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NEW ADVENTURES of "ALICE"

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FROM THE BOOKSHOP FOR Boys & Girls
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"As the dancers circled round and round"
(*page 156*)

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JR.

FOREWORD

PROBABLY you, like myself, have often wished that Lewis Carroll might have found time to write another book about "Alice." Certainly most of the children who have delightedly followed her through "Wonderland" and the "Looking Glass" country have sighed regretfully when Mother finished reading the last chapter to them.

After reading the marvelous tale for perhaps the tenth time when I was a little boy, I started trying to imagine what Lewis Carroll would have written had he continued the "Adventures," and it has been great fun for me to go on with these imaginings from time to time and finally to write them down.

The children "with dreaming eyes of wonder" to whom I have related some of these "New Adventures" have frankly enjoyed them and their accompanying nonsense verses, and have helped with many stimulating questions and suggestions. This leads me to hope that even Lewis Carroll, himself, might have enjoyed some of these added "doings" of his adventurous "Alice."

And so I make no excuse or apology for what to some may at first seem my shocking assurance, and if any of my love for the dear old dog-eared volume of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking Glass" has crept—as I meant it should—between the lines of this humble supplement, that is excuse enough for its being. It is offered as a loving gift from thankful children to the sweet spirit of the immortal Lewis Carroll who has always seemed to me a dear, indulgent, story-telling Uncle to all children.

Caldwell, N. J.

John Rae

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I	Found in the Attic	9
CHAPTER II	To Bunberry Cross, or Along Came a Snipe	15
CHAPTER III	The Peevish Printer	29
CHAPTER IV	Fire!!	37
CHAPTER V	Self-Steering Pens	45
CHAPTER VI	It's a Dangerous Place	53
CHAPTER VII	The "Summersault Sally"	63
CHAPTER VIII	Buttermilk Channel	73
CHAPTER IX	Tub and Tunnel	83
CHAPTER X	Iceberg	99
CHAPTER XI	The Skating Party	111
CHAPTER XII	Strange Growths and a Stupid Snail	121
CHAPTER XIII	King Cole's Court	129
CHAPTER XIV	The Rehearsal of "The Enchanted Cheese"	141
CHAPTER XV	In the Studio and—	147

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New Adventures of "Alice"

CHAPTER I

Found in the Attic

"BUT the provoking Kitten only began on the other paw, and pretended it hadn't heard the question. Which do *you* think it was?"

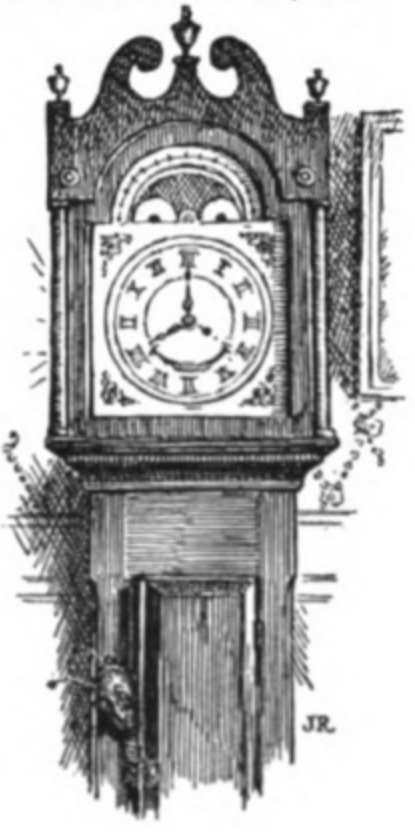
Mother closed the book and Sister Betsy and Brother Billy both sighed.

"Oh dear, I wish there were more of it," said Betsy, "Isn't there another book about Alice, Mother?"

It was the fifth or sixth time that Mother had read "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking Glass" to them out of the fat red book, and every time they had reached the end, Betsy had asked this same question.

"I'm just as sorry as you are, Dears, that there isn't," said Mother. "But even if there were we couldn't read any more tonight. It's your bed time!"

And sure enough, the old fashioned hall clock had begun to buzz and grind and click as it always did before



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striking the hour. "As though it were chuckling wickedly to itself," Betsy thought.

Betsy must have been thinking of "Alice" and making up for herself more Adventures and wishing there were another book all the time she was getting undressed and brushing her nice little white teeth, for when she said her prayers she added, "And please send me another book about Alice."

She had hardly got comfortably snuggled and settled into the pillow and kissed Mother and called "Good night" to Dick, the canary (who answered with a sleepy little thrill), when she found herself up in the attic looking for things "to dress up in."

The bed clothes seemed to have turned into dusty old dresses

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and coats which she was pulling over, looking for a little dress her Mother had worn when Mother herself was only eight years old. She knew it was somewhere in the pile of things in the attic, and would be just what she wanted to dress the part of "Alice," in a little play which she and Brother and some of the other children were going to give, perhaps, the next Saturday afternoon.

Somehow or other the dresses and coats as she handled them became smaller and stiffer and smaller still and flat, and pretty soon she realized that they weren't dresses and coats at all, but a pile of neat little books, none of which Betsy had ever seen before and which seemed to come in a sort of set. They were called "Wish There Were More" books or the "Sequel Series"—"Oh, if I only had them all on my shelves."

"Now," said Betsy to herself, "P'raps I'll find another Alice book;" and she took them up one by one with eager hands.

There was "More Robinson Crusoe!" "More Arabian Nights!" "More Grimm's Fairy Tales!" "More Wonder Clock Stories!" and oh, dreams come true! there was the book she had longed for:—"More Adventures of Alice!"

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CHAPTER II

(*Really Chapter I of the book Betsy found in the attic, in her dream*)

To Bunberry Cross, or Along Came a Snipe

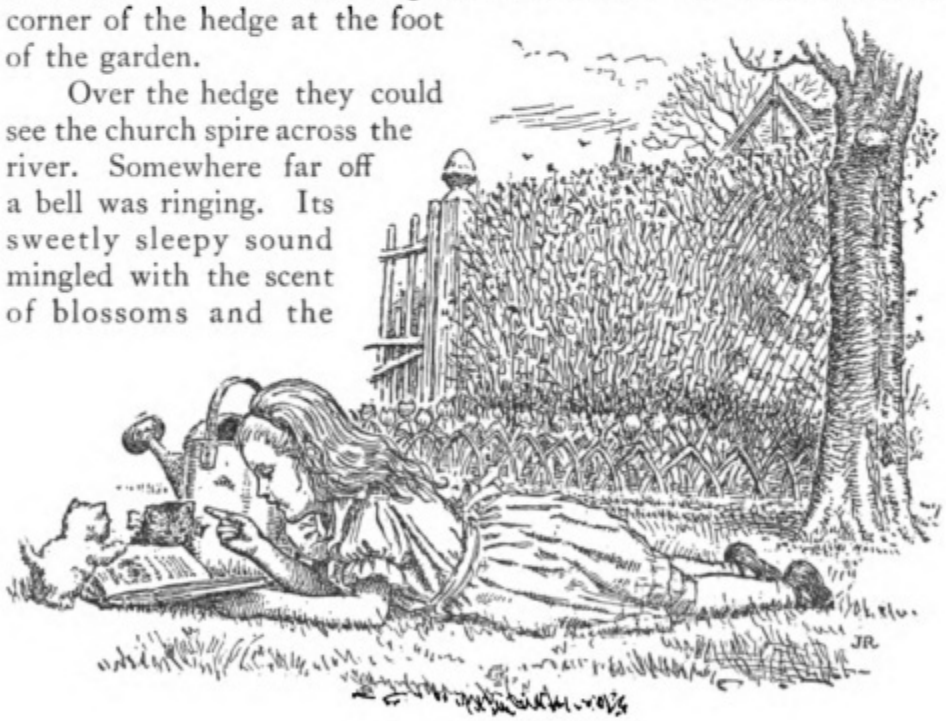
It was a sleepy, spring-time Sunday afternoon.

Alice was lying on the grass near the garden-house reading Mother Goose Rhymes to her kittens who were tumbling about near her in the slanting yellow sunshine. (She often pretended the kittens were small children.) Just now she was reading "Ding Dong Bell, Pussy's in the Well."

"I'm sure you'll like this one and it *may* prove a warning to you," she said.

Her sister was sitting on the garden-house step making a pretty little sketch of a blossoming hawthorne tree which stood in the corner of the hedge at the foot of the garden.

Over the hedge they could see the church spire across the river. Somewhere far off a bell was ringing. Its sweetly sleepy sound mingled with the scent of blossoms and the



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droning of Alice's voice very harmoniously.

She had just come to the line "What a naughty boy was that"—when she noticed a bird with a straw in its beak alighting on the hedge nearby. Alice stopped reading to watch him for she always liked to find out where nests were being built. The bird was a very sprightly little fellow, cocking his head from side to side and looking directly at Alice with remarkably intelligent bright eyes.

"Why," thought Alice, "he looks as if he were actually going to speak!"

And sure enough, he did!

"Wonderful view from here," said the bird casually in a rather muffled voice. Alice now saw it was a Snipe, much larger than she had at first supposed, and that instead of a straw he held in his beak a long clay pipe from which a thin wisp of bluish smoke was curling, and which probably caused the indistinct mumbling voice.

The hedge, too, seemed to be changing strangely, it was growing higher and higher, and soon she saw it was a hedge no longer, but a grove of tall oaks, and the muffled voice of the Snipe now sounded very far away indeed.

"I've something important to ask you. Do you—" she thought she heard him say and then she could not catch any more. Though he was still to be seen on one of the topmost branches of the tree nearest her.

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"Little bird faces appeared at open, curtained windows" (*page 19*)

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must be he) turned respectfully to her. "Your pardon, Miss, but could you, perhaps, tell me as how I could get to Norrich? I'm anxious to get there before nightfall, that I am, Miss."

"He speaks exactly like the nice old farmer who comes around to sell us cheese," thought Alice.

"And that's just what he does," put in the Snipe, just as if she had said it aloud. "Of course, you know," he continued, "the moon's

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"What good would *that* do him?" asked Alice, anxiously, for she was quite worried about the Man in the Moon. She naturally felt responsible and guilty. Of course, she hadn't really meant to give him those absurd directions. "I don't believe I even got the population right," she said to herself, helplessly.

"Why, Silly, you can always get to Babylon by candle light," replied the Snipe, severely. "And you ought to know it." "Great view," he added absently, as if to change the subject.

Now for the first time Alice looked down. How changed everything was! The gravel garden path had become a dusty road winding under the oaks, and in place of her sister there was a strange little man in very baggy clothes and a flowing necktie so long that the ends hung down almost to the ground. He was busily sketching just as her sister had been.

Alice, although she was ever so high up in the tree-tops, could somehow or other see just what he was drawing on his little pad. This was what she saw—

"Why, it's the Old Lady 'with Rings on her Fingers and Bells on Her Toes,' just like the picture in my Mother Goose," she exclaimed delightedly.

"Yes, he drew us all, drat him," murmured the Snipe, crossly. "He made one of my wings shorter than the other, too!"

When the artist's picture was finished it seemed immediately to grow to natural size and come to life.

By this time Alice was quite used to unusual happenings, and about the only thing that could have startled her very much would have been for something to look "just everydayish" or act in a perfectly normal manner. She was not at all surprised, therefore, to see the white hobby horse start off down the road with a rocking sort of

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gait, the old lady in her familiar spotted dress and strange bonnet jouncing up and down on his back and in a cloud of dust.

Alice could just catch the faint jingling of the "bells on her toes."

"This must be the road to Banbury Cross, then," said Alice, half aloud.

"*Bun*berry Cross," corrected the Snipe, kindly. "No fault of yours, my child, the Printer ran out of U's, that's all. You see it's where they make the hot cross berry-buns. You'd never say, 'hot cross *bans*.' No, certainly not! In the first place it would never rhyme with *sons*, and in the second pla— but no matter. What do you think of the view?"

And pointing to the artist with his pipe, "He drew it all—all the houses and trees and the hills just as he had to draw all of us, birds and animals and people."

Now Alice knew why it was that the landscape looked "strangely familiar;" it, too, was like the pictures in her Mother Goose! But also quite a little like Wonderland and the strange Looking Glass country that she had once dreamt about.

"Isn't it hilly?" Alice began; "and what's that——"

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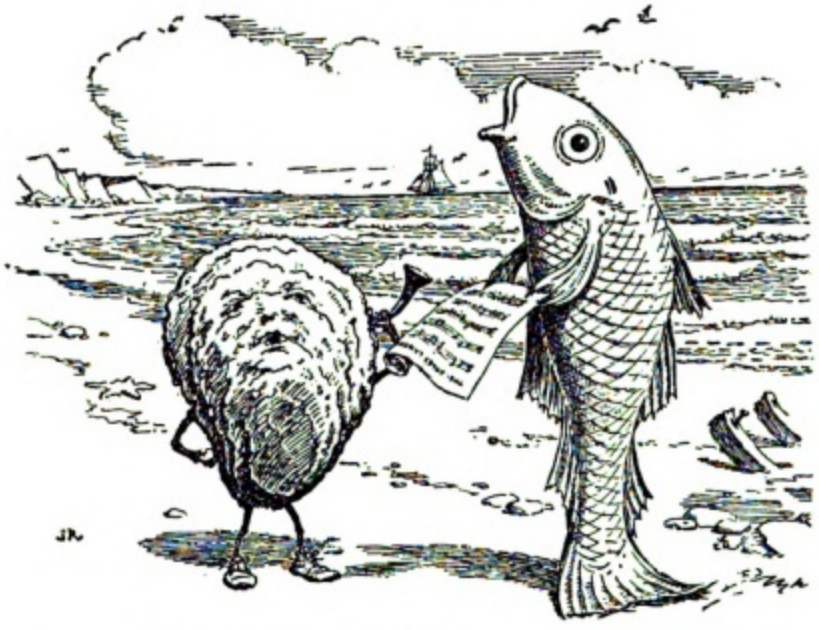
"You never know what you can do till you try;
A girl like a bird may be able to fly;
A bird like a fly may be able to buzz;
Things stranger have happened and every day does.
I've heard many times (I have proofs if you wish)
A deaf and dumb oyster can sing like a fish!—"

"But fish can't sing," interrupted Alice, who by this time was managing to fly fairly well and was going remarkably fast—she



had to keep a little ahead of the Snipe, as the smoke trailing from the pipe was very choking and blinding.

"What's their scales for then, I'd like to know?" snapped the Snipe; and after a moment he added, triumphantly, "Some of 'em fly anyhow! But don't interrupt again or we'll never get there."

Alice couldn't see just what the Song had to do with getting them there, but said nothing, and the bird continued—

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"Why how, let me ask you, my dear, do you s'pose
I learned to smoke pipes, and to eat with my nose?
There's one thing, however, that cannot be done
With all of your trying, that's this—
Have a bun."

The strangest thing had happened! They were "bumping into a flock of buns" as the Snipe expressed it. The air was full of hot cross buns which seemed to be floating up from an open window of a house on the outskirts of the village far below them.

"That's the baker's shop and there's the butcher's and there's the candlestick maker's," said the Snipe.

Alice saw that they were now right over a little village. She had been too busy listening to the Snipe to realize how fast they had approached it.

"Drop 'em a penny, drop 'em a penny!" called the Snipe, and then in his effort to snatch one of the floating buns with his beak lost the pipe which fell through the air, leaving behind it a trail of blue smoke.

"Now I'm in a pretty pickle and no mistake," he mumbled in a scared voice. "I didn't mean to keep the old pipe, it was just a joke—"

"But here we are!" cried Alice between bites—she had caught two of the buns which were still very warm and wonderfully light. "Perhaps that's why they float away," she thought.

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"Oh!" said Alice, "so you did."

This seemed to her a strange way of carrying on a conversation but, "After all," she said to herself, "it's really a very nice sort of a game. I wonder if he usually talks this way?"

The Printer seemed to have read her thoughts, for in the twinkling of an eye he had printed another little slip like this:

Well, in the first place, as you see, my voice is rather weak;
It very rapidly becomes a whisper, so to speak.
Just think how handy it might be to print, instead of talk,
If I should fall into the sea:
"Help! Help!" I'd never squawk.
Not I, I'd print some circulars
(In bold faced type display)

"Your kind assistance is required;
I'm sinking in the bay."

Or, if I took to me a wife,
Stone deaf; of course, you see
In converse, then, how indispensable my press would be!

"That sounds very reasonable, I must say," mused Alice.

Of *course* it's reasonable

said (or rather printed) the peevish Printer, petulantly; then something seemed to occur to him. He smiled mysteriously and printed this—("That tiny type looks just like a whisper," thought Alice).

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This is a secret!
I'm the man who printed Mother Goose! This is a rhyme the Poet wrote about me.

Printer Man, Printer Man, print me a book;
Tell what a great Man am I;
Make me a Hero, by hook or by crook.
Or I'll beat you and blacken your eye!

I didn't just like that one (especially the part about beating me) so I simply left it out. You see I might have been twice as famous. There's just that Pie-Man rhyme about me now. Then, too, I wasn't anxious to be known as the Printer of the book either. The Poet who wrote the rhymes has had to live in hiding for years. (Some folks didn't like what he said about 'em and wanted to kill him) and they might have felt the same about me for printing what he wrote. I don't know as I'm exactly proud of being classed with that Mother Goose crowd anyway, they're a mixed lot; beggars, pigs, and pipers and very few gentlemen among 'em, you'll notice.

Alice *had* noticed that the crowd gathered about the Town Crier in the street was a strangely assorted lot (though all looked familiar), tall and short, fat and thin, beggars and fine folk, and a great many quaintly dressed old women and children. Pigs, cats, dogs and crows and other beasts and birds seemed to mingle with the rest on equal terms. One neatly shaven pig she noticed coming out of a shop, over the door of which hung a sign—

I. SHAVEM
Barber and Wig-maker.

She had been so interested in the printed conversation game that she had almost forgotten to eat her pie which lay on the grass beside them. Now she took it up.

"What a dear little brown pie! How good it will taste!" she thought. "Um, um! I'd better eat it before it's all cold," she thought, and politely started to offer a bite to the Printer, but saw that he was furiously busy printing a lot of little circulars on bright red paper!

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"Fire!! Fire!!! Fire!!!!"
(page 36)

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CHAPTER IV

Fire!!

All was confusion and excitement! Some of the Mother Goose people were running in one direction and some in another. Most of the crowd were trying to squeeze through the town-gate and seemed to be hopelessly stuck in the narrow opening.

While Alice stood wondering in which direction the fire really lay, she noticed nearby a little man in green pointing excitedly with a long flute. Looking in the direction in which he was pointing she saw, through an opening between the bakery and the barber shop a thin column of smoke which seemed to come from behind a barn in a field about half a mile away.

"That must be it," thought Alice, "for where there's smoke there must be fi——."

Just then somebody collided with her so violently that she was almost knocked off her feet!

"I beg your pardon, Miss, but really you know, Miss, you should be more careful 'ow you stands about staring—that was, as you might say, a close shave. I might 'ave cut yer hear off."

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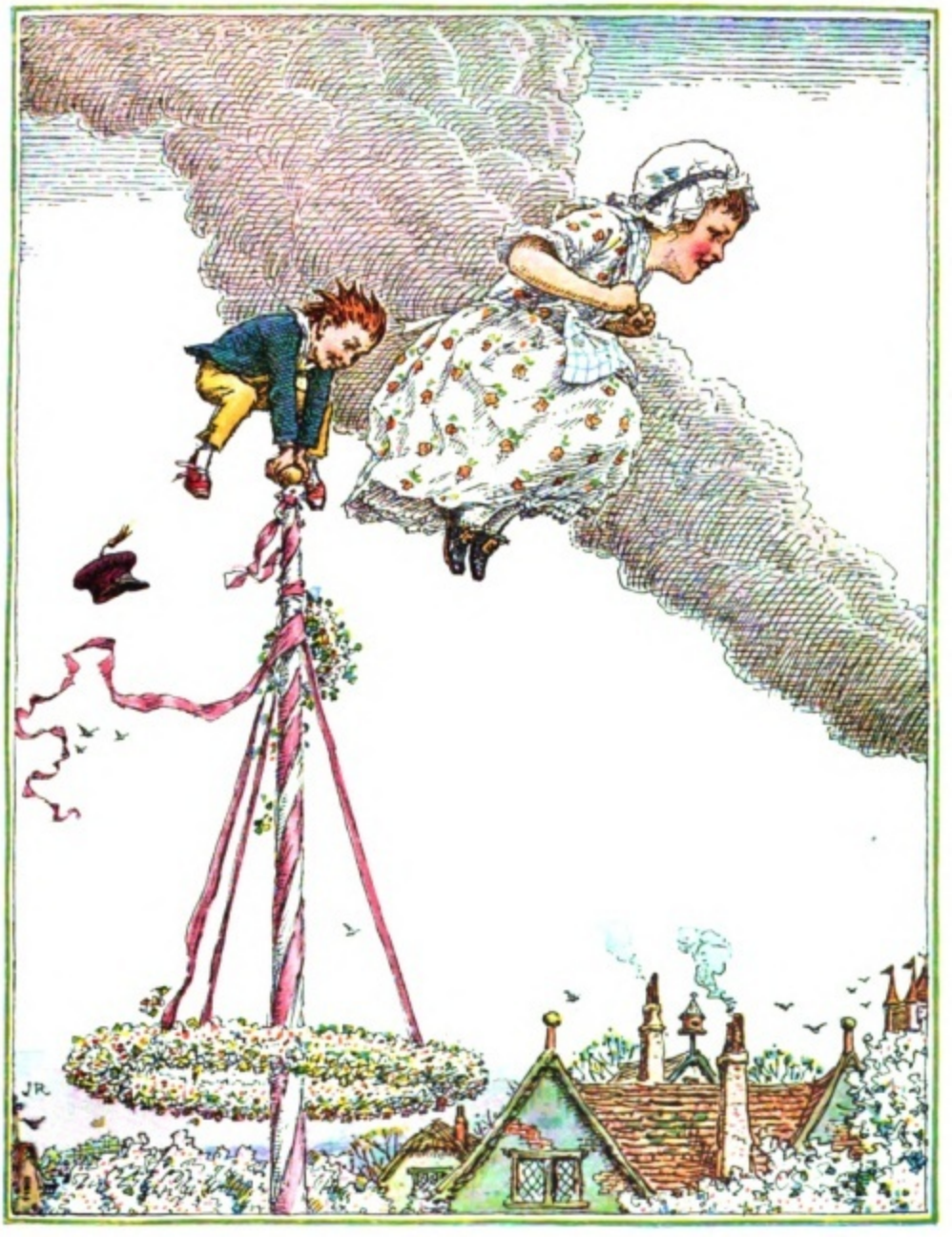

"It seemed to be a sort of race"
(page 40)

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"Have you met my friend,"—she began; but when she turned it was quite a different person from her leaping partner of a few moments before whose hand she now held. He was a strange little spindle legged man, rather shabby, with *very* long hair, large wistful eyes and a friendly smile.

"I'm the Poet. Jack was only a disguise. Have to do it, or they'd get me, I surmise," said he, pointing back at the crowd they had left far behind.

Alice, the Snipe, and the Poet were now walking hurriedly across a broad stubbly field toward the burning haystack. As they approached, a cloud of Lady Bugs passed over them, coming from the direction of the fire. "Poor things," said the Snipe, remorsefully to himself, "they probably lived in that haycock."

"Let's watch the blaze awhile from here, until the townsfolk get too near," suggested the Poet smiling at Alice and added, "Then we must skip, you know, my dear, all three of us have cause to fear!"

Alice now noticed for the first time that the little man wore a brass chain about his neck with a metal tag, numbered 333; she wondered what it could possibly be, but was, of course, far too polite to ask on such short acquaintance.

"My Poet's License—as you see, my number is three-thirty-three," the Poet remarked pleasantly, noticing her curiosity. "A thing I'm very proud of too,— becoming, *quite*, I think. Don't you?"

All this time the smoke from the hay was growing blacker and thicker, and the din of the fire-alarm bag-pipes was getting louder and wilder and the scraping of the cat's fiddle more shrill and piercing.

Now from the big barn nearby came sounds of trampling feet and ungrammatical shouts of "That's him!

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That's him! There he is!" And what seemed to Alice like *hundreds* of archers, each with a big gold crown embroidered on his left sleeve, rushed pell-mell out of the big barn door.

"We're lost! Alack a day, friends, we must flee! All the King's men! I know they're after me," exclaimed the Poet.

"It's *me* they're after, neighbor, if you must know," said the Snipe a little jealously. "*I* dropped the pipe that caused this fire in the King's hay."

Alice was a little frightened, it must be confessed, and *very* impatient at the Poet and the Snipe for waiting to talk when it did seem as though they should all have been running for their lives!

The Archers had drawn up in line in front of the barn and one who seemed to be their captain stepped forward and gave the commands, "Ready! * * * * Aim! – – – – – – –"

The Poet turned to Alice excitedly and whispered very rapidly, "I have a plan. We'll wait until they shoot; each grab a shaft and out of danger scoot, then"—

"Fire!" yelled the captain of the King's men, and the air was full of flying arrows.

"All aboard! Don't be slow. Hold on tight! Home we go," shouted the Poet.

Whirrrr—an arrow whizzed by close to Alice's head, and following the suggestion of the Poet, she grasped it as it flew past and scrambled aboard. "An *arrow* escape," she heard the Snipe chuckle. The goose feather tip made a very comfortable springy seat and she could hold firmly to the shaft near the head.

The arrow was going at a frightful speed, and the Wind whistled behind Alice's ears; in fact, it whistled a real tune, "London Bridge." "And very prettily too," thought Alice. "I wonder if 'Blue Bells of Scotland' comes next, as it does on my music box?"

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She had just turned to see if the Poet and Snipe were anywhere near her when suddenly everything grew black as night and she realized that they had dived into the thick cloud of smoke from the fire. Alice clutched the arrow tighter. "For," she said to herself, "it *would* be nasty to fall into the fire with this clean pinafore on."

Somehow the shaft of the arrow had grown softer and feathery and when Alice looked down she saw that it was now a fat grey goose she rode! The goose seemed to have lost her way in the dense smoke and was flying hither and thither in an aimless fashion.

The smoky darkness was full of sparks. "Or are they stars?" she wondered. "And isn't that the light from a little window way off there?" The goose seemed to have seen the lighted window too, for she stopped darting about and flew very rapidly in that direction, murmuring half under her breath, "That's the house I'm sure, I smell the cakes aburning."

As they came nearer Alice saw that the light came from a tiny little thatched cottage, built high in the air, on four tremendously long poles.

"Why it's all upstairs," she exclaimed.

"To prove that I'm erratic, I built my house all attic," said a voice near at hand; and there was the Poet flying along beside her on a goose exactly like hers.

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CHAPTER V

Self-Steering Pens

By the time they had reached the front door of the strange little four-legged house and alighted, the smoke had all cleared away. Instead of sparks, the sky was full of wonderfully brilliant stars, thickly spread and so carefully arranged in their constellations that one could easily pick out the Great Bear, the Little Bear and all the rest; the Dragon was *so* real that Alice was almost frightened for the moment. "It's just like the chart in Uncle's big Astronomy," she cried, clapping her hands.

The Poet turned to Alice and said earnestly, "If the Dipper were nearer 'twould do very well (perhaps you have noticed a scorched sort of smell!) but we're short here of water, so far from the ground, and cakes *always* burn if I just turn around."

He had been fumbling with a curious big brass key that hung at his belt and had finally managed, by trying it backwards, to push it into the keyhole and turn the lock which sprung to with a loud report.

"There, that's locked now, so let's go in. It's time our supper to begin," he murmured, and then dived in through an open window!

It seemed, to Alice, a strange performance to carefully lock the door and enter by the window, but she was getting used to surprises of all sorts.

"I suppose he *has* a reason," she decided and followed. In so doing she knocked over a huge bottle of ink which had been standing on a little desk near the window.

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Alice was a very neat little girl and anything of this sort distressed her almost beyond words.

"Oh dear! *Now* I've done it," she wailed as the ink, which was bright green, ran down over the stool and onto the floor. She started desperately mopping it up with her handkerchief but this seemed useless, as by this time it was at least an inch deep all over the floor!

"No matter—an accident—worry no more, but just take a look at my ink-saving floor," remarked the Poet casually, turning from the stove where he had been mournfully examining the burned remnants of the patty-cakes through a large reading glass.

"It happens so often—about once a day—that week ago Wednesday I fixed it *this* way," he added, and raised a small trap-door in the middle of the floor. Alice now saw that the floor was full of shallow grooves which led the ink to a little well under the trap-door. Soon the last drop had run into the inkwell.

The Poet now went over to what looked like a sort of an umbrella-stand which was full of enormous quill pens, and selecting a beautiful bright blue one, he handed it politely to Alice, taking a green one with yellow spots for himself. He then took from a drawer, in the little desk, some very long narrow sheets of bright crimson paper, remarking with a chuckle, as he held them up, "It's *easily read*, as somebody said."

Sitting crosslegged on the floor, the Poet dipped his pen into the inkwell and started to write rapidly.

"Try it! Try it! Don't sit quiet," he cried, pushing several sheets of the crimson paper toward Alice and excitedly running his

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fingers through his long hair. Alice noticed that even when he did this the big quill-pen kept on writing busily, making a wonderful flourish at the end of each verse and occasionally adding a "Spencerian swan" for good measure!

Alice dipped *her* pen in the bright green ink and was delighted to find that it started immediately to write in a neat rounded script, fairly dragging her small hand along with it.

"We may as well finish up Volume Eight! *No supper tonight,* says the voice of Fate," muttered the Poet after he had written a verse or two, adding, after a moment's reflection, "Though I'm not sure I shall ever dare to publish these. I must have a care."

Alice hardly heard a word of what the Poet was saying, for she was fascinated by the very unusual sensation of using a "self-steering pen," and *tremendously* interested to see what it would write.

"Of course it will be all nonsense," she said to herself, and nonsense it surely was. After a minute or two the blue quill stopped and this was what she read:

"Who'll buy my cakes?" the crocus
croaked,
And Echo answered, 'Who?'
Echo was dressed all in his best
In brilliant, buoyant blue.
His belt was trimmed with big bright
bells,
And yet he wrung his hands,
And in despair he clawed his hair,
All bound with rubber bands,

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ECHO

Yet tho he'd bands upon his hair
He played upon a comb!
The air was fresh and soft and sad,
Somewhat like "Homb, Sweet Homb,"
Tho this fresh air was all about,
He breathed a last farewell.
'Who'll buy my cakes?' the crocus croaked;
For he had soap to sell."

The Poet scratched his head judicially for a moment then said slowly, "That's *rather* good, yes rather *good*, but really now I think I should leave out that part about the cake, it almost makes one's stomach ache. Though, if one makes of it a lather, soap's not bad eating—if you'd *rather*. Let's see if *this* one's worth its ink—the *title's* pleasing—'Come to Think.'"

The Poet then started to read from the sheet he was holding—

"COME TO THINK"

Why is it ZEBRA'S sometimes spelled with double X and Y?
I don't know, but I'll ask Aunt Ann, perhaps *she'll* tell me why.
And why, you ask me, does a dog face always nor'-nor' west?
I cannot answer *that* although I've tried my level best.

And why, oh why, do you and I
Walk on our thumbs and ears?
I do not know, *you* do not know,
They do not know, my dears.
Why is a porpoise always *pink?*
I'll try hard to recall—
Why—come to think, *they're never pink.*
THEY'RE NEVER PINK AT ALL!

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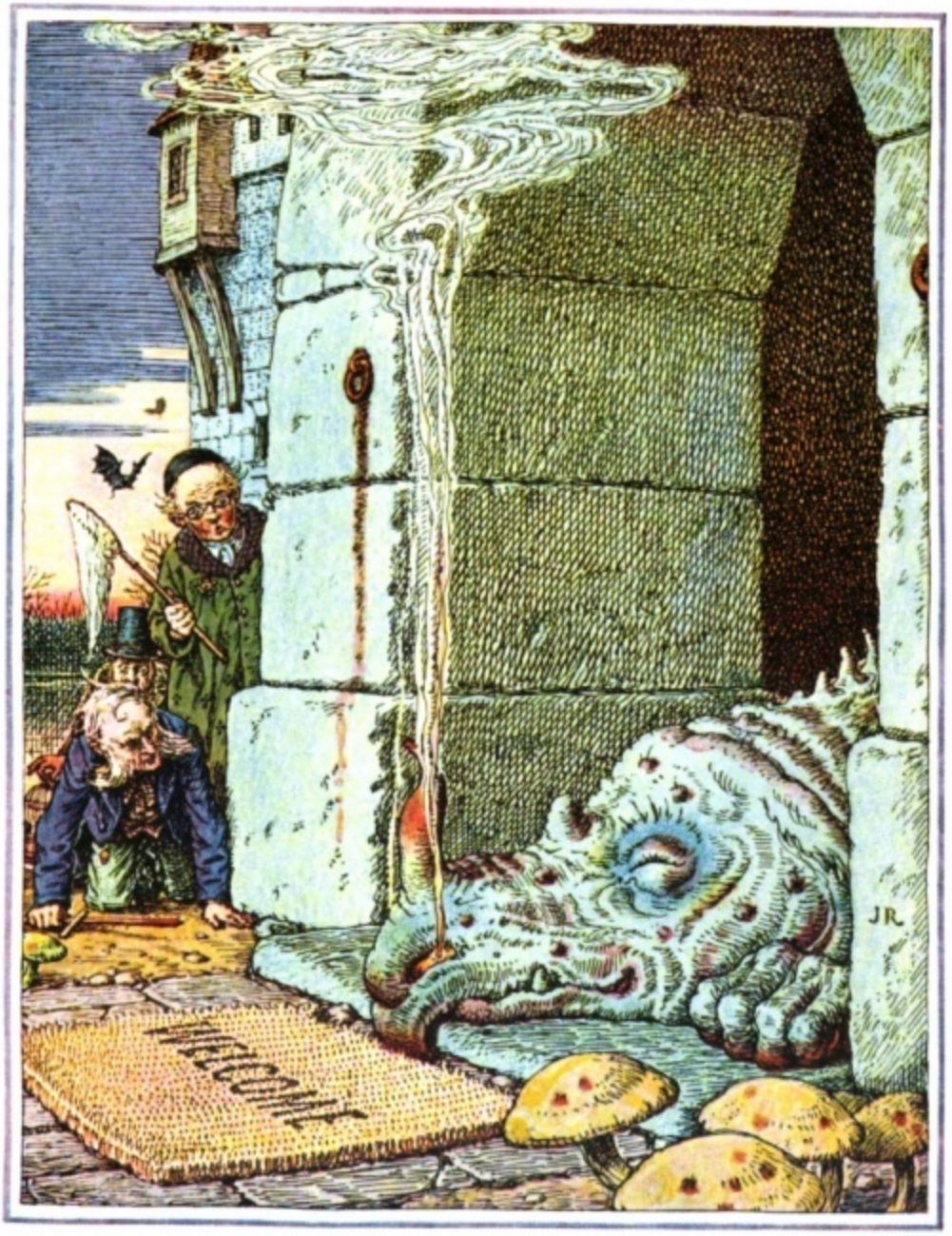

"They seek the Wurbaloo"
(page 51)

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"That'll *do* I guess," said the Poet doubtfully, setting the sheet aside. "It's got a good moral, anyway." Alice couldn't exactly see just where the moral came but she didn't interrupt to ask about it, for the Poet had already begun to chuckle over another sheet which he soon started to read as follows:—

SECRETS

Come close to me, that I to you a secret may impart;
A secret more important, too, than how to toss a tart.
I'll whisper in your purple ear, like this, a word or two.
Come nearer, lest *they* overhear;
They seek the Wurbaloo!
At three o'clock I heard them creep, at four I heard
them crawl,
At five-fifteen in silence deep I———"
DONG! DONG!! DONG!!!

Alice jumped to her feet in alarm, for a sudden deafening sound of bells filled the tiny room.

"Whoa there! BACK! Dobbin,—Jack," shouted the Poet over his shoulder in a matter-of-fact way. Alice looking in the direction of the furious ringing saw that it came from bells on the collars of two tiny dappled horses who had stepped out onto a little platform under the face of a very curiously carved clock like a toy stable, which hung in the corner of the room.

"Well," said Alice, much relieved, "that *is* a strange sort of cuc-koo-clock."

"It's not a *cuc-koo-clock*, my dear. Those are *bell horses* that you hear."

"One o'clock, two o'clock, off and away," quoted Alice.

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CHAPTER VI

It's A Dangerous Place

Almost before the Snipe had finished his warning, Alice found herself mounted on one of the dappled bell-horses and galloping along at a furious pace on a dark road which wound in and out through a very dismal forest of twisted, bare trees.

The bell on her horse's collar made a terrifying amount of noise in the silent woods.

"I'm sure the Beggars will hear it and know where I am," said Alice half aloud. She finally managed to reach down over the horse's neck and tie her handkerchief about the bell-clapper. She

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could now hear the watch-dogs barking far in the rear and had just settled herself quite comfortably in the big wooden saddle when a friendly voice behind her panted, "I say—wait up a bit—can't you? *What's* your hurry? Though for that matter I'm usually in a hurry myself. It keeps you busy this being a hero, always running about—to drowning accidents and affairs of that sort."

The owner of the voice had now caught up with Alice who was pulling in the bell-horse as well as she could. Looking down she saw a short, very fat little fellow, dripping wet from head to foot, running along beside her as fast as his ridiculously short chubby legs

would carry him. Under his arm he carried a small white kitten ("Just like my own Pussikins," thought Alice—) which was wetter, if possible, than he.

"There's nothing for you to be afraid of now that *I'm* here," he continued cheerily. "I'm sure the Beggars would never dare to follow you into *this* forest anyhow, for they know it's a dangerous place and full of dangerous people. The Raven lives here," he continued in his gossipy way, "the one with the frightful voice, you know, and the Old-Man-who-wouldn't-say-his-Prayers and John O'Gudgeon, the Wild-Man, and Peg's father, the Miller, and Margery Daw—and the Four and Twenty Tailors,—though of course *they're* not so *very* dangerous," he added reassuringly, for Alice was beginning to look just a bit frightened.

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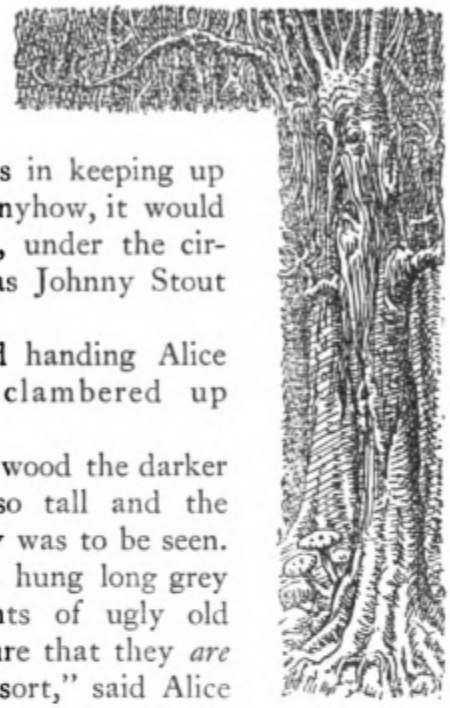

"Don't you think you'd better get up behind me and ride a ways?" she suggested, for the roly poly little fellow was beginning to puff from his exertions in keeping up with the galloping bell-horse; and anyhow, it would be rather a comfort, she thought, under the circumstances to have such a hero as Johnny Stout near her for a while, at least.

He assented very readily, and handing Alice the bedraggled White Kitten, clambered up panting.

The further they rode into the wood the darker it became. The trees were now so tall and the branches so interwoven that no sky was to be seen. From these gnarled black branches hung long grey moss like the threadbare garments of ugly old giants. "In fact, I'm not at all sure that they *are* really trees and *not* ogres of some sort," said Alice to herself.

Once or twice she looked back over her shoulder and it was very disturbing to notice that the trees had apparently closed in behind them and seemed to be standing in the road pointing at her and whispering together. In these rather terrifying surroundings it was a comfort to have the little White Kitten to hug, damp though it was.

"Its purring sounds very homelike," thought Alice.

"Must be long past tea time, and this riding gives a chap an *awful* appetite," sighed Johnny Stout, after they had gone what seemed miles and miles. It was now almost pitch dark. "We'll soon be at the mill though, and if you'll just pretend you've a wooden leg we *may* get a dumpling or two."

Alice was about to ask for an explanation of this puzzling

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remark when she caught sight of a lighted window through the trees ahead and heard the clattering and creaking of a mill-wheel.

"What a strange place for a mill here in this deep forest!" she exclaimed. "But perhaps it's a *saw*-mill."

"You're *almost* right," said Johnny, "but not *exactly*. It's an axe-mill. A place where they grind axes, you know; they have to

have axes to cut down trees to make axe helves, to say nothing of the jack-straws and tooth-picks they make from the smaller pieces."

As they drew nearer they heard loud harsh voices raised in angry dispute.

"They're always at it," said Johnny. "Never saw such a family for fighting. You see the Old Miller has dyspepsia, and no wonder, he lives on crab-apple dumplings!"

By this time they had almost reached the mill, the door of which now burst violently open. Out hopped a dishevelled young woman with a wooden leg, followed closely by an ugly bald old man who stopped just outside the door to hurl a huge, heavy looking dumpling at her. "What did I tell you?" chuckled Johnny, "That old——"

CAW! CA-AW! ! ! CA-A-AW! ! !

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Before Alice had gone more than a dozen yards, there came the sound of running footsteps behind her, and thinking that it was surely the Miller in swift pursuit, she redoubled her speed and actually *flew*, for the road was now caving in so rapidly and Alice was bounding along at such a remarkable speed that her feet only occasionally touched the ground. * * *

It was with great relief that Alice soon heard a familiar voice, just behind her panting, "You need not fear—'tis I, my dear." Looking back she saw the Poet, whom she had forgotten all about, with his long hair streaming out behind him. A pink riding coat—several sizes too large—which he was now wearing, flapped about his slender legs as he caught up to her with tremendous leaps.

Alice was really very glad to see him again. "After all, he *is* a good natured fellow and pleasant company, even if he *does* always talk in verse," she said to herself.

"I too, have lost my good bell-horse,—the Raven was the cause of course," said the Poet conversationally; then noticing the dumpling—which somehow, no matter how fast they went kept just about the same distance ahead of them—he exclaimed: "I say, how lucky! as for *me*, I'm just as empty as can be. We really must increase

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"At the thunderous command 'Halt!' Alice and the Poet stopped short" (page 61)

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our speed if on yon dumpling we would feed, but there's the sentry-box, my dear, and now, perhaps, the Grenadier—"

"Halt!" a tremendous voice—coming apparently from a sentry-box at the side of the road—boomed out, and the next moment a soldier, at least seven feet tall, in a brilliant scarlet and white uniform and very heavy hob-nailed shoes, stepped stiffly out. He held a musket in one hand and large pewter tankard in the other.

At the thunderous command, "Halt!" Alice and the Poet stopped short, for the huge Grenadier was really a terrifying person. The Dumpling, however, paid no attention but bounced past the sentry-box without any slackening of its speed. (Alice now noticed for the first time that the dumpling was provided with short arms and legs and was not really *rolling*, but was progressing by turning handsprings in rapid succession.)

The Grenadier scowled at it in stupid surprise and again bawled out, "Halt!!!" this time so loud that the tin sentry-box rocked and clattered. Then to Alice's astonishment, he laid his musket on the ground and balanced himself clumsily upon his head. Taking his musket again and placing it upside-down to his shoulder he now aimed long and carefully at the fast disappearing Dumpling.

While the Grenadier was doing this, the Poet said to Alice in a rapid whisper, "He shows by his actions *he* knows how to shoot. His idea's original, clever, and cute. A musket *will* kick as you probably know,—one's often knocked over, so hard is the blow—and if one should land on one's head it's no joke: One's neck is as likely as not to be broke. *He's* wise then to stand on his head, I repeat, for when the gun kicks, he'll be knocked to his feet. Moreover—"

Here there was a deafening explosion and from the Grenadier's musket came a great puff of white smoke which instead of quickly

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"Summersault Sally," the first thing Alice noticed was a number of enormous white rats, in sailor suits, busily engaged in coiling up cordage.

"Perhaps," she said to herself, "those ropes are the *ratlines*. But why," she asked the Poet, "should anyone want rats for sailors?"

The Poet considered a moment and then said, "Rats always leave a sinking ship, you see, so I suppose, the Captain takes 'em every trip, for while they're 'round he knows—"

Here a rumbling voice from the forward part of the ship reached their ears and the Poet cut short his explanation of the rat sailors to say, "Ah, there's good Captain Tee Wee now—just hear him singing in the bow."

Looking in the direction whence the sound came, Alice saw a tiny man, hardly more than two feet high, dressed in a very exaggerated nautical costume. He was doing a curious sort of a "revolving sailor dance," and singing in a voice that might have belonged to a giant, the following song:

"Oh, never, never leave, my lads,
  Your happy, happy home.
Your parents' hearts 'twill grieve, my lads,
  If off to sea you roam.
Then listen to, polite, my lads,
  This ballad; hark ye well,
For sure as black is white, my lads,
  It is the truth I tell.
Young Percival O. Pink, my lads,
  He ran away to sea,
Although you'd never think, my lads,

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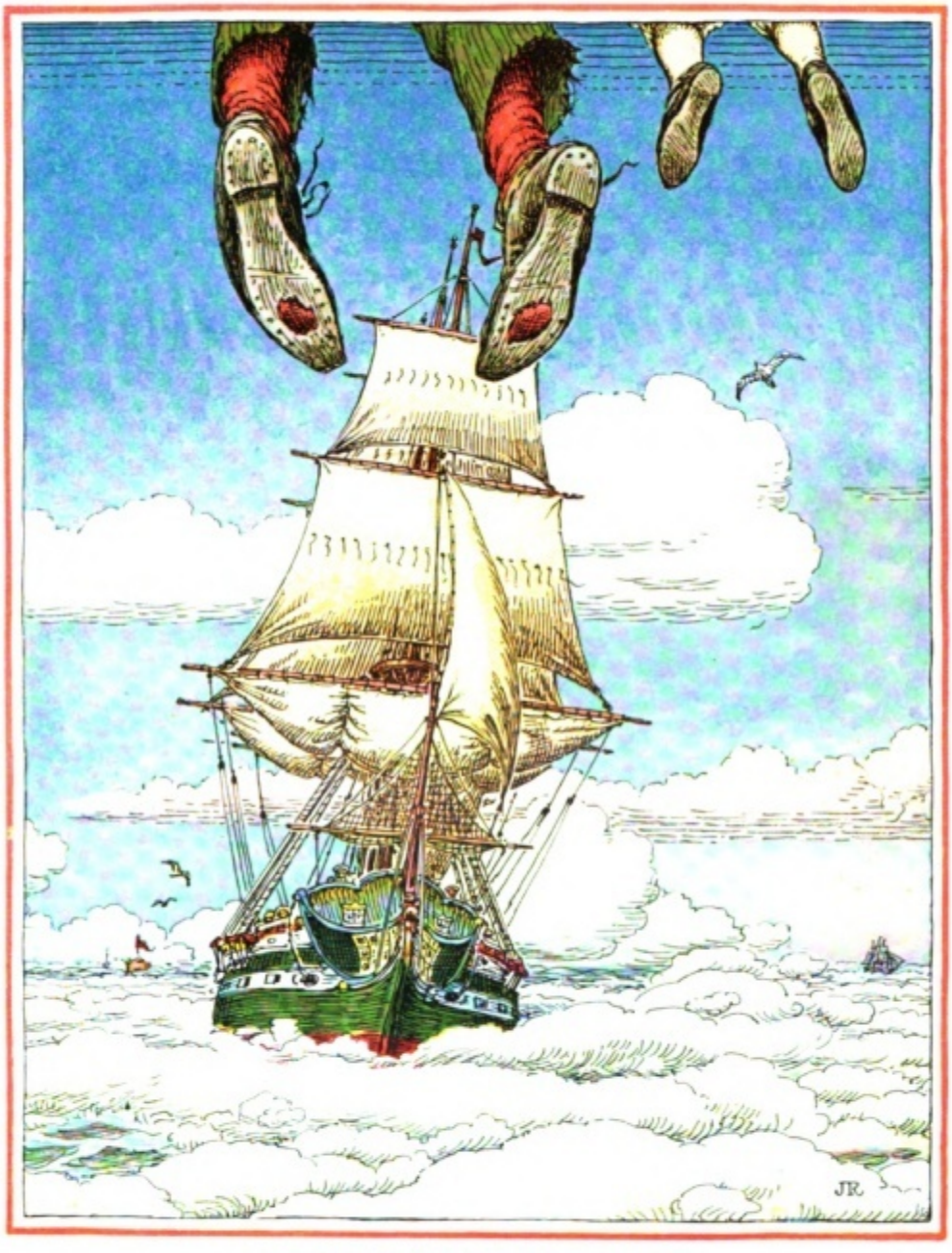

*"The clouds * * * had changed by now to a rather milky looking sea" (page 65)*

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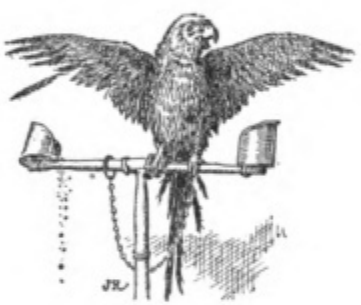
A thing like that could be.
For Percy's home, you know, my lads,
Was fine as one could wish.
So why then should he go, my lads,
To face the flying-fish?
Pink's parrot sang, they say, my lads,
'The Battle of the Ford'
Five hundred times a day, my lads,
And Percy, he was *bored.* * * * *
His mother 'most went mad, my lads,
When Perc could not be found.



She says, says she, ''E's went to sea,
And surely will be drowned!'
His father, Peter Pink, my lads,
Says, 'dry your heyes, my dear,
For lookee, Peg, 'is wooden leg
Will float 'im, never fear.'
She sobbed afresh and said, my lads,
'When hoff to sea 'e chased,
That wooden limb—oh, woe is 'im—
'E left it in 'is 'aste!'
Says Pete, 'Your tears you waste, my love,
'Is 'aste with 'im must be,

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So if it's in 'is 'aste, my love,
'E's got it, don't you see?'
Then do the Captain's jig, my lads,
And keel and double-haul,
And lower away the gig, my lads,
And catch me if I fall!"

The diminutive Captain's whirling, bounding dance had been growing more and more energetic as the song proceeded, and with the last words, which were panted rather than sung, he bounced right

into Alice, who, to keep him from falling, caught him in her arms, where for a while he lay gasping like a fish out of water.

When Captain Tee Wee had recovered his breath, Alice placed him carefully on the deck, thinking as she did so, "He looks just like a live sailor-doll."

The tiny fellow still seemed a trifle dizzy and uncertain, but after a moment he remarked casually, "Last time it was the Snipe caught me."

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explanation. "The feet on 'em, you know, are werry much larger than *land*-feet, and the knees have springs in 'em that pulls you up straight whenever you starts to fall." As if to illustrate this point, Captain Tee Wee bent his knees and began to sway back and forth, and—the "Summersault Sally" pitching, just then, unexpectedly—down he went once more, this time rolling over and over along the deck toward an open hatchway. Just as he reached it, a man, evidently a Cook, appeared coming up through the opening carrying a very large, full soup toureen, and into this with a great splash, fell the poor little Captain!

Evidently the soup was not very hot, for the Cook unconcernedly fished the sputtering Captain out and set him, dripping, on his feet, merely saying, respectfully, as he peered anxiously into the toureen: "I'm *werry* much afraid as 'ow most of it's spilled, sir." Here the Cook glanced meaningly at Alice and the Poet and shook his head in a discouraged sort of way, as if to say, "This sort of thing happens almost every day, you know."

"And it's probably ruined my watch," choked the Captain, mournfully, pulling from a pocket in his blouse a short length of fish line and a very curious object, which looked more like a large brass peg-top than a watch, though Alice saw that there *was* a row of numerals painted around it up near the peg.

"You may look at it if you like, Missy," the Captain added, handing the strange watch and the fishing line to Alice. (She had started to mop him off with her small handkerchief and was having

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a very discouraging time of it). "It's my *self-winding* port watch," he went on, proudly. "You see, I wind it *myself*."

"I suppose you have to spin it with the fishline, like a boy's top?" said Alice, smiling at the Captain's last remark.

"That's the beauty of it, Missy, that's the beauty of it," cried the Captain, enthusiastically. "You see *this* here watch only goes while you're a spinning of it; and while it's a spinning, you nacherly can't tell time by it, Missy. Coz why? Coz you can't see the numbers on it then, nohow."

"Well," said Alice, doubtfully, "I shouldn't call that a very *satisfactory* kind of time-piece."

"A very *good* one, *I* should say—to lose a train by, anyway," put in the Poet, with a grin.

"Best kind, I calls it," said the Captain very positively; "never a proddin' of you by remindin' you it's gettin' late for something or other. Leaves all that to your own good judgment, like." He had been clumsily winding the fishing line about the watch as he spoke and now drew back his arm to spin it. In so doing he jostled the Cook, who during the conversation had been standing behind him thoughtfully drinking up what was left of the soup. The toureen dropped from the Cook's hands, but instead of breaking into a thousand pieces on the deck—as might have been expected—it *bounced* like a large rubber ball!

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Alice, who had been sitting on the the ship's low rail, reached out wildly in an attempt to catch the toureen as it bounced over the side. * * * * *

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CHAPTER VIII

Buttermilk Channel

Milkman! Milkman! where have you been?
In Buttermilk Channel up to my chin.
I spilt my milk; I spoiled my clothes—
And got a long icicle hung to my nose.

The next thing Alice knew, she was floundering about in a sea of buttermilk!

The buttermilk, curiously enough, did not seem to wet or chill her, though, as she discovered later it was deliciously cool to drink.

When she had recovered her wits sufficiently to look about her, Alice saw that the "Summersault Sally" was already some distance away and plunging along at great speed. She could just make out the familiar figure of the Poet leaning far out over the rail, waving his hand; and, carried on the breeze, came the words, "So sorry that you have to leave. Good bye! Give my regards to Steve." The next moment the ship had disappeared in a bank of fog.

After swimming about aimlessly for a time, Alice found to her surprise that she could touch bottom with her feet and still keep her head and shoulders above the surface. This of course, was a great relief, but it was very tedious just standing about in this way with nothing in sight but buttermilk and not a soul to converse with. So after a while Alice began talking aloud to herself as she usually did when all alone. "Well, of all the uninteresting, lonesome situations, this is the very worst. I *do* wish some one would come.

"And I wonder who 'Steve' is?" she continued after a moment or two, remembering the Poet's farewell words: "I daresay I shall meet him before long anyway."

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"Werry probably, Miss, werry probably, coz *Long* can't be found nowhere," said a melancholy voice startlingly close behind her.

Alice turned in such haste that she lost her footing on the slippery bottom and went under.

When she came up again, sputtering, the little girl saw this rather curious sight—a large dented milk can balanced on the head of a very sad-faced undersized man who was standing almost up to his neck in the buttermilk. A long icicle hanging from the end of his nose helped to make his expression almost ludicrously woe-begone.

"And wot's more," he was now continuing dolefully, apparently not having taken the slightest notice of Alice's mishap. "I'm Steve! Steve for short—that is, Steven Short's me 'ole name, Miss. Long 'e *was* my pardner and that, as you might say, is the Long and Short of it. But, as I were a-sayin' afore, 'e 'asn't been seen for days, Miss."

"How did he happen to get lost?" asked Alice, feeling that it was time for her to make some sort of remark.

"It's a sad story, a most distressin' story, that it is—(here the Milkman's voice almost broke). You see, Miss, my pardner Long were an uncommon *tall* man, a regiler giant he were, and *h*unfor- tunately 'is *h*eyesight were werry poor. And it's probable that 'is *h*eyes gettin' wuss—and 'im bein' so tall—'e finally got so's 'e couldn't see no further than 'is knees, Miss, and 'is feet they took 'im *h*up the wrong road somewheres. Leastways that's my *h*opinion."

"How very unfortunate," was all Alice could think of to say in consolation, and the

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Although Alice's verse did not seem to have had a very noticeably cheering effect on the Milkman, he had at any rate ceased sobbing and the tears were no longer running off the end of his nose.

"Medium good, medium," he murmured gloomily, after quite a long pause. "But just listen to *these* here werses," he added more brightly and drew a soggy, dripping sheet of familiar crimson paper from his breast pocket (the tide was evidently ebbing, for the second button of the Milkman's coat was now visible); "the Poet he wrote it special for me, for to pay my milk bill; you see, Miss, 'e——"

"Oh, do *you* know the Poet too?" interrupted Alice. "He's really quite a friend of mine." It somehow seemed to her that she had known the Poet for a very long time.

"I knowed 'im *last week*, Miss, but, my Gallons! 'e 'as that many disguises that you can't always rightly tell 'o's 'im, as you might say. I knows 'im when 'e's a scarecrow, an' I knows 'im when 'e's a weal-an'am pie, and they do say 'e's *wonderful* convincin' as a signpost," he added earnestly, handing Alice the dripping sheet (he had been clumsily attempting to dry it by rubbing it with his coat-sleeve which was if possible even wetter than the paper). "You'd better read it to yourself, Miss, *h*after all, he said huskily. "You see, it's really *too h*affectin' to me; not only for its *h*own sake, as you might say, but for the sake o' the six bob 'e never paid me."

Fearing that the Milkman would burst into tears again, Alice took the sheet. She could just manage to make out the blurred writing, and this is what she read:

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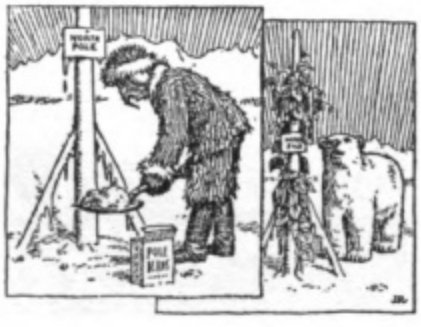
YEARNINGS

For years and years I've peddled Milk,
From Trent to Timbucktoo,
And also cream, though 'twas my dream
Far different things to do.
Far different things to do, to do,
Far finer things to do!
For instance, I should like to drive,
Around and round the square,
A pink and purple omnibus,
How people all would stare!



Or, think how pleasant it would be
to stand for hours and hours,
Upon some snow-capped mountain-peak
A-selling paper flowers.
Then one might fish for griddle-cakes
Each night twixt twelve and two:
I sob and sigh, to think that I
So many things don't do.
I'd take soft soap and sea-shore sand,
And mix 'em up with tea,
And of them make a cobble cake,

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"A huge tub was approaching, spinning round and round" (page 81)

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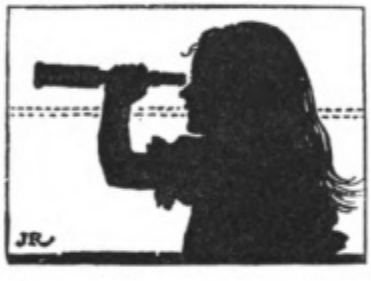

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story at the moment, but upon opening her mouth to do so, she was astonished to hear herself reciting, with appropriate gestures, the following verses:

Oh, the fire-bell was ringing
  In the town of Ballyhack,
And the village choir was singing,
  "Bring, oh, bring my Benny back."
Now a simple, soothing story
  Is this tale of Shanghaied Ben,
Just, perhaps, a bit too gory
  Where his ears are clipped, but then
There's a fairly happy ending,
  Though the tune is mostly glum.
(As a rule it's quite heart-rending
  On the fog-horn and the drum).
Well—the songing and the singing
  'Bout the bringing back of Ben,
And the donging and the dinging
  Mingled sweetly; so that when
The Policeman—who was taking
  Of his after-dinner snooze—
Heard it, he, instead of waking,
  Dreamed he read the
    "Oxford News!"

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During the recital of Alice's verses the Butcher, the Baker and the melancholy Milkman, who had finally finished eating the last of the bread and milk, had all been yawning audibly—which was of course *very* rude under the circumstances—and seemed to be having an increasingly difficult time to keep awake and to preserve their balance on the rim of the tub. Just as she came to the last word, they all tumbled overboard very neatly and quietly, and floated off, bobbing up and down like corks on the green water, all three snoring in perfect unison. "They do it precisely as though they had practiced it together a great many times," thought Alice.

The little Candlestick-maker held his sides and rocked back and forth so alarmingly that Alice feared he, too, would fall overboard.

"It was either that part about the 'after-dinner' snooze or the last line about reading the *'Oxford News'* that finished 'em," he managed to say when he could control his shrill laughter.

"It was *very* unmannerly of them at any rate," said Alice, "but shouldn't we try to get them aboard again?" She felt vaguely that something ought to be done, though as a matter of fact all three of the floating sleepers looked perfectly comfortable and happy where they were.

"I make it a rule," said the Candlestick-maker seriously, "*never* to disturb a man when he's taking his after-dinner nap. He's apt to wake up very cross. Besides, it'll help their digestions to sleep a bit. And speaking of digestions," he rattled on, "reminds me of cheese, and cheese reminds me of cake (here he reached toward the pocket of his yellow coat). Now what would you say to a piece?"

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Is fine for old and young.
A friend of mine once used to make
A stew of lizard legs
And linseed oil; while jelly cake
He'd salt away in kegs.
Of course, we can't be all alike

In what we choose to chew,—
A fine puree of railroad spike
Might not appeal to *you*.
But that reminds me, Uncle Ben,
To ask you, what's *your* choice.
What victuals do *you* call for when
Your appetite you voice?
Do you demand wild roses panned—
Or choc'late-coated eels?
Unk scratched his head then slowly said,
"What *I* like most is—meals!"

As any reference to food was becoming very painful to Alice, she made no comment on this doggerel, and, in the interval of silence that followed, the Candlestick-maker, with the injured air of one whose best efforts have been unappreciated, carefully folded the sheet, sealed it with a bright yellow wafer which he had taken from

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He seemed to be in a great hurry, as postmen usually are. Taking a rather bulky package from his bag he tossed it to Alice, remarking pleasantly, "Proper fine day, Miss;" then, touching his cap, he was off.

"Nothing for me?" the Candlestick-maker called after him. But the Postman kept on, unheeding, and soon disappeared from view.

"It's high time I was getting an answer," said the little man, complainingly.

"But who *do* you suppose sent me *this*?" Alice exclaimed, surprised and delighted at receiving this unexpected piece of mail.

"Probably it's only a note from the Stage Manager, reminding you to be on time for the rehearsal," said the Candlestick-maker, trying hard to keep the envy out of his voice. "Though, of course after all this delay we're frightfully late, already."

Although she had not the slightest idea what "rehearsal" her little companion was referring to, Alice did not ask for particulars just then. She was too much occupied with her fascinating mail package. It was a most interesting looking one, too; wrapped in oiled silk and tied with a piece of seaweed. Furthermore, the packet was rather heavy for its size and almost completely covered with two-penny stamps except for the small space where ALICE M. was written in green ink.

"What does the M stand for?" asked the Candlestick-maker rather suspiciously. "You see," he went on before giving her time to reply, "it *might* mean ALICE *MAYBE!* So perhaps it's not for you after all. It *might* even be intended for me."

This was a rather disturbing thought, especially as, curiously enough, Alice could not for the life of her, at the moment, remember her full name. "It stands—" she said, hesitating uncertainly as

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she started to open the package, "I *think* it stands for my last name."

"Your *last* name, eh? How often do you change your name, I'd like to know? And you can't even be sure what the last one was! I suppose ALICE is the name you had before you changed it for this last one that you can't remember. Well, there's something mighty suspicious about it, that's all *I* can say."

Poor Alice was so confused by this rapid and complicated speech, that she did not even try to argue about the name but said weakly, "I suppose so," and went on unwrapping her package, which proved to contain a small collapsible telescope and a thin pack of little red cards, tied together with a broad white ribbon upon

which were printed the letters S. C. T. Upon each of the cards was written a single word. Alice read them off just as they happened to come in the little pack.

LOOK YOURS BEEN P. SEE TRULY SPYGLASS THROUGH THAT THE YOU'LL WE'VE AND WRECKED.

"No doubt it means *something*," said Alice, half aloud, after she had tried many different combinations of the words without success.

"Maybe it's some sort of a cipher message," said the Candle-

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standing motionless just ahead of them on the track. It proved to be beautifully finished in mahogany and gold with soft, blue cushions upon the little platform.

"How jolly," exclaimed Alice (the child had always longed to ride on one of these cunning little cars). And running forward she scrambled aboard and then, after helping her tiny companion up to the platform beside her, started to work the propelling handles up and down.

Away they went, very slowly at first, but steadily gaining momentum until they were finally going at a very respectable speed, though strangely enough this did not seem to get them any nearer the mouth of the tunnel. The Candlestick-maker, who was of course too small to help much with the handles, was enjoying the ride immensely; he kept saying complacently over and over, "If Pansy could only see me now, eh? If she only *could!*"

Ever since they had finished playing "Soldiers of the Queen" Alice had heard a muffled sound of low rumbling and whistling, which she had at first supposed to be merely the re-echoing of their drumming and fifing in the narrow tunnel; but instead of diminishing it was now growing louder and louder and beginning to resemble more and more alarmingly the sound of a railroad engine. Looking back over her shoulder, Alice saw to her dismay that it *was* an engine, still some distance behind them to be sure, but gaining fast. She redoubled her efforts, working the propelling handles up and down frantically in her terror, and the hand-car fairly flew along the track. Their speed being now just about that of the engine, the distance between them remained for a while undiminished.

"Perhaps we won't have a collision after all," Alice shouted pantingly. The din in the tunnel was now terrific.

"I'm afraid not," shrieked the Candlestick-maker in reply. He seemed to be deriving even more pleasure from this form of

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parition, but it suddenly occured to her that of course this was only a Snowman and that the carroty red nose *was* a carrot, the black eyes lumps of coal and the goatee a worn-out paint brush. "And he really has a very kindly expression in spite of his unusual features," thought the little girl.

It somehow did not surprise her much now to hear him ask pleasantly, "Any baggage, Miss?" his paint-brush goatee wagging stiffly as he spoke.

"Nothing but this," answered Alice, holding up the candlestick and noting as she did so that the candle was again burning.

The sight of the candle apparently made the Snowman quite nervous, for he said rather shakily, "You might just blow that out, Miss, if you don't mind; I can't abide a flame of *any* sort, not since my brother almost died of a bonfire."

Alice blew out the candle and the Snowman, who seemed greatly relieved, continued politely, "Just leave your bundle in the baggage room if you like." He pointed with a very short fat arm to a large clumsily wrapped package, which Alice had certainly not seen before, standing just beside her on the platform. She was about to tell the station agent (for that was what the Snowman evidently was) that it did not belong to her, when she noticed tied to the bundle a large tag upon which was printed in bold letters—YOURS.

"But," said Alice to herself, but half aloud—really hoping that the interesting package might prove to belong to her— "How do *I* know that the tag doesn't mean that it belongs to the Snowman?"

The Snowman heard her question. "Why, Miss," he said slowly, like a good natured teacher patiently explaining something to a stupid child, "you see if it were *mine*, it would be marked *MINE*,

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but as it isn't marked *MINE* why then of course it isn't *mine: but*, if, on the other hand, it were *yours*, Miss, then it would be marked YOURS, and as it *is* marked YOURS, why then of course it *is* yours and *not* mine. Or, to put it another way," he went on triumphantly, after taking a breath, "if it were not yours—" (here he stopped, for Alice was no longer listening, but was already unwrapping the bundle, for, like most of us, she was always easily convinced of what she wanted to believe).

First came several layers of newspapers—most of them the "Gloster Gazette" and the "Norrich News"—then straw tied round and round with heavy cord like the winter covering for a rose bush; next came a ragged old quilt decorated with a design of cabbage-like scarlet flowers. As the air was now very chilly in spite of the bright sunshine, Alice stopped to drape this quilt about her shoulders like a sort of cape. She then removed the remaining wrappings from the bundle, consisting of a fish net and several more newspapers (these being mostly "Bunbury Bugles").

"Well of all pre-pos-terous things!" exclaimed Alice as she finally pulled off the last of the papers; for, after all her trouble in undoing the great package, its contents proved to be only a rickety old, bottomless bird cage upon the little padlocked door of which hung a card bearing the words, "GONE FOR THE DAY."

The Snowman, his head and shoulders craned as far as possible out of the station window, had been watching with great interest the unwrapping of the mysterious bundle, and he now exclaimed with a chuckle which nearly dislodged his paint-brush goatee: "*Very interesting* luggage, Miss, and also *very* instructive." "However," he added more seriously, "you might just hang it on that hook by the door there. (Alice was about to throw the

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The Milkman, after looking sadly about in a bewildered way for a moment or two—apparently but half awakened by the slight shock of landing—settled back against a convenient post, closed his melancholy eyes and started snoring at once.

The others rose unconcernedly to their feet and shook themselves like three water spaniels, and Alice now heard the Cook, who seemed to be continuing an interrupted conversation, remark: "—and what I says is, it's good riddance to 'em! If them two lubbers an' that old shell-back wanted to sail with that tow 'eaded softy, Captain Shafto, why shouldn't they, *I* says, an' werry good, too."

"Right you are, matey!" roared Captain Tee Wee so heartily that several icicles fell jingling from the station eaves.

The Poet, who had just caught sight of Alice, showed no surprise whatever; he merely smiled pleasantly as if he had naturally expected her to be there, and remarked casually, jerking his thumb at his companions, "They refer to the Butcher, the Baker and Turtle, who were taken aboard the 'Meandering Myrtle'."

"But I don't remember seeing a *turtle* aboard the 'Summersault Sally,'" said Alice. "Where did *he* come from?"

"The waves they ran so high, you see, *our ship turned turtle.* Pardon me if I now leave you for a while to give my new disguise a trial." Thus saying, the Poet stepped into the little station, from the door of which, after but a few moments, hopped a very large, black and white penguin.

Startled by this sudden transformation, Alice took a step backward and, tripping over the trailing end of the bed quilt which she had wrapped about her, fell flat.

The penguin helped her up clumsily, remarking as he did so, "There's no need to feel such a shock of alarm: I'm only the Poet who'll do you no harm."

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When Alice got to her feet again the Snowman, Captain Tee Wee, the Cook and the sleeping Milkman were gone—though she was quite sure she still heard muffled snoring. The station itself had disappeared, too, and she and the ridiculously disguised Poet were standing on what seemed at first to be the flat, icy roof of a high tower of some sort. The end of a ladder ("It looks just like the railroad track stood up on end," thought Alice) showed above a low parapet which bordered the roof.

The snoring soon changed to a sound like that of surf far below them, and peering over the parapet Alice saw, to her astonishment and dismay, that they were on the very highest pinnacle of a tremendous iceberg!

Owing to a heavy fog which surrounded the base of the iceberg, it was impossible to see where the ladder led to. "It probably rests on the bottom of the sea, and I'm sure I should never dare to climb down anyway," thought Alice miserably, adding half aloud: "Oh, dear, I wish I had never come." Then it occurred to her that she had had nothing to do with *coming:* in fact she had not *come* at *all.* This was a very confusing thought. She felt, though, that the Poet was somehow or other to blame for their predicament; so, turning to him, she said piteously, "Whatever *shall* we do?"

Patting her shoulder with one of his ridiculous flipper-like wings, the Poet answered reassuringly: "Don't fret yourself, be calm, my dear; *I'm* really rather glad we're here. An iceberg's safe—if gales don't rise—and how it suits my new disguise! Still if you're feeling timid,—well, you just might try your fire-bell."

"My *fire-bell?* I *haven't* any fire-bell and you know it," said Alice crossly; for she felt that the Poet had chosen a very poor time for teasing her.

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Alice recollected that the Candlestick-maker had said something about being late to a rehearsal of some sort and she wondered if it were this Pantomime that he had referred to. She was too much interested in the snowflake mottoes, however, to ask about it just then. Unrolling another of the slips, she read aloud: "HONEY MAKES THE HAIR GROW." "Of course, *that's* just nonsense," she said impatiently; "though, come to think, I *have* heard a proverb something like it—'Money makes the mare go,' I believe it was."

"Well," said her companion judicially, "perhaps that other, too, is true, although the wording's tricky; for honey *in the comb*, you know, would make the hair grow—sticky!"

"Perhaps you can tell what *this* one means, too," said Alice, smiling, at the ingenious explanation of the other: "DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS BEFORE YOU PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET."

After a moment's reflection, the Poet replied: "In counting chickens, don't you see, there's apt to be some slip—that is, if on arithmetic you've not the firmest grip. And if you *slip* why, like as not, upon your eggs you fall, and if those eggs are in one lot, it's plain you'll break them all!"

Alice was growing very much interested in this game of explanations. "It's my turn," she now exclaimed, "and here's one that I can almost understand myself; it says, 'IT'S NEVER TOO STRAIGHT TO BEND,' and I daresay *that* means——"

She was interrupted by the sudden appearance of a head and shoulders above the edge of the parapet and the next moment a stocky fellow, unmistakably a fireman, stepped from the ladder and stood before them, panting. His shirt was the brightest crimson Alice had ever seen and he wore a big tin fire-hat, the

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brim of which extended like a wide shovel at the back. Hanging from his belt were a small pick-axe, a brass fire-trumpet and a leather bucket about half full of water.

"Two of 'em to save," the Fireman muttered complainingly when he had recovered his breath, "*TWO* of 'em—and me on a holiday!" Then taking the bucket from his belt in a business-like way, he dashed the water over the Poet, saying mournfully as he did so, "and not even enough water for *one*."

"I'm glad of that," thought Alice, "though the Poet doesn't seem to much mind being soaked."

The Poet, who apparently had hardly noticed the unexpected bath, was saying cheerfully, "Don't bother about *me;* I'll flap down to the ground. Help her, old chap."

Then, holding up the bottomless bird cage, he went on, "My helmet for the Pantomime; so glad I thought of it in time."

"He certainly didn't have that cage a moment ago," thought Alice confusedly. "I didn't know that old thing was yours," she started to say, but the Poet, in his awkward penguin disguise, had hopped to the parapet, and now, after a few preliminary flappings of his unwieldy wings, flew heavily away. He had left the bird cage behind and the Fireman, picking it up, hurled it after him with a loud shout of "Heads below!" Then turning to Alice, who half feared that she was about to be thrown after the cage, he said politely enough, but in a rather bored voice, which plainly showed that he did not enjoy working like this while on a holiday, "Well, Miss, what'll it be for *you*, ladder or life net?"

Now Alice did not like the idea of either method of descent,

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CHAPTER XI

The Skating Party

After sliding for what seemed miles and miles, Alice was just about to begin a conversation with herself to relieve the lonesome stillness, when she was quite startled to hear a familiar voice nearby exclaim: "I trust we're getting near the ground—these wings work poorly, I have found."

Looking up over her shoulder, Alice saw the Poet floundering along through the air. He seemed to be having some difficulty in steering himself, but, on the whole, was doing remarkably well considering his short flipper-like wings, though his flying did perhaps look more like a sort of slow aerial tumble. A little above him was the bird cage, drifting down through the air as lightly as though it had been made of paper.

"Can't you get hold of the bannister?" called Alice as he flopped nearer. "It would be much easier for you to slide I'm sure."

The Poet, as if seriously considering this suggestion, scratched his head thoughtfully with his wing. This, of course, caused him to fall through the air in an alarmingly lopsided way for quite a distance. When

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he had steadied himself somewhat again, he shouted: "I'm really afraid that it's too long a jump from here, and besides, at the bottom you—" BUMP!!

The bannister coming to an abrupt end, Alice had landed in a surprisingly painless manner on a surface of very smooth ice, where, owing to the momentum gained in her long descent, she slid backward, in a sitting position, at great speed. * * * * As she started to slow down—after going for what seemed a tremendous distance—Alice heard a confused sound of cheering, and hoarse shouts of "Bravo!" "Wonderful!" and "Very well done, Miss!" growing nearer and nearer. And looking up, as she finally came to a stop, found herself in the midst of an excited group of curiously dressed animals and people, some of whom she had already met on her strange adventures and others whom she recognized only because she had seen their pictures in her "Mother Goose."

Most of the group had on skates of a very antiquated pattern, curled up in a large spiral at the toe. The manner of wearing these was in some cases decidedly unusual! Alice noticed particularly a Clown who wore his skates on his *hands*, and the "Old-Man-all-dressed-in-Leather" (Alice felt sure it was he, at any rate), a wrinkled old fellow with only *one* skate, but that an enormous one, strapped to a great shoe which he wore in place of a coat. This necessitated a very strange method of skating —as the illustration shows.

The Old-Man-all-dressed-in-Leather propelled himself forward as Alice rose to her feet after her long slide; he pinned to the quilt, which was still wrapped about her, a large,

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blue rosette from which hung a long end of ribbon bearing the word WINNER, exclaiming with a good deal of flourish, as he did so: "We compliment you, ma'am, on your most commendable performance and well-earned victory!"

The cheering, which had been hushed during the Old Man's little presentation speech, now broke out afresh and Alice, who had stood grinning sheepishly while the Old Man pinned on the rosette, could not help finally laughing outright at the absurdity of the whole situation; for, to cap the climax, the Poet, in his clumsy penguin disguise, had appeared hopping heavily toward them, rolling the rickety, clattering bird cage ahead of him across the ice.

As Alice stood watching his approach and laughing uncontrollably, a voice, which she recognized as Captain Tee Wee's, boomed out, "All entries for the second race this way!" No one seemed to pay the slightest attention, however, either to this announcement or to the approaching penguin, for the Fireman, whom Alice now noticed for the first time, had started a bonfire on the ice, a short distance away, and the crowd was hastening in that direction. A little bent old woman with an old fashioned "witch-broom" was industriously sweeping up the paper snowflakes that had fallen on the ice (it was a pile of these that the Fireman had lighted).

When Alice approached he stopped his work of tending fire and said in a rather apologetic way, as though he felt that he had been caught at a very childish pastime, "It's a real change, as you can easy understand, Miss, this *lighting* fires — me being on a vacation — for other times I'm mostly busy a-puttin' of 'em out; besides which I've arranged this here fire so's the smoke's all a-blowin' his way, in hopes to wake him up."

Here the Fireman pointed to a little wooden bench nearby. Upon this bench Alice was somehow not at all surprised to see the Milkman stretched out, still snoring loudly.

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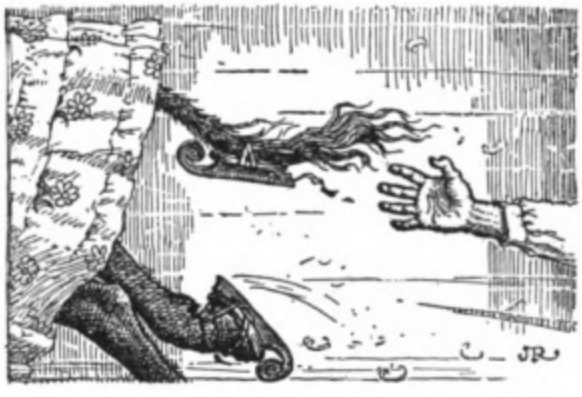
Though evidently greatly hampered by her skates, Moolygeezer started off with a series of great galloping leaps, and the most ridiculous chase that Alice had ever taken part in began.

By the time the crowd of strangely assorted skaters had gotten their wits together sufficiently to start after her, the ungainly creature



was crashing along over the ice at an amazing rate of speed, now running on all fours, and now coasting, as it were, on her hind legs, using her tail when she did this as a sort of rudder.

Most of the pursuers, in their frenzied efforts to get started quickly, had fallen down like the Milkman, whom Alice heard muttering wistfully, as he picked himself up and started after the others, "It's werry disappointing, werry."

Not wishing to be left alone, and quite interested, besides, to see how the chase would end, Alice ran along after the noisy crowd.

The Old-Man-dressed-all-in-Leather, notwithstanding his curiously attached single skate, led the pursuit by a good distance. ("Perhaps it's because, skating on his back in the way he does, he can't very well fall down," said Alice to herself.) Next came the Clown, who was going along very smoothly and gracefully on his hands, fanning himself industriously all the while with a large palm-leaf fan which he held somehow with one of his feet. Behind him

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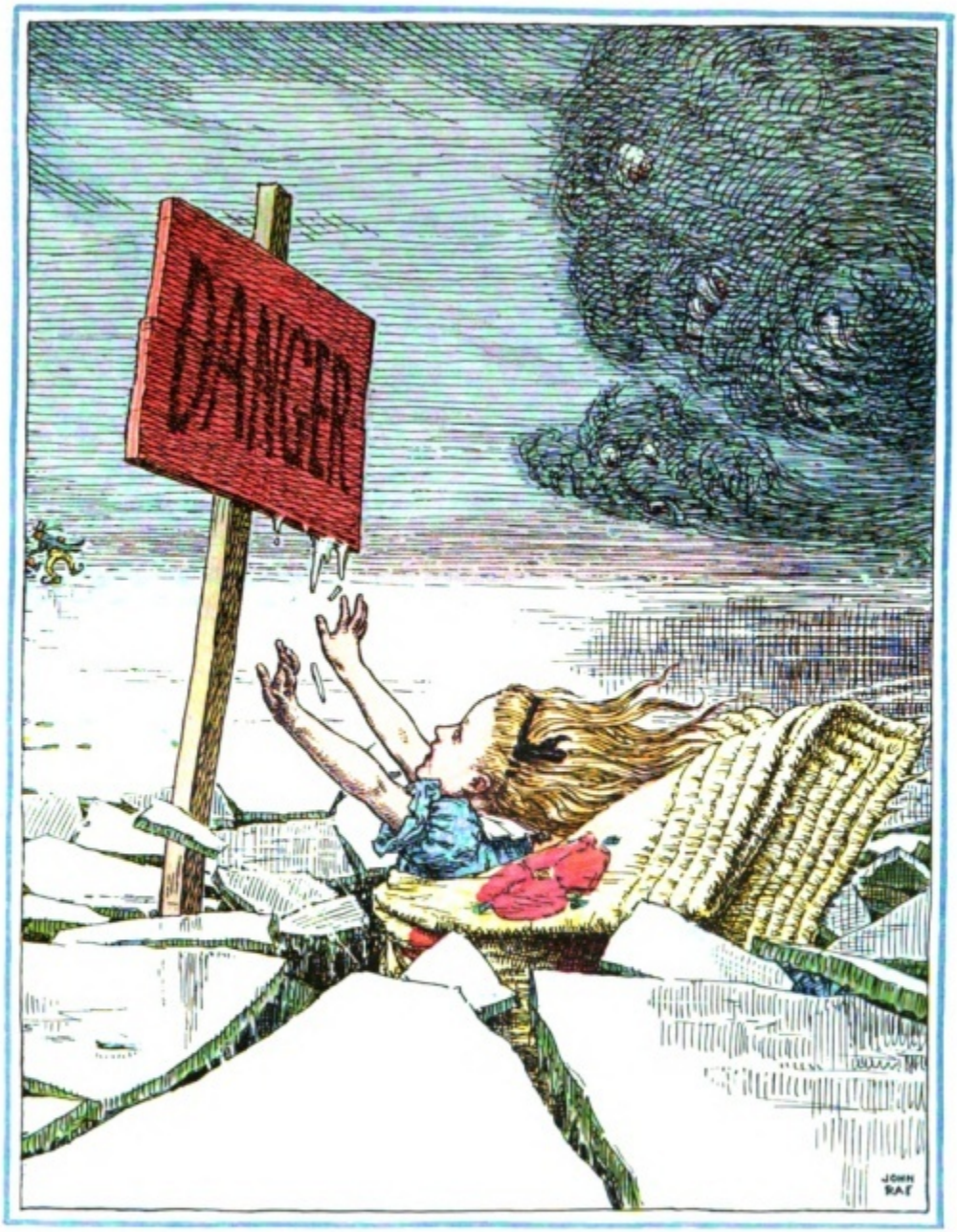

"Ice gave way beneath her with a curious tinkling crash" (page 119)

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"She carefully picked one of the bowl blossoms"
(page 123)

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handle of his umbrella, which was bright green like those standing beyond the moat.

Alice, who had by this time come to within a few rods of the palace, was about to call out to the Doctor, when without any warning the path she was on started, with sudden violence, to swing from side to side—like a hammock that has been given an unexpected jerk — and almost before she realized what was happening the poor child found herself sliding off into the slimy water, which luckily was only up to her knees at this point.

The path stopped swaying almost immediately and Alice scrambled back onto it and ran the remaining distance to the castle door, feeling somehow very angry and foolish at the same time.

The Doctor, who, in spite of his pounding and shouting, had heard the commotion of Alice's mishap, had dropped his umbrella and was already opening his little black medicine satchel when she arrived, panting. (She was much surprised to find that she still held the pipe and bowl; the contents of the bowl had changed mysteriously to what looked like cider in which a small crab was swimming about.)

"Just what happened to me a few minutes ago—just what happened to me, and a poor sort of joke, too, *I* say," the Doctor remarked without looking up. "Now where *did* I—ah, *here* it is!" he added, taking from his satchel a small blue bottle labeled, "FOR WET FEET." And before Alice had time to protest he clapped it to her lips and emptied the entire contents down her throat. Then

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putting the empty bottle back in his satchel he turned again to the door, only pausing for a moment to say very seriously, "You know, my child, there's *nothing* so dangerous as wet feet,—nothing so dangerous. Why, I once knew a centipede—" But here he resumed his battering at the door panels and the rest of the centipede story was drowned out by the din.

The medicine had apparently started to do its work immediately, for already Alice felt a very decided sensation of warmth in her feet, and a thick cloud of steam had begun to rise from them. This steaming continued violently for about half a minute, and when it stopped she found that her shoes and stockings were perfectly dry.

By this time the Doctor had broken his umbrella and was sitting in a discouraged way on the doorstep, absently swallowing, two or three at a time, some large red capsules from a box labeled "PARR'S PATIENCE PILLS—Take one every 24 hours."

Alice was about to remind him that he was taking what seemed to her entirely too many of these, when the door opened inward and the Doctor, who had been resting his back against it, fell back sprawling, colliding as he did so with an enormous snail—about four feet tall—which wore, in addition to the usual shell, a rather jaunty little red hat, with DOORMAN lettered upon it.

Through the open door Alice, to her astonishment looked, not into a dark hallway or a room, as she had expected to, but into what seemed to be a kind of formal garden, at the far end of which, behind a hedge of huge sunshades, she could now hear the sound of many voices. The castle, in fact, consisted of only one wall and was not much more substantial than a piece of scenery.

The strange doorman, with scarcely a glance at

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Alice or the sprawling Doctor, very deliberately picked up three or four of the pills, which had scattered in all directions, and began munching them with a sort of dreamy satisfaction.

The Doctor, who had risen to his feet, waited with great patience until the Snail had entirely satisfied his appetite for the pills and then said very meekly: "You will pardon my knocking, I feel sure—you see, I have an appointment with the King; but really you needn't have *hurried* so, my man."

The surprised Alice wondered whether the Doctor's suddenly acquired docility of manner was due to the great number of PARR'S PATIENCE PILLS he had eaten or to the rather threatening appearance of the Snail's long horns.

Without giving any evidence that he had even heard the Doctor's humble remarks, the Snail laboriously took from the lining of his hat a small, fat, leather-covered book entitled, "DOOR RULES, VOL. VII," and began thumbing over the pages. While he was doing this, Alice noticed that on the wall near the door hung a placard which read, "COURT JESTERS WANTED: APPLY BETWEEN 12 and 12, K. C."

At the end of a full minute the Snail cleared his throat and, with an air of solemn importance, read: "RULE 149. No one is allowed to pass in unless he leaves his umbrella at the door." He then languidly motioned to the Doctor to drop his umbrella and

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Alice had noticed an enormously fat, jolly looking man, dressed in bright scarlet, with a crown on his head and a scepter in his hand,—*King Cole*, without a doubt!

The King acted as umpire at first, bawling out rules, decisions and scores, in a voice choking with merriment; but as the ridiculous game proceeded he became more and more hilariously excited and finally leaped from his throne and joined the boisterous contestants, using his scepter as a racket.

The game now became more confused and noisy than ever, for King Cole, in spite of his great girth, proved to be as lively as a cricket. He bounced about here, there and everywhere, whacking at the flying oranges with loud whoops of joy, and turning a handspring now and then out of pure exuberance.

His contagious enthusiasm caused the others to redouble their exertions and they tore about the court, tripping over the moving boundary tapes and shouting with laughter at the clumsy efforts of some of their number to imitate the acrobatic agility of the King. The ludicrous attempts of one extremely "bandy-legged" man to turn a "cartwheel" caused Alice to almost go into hysterics.

Though most of the fans were broken by this time, neither side seemed to have the advantage. The players had begun throwing the oranges about at each other, and this kept Alice constantly dodging, as she was now standing very near the court in order to watch the game better.

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tion—a friendly chat with a *King* would be something she could boast about a little, afterward—so she asked in her very politest manner: "Please, Your Majesty, why don't the Soldiers sit down like the rest?"

The King had broken off a long piece of the pipe stem and through this he was contentedly sucking up the contents of the bowl.

Upon hearing Alice's question, he removed the pipe stem from his lips to say with a chuckle, "Oh, it's all right about *them*, my dear. You see, that's our standing army and naturally, a *standing* army *can't* sit down."

Most of the guests must have been familiar with this little joke of King Cole's, for many of them had started to laugh extravagantly as soon as Alice asked her question. This seemed to encourage the King, who waited until the applause had ceased and then continued complacently: "We suppose you've noticed, my dear, that our Soldiers are all armed with bellows? (A rather clever idea of our own, that.) Perhaps you can guess the reason, eh?" Then, without waiting more than a second or two for an answer from poor Alice—who was beginning to feel uncomfortably conspicuous and extremely stupid—the King said triumphantly: "It's so that without the expense of ammunition they can always return blow for blow."

At this, the Soldiers all suddenly raised their pairs of bellows and squeezed them in perfect unison, with a most surprising result!

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All of the party sitting in front of the "army" on the tennis lawn, with the exception of the ponderous Pansy, were rolled over and over by the blast, and there was a great deal of squealing and laughter and good natured scrambling about to recover lost hats and oranges.

King Cole fairly rocked with his enjoyment of this lively scene.

In the midst of all this uproar, Alice noticed coming through a nearby opening in the sunshade hedge, a roly-poly little old lady wearing a crown like the King's and a very soiled robe of light lavender velvet, trimmed with ermine. Behind her walked the Cook of the "Summersault Sally," carrying a plate piled high with slices of bread, and a tremendous jar labeled, HONEY. They had almost reached the throne by the time the King, who had caught sight of them when they first appeared, managed to control his mirth and shout to the boisterous guests on the lawn, "Silence—the Queen!!"

"Of course, we don't mean by that that she needs *silencing*, you understand," he whispered loudly, turning to Alice with a jolly wink; "that is, not just *now*, perhaps—though she *is* something of a talker, my dear."

The Queen, who had evidently overheard this last remark, seemed to take it as a great compliment. She hastily swallowed all she possibly could of a large bite she had just taken from a slice of bread and honey—which the cook had handed to her a moment before—and said coyly, with her mouth still half full: "You see, my child, he's a great flatterer. Oh yes, indeed, a most atrocious flatterer; but there *is* truth in what he just said about my being a wonderful talker.—Not so stingy with that honey, my good fellow" (this to the Cook.) "Why, once in my younger days, I remember talking from seven in the morning until ten in the evening to an

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admirer of mine—deaf he was—and never even——" Here the Queen took another prodigious bite of bread and honey, and though she kept right on talking, her mouth was so full that for a time one could only catch an almost unintelligible word now and then.

Alice soon gathered from gestures, however, that the Queen had changed the subject, and was now expressing extravagant admiration for the ridiculous, ragged old quilt which Alice still wore.

"I really don't need the quilt any longer, now that it has grown so much warmer," thought Alice, "and besides, Her Majesty really *does* need a large napkin of some sort." So she removed the gaudy covering, and was quite surprised to hear herself saying, "I beg of you to accept this trifling gift, for what Your Majesty admires is yours."

She vaguely remembered having read these words somewhere, but they seemed to fit the situation perfectly.

The Queen seemed quite overcome with astonished gratitude, for her jaws even stopped working and she stared at the quilt as though doubtful whether the offer of so rich a gift were meant seriously. Then suddenly—regardless of the bread and honey, with which both her hands and her mouth were now full—she threw her short arms about Alice and kissed her heartily on both cheeks!

"That's a great honor for you, my dear child, a great honor!" chuckled the King; then with another of his elaborate winks, added: "I suppose you'll be very much stuck up for a while." Then finishing his refreshment with a loud smacking of lips and a tremendous sigh of satisfaction, the rotund Monarch hurled the empty bowl over the hedge, and then placing his fore-fingers against his teeth he whistled ear-splittingly. ("Just the way our baker's boy does it," thought Alice.)

The King's whistle was apparently a signal, for immediately the cat-attendants appeared at the entrance to the court, dragging a small wheeled

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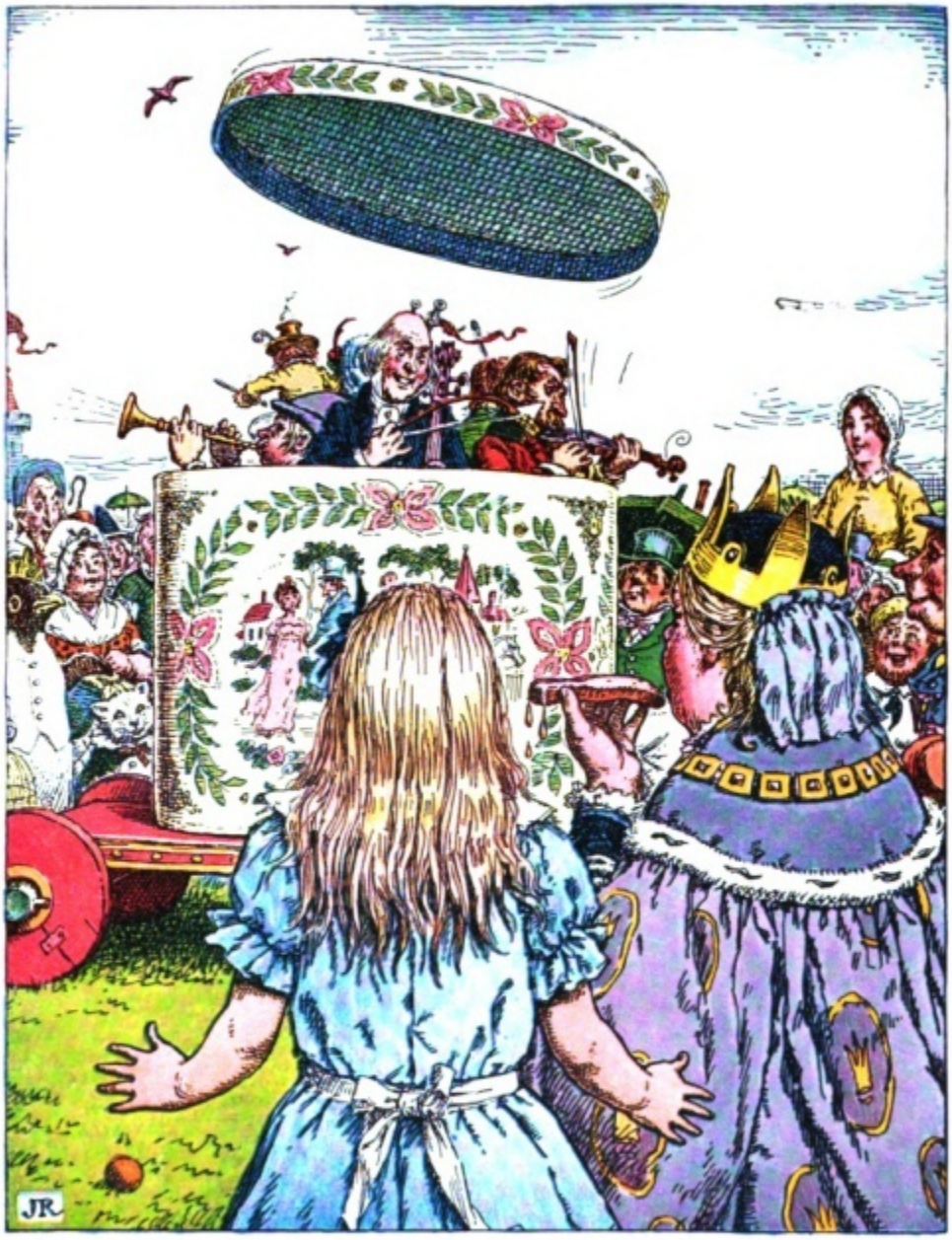

"Just then there was a sort of musical explosion"
(page 137)

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Before the game begins the "parts" are given out: that is, each player is given the name of one of the characters in a story of an adventurous stage coach trip. Excepting the *leader*—the one who recites or reads the "story"—the players are all seated. Whenever during the recitation of the adventures any one of the characters is mentioned, the player having that "part" rises from his seat, turns around twice and sits down again, the failure to do this calling for a forfeit. Whenever the word "*Stage Coach*" is heard, *all* rise and change seats, the "leader" trying in the general scramble to obtain a seat for himself. If the leader succeeds in this, the player left standing must go on with the story.

Alice took a seat among the others on one of the little stools and the Queen gave out the "parts," her haphazard distribution of these causing a great deal of merriment. To the gigantic Pansy, for example, she gave the part of the "Little Dog" (a traditional "Stage Coach" character) and to Jack Spratt that of ponderous "Captain Swordfish;" while Alice herself was old "Aunty Crusader," and many of the others had parts equally inappropriate.

When all were ready, the Queen started to read very rapidly from a dog-eared little book which she had taken from a pocket in her skirt, and the game began.

Alice happened to be sitting between the tremendous Pansy and the Old Man of Bombay. This proved to be rather an unfortunate thing for her, as the Old Man, growing very much excited as the game progressed, puffed harder

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at a rakish angle on his head.) "Curtain goes up on the opening scene," he went on, "showing a grocery. Enter Queen."

At this juncture the stage coach, which had evidently just then struck a very rough piece of road, began to bounce and bang along so noisily that Alice, who was sitting on the back seat, could catch only a few words now and then of what the Poet was saying. Then, too, the dust became so thick that at times she could scarcely see anything at all, so that afterwards the memory of the "rehearsal"

was always confused and unsatisfactory. She gathered, however, from the parts of the first act that she *did* hear and see, that the plot of the pantomime had to do principally with the chase of an enchanted Stilton cheese, which had escaped from the Queen's buttery. And this seemed to necessitate, on the part of the actors, a great deal of tripping over each other's feet and falling down and throwing things about.

"In the first place," said Alice, in telling her sister about it all afterward, "there was a good deal of quarreling about who should have the parts with the most *eating* in them, and when the "rehears-

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ing" finally started it was *very* much like the game of "Stage Coach" we had just been playing at King Cole's Court, for as each different character in the pantomime was mentioned by the Poet, the one taking that part would jump up and go through all sorts of strange antics; and the top of the stage was *so* crowded and we were rocking so from side to side, that quite often some one would be pushed off! Though I don't suppose the fall could have hurt any of them much, as their clothes were all padded out so."

After this sort of thing had been going on for about ten minutes the coach began to slow down, the noise of the band inside diminishing at the same time. Soon both the stage coach and the music stopped.

When the dust had settled, Alice, looking forward, was astonished to see that there were no horses hitched to their strange conveyance.

"It almost seems as though it must have been the music that kept us going," said Alice aloud to herself, "for when the band stopped the stage stopped."

The Doctor, who was now rummaging about in his little medicine satchel, overheard this remark and said without looking up: "Of course, a stage coach can't go without noise, silly. But *this'll* soon revive that band, I daresay," he added, "and then we can go on again." As he said this, he pulled out of his satchel a small bottle labeled, "EXCELO'S ELIXER FOR EXHAUSTED MUSICIANS." He then climbed down the little steps on the side of the coach, opened the door and stepped in.

Most of the actors had by this time jumped down to the ground and were peering anxiously in at the windows in a helpless sort of way.

"If *that* medicine works as quickly as the stuff he gave me for wet feet, we ought to be going again very shortly," said Alice to

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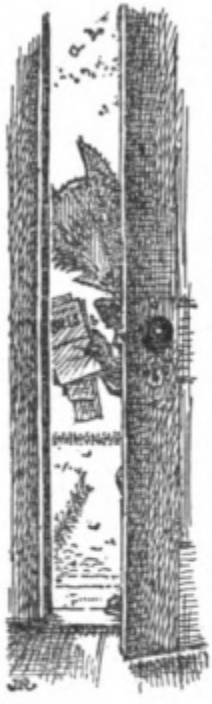
the way, my child," he added, lowering his voice, "when you came in did you happen to see anything of an old Wolf hanging around outside the door?"



"Well, sir," answered Alice a little timidly, "I didn't come in through the *door*, but through the window. You see, I fell off the stage coach and—"

"*I* understand," interrupted the Artist, genially; "*you just dropped in*, as one might say. And I see you came down *plump*, too," he added with a smiling glance at the child's strangely balloon-like clothes. "You're a bit puffed up still, I daresay, about having been on the stage. Though you needn't worry about that," he added consolingly, "you'll soon be quite your normal size again, I'm sure."

This seemed indeed to be so, for already her dress had shrunk perceptibly, and Alice was beginning to look more as usual. It still, however, gave her rather a ridiculously blowsy appearance and made her feel uncomfortably self-conscious, especially in the presence of an Artist, so she hastened to change the subject by asking, "Won't you please tell me more about that Wolf you're expecting. Is he a friend of yours?"

"I should say he *isn't* a friend of mine, child," whispered the Artist, glancing apprehensively toward the door. "In fact, he's my *worst* enemy. He's a bill collector, you see, and a most frightful nuisance he is, too, always knocking at the door just when I'm especially anxious not to be disturbed. But speaking of *nuisances*—Here he chuckled; evidently reminded of something which gave him great satisfaction—I *must* tell you about the crows. They used to be a worse nuisance to my neighbor, the Farmer, than that old Wolf is to me; but I've fixed *them!* Yesterday I painted a full length portrait of John O'Gudgeon, the Wildman, and set it up out

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there in the Farmer's field, as a scarecrow. Those thieving birds won't bother *him* again."

"But I saw some crows flying right by this window just a few seconds ago," put in Alice. "I noticed them particularly, for each one carried a little sack."

"That's just what I was coming to, my child," exclaimed the Artist delightedly. "You see they were so fearfully frightened by that scarecrow of mine that they're even bringing back the grain they stole last summer."

"It must have been a *wonderful* scarecrow," said Alice, laughing.

This complimentary remark evidently pleased the Artist tremendously, for he smiled beamingly and led Alice to the large easel—the one he had been working at before the interruption of her arrival.

Upon the easel was a drawing of a rather timorous young girl dressed in quaint, old fashioned costume and carrying a bucket in her hand. In the background were three or four dogwood trees.

"As I told you before," the Artist remarked affably, "I'm doing the pictures that are to go with the rhymes in the Poet's new book — 'More Mother Goose Rhymes,' I think he's going to call it. And this one that I've just finished goes with a verse that starts—

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"We keep a contrivance for waking one up by
setting one's pillow afire" (page 152)

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A guaranteed, smokeless clay pipe,
But better than *that*,—a fine, self-raising hat,
And a pattern for cutting up tripe!
Don't fail, please, to notice upon the third shelf,
Right next to the yarn-spinning top,
A wonderful thing I invented myself,
A new *silent soup spoon!* So stop,
Step in for a minute or two and look 'round,
Our wares we feel sure will surprise,
For we've everything here that is *usefully queer.*
But you've heard of that "*word to the wise*"—

As Alice finished reading, a feeling of homesickness came over her, for she was reminded of the many times she had read Mother Goose verses to her pets in the garden at home. "If only I had my dear, dear Pussikins and Patsy here right now," she sighed piteously. Curiously enough, just as she said this, a sudden breeze from the open window disturbed a pile of papers lying on a small stand near which Alice was sitting, and there drifted down to the floor, directly in front of her, a very pretty sketch of two sleeping kittens.

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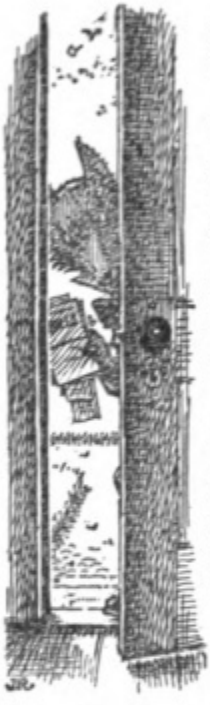

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A guaranteed, smokeless clay pipe,
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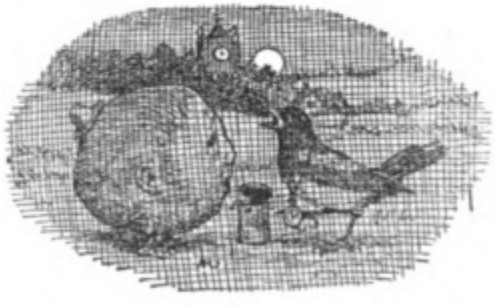
"I can pretend *these* are Pussikins and Patsy," said Alice, trying hard to be cheerful, "and it will be really quite easy, too, for I never *saw* such a life-like picture."

The Artist, who was tacking a fresh sheet of paper to the drawing board on his easel, overheard this and said, complacently: "It *is* life-like, if I *do* say so. Why, would you believe it, since I drew that picture there hasn't been a mouse in the place, and they used to take my bread and cheese off the shelf, right from under my very nose."

"Perhaps," suggested Alice, smiling at her own idea, "if you'd paint a picture of a large, full grown cat, a real *mouser* like our Thomas, the mice would bring back the bread and cheese just as the crows brought back the corn."

"That's a really *fine* idea, my child," said the Artist, thoughtfully, "and I'll try it just as soon as I get these drawings done."

Alice now set the sketch of the sleeping kittens up against the leg of a nearby stool, and picking up another of the long sheets, she assumed a serious air and said: "Now, children, I want you to be *very* attentive. The title of *this* is, 'An Explanation.'" She then very gravely read the following:



The Early Bird, at two A. M., once met the Rolling Stone:
(I don't exactly envy them their working hours, I own.)

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The dancers had disappeared; the Artist was putting away his brushes and—but, no—it was *not* the Artist, it was her own sister, who was saying as she folded up her paintbox, "Wake up, dear. Why, you've been asleep for almost a whole hour."

"*W'ho'd ever even fancy that so many unusual things could happen in less than an hour?*" said Alice slowly, sitting up and rubbing the sleep out of her eyes.

And that was the end of the story in the book that Betsy found in the attic.

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