended in her popping through the battledore, into the land of Jennesay Quaw—no wonder, then, that the others could not find her!

And when she woke up, she was lying among a quantity of feathers, at the bottom of a big nest. She was still very small, but in other

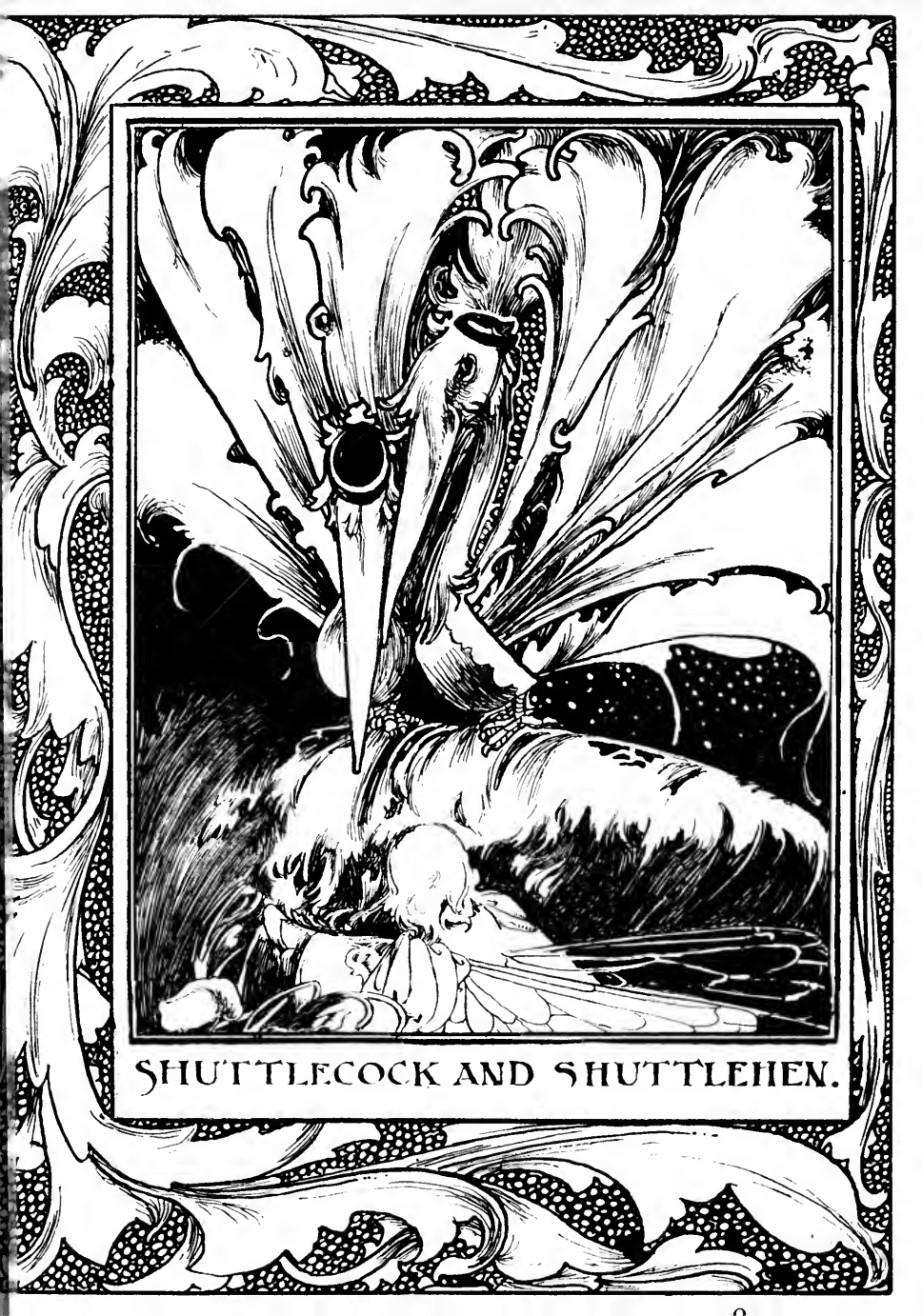
ways was quite like herself again. Strange to say, she did not feel in the least frightened, or even surprised at what had happened to her; but sat up, rubbed her eyes, and wondered where she was. On the edge of the nest were two curious-looking birds, who were attentively examining her. They had on red velvet caps and jackets, ornamented with gold braid; their wings were of stiff, white feathers, and their tails of the same, the latter being set on exactly as a shuttlecock's feathers are; and the Princess saw at once that they must be a real live shuttlecock and shuttlehen.

"What on earth is this?" exclaimed the Bird with the handsomest plumage. "What *have* you been hatching out, my dear?"

"I'm sure I don't know what it is," replied the duller of the two. "I never saw anything like it."

"I did, once," said the Shuttlecock; "in a toy-shop I lodged in. They called it a *doll*. It was full of saw-dust. This one is, too. Just you peck her, and see."

But the Princess had no idea of submitting to such rudeness; so she stood up in the nest and said, "I'm not a dolly. Nuffing of the sort! I'm a Princess; and I'm Papa's own girlie."



SHUTTLECOCK AND SHUTTLEHEN.

"Then how did you come here?" asked the Shuttlecock.

"I comed right through the door," said the Princess.

"Which door?" asked the Shuttlehen anxiously.

"The battledore, of course," said the Princess. "There's no other door, is there?"

"Certainly not," said the Shuttlecock; "but what did you think of the battle?"

"I didn't see any battle," said the Princess.

"Then we must set that right at once," said the Bird. "Come along with me."

"Along what?" asked the Princess.

"Oh, along the air, I suppose," said the Bird. "It's not a long distance, at all events." And then he got into the bottom of the nest, beside her. "Now jump upon my back, and hold on," he said.

The Princess did as he desired, taking a firm hold of the collar of his jacket; and then away he flew with her. They passed through what would have seemed like a wood, only that, instead of such trees as she had seen in Dreamland, there were countless straight poles, most of which were crowned with a variety of odd-looking articles.

"I never did see such funny trees," said the Princess. "What are they?"

"That one, with the crock on top," said the Shuttlecock, "is a pan-tree. The one beside it, with nothing on top, is a simple pole-tree. The one with the wheel is an axle-tree; and that with the saddle, a saddle-tree, of course. There's a curious one—one of our rarest, I'm sorry to say. It comes from the East, and we call it the Indus-tree. Perhaps you'd like to see the poet-tree," he added. "It's a little out of our way, but it is one of our greatest curiosities."

"If you please," said the Princess.

The bird made a swerve in his flight, and carried her to where it grew. It differed from the rest in being topped by what looked like a shock of long, lanky, black hair; immediately below which hung what the Princess found to be a quantity of leaves, indeed—but they were leaves of paper, such as we find in books.

"Take one," said the Shuttlecock. And the

Princess put her hand out, as they flew past, and pulled one off.

"Now read it," said the Bird.

So the Princess began, and read as follows:

THE TURNIP AND THE ELEPHANTS

A Turnip on a golden plate
Was elegantly lying,
While round it, consciously elate,
Three Elephants were flying.
They sang, "It seems to us that fops
Delight in eating turnip-tops!"
And then they fell a-crying.

The Turnip wondered, as he heard
Their notes of lamentation;
And thought them painfully absurd,
Nor suited to their station;
For well he knew that merry chants
Are more befitting elephants
Than accents of vexation.

So up he stood, and thus he said
By way of admonition,
"I think you surely are misled
To pity my condition.
You need not make, supposing fops
Do take to eating turnip-tops,
So sad an exhibition.

"You flutter in your airy rounds—
Though that itself is curious;
Since elephants weigh many pounds,
And lighter ones are spurious—
Yet, if I really thought you felt
A pity, thus to make you melt,
I should be simply furious.

"I don't know how you lost your size,
And managed to become bugs.
You don't seem pretty to my eyes,
Or graceful, as are some bugs.
You're small; but still you're much too stout.
Get out, you hypocrites! Get out,
You three atrocious humbugs!"

The Elephants, in mild alarm,
Said, "This is unexpected!
We did not mean you any harm,
Or know that you objected."
And so they dried their eyes, and smiled,
And, since they had the Turnip riled,
Got out, as he directed.

"I fink I don't *quite* understand that poem," said the little Princess.

"Neither do I," said the Shuttlecock.

"What did those ephalents get out of?" asked the Princess. "Was it out of a nest, like us?"

"Out of breath, like me, perhaps," replied the

Bird; "or, perhaps, out of pocket. I often am, with my large family."

"Out of whose pocket?" asked the Princess.

"That's just what I can't tell," said the Bird. "It's the way we explain everything here, you know."

"But you didn't explain it at all," said the Princess. "I don't understand it, not one little bit."

"No matter," said the Shuttlecock. "We haven't much farther to go."

CHAPTER III

By this time they were well out of the wood; and the shuttlecock perched, panting for breath, on a stump, by the side of a large green field.

"I must leave you here," he said to the Princess. "This is the field of battle; but you needn't be afraid. They're quite harmless, you know."

"Who are *they?*" asked the Princess, getting off the shuttlecock's back. But she received no answer, for the bird, without another word, flew away into the wood again: so she sat down on the stump, and waited for what might happen next.

She had not long to wait; for almost immediately, a trumpet sounded, and in through a gate of the field rode a procession of richly dressed men, with a like number of women, on horseback. The herald went before them, still blowing his trumpet, and led the way to the middle of the field, where they all drew up in a circle, and bowed very low to each other. Then the herald, who was in the centre of the ring, began bowing to each in turn; and as there were more than a hundred of them, and he seemed very much pressed for time, he bobbed up and down—just like a jack-in-a-box, the Princess thought. When he had finished this, he blew his trumpet again, and then all the equestrians drew up in two rows, and sat facing each other.

Again the herald trumpeted, and shouted out, "O yes! O yes! O yes! Know all men by these presents——"

"I don't see any presents," shouted one of the men on horseback. "What have you done with them?"

"I really am very sorry, your Majesty," replied the Herald; "but I hadn't time to buy any this morning."

"Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself," said the man who was enormously stout, wore a suit of armour, and had a strong French accent. "You can't go on with your proclamation without the presents, you know. I suppose I must send some one to fetch them. Who will go?" he asked, turning to the others.

"Send my Teddy," said another very stout gentleman, in a large hat with a plume of hanging feathers, which he wore very much on the side of his head. "He's a steady boy, William, and used to being ordered about."

"*My* Teddy's the youngest," said another man, in a robe trimmed with rich fur, with a plumed cap on his head; "and, besides, he's best out of his uncle's way."

"I quite agree with you there, Ned," said a little hunchbacked man, also very richly dressed. "Get rid of the kids—that's my principle. Better send them both, Bill."

The fat man, who had first spoken, beckoned to two boys—one of them a mere child, who had taken part in the procession; and, giving them a whispered message, sent them riding off

on their ponies in great glee. "Now," he said, turning to the herald, "what are we to do next? We can't possibly fight until after the proclamation, you know."

"Please, your Majesty," said the Herald, "I really don't know. I must go home and look up the precedents; unless, indeed—Oh! dear me! she's off again!"

This exclamation was called forth by the sight of an old lady on a white horse, who had broken out of the ranks suddenly, and was cantering round the field in the most absurd manner. She had on an extremely stiff dress of gold brocade, and wore an enormous ruff round her neck, that came high above her head. But the most curious thing about her was that her feet were bare, and to each of her toes was attached a little bell; and as she cantered along the bells jingled quite musically; and, when they heard them, all the rest of the equestrians began cantering after her.

The herald, who was left alone, seemed greatly annoyed at this. He took his trumpet, and blew it till the Princess Monica thought he would burst his cheeks, but the others took no notice of him. Then a happy thought seemed to strike him, and, climbing up on another stump, near where she sat, he shouted out, "Once round is

one revolution! No more kings or queens for the present!"

In an instant, all the horses, with their riders, disappeared; and the last thing the Princess saw of the herald was, that he was kicking out, at the gate, a vulgar-looking man, with a coarse, disagreeable face, and saying to him, "Out you go, Noll. Don't let me catch you sneaking in among your betters again."

They had hardly gone, when the Princess heard a fluttering of wings, and down from among the trees flew the shuttlecock with another paper leaf in his mouth, which he gave her.

"Dear, dear!" he exclaimed, "I fear I'm late. I had to go back, you know. Did you see the battle? Who conquered this time?"

"They never fighted at all," said the Princess; "they only played at 'circus,' and the clowns weren't a bit funny. They've just gone out of the gate—the clowns have."

"That's just my luck!" said the Bird; "I always come late for history. Perhaps there's something about it in the paper, though. It's the latest leaf from the poet-tree. Read it."

"Why, it's all about my own self!" exclaimed the Princess; "and it's all true, too."

"Too true, too true!" said the Shuttlecock sadly, shaking his head.

"I fink you're a very silly bird," said the Princess. "But it *did* happen. *Really*, you know."

"Read on, then," said the Shuttlecock. And the Princess read:

THE TWO 'POSSUMS

There was an Opossum lived up in a tree:
Opossum! Opossum! Opossum!
A round little, fat little fellow was he.
Opossum! Opossum! Opossum!
He climbed about fast with his four little legs;
He caught little birdies; he sucked little eggs,
And emptied the egg-shells quite down to the dregs:
This 'Possum! this 'Possum! this 'Possum!

One night this fat 'Possum was prowling around;
Opossum! Opossum! Opossum!
He saw a small girlie come over the ground.
Opossum! Opossum! Opossum!
And as the wee girlie quite close to him came,
He never was frightened, but sat there quite tame,
And said, "Little girlie, pray, what is your name?"
Miss 'Possum! Miss 'Possum! Miss 'Possum!

She replied, "Mr. 'Possum, I think you can tell,
Opossum! Opossum! Opossum!
Without asking, my name; for you know it quite well.
Opossum! Opossum! Opossum!

It is one that you've often heard mentioned before ;
Written down on your cards, written up on your door.
If you'll keep it a secret, I'll tell you once more,
'Tis 'Possum, 'tis 'Possum, 'tis 'Possum !"

When the 'Possum heard that, he was going to laugh ;
Opossum ! Opossum ! Opossum !
But he stopped, and said wisely, "Come, none of your chaff!"
Opossum ! Opossum ! Opossum !
But the girl said, "I don't mean to chaff in the least.
We have one name between us, you dear little beast :
So come—since 'enough is as good as a feast,'
Kiss 'Possum ! kiss 'Possum ! kiss 'Possum !"

"And did he?" asked the Shuttlecock.

"No," said the little Princess; "he said he didn't know how. But I kissed him on his fur. I like kissing furry things. I don't like kissing fevvers, though," she added hastily, fearing lest the bird might want to take liberties.

But the shuttlecock was not attending to her. He was looking up at the sun, and seemed to be engaged in some calculation. Presently he said, "It's half-past three o'clock. Time for geography! Jump up!"

The Princess Monica saw that he meant her to take her place upon his back again, so she did as he desired, and away they flew across the battle-field.

CHAPTER IV

As soon as they crossed the hedge, on the side farthest from the wood, they came into one of the very oddest-looking places the Princess had ever seen. It was something like a great ploughed field, every furrow of which went down, to an extraordinary depth, into the earth, making the ridges between look like the leaves of a book set upright on its back, and partly opened. The shuttlecock paused, hovering in his flight, over these, and said, "Now, here we are. Which country shall we learn?"

"I didn't come here for lessons," said the Princess.

"Neither did I," said the Bird; "we must keep them out of our story, mustn't we? But this geography has got to be done; and if *we* don't do it, somebody else will, and all the part about it will have to be left out. You can skip it, if you don't like it, you know."

"I think, if you please, I'd rather skip it," said the Princess.

"But you've no skipping-rope!" exclaimed the Bird. "Wait here a minute, and I'll go for one."

So saying, he alighted on top of one of the ridges, and made the Princess climb off his

back and sit on the ridge, with her feet dangling into the furrow in front of her. Then he flew rapidly away; but no sooner had he gone than the Princess found a change coming over the place. The furrow before her began to widen, just like a book opening! and she felt the ridge she sat on fall away backwards, beneath her, giving her the sensation of going down in a lift. She was not frightened; but for a moment she felt sick and dizzy, and closed her eyes.

When she opened them again, she found herself standing on the side of a mountain, looking down into a very beautiful valley, into which the furrow had evidently opened out. There was another mountain on the other side rising very high into the air, with all its upper parts covered with snow and ice. Dark pine-woods bordered the valley on both sides, and at the bottom were rich green meadows, with a rapid stream of water running through them. But all was on a miniature scale, like a beautifully constructed model, and the little Princess felt herself very large indeed, in comparison with everything round her.

"Oh, dear me!" she thought; "I was so nice and wee just now; and here I am turned into a giantess. I do hope I'm only a

giantess, and not an ogre! That would be horrid."

As she thought this, there came, running out of one of the pine-woods, a number of little men, who seemed extremely busy. The Princess hid herself, as well as she could, among the trees, so that the sight of her should not alarm them, and listened to their conversation, or rather, their shouting to one another:

"Now! That way, Jack," cried one. "Not so fast! You're getting out of the line."

"No, it's you that's out of the line, Tom. Steady! Catch hold in the middle, Joe! Don't let her tangle. Now just go on with that meridian. Hurry, too, or they'll be coming before the map's ready."

"We've got it straight now, but we can't set it rightly north and south," said the first speaker. "Will any of you chaps fetch a compass?"

"You go, Joe," said a gruff voice. "You have a pair of compasses, haven't you?"

"Yes," replied Joe; "and a precious pair they are, too! Been boxing one another all the morning, till they haven't a leg left between them to stand on."

"No matter, pull it straight, and lay it down anyhow," said the gruff one. "Anything is

good enough for them to joggrify this place with. Hullo! What's that?"

The diversion was caused by the sudden appearance of the shuttlecock, who suddenly swooped down among them. The Princess Monica looked out from her hiding-place, and saw the little men scattering in all directions; while the bird picked up a rope from the ground, which had evidently been the central object of all the excitement, and flew to her, carrying it in its beak.

"Your skipping-rope, my dear," he said. "If you had only told me where it was, you might have been spared all this geography."

"But you didn't give me time," said the Princess.

"It wasn't mine to give," said the Bird; "but, as I said before, no matter. Do you know where we are now?"

"No," said the Princess; "where are we?"

"Borrioboola Gha, my dear, and no less. Beautiful spot, isn't it? Stop a moment—I've some rhymes about it here. Got them from the poet-tree when I was passing. Read them."

The little Princess was amused at the shuttlecock's peremptory way of ordering her to read

to him ; and she thought he might at least have said, "If you please." Still, she took the leaf he held out to her, and read as follows :

BORRIOBOOLA GHA

There sat three knaves on the top of a hill,
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
And (for all that I know) they are sitting there still.
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
And they looked at each other with furtive eyes,
Till one of them muttered, in glad surprise,
"There's a run on the market, and pigs will rise!"
Borrioboola Gha.

Then the first of them looked at the back of his head—
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
It's not easy to do, but he did it ; and said,
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
"A rise in pigs means a plenty of swine ;
And I think I had better go see about mine,
As my poor cerebellum is eager to dine."
Borrioboola Gha.

And the second, he hid in his own inside—
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
It's not easy to do, but he did it ; and cried,
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.

"A rise in pigs is a pigs' insurrection;
And I'm going in here as the surest protection,
For I wish, as you see, to avoid the infection."
Borrioboola Gha.

But the third, he grew honest, and wise, and good—
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
It's not easy to do, but he did it; and cooed,
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
"A rise in pigs is a porcine ascent;
And if I were a pig I should feel content."
But I don't think the other two knew what he meant.
Borrioboola Gha.

Now each of them sits on the bridge of his nose—
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
It's not easy to do, but he does it. Which shows
Borrioboola, Borrioboola.
That if you are eager, and wary, and wise,
And look out for a market with pigs on the rise,
You may see many things without shutting your eyes.
Borrioboola Gha.

"I fink that's the foolishest nonsense I ever read," said the Princess Monica.

"Not if you try to live up to it," said the Shuttlecock. "I keep my eyes wide open, and so I see lots of things—bird's-eye views, you know, and panoramas, and things of that sort."

"I should so like to see a panorama," said the Princess. "I've seen three circuses, and a pantomime, and Punch-and-Judy—I liked that best: but I've never seen a panorama."

"That must be set right, too, then," said the Shuttlecock. "Look over there."

The Princess looked across the valley, and saw that the mountain on the opposite side had begun to move along sideways. At first it went very slowly, but afterwards began to go faster; and as it went along, it was followed by more scenery, looking like an enormous painting as it passed. The Princess did not at first recognise any of the views, but at length they seemed to become more familiar, and when the panorama at last stood still, there was a splendid picture of the valley of Dreamland, with its river of silver, and its rainbow bridge leading into her own dear home, which from the time that Microbacterion had spoken to her, she had utterly forgotten.

"Oh!" she almost screamed, "there's our Castle! And I'm not there. I'm sure I ought to go back again. They don't know where I am, and they'll fink I'm losted."

"Why?" said the Bird; "didn't they know you were coming?"

"Nobody knowed, but me; and I didn't

know myself," said the Princess. "I went asleep under a tree, 'cause it was so warm; and then somefing buzzed in my ear; and then I just tumbled through the battledore, into your nest."

"That looks like some of Microbacterion's mischief," said the Bird. "But he can't hurt your sort, you know—only sends them to Jennesay Quaw now and then for a while. But I'll set that right, too. Just you wait here a minute." So saying, he flew away down to the bottom of the pine-wood, and quickly returned, carrying the ugly troll in his claws.

"Now," he said to the Princess, "watch me!" And then he flew straight across the valley, and dashed the troll against the picture of Dreamland. The hideous thing disappeared at once, seeming to sink into the trunk of a tree, which the Princess recognised as the very one she had fallen asleep beneath.

Then the Shuttlecock flew back. "He's gone to tell them you're coming," he said; "so don't be afraid, but jump on my back again, and shut your eyes tight."

The Princess did so, and, in a moment, found herself being carried through the air much faster than before. Then came a crash, and, lo and behold!—she was standing in the middle of the

fairy-ring, with the torn parchment about her feet.

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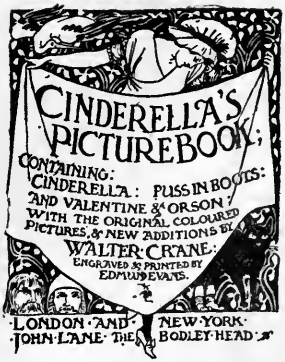

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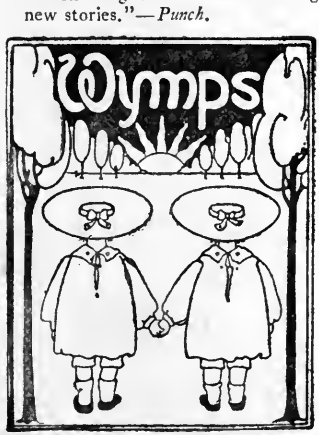

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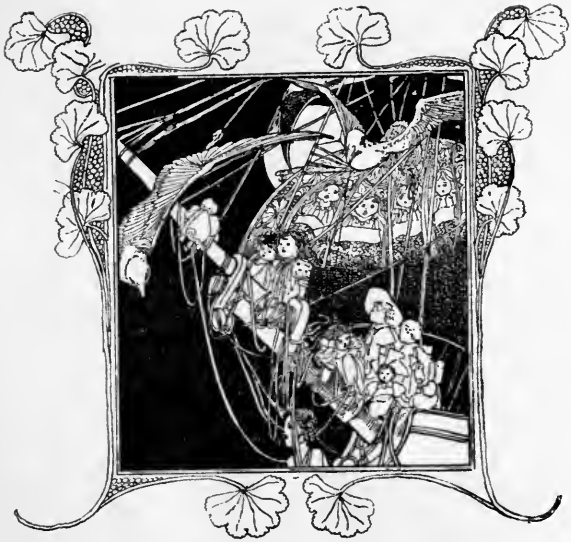

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