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Transcriber's notes

Minor punctuation inconsistencies have been silently corrected. A [list](#) of other changes made can be found at the end of the book.

The King *of* Gee-Whiz



They flew on and on *Page 128*

The King *of* Gee-Whiz

By Emerson Hough

Author of *The Mississippi Bubble*
The Law of the Land, etc.

With Lyrics by

Wilbur D. Nesbit

Author of *The Trail to Boyland*, etc.

Illustrated by

Oscar E. Cesare

Indianapolis

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The
King *of* Gee-Whiz



CHAPTER I

THE WIDOW PICKLE'S TWINS AND THEIR PECULIAR HAIR

1

Once, several years ago, there lived in a city far from the sea-shore a widow by the name of Mrs. Pickle, who had Twins named Zuzu Pickle and Lulu Pickle. At first glance, these Twins seemed much like ordinary twins in appearance. Both had blue eyes, pretty curved lips, and rosy cheeks; and as they were quite alike in size, it may seem that, like many other twins, they must have been hard to tell apart. Such, however, was not the case. Indeed, they could not well be confused with each other, for, aside from the fact that Zuzu was a boy and Lulu a girl, one had green hair and the other blue. This peculiar color of their hair made them quite different from most twins, and led to a great many strange circumstances, some of which are described in this story.

2

The father of these Twins was Aurelius Pickle, an innocent and good man, who for many years was known as a very skilful chemist. Like many other chemists, he wasted a great deal of time in doing things which did not bring in any money. For instance, he worked many years on a compound intended to change a person's hair from any color to a rich, dark brown or to a deep and shining auburn, at will. Aurelius Pickle was a poor man, and hence did not have the means for his researches that he desired. He often told his wife that it was fortunate they had Twins with such long hair, for thus he could make all the experiments for the Twofold-tint Compound, which was what he intended to call the hair-coloring fluid on which he was working. Whenever he made a new kettleful of this, he would try it on the long rich hair of the Twins.

At last he hit upon two new mixtures, one or the other of which he felt sure would be just the thing. He tried one on the hair of Lulu and the other on that of Zuzu. To his great surprise, the hair of Zuzu became a fine pale green, while that of Lulu turned at the same time to a pale blue, much the color of the ribbons around the neck of a new baby.

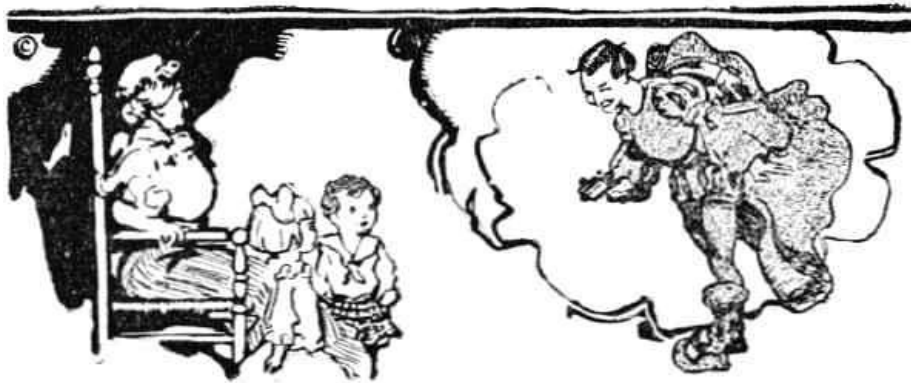
3

The Twins, seeing themselves in the glass, were much pleased with their appearance, and said they felt sure no one in town had hair like theirs; which in all likelihood was true. With their father, however, it was quite otherwise. Indeed, what he thought was never fully known. He was taken suddenly ill, and sank back upon his couch, where he rapidly became worse, and could get no further than to ask his children to call their mother. When she appeared, Aurelius Pickle smiled feebly and motioned her toward the cupboard where he kept his Chemical Substances. He could do no more.

This, in brief, is how there came to be such a person as the Widow Pickle. It is not unusual for widows to have Twins, but seldom could be found such Twins as these.

Aurelius
Pickle





CHAPTER II

THE WIDOW PICKLE'S STRANGE VISITOR

So badly did the Widow Pickle feel over the peculiar color of her Twins' hair that for a long time she forgot to obey her husband's last wish and look in the cupboard. At last, however, she bethought herself of this request and hastened to the place where Aurelius Pickle had kept his Chemical Substances.

She found several strange-looking boxes, with all sorts of powders and pastes in them, but with no names on the backs to tell what were their contents. She feared to make any experiments, lest she might stain her own hair either blue or green or some other unfashionable color; so all she could do was to look and wonder what was in the boxes. After several days, she concluded to mix some different powders together. She took one small box with a red cover and another that had a black cover, and, pouring small portions of the powder from each of these on a plate, she began to stir the two together.

Nothing happened for some moments. "Chemistry is rather hard, after all," said the Widow Pickle to herself. "I thought that all there was to it was stirring things together. I formerly noticed that when my poor dear husband did that, something nearly always happened."

At last, disappointed that nothing had happened, she went to the match-box. "Perhaps," said she, "if I touch a match to it something will happen." She did so, and, to her great surprise, something did happen, and that at once.

A cloud of heavy vapor filled the room, and as it cleared away the Widow Pickle saw standing there, bowing and smiling very pleasantly, a little dark man, whom at first she took to be a Japanese. He had black hair, rolled very tight on the top of his head; small feet, incased in boots with long up-turned toes; and a loose flowing mantle of red satin. His hands were small, and his little black eyes twinkled merrily.

"Madam, I believe you have sent for me," he remarked.

"Indeed, I did not," said the Widow Pickle. "Moreover, I don't know who you are. Whence do you come, sir, and why do you intrude without invitation?"

"Who should I be," said the little man, still smiling pleasantly, "but the Private Secretary and Court Musician of the royal monarch of the Island, the King of Gee-Whiz?"

"The King of Gee-Whiz?" said the Widow Pickle. "I never heard of such a person."

"Then, madam," replied the little man sternly, "grant me leave to tell you that you must be an extraordinarily ignorant person. Every one of consequence knows of his Royal Highness, who rules our Island."

"And, pray, what do you have in your Island, little man?" asked the Widow Pickle scornfully.

"Many things," replied the strange little man, "more than I should like to tell you all at once."

"Gold, perhaps?" asked the Widow.

"I believe it is called gold—a very common metal, indeed."

"Pray, then, what do you use for rings?" asked the Widow, hiding her hands under her apron.

"We usually make them out of our smaller diamonds," replied the little man carelessly. "There are, however, more precious stones. For instance, there is Lapis Malazite, a very fashionable blue gem; and Lapis Corazine, an emerald-green jewel. Blue and green, madam, are our favorite colors."

"How strange!" exclaimed the Widow Pickle. And then she told of the manner in which the hair of her Twins had been permanently colored by some of her husband's Chemical Substances.

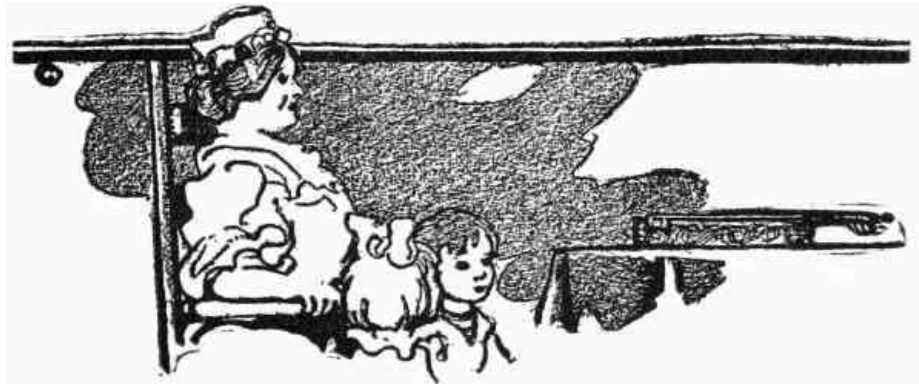
"That is very singular," said the little man. "All I can say is that if their hair is the real malazite blue and the correct corazine green, they could have anything they like in the Land of Gee-Whiz; for these are the Royal Hereditary Colors. But, really, I must be going. I rarely ever stay away more than an hour at a time."

As he spoke, he stepped toward the window, but in doing so he gave his mantle a slight twitch to one side. As he did this, he displayed to the curious gaze of the Widow Pickle a strangely-carved Banjo, whose supporting ribbon was swung over his shoulders. The Banjo was of ivory and gold, and the pegs for tightening the strings were of shining gold.

"Stay!" cried the Widow. "I have never seen so beautiful an instrument as that. I am sure you play it well; and as for me, I dote upon the banjo."

"Madam," smiled the little man, "I see your taste is excellent."





CHAPTER III

THE ENCHANTED BANJO

The Widow Pickle asked the stranger to allow her to examine the Banjo, and he did so willingly. About this time, the Twins, Lulu and Zuzu, ran into the room; and very soon they were leaning at their mother's knee, with their chins in their hands, ready to listen to the music. At first, the stranger did not look at them intently, but when he did so he started back with an exclamation of surprise. At that moment, also, something strange seemed to happen in the Banjo. The Widow Pickle looked down at it suddenly. She felt the strings move beneath her fingers. At this, she arose and almost flung the instrument upon the table. To her great surprise, it began playing gaily and cheerfully, just as well, and, indeed, perhaps better, than it would have done had it been operated by the Widow Pickle herself. The song which the Banjo sang was something like this:

10

MALAZITE BLUE AND CORAZINE GREEN

O, Malazite Blue and Corazine Green!
Such wonderful colors I never have seen,
Except, in the sky
At a million miles high
Is the Malazite Blue for delighting the eye.

And Corazine Green is splendidly fair
When tinting the ringlets and curls of your hair—
It comes, if you please,
From the leaves of the trees
When they are made bright by the brush of the breeze.

Oh, barrels and barrels of Malazite Blue,
And barrels of Corazine Green, it is true
Are used every year
Just to keep the sky clear
And to tint all the leaves when they have to appear.

"Well, I never heard anything in the world like that," said the Widow Pickle. "An Enchanted Banjo, that can play by itself! Surely, this house is haunted, my children, since your poor father died! But what a situation for a lone widow to be in here in a great city, with blue- and green-haired Twins, an utter stranger, and an Enchanted Banjo, which plays by itself, and sings about the peculiar hair of my dear Twins! I always said that your poor dear father, although good, was not a practical man."

11

She looked at the Banjo as it lay upon the table. To her great surprise, she saw it take itself apart before her eyes. It lay there in two pieces, the neck quite apart from the head. Of course, in that position it ceased playing, and, indeed, one could have expected nothing else, for even an Enchanted Banjo can not play when it is in two pieces.



CHAPTER IV

THE SEARCH IN THE CUPBOARD

Now, presently, a very strange thing happened. The Twins, Lulu and Zuzu, stood at the edge of the table grieving very much that the Banjo was broken. Each put out a hand, Lulu touching the neck of the instrument, where, in her opinion, the music was, and Zuzu the round part or head, where he thought that the music was situated. To their great surprise, as they did this the Banjo again began to play, the two parts joining themselves together as good as new. So long as they held it in this way, it played the most beautiful and wonderful music. Stranger still, after it had finished playing, it began also to talk.

13

"I am the Enchanted Banjo of the King of Gee-Whiz," it said in a small, distinct, and quite unmistakable voice. "I only take myself apart to rest myself; but if you put me together again, of course I feel obliged to play for you, as that is only common politeness on my part."

"Is that indeed the truth, sir?" asked the Widow Pickle of the little dark man.

"It is," said he; "and I myself am the Court Musician, as I have said. It is my duty to furnish music for the King every day at half-past two in the afternoon, and I find a self-playing instrument a great convenience. Now, I am sorry to disturb you, but, by the way, it is nearly time for us to be returning."

"Excuse me, my children," remarked the Enchanted Banjo, "but you are holding my neck very tight."

At this, Lulu and Zuzu released their hold, and with a sigh of relief the Banjo again lay in two pieces on the table.

"Now, children, see what you have done!" exclaimed the Widow Pickle. "The Banjo is broken again."

"Never mind," said the Private Secretary, "it will always play when the two hold it together. Besides, it can not resist the Royal Hereditary Colors, madam, for these are very powerful in our Island."

14

"In truth," said the Widow Pickle, "I am of a mind myself to go to this wonderful place of which you talk. I would like to seek my fortune and that of my Twins. Have you credibly informed me that Twins with malazite-and corazine-colored hair would have a good chance in that country?"

"I have told you the truth," said the little dark man; "but I must say it is very far from here to the Island of Gee-Whiz, some hundreds of thousands of miles across the seas."

"Then, sir, how did you come here yourself?"

"I came by the Gee-Whiz Submarine Express," replied the Private Secretary. "How else should I come?"

"Alas! I don't know what you mean," said the Widow Pickle at this.

"Not know, madam? Why, you have all the means for summoning the Submarine Express directly at your command."

"Where? where?" asked the Widow excitedly.

The little man pointed at the cupboard where the late Aurelius Pickle had been accustomed to keep his Chemical Substances.

"Why, to be sure," said the Widow Pickle, "it must be in the cupboard, for it was there I found the two strange powders which went off with a flash."

15

By this time, the Twins were dancing around the room in excitement, running toward the cupboard, which had never seemed so full of interest before, even in their hungriest moments.

"Are you ready for your journey, madam?" asked the Private Secretary.

"I declare, I've more than half a mind to learn what all this means," said the Widow Pickle.

"Get us ready for the journey, mamma," cried the Twins, as though it were all settled.

"Very well," said the Widow, "we may as well be prepared for anything that may happen. First let me comb your Royal Hereditary Hair. Lulu, go fetch me the blue comb, and you, Zuzu, get the pale-green one, on top of the dresser, at the right hand as you go in. I can not help feeling," said the Widow Pickle, as she combed the long, wavy hair of her two children, "as though something was going to happen."

At that moment the Enchanted Banjo, held once more by the joyful Twins, began this remarkable song:

SOMETHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN

Such a squidgy feeling in my bones!
Such a tingling tangling of my hair!
Something whispers now in warning tones
That it will be best if I take care.
I keep looking out on either side,
Watching for just what I do not know—
Will it sit, or stand, or walk, or ride?
Wonder will it come, or will it go?

16

Something's sure to happen—
Oh, what can it be?
Something, something, something
Keeps on warning me.
I shiver and I quiver,
I tremble and I bow—
Something's sure to happen!
When? And where? And how?

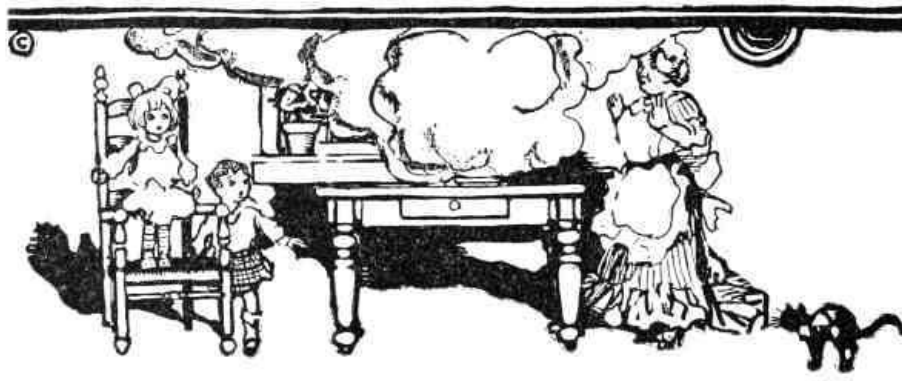
Don't know how I know it! But I know
By the creepy feeling of my skin,
By my eyes that keep on winking so,
By the shaky shiver of my chin.
Something tells me to be looking out;
Something will not tell me what to do—
Something's sure to happen; there's no doubt!
Wonder will it be to me, or you?

Something's sure to happen—
Oh, what will it be?
Something, something, something
Keeps on warning me.
I quiver and I shiver,
I shake and shake again—
Something's sure to happen!
What? And how? And when?

17



She found several strange-looking boxes Page 4



CHAPTER V

THE GEE-WHIZ SUBMARINE EXPRESS

The Widow Pickle kept studying over matters and things as she combed the Twins' hair with the blue and green combs. She began to think, as a great many widows do, that after all her husband had perhaps been a very wonderful man, and better than she had thought at the time. She wished very much, as many widows do, that her husband were alive again for a few moments. She wished to ask him just one more question. We need not explain what that question would have been, for any one could guess that it would have been in regard to Chemical Substances.

At last, she arose and went to the glass door of the cupboard and began looking carefully behind the dishes on the shelves. At length she saw a little box, which she had not noticed before.

19

"Aha!" cried the Widow Pickle, "I am sure this is the powder which you mean. Is it not so, little man?"

The latter refused either to speak or to make any sign.

"I will try it, anyhow," said the Widow Pickle. So she poured some of the powder from this box upon a plate and began touching a lighted match to it. To her great surprise, the powder burst out into a cloud of smoke, and when the smoke had cleared away, she saw, lying upon the plate, a small but perfect little ship, the like of which she had never seen before in all her life. It was something like a steamboat, except that it was covered over entirely with glass. At the stern it had a large wheel, evidently to make it go, and it had other wheels along the bottom, like feet upon a sofa. Its bow was curved up and backward sharply, something like the front of a sled, and its sides were gently rounded so that it could slip along easily. The deck was quite roofed over by this curved-glass shield, for what reason the Widow could not tell. Indeed, although she guessed at once that this was a boat of some sort, she could not tell what sort it was.

"Well, I'd like to know—" began the Widow Pickle.

20

"What was it you were about to inquire, my good woman?" asked the Private Secretary.

"Why, what should I inquire, my good man," replied the Widow, "if not to ask what is this thing here on the plate?"

"That, madam," said the Private Secretary, "is a boat."

"A boat? A boat?"

The Private Secretary nodded.

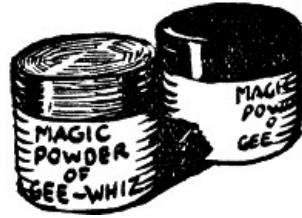
"Can't you read the name?" he asked.

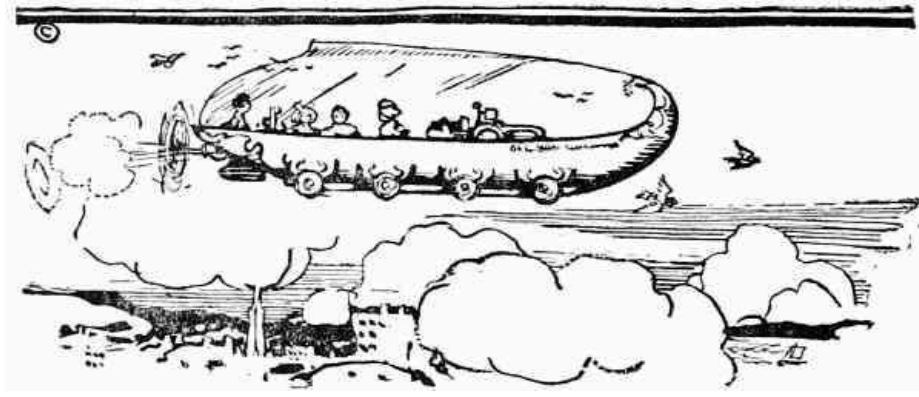
So the Widow Pickle peered closely through her glasses and saw that there was a name printed in small shining letters on one end of the boat. "The Gee-Whiz Submarine Express!" cried the Widow. "But, alack! how small it is. Why, it is not as long as my foot, and I was always thought in my time to have a very small foot, too!"

The Private Secretary smiled in a knowing manner.

"Perhaps, mamma," said Zuzu, "you have overlooked something in some other box."

"Zuzu, you have a good mind for one so young," said his mother. "I will look in the cupboard again." So again she began rummaging around, and at length she found another box, a square one, covered over with dust, showing that it had not been opened for a long time. The first box had held a pale-blue powder, but this one was filled nearly to the lid with a light-green powder. On the top of this box, written in the hand of Aurelius Pickle, was the inscription, "Magic Powder of Gee-Whiz." When the Widow Pickle saw this, she gave an exclamation of joy.





CHAPTER VI

THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE AIR

"Hurry, hurry, mamma!" cried the Twins. "Let us go."

"But how can we go?" asked the Widow Pickle of the Private Secretary, as she stood holding the second box of powder in her hand.

"I suggest, madam," said the Private Secretary, "that you might put a little of the first powder, the blue one, in the engine."

The Widow Pickle placed a pinch of the pale-blue powder upon a certain portion of the little boat, and, to her great surprise, it began to grow before her eyes.

It grew and it grew, slowly but steadily, until it was large enough for either of the Twins to get into. In a moment more it would have been too large to pass out of the window; and as the Widow Pickle saw this, she was about to brush off the rest of the powder.

"Stop!" cried the Private Secretary. "The window will not make the slightest difference in the world. Quick, madam! Get in with the second box, or it will be too late."

Indeed, the engine inside the boat now began to churn, and a strange, brilliant sort of blue smoke began to hiss at the spouts near the wheel. The boat, for such it can be called, began to crawl on its feet across the floor toward the window. The Private Secretary grasped the Enchanted Banjo and with a bound sprang into the boat. The Widow, holding on to the remaining box of powder, and grasping the Twins also with the other hand, sprang aboard quickly. The Private Secretary then snapped down the glass all around.

To her great surprise, the Widow Pickle found the boat quite large enough for all four of them, and even as she settled down comfortably in her seat the boat rose slowly and, with a slight hissing of the strange blue steam at the wheel, it passed directly out and through the window, just as though it were not there, and sailed off across the tops of the tall buildings toward the sea.

"Oh, Mr. Secretary," cried the Widow Pickle, "how very much startled I am!"

"Madam," replied the Private Secretary, "there is no need to be startled. It is very well, however, that you got the second box from among the Chemical Substances of the late Aurelius Pickle."

"Why should that be so?" asked the Widow. "You must remember that I am in the dark about many of these things. It seems very strange to me to be thus flying off across the city. For all we know, we may drop directly into the sea before long."

"That is true," said the Private Secretary, chuckling. "In fact, that is precisely what we shall do within two minutes. And that is the reason I am glad you have the green powder with you. That, you must understand, is our fuel for water travel;

for without that we could not possibly get up any green steam, and surely you must know that with a boat of this particular kind, blue steam may be all very well for the air, but it is of no service whatever under the water."

"That," said the Widow Pickle, "seems a most singular thing."

"Many things which now seem strange to you," replied the Private Secretary, "will presently seem quite natural. You must remember to put a little of the green powder under the boiler the moment we strike the water; but whatever you do, you must not put the green powder in before we reach the water."

"Why, what will happen then?" asked Zuzu.

"You would better not try to find out," said the Private Secretary, smiling. "But now, madam, first put in a little more of the blue powder. I see we are passing near the moon, and, if I mistake not, the face of the moon is unusually clean to-night. I see that little Lucy Green has been at work. You do not know how that can be? Perhaps the Enchanted Banjo will tell you. Put it together, my dears, and see if it will not."

So Lulu and Zuzu held the Banjo as before, and to their great surprise it told them how the moon had its face cleaned.

LITTLE LUCY GREEN

Oh, have you never heard the reason why the moon is clean?
Once on a time there was a girl whose name was Lucy
Green;

She saw the moon was dirty and was very far from bright,
She raised her hands in horror, and exclaimed: "My, what a
sight!"

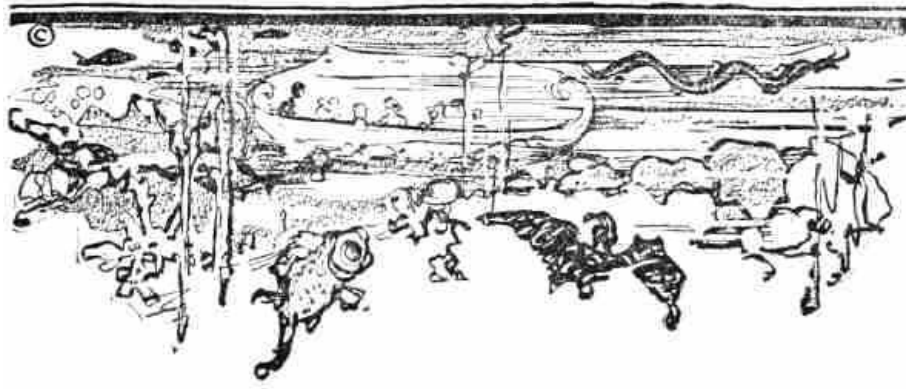
And then she got some polish, and a ladder, and she climbed
Till she reached the moon that drifted, spotted, dusty, and
begrimed.

UP!
clum'
she
and
clim'
she
Oh,

Then she scoured the moon with polish and she cleaned it of
its rust,
And she took a cloth and rubbed it till it hadn't any dust;
And the good old moon grew happy when its face began to
shine
And the little girl was merry, and she said: "Now, you look
fine!"
Then she took her can of polish, and her cloth, and then she
found
That the moonbeams made her ladder seem like gold from
sky to ground.

Oh,
she
clim'
and
she
clum'
DOWN!





CHAPTER VII

THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE WATER

"Now we will drop down from the sky a way," said the little dark man, "and I hope soon to show you some other interesting things. But, madam, you must be ready to throw the green powder into the engine the moment I tell you to do so."

Even as he spoke, the boat began to descend, and now struck the water with a soft splash. "Quick! the green powder now!" cried the little dark man. At that instant, the Widow Pickle tossed a pinch of the green powder into the furnace door, and, to her great surprise, the little ship settled down gently, the steam changed from blue to green in color, and the wheels began to turn around with a motion which sent the boat forward very quickly.

28

"Mamma, mamma," cried Zuzu, "we are sinking! Look! We are going down!"

Lulu also was very much excited, but the Private Secretary smilingly reassured them.

"Of course," he said. "Did you suppose the Gee-Whiz Express would run upon the top of the water like any ordinary steamboat? Any one can build a boat like that."

"But we'll all be drowned," cried the Widow Pickle.

"Not in the least," said the Private Secretary. "We are five hundred feet beneath the surface of the sea at this present moment, and if we were going to be drowned we should have begun to feel strange long ago. Evidently, madam, you forgot the glass which covers us over. We can see through it distinctly, but it won't let any water in. I am sure we shall enjoy our voyage very much. Moreover, we have with us the Enchanted Banjo, and it will play for us whenever the Royal Heirs are so good as to assist it."

The Banjo seemed to be in a jolly mood as well as the Royal Heirs, for as soon as the Twins grasped it together it rattled off at once into the following jingle:

SONG OF THE ENCHANTED BANJO

29

Once I was but a banjo of the ordinary sort
Until a minstrel played me for the pleasure of the court,
And quite by accident he struck the sweet and simple tune
The Fairies love the dearest when they dance beneath the
moon.

Oh, it was most amazing, when to every one's surprise
The Queen of all the Fairies came to view before their eyes!

They gazed upon the Fairy Queen, and she smiled back at
them

She wore a robe of woven gold, with silver on the hem,
Her wings were set with diamonds and made of golden
gauze,

And she was quite the finest Fairy Queen that ever was.
She stopped before the royal court and held her place alone,
Then bowed and gracefully sat down before the Royal
Throne.

The Fairy Queen then waved her wand; the minstrel stepped
away,

And I, suspended in the air, at once began to play;
I played them all the Fairy tunes that ever have been made,
And everybody knew the words to everything I played.
I played before the Fairy Queen, and did my best, you see—
And therefore I enchanted her, then she enchanted me.

"Now let's play we are pirates!" cried Zuzu.

"Very well," said the Private Secretary. "The Banjo knows
that a great many people feel like playing pirate, so perhaps
it will sing of one or two." The Banjo then played for them
the following melody:

THE PIRATICAL JUNE-BUG

30

A June-bug once went out to sea—
Yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!—
With sails aspread and helm alee—
Yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!
He had a long, low, rakish boat;
He wore a shining overcoat;
He hummed and grumbled in his throat—
Yo-ho! the wild winds blow!

This bold June-bug he said, said he:—
"Yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!
A pirate's life is the life for me!
Yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!"
He roamed about the ocean blue
And bossed his rumbling, stumbling crew,
And sought for wicked things to do.
Yo-ho, the wild winds blow!

Now when a June-bug heaves in sight—
Yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!
You'll notice it is full of fight—
Yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!
When it sails by, with curve and dip,
And strikes the wall with bang and "bip!"
It's dreaming of its pirate ship—
Yo-ho, the wild winds blow!
Yo-ho!
Yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!

The submarine boat went ahead very rapidly all this time,
dropping down until at length it struck the bottom at a depth
of several thousand feet. Fortunately, it landed at a place
where there was smooth, white sand so that no damage was
done; and it at once began to run along the bottom of the
sea.

31

"I would rather go on through the water the way we were,"
said Lulu, "and not on the bottom, for I find it much more
bumpy in this way."

"True," said the Private Secretary, "but by journeying upon the bottom we are not so apt to get lost as though we tried to go directly through the water. If you will observe, we are now following the main traveled road to the Island of Gee-Whiz, and if all goes well we shall hardly lose our way. I need not explain to you that to be lost in the middle of the ocean, two or three thousand feet below the surface, is one of the worst things that can happen to a person. But don't think we are going slowly, because we are making at least a hundred miles an hour, as you may tell by looking at the scenery we pass."

"And very beautiful the scenery is," said the Widow Pickle. "Look, my children, at the trees and the hills; and yonder is a high mountain all of coral, if I am not mistaken."

"Quite right," said the Private Secretary. "This is one of the best places in the world for coral beads, and if we had time we could get all we wished."

"Look, look, mamma!" cried Lulu, "isn't that a whale?"

The Widow Pickle stopped to put on her glasses, and the Private Secretary answered for her. "Yes," said he, "that is a whale, and a very good one. See, it means to swim us a race."

The great whale was now swimming alongside, its vast jaws working convulsively, and its tail in such rapid motion that long white sparks flew from its extremity.

"Poor fellow," said the Private Secretary, "he thinks, as you do, that we are not going very fast. See him perspire! I can tell him now that he might as well drop behind, for the Gee-Whiz Submarine Express is much the fastest thing that swims the deep."

"But what is that out there, mamma?" cried Zuzu, whose nose was pressed flat against the glass.

"That," said the Widow Pickle, "is something so strange that I have not the slightest idea what it may be."

"It is a Flying Nautilus," explained the Private Secretary, "a very beautiful creature, which has wings like sails, but it can not sail with us; and yonder, I see, is a Goroo; but even the Goroo will find that we go too fast for it."

The Goroo now swam alongside for some time. It was a long, slender monster, with a body something like that of a snake and a long, tapering head, from which two horns arose and fell back gracefully over its shoulders. Its eyes were very large and prominent, and it had four or five fierce whiskers on each side of its mouth, all of which were bright pink in color. It had twelve fins along its back, which enabled it to swim very rapidly indeed.

"The Goroo," said the Private Secretary, "is often by mortals called a sea-serpent, and this fact causes us who live in Gee-Whiz considerable amusement, because we know that it is not a sea-serpent, but a Goroo. It would eat a man if it had a chance, but it can not harm us so long as we are in the boat."

"See," he continued, "that short fat-looking animal we have just passed is a Calabite, a very rare and odd fish, which lives entirely upon fresh oysters. It cracks the oyster shells with its long teeth, just as you do hazelnuts, and it eats so many that often fishermen wonder where all their oysters have gone. If the truth were known, it would very probably be found a Calabite had eaten them."

"That large creature with a long mane and six legs on each side," he resumed, "is a Talapud, a creature never seen in any menagerie, so far as I know. It can travel very fast indeed, but though it has six legs on each side, it is very lazy, so that it rarely exerts its full speed. We shall, no doubt, pass it easily."

"There, also, is a Naugalook, that bird-like thing, which also swims with wings instead of fins. As you see, it has a very

wide and cruel beak, and many a fish it eats each year. It is the eagle of the sea, and very dangerous to meet unarmed, on account of its great size and ferocity.

"The Waugog, as you may observe, is a sort of turtle. There are two just coming out of their holes; stupid things, who think of nothing but eating, and can travel scarcely faster than a turtle upon the land. A full-grown Waugog is as large as a church, and should we run against one at full speed, it would jar the boat very much. You will see, madam, that travel underneath the sea is not without interest."

"I should say not," said the Widow Pickle; "quite the opposite, indeed, and I am very glad to have my children thus improve their education."

"There is one thing I should like to ask," said Zuzu, "and I have often wondered about it."

"And what is that?" asked the Private Secretary.

"I wonder how the fishes ever go to sleep."



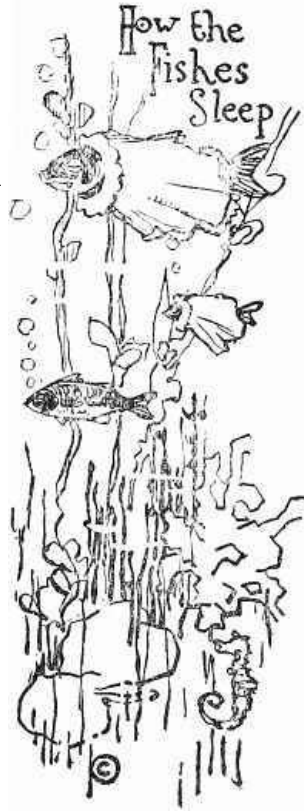
"She scoured the moon with polish" *Page 26*

"That," replied the Private Secretary, "is something over which many wise men have also wondered. I have often heard the Banjo on our sea journeys express the same curiosity. Perhaps it will tell us about that."

At his suggestion the Banjo sang a little song.

HOW THE LITTLE FISHES SLEEP

I often wonder
 how and
 where
 The little
 fishes
 sleep;
 They do not need
 to braid
 their hair
 Before they



slumber deep,
 But possibly each little fish
 Puts on a little gown
 And goes to bed—and Oh, I wish
 I knew where it lies down.

I wonder if it tumbles round
 And kicks the covers off
 And wakes at every little sound,
 Or—does it have a cough?
 I think it would, for mamma says,
 When she turns down my lamp
 I'll get the croup one of these days
 From staying in the damp.

But maybe little fishes go
 To sleep as you or I;
 Waves rock the cradle to and fro
 And sing a bye-lo-bye.
 If they wear gowns, though—goodness me!
 When washing-day is here
 Where do they dry things in the sea?
 I wish you'd make that clear!

"Humph! The Banjo doesn't seem to know any more about it than we do," said Zuzu, not fully satisfied.

"No," the Private Secretary replied; "that is true; but for some of these hard questions we may have to go to the Fairies for answer, and it is some distance yet before we get anywhere near the Fairy country."

"How far have we gone now, sir?" asked Zuzu.

"That," replied the Private Secretary, "is difficult to explain,

for you must see that we do not measure distances as you do. However, I should think it would take us perhaps three or four more of what you call your hours before we are within sight of the Island of Gee-Whiz. We must first pass the Agalone Mountains. Indeed, it seems to me that I see that mountain range now beginning to appear before us."



The
Goroo



CHAPTER VIII

THE EXPLOSION OF THE SUBMARINE EXPRESS

"We must be sure to strike the right road through the Agalone Mountains," said the Private Secretary, peering out through the glass, "because a great many boats get lost hereabouts in the long and winding path. Even were it possible for any mortal to get thus far toward our country, it would be very difficult to trace the way through the Agalone Mountains, which are very high and precipitous indeed. Moreover, to render the road even more difficult to follow, we occasionally have these mountains moved a few hundred leagues from side to side, so that not even the boldest mariner from your country could tell a thing about it if he tried to follow us."

38

"It is a wonder to me that no one has ever found this Island of Gee-Whiz," said the Widow Pickle.

"Believe me, madam, it is practically impossible," replied the Private Secretary. "Many have sought to discover the Island of Gee-Whiz on account of its great riches, but no one has ever yet done so. Were it not for the fact that these Twins, the Prince and Princess, have corazine and malazite hair, it is scarcely likely that you yourself would ever have seen our Island.

"But now," he resumed, "it is nearly time I should go aloft and look ahead. To me it seems that these mountains do not look so entirely familiar as they should."

"Go aloft?" inquired the Widow. "How can you go aloft? Do you mean to the surface of the sea?"

"Of course," said the Private Secretary. "I can see the Island at a much greater distance from the surface of the sea. As for going aloft, that is perfectly simple. I set this pole in the holes which run up and down through the top and bottom of the boat, like the place for a mast in a sail-boat, and I then attach the clutches of this machine here to the pole and set the engine going up and down instead of backward and forward. In that way, as you shall presently see, the boat will begin to climb up the pole, like a boy after birds' nests. But now, madam, let me request you to stand near the furnace door; and when I give the word, put in a pinch more of the green powder to keep up the steam, for it is far harder to climb straight up than it is to go straight ahead, for the boat is flat on top and not pointed as it is at the end."

39

As the Private Secretary spoke, he arranged the clutches of the machinery as he had said, and, to their great surprise, the boat began to climb up the pole at a rate which left no doubt that they would very soon be at the surface of the sea.

"Now," cried the Private Secretary, "put in the powder, quick!"

The Widow Pickle, in a great hurry, took a pinch of powder and cast it under the grate as she had done before. This was where she made a great mistake, which afterward brought upon her much criticism; for, instead of putting in the green powder, which belonged to the sea, in her hurry she cast in a pinch of the blue powder, which was correct for use in the

air, but not in the water. As she did this, at once there was a blinding cloud of smoke and a deafening explosion, which shook the sea like a volcanic eruption. The boat flew quite to pieces, as though it had been built of cardboard. In a moment, they were blown violently into the air beyond the surface of the ocean.





CHAPTER IX

THE ARRIVAL AT THE ISLAND

As the boat was blown from under them, the passengers thought the end had come and that they must be drowned far beneath the sea; and only the great skill and presence of mind of the Private Secretary prevented their meeting this fate. But as they were starting upward, carried by the violence of the explosion, the Private Secretary caught at the rack where the life-preservers were hanging, and so saved their lives. As they reached the surface he handed each a life-preserver, and soon they were all swimming safely on the surface of a placid green sea.

"Madam," said the Private Secretary sternly, "that we are not all killed is no fault of yours. Such carelessness deserves the utmost punishment, for now our boat is gone."

42

"I am innocent," cried the Widow Pickle, "for I did just what you told me to do, I am sure. I threw in the powder; and indeed it seems to me that was what made the explosion."

"Precisely," said the Private Secretary. "You put in the wrong powder. You used the malazite instead of the corazine—I know it as well as though I had seen you do it myself."

"That is quite true," said the Widow Pickle, "but I thought—"

"It is of no consequence what you thought," said the Private Secretary. "But, for that matter, it is of no use to argue over it now. We are here, and lucky it is we are not drowned. Happily for us, we have been blown some miles forward on our way, quite over the Agalone Mountains, and shall be able to swim the remaining distance without trouble. Yonder are the shores of the Island now, only about a mile away."

It was as he said. They swam after him, and soon there appeared a wide white beach, flanked with stately palms, among which they saw rising the white towers and domes of a stately city. Toward this they swam as vigorously as they might, and in course of time stepped upon the hard white sand of the beach and knew that their journey was over.

43

"I am very sorry that we lost the boat," said the Widow Pickle, "but I am extremely glad that we are here, for I couldn't have swum another mile to save my life. My life-preserver belt was very tight. But what a pretty spot this is! I am sure we shall like this place very much indeed, and I am glad we came. Look, is not that some one coming down the beach to meet us?"

"That," said the Private Secretary, "is none less than his Majesty himself, the King of Gee-Whiz!"



The Naugatuck



CHAPTER X

THE KING OF GEE-WHIZ

As the King approached them, it was easy to see that he was indeed a very important person; for all the people fell down upon their faces before him and made a slow deep salutation, much as though you should say "Ah-h-h!" in this way, with a very deep breath. To this respectful greeting the Monarch made no return whatever. The Widow Pickle noticed this.

"I see that you are not fully acquainted with Monarchs," said the Private Secretary, "or at least I should say with Monarchs such as ours. At times he is even more absent-minded than he now appears. I have known him to order half a dozen of his best friends to be banished for some slight offense, and then to forget it before luncheon of that same day, and ask for them again, just as though nothing had happened."

45

"That," said the Widow Pickle, "seems to me a very unusual sort of thing to do. I should like to see him banish me if I did not feel like being banished at the time!"

"You will pardon me," said the Private Secretary, "but it appears to me that you must be an extraordinarily ignorant person, for banishing persons, or even cutting off their heads, in a fit of absent-mindedness, is a part of the daily routine of any truly royal king, and his loyal subjects are very fond of both. If they were not, they could not be called truly loyal subjects; and what is the use of being a subject unless one is a truly loyal subject, madam?"

"That," said the Widow Pickle, "is a very difficult question."

"I thought you would find it such," replied the Private Secretary. "But tell me, is not our King a very royal person? And I may add that he is as kindly a king as ever sat on a throne. Once in a while, he does something which indicates a slight loss of temper; but how could you blame him, with his poor stomach, and with his love affair with the Fairy Queen, as well, to trouble him? It is quite enough to upset any king in the world, I am sure."

46

"His stomach?" said the Widow Pickle. "And the Fairy Queen? Well, the poor King, after all, may be quite like other men. I remember that my poor dear husband, Aurelius Pickle, used to have just such times with his stomach. Why, at times, he could eat nothing in the world but some of my Waffles."

"Your Waffles? What are those?" asked the Private Secretary. "Are they anything new?"

"Well, I can't say as to that," replied the Widow Pickle, "for my grandmother taught me how to make them. But I may say with some pride that the Governor of our State once ate of my Waffles and asked for two more, and in my family that was considered very high praise, indeed. I should like to try one on your King, if he is troubled with his stomach."

"That might be quite a fine idea," said the Private Secretary, "and if you don't object, I shall place the matter before his

Royal Highness. I have never seen this that you call a Waffle, but if it will make the King forget his royal trouble it may be very much better for him and for all the rest of us."

"I should be very glad, indeed, to be of any slight assistance that I may," said the Widow Pickle modestly.

47

"But, hush!" whispered the Private Secretary. "He is coming this way. May I suggest that just as he steps across that white line which you see marked upon the ground, you make him a deep reverence? I think you call it a courtesy in your country."

"Very well," said the Widow Pickle, "but I shall do no more than courtesy, and shall not make it too deep even in that case, for I myself come of a very proud family."

"Hush!" whispered the Private Secretary again. And now the King came forward, fixing upon them the keen glance of his royal eye. Seeing this, Lulu and Zuzu grasped their mother's gown in their hands and shrank back behind her, much frightened. The Private Secretary bowed flat upon the ground and began to say "Ah-h-h!" very fast.

The Widow courtesied as she was bid, looking up at the King. Indeed, she was willing to declare the King most extraordinary in appearance. He was about six feet or more in height, and very dark in complexion, almost coffee-brown in color, indeed. His hair, which was of a bright brick-dust red, was profuse, and stuck out around his head in a sort of fringe to the extent of two or three feet on each side. In his nose he wore a large ring, and his teeth shone as he opened his mouth, for in each tooth was set a fine large diamond. On his fingers were rings of highly-shining precious stones, like emeralds and diamonds and rubies, with others whose names the Widow could not guess. The King wore a garland of flowers about his neck, and carried in his hand a war club or heavy cane made of dark wood, with a large gold knob at the end, and set thickly with shining stones about the handle. His feet were clad in bright-red slippers, whose points turned up nearly to his knees. A rich cloak of spotted fur hung across his shoulders, although the climate was so warm that he really was in small need of fur; so he allowed it to fall back carelessly, confining it with a cord, which latter passed around his chest and shoulders. Around his neck also was hung a broad collar of cloth or leather, which was set as thick as it could hold with all manner of brilliant, shining stones. It was plainly to be seen that the Island of Gee-Whiz was a land very rich indeed in precious metals and gems, for the like of this display of gold and gems was never before seen in any country. As the Widow Pickle looked, she wondered where all these rich stones and all this gold came from; and mentally she made a resolution to discover this before very many days had passed.

48



CHAPTER XI

THE ROYAL HEREDITARY TWINS

"Madam," said the King, "who are you, if I may ask, and why do these young persons hide behind you? Let us have no delays and no excuses. If we are to get on in the least pleasantly, I beg you of all things to remember that I am King. And I need hardly state that the King of Gee-Whiz is something of a Monarch, if I may so express it."

"If it please your Majesty," said the Widow Pickle, "I am a Widow, and come from foreign parts."

"That," rejoined the King, "is a claim of no special distinction, for there are very many widows who come from foreign parts. Pray, whatever you do, don't bore me, for I am very easily bored, and when I am bored I am very bored indeed, as you will readily perceive a true King must be."

"That I can easily understand," said the Widow, "but I hope that my Twins will not bore you. Come, my children, and make your bow to the King."

In truth, it must be said that the Widow Pickle was more frightened at the King than she thought she was going to be.

"Yes," said the King, "let us see what your children look like."

At this, very much frightened, Zuzu and Lulu came out from behind their mother and bowed very low before the King, and they had the presence of mind to make the sound "Ah-h-h!" between their teeth as the Private Secretary and others had done. The King was pleased at this. But, at the next moment, he sprang back with an exclamation of surprise.

"What!" said he, "what is that I see? Is it possible that we have here two young persons with the Royal Hereditary Hair in true malazite blue and royal corazine green? Why, bless my soul and body, not since the reign of Gee-Whiz the Twelfth has a true double instance of this kind of hair been found in all our kingdom!"

"Do you like their hair, your Majesty?" asked the Widow Pickle.

"What a question!" exclaimed the King. "How can I help liking it? Did not the Royal Queen Mother of our family three thousand years ago have blue hair; and her husband, the reigning monarch, green? My dear madam, I look upon this as the most fortunate thing that has occurred during my entire reign. If I am not very much mistaken, we shall hear of strange and wonderful things before long."

"I am glad you like their hair," said the Widow Pickle proudly, "although I must say that in our country neither was considered a fashionable color."

"Yours must be a very strange country," said the King of Gee-Whiz, "and you must have associated with extraordinarily ignorant persons, not to know that blue and green are the finest colors in the world for hair. Really, never in my life have I seen such a delicate shade as this. I

am so delighted that I shall at once, in accordance with the law of the Island, have this Prince and Princess measured for a brand-new throne each. Moreover, they shall each have one of the Fairy Wishing Wands, which are a part of the royal property. Whatever they wish they shall have three times a week—but of course no more, for that would not be lawful."

"Certainly not," said the Widow Pickle, although she did not in the least understand what all this was about.

"As to yourself, madam," resumed the Monarch, "although you claim to be the mother of these children, I do not observe that your own hair shows any token of the royal colors. In short, it is somewhat the color of my own. I regret to state that my hair, although once of a royal tint, was bleached by a sudden exposure to the sun by a careless nurse when I was young." He smiled sadly, but soon recovered. "This, however, shall not happen to this young Prince and Princess," he said, "for they shall have royal umbrellas and attendants to carry them when they walk abroad.

"Let me think," went on the King. "I forget what I was about to say. Was I going to banish you, my dear madam, or have you beheaded? Jiji, get up and tell me what I was going to say."

At this, the Private Secretary, who had been prostrate with his face upon the ground all this time, arose very quickly.

"Your Majesty," said he, "let me suggest that you neither banish nor behead this good lady. Her husband was a very remarkable man, a dealer in Chemical Substances. It was in this way, as I am assured, that he discovered the means of making a very wonderful dish known as the Waffle, which is considered to be a sovereign cure for what are called the high crimes and misdemeanors of the Royal Stomach."



They knew that their journey was over *Page 43*

"It was not my husband," began the Widow Pickle indignantly; but the Private Secretary, bowing low, stepped in front of her, wriggling his hands behind him very hard.

"Her husband, your Majesty," said he quickly, "was a wonderful man. I have myself seen one of these Waffles, and they are extraordinarily fine to look upon, although I have never eaten one. That is reserved for royalty alone."

"I have eaten them often," exclaimed Zuzu.

"That," said the King, "is not remarkable, my dear, because you evidently are of royal blood. But, madam, tell me where can I get one of these Waffles to eat?"

"That," said the Widow Pickle, "is very easy, if you will but get me a Waffle-iron and permit me to build a fire here in front of the palace."

The King turned to the Private Secretary. "Jiji," said he, "get her a Waffle-iron at once. If there is no such thing, have it made by the royal smiths. Pray, madam, what is a Waffle-iron made of?"

"Of iron, your Majesty."

54

"That is too bad," said the King. "We have no such precious metal as that. I suppose we shall have to make it out of gold. Do you mind if we make it of gold?"

"I never saw one of gold, your Majesty," replied the Widow Pickle, "but perhaps I could make out with it." In her heart she was thinking that if she ever told her friends she had baked Waffles on a gold Waffle-iron, they certainly would not believe her; but we can easily see how much mistaken her friends would have been in that case.

"Very well," said the King. "Get the lady a gold Waffle-iron and help her all you can with her work. If she is half as good a cook as you think, she also may have some sort of throne; although I much regret that her hair is far from the desirable color for those of the royal household."

"I ought to have a little flour," said the Widow, "and a little milk."

"Milk?" said the King. "How unfortunate! The royal cows are all lost in the woods, every one of them, and not even the Court Detective, whom I employ for that purpose, can find them."

"Don't you know how to find them?" cried Zuzu eagerly.

"No, to be sure I don't. I'm too busy to learn such things."

55

"You ask a Daddy-long-legs," said Zuzu.

"I beg pardon?" said the King. But just then, as Zuzu and Lulu happened to grasp the Enchanted Banjo, the latter began to tell the King how to find the cows—a thing which any child could have told him.

DADDY-LONG-LEGS

Ho, Mister Daddy-long-legs, it is queer
How much you know.
A very savage being you appear—
You are not, though.
With gentle grace and kindly bows
You tell us where to find the cows.

Ho, Daddy-long-legs, tell me, tell me now
Which direction I must go if I find my cow.
'Way over yonder—'way over there—
That's the way he points us with his long leg in the air.

Ho, Mister Daddy-long-legs, when you sprawl
Upon the fence,
One wouldn't think the cows would moo at all
When you commence
To show us where their feet have made
A winding pathway to the shade.

Ho, Daddy-long-legs, tell me, tell me now
Which direction I must go if I find my cow.
'Way through the meadow—'way down the brook—
See his long leg pointing out the place where we must look!

56

"Well!" said the King, "that is a most extraordinary thing, most extraordinary indeed, and I shall certainly have to call the matter to the attention of my Court Detective. But, madam, as we have no cows at present, how would a little cocoanut milk do? We can get you any amount of that."

"I have never tried it," said the Widow, "but I am sure it will be very much better than no milk at all."

"Very well, then," said the King, "I'll have Jiji get you all you want."





CHAPTER XII

THE GOLD WAFFLE-IRON

Meantime the Private Secretary departed, but now in a few moments returned with a very fine new Waffle-iron, all of gold, which he had had made as the Widow instructed, with small hills and hollows all over its surface.

"This," said the Widow Pickle, "is the most beautiful Waffle-iron I ever used. If I do not make good Waffles now, it surely will be my own fault."

So now the Private Secretary also got her some palm flour, and two quarts of cocoanut milk; and after making a little fire in front of the palace door, the Widow Pickle busied herself and soon produced a nice brown Waffle, with hills and hollows all over it, from her new gold Waffle-iron. "Now, if I only had some syrup," said she, "I am sure I could recommend this Waffle for any purposes connected with eating."

The King had been watching her very closely in her work. "What do you mean by syrup?" asked he curiously.

"This," said the Widow, "is certainly a strange country—not that I wish to criticize in the least, your Majesty. But I was just thinking that a world without syrup is very singular indeed."

"Well, you will understand," said the King of Gee-Whiz, "we who live on this Island are not very different from Fairies. At least, we are dependent upon the Fairies for all we eat and wear and use. They are our work people, and we have to take what they give us and be thankful. Now, I suppose the Fairies have never considered that syrup was necessary for us."

Zuzu and Lulu listened with the greatest interest, and when the king spoke of Fairies they could not restrain themselves.

"Oh, your Majesty," said Lulu, "have you ever really seen a Fairy?"

"Have I?" said the King. "Thousands of them. We get all our gold from them—when their pretty Queen, Zulena, is good enough to grant our wishes. Fairies! Why, they are as common as leaves upon the trees. Are there none in your country, my Princess?"

"None," said Lulu, "only I have always so much wished to see just one Fairy."

"If that is all you wish," said the King of Gee-Whiz, "there will not be the least trouble about it. We got this Enchanted Banjo from the Fairies, and I am sure it will be obliging enough to tell you about so common a place as Fairy-land. Won't you, Banjo?"

The Banjo nodded its head, and presently began to play.

I know where is Fairy-land,
Little one with wond'ring eyes.
Often, often, do you stand
Gazing where the hills arise,
Dreaming of the land that lies
Somewhere, where the fairies are
Past the ending of the skies—
Fairy-land afar.

I have seen it, and I know
How we journey to that land;
Nodding poppies flash and glow
Down the path on either hand;
Jewel spray on silver sand
Brings the snow-white Fairy-boats;
Each, by elves and brownies manned,
As a lily floats.

Ho, sometimes you hear the bells
That the dancing Fairies wear!
Oft at night their music swells
Far and faintly on the air,
And sometimes the breezes bear
Calls blown on a Fairy-horn;
You have heard them, here and there,
In the summer morn.

Here's the secret: You must look
For the path with drowsy eyes:
Twixt the covers of a book
Half the wondrous secret lies.
Then if you are good and wise,
In a twinkling there you are—
Past the ending of the skies,
Fairy-land afar.

"The Banjo knows more about the Fairies than any one," said the Private Secretary. "It can tell you how they employ themselves all these long summer days." And thereupon the Banjo began:

WHAT THE FAIRIES DO

Oh, do not think the Fairies can be idle all the while,
That they have nothing much to do but sit and sing and
smile;
Each has a task he must perform—he must be smart and
good
And do his work as carefully as real-sure people should.

Some Fairies have to hurry forth and waken all the leaves
And bid them come and dress the trees in dainty styles and
weaves;
Some Fairies have to go with paint and some with rich
perfume,
And tint and scent the flowers when they open into bloom.

The Jack-o'-lantern Fairies have to dance above the bogs
To make a light for all the concerts given by the frogs;
And others whisper to the bees and tell them where to look
For honey in a clover bloom that hides beside the brook.

And some come when the night is here and you have gone to
sleep
They find your home and then upon your pillow they will
creep,
And tell you dreams that you must dream; and then, you
understand,
Next morning you may truly say you've been to Fairy-land.

"But now, in regard to this syrup, I wonder very much how it tastes," interrupted the King, returning to the matter that had been upon his mind, "tell me, how does it taste?"

"Very sweet, your Majesty," said Zuzu, "and it is very nice with Waffles. I have eaten it often."

"But whence do you obtain this syrup?" asked the King.

"The best kind comes out of a tree," said Zuzu, who had often been with his uncle when he was making maple sugar.

"From a tree? Oh, I suppose you get it just as I do my palm wine when I wish, or my cocoanut milk. You cut a hole in the tree, and catch the juice in a cup?"

"It is something like that, your Majesty," replied Zuzu.

"Then, my dear," said the King, "take this little gold ax and run and catch me a cupful of syrup for my new Waffle."

Zuzu did as he was bid and soon came back with a cupful of very fair syrup. This the Widow at once spread upon the hot Waffle and offered it to the King.

"This syrup," said the King, touching his finger to the contents of the cup, "is most delicious. It is something we have had all along, but did not know it."

"Your Majesty," said the Widow Pickle anxiously, "I beg you will eat your Waffle while it is hot."

"Oh, very well," said the King wearily, "but surely you must know that I usually am very much more bored about eating things than any one can possibly be who has never been a King."

So saying, he took his royal golden knife and fork and cut off a morsel from the Waffle, which he placed in his royal mouth. As he did so, to their great surprise, he sat up straight, and a pleasant smile appeared upon his face. His cheek stuck out where the mouthful of Waffle lay; but the King did not act as though he intended to swallow it, although his smile showed that he was pleased.

"Is it good, your Majesty?" asked the Widow Pickle again anxiously.

The King nodded but did not speak. He motioned for a piece of paper, on which he wrote the word "Excellent."

"Then, why do you not eat it?" asked the Widow.

"I fear very much there may not be anything more so good," wrote the King.

At this, the Widow Pickle herself smiled happily.

"Oh, yes, there is, your Majesty," she cried. "I warn you that every bite of this Waffle is as good as the first one. Moreover, I assure you I can bake others quite as good, as many as you like."

Hearing this, the King at once ate the portion of Waffle, and, to the great joy of all, regained his voice; for of course no King ever speaks with his mouth even partly full.

"That," said the King, with a long breath, "was the most remarkable delicacy I ever ate in all my life. My dear madam, I am very much pleased that I have heard of it, very much pleased, I assure you. Indeed, I welcome you to our Island."

"But hurry, your Majesty," cried the Widow Pickle, "or the Waffle will get cold!"

Whereupon the King, still smiling with comfort and joy, fell to, and presently the first Waffle was quite gone. Another followed, and yet another. "More!" cried the King, as though he were a little boy. So the Widow Pickle, very warm and very happy, baked Waffles until she quite forgot to count them any more.

"You may have a throne made for the lady also, Jiji," said the King carelessly to his Private Secretary, after a while, "for I have concluded neither to banish her nor behead her. She

shall be made the Royal Waffle Baker, with a permanent salary."

The Widow Pickle was delighted, for although she had baked many a Waffle before, she had never done so with a gold Waffle-iron, and had never been so well rewarded for what to her seemed a very ordinary accomplishment.

Later, for the entertainment of Lulu and Zuzu, the Enchanted Banjo sang this little song, which, it said, contained a very helpful moral lesson:



IF YOU WERE A WAFFLE



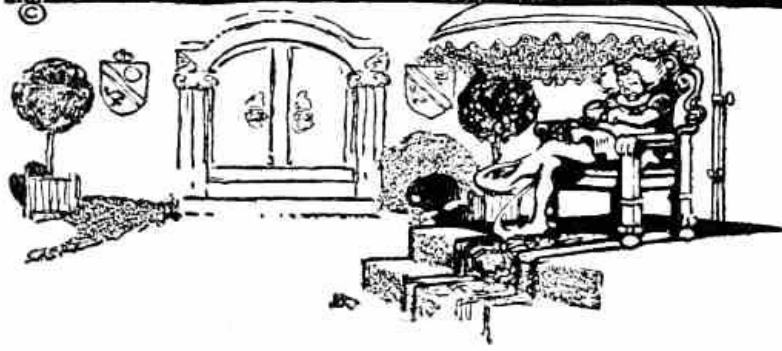
You think that things go wrong
If you should stub your toes;
If, when you run along,
You fall and bump your nose;

You sometimes wail and cry
Because you may not wear
The things that please your eye;
You do not like your hair!

But—
Wouldn't it be awful
If you were a waffle?
Puckered, brown, and round and flat—
Would you only think of that!
If you were a waffle
Wouldn't it be awful?

Sometimes you sigh—you do,
Because you are yourself!
What would you think if you
Were on a pantry shelf?
If you were set away
Because you had grown cold—
Left from but yesterday
And now, alas! too old!

Oh—
Wouldn't it be awful
If you were a waffle?
Hot and brown, and made to wait
On somebody's breakfast plate—
If you were a waffle,
Wouldn't it be awful?



CHAPTER XIII

THE FAIRY TELEPHONE

The next morning, after the Widow Pickle and the Twins had finished their breakfast, they strolled for a short time through the palace grounds, upon the edge of which was the house which the King had given them as their new home. Presently, they came to the place beneath the trees where was situated the great throne of the King of Gee-Whiz. As the climate was warm, he always kept his throne out of doors, under the trees, where it was cooler than in the palace. Here they now found the King fast asleep under his umbrella; but just as they were about to speak to him, they saw the Private Secretary beckoning to them. They joined him and followed him to a little distance from the throne.

67

"We must be careful," said the Private Secretary, "not to disturb his Majesty when he is asleep. He will probably not waken until eleven thirty-five, at which time it will be desirable for the Royal Baker of the Waffles to be ready to prepare his breakfast. I suggest that a little promenade through our Island might now be found pleasant."

"Can't mamma go with us?" asked Zuzu.

"That would be very nice," said the Private Secretary, "except for the reasons I have given. It will perhaps be the best and safest thing for your mamma to remain near the palace, lest the King should suddenly awake and be hungry."

So saying, the Private Secretary took Zuzu and Lulu each by the hand and they started out for a walk in the cool morning air.

Zuzu noticed that the Private Secretary carried under his arm some little sticks or wands, which shone as though they were made of gold and jewels.

"What are those little sticks that you are carrying, sir?" asked he.

"Those," said the Private Secretary, "are the Royal Wishing Wands which have been given to you by the King. He himself obtained them, some time ago from the Fairy Queen. You will find them very useful; for if there is anything in the world that you want, you can have it by simply rubbing this Wand three times and wishing clearly and distinctly. But you must remember that you have only three wishes in any one week; so I suggest that you exercise care."

68

As he spoke, the Private Secretary extended to each of the Twins one of the Royal Wishing Wands, and with great delight both began vigorously to rub the Wands and to say excitedly, "I wish! I wish!"

"Very well," said the Private Secretary, smiling. "What is it that you wish?"

"Please bring my mamma some gold and some diamonds, a whole bushel," said Lulu; and Zuzu said, "I wish the same, because I have often heard mamma express a wish for those very things."

"Very well," said the Private Secretary, "she shall have them just as soon as his Majesty can telephone to the Fairy Valley. His Majesty is very liberal in such matters as these."

"Telephone?" cried Zuzu. "Do you have telephones here?"



Zuzu and Lulu bowed very low *Page 50*

"Certainly we do. How could the King order such gold and diamonds as he may need, if he were not able to telephone for them to the Fairies? You see, we get these things only through the Fairies, who live far toward the interior of the Island, in a place which not even I myself have ever seen."

69

"Well, I would like to know how any one can telephone to a Fairy," said Zuzu, who had never heard of such a thing before.

"It is the simplest thing in the world," replied the Private Secretary. "The morning is the best time for the use of the Fairy Telephone. You will notice that then the dew lies heavy upon all the world. All the leaves and blades of grass are wet with it, and it shines in the early sunlight, to my mind far more beautifully than any diamond. Now, over this dewy world of leaves and grass and boughs and ferns, which touch each other quite across the Island, you will see many little fine lines, finer than hairs, woven in and out. Sometimes you will see long floating films and sometimes braided nets. These are the webs of the spiders, which spin all the time without any one asking them to work. Now, these webs of the spiders are the lines of the Fairy Telephone, and they run from this Island quite over into the valley where the Fairies live."

"But how can you hear?" asked Lulu. "I have had spider webs in my hands, but I heard nothing at all."

70

"That was because you did not have a Cricket to put to your ear at the same time," said the Private Secretary. "If you have a good Cricket and place it at your ear, it will say things to you. Have you not heard Crickets chirping, chirping away, hour after hour?"

"Of course! of course!" cried both the Twins, "we have heard that."

"Well," said the Private Secretary, "that is all there is about it. The Crickets are simply telephoning from the Fairies to you, and it has been your own fault that you have not had messages from the Fairies before now. Only I should say you must remember to have a White Cricket for good Fairies. A Black Cricket will telephone only to bad Fairies. His Majesty, of course, has a fine White Cricket, which has always lived under his shadow; and it is with this that he telephones to the Fairy Valley."

"I wish I had a Cricket," said Zuzu.

"Very well," said the Private Secretary, "you shall have one presently; but remember that is two wishes you have already had. And remember only a White Cricket is the right kind."

Before Zuzu could think or wish again, Lulu broke in. "I shall wish for a dewy morning and plenty of spider webs," said she.

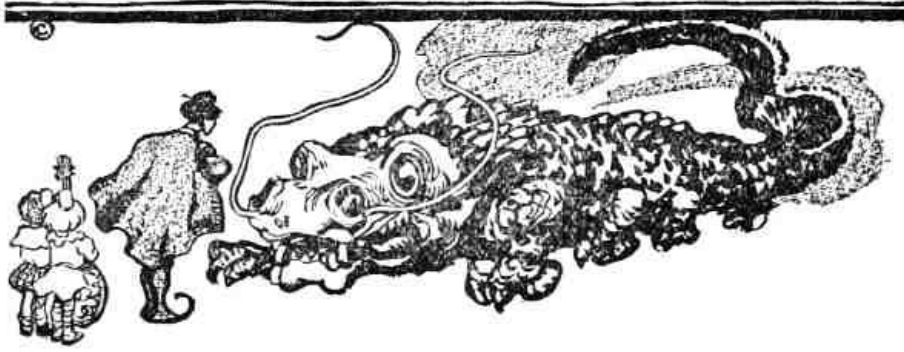
"Very well," said the Private Secretary, "I shall make a note of your second wish. You have now but two wishes left for the week; although I must say that for inexperienced wishers you have done very well."

"But why can't we ourselves go to the Fairy Valley," asked Zuzu, "if it is right here on this Island?"

The Private Secretary frowned. "Surely," said he, "you are a very ignorant person if you can have such a thought as that. The Fairy Valley is known to none of us of the royal household. Besides, you quite forget about the Dragon which guards the entrance to the Valley. Listen! It seems to me I hear the Dragon's voice at this moment."

They all stopped and listened, and, to be sure, they heard at that moment a low, hoarse, roaring sound come across the forest, sounding something like the bark of the sea-lion in the zoölogical gardens, so that any who have heard that will know very well how the voice of a Dragon sounds. For, as it seems, this is what Zuzu and Lulu heard.

"Yes," said the Private Secretary, "there is the Dragon roaring now."



CHAPTER XIV

JANKOW THE DRAGON

"I don't exactly like that sound," said Zuzu, drawing back. "It makes my shoulders creep." Lulu also hesitated.

"Don't fear," said the Private Secretary. "In my belief the Dragon is not so bad as his voice and actions would seem to indicate. I have lived here all my life, and although I have known our Dragon to threaten to do a great many things, I have never known him really to harm anybody in his life. It seems necessary for a Dragon to roar a great deal; but in my experience they are not dangerous if properly approached and handled with care."

73

Zuzu and Lulu, none the less, were very much afraid as they went on through the woods with the Private Secretary. The voice of the Dragon seemed to them very loud and ferocious. They held on tight to the hands of the Private Secretary, who led them on until at last they came out into a wide, open space in front of a high and jagged pile of rocks. In these rocks there was a narrow sort of gorge or passageway, and directly in front of this opening or door, as they presently discovered, lay the head and shoulders of the most dreadful looking Dragon either Zuzu or Lulu had ever heard of in all their lives.

The head of the Dragon was as large as a two-horse carriage and its mouth was as wide as a door; so that both of the Twins could have stepped into the mouth had they cared to do so. As they approached, they saw that the roof of the Dragon's mouth was dark red, the sides of its mouth and its tongue a light red in color. It had teeth as long as one's arm. Fire at times came out of its nostrils, and its eyes, which were as large as bushel baskets and very bright red in color, rolled from side to side in the most remarkable and threatening manner.

"Oh, I wish it would stop," exclaimed Lulu, beginning to cry, as the Dragon went on growling and roaring.

74

"Arnggh! Arnggh!" it roared, and started up on its forefeet as though to talk to these intruders. As it did this, it moved its long body quite to the extremity of its tail, and the Twins could hear its heavy scales rattling at least fifty feet back in the dark passage where the rest of the body and the tail of the Dragon were lying. At these sights and sounds it was all the Private Secretary could do to keep the Twins from running away, but he held them tight by the hands.

"Good morning, Jankow," said he to the Dragon. "How are you feeling to-day? Does the same tooth still bother you?"

"Of course it does," said the Dragon. "How do you suppose you would feel if you had a tooth that had been bothering you for fifty years?"

"I understand," said the Private Secretary, "but thus far the Royal Dentist has always declined to pay you a visit, Jankow, for fear you would swallow him while he was at work."

The Dragon only roared a few more times at this, but at length he asked, "Who are these two young persons you

have with you?"

"These," said the Private Secretary, "are the Royal Hereditary Twins, who have been expected on the Island for a thousand years. You will see that one has the Royal Hereditary malazite blue hair, while the other has the genuine and ancient corazine green hair. Moreover, as you will observe, they both bear the Royal Wishing Wands, which all must obey. It is the wish of his Majesty that they have a pleasant life upon our Island."

75

"Well, I hope they will have a better time than I have had," said the Dragon mournfully. "What self-respecting Dragon would ask a place like mine? I am forced to obey the King or he will close my mouth; and I am obliged to obey the Fairies in the valley below, else they will pinch my tail. And I was once the Royal Army of the first King of Gee-Whiz, a thousand years ago!"

"You will see, my young friends," said the Private Secretary, "that Dragons grow very old and are sometimes, I fear, as short-tempered as they are long-lived; although I mean no offense to Jankow, who really has a tooth which should have been extracted, had he not been so proud of retaining a full set of teeth. And what he says about being the Royal Army is quite true."

"Indeed, it is," said the Dragon proudly. "I was the sole defense of this Island against the Wicked Fairies a thousand years ago, but now I am obliged to defend the Fairies as well. Were it not for me, they would get out of the Secret Valley and make trouble perhaps even now. I keep everybody in on one side and everybody out on the other. So I may say that I am still the support of this kingdom, although I am older than I once was."

76

"Oh, I see," cried Lulu. "That is why they telephone to the Fairies."

"Yes," growled the Dragon, "that is how they get around me. The new King has in some mysterious way discovered the use of the telephone. It makes me more than ever discontented with my place. And I can tell them that for a faithful, hard-working Dragon they'd have a hard enough time getting my superior, of that I am very sure. And all this indignity to me, who lost a limb in the service of my country!"

"What does he mean by that?" asked Lulu of the Private Secretary.

"It is true," said the latter. "He should have eight legs, including the two in front, which are by far the largest and most important of the eight. But if you will observe closely, you will see that Jankow's left foreleg is of wood and merely painted over."

"Yes, and needs a fresh coat of paint as well," growled the Dragon, none the less thrusting out his wooden leg that all might see it. "I am a very much neglected Royal Army, as you can readily see for yourself. Moreover, this loss of one of my most important legs confines me to this spot. I have been here for over a thousand years. A great many persons think they would like nothing so much as to be a Dragon, but I can tell them that they might not find it so pleasant after all, for being an honest and hard-working Dragon is no light task."

77

"Don't you go to sleep each night?" asked Zuzu.

"I never go to sleep at all. For over a thousand years I have not had a nap. There is nothing in the world can put me to sleep."

"Except *one* thing," said the Private Secretary, smiling.

The Dragon scowled at him. "What is the use of mocking me?" it said. "Of course, I know that the Enchanted Banjo might put me to sleep, but that plays only for the King; but not until that takes place does any person get by Jankow, the

Royal Dragon."

"We quite trust you, Jankow," said the Private Secretary, "and I agree with you that you are a most excellent and satisfactory Dragon. But now, my young friends, if you please, we would better start back to the royal palace, for his Majesty will be waking before long. I only hope that the royal Waffles will continue to be satisfactory!"





CHAPTER XV

THE GOLDEN LADDER TO FAIRY-LAND

The Widow Pickle proved that she had not lost her skill in the art of baking Waffles, and those which she furnished for the royal breakfast-table could not have been surpassed in any land. After eating several platefuls, the King had again fallen asleep, remarking that he had not slept so well for years. The Widow Pickle herself was taking a nap in a hammock under the trees when the Twins finally returned; and, seeing that every one was fast asleep and they themselves left alone, they presently wandered out a little way into the edge of the wood, where they sat down side by side upon a log, their royal crowns upon their brows and the Royal Wishing Wands in their hands.

They sat thus, staring out over the distant sea.

"This is a very strange and wonderful country," said Zuzu, "and I am sure I should never have expected to be here, above all places. I sometimes have to rub my eyes to be sure I am awake. Now, the very idea that we should be so close to actual Fairies, to have them all about, or at least within a short walk—that is very strange and hard for me to believe."

"But we don't see them anywhere," said Lulu ruefully. "Now, Fairies may be very close to one, indeed be almost any place about, and still one may not see them. We seem to be very little better off than when we were at home over there;" and she waved her hand toward the distant blue sea, from the other side of which they had come to this strange Island of Gee-Whiz.

Zuzu sat thoughtful for a moment. "Yet," said he, "here we are, with thrones almost as good as that of the King, and with Royal Wishing Wands, which will bring us anything we want if we only ask for it; and you know we are allowed to telephone to the Fairies."

"That is true," cried Lulu, "I had forgotten that. But we must have a web and a Cricket. A White Cricket may be very hard to find."



Zuzu put the cricket to his ear *Page 81*

"Perhaps if we got a plain black one it would do just as well," said Zuzu. "Look, there goes one now!" And indeed, as they glanced down they saw a large Black Cricket hopping along through the grass.

"I will get it," cried Zuzu, and sprang after it with his hat in his hand, soon returning with the Cricket held in his fingers.

"Now we must have some spider webs," said Lulu, forgetting that they were not complying with the conditions the Private Secretary had told them. They forgot to look for a White Cricket, but eagerly ran about in the grass searching for a spider web. At length, under a wide burdock leaf, they found one. "Here is the Fairy Telephone," cried Lulu. "Quick! Quick! Listen! Let us hear what the Cricket and the spider say for us!"

So Zuzu put the Cricket to his ear. "Creek! Creek!" said the Cricket. Then, as he listened very closely, Zuzu heard something very thin and very far away begin to sing to him.

"Aha!" cried Zuzu, "this is not such a bad Cricket after all. I shall call the Fairy, and we'll see what it is, good or bad." So he called out in a loud voice over the Telephone, "Come, Fairy, come!"

To their great surprise, as he spoke there stood at their feet a little Black Fairy, with pointed hat, who smiled and bowed.

"Pray, who are you?" asked Zuzu.

"I am Gobo, a Fairy," he explained. "What was it that you wished, good sir?"

"We wish to see a Fairy," replied Lulu eagerly. "Are you a Fairy?"

"I am one sort of Fairy," replied the little one. "Unhappily, there are other kinds, as I must admit."

"But we wish to see the real ones, with white wings. We want to go to the Valley of the Fairies, where we may see the Queen herself and learn how the good Fairies live," said Lulu.

"I can be of no use in that case," said the little one, turning away gruffly.

"But surely you can help us to get into the Fairy Valley!" cried Lulu.

"I might get into trouble if I did too much talking," replied the little one. "But why do you ask me so foolish and childish a question, when you have all the means in your power without my aid?"

"What do you mean?" cried Zuzu eagerly. "It is true, we have three wishes every week, though foolishly, like most Twins, we often wish the same thing, and so shorten our allowance. In this way we have nearly used up all our wishes for this week, and I am sure we can not wait another whole week before trying to get to the Fairy Valley, where the Queen lives and whence all the gold and jewels come."

"Aha!" laughed the little black one. "Suppose I should tell you. Could you keep the secret to yourselves?"

"To be sure we could," cried both the Twins. "We would not tell a soul on the Island."

"Then why not go?" said the little one. "Have you not the Enchanted Banjo?"

"We could get it," said Zuzu, "and it plays for us."

"That I know," said the Wicked Fairy, "and with the Enchanted Banjo can you not do all manner of things? For instance, although I do not say it or admit it, would not the

Enchanted Banjo put the Dragon to sleep?"

"Precisely what the Private Secretary said, and indeed what the Dragon himself wished!" said Zuzu.

"And if the Dragon were asleep," said the Wicked Fairy, "would it not be easy to unscrew his wooden leg, and leave him so that he could not get away, no matter how hard he tried? And if he were helpless, what could hinder you from slipping past him and going down the Golden Ladder into the Valley of the Fairies, which he guards so faithfully?"

"The Golden Ladder?" cried Lulu. "What is that?"

84

"You must be a very ignorant person not to know," said the Fairy. "That is the stairway of the Fairies, very long but not hard to travel, if you know the way. It leads to the Fairy Valley, that is sure; and it is also sure that no person except a Fairy has ever been down that Golden Ladder, no, not in the thousands of years that I have lived on this Island; and that is the truth and you may depend on it, even if I am called a Wicked Fairy and answer the Black Cricket instead of the White."

"But could we ever get back again?" asked Zuzu fearfully.

"That is for you to determine," said the Wicked Fairy, scowling.

In his excitement over these matters Zuzu had let go of the Cricket, which, finding itself at liberty, now hopped away and crawled under a log. As he stooped over to pick up the Cricket, Zuzu noticed that the Wicked Fairy was gone; so they could ask no more about this matter of the Golden Ladder into the Valley of the Fairies.



CHAPTER XVI

THE KING AND THE WICKED FAIRY

On the morning following this event, the King of Gee-Whiz woke in great good humor. "I declare, I never felt better in my life," said he to his Private Secretary, "and I believe it is all due to those excellent Waffles which the lady has made for me. I must have some more, and that at once. Pray, tell her to get ready my breakfast, and to have not less than two dozen Waffles at the least."

"Very good, your Majesty," said the Private Secretary, smiling, and very glad that he had been able to find something so much to the King's liking.

"And where are the Royal Hereditary Twins, this morning?" asked the King. "They are, I suppose, perfectly happy?"

86

"Perfectly," replied the Private Secretary, "as indeed they ought to be. I presume they are wandering somewhere about in the forest, as is their custom. I need hardly say that they have already nearly exhausted their three wishes."

"Well," said the King, "we need not fear they will wish anything dangerous. But do you know, my dear Jiji, I have been feeling rather nervous myself this morning."

"Why, your Majesty, what can be the trouble?"

"I can not call it exactly any trouble, for it is a mere uneasiness. The truth is, I felt as though there were some one behind my bed all the morning. Now, that can not possibly be the case."

"No, your Majesty," said the Private Secretary, "because I always sleep across the door-mat myself, and it would be impossible for any one to reach your Majesty's bedside without my knowing it. Permit me to suggest that perhaps the royal Waffles—"

"No, no," exclaimed the King decidedly. "It is not in the least the Waffles. It is nothing—only a dream, perhaps. Yet I wonder if any of the Fairies can have got out of the valley. If I thought so, I would have Jankow court-martialed, and perhaps beheaded. He is getting a trifle too old for a good Dragon, anyhow."

87

"Impossible," said the kind-hearted Private Secretary. "I saw Jankow but yesterday, and he is as wide-awake as ever."

"As for myself," replied the King, "I have not slept so well for a hundred years, although I can not tell whether it is the Waffles or the syrup."

"It was a fortunate thing, your Majesty, that you found the syrup so easily," said the Private Secretary.

"Quite right," replied the King. "And since it is not yet quite breakfast time, I think I shall just wander out into the woods and carry my ax, in case I should find a syrup tree. Although I am King, I believe in every man doing a little work for himself, you know."

So saying, the King stepped out into the edge of the great

forest which surrounded the palace, humming a tune to himself, for he felt very contented that morning. He was not aware that at his side, hopping along as he walked, was the little Black Wicked Fairy which had been summoned by Zuzu's thoughtless message of the evening before. This Wicked Fairy, when Zuzu had stooped over to find his Cricket, had merely slipped back under a leaf and hidden himself, where he had stood laughing to himself at the confusion of Lulu and Zuzu. It seems to be a peculiarity of Wicked Fairies never to oblige any one if they can help doing so; and that this is true may be seen from the acts of this Wicked Fairy in regard to the Telephone.

No sooner had Zuzu and Lulu left the forest on the night before than the Wicked Fairy followed them to their own house near the palace. He spied upon all the surroundings, and soon discovered the sleeping apartments of the King. He hopped over the form of the Private Secretary after the latter had gone to sleep, and so hid himself behind the royal bedstead, as the King had dimly felt was the case.

Now, it was not in the power of the Wicked Fairy actually to harm the King or any other person, but only to encourage persons to do things which would get them into trouble. Thus it was he who had suggested to the King to take his ax and go out into the woods to find a syrup tree. This was really the worst thing in the world the King could have done, as was very soon to be shown; for it was far from the Fairy's intentions that the King should cut into a real syrup tree.

As the King went on, with his gold ax over his shoulder, he was thinking of a great many things which he ought to do, or wanted to do, or did not want to do. By this time, the sun was shining brightly, so that the shadow of the King appeared distinctly upon the ground. Now, you must know that the shadow of a king is very much better and bigger than the shadow of a common person. A king will not cause a shadow in the dark, or at least very few kings will; but in a brilliant place, even if there be intervening objects, the shadow of a king is very clear and distinct. The King of Gee-Whiz was very proud of his shadow, for, being a trifle vain, he thought himself a very handsome man, and that, indeed, he once had been; which is the same thing, for a King.

Now, as he looked down at the ground, he saw his shadow moving along at his side, keeping step with him regularly and looking, as it seemed to him, very large and handsome. He stood for a time at an open space in the forest, with his ax resting on a stump, looking with pride on his shadow, which he thought was quite the most superior shadow he had ever seen. When he made a motion, the shadow made the same. He raised his hand to his head in royal salute, and the shadow did quite the same. "Even a shadow has reverence for the King," said he, and he felt very glad that he had been born a King, as the position carried with it many advantages of a very obvious nature.

"I don't see what I could do without my shadow," said the King of Gee-Whiz. "It and my faithful Private Secretary are my best friends and companions, and without them I should be very lonesome; for not even a King, I presume, could eat Waffles all the time. I am sure I should miss my shadow above all things."

As the King of Gee-Whiz said this, he looked about him uneasily, with something of the same feeling he had experienced when he thought some one was behind his bed. There was good reason for this, for in both cases the Wicked Fairy was directly at his elbow, although the King could not see him.

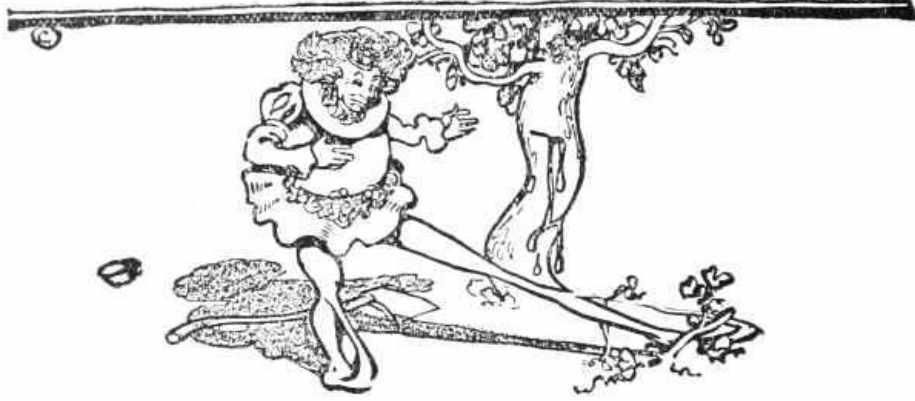
"Well, well," said the King, "I will just draw me a jug of syrup, and I am sure the exercise will do me good. Even a King must have physical culture, or fall quite behind the times. Let me see. Ah, here is a tree which looks precisely like a syrup tree."

So saying, he laid about him with his ax and cleared a little

space so that he could get at the trunk of the tree. It was then that the Wicked Fairy whispered in his ear, although the King did not know it: "Cut into that tree, the one with the big green leaves!"

The King of Gee-Whiz, not knowing that a Fairy was there, thought it was his own voice he had heard. "Eh?" said he. "Ah, to be sure, this certainly is the tree. So now for a little exercise, and some syrup for my breakfast." So saying he swung his gold ax and cut deep into the trunk of the tree the Fairy had shown him.





CHAPTER XVII

THE KING AND THE RUBBER TREE

Now, in the forests of the Island of Gee-Whiz are very many sorts of trees—palm trees, tall and stately, with parasols at their tops; juju trees, with rough, sticky sides and long, slender leaves; and strawberry trees, not in the least resembling our little creeping vines. There are also orange trees, with ripe yellow oranges, and trees with fruit resembling chocolate éclaires, all ready for eating, and other trees which bear fruit much like a charlotte russe. Besides these, there are many trees such as we all know—hickory, oak, and apple trees, and maple trees, from which maple sugar comes. It was, of course, from the sugar-maple tree that Zuzu had drawn the syrup for the Waffles; and that, of course, was the kind of tree into which the King should have cut with his little gold ax. But, being guided by this Wicked Fairy whom he could not see, the King was not aware of this. The truth is that, as he swung his ax and cut into the tree before him, it was not a maple tree at all, but a rubber tree. As he struck the trunk, to his great surprise, there gushed out not a pale, sticky syrup, but a fresh-looking liquid, which resembled milk.

"Bless my soul and body!" said the King. "That does not look right."

"Oh, yes, it does," whispered the Wicked Fairy in his ear.

"Eh? What?" said the King, still not knowing it was a Fairy. "Yes, I suppose this must be right. In any case, I will taste it and see." So he held out his cup and caught it full of the rubber juice and drank a deep draft of it. To his great surprise, he began to feel very strange.

"Bless my soul and body!" exclaimed the King to himself. "This is most extraordinary. I must say that I feel strange, quite strange, I do indeed. Why, this is not in the least like the syrup I tasted yesterday morning. I wonder if I could have made a mistake."

"It is no mistake," whispered the Fairy, "that is the right tree."

"Eh? What?" said the King. "Oh, yes, so it is, so it is. At first, it seemed to me that the syrup was not the same."

"Take some more," whispered the Wicked Fairy; and the King, still not knowing there was a Wicked Fairy there, did so, this time taking a deep draft.

"Bless my soul and body!" cried he this time. "I begin to feel very strange, very strange indeed. I feel really light-headed."

He looked down at his shadow, but the shadow still was there, keeping time with every motion, so that he felt much comforted.

"My shadow is just the same," said the King, "so everything must be all right. But, dear me, what is the matter with my leg?"

The King had, in stepping back from the tree, caught his foot between two roots, and now, instead of releasing his foot when he pulled at it, he saw, to his great surprise, that he was stretching his leg out to twice its natural length.

"Dear me!" he said, as he moved back and sat down on a log, looking in curiosity at his leg, which was now about ten or perhaps eleven feet long and much thinner than before. "Bless my soul and body! If I were not the King and quite wide-awake, I should say that something was happening to me, I should indeed. This impresses me as being most extraordinary. Where is my shadow?" He looked around and there was the shadow just the same, with its leg as long as his, which made the King again feel very much better.

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"It does not hurt," said the King, shaking his head; and the shadow also shook its head to show that it was not in any pain.

"Take another drink," whispered the Wicked Fairy to the King.

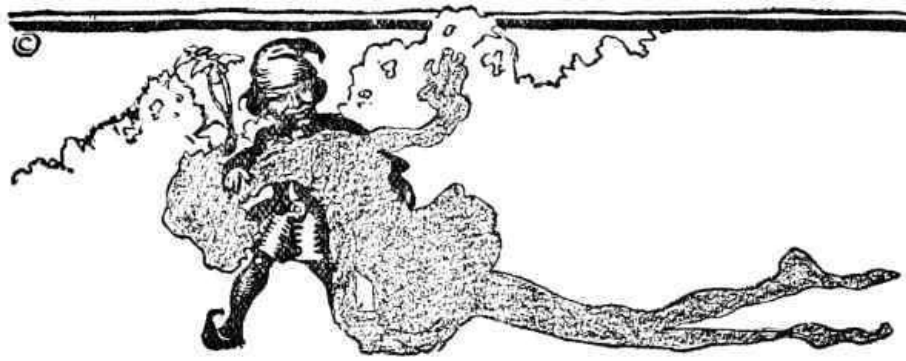
"Well, if it does not hurt any," said the King to himself, "and since the thing is so curious, I will take another sip of the syrup, I believe." He did so, and this time his hand, which had rested on the tree, remained there when he went back to the log to sit down, his arm stretching out as long as his leg. This was very much to the King's surprise. He gave a sharp jerk, and both arm and leg shortened as they flew back quite as though they had been fast to a strong rubber cord. At this the King perspired a trifle and moved away toward the other end of the log, looking down at his hand and foot as he did so. To his great surprise, as he sat down on the log, he felt himself gently bounce up again in the air, and this was repeated each time as he struck the log, so that it was some moments before he could really settle down. Even then he felt very touchy and insecure, so that he scarcely dared draw a long breath. Indeed, when at length he did draw a long breath, he found, to his great surprise, that his chest swelled out like a small balloon, so that he was more than three times as large around as he was before. He was much alarmed at this, but smiled again when he saw that his shadow was quite as large as himself.

96

"Bless my soul and body!" said the King to himself, "I wonder if they will know me now. This is what I call great good fortune! The truth is that I have always felt larger than I really looked, so I am very glad I cut into this tree and got a taste of something to make me grow to my real size. I have long looked for something of precisely this sort."

"Why not get up and dance?" asked the Wicked Fairy in his ear.

"Eh? What?" said the King. "Dance? Oh, yes, I certainly am happy enough to dance at this new discovery. Indeed, my spirits have at no time felt more elastic than at the present moment. So, since there is nothing to prevent it, I think I will do a royal step or two to pass away the time before breakfast."



CHAPTER XVIII

THE KING LOSES HIS SHADOW

The King of Gee-Whiz stepped out into an open space in the forest, and, to his very great surprise, observed that he could not feel his feet touch the ground. This was really because he was so full of rubber, although he himself had no idea of any such thing at all. He was conscious only of feeling that he had all along been a greater King than he had had credit for being. So he hummed a tune to himself as he began to dance.

There was probably never a dance just such as this which the King of Gee-Whiz now began. Had he himself seen it from a distance, he would have been sure that it was not the performance of a dignified and respectable King. He sprang from one foot to the other, and each time he touched the ground he rebounded into the air a dozen feet, or possibly even more. He alighted upon both feet, muttering as he did so an exclamation of delight, for, strange as that may seem, he was enjoying himself very much. Each time that both his feet struck the ground he went into the air just twice as far as when only one foot was so employed. He slapped his arms upon his chest, and as he did this, to his great surprise, a squeak came out of his mouth exactly similar to that which comes from the hole in a rubber ball when you squeeze it. This startled him at first, but he was too busy to think about it long.

He sprang from side to side; and whereas in a common dancing step a King goes scarcely more than two or three feet at a stride, the King now would step at least a dozen feet, or, for that matter, perhaps twenty. There seemed to be no limit to the length of the steps he could take; and whenever he took a step he bounded high into the air, at times having difficulty in keeping himself from turning quite over in the air. Indeed, the temptation to turn hand-springs and somersaults as he had done when a boy became so strong upon him that only his great kingly dignity served to prevent his doing that very thing.

"Aha!" cried the King, "this certainly is fine." At least these are the words which he wished to say, although all that he could hear were several sharp whistles as the breath came out of his mouth.

The King sprang up and down very hard, anxious to see how high he could go into the air. To his great surprise, he found that by making several leaps up and down he could easily bound upward as high as the top of the tallest palms. This pleased him very much, as in this position he secured a wider view of his own possessions than he had ever had in his life before.

"I shall come back here once in a while," said the King to himself, "and have another drink at that rubber tree, if this dose wears off after a while. This really is wonderful. It enlarges my outlook upon life many-fold, and although I have previously to this felt very much of a King, I now begin to understand how much I have underrated my own abilities in every line of activity. But, by the way," he added to himself,

"this exercise is affecting the royal appetite. I think I'll step over and have my breakfast."

So in one or two long strides he walked over to the palace and called aloud to his Private Secretary and to the Widow Pickle. To his great surprise, when he called aloud, the King could not speak a word, but could only whistle. He put up his hand to his face to feel what was the matter with his voice, but of course he could not feel anything about his voice. He did, however, observe, very much to his annoyance, that his royal aquiline nose had quite disappeared, that his mouth now extended quite across his face, that his ears were small and almost gone into his head, and that for a forehead nothing remained but a wide, round expanse, which he could easily dent with his thumb. In short, he resembled, to the touch at least, although, of course, he could not see himself, nothing in the world so much as a large, soft, rubber ball, hollow and inflated, and with legs and arms attached.

100

When the King realized this and found also that his voice was gone, a sudden fear fell upon him. "My soul and body!" thought he to himself, "can this be true? If so, I am in the worst sort of a situation, for no one will recognize me!" So saying, he sank down upon the ground near the palace door, and after a number of bounces up and down at last settled into an attitude of Deep Thought.

After the King had thought for quite a time, he happened to look upon the ground before him. To his great surprise, there was no shadow there. He had not known that all along it had been the intention of the Wicked Fairy to steal his shadow. Such, however, had been the case. While the King was at the top of one of his highest bounds, the Wicked Fairy, who had remained upon the ground below, took the opportunity to remove his shadow from beneath him; so that after that the King cast no shadow at all. Just how this was done it is hard to say. Perhaps the Chemist, Aurelius Pickle, who knew many strange things, could have told how this occurred, but he, being dead, could not be asked. It may be that as the King was stretched out to thrice his natural height, he was thrice his natural thinness, and that the shadow also became three times as thin, and so was easy to take away. In any case, certainly the Wicked Fairy had removed the King's shadow, and, of course, with it the White Cricket which had always lived in that shadow. When the King looked down and saw what had happened, he fell back in a deep swoon of terror.

101

For a moment all was still; then there came from somewhere off in the distance, the doleful tones of the Enchanted Banjo.

THE SORROWFUL SONG OF THE SHADOWLESS KING

102

If you find my shadow, O bring it straight to me!
A shadowless King is compelled to be gloomy;
I sit in the sun and I sob in my sorrow
And wonder if I'll have a shadow to-morrow.

I've lost my shadow;
My heart is sad, O!
I would be glad, O!
If I but had, O!
My shadow.

I look in the corners, I hunt through my palace;
I grieve that my shadow was stolen through malice—
Just think, if you please, of a life sad and hollow!
When I take a walk there's no shadow to follow.

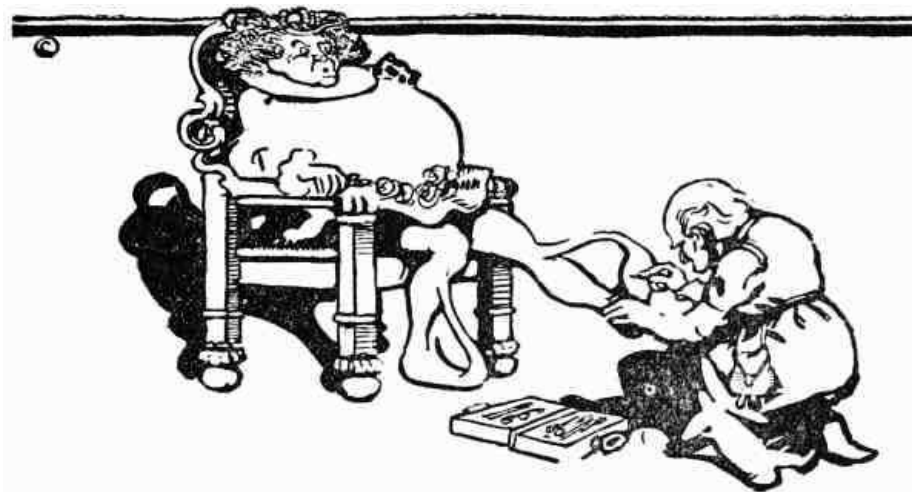
I've lost my shadow;
It is too bad, O!
It makes me mad, O!
To think I had, O!
My shadow.

My shadow was ever a thing of great beauty;
It did all I did, as was its bounden duty;
It echoed my sitting and standing and walking,
My riding and ruling, and all but my talking.

I've lost my shadow;
It makes me sad, O!
I would be glad, O!
If I but had, O!
My shadow.



The King was very proud of his shadow *Page 89*



CHAPTER XIX

TROUBLES AT THE ROYAL PALACE

About the time these events were happening the Widow Pickle was preparing to make ready the King's breakfast. As she came from her house and approached the palace, her eyes rested upon the prostrate body of the King.

"This," said the Widow Pickle, "is the strangest looking object I ever saw in all my life. I wonder what it is."

At this time there came around the corner of the palace the Private Secretary of the King. "Good morning, Widow Pickle," said the Private Secretary. "Have you seen his Royal Highness anywhere this morning? It is nearly his breakfast hour, and no one knows where he is."

104

"I don't know either," said the Widow Pickle; "but I do know that it is scandalously late for any decent King to be lying abed. But tell me, what is this thing lying here, do you suppose?"

As she spoke, she gave the King a poke with her foot, which immediately made him resolve to have her beheaded. The King recognized his Private Secretary and made frantic efforts to speak to him, all the time gesticulating in the wildest manner; but all he could do was to squeak as before; and the worst of it was that, as he became excited, he began again to bound up and down in the most violent manner.

"Mercy on us!" said the Widow Pickle. "I didn't know it was alive! What do you suppose it is?"

The Private Secretary took a second look and turned deathly pale.

"Madam," said he in a whisper, "it is none less than his Royal Highness, though what has come to him I can not say. But that it is the King I can swear by these two fingers on his hands and by the pink strawberry mark upon his shoulder."

"Your Majesty!" cried the faithful Private Secretary, "calm yourself, I beseech you. Pray be seated."

105

The King continued to bound up and down.

"Your Majesty," said the Private Secretary, "how came you in this unfortunate condition? I am very much distressed, indeed, your Majesty. But will you not be seated?"

The King violently shook his head and resumed his agitation, until at length the Private Secretary grasped him by one arm and so at last brought him to a stop and placed him upon the Royal Throne.

"Why, your Majesty," said the Private Secretary, "you are light as a feather! Pray, tell me, how has this happened?"

The King could only squeak as before, but now he made a violent motion toward his feet. The Private Secretary

understood him, as any good Private Secretary should be able to understand even the inmost thoughts of his King.

"Quite right, your Majesty," said he. "I shall send at once for the Court Physician."

So presently the Court Physician came up on a run, and, seeing what was the trouble, took his keen lancet and bled the King in his royal left foot. At once there was a sharp, hissing sound, and the dimensions of the King began to subside. In a few moments he had shrunk to such a size that he could be recognized by all. But now he was in such a rage that he could not make himself understood, but merely spluttered. Then he was for beheading the Widow Pickle at once for kicking him while he was helpless. Then he changed his mind, and ordered everybody banished from the Island except himself. This notion also passed, and he at length became more calm.

106

"Your Majesty, it was all those Waffles," cried the Court Physician, who was jealous of the Widow Pickle.

"Not in the least," declared the Widow Pickle. "That was never said of my Waffles before, as I am an honest woman."

The King was a just Monarch, after all, and presently admitted it was not the Waffles, but what he had taken to be the syrup, which he was now ready to agree was perhaps a foreign substance of a dangerous nature. He explained the appearance of the tree from which he had taken the liquid, and the Court Physician in post-haste set off to the forest. He returned at length quite out of breath, and assured the King that he had examined the tree and found that it was not a syrup tree or *Arbor saccharinus*, but a rubber tree, *Arbor elasticus horribiliensis*, whose juice was capable of the most singular consequences when taken into the human system.

"That explains all," said the King, who was now leaning weakly back upon the throne, very weary and pale; "all but one thing." As he spoke, he slowly and tremblingly turned his head and looked upon the ground to see if he could discover his shadow.

107

"Look! Look!" cried the King, pointing before him.

The Court Physician and the Private Secretary both looked but could see nothing.

"There is nothing there, your Majesty," said the Court Physician.

"Nothing there!" exclaimed the King. "Of course there is nothing there—why, my soul and body! can't you see my royal shadow is gone?"

They looked again, and, to their great surprise, saw it was quite as the King had said. They looked all around, back of the throne, in front of it, and under it, and behind the door, but, seek as they might, could find no trace of the royal shadow.

"This," said the King, "is very terrible. I have been attached to that shadow for so long that I am sure I do not know what I shall do without it. Why, I feel so lonesome! Tell me what I shall do, tell me at once! Why do I employ an expensive Court Physician and a Private Secretary, if they are not able to tell me what to do in a case like this?"

"If your Majesty will pardon me," said the Court Physician, "I would suggest that this is rather the work of the Court Detective."

108

"Nonsense!" said the King. "Jiji, do you go at once to the Court Tailor and Royal Robe Maker and have him take my measure for a new shadow. And now bring me my Waffles immediately, my good woman, for I am very much exhausted by all these trying circumstances."



CHAPTER XX

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE ROYAL TWINS

In the meantime, it hardly need be said, the Wicked Fairy had fled far away with the King's shadow, so that there was not the slightest use in looking for it about the palace. In the meantime, also, the advice of the Wicked Fairy to the Twins had been productive of further trouble. Hardly had the two well arisen from their beds before they began to whisper together about certain plans.

First, they got possession of the Enchanted Banjo; for it hardly need be said that they now proposed a journey to the Valley of the Fairies, and without the Banjo they could not put the Dragon Jankow to sleep. The Private Secretary, excited over the condition of the King, did not miss the Banjo, so Lulu and Zuzu had no difficulty in taking it away.

"Pray, where are you going with me?" asked the Enchanted Banjo of the Twins.

"Where should we be going," replied Zuzu, "if not to the Valley of the Fairies? Will you not go with us?"

"With all my heart," said the Enchanted Banjo, "for it was in that Valley that I was born. You may depend upon me; but we shall need to be very careful indeed."

By this time, as the Twins walked on their way through the forest, they began to hear the voice of the Dragon—"Arrnghgh! Arrnghgh!"—but they went on as bravely as they could, and presently were directly before the Dragon, which again reared and rattled its long body covered with heavy scales. This was a fearful sight, but Zuzu and Lulu tightly grasped the Enchanted Banjo, and it began to play:

THE LULLABY OF ENCHANTMENT

Ho, Little Wind, come out of the west
And whisper the song that is laden with rest.
The world is a-weary,
The day has been long
So sing for my dearie
A lullaby-song.

Lullaby, lullaby, soft and low,
For that is the way that the Fairy-horns blow;
And thither and hither and thither and here
The Fairies bring dreams for the sleep of my dear.
Lullaby, lullaby, low.

Ho, Little Wind, you may creep, if you will
Where the willows bend low at the foot of the hill;
The flowers are closing,
They drowse in the dew—
And dozing, and dozing,
They wait now for you.

Lullaby, lullaby, soft and deep;
The stars far away now are climbing the steep,
And out of the silence is wafted a croon
That murmurs in mellowness under the moon.
Sleep-i-ly, sleep-i-ly, sleep.

At the first verse of this song, the Dragon began to beat time with his good foreleg; then it began to nod a little, and then it yawned very wide and deep, until one could see very far down into its hollow throat. "Dear me!" said the Dragon, "I feel very drowsy this morning. I think I must have a bit of spring fever."

"Play again," whispered Zuzu to the Enchanted Banjo. So the Banjo played again:

Ho, Little Wind, sing it gently and sweet;
Come, hum through the vines till the echoes repeat
The words you are singing,
And on through the night
Go swinging and swinging
Away to the light.

Lullaby, lullaby, low and low—
That is the way that the Fairy-songs go,
And that is the way that the sleepy-song sighs
Till the magical spell sets its seal on our eyes.
Lullaby, lullaby, low.

By this time, the Dragon was openly nodding at its post of duty. Its head would fall down, and then it would waken and jerk its head upright again and frown at them as though they had accused it of being asleep when nothing of the sort was true. At last, it laid its head down upon a rock for a pillow and went fast asleep, snoring so loudly that it might have been heard at least the distance of a mile.

"Quick! Quick!" cried Zuzu, when they saw the great Dragon was indeed asleep. "Give me the screw-driver from the lunch basket, quick!"

Lulu felt in the basket which she carried and found the screw-driver, and at once Zuzu sprang to the side of the Dragon and with a few strokes unscrewed the wooden leg of the Dragon close up to the shoulder.

"Now," cried Zuzu, "hurry, and soon we shall be at the Valley."

So now they stepped close to the side of the sleeping Dragon and edged past through the long, narrow passageway where the great tail lay curled up. They jumped close against the wall whenever the Dragon stirred in his sleep, and for the last few paces of the passage they almost ran. But the Dragon did not waken and they got through in safety. Then,

to their great surprise, they found themselves directly at the top of a long, narrow, golden ladder, which fell straight down, down from the edge of a break in the rocky floor. It extended down farther than they could see, until finally its two sides seemed to unite in a shining thread of gold far below.

"This," said Zuzu, "must be the Fairy Ladder. Quick, before the Dragon wakens!"



CHAPTER XXI

THE JOURNEY TO FAIRY-LAND

Nobody can tell how far the Twins went down the Golden Ladder before they dared to stop. It may have been an hour or two hours before they began to get so tired that it seemed they could go no further, no matter what might happen. They looked up at the Ladder down which they had come, and, to their great surprise, they could no longer see the top of it; the sides of the rocky walls seemed to come together above them, just as they still did below them. It seemed to them that they were in the middle of the world. They did not dare to try to climb back again, for they were too tired. They also feared to go any further down, because that took them further away from their mother and from the only sort of world which they had ever known. As they realized the situation into which their eagerness had brought them, they both began to cry.

115

This was a very sad situation for the Twins, but it shows how very hard it always is to get into the secret places where the Fairies live. If it is not hard in one way, it always is in another. Just at this time, however, help came to Zuzu and Lulu in a way which they did not expect. The Enchanted Banjo began to play a tune of a very cheerful sort, which ran something like the following words, as nearly as can be told:

THE JEALOUS JUMPING JACK

There was a Jealous Jumping Jack
That told the other Toys:
"None of you has my clever knack—
You're only good for noise."
The Humming Top, the Horn, the Drum,
The Bell, and Talking Doll,
He told: "You screech and clang and hum—
You can not jump at all!"

They looked at him in great surprise
And did not answer back,
And then great rage began to rise
Within the Jumping Jack.
"Now, look at me!" he cried, and humped,
And pulled his legs 'way down,
Then gave a spring and madly jumped
Away, out of Toytown.

The Horn blew loud, the Red Top hummed,
The Talking Doll called: "Stop!"
The Bell rang, and the gay Drum drummed,
But still he would not drop.
The Jumping Jack jumped on and on
Although for him they yearned;
They know not where 'tis he has gone—
He never has returned.

They say—but I don't think it's true—
That little girls and boys
Sometimes grow rudely jealous, too,
As do some foolish Toys.

Zuzu and Lulu were very much encouraged at hearing the Banjo once more, and so they dried their tears.

"Cheer up, my young friends," said the Banjo, "and look about you. To me it seems very strange that Twins with Royal Hereditary Hair should not be able to see the resting-place cut here in the rock."

Zuzu and Lulu both looked about them, and there, in the face of the rocky wall along which the Golden Ladder hung suspended, they saw a little room or cave, and to this there led from the Ladder a sort of platform made up of rungs or rounds. Very quickly they stepped over this short horizontal ladder and sat down in the shade of the chamber into which they stepped.

"Dear me," said Lulu, "my arms are tired. I don't believe I could have carried this basket another minute."

"And my feet," said Zuzu, "are nearly cut in two by the rounds of the Ladder. This Dragon's leg is very heavy, and, now that I think of it, I don't see why I carried it at all, for when one stops to reason it out, there seems very little use in the wooden leg of a Dragon for any one but the Dragon itself. Let us leave it here and take it up when we go back."

"That would be a sensible thing," said Lulu. "I think it also would be very sensible if we ate our lunch now, for then the basket would be much lighter."

They ate their lunch, which tasted very good, as they were hungry after their long climb.

"Now," said Zuzu, "let us ask the Enchanted Banjo to play for us again, and perhaps that will make our hearts lighter also, and then we shall certainly climb very easily."

So now they placed the two pieces of the Banjo together again and it began to play for them a lively air, which had in it some strange things which they had not hitherto heard.



He drank a deep draft of the rubber juice *Page 93*

Once on a time, long, long ago
I went to singing-school
Where all the wee birds in a row
Learned to obey each rule;
The teacher was a Parrot wise
For he alone could talk—
He flapped his wings and blinked his eyes
And scolded at the Hawk.

And the Crow and the Wren
And the little Fat Hen
And the Sparrow and Thrush and Jay
Were taught how the notes
Should come from their throats
In quite the particular way.

The Parrot taught the Dove to coo,
The little Chicks to cheep,
The Owl to screech and sing "Too whoo!"
The Whippoorwill to weep;
He taught the Lark to run the scales
And trill with great delight;
He had a class of Baby Quails
That whistled at "bob-white!"

And the Hen learned to "cluck;"
"Quack-quack" sang the Duck;
Till the Parrot at last called "Hush!"
And the echoes all rang,
When the Bobolink sang,
A duet with the little Brown Thrush.

Now when I hear the Robin's song,
Or Humming Bird's soft note,
Or hear a carol sweet and strong
From the Canary's throat,
I smile, and sometimes beat the time
For very well I know
How each one learned his music's chime
While standing in a row

When the Crow and the Wren
And the little Fat Hen
And the Sparrow and Thrush and Jay
Were taught how the notes
Must come from their throats
In quite the particular way.



CHAPTER XXII

THE BUMBLEBEE EXPRESS

The three now sat in a row and were not unhappy, for their hearts felt very light. At last the Banjo said: "My young friends, it is not true that I am a Fairy, although I have told you that I was born in Fairy-land and that my parents were good Fairies as well. Now, I did not like to say much to you before this time, although the truth is that had you not taken me with you to the Fairy Valley, I could not have gone there at all."

"How, then, did you come to leave the Valley of the Fairies?" asked Lulu.

"Once, long ago," replied the Enchanted Banjo, "I was taken up to earth by a Black Fairy and left hanging upon a tree, where I was found by the King of Gee-Whiz, and later given to his Private Secretary, who always had to make music every day for his Majesty. There was no way in which I could escape, and, indeed, I was always treated kindly, as you know. Now, I will try to see whether I have forgotten all the speech of the Fairy Valley. I need not say that it is fortunate that you brought me along, because, certainly, if you came through the act of a bad Fairy, you would not be welcome in the Valley, and there is no telling what might happen were I not there. But now, if you will put me together once more and press very lightly upon the strings, I will try to talk in what is known as the Diamond language, very small and bright and clear and precious; because that is the way the voice of a Fairy sounds, as nearly as any one can describe it."

So now they put the two pieces of the Banjo together again very gently and pressed very lightly upon the strings, and very softly the Banjo began to play as they had never heard it play before; and, indeed, its voice did sound like a diamond or some other precious stone, as nearly as they could describe it.

THE BUMBLEBEE EXPRESS

Ho! The Bumblebee Express!
How it buzzes through the air
Till before you even guess
Where you are, why, you are there!

Stopping at the hollyhocks
For a load of honey freight;
At the sweet pea and the phlox
Where the other shipments wait.

Then away, away it goes!
With a zip and zum and zoom
With a halt beside the rose
And a stop at Clover Bloom.

Hurry, Fred and Tom and Bess
Don't you want to take a ride
On the Bumblebee Express
To the orchard's other side?

Will it hold you? Goodness, yes
But you can not have a seat
In the Bumblebee Express
If you are not good and sweet.

Hardly had the last note of this Fairy summons died away, when there came a soft, whirring sound below them.

"Look!" cried Lulu. They peered over the edge of the room in the rock far down along the Golden Ladder; and there, approaching them rapidly, they saw a bright light. A faint click came along the Ladder, as one may sometimes hear the rails click when a railway train is far away. Rapidly this light grew more distinct, and almost at once, with a whizz and a whir about as loud as ordinarily may be heard across a room, but which in that place sounded very much louder, there drew up at the edge of the chamber a strange and wonderful little coach, such as perhaps no Twins in the world ever saw before.

It was made of a walnut shell for a body, although the shell was traced with lines of silver and gold. It had a canopy over the top, made of such gossamer as blows upon the air of evenings. Within it were two seats, each as large as a silver dime, and there was another seat or high box for the coachman. The coachman was a small blue grasshopper, who sat very erect and straight upon his seat and drove with wonderful skill, holding tight to the lines, which were made of single strands of silk. The most wonderful of all was the team which drew this little Fairy coach, for such at once they saw it was. Its horses were nothing in the world but great golden bumblebees, with black and yellow bodies, with fuzzy legs and large, bright, dark eyes, which shone so clearly that no other lamps were needed for the coach. Indeed, it had been their eyes which the Twins saw as they leaned over the edge; and it was their strange, steady buzzing which had made the noise they heard—a very busy and pleasant sound when bumblebees are going as fast as these had been. They panted a little as the coachman pulled them up and drove slowly into the little room in the rocky wall where the Twins were sitting. The latter looked at the Fairy coach with delight, for it was the most beautiful thing they had ever seen in all their lives. At first they did not know whether there was any one about the coach but the driver, but now there stepped down a footman, about as large as a green house-fly and much resembling one. With a deep bow, he swung open the door in the side of the coach as though inviting the Twins to enter. As he did this, the driver tightened up his reins and the golden harness of the bumblebee horses jingled and jangled and tinkled as they began to toss their heads and champ at their bits, eager to start.

"Dear me," said Lulu, "isn't this the sweetest little coach in all the world? How fine it must be to be a Fairy and ride in

such a coach as this!"

"What is this, Banjo," asked Zuzu, "and where has it come from?"

"You must be an extraordinarily ignorant person," said the Enchanted Banjo, "not to recognize Queen Zulena's own private coach, the Bumblebee Express. But why do you wait? Why don't you get into the coach? You see the footman is waiting for you."

"Get in?" said Zuzu. "Why, how could we?"

"Yes, indeed," said Lulu. "It is not big enough for a kitten, let alone Twins of our age."

"You are quite mistaken," said the Enchanted Banjo. "Her Majesty, the good Queen Zulena, has sent for you. Do not try to understand everything in the world, for you are still young and there are many things which you do not know. So do as I say and step in at once."

To their great surprise, they stepped through the door with perfect ease and found there was plenty of room and to spare upon the seats.

While they were settling themselves for the ride the Enchanted Banjo sang:

HOW THE FAIRIES SING

You can hear the Fairies sing
Just as plain as anything,
If you wait
Till the breeze at twilight blows
Breaths of perfume from the rose
At the gate.

Then it is you may hear words
Sweeter than the songs of birds,
Fair and fine,
Soft and sweet and low and clear—
No such words as yours, my dear,
Nor as mine.

But the speech they use is quaint,
Whispery, and very faint,
Yet it swells
As it drifts, now high, now low,
Borne in echoes to and fro
Like to bells.

Once you hear the speech of them
You will know each word a gem
New and bright,
For it seems to sway and shake
As the jewels do that break
Into light.



CHAPTER XXIII

TO THE VALLEY OF THE FAIRIES

At once the coachman whirled his little team out from the small room in the rock, and the coach took its place between the rails of the Golden Ladder, which now seemed to resemble the rails of a railroad. They were headed straight down, and Zuzu and Lulu caught their breath as the coach dived off and began to drop as fast as lightning, down and down. But hardly had this flight begun before, to their great surprise, both lost their fear of falling, and, indeed, forgot that they were going in any direction except straight ahead.

They flew on and on, as fast as a bird and as easily, the bumblebee horses galloping steadily without stopping to draw a breath, the coachman flirting his whip now and then, and the footman sitting up very straight and stern. The Enchanted Banjo now looked perfectly happy.

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"In this way, my friends," it remarked, "we shall soon be at the edge of the Valley of the Fairies. Had you stopped to climb down that Ladder, there is no telling how long it would have taken you. It might have been several years, and, indeed, for all I know, you might have been old persons by the time you got there, and so have had trouble about getting into the Valley; for every one knows that children are more loved by the Fairies than old people."

"How long will it take to get there now?" asked Lulu.

"That is a hard question to answer," replied the Enchanted Banjo, "but I will sing a little in order to pass away the time." And so the Banjo sang:

THE CRAB AND THE LOBSTER

The Lobster and the Crab once met
Where all the sand was nice and wet,
And bowing nicely, down they sat
To have a pleasant, friendly chat.

They talked about the weather; next
How with their children they were vexed;
Then said the Crab: "I often fret
About the Rules of Etiquette."

"Now I," the Lobster said, "am, too,
Disturbed by it the same as you.
I do not like these folks who say
One should act thus, or talk this way.

"My nature is, indeed, mine own;
Why, if the King called from his throne
For me to go ahead, he'd find
That I should quickly drop behind."

"I, too," the Crab declared, "am odd,
And at some formal laws I nod.
In this one thing I take great pride:
When I walk straight, I step aside."

Oh, children, pray take heed of this—
You, little boy; you, little miss—
The Lobster and the Crab do thus
Because they are like most of us.

The Crab goes on in sidewise tracks
And when the Lobster leads, it backs!
They do so, for it is, you know,
The only way that each can go.

"We are now in a land where things are not measured as they are in your world," said the Banjo. "You saw how easily you got into this small coach, did you not? Its measurement is not the same as that of a coach up there," and it pointed directly above. "In the same way, the time will be much smaller than the same length of time would be where we came from. I don't think the journey will tire you in the least, but it may, perhaps, be a sensible thing for you to curl up on the seats and take a little nap."

"That is so," remarked Lulu. "I am feeling rather sleepy."

"So am I," said Zuzu.

So they both curled up on the seats and went fast asleep.



CHAPTER XXIV

THE ROYAL AND OFFICIAL COUNCIL

In the meantime, as may readily be imagined, there was a sad time at the palace of the King of Gee-Whiz. The Widow Pickle threatened to upset the royal household if her Twins were not brought back before sundown of that day. No trace could be found of the royal shadow, nor could any one tell what had become of the wooden leg of the Royal Army. The Private Secretary was almost frantic over all these difficulties, and the Court Physician was also at his wits' end, seeking for some remedy for the strange disease of the King, which had caused him to lose his shadow, this being a thing which he could not find mentioned in any of the medical works which he habitually consulted.

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"Oh, my poor head! My poor head!" said the King. "And to think that my poor, dear shadow may have quite as bad a headache for all I know! Oh, dear, was ever so unhappy a King as I! Jiji, play for me, and see if you cannot do something to settle my poor nerves."

The Private Secretary went into his apartment, but presently returned and fell prostrate upon his face. "O, King," cried he, "I am the most wretched servant that ever disappointed a royal master!"

"Why, what is the matter now? What is the matter?" asked the King. "Has anything else gone wrong?"

"O, King," said the Private Secretary, "I regret to say that the Enchanted Banjo has disappeared from my apartments in the royal palace."

"Ah!" cried the King of Gee-Whiz, as he heard the news. "This is almost too much! I begin to feel so strange that I really think I shall have to send for the Court Headsman."

As the King of Gee-Whiz said this, he fixed a stern eye upon the unfortunate Private Secretary; who, as must be plain to all, had not been in the least to blame for any of these unhappy events.

"I beg to suggest, your Majesty," said the Private Secretary, "that you send for the Court Detective instead."

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"If in your opinion he can be of the slightest service," replied the King, "then pray have him come and set to work at once."

So the Court Detective came and was admitted to the presence of the King. He was an oldish looking man, thin, and dressed in a long, flowing, black gown. He carried under one arm a large book, and under the other a basket of plaster-of-paris, with which he was accustomed to think he would some day make a cast of the footprints of some escaping criminal. On his nose he wore two pairs of spectacles, one for far looking and one for close looking, and in general he was a very wise-appearing man. The King at once explained to him the reasons for his summons to the palace, and at that the Court Detective became even more wise.

"I see, your Majesty," he remarked, "you have lost your shadow. Ha! Hum! Most serious, most serious, I assure your Majesty."

"And the Widow has lost the Royal Hereditary Twins," continued the King.

"Precisely. Most serious, most serious," said the Court Detective. "It would have been better had I been called much earlier, before the trail was so cold; but we shall see, your Majesty, we shall see."

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"And the Private Secretary has lost the Enchanted Banjo, upon which we were accustomed to rely for our entertainment."

"Ah, that is very bad, very bad indeed! Whom does your Majesty suspect of all these things? Is it your Majesty's belief that one and the same person has committed all these crimes?"

"That is for you to tell," said the King.

"Ah! That will render it more difficult," said the Court Detective, "very much more difficult; but we shall see, your Majesty, we shall see."

"You will report at the palace at two this afternoon," said the King, "and if you have not at that time brought back the missing articles, your head will be removed and you will also lose your position as Court Detective."

"Your Majesty," said the Court Detective, "I hope you will not exercise undue haste. This is the first case I have ever had, and I should like permission to continue my studies a little later than two o'clock this afternoon."

"Very well, then," said the King, "you shall have until half-past two. By that time you must have results." Whereupon, the King bowed and turned away.

The Court Detective was very much agitated at these sudden responsibilities, but he now hastened away. After sitting for some time in deep thought, he began to search all about the palace yard, looking for footprints. In this he was successful, and of every footprint he found he made a cast in plaster-of-paris; so that before long he had a basketful of footprints, and with these he hastened back to the King.

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"Your Majesty," he exclaimed, "my eagle eye has discovered many things, and if my plaster-of-paris had not run out, I should have been able to show your Majesty even more footprints than these."

The King was much pleased. "You have a good mind," said he to the Court Detective. "Among these footprints I see several which no doubt belong to the Royal Hereditary Twins. In which direction were they going?"

"That, your Majesty," replied the Court Detective, "is something which I did not look into, considering it immaterial; but now that your Majesty has mixed up these footprints in the basket, I feel that it will be much more difficult to determine the course which they were taking when I discovered them."

The King sent out the Court Detective once more with instructions to examine closely the ground around the home of the Dragon Jankow, as the Private Secretary had suggested that they might have gone thither. The Court Detective declared that if the Twins were found, the shadow and the lost Banjo also would be discovered; but he refused to say what made him think this, and only wagged his head.

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Within a short time after he had gone out the second time, the Court Detective again returned, very much excited. "Your Majesty, your Majesty," he cried, "a crime has been committed!"

"Several crimes have been committed," said the King

sternly, "but what is it that you have detected now?"

"The Royal Army has lost its wooden leg."

"Ah," said the King. "Have you just detected that? I knew that long ago, as also did the Dragon. But did you find any footprints near there?" asked the King.

"I did not look for any," said the Court Detective; "but had I found any I should have been helpless, for I was quite out of plaster-of-paris. But I discovered that a portion of a sandwich and two tins of preserved herring had been left near the opening of the gorge where the Royal Army lives."

"Ah," said the King, "let us see them."

"Your Majesty," said the Court Detective, "I regret very much to state that I was hungry and ate the sandwich and the tinned herring; but if I had had more plaster-of-paris, I could have made you an excellent cast of the tins."



The King could bound as high as the tallest palms *Page 99*

"It seems to me," said the King, "that you are not really accomplishing much toward taking the criminals."

"But, consider, your Majesty," said the Court Detective, "the handicap under which I labor. A detective without plaster-of-paris is almost helpless, and there is no more plaster-of-paris on the Island. This which I have used was left to me by my father, the Court Detective to your Majesty's grandfather, and it was a most superior article, which can not be replaced."

At this time the King looked at the palace clock. "Very well," said he, "it will not matter, for, as I perceive, it is now half-past two; so I presume I may as well behead you now."

"Your Majesty," said the Court Detective, "I respectfully request that you do not behead me."

"I am sure you can do quite as well without your head," said the King.

"No," replied the Court Detective, "that I respectfully deny, your Majesty; and I request that you leave the matter of the legality of my execution to the Court Lawyer. I maintain that the lack of plaster-of-paris is the cause of my failure, and that lack was not my own fault."

"Oh, very well," said the King, "I always wish to be just. Send for the Court Lawyer, and let us ask him about it; though thus far I can not see that we have learned more than we knew before."

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The Private Secretary went after the Court Lawyer, who was asleep in his office, but who awoke and accompanied him to the palace. The Court Lawyer was a small man, but very wise indeed. He, too, was old and he, too, wore a long, flowing robe of black, and a high, pointed hat with narrow rim, which made him look taller than he really was. He carried a black bag under his arm, in which were many wise and learned books of the law. To him the King of Gee-Whiz stated the case as it had been submitted, saying that he would very much like to behead the Court Detective, but that he did not wish to do anything illegal.

"What do you think in regard to this," asked the King, "and how quickly can you give me a decision upon this question of law?"

"Your Majesty," said the Court Lawyer, "I have known less knotty questions than this one to remain in the Courts of Chancery for over a hundred years; but such is my own great personal skill in this branch of the law, that I make no doubt I can deliver your Majesty an opinion of several hundred pages and of great importance in less than half that time."

"That," said the King, "is absurd, for it would be of no use to the Court Detective, if he were beheaded now, to learn fifty years hence that his execution had been illegal."

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"The law can not take any cognizance of unimportant details," said the Court Lawyer; "so I do not presume to enter into any discussion of that point, as I have had no brief prepared, nor could I have had on such short notice."

"But can you not guess," asked the King, "and give us an informal opinion as to whether I can behead this gentleman, and so go take a nap?"

"Your Majesty," said the Court Lawyer firmly, "the law is not to be handled in so hurried a manner. I can make no such hasty decision. I should not undertake to render an opinion upon this question in less than fifty years, and then only in case I have received my proper fee."

"But in case the act should later be found illegal?" asked the

King.

"Then, in that case," said the Court Lawyer, "your Majesty would be in danger of impeachment proceedings, which might cause your Majesty to lose your throne."

"It is enough for the King to lose his shadow without losing his throne," said the King angrily. "Away with you, every one, or, I declare, I shall send for the Court Executioner and consult with him alone!"

So they all hastily withdrew from the King's presence, and for the time the matter was allowed to rest. It may be if the bad Fairy had not stolen the White Cricket, they might have used the Fairy Telephone and asked the good Queen Zulena whether any word had been received there of a missing pair of Twins, a royal shadow, the wooden leg of a Dragon, and an Enchanted Banjo.





CHAPTER XXV

THE FAIRY CITY OF ALMALENA

In the meantime, as may be supposed, the twins Zuzu and Lulu were rapidly approaching the secret Valley of the Fairies. They did not know how far they had traveled when at length they awoke. The Bumblebee Express had stopped suddenly.

"Well," said the Enchanted Banjo, "here we are at last at the city of Almalena."

The Twins sat up on the carriage seat and rubbed their eyes, scarcely believing that what they saw was anything but a wonderful dream, so strange and beautiful seemed everything here in the land of the Fairies.

Before them lay the city of Almalena, shining in some strange clear light, which was strong as the light of the sun and yet soft as the light of the moon. In this radiance one could see to any distance at a glance and with perfect distinctness. The houses on the farther side of the Fairy city were as clearly visible as those close at hand.

The houses were all of some shining substance, possibly of gold, but it did not hurt the eyes to look at them, for here everything was soft and gentle. They could see long streets of these houses; and crossing the streets were boulevards and parks and open spaces filled with beautiful trees and flowers. The sweet voices of birds filled all the air, but did not prevent the hearing of every other sound distinctly. Here and there tall towers arose, and at the top of each of these was a large diamond, whose light made the radiance which was noticeable everywhere. There were very many spires and pinnacles and lace-like carvings in what seemed to be stone, but which may have been this Fairy material resembling gold.

The city of Almalena was not a city as we know it. There was no smoke anywhere at all, nor any chimneys. There was no confusion or hurry, nor any jostling nor crowding nor noise. The streets were paved with soft woven carpets, and although many wheeled vehicles were darting here and there, drawn by bees or butterflies, these made not the slightest noise, except that now and then one could hear the faint tinkling of golden harness, like that on the steeds of the Bumblebee Express. All was sweet and calm, and always arose sweet music, and always there came the feeling that here it was neither hot nor cold, but comfortable; and always there lay wide and fine the avenues of the Fairy city lined with pleasant trees; and always through the soft air came the tinkling of many little silvery bells, very sweet to hear, as unseen hands rang them in the lacy towers.

Beyond the city lay a wide lake, shining in the Fairy sunlight, and wrinkled with little ripples about as large as one's hand. This lake was dotted here and there with little boats that sailed merrily over the tiny waves. Others went by oars, and yet others seemed to glide without being propelled in any visible way. Beyond this lake was the thin dark line of a wide forest, and at one side of this rose a high mountain, while at the other, very far away, as it seemed, rose two other

mountains which came close together in a sort of gateway between the hills. Closer at hand upon the lake were floating islands upon which grew trees and flowers, and which seemed also to have people upon them, since now and then came sounds of laughter and of happy voices.

Above all in the city of Almalena there was a great feeling of happiness and content. You might look over all that valley inch by inch, and listen hour by hour and never would you hear a complaint or a cry; nothing except smiles and happy words and cheerful songs and pleasant voices, and musical instruments which spoke only of joy and pleasure. This, indeed, is the great thing about the home of the Fairies, that there everything is happy, and that such a thing as grief or unhappiness is unknown.

"This," said Lulu, "is the most beautiful place I ever saw, and it far surpasses anything of which I have even dreamed."

"Now since we are here safe and sound," said the Enchanted Banjo, "it is our first duty to go to see the Fairy leader, the good Queen Zulena. I am sure you will say there was never so beautiful and good a queen in all the world. You may drive us to the royal court of the Fairies, if you please, Coachman."

So the coachman cracked his whip, the bumblebees again champed at their bits and snorted, then broke into a gallop that fairly made the little coach fly up the main street to the Royal Court of the Fairy city of Almalena.

The coach pulled up under the wide porte-cochère and as Zuzu and Lulu arose from their seats there came out to meet them many servants who aided them to alight and ushered them into the Royal Court of the Fairy Queen Zulena. This was in the finest palace of gold and silver and jewels which can be imagined. Here presently they saw the Fairy Queen.

She was a very beautiful queen, this ruler of the secret Valley of the Fairies. This Zuzu and Lulu saw as she arose from her throne to meet them. She seemed about as tall as Lulu, although it is hard to tell just how tall any person is in the Fairy country, where measurements are not the same as with us. She was robed in white and silver, and wore a crown of shining little diamonds which glittered beautifully. Her throne was about as tall as a library chair, and was placed on a little platform raised a distance above the floor. The arms of the throne were richly carved and about the back and along the arms were set many great red stones which made a warm light. Around the foot of this throne fell the folds of the Queen's garments, and as she rose and swept back these long robes there stepped out, from recesses in the wall, one at each side of the throne, two pages, a boy and a girl, of the same height and size and expression. Zuzu and Lulu looked at these in wonder and realized that they also were Twins. These twin pages carefully took up the robes of the Queen and stood at the edge of the platform. As Zuzu and Lulu gazed at these pages, to their great surprise they observed that they had hair of malazite blue and corazine green, just as they themselves had; only in the case of the pages, the boy, whose name they learned was Fofu, had the blue hair, and the girl, whose name was Fifi, had green, these colors being the reverse of those in their own case.

The Queen stepped down from her beautiful throne and caught Lulu and Zuzu in her arms. "My dear children!" said she. "My dear children, how glad I am to see you! And here, too, is my good Banjo, that used to play for us long ago, before we lost it. Ah! I see these new friends of mine have the royal malazite and the corazine hair, and they are the images of yourselves, my dear pages, Fofu and Fifi! These are royal children who have come to visit us, and I am sure all this is as much as any Fairy Queen could ask. I hope that my new friends will shake hands with these my pages, and that you all will be very good friends."

So the little pages stepped forward from the foot of the

throne, Lulu and Zuzu shook hands with Fofu and Fifi and soon they were very good friends.

"Now," said the Fairy Queen, "we will have some cakes and tea, for I know you must be very weary from your long ride. And as you eat, I will have some shadows dance on the palace wall for your entertainment. I am sure the Enchanted Banjo will play for the shadows, because they can always dance very much better to the music of an Enchanted Banjo."

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So then the shadows began to dance on the wall for them, as the Banjo played:

THE DANCE OF THE SHADOWS

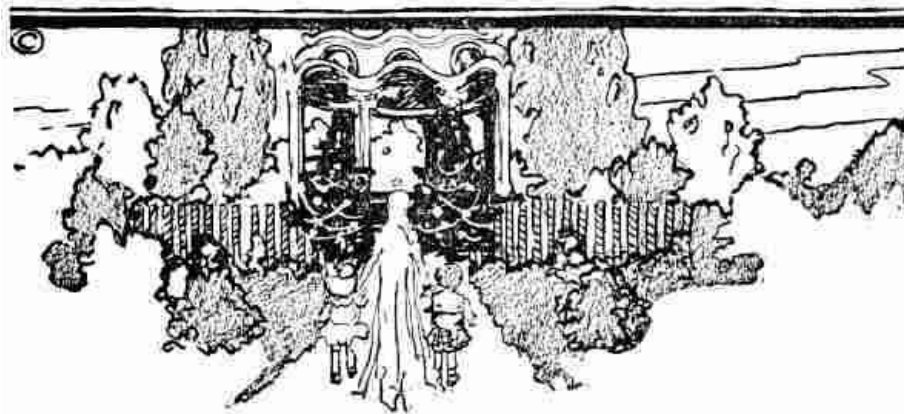
When the firelight flickers brightly
Then we see upon the wall
Shadows bowing all politely,
Short and thin, and wide and tall;
When the ruddy blaze is leaping
And the red sparks glint and glance,
Then with bows both low and sweeping
Do the shadows start their dance.

With a sway and a shift, and a leap and a lift,
And a stride and a shuffle as they glide roundabout,
And a stop and a swing, and a jump and a fling,
And a twist and a twirling as they weave in and out.

Thus they go in gay procession
Down the wall and back again
As though it were their profession
To make mock of dancing men;
They go swift, and swifter, wheeling
In the figures made by chance,
Darting from the floor to ceiling—
Thus the shadows have their dance.

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With a leap and a whirl and a twist and a twirl
And a slide and a shuffle as they weave roundabout,
And a swing and a hop, and a bow and a stop,
And a shift and a nodding as they wind in and out.



CHAPTER XXVI

THE JOURNEY TO CANDY-TOWN

After they had eaten all their fairy cakes and tea—which were not in the least like anything they had ever tasted before, but were much better than anything they had ever known—Zuzu and Lulu told the Fairy Queen about their journey and how they had happened to undertake it. They told her what the Black Fairy had said to them, and how they had taken off the wooden leg of the Dragon, and how they had started down the Golden Ladder. Neither Zuzu nor Lulu had heard of the King's losing his shadow, but in some way the Fairy Queen had heard of this, and now she told them of it, to their great surprise.

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"This," said she, "was the work of the Wicked Fairy Gobo, whom I have warned never to interfere in matters outside of his own home in yonder mountain. Had you only telephoned to me by the White Cricket instead of the Black Cricket, all would have been well, for in that case I should have sent the Bumblebee Express quite up to the top of the ladder for you, and should have commanded the Dragon to let you pass; but at any rate, here you are, my dears, and I think no one will be the worse off for that, except the Wicked Fairy Gobo, who knew very much better than to use the Fairy Telephone Line. Him I shall punish for this act in due time. But we must not be angry or unhappy over these things. After you have finished your supper, we will have a short sail upon the lake, and make a visit to some of the floating islands."

So they all went out sailing upon the Fairy lake, in a beautiful pale-green boat, which moved very gently through the water under the oars of a crew of Fairy dwarfs, who used oars made of wheaten straws, rowing so gently that the boat hardly made a ripple on the water. They had also a sail of white silk, which was hoisted at the bow of the boat, and which was filled by a gentle wind that blew across the lake. The Queen sat on the high seat at the stern of the boat, with Lulu and Zuzu at her feet. After some time they landed at the edge of one of the floating islands, which the Twins were sure was one of the most beautiful places they had ever seen in all the world.

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As they moved from the shore they found themselves in a grove of trees, and a short distance ahead in this grove they saw gleaming the sides of a sort of small temple, surrounded by a fence. To their great surprise they found that this fence was built of red and white and blue rails, laid up like any rail fence; but that these rails were sticks of candy instead of wood.

"Come now, my children," said the Fairy Queen, "and let us be seated at yonder temple or kiosk, and have some more cakes and tea." So they all went to a little table in the kiosk, and the Queen touched a tiny bell. Some very small Fairies brought cakes and tea of the finest sort imaginable, of which it seemed they could not eat so much as to injure themselves, and which no matter how much they ate always tasted as good as they had before.

"Now," said the Queen, "I see that you still have the Royal Wishing Wands which the good King of Gee-Whiz has given to you. Why do you not wish for something, if there is anything you would like to have?"

"Alas!" said Lulu, "we had but three wishes a week, and we have used them all up but two. We are saving those for some important occasion."

"That is very nice of you," said the Queen, "but now let me assure you that your Wishing Wands are meant for use in the kingdom of Gee-Whiz, and not in the kingdom of the Fairies. While you are with me you can have anything you like as often as you like, by only wishing for it, if I am not mistaken in thinking that my Fairies are able to do anything I ask of them."

"I wish," said Zuzu, "that I had a sled that would run up hill."

"A very good and sensible wish," said the Queen, "and one which is easily granted. Here is your sled, with your name on it in nice red color, and with low sharp runners; and I assure you it will run up hill just as well as down; which has never been the case in your country, and which is a great objection to all sleds used there."

"Now," said Lulu, clapping her hands and jumping up and down, "we must have some snow! But I wish it could be warm snow, for cold snow is not pleasant, and makes one's hands red."

Again the Queen smiled and waved her wand and lo! as she did so soft snow began to fall all about them, so that the ground was soon quite white. Almost afraid to test it, Lulu put her hand into the snow, but withdrew it again with a cry of delight. To her great surprise the snow was quite warm and nice.

"I think you will find this sort of snow very comfortable," said the Queen.

"I don't see how anything so cold as snow can be warm," said Zuzu, only half believing that this could be true.

"You do not remember," said the Fairy Queen, "that this country is more or less tropical, so that here snow might be expected to be warm."

"At any rate," said Zuzu, "I find it very nice, and with a sled that runs up hill, and snow that does not get cold, I don't see what more any one could ask. I don't think I'll wish any more, because I can't think of anything to wish."

"I know what I'd like!" cried Lulu.

"And what is that, my dear?" asked the Queen.

"I'd like a doll."

"What sort of doll, my dear? We have many very fine ones."

"I'd like a new doll—no, I wouldn't, because that would be leaving my old dolly, and I am sure I like my old dolly as much as I could any new one, yet I want a new one, too. Now, what can I do, when I want both a new doll and an old one?"

"That is very easy," said the Queen. "I will get you a doll which is both old and new." And again she waved her wand.

Lulu looked down, and almost cried aloud; for there in her arms was a brand new doll, the finest she had ever seen, that could laugh and talk and eat, which was quite new, but which, to her great surprise, was also quite old! She felt free to love it quite as much as she liked, and so she did love it very much. As she stood with the doll in her arms, to her great surprise the Enchanted Banjo began to play and the doll began to sing, and the song it sang was called:

I'M THE DOLLY YOU LOVE BEST

With battered eyes and broken nose,
With tattered ears and worn-out toes;
With one pulled-out and stringy arm
Where you have swung me to my harm,
I am the dolly you love best,
The doll that's dearer than the rest.

Your own old dolly
Whose smile is ever jolly,
Who never sighed or cried when you would fling her at the
wall;
Your old, worn dolly,
Your best-loved dolly,—
The dolly that you always thought the fairest one of all.

I am the doll who heard you weep
Because she would not go to sleep;
I am the doll who helped you play
At going calling every day;
With frowsled hair, in tatters dressed;
I am the dolly you love best.

Your own old dolly
Whose smile is ever jolly,
Who never moaned or groaned when you would idly let her
fall;
Your old, old dolly,
Your best, best dolly—
The dolly that you always thought the fairest one of all.



The Dragon again reared and rattled its long body Page
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"I am very happy here, indeed," said Lulu, "and I can't think of another thing to wish. I feel a little thirsty from eating so much cake."

The Queen smiled again. "There is no need to wish for a drink," said she, "for if you will only take a cup and step to the spring, I think you will find that it is made of very good lemonade."

So Lulu took her cup, stepped to the spring, and to her great surprise she dipped up a cup of what proved to be the very best lemonade she had ever tasted in all her life.

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"Now," said the Queen, "suppose we walk farther into the island, and see what we call our Candy Land."

So they walked on deeper into the wood, and as they did so they looked all about them, and behold! all the trees were Christmas trees, hung full of shining things—toys and books and parcels, everything most inviting in appearance. Not one Christmas tree was there, but hundreds, and every way they looked they saw still more Christmas trees, so many they could hardly count them in a day, had they done nothing else but count.

"This," said the Queen, "is what we call the Christmas tree forest. It is here that Santa Claus, one of my best friends, gets all the Christmas trees which he uses in the winter-time. They grow here in hundreds, and of just the right size. But that is only a part of what I was going to show you."

Now they came to a long row of houses like shops, in two rows like the shops in what is called an Arcade; but to their great surprise everything they saw here was made of candy. The houses, the people and everything in the shops proved to be made of candy. There was nothing in the world one could have thought of which was not there, and one might have furnished a large house from top to bottom; but every article was made of candy—candy rocking-chairs and tables and pianos, and knives and forks, and everything else, so that Lulu and Zuzu hardly knew what to do, it all seemed so strange to them.

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"These things are not so durable as though made of gold or gems," said the Fairy Queen, "because one is always tempted to eat off the arm of a chair or to bite a piece out of the table or the clock. But you need not mind about that; bite all you please, for there are plenty more of these things. The good Candy Man will bring more, I am sure, for that is why we have him here."

So Lulu and Zuzu sat down in candy chairs at a candy table, and soon there came up to them a quaint looking little man whom they knew to be the Candy Man. He smiled and smiled as he approached. "You will excuse me, my good young friends," said he, "if I do not come and sit down with you, but you see I am made of candy, and if I get too near the fire my face melts, so I have to be very careful. But if you see anything here, help yourselves, and I will get some more for you, if you like."

As they looked at the Candy Man, the Twins observed to their surprise that he had only one arm. "Oh! poor man," said Lulu, "you have only one arm. That's too bad. Will you tell us how you happened to lose your arm? Did you fall down and break it?"

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"No," said the Candy Man, "I did not break it, but lost it; and yet though I lost it, I still have it, so that though I miss it, I do not regret it."

"Why, how can that be?" inquired Lulu.

"Well, the truth is," said the Candy Man, "I ate it."

"How awfully sad!" exclaimed Lulu.

"Not in the least, my dear," the Candy Man said. "Such events are not unusual in this country. If you think I am badly off, you ought to see my brother. Did you never hear the story about when he was a boy? Ask the Banjo."

So the Banjo told them the story.

THE CANDY BOY

Oh, list to the tale of the Candy Boy—
The boy that turned to candy.
He was his mamma's pride and joy,
And sweet things were too handy.
He ate and ate and ate and ate
Mint sticks and peanut brittles—
Just candy, it is sad to state,
Made all of this boy's victuals.

One day he noticed that his hair
In taffy drips was streaming,
And that upon his fingers there
Were bright red stripes a-gleaming.
He bit his finger, and he found
That it was flavored sweetly
From having candy all around
He'd turned to it completely!

Oh, dear! Oh, dear! This tearful tale
I really should not finish.
He ate his arms without a wail
At seeing them diminish.
From eating so much candy, see
How things resulted direly:
That boy is no more here, for he
Ate up himself entirely!

"Is there anything more that you would like?" asked the Fairy Queen after this entertaining story.

"No," said Lulu, sighing and hugging tight her new-old doll. "I am so happy and contented that I can not think of anything else to wish for myself; but I was just thinking how badly the poor King must be feeling all this time without his shadow, while here are we, to whom he gave these Fairy Wishing Wands, having so good a time. I wish he could be happy and contented, too."

"Ah, so do I," said the Fairy Queen Zulena. "I have wished that for many years."

The Twins looked at her and for the first time they saw a shade of sorrow cross her sweet face. "The truth is, my children," said the Fairy Queen, "I have often wanted again to see the King. Once, very long ago, we were children here together in this country, until he fell partly under the influence of Wicked Fairies and began to care more for gold and jewels and the like than for anything else. It was the Wicked Fairies who changed his nature; but I am always hoping that he will grow to be a great and good king even yet, so that we may together rule over the same land."

"Why," said Zuzu, "that is precisely what the King has said to us very many times!"

The face of the Fairy Queen flushed a little at this, but she sighed. "Alas, I think that can not be," she said. "True, I aid him as I can, and whenever he telephones to me for gold, I give it to him, because certainly we have more gold than we can use, and many gems as well; but I can not go up to the Island to meet him, and so can only telephone, which I do not find wholly satisfactory. Against certain Wicked Fairies not even I, the Queen, can prevail in all cases. Thus, I am sad to say, I could not even secure the King's shadow from the Wicked Fairy Gobo, if it be true that he has taken it and hidden it at his cave in the mountain. That could only be done by a good child who wished it very hard, and who used the Wishing Wand which is proper for the Island of Gee-

Whiz, where the shadow came from."

"Ah!" cried Zuzu, "then that is precisely what I shall wish next." So he rubbed his own Wishing Wand very hard, and besought that the King should have back his shadow again, and never more lose it.

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"That," said the Queen, smiling now happily, "is very kind of you, and I am sure if only we can find the shadow here in the valley, the Wicked Fairy will be obliged to let it go. It is quite likely that he has also taken the White Cricket of the King. If we could restore both of these to the rightful owner, I should be very happy and contented myself."

"But what shall we do to-morrow?" asked the Queen of the Twins as she arose and started out from the Candy Man's place.

"I should above all things like to see the place where the Fairies find all the gold," said Zuzu.

"Very well," said the Queen, "we will go to-morrow, and I will show you where all the gold comes from; but now let us go back to the palace, and go to sleep for the night."

As she spoke, she again touched a little bell, and soon there came a little Fairy, smiling and bowing before her.

"Dimi," said the Queen, "please to have the wind changed so that it shall blow back toward the city, instead of in this direction. We must be going home now, and I do not wish my oarsmen to become at all weary."

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Dimi bowed and smiled, with his hands spread wide apart, and as the Twins and the Fairy Queen now walked down toward the Fairy-boat, to their great surprise Lulu and Zuzu saw that the wind was beginning to blow gently and softly in the opposite direction. Soon they were gliding silently and steadily over the crystal waves of the Fairy sea.



CHAPTER XXVII

THE VALLEY OF GOLD

That night Zuzu and Lulu slept in golden beds with silken curtains, with pillows made of thistle-down, very light and soft. Naturally they slept very soundly, so it was morning almost before they knew it. When they arose they saw standing near by golden basins filled with clear shining water, and after they were bathed and dressed they saw standing near a little Fairy with a dainty breakfast-tray. They ate heartily, and presently hastened away to see the good Queen Zulena and to remind her of her promise to show them the Valley of Gold.

"Come then, my dears," said the Queen, "bring with you the Enchanted Banjo and we will take the Bumblebee Express, and travel beyond the forest, toward yonder mountains." 164

In a few minutes they heard the tinkle of the golden harness and the stamp of the bumblebees on the pavement, eager to be off. Then, taking their seats as before, off they went through the air, flying as straight and fast as the strongest bumblebees can go.

"Let me tell you one thing, my children," said the Fairy Queen, "and it is this: No matter what you see, you must not tell any person where the Valley of Gold is to be found. That is a secret which we Fairies have guarded for thousands of years, and you must by no means tell of it."

So both Zuzu and Lulu promised, and ever since they have kept their word; and what is told here is told only that you may know how wonderful a place it is, and what strange things are to be seen there; but no one can tell you how to get there unless you may be fortunate enough to find a White Cricket and ask of it the way. And, as White Crickets are very few and hard to find, so there are very few children who ever really see Fairy-land, and most children are obliged only to read about it in the stories of those who have really been there.

"When we telephoned," said Zuzu, "we got the wrong kind of Cricket, and had it not been that we had the Enchanted Banjo with us, we might have met all sorts of trouble. We thank you, good Queen, for not punishing us; but we should like to know how the really-truly Fairy Telephone would be." 165

"Good Banjo," said the Fairy Queen, "can you not tell these dear young people how the really-truly Fairy Telephone goes?"

"With the greatest of pleasure, your Majesty," replied the Banjo, with a smile. And then it sang:

TO TELEPHONE TO FAIRY-LAND

If you want to telephone to Fairy-land
You must have a snow-white Cricket in your hand.
It is easy; don't you see?
Just as easy as can be
If the way to telephone you understand.
When the crickets are all chirping in the night
Then you have to go and seek by candle-light,
And keep watching as you pass
Through the bushes and the grass
For a Cricket that is perfectly snow-white.

"Hello! Hello! Is this the land of Fairies?"
"Hello! Hello!" you'll hear the faint reply
From one whose cheeks are redder than the cherries;
"Hello! Hello!" You'll do it if you try.

When you find the snow-white Cricket, all you need
Is a line that's made of cobweb—yes, indeed!
Do not let the Cricket go;
Hold it tight and say "Hello!"
In the hollow of a flower gone to seed.
It's a very simple thing to understand,
If you want to telephone to Fairy-land
Take a candle; go alone;
Find the Fairy Telephone—
But first have a snow-white Cricket in your hand.

"Hello! Hello! Is this the land of Fairies?"
"Hello! Hello!" A voice will come to you
From one whose eyes are blacker than blackberries—
"Hello! Hello!" Now talk an hour or two.

"Well," said Lulu, "that is certainly very nice. Now I shall always know how to talk to the Fairies over the really-truly Fairy Telephone; so that, good Queen, even although we are very far apart, I shall always call up and talk to you, no matter where I am, almost every day of my life."

"Thank you, my dear," said the Fairy Queen, "that will be very nice, and I do not want you to forget me. Now we will go and I will try to show you some more things about our country.

"Here you will see by the roadside many little houses like smith shops, with tiny white smoke coming out of each. This is where my little dwarf Fairies are at work making diamonds, very clean and white, among the most beautiful stones of all, as many think. But beyond these houses are those where the most skilful of my workmen are making the stones which we prize more than diamonds, those whose color is that of your hair, my dears, the royal blue malazite and the precious green corazine, the like of which can be found nowhere else in all the world. We will ask for some of these to take with us."

Then as she spoke there came out from one of the houses a little Fairy with his hands full of these precious blue and green stones.

"Good morning, your Majesty," said he, "I knew you would like to see some of our work to-day, for these are among the finest we have ever produced." As he spoke he placed in her hands some shining, trembling drops of blue and green.

"These," said the Fairy Queen, "are made from extracts of the bright blue sky, my dears, and from the essence of the deep green leaves."

"And did our hair get its color in the same way?" asked Lulu, wondering.

"That may perhaps be," said the Queen, smiling at her eagerness. "There are some who think that we come from the sky and from the trees, and perhaps this is true, for ever since even Fairies can remember, there have been the trees and the sky just as there have been persons."

The Bumblebee Express soon was progressing again merrily, and ere long it brought them into a deep depression between two mountain peaks beyond the forest. The way here was winding and roundabout. They went on and on, around and around, deeper and deeper into the mountains. Now they began to hear strange wild sounds, roars and deep hoarse voices which reminded them of that of the Dragon in the Island of Gee-Whiz.

"Those are the faithful watch-dogs of the forest," explained the Queen, "lions and tigers and bears, which would certainly eat up any one who came hither without my permission. They will be harmless so long as I am with you, and you need have no fear. In a few moments we shall be at the gateway to the Valley of Gold."

Before long they paused at what seemed to be the end of the way. A steep rocky wall rose directly before them, covered over with growing ivy and with short thorny plants. On each side of this the mountains rose quite up to the sky, so that there was no such thing as getting around on either hand. What was to be done now Zuzu and Lulu could not guess, but the Queen of the Fairies did not hesitate.

She sprang from the seat of the coach and walked directly up to the wall, upon which she struck sharply five times with her jeweled parasol handle. "Abra! Abra! Adabra! Abra! Abracadabra! Open! Open! Open!" she cried aloud; and her voice was clear and strong as well as sweet.

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Now arose a great grumbling noise within the walls of rock. Voices were heard shouting, and there came the sound of heavy clanking and creaking of very heavy machinery.

"O, Queen!" cried out a deep voice, as it were from the very bosom of the rock; and the Queen called out: "Open! Open! Open! It is the Queen!" And as she did this hoarse voices arose again in unison, and the groaning of heavy weights and chains continued. At last, as they sat gazing at the face of the rocky wall, to their great surprise they saw it open in a tiny crack, as though it were slowly splitting across. As they looked, this crack widened steadily before their eyes, and they saw that a heavy rock which had made a part of the wall was slowly rising, a little at a time. At last it swung quite free, and before them lay a passageway through the rock and the concealing ivy which covered it. No one in the world would ever have suspected that there was a door in the face of this rock wall. It may be seen that the Fairies guard their secret very carefully. Even to this day men frequently pass by the gate into the valley, not seeing it in the seamless rock, and not suspecting that they are so near to the great Valley of Gold.

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The Queen now took her seat and motioned to the coachman to drive on through the gateway. He did so, and as they went forward they saw a great golden light flooding out to meet them. They passed between long rows of dark, fierce-looking warriors, armed with swords and spears and shields, all dark-bearded and broad-shouldered. These frowned at the new-comers, but the Queen raised her hand to restrain them, and the Twins passed on in safety. As they did so they heard, rattling and clashing into place behind them, the vast rock of the gate. And so in this new golden light they looked about on what no other mortals yet have seen, and what, in spite of much longing, it is doubtful if any ever again will see.

They were in the front portion of a deep valley or cleft in the mountain. On all hands the walls rose sheer and smooth, without a crack or seam, almost up to the blue sky, which seemed miles and miles away. Around the edges of the rocky walls, high above, grew dark forest trees, but these were so far away that they seemed no larger than one's hand. From these trees to the bottom of the valley may have been a mile, or perhaps two miles, if it were possible to get any idea of distances in Fairy-land. Not in any place on these naked walls was there a notch or step or foothold of any kind.

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Across the valley may have been two miles or three, or perhaps ten or twenty, so hard was it to tell of such things in this peculiar golden wavering light which filled all the place. This light, it was easy to be seen, was the only one known in the valley, for the entire valley lay in the shadow, the light from the sky marking the rocky walls only a little way down from the top.

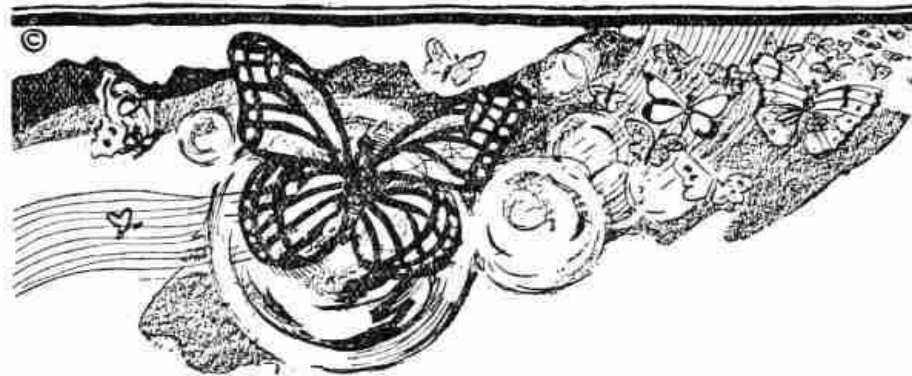


"Quick, before the Dragon wakens" *Page 113*

"There is but one hour in the day when the sun shines into the magic Valley of Gold," said the Queen. "At dawn, it falls through a notch upon the farther side, which you can not see from here, and the sunlight enters the valley for a short time. A path leads to that notch, it is said, though I myself have never seen it; but it is fatal to tread that path and to look over into the valley when the sun shines in; for the great reflection upward from the Mother of Gold—this great vein of gold which runs across the valley and from which comes this golden light that you see—is so strong that any one who looks upon it is at once smitten blind, and may never see again. So perhaps you may see how difficult it is to find this valley, or even to enjoy it when found; for if you had all the gold in the world—even this Madre d'Oro, the Mother of all the Gold, as the Fairies say—it would do you no good, for at once its possession would destroy all its enjoyment."

Zuzu and Lulu wondered and wondered at all these things, and were not a little frightened, for on all hands they still heard groanings and murmurings, and strange voices deep within the earth.

"Keep close to me, my children," said the Queen, "and do not fear. Now we shall see the vision of the Mother of Gold in all its splendor."



CHAPTER XXVIII

THE MOTHER OF GOLD

As the Fairy Queen spoke, she descended from the coach and held out a hand each to Lulu and Zuzu. She led them onward through a sort of hedge of dense trees which lay before them, and beyond which there arose the flickering light, yellow and warm, that had appeared to color all the air of the Secret Valley. At length they stepped out in full view of the great source of all this light, and saw before them the most strange and wonderful thing they had ever seen in all their lives.

From directly at their feet, entirely across the Valley as far as they could see, there ran a great ledge or dam of pure gold, which yet did not seem solid, for it seemed to rise and fall and flutter as though it were almost ready to melt and flow; but it never did so. This great vein of gold was many miles in length, so far as they could tell; and how far back at each end it ran into the foot of the walls of the Valley no one could tell. Its front or face broke off like a wall, or rather like the side of a dam, perhaps fifty feet or more from top to bottom. Over this ledge or dam, a short distance out toward the wall of the valley, there flowed a broad river of clear water, white as crystal, which made a deep pool below the ledge of gold; and thrusting up through this sheet of falling water were points of rock which sparkled like diamonds, or gleamed dull and white like pearls; and such was the peculiar quality of this great ledge of seemingly living gold, that, as the water fell over it, it partly turned into a sort of vapor; and in this vapor, rising continually and floating away up into the sky, were thousands of butterflies, all gold and black and green, floating away upon many-colored bubbles, like soap bubbles, very light and fine. These came streaming up and up all the time, and danced out toward the top of the Valley as far as any one could see. So now Lulu and Zuzu knew where the butterflies come from in the spring, when they appear fluttering up from the south to play among the flowers. They come from the hidden Valley of Gold; and the gold they have upon their wings they certainly get from this great ledge of gold which lies across the Fairy Valley.

Near to the place where they stood were thousands of other Fairies working upon the linings of mother-of-pearl which lined the shells that lay along the ledge. These also made numbers of the bubbles upon which the butterflies were floating. So then the Twins knew where the bubbles come from that we see sometimes; they are made by Fairies. Again in another place very many Fairies were making all sorts of beautiful flowers—blue, and pink, and crimson, every color in the world, and both large and small. Upon trees near by, and spread out upon the rocks also, were numbers of delicate bracelets and brooches and rings and pins, and all manner of beautiful and rare things in gold and gems. So now the Twins knew whence come the bracelets and rings and ornaments of that kind, which so few people have ever seen made.

Over all this scene of beauty there arose sweet music, very peaceful and calm, as though it came from the bottom places

of the earth, of which no one knows more than a very little, unless one has been in Fairy-land. All this was so beautiful and strange that the Twins sat down and hardly knew what to do. They watched the great ledge of the Mother of Gold heave and swell and sink and rise again, and saw the Fairies making these beautiful things, and saw flitting across the Valley beautiful birds with long tails, as long as one's arm, and with crests as long as one's hand, and with feathers which seemed of gold and pearl and green and blue; and the voices of these birds seemed to them the sweetest they had ever heard.

The Fairy Queen allowed them to sit and look as long as they liked, and bade them take up all the pieces of gold and gems and jewels which they liked—all the diamonds and other precious stones. "This, my children," she said, "is where mortals get their gold and precious gems. These come from the Fairy Valley. Here it is that we secure all the gold required by the King whom you have left behind in the Island, and the gems in which the King and his friends delight. But since you have seen this vision of the Mother of Gold, you must not tell even the King where it is, for in that case some of his friends might make war upon us, and we should have to summon from under the earth many of these fierce warriors whose voices you have heard. For all the people who live under the earth fight to the last to conceal this gold from all the rest of the world; and that, as you may readily understand, is the reason why gold and jewels are so hard to get, and why they are by many considered so valuable.

"Now when you have seen all you wish and when you feel that you will not need to come again—for no one but myself ever twice sees the vision of the Mother of Gold—we will go back and look at other things for a time; but you need not do this until you feel that you will be very happy and contented to do so."

"I am sure we shall be happy and contented," said Lulu, "for now we see that what we once thought was very rare is indeed very abundant, and that to hold much of it in one's hand does not seem to make one feel much better than before. See, my hands are full of gold, and I want no more."

"Then," said the Queen, "since you promise to be happy and contented, we may go." So saying she beckoned to the coachman, and the Bumblebee Express swept up once more, the bumblebees stamping and champing at their bits. And now again the mighty gate of stone swung open, and once more it closed behind them; the savage warriors fell into place behind them; and after they had passed the gate they heard groans and murmurs from below and behind them; and then once more came the roaring of the tigers and the lions which live without the gates and which aid in the guarding of the treasure. So presently they were flying again along the crooked road between the mountains, and as they looked back, to their great surprise they could not tell which was the mountain pass out of which they had come; for now there appeared to be several, and they all looked alike.

"That is just as well," said Zuzu, "for we have promised to be happy and contented, and not to wish to go back again to the Valley of Gold."



CHAPTER XXIX

THE SECRET WISH OF THE FAIRY QUEEN

"Good Queen," said Zuzu to the Fairy Monarch Zulena, when the Bumblebee Express had finally brought them back again to the Fairy city of Almalena, "there is something which perhaps you have forgotten, or which at least you have not mentioned for some time."

"And pray what is that?" asked the Fairy Queen.

"Why, we have all of us quite forgotten the poor King, who has lost his shadow."

"Indeed, I have not," said the Queen Zulena; "but, as I have told you, I can only show you where the Wicked Fairy lives who took the shadow. As that is something belonging to the country of the Island, I have only partial power over it. If I should seize upon this shadow and take it to the palace, there is no one there whom it would fit; and as to taking it up the Golden Ladder myself, that is quite out of the question. If I did that I should be called a very forward Queen indeed; so upon the whole I hardly know what to do about it, except to take you upon a visit to the home of the Wicked Fairy Gobo."

"If it be true that the Wicked Fairy has also taken the White Cricket," said Lulu, "then the King can not telephone you any more."

"That is true!" said the Fairy Queen; and to their great surprise she broke out weeping, the first time that any such thing had ever happened in all her life. "I have not heard from the King for many days," she said; "and now I know that he can never telephone me again, because certainly the White Cricket which I gave him has been taken away by this Wicked Fairy."

"But," said Lulu, who also wept at seeing the good Queen in trouble, "why can we not find this Wicked Fairy and ask whether he has these things? Perhaps we can get them back again. I could carry the White Cricket in my pocket, and Zuzu could carry the shadow, if it were not too large, and so we could manage in some way to get back up the Golden Ladder, even if your Majesty could not send us in the Bumblebee Express."

"Could you do that, my dears?" said the Fairy Queen, "would you be so good as to do these kind things for me?"

"Certainly," said Lulu, "we should be glad to. We do not want to go away from you, for this is the loveliest place we have ever seen in all our lives, but mamma will be anxious about us before long; and since you, too, would like the poor King to have back his shadow again, perhaps you would not mind if we go back for a time. We will come again whenever you telephone and ask us to do so; for you must know that we have thrones near the King, and he tells us everything he does. We should like you to get us past the Dragon, for we might not be able to get off the Dragon's leg so easily the next time; and if we did not, there might be all sorts of trouble."

"But what shall I do without you, my dears?" said the Fairy Queen. "I wanted you to join my dear little pages, Fofu and Fifi, at my throne; then I should have had four pages—two boys and two girls—and with the most beautiful hair in all the world. I love you so much, my dears, that I can not bear to have you go away."

"In my opinion," said Zuzu thoughtfully, "the best way would be for you and the King to make some sort of arrangement about the Dragon and the Golden Ladder. In that case it might be easy to turn the two kingdoms into one. And what is the use of having two thrones, one here and one there, if one will do quite as well?"

As she heard these words the face of the Fairy Queen was wreathed in smiles. "How I love you, my dear boy!" said she. "But, alas!" she added with a sigh, "that is impossible, I fear. Although I can give wishes to others outside my kingdom, when I wish anything for myself outside my kingdom, I have no power."

"But," cried Lulu gleefully, "here are our two Wishing Wands, given us by the King, and each of them has a wish left unwished. Will not these two wishes be enough? See, we shall wish just as you wish, because you have been so good to us."

"Ah! my children," said the Fairy Queen, trembling with eagerness, "be careful what you say. Pray do not wish for anything until I have had time to think! Tell me, my dears, when you are back in the country of the King whence you came hither, will you then wish the wish which I wish also?"

"Truly we will!" they both said in reply.

"Then I will whisper it to you," said the Fairy Queen; "but you must not tell any one until you have reached the palace of the King, and then you may wish it out plain and strong; and I pray all the Fairies that obey me to help that wish to come true, for in that case I myself would always be very happy and contented."

So then the Fairy Queen Zulena bent over and whispered in their ears the wish that was in her heart.

"Now then," said Zuzu, "let us go to the mountain of the Wicked Fairy and find the King's shadow."

"Very good," said the Queen, "that is excellent wisdom, and we shall all start at once." So once again they stepped into the Fairy coach, and the good Queen told the coachman to drive beyond the forest to the mountain where dwelt Gobo, the Wicked Fairy.

The driver cracked his whip, the golden harness rattled and tinkled, and the wheels of the dainty coach began to whir as the steady buzz of the bumblebees in flight began.



CHAPTER XXX

THE QUEEN RECOVERS THE SHADOW

"Ha! Gobo," cried the Fairy Queen as at last they drove up before the door of the cave in the mountain where the Wicked Fairy made his home, "we have come to question thee about thy evil deeds. Come hither, and confront thy Queen!"

The Twins had not thought that the gentle Queen Zulena could be so stern, or that her eyes could flash as they did when she spoke these words.

"Aye, aye, my Queen," sounded a hoarse voice from within the cave; and presently in obedience to the order of the Fairy Monarch there stepped into view from the darkness of the cave the Wicked Fairy Gobo, whose evil deeds have been recounted in our story. He trembled as he saw the sternness of the Queen, and began to stammer and make denials.

"Who hath accused thee, Gobo? Yet now we know that well mightest thou be accused. Tell me, where hast thou hidden the shadow of the King, which thou hast stolen? Where, too, is the servant of the king, the White Cricket, such as was never found save in the royal gardens of our palace?"

The Wicked Fairy fell upon his face on the ground, but even as he did so the Queen raised her hand. There came very plainly to their ears the chirp! chirp! of something hidden within the cave.

"I may as well confess," said Gobo; "for that is the voice of the Cricket you hear. It is of no service to me, for a more unwilling Cricket I have never seen."

"Bring it to me!" commanded the Queen, and sullenly Gobo did as he was bidden.

"Here," said the Queen to Lulu, "is the White Cricket. Pray handle it softly, and let no harm befall it. As for you, Gobo, Wicked Fairy that thou art, lead us at once to the hiding-place of that other thing which thou hast stolen."

Sullenly the Wicked Fairy walked ahead of them toward the edge of the wood, and threw open there a little gate. To their great surprise they saw, standing near the gate, leaning against a tree in a shady place, nothing less than the shadow of the King, just as the Wicked Fairy had stolen it more than a week before!

Of course it must be remembered that this was the shadow of the King stolen after he had taken the drink from the rubber tree, and when he was thrice his natural height and much distorted, in his dance high up in the air. It looked more like the shadow of some misshapen giant. As the Queen saw this, tears again came to her eyes. "It is not like him!" she said mournfully.

"'Tis as I tell thee, Queen Zulena," insisted Gobo, "for I took

the shadow with my own hands, in the broad daylight, and I know whereof I speak. See, if thou wouldst prove it, look at the shape of his left forefinger, where the King wore the royal jewel of malazite and corazine, engraven by your Majesty's own Fairies."

"Ah! it is indeed true," said the Fairy Queen. "But how changed! My dears," and she whispered again to the Twins, "do not forget your wish and mine."

"And now, sirrah!" exclaimed the Queen, "Gobo, Bad Fairy that thou art, thou must bow before my power! I know not what punishment may be fit for thee."



To him the King stated the case *Page 138*

The bad Fairy writhed in the dust and begged for mercy, promising anything that should be asked.

"First, we must have the shadow of his Majesty," said Zuzu.

"Willingly," cried Gobo, "willingly! though perhaps it may not fit him now."

"Never fear, Gobo," said the Queen Zulena, "we ourselves shall see to that. So fare ye well, wicked Gobo. One more such act as this, and our royal guards shall banish thee to our jail, and fill thy cave to the roof with stones. From this time your leave to go abroad is revoked for a thousand years. Here must you remain a prisoner!"

"I crave a thousand pardons, good Queen," begged Gobo, spreading out his arms in submission. "But spare me now, and I shall make amends by leading the life a Fairy should live under so wise and good a Queen as thou."

"Learn better in the time accorded thee, and ask no more," said the Queen sternly in reply.

"And now, my children," she continued as she turned again toward the Twins, "let us take the King's shadow in the coach, and return to the royal palace. I am sure that by careful labor I can restore this poor, dear shadow to its original shape."

As she spoke she was about to step again into the coach, when all at once she turned toward the Enchanted Banjo, as though she had heard it speak.

"What is it, good Banjo?" she asked. "And why do you laugh as though you would split yourself? Is it anything you want to tell us?"

"I was just thinking, your Majesty," replied the Enchanted Banjo, "while we have all been talking about Wishing Wands and the like, about a funny thing of that sort that once happened within my own experience. I made up a song about it the other night, and if you care to hear it, I will sing it to you."

"Very well," said the Fairy Queen; and so the Banjo began, in a rich, full voice:

THE COME-ALL-YE OF PAT McGLORY

Come all ye fine young ginglemin, I'll tell to ye a story
Concernin' one that I knew well; his name was Pat McGlory.
One mornin' whin the cow had died that helped him run his
dairy
He sat him down an' cried an' cried—when up there leapt a
Fairy.

O, ho, ho, ho! Um, ha, ha, ha!

The Fairy wore a golden crown, wid di'monds in aich wing,
An' anny one would know at once he was the Fairy King.
He looked one moment at poor Pat—this splendid little Fairy

—
Then whispered soft an' sootherin': "Ye'll have a bran' new
dairy."

He waved his wand a time or two, an' Pat got lean an' slim,
An' whin the Fairy started off, why Pat wint after him!

O, ho, ho, ho! Um, ha, ha, ha!

He popped into a hole that was near by thim in the ground
An' Pat came slidin' after him wid: "King, where are we
bound?"

The king he answered not a word, but stopped and touched a
stone

An' there they were in one big hall befoor a golden throne.
The king he sat upon the throne, an' thin he said, said he:
"Because I like you, Pat, my lad, I'll give you wishes three."

O, ho, ho, ho! Um, ha, ha, ha!

Thin Pat he thought about the things he needed most right
now,

An' said: "I can't make up my mind. I wisht I had a cow."

The king he waved his shinin' wand, and said: "Look by yer
side."

An' there there stood a splindid cow—'twas all of four feet
wide.

Thin Pat he started out wid her, an' first thing that he knew
He found th' cow was far too wide, he couldn't drive her
through.

O, ho, ho, ho! Um, ha, ha, ha!

"I wish," he said unthinkin' like, "I wisht I had you home."
Thin—whist! They lit upon his barn, a-straddle of the comb.
An' thin the cow began to jump an' she began to bawl,
An' Pat kept skippin' back an' forth for fear that he would
fall.

"O, cow!" he cried. "Nice cow, dear cow! Sure I don't know
yourname,

I only wisht you's back within the place from whince you
came."

O, ho, ho, ho! Um, ha, ha, ha!

At once there was no splindid cow at all for him to see—
An' if you count thim you will find he'd had his wishes three.
Come all ye fine young ginglemin, remimber now the story:
Whinever you've a chance to wish, don't wish like Pat
McGlory.

O, ho, ho, ho! Um, ha, ha, ha!

"Well," said Lulu, "it seems to me that Pat McGlory was not
very bright, for he got nothing at all for his wishes."

"There are more persons like that than would at first be
supposed by any one not in this business," said the Banjo.



CHAPTER XXXI

THE MESSENGERS OF THE FAIRY QUEEN

"My dear friends," said the Fairy Queen after they had arrived once more at the palace, "I must tell you more about this Wicked Fairy Gobo. He was once one of my trusted workmen in the valley where you have seen the Mother of Gold. You know how necessary it is for the greatest of care and secrecy to be observed by every person permitted within those walls; for should any unfaithful servant allow that secret to become known, or should he leave the gate open, or should he do any one of a hundred dangerous things, then all would be lost.

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"Now this is what the Wicked Fairy Gobo did; he became covetous of the gold which he saw all about him, and began, as mortals do, to think this gold worth more than everything else. In short, he was willing to do anything, if only he might control all this gold. It was he who planned to open the gates and let in wicked persons who would have robbed me. My faithful friend the White Cricket told me of this, and at once I banished Gobo from the Valley of Gold, and changed the mountains all about, and made new gates, and secured new sentinels and guards of the valley; so that Gobo never again could find the way thither. He has been my enemy ever since, although hitherto I have never punished him, beyond confining him to yonder mountain; whence it was his privilege to emerge twice a year. You see what he has done. Jealous that I should hear from the King so often, Gobo has taken the shadow and with it the White Cricket, so that I could telephone no longer. Now in order that I may once more hear from the King, I shall send him back, in your hands, my dears, the Cricket for his telephone; and I shall send him back also his shadow, after I have restored it to its proper shape. And I shall send him also my hope; and I shall send him the message which I have whispered in your ears."

"But see the poor shadow, how badly it is bent," said Lulu. "It does not look in the least like the King as we know him."

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"I shall hope to be able to straighten out the shadow," said the Queen. "It is only the Wicked Fairy who has destroyed its beauty for the time."

"But," asked Zuzu curiously, "why do you take so great an interest in the King of the Island of Gee-Whiz? It always seemed to me that he acted very strangely; for sometimes he was friendly toward the Fairies and sometimes not; and often he wanted more gold."

"Ah! that is it," said the Queen, sighing, "it was always that gold! It was the Wicked Fairy Gobo who put such notions in his head; but let us hope that all will yet be well. I beseech you now to hold tight to your Wishing Wands, and on no account make another wish until you are in the presence of the King himself.

"But now it is time that you rested after these journeys through my realm. You may join Fofu and Fifi for a time in the Fairy gardens, and say good-by to them; then the best thing you can do is to eat your supper of cakes and honey, and sleep soundly in readiness for the journey up the Golden Ladder. It was my wish, as I have told you, to make you my pages, and to keep you here in my realm for ever, for you are very good children indeed; but now I love and trust you so much that I am going to make you my messengers instead of my pages, and let you go away again for a little time. In order that you may be happy and contented, perhaps the Enchanted Banjo will now play for us."

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So saying she handed the Enchanted Banjo to Zuzu, and at once as he and Lulu placed their hands upon the Banjo it began to sing for them.

FAREWELL TO THE FAIRIES

Farewell, Fairies, gay and good;
You who haunt the Christmas Wood,
You of that thrice happy band
Which lives down in Candy-land,
You who idle in the shade
By the Lake of Lemonade;
Farewell, Fairies; thus we sigh
When we come to say good-by.

You that in the world of dreams
Sail in bubble-boats the streams;
You that hide beneath the grass
Chanting to us as we pass;
You that flash among the trees
Laughing at the honey-bees—
Tears come sadly to each eye
When we come to say good-by.

Farewell, Fairies, one and all—
Some day we shall come and call
To you from the border-land
In the speech you understand—
So and so, and thus and thus—
Then you will remember us.
But to-day we may but sigh
Now that we must say good-by.

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Then the Queen bent over each little pillow and spoke softly:

"Before you fall asleep I shall kiss you each good night and good-by; for when you awaken you will be far away."

As she kissed Zuzu and Lulu, they began to feel very drowsy, but before they had time to reason it out to themselves, they were both fast asleep. The last thing they knew was the soft kiss of the Fairy Queen; and the last thing they saw was the room of the fairy palace, very beautiful, seeming to fade away and become more distant and indistinct.



CHAPTER XXXII

THE RETURN TO THE ISLAND

When they awoke, Zuzu and Lulu rubbed their eyes very hard, and looked around them in wonder; as, indeed, well they might. They were now not in the fairy palace at all, but once more alone, and at the top of the Golden Ladder, whose long lines they could see far, far below them, shining like the beams of the sun at evening or morning. Near by them rose the walls of the rocky pass in which lived Jankow, the Dragon, and near them was the end of the tail of the Dragon. They could hear its harsh voice coming to their ears very plainly.

"Do not be afraid," said Zuzu to Lulu, "for I am sure that the Fairy Queen will protect us, even though we do not see her at the moment. We shall be quite safe, also, because I have the wooden leg of the Dragon; and here I have the shadow of the King, all straight and fine and new again; and you have the White Cricket in your pocket; so I am sure they will all be glad to see us back again when we tell them where we have been."

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At the same time, although Zuzu spoke boldly, both he and Lulu kept very close to the wall as they edged along the narrow opening from the top of the Golden Ladder to the front of the gorge where the head of the Dragon lay.

The Dragon was engaged in loud roaring as usual, but his voice was hoarse and weary. Instead of sitting up straight upon his front feet, he leaned over against the side of the rock-wall in a very sad sort of way.

"Oh, dear!" said the Dragon to himself—so loudly that they heard his words distinctly—"this is indeed terrible to have to go through life with but one leg in front. Some say that as a Dragon has a dozen legs, and a tail as well, he should not miss a leg here or there, but I am sure those who say this do not know the real truth. If only I could get back my leg, I would ask no questions, I am sure."

At this Zuzu felt the Enchanted Banjo nudge him in the side, and guessing what it meant, he stepped forward boldly.

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"Good Dragon Jankow," he said, "here then is your leg, as good as new. Let us pass, and we shall put back the leg, so that you can sit up again and see all that is going on; but we claim your promise, and you must ask no questions."

The Dragon turned upon him one of its large eyes in which at first chiefly anger showed; but when its eye fell upon the wooden leg the Dragon's mouth opened in a wide smile of joy.

"Is it a bargain?" asked Zuzu.

The Dragon nodded three times, which meant that it was a bargain; so Zuzu leaned the shadow of the King against a tree not far away, and, handing Lulu the Enchanted Banjo, he began at once to screw back in place the wooden leg of the Dragon.

When he had completed this act the Dragon wriggled all

over with joy, sat up straight in front again, and gave a loud roar of pleasure.

"Now," it said, "I am something like a Dragon once more; and let all persons beware of my might. Arrngh! Arrngh! Arrngh!"

"I am sure, my good friends," he explained to them, "you can not understand how much I have missed that leg. Many persons will tell you that a wooden leg is a very poor one, but I can assure you that when you have been used to a wooden leg for several hundred years it is a very good leg indeed to have, and one that you miss very much when it is gone. As you go on toward the palace, my dear friends, I wish you would inform the King that his faithful Army is again quite ready for business, and will defend the Island against all intruders."

Zuzu and Lulu now ran forward through the wood quite rapidly for a way, but as they approached the palace their steps began to lag. "Suppose mamma should want to punish us," said Zuzu. This caused Lulu to think very hard for a moment.

"It may be that she will," said she finally, "but perhaps, on the other hand, she too will be glad to have us back and no questions asked. It seems to me that the best thing we can do is to have the Banjo play for us. Perhaps they will forgive us without our asking it, but we would better ask the Banjo how we can tell about that."

So again they placed the Banjo in position and once more it began to play; and it told how one can always tell whether or not one's mother wants one.

THE WISE DANDELIONS

When dandelions have grown white
Then they are wise as wise can be;
Their fluff, all feathery and light,
Holds messages for you and me.
We ask: "Does mamma want me now?"
Then puff our cheeks and blow and blow
And when the fluff flies off, somehow,
It means that homeward we must go.

It's always true, no matter where
You are, if you will try the spell
And puff the fluff into the air,
If mamma wants you, it will tell.
But still, it's strange—you wonder why,
And more and more your wonder grows
When you see right before your eye
How well the dandelion knows.

Whene'er you take the ball of fluff
And whisper to it soft and low
And hold your breath, and then go "Puff!"
Away the fluff is sure to go.
And then if homeward you make speed
You'll find the message was quite true
For if you ask mamma, indeed,
She'll say: "What? Want you? Yes, I do!"

Lulu picked up a big, white, fluffy dandelion, and blew and blew at the top until all the fluff was gone.

"Ah," said she, "it is plain that mamma will be glad to see us back again."



CHAPTER XXXIII

THE HAPPY ENDING OF THE STORY

Now at the royal palace of the King of Gee-Whiz all was gloom and sadness, as may readily be supposed. The Widow Pickle had lost more than thirty pounds in weight from weeping so incessantly; the Private Secretary was also worn almost to a shadow, while the Court Physician, the Court Detective, and the Court Lawyer all confessed themselves on the verge of despair and in fear of their lives; as by this time they had been obliged to admit their entire inability to solve the mystery regarding the disappearance of the Twins, of the Enchanted Banjo, of the shadow of the King, and of the Dragon's wooden leg. The King himself was by this time very thin and weary-looking, and took no delight even in Waffles, while the mere thought of syrup caused him to shudder. "My life is ruined," said he, "and I shall never again be happy." This he repeated over and over again.

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"Without a shadow I no longer desire to be King," said he at length to the Private Secretary. "Elect a Council, if you like, and have them make the laws and do the ruling as they please. I am going to cease being King, because I am not happy and contented."

It was just at this time that there was heard, far off in the forest, the sound of the Enchanted Banjo, playing the air which has been mentioned. At this sound the King sat up very straight on his throne and began to listen. At that moment there rushed toward him the Court Detective, who exclaimed, "Your Majesty! Your Majesty! I have the honor to report that I have discovered the Enchanted Banjo!"

"Where?" asked the King.

The Court Detective pointed toward the sound, and answered, "There!"

"Ah," said the King, "I had discovered that much myself."

At that moment the Court Physician hastened up and exclaimed, "Your Majesty! Your Majesty! I have the honor to report that you are going to be much better very soon!"

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"Ah!" said the King, "I knew that much myself;" and he settled his royal waistcoat in front and began to look interested.

"Your Majesty! Your Majesty!" cried the Court Lawyer, excitedly running up at this moment, "I have the honor to report that it will not be necessary to behead the Court Detective! I have rendered my opinion."

"Indeed?" said the King. "I have just rendered that opinion for myself."

"Your Majesty! Your Majesty!" cried the Widow Pickle, also appearing at this moment, quite out of breath, "I am sure my Twins are coming home."

"Indeed?" said the King. "I was of that belief myself before you spoke. I beg you all to observe that I am King on this Island, and I propose now to resume my reigning for a time, to show that I am King. Yet what, I should like to ask, do all these matters benefit me, who am as shadowless as before?"

There was no time to answer him, for at that moment, to their great surprise, there emerged from the edge of the forest the Twins, carrying the Enchanted Banjo between them and carrying also their lunch basket and the shadow of the King. They walked at once directly in front of the throne and as soon as their mother had kissed them again and again, they signaled that they would like the attention of those present.

"Listen!" cried the King of Gee-Whiz, "the Royal Hereditary Twins of the Island of Gee-Whiz will now be heard!"

The King's voice was weak because of his longing for his shadow. He did not suspect it, although it was a fact, that Zuzu was holding his shadow before him in plain view. It was so new and handsome a shadow that the King did not recognize it as his own.

"O King!" said Zuzu, approaching and kneeling before the throne. And Lulu also came and knelt saying "O King!" They held the Royal Wishing Wands high above them.

"We come as messengers from the good Queen Zulena, Ruler of the Fairies," said Zuzu; "and we bring a wish to you from her, which she wished us to wish on our Royal Wishing Wands."

"Zulena!" gasped the King, falling back upon the drapery of his throne with his hand at his throat. "Zulena!—is it possible that she—"



The bad Fairy begged for mercy *Page 187*

"O King!" said the Twins together, both rubbing hard at their Wishing Wands, "this wish has been kept a secret for many years in the heart of the Queen of the Fairies. This is the wish: That you be restored to your former self again; that you cease to value gold as the greatest of all things; that you remember the friendships of your earlier days; and that for ever you may be happy and contented!"

Then to their great surprise a strange and wonderful thing occurred, directly before their eyes. The form of the King of Gee-Whiz straightened up. The tired look faded away from his face. His hair became long and glossy and dark. His eyes became bright and merry. His garb grew yet more shining and splendid; and at once his bearing was that of a young and handsome man, as indeed he now was. With his hand at the hilt of his sword, he stepped down from the first step of his throne, and with a truly royal air raised his hand and exclaimed: "Long live the Queen Zulena, the Sovereign to whom I send my homage!"

As he said these words all bowed down before him as though a strong wind had swept them forward. The King spoke again.

"My shadow, please!" he said. Without further speech Zuzu handed him his shadow, recently twisted and distorted, but now new and handsome as the King himself. To their great surprise it fitted the King perfectly in every way.

The face of the King was stern and commanding now, though very handsome and very glad. "My Royal Cricket now, good Princess," said he to Lulu; "for now we shall send word of our own to our ruler, the good Queen who has set us free from all Wicked Fairies."

Lulu bowed low before the King, and presented to him the White Cricket; which at once took its place under the shadow of the King. In a moment it had found a floating film of gossamer, the web of the Fairy spiders, and the King inclined his ear as he heard a voice far off chirping.

"That," said the King, "is the telephone to Fairy-land. And now a royal wish of our own: May the Fairies help a Monarch who wishes always to be wise and good. Zulena! Zulena!"

And lo! as they all gazed at the spot where he stood, to their great surprise they saw standing there, smiling and bowing and looking very sweet, no less a person than Zulena, the good Queen of the Fairies.

Kneeling to her, before them all, the King kissed her hand. The face of the Queen was now very glad and happy.

"Now," said the King, rising and again looking very handsome, and very stern as well as very kind at the same time, "we, the good Queen Zulena and I, shall rule this country together from our joint throne. We shall ever defend the secret of the Fairy Valley where lies the Mother of Gold. From this time on it shall be our greatest task to spread abroad content and happiness for all."

"My lord speaks well and wisely," said the sweet voice of the Fairy Queen, "and that all may know our wishes to be the same, I shall grant to each of our subjects here present, before the Royal Wedding March begins, one wish each, for that which is best for the one wishing it."

The Court Detective, the Court Physician, and the Court Lawyer each wished for greater wisdom; and this the Royal Couple said was a very desirable wish, and should be granted. The Private Secretary asked that he might be continued all his life in the service of the King; and this was granted him, for a better Private Secretary was never known. The Prince Zuzu, and the Princess Lulu—for so they

might as well be called at this time—each wished that all their friends might be happy and contented, that the King and Queen might live and reign for ever and keep Fairy-land a place whence good children may have good gifts sent to them.

The Widow Pickle made a wish which after all was, under the circumstances, perhaps quite as practical as any. "This looks like a wedding," said she, "and I have not a thing in the world fit to wear. Dear me, I wish I was back in the city for just a day or so to do some shopping."

Now, as they all finished their wishes, they looked about them upon a strange and wondrous scene. The sun was just sinking and all the earth seemed as though flooded with gold. The King and Queen stood hand in hand upon the steps of the throne; and near by, grown very large, was the Enchanted Banjo, swung high between two tall trees. Birds came and perched upon the strings of the Enchanted Banjo, and the wind blew leaves across the strings; and as they looked at these things the Enchanted Banjo began to play.

BALLAD OF THE GOOD CHILD

When little children have been good—
As all good little children should—
It's very strange, but very true,
That then the sky is bright and blue
Until the sun sinks in the west
And then the stars all look their best
And something whispers far away:
"You have been very good to-day."

The bees that hurry home for night;
The little chickens, plump and white;
The katydids—they shout the word
Until on every side 'tis heard;
The crickets hidden in the grass
Chirp merrily to all who pass:
"That child, in study, work and play,
Was very, very good to-day!"

And when your little prayer is said
And you have snuggled in your bed
And when your eyelids slowly close—
Why, then, oh, what do you suppose?
The bed, the chair, your clothes, the wall,
The turned-down light—they one and all
Seem glad, and speak of you and say:
"You have been very good to-day."

Perhaps it was the wish of their mother which brought it all about; and whatever might have been their own preference in the case, of course the wish of the Widow Pickle had to be granted, just the same as all the others. However that may have been, the facts are very plain: when Zuzu and Lulu awoke to a sense of their surroundings they were back in their own little beds, in their own little room at home, and around them there was no court of Fairy-land, nor any strange forest of the distant island in the sea. They rubbed their eyes, and stared about them for a time.

"Did you have a funny dream?" asked Zuzu.

"Yes, did you?" said Lulu. "I thought I heard music."

"Let's talk about it," said Zuzu.

"Very well," said Lulu, "suppose we do, for certainly it was a very beautiful dream."

Corrections

The first line indicates the original, the second the correction:

p. [32](#):

white sparks flew from its extremity,
white sparks flew from its extremity.

p. [199](#):

been used to a wooden leg for several hundred years'
been used to a wooden leg for several hundred years

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE KING
OF GEE-WHIZ ***

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