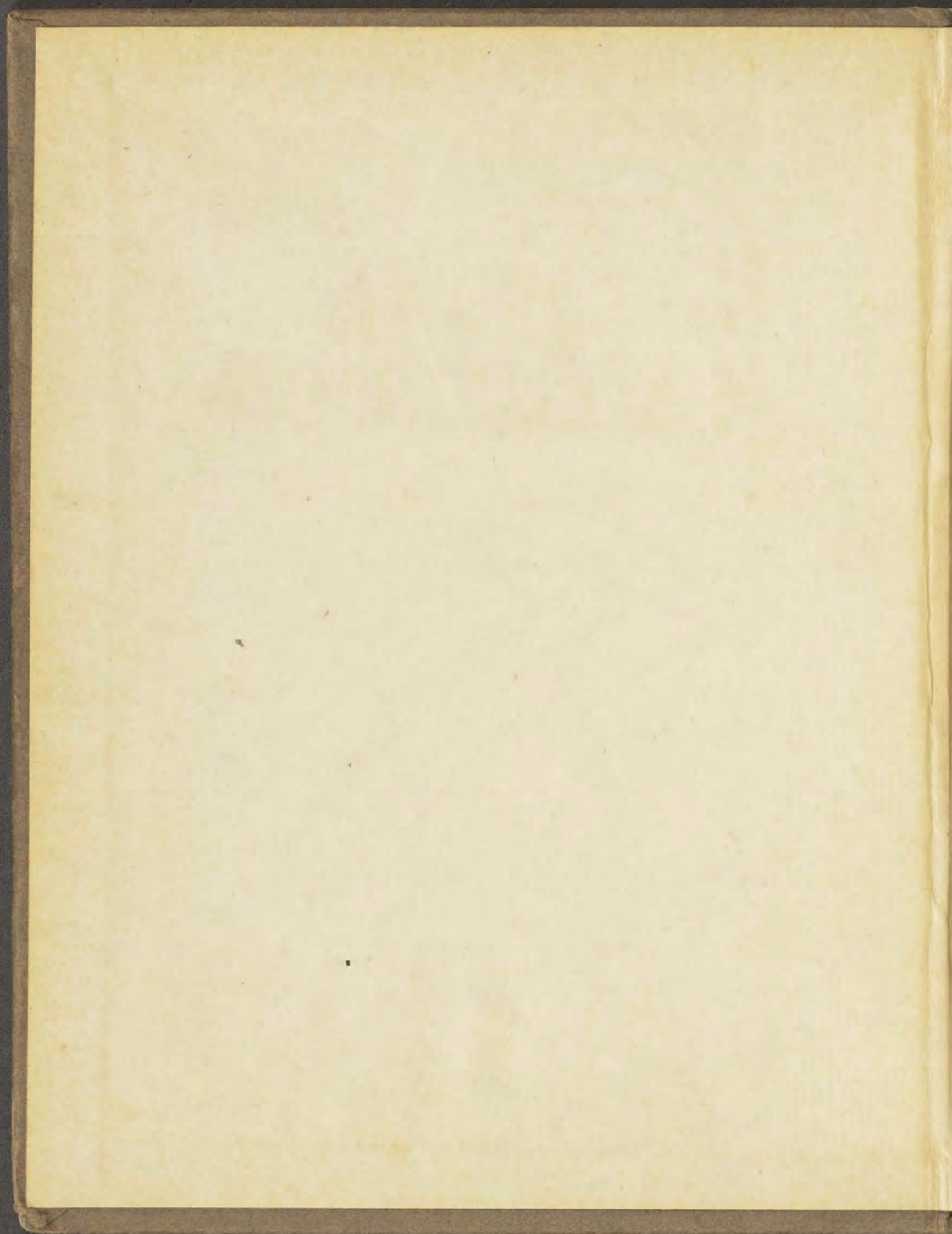


JEWEL
STORY BOOK



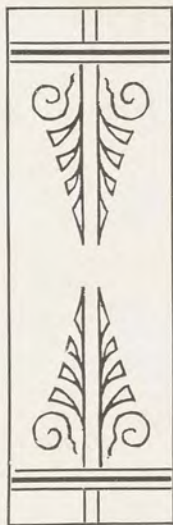




Where the dead bird had been was a pile of flashing,
glowing, red jewels

(Page 60)

JEWEL
STORY BOOK



By

FLORENCE A. EVANS

Author of "Alice in Pictureland," "The
Tale of Pierrot and His Cat,"
etc., etc., etc.

Illustrated

By

W. H. FRY.

AKRON, OHIO

THE SAALFIELD PUB. COMPANY

CHICAGO

1910

NEW YORK

COPYRIGHT, 1903,

BY

The Saalfield Publishing Company

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE JEWEL STORY BOOK.....	7
THE PEARL'S STORY.....	13
THE CAT'S-EYE'S STORY.....	18
THE EMERALD'S STORY.....	24
THE AMBER BEADS' STORY.....	29
THE TURQUOISE'S STORY.....	34
THE CORAL HAND'S STORY.....	38
THE MOONSTONE'S STORY.....	43
THE CAIRNGORM'S STORY.....	48
THE RUBY'S STORY.....	55
THE OPAL'S STORY.....	61
THE SAPPHIRE'S STORY.....	69
THE AMETHYST'S STORY.....	76
THE TOPAZ'S STORY.....	80
THE DIAMOND'S STORY.....	86
THE CARNELIAN SEAL'S STORY.....	93
THE GARNET'S STORY.....	97



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

- Where the dead bird had been was a pile of flashing, glowing, red jewels *Frontispiece*
- Found by the searching Indians who had vainly looked for Wahneto through the long hours of the night 36
- “If you do not hold your tongue and leave me in peace, I will turn you into a dandelion-top” 46
- The Prince set out, mounted on the white elephant and accompanied by the Siamese cat 72



THE JEWEL STORY BOOK.



DOROTHY could not remember the time when she had not thought her beautiful young mother the sweetest and loveliest lady in the world; indeed, she always seemed as far above and superior to the ordinary run of people as an angel, so the child thought on the rather rare occasions when she saw her. Not that Dorothy's mother did not care for her, quite the contrary, but her husband was very fond of society and insisted that his beautiful wife should accompany him wherever he went, instead of staying home with her little girl as, to tell the truth, she would often have liked to do. And so it was that in the mornings, while her mother was still asleep after a late return from some ball or reception, Dorothy would go off to school, and when she came home in the afternoon her mother would be away at an afternoon tea, or a matinée, or on an endless round of calls that never seemed finished; after this would come dinner, where there was generally company (in which case Dorothy would eat her dinner alone in her own little sitting-room); and then her parents would dress to go to the reception, ball, or opera where they were due. To be sure Dorothy's mother usually came in to say good night before starting on her round

of pleasure, and let her little daughter see her in her beautiful evening gown and with her flashing jewels. She could rarely stay longer than a moment, but it was to this moment that the child looked forward all day, for she fairly idolized her lovely mother.

Perhaps it occurred to this fair lady that she might see more of Dorothy, for one evening, when for a wonder there was no company and the little girl had dined with her parents, her mother said:

“Would you care to come up stairs with me, dear, and see Thérèse dress me? It must be rather stupid for you to be alone so much of the time, and that will give us a chance to talk to one another.”

Would she care to? Dorothy's eyes sparkled and her cheeks flushed at the very thought, and the minute dessert was over, she ran up stairs joyfully, two steps at a time, to where Thérèse, her maid as well as her mother's, was waiting.

The little girl hovered around in delight while her mother's beautiful, heavy black hair, which reached almost to the floor when she was seated, was brushed out and arranged. Then the gown of filmy white lace and the dainty slippers and stockings to match were brought out and donned, after which, last but not least, the great, wrought silver jewel box was produced and a selection made of its contents. Dorothy had never before seen the whole collection of her mother's costly ornaments, and the lady, seeing the pleasure and interest with which the child examined them, good-naturedly said:

"Suppose you stay here and look these over after I am gone. It may amuse you and Thérèse can put them away after you finish with them."

"Oh, may I? How perfectly lovely!" cried Dorothy, delightedly.

But now her father came up to see if his wife was ready to start and the little girl was soon left alone, for Thérèse, who had a visitor awaiting her in the servants' sitting-room, made some excuse and went down stairs soon after her mistress left the house.

Dorothy, however, did not in the least mind being left alone. She was having a royally good time—royal in more senses of the word than one for, with a diamond tiara on her head and with her neck, wrists and fingers sparkling with precious stones, she looked quite like some radiant little princess. She had inherited her mother's great gray eyes and heavy black hair and bid fair to resemble her much when she reached womanhood. But at present, as she stood before the mirror and gazed at her reflection, it never occurred to her that she was pretty, all her thoughts were for the jewels, none for herself. And when, some time later, she removed the ornaments and, after putting them back in the box, sat looking at them, she remembered that she had somewhere read (for she was a great reader for her age and seldom happier than when absorbed in a book) that every precious stone, if it could tell its story, would have an interesting tale to relate.

"Just think what a lot of stories all the pretty things in this box would be able to tell me if they could talk,"

she said to herself; "and how I wish that they could. I've done my lessons for to-morrow and I've read all of my story books, and it's a long while before bedtime and I've nothing to do."

"Poor, little, lonely, girl!" said a voice behind her.

Dorothy turned, thinking that Thérèse might have come into the room, but she could see no one.

"There is no use in your looking, you cannot see me," continued the voice.

"Where are you, and what are you?" asked Dorothy, rather anxiously, for it made her feel quite nervous to be holding a conversation with a person whom she could not see and did not know.

"I am an Invisible Sprite," replied the voice.

"What?" said Dorothy, who had never heard of such a being.

"An Invisible Sprite, and you needn't think, just because you never chanced to hear of one before, that there is no such thing."

"But I never said anything—" began Dorothy.

"No, perhaps not, but you thought it," replied the Sprite, in an injured tone.

"Dear me, how careful I shall have to be if I can't even think," said Dorothy to herself; but aloud she only remarked, "I didn't mean to and I will try not to do it again."

"That's right," said the Invisible Sprite, in a mollified tone. "But I felt sure that you were lonely to-night and have come here to amuse you; what shall we do? I can grant you a wish if you like."

"Oh, can you?" cried Dorothy, her face quite beaming with delight. "Well," as her eyes fell upon the box of costly ornaments, "I wish that my mother's jewels would tell me some stories. I'm sure that they must know some good ones."

"A very good wish, indeed, and I'm sure that you will not regret it," said the Sprite.

"But can you truly grant it?" asked Dorothy, who could not quite believe that this wonderful thing was happening to her.

"Now if you're going to begin by disbelieving things, I shall have nothing more to do with you. Good-bye," said the Invisible Sprite, and his voice showed that he was deeply offended.

"Oh, really, Invisible Sprite, I do believe it, truly I do!" cried Dorothy in alarm.

"Very well, then, but you must be careful of what you say," warned the Sprite.

"When is the wish going to begin?" asked the little girl, when she knew by his voice that the Sprite was quite close to her again; in fact it sounded, though of course she couldn't be certain, as though he were sitting on the mantelpiece.

"Right away, if you like," replied the Sprite; "you have only to pick out the jewel which you wish to hear first, and I will attend to the rest."

For several minutes Dorothy hung over the wonderful box, undecided which to choose, but at length she picked out a ring containing a single enormous pearl.

“I should like to have this pearl tell me a story about some of the things under the sea,” she said, holding the ring in her hand and turning it this way and that to admire the lustre of the beautiful gem.

“That’s a good choice, just wait a moment and everything will be ready,” said the Sprite, and then Dorothy heard him murmur to himself a couplet that sounded like

“Box, box,
Teddi awfoo nox!”

THE PEARL'S STORY.



IF I understood you aright, you want to hear a story about the regions under the sea." remarked the pearl.

Dorothy started so that she very nearly dropped the ring.

"If you please," she said, politely, as soon as she had recovered from her astonishment; "I have read so much of the wonderful things that divers see when they go down into the ocean that I'm sure I'd be very much interested to hear about it from some one who has really lived there."

"Divers!" exclaimed the pearl, in an agitated voice. "I must beg that you will not mention the odious, cruel creatures to me. Had it not been for one of them, I should still have been reposing peacefully in my parent oyster at the bottom of the ocean and growing larger and larger all the time. I hold them responsible for all the unhappiness I have experienced since they tore me from my youthful home, and their very name so distresses me that I become quite dim when they are mentioned."

Dorothy looked closely at the pearl and saw that its beautiful lustre really did appear to be fading away.

"Excuse me," she said, hastily, "and I will try not to mention such a painful subject again. But I should be very glad if you would tell me something about the depths of the ocean."

"I might tell you the story of how the jellyfish came to be jelly," said the pearl, thoughtfully.

"I'm sure that I should like very much to hear it," responded the little girl; "please go on."

"Many, many centuries ago," began the pearl, "all the creatures in the sea were ruled over by one King, a Great Shark, and I must say that he made a very good King, too, for he kept his subjects from quarreling by the very simple expedient of devouring them when they appeared before him to complain of one another. The inhabitants of the ocean soon found this out, and it made them very careful how they appeared in court, I can tell you.

"Well, one fair day the Queen of the Parrotfish, when she came down to breakfast, found that the meal was not ready and that the jellyfish, which she kept to wait on her, were nowhere to be seen. She swam quickly through the palace but found no sign of them, so finally she opened a window and called out to a periwinkle who was at work in the garden:

"Pray tell me, have you seen any of my jellyfish this morning? None of them are in the palace and I cannot imagine what has become of them."

"Yes, Your Majesty," said the periwinkle, reluctantly; "I have seen them. But if you don't mind, I'd rather not say anything about them."

“‘I do mind; tell me at once and don't be foolish about it,’ said the Queen, sternly. ‘I can't wait for my breakfast all day, and if there is no one to get it for me, I shall have to cook it myself.’

“So the periwinkle, thus pressed, at last told all that he knew—that the jellyfish (who had been given their name because of their inordinate fondness for that delicacy) had the evening before, after the Queen had gone to bed, given a party to a number of their relatives, at which they had consumed large quantities of jelly, in fact all that was to be found in the palace. And late that night the Queen's servants had been taken violently ill and, while they lay groaning in their beds, not daring to call for help lest their royal mistress should discover their misdeeds, there had appeared at a window which they had opened to allow the entrance of fresh water, a gigantic sea-spider, a servant of the Great Shark, who had haled them away, whether to be devoured by his master or thrown into a dungeon, the periwinkle knew not.

“The Queen was deeply affected when she heard this narrative, both because she mourned the loss of her entire winter stock of jelly, and because her favorite maid, the only one who knew how to arrange her fins in the most becoming manner, was among the missing ones. But there was no help for it at present; she went into the kitchen and prepared her morning meal and then sat down to think over the situation and try to devise some plan which should procure the return of her vanished servants. She herself was deeply afraid of the Great Shark, but she knew

that he respected her as a Queen and would dare do her no real harm, so she at last made up her mind to go to him in person and beg for the release of her servants, that is, if, as she feared, he had not already eaten them.

“So she arranged her fins and scales as nicely as she could, though she was not used to doing it herself and, wearing a pleasant smile which displayed her fine front teeth to advantage, so as to hide her alarm at the errand she had undertaken, she set out for the palace of the Great Shark. As she drew near, she met many sea-spiders, the chosen servants of the King, who looked at her askance with their ugly goggle eyes, but when they saw the golden crown, which she always wore upon her head to show her rank, they let her pass unquestioned.

“When the Great Shark saw the Queen of the Parrotfish, still broadly smiling, enter the palace and swim gracefully to the steps of his throne, he was greatly astonished for it was not thus that he was accustomed to have his subjects appear before him. And still more was he surprised when the intrepid lady coolly demanded the return of her servants, urging as a reason for her request that she found it impossible to curl her own fins so that they looked like those of a Queen, and that she must and would have her own maid back!

“The King acknowledged, somewhat sheepishly, that he had already had some of the erring jellyfish for breakfast and did not know whether the Queen’s maid had been among them or not. But he chivalrously added that, as

he did not like their taste, he would as an especial favor return the remainder to their mistress.

"At this the Queen was greatly rejoiced, and the Great Shark at once had the rest of the jellyfish brought up and given to her; whereupon she thanked him profusely and at once set off for her own domains with her recovered retainers, among whom, to her deep joy, proved to be the maid whose loss had caused her such distress.

"But she found that one curious thing had happened: the jellyfish had been so alarmed at their captivity and the fate of their companions who had been devoured by the Great Shark, that they had become quite soft and shaky, like the jelly of which they had been so fond, and trembled at the slightest motion of anything near them; whereas, before their dreadful experience they had been hard and firm and afraid of nothing."

"Did they ever eat any more jelly?" asked Dorothy, who had been greatly interested in the pearl's story.

"No," said the pearl, "they felt that it had been the cause of all of their trouble and they never touched it again."

"Which jewel do you want to tell the next story?" asked the Invisible Sprite, as the little girl replaced the pearl ring.

Dorothy picked out a handsome brooch containing a fine cat's-eye surrounded by diamonds.

"I should like this large stone in the middle to speak next," she announced.

THE CAT'S-EYE'S STORY.



BEFORE I tell you my story," said the cat's-eye, "I shall have to ask you two things: do you know where Ceylon is, and have you ever heard of a yakkoe?"

"I know where Ceylon is," responded Dorothy; "it is an island and is not very far from India; we have just had it in geography. As for the other thing, a yak —, I don't think I ever heard of one."

"In Ceylon, where I came from," said the cat's-eye, "the people believe that evil spirits which they call yakkoes live in all old, partly decayed trees, and you may be very sure that they are careful to cut down any tree near their dwellings which they see to be dying. My story has something to do with these yakkoes, so I thought I had better explain a little about them before I commenced; it is always well to understand things."

"Especially at school," remarked the Invisible Sprite.

"Won't you please go on?" asked Dorothy, for she feared that this last speech was for her benefit.

"I am, you must know, a very ancient stone, indeed," began the cat's-eye, proudly, "and I intend to relate my early history to you. The first thing that I remember, centuries ago, was that I was lying with a vast number of other

precious stones, some of my own kind but the greater part of an entirely different sort, among the sands of the bank of a pleasant stream. It was a beautiful day; the sky was blue, the foliage a rich green and overhead the tall, graceful palm-trees waved languidly in the gentle, balmy breeze which would have wafted the odor of costly spices to us had we been fortunate enough to possess noses. All was peace and everything seemed happy, and I thought to myself that if this was life, it was, indeed, worth while to be alive.

“But my delightful existence in that favored spot did not last long. Suddenly a brown, skinny hand reached out from behind some bushes and, selecting me from among all the bright and glittering gems which lay strewn about, bore me away from all that I had ever known. Of course, I tried to slip from the creature’s grasp, but he only held me tighter, and soon we had gone such a distance that my curiosity was aroused and I was quite willing to find out where our destination was to be. As I was carried along, I peeped through the fingers of the hand in which I was held captive and saw that the person who had me was a brown-skinned man, rather scantily clothed, whose hair was neatly done up in a knob behind and securely fastened with a large tortoise-shell comb.

“I had no time for further observations, for we now entered a building which to me, who had never seen anything of the kind before, appeared enormous. At first it was so dark that I was practically blind, but I soon became accustomed to the gloom of the place and then I

saw that one entire end of the large room of which the interior consisted was occupied by an enormous idol. For a time, I thought that the great image was alive, and I shook to my very centre when my finder placed me in one of its huge hands. But I soon found that I had nothing to fear; the hand never stirred and so I knew it could not be alive.

“For how many years I lay in that outstretched palm, I never knew. Sometimes for a long period I would see no one but the priests (of whom my finder was one) who ministered to the idol, and in the long, tropical evenings when they sat in the temple and related long and wonderful stories of the evil spirits which inhabited the island, I listened with great interest, and it was then that I learned all about the yakkoes. On the other hand, when a great feast day in their religion came, the people would flock to the temple in great multitudes, kiss the foot of the great idol, offer up their prayers to it and then go away, evidently feeling that they had done their duty.

“As I said before, a long period of time passed away, and I had become well content with my life when once more there came a change. One evening, when the priests went down to the river to bathe, for cleanliness was a great part of their creed, leaving the door of the temple open, I gave myself up to a period of solitary contemplation, for I knew that they would probably be absent for a long time. But all at once my reverie was interrupted by the entrance of a curious creature which, though brown like the priests, was covered with hair and had a tail!

“After my first startled glance at this strange being, there remained no doubt in my mind—it agreed very well with the descriptions I had so often heard of the yakkoes, and it must be one. I at once began to feel nervous and uneasy, for the tales that had been told in my hearing of those evil spirits left me no doubt that it would do some mischief. I looked longingly through the open door; I could see the priests sporting in the river, but they were far away and never even glanced toward the temple.

“At first the creature seemed rather alarmed by its surroundings, but it soon ceased to show any signs of fear. Quickly it advanced to the idol and was even impious enough to clamber up over it and perch upon its head, letting its long tail hang down directly over the image’s face. In this position, it speedily caught sight of me, and immediately swung itself down and took possession of me! My horror at finding myself in the very grasp of one of the terrible yakkoes was so great that I must have lost consciousness, for the next thing that I remember was finding myself, still in the creature’s disgusting paw, snugly ensconced in the hollow trunk of a tree which grew near the temple and which, from the outside, would never have been suspected of being decayed. In one place, however, there was a crack in the bark, and through this I very soon saw my old friends, the priests, still ignorant of what had taken place in their absence, troop up from the river and enter the temple.

“But it was not long before they discovered that some

intruder had been there and that their sacred stone, myself (for in that land, cat's-eyes are supposed to possess magic virtues), had been made way with. Their lamentations were loud when this distressing fact became evident, and I, from the yakkoes' stronghold, would, had it been possible, have added my voice to theirs.

"Not content with admiring me himself, the yakkoe who had stolen me called countless others of his kind to come and admire his treasure, and I was passed from hand to hand (or rather paw to paw) and examined and chattered over till my very surface turned cold. Bitterly did I now regret the life in the temple which had often seemed so stupid to me, and vainly did I wish myself back with my friends the priests.

"But the yakkoes, who appeared unable to interest themselves long in any one thing, soon tired of me, and one of them impatiently cast me down into the hollow of the tree among the roots and amid the dust and ruin of ages. And then, suddenly, the whole band of yakkoes went away, and I never saw them again.

"For long years I lay there; the time passed slowly and, having nothing else to do, I acquired the habit of taking long naps. One day, after I had long since given up all hope of ever being released, I was rudely awakened by the falling of the hollow tree!

"For a time, I was almost blinded by the sudden rush of light, but I soon became accustomed to it and looked around. What changes had taken place during my long imprisonment! Where the temple had been there now

stood a wooden house with broad verandas, and, as I gazed in surprise, a group of people whose hands and faces were white issued from the door and came toward me. I could not understand the strange language which they spoke, but they were apparently discussing the fall of the tree.

“As they stood around the broken roots, one of them caught sight of me and picked me up. I was a valuable stone, so he soon sold me, and I passed through many hands until I at length became the property of your mother.”

As the cat's-eye ceased, a peal of merry laughter rang through the room.

“You foolish cat's-eye!” cried the Invisible Sprite. “Don't you know that your yakkoes were nothing but monkeys?”

“I—I never thought of that,” gasped the jewel.

“I should have thought of it at once,” said the Invisible Sprite, loftily; “that is what comes of being superstitious. Well, your turn is over. Which shall come next, Dorothy?” and he popped the brooch back into the box before the cat's-eye could answer him.

“These emeralds are very beautiful,” said Dorothy, picking up a handsome necklace; “I should like to hear what they have to tell.”

THE EMERALD'S STORY.



MOVE that the large emerald which forms the pendant shall tell the story," suggested one of the smaller stones and, as the others quite agreed with it, the gem which had been chosen as spokesman sparkled brightly in the gas light with pleasure, and at once began its recital.

"I do not know where all of my companions came from," it said, "but I was found in that part of South America now known as Colombia, near the borders of Ecuador. That was long ago, when the fierce race of kings known as the Incas ruled over Peru and, under their warlike sway, the borders of the country extended very nearly to the Isthmus of Panama, so that, you see, I am really a Peruvian.

"Not far from my early home rose a vast mountain peak from which, at irregular intervals, were cast showers of ashes and molten rock. Far down in the depths of this mountain, so tradition said, were imprisoned the former inhabitants of the land who were forced by virtue of a wonderful charm held by the Incas, to spend their time through all ages in mining and smelting precious gems and minerals for the conquering race. It is thus, we are

told, that the enormous treasures which excited the cupidity of the Spaniards were brought together, and the smoke from the volcano was said to be from their underground refining furnaces.

“Once a little Peruvian girl, hearing from her elders the story of the endless captivity and labor of the imprisoned miners, felt a stir of pity at their forlorn condition and made up her mind that she would pay a visit to them and see if nothing could be done to lessen their sufferings. So she picked as large a basketful of luscious fruits as she felt able to carry, for she was sure that their juicy ripeness could not fail to be grateful to the workers in those regions of great heat, and, without telling any one of her intention, set off on her errand of mercy.

“It was in the cool of the evening when she started, and she had no difficulty in finding her way to the volcano which was visible for miles around, for a glow from its inner fires was always to be seen at its apex. The child had no intention of scaling the mountain, such an undertaking would be far beyond her strength, but she knew that there were many crevices among the rocks, through which entrance to the central regions might be gained, and she had long had her eye upon one particularly promising ravine which she soon came to and entered without experiencing the slightest feeling of alarm.

“It was as she had thought; the passage led almost directly into the mountain, and she soon smelled smoke

and saw the glow of a fire far ahead of her. It was growing unpleasantly warm but she did not heed that fact, save as it deepened her pity for the unhappy creatures who were compelled to live and toil always in that stifling atmosphere, and she hastened forward, delighted to think of the relief which she would be able to give to a few, at least, of the miserable workers.

“As she drew nearer, she plainly saw the captives at work, and then she paused and, for the first time, felt some misgivings, so repulsively ugly were the hairy, deformed, fire-scorched beings she had come to succor. All around the great lake of fire in the centre of the cavern were strewn huge bricks and bars of precious metals, and everywhere could be seen gleaming heaps of precious stones, but so alarmed was the child by the appearance of the guardians of this great treasure that she hesitated and might in her fear have noiselessly retraced her steps, had not her basket of fruit accidentally slipped from her arm and allowed its contents to roll over the floor in all directions.

“And now escape was no longer possible for, dropping the great ladles in which they had been melting ore and the picks with which they had been mining it, the hideous creatures closed in on her from all sides, filled with wonder and curiosity, for never before had an inhabitant of the upper world (with the exception of the taskmaster who came at regular intervals to remove the treasure they had amassed) visited their dismal prison. Seen close by, they were even more terrifying than they had appeared

at a distance, for their coarse, matted hair hung far down their backs, their teeth protruded from their great mouths like huge tusks, constant exposure to the heat had hardened and blackened their skins till it was like leather, and their eyes gleamed horribly upon the poor little girl who stood quaking before them and bitterly repenting of having ever ventured into the stronghold of those monsters.

“But it was not long before their attention was diverted from the child; one of them caught sight of the scattered fruit and, with a howl like that of a wild beast, sprang upon and began devouring it like a starving person; and as soon as his comrades saw what he was about, they followed his example while the poor little girl whose sympathy for their fate had brought her to this pass, flattened herself against the wall and tried to make herself as small as possible, hoping that the dreadful creatures might forget all about her. But the hope was a vain one; as soon as the last fragment of fruit had disappeared, the one who seemed to be the leader approached and spoke to the trembling child.

“‘Who are you, and what do you here where no intruder’s foot has trodden for untold centuries?’ he demanded, in a hoarse voice.

“And the little girl, though she still shook with fright, told all the story of how sorry she had been for them and how she had made her way to that dismal place in the hope of helping them. When she had finished her tale, the creatures began to weep for joy, and the leader, as well as he could for his emotions, told the

astonished child that she had broken the spell which had kept them so long in bondage and which was only to endure until some human being should show them a kindness. As a reward for her goodness, he filled the basket which had held the fruit as full as he could pile it with precious stones of all sorts and then, after leading the child to the entrance of the cleft in the mountain, he and his followers fled away into the forest and were never seen more. And it is a fact that, a few days later, smoke ceased to issue from the crater of the mountain, showing that the fire within, having no one to attend to it, had become extinguished. I was one of the jewels given to the kind-hearted child, and that is how I came to know the story."

"But you said that you came from near there," said Dorothy, in a puzzled tone.

"So I did," replied the emerald, promptly; "but I was found by the imprisoned miners who brought me to their cavern."

"It is time for you to pick out another jewel," interrupted the Invisible Sprite.

"I should like to hear what these can tell," said Dorothy, picking up a very ancient-looking and discolored string of amber beads and putting the emerald necklace back in its place.

THE AMBER BEADS' STORY.



IN A far off land on the other side of the world," began the amber beads, without waiting for any formal introduction to their story, and all speaking at once so that their voices in chorus had a faint, rippling sound, "there once lived a race of people who worshipped the sun, for they justly felt that to the power of that shining orb were due many of the blessings which they enjoyed in the delightful climate of their land.

"Now, according to the legends of this people, the sun at dawn of each day entered a chariot drawn by a pair of fiery steeds and made a royal progress through the heavens from the east to the west, which latter place he always reached just at nightfall. Then he would rest during the night and the next day be up bright and early to perform the same journey over again. And so skillfully did he guide his chariot, always at the same distance above the world, that the land prospered and all went well in heaven and earth.

"The sun was the father of many children but there is only one, a handsome, though rash and daring youth, any account of whom is at all necessary to this story. This handsome young fellow one day had a dispute with

a comrade, in which the latter offered to lay a wager that the former would not be permitted by his father to drive the chariot of the sun for a single day.

“This naturally made the young man very angry and, hastening to his father, who had now approached the western limit of his journey, he begged that august personage most earnestly that if he really loved him, he would grant him a single request. And the sun, though rather surprised by the seriousness of the plea, swore by a sacred river of the land that he would do so, without fail.

“The youth hesitated, for he knew that his desire was a far bolder one than his father had had any idea of, but at length he told it: he wished to drive the chariot of the sun for a single day. At hearing this, the sun was greatly alarmed; he had given his word and must keep his promise, yet he feared that some danger would befall his son in an undertaking of such magnitude. He himself had, at times, found it difficult enough to control his steeds, and he was sure that the youth would mismanage them, and who could tell what would happen to the rash driver or the unfortunate earth if the chariot of the sun should leave its course? Bitterly enough did he repent his thoughtless granting of his son’s request without first learning what it was, but still he could not break his word.

“All expostulation was fruitless and seemed only to make the youth more desirous of undertaking the adventure, so at last his father instructed him in the manage-

ment of the steeds and, with grave warnings, handed over to him the chariot of the sun for a single day.

"All went well at the start and the youth began to think that his father's anxiety had been quite needless. But his unusual position, high in the heavens, where he could see the whole world at a glance, was so novel that the young driver soon forgot all of the sun's instructions and let the steeds which drew the chariot wander whither they would through the heavens. You may be sure that they took prompt advantage of this inattention on the part of the youth and followed their own sweet will through the sky, and it is said that on that unfortunate day the sun described so many strange and unusual movements that the ancient astronomers and philosophers were greatly alarmed and predicted that the world was speedily coming to an end.

"But presently the immortal steeds grew tired of the heavens and, feeling that they would enjoy a frolic on the fresh verdure of the world far below them, began to descend. Then, and then only, did the youth notice that something was wrong and arousing himself, tried to control the horses and bring them back to the way which his father, in the course of his instructions, had pointed out as the right one. But the steeds had had a taste of liberty and refused to be brought back to their accustomed path. The young man shouted at and struggled with them until his strength was exhausted and he felt his senses leaving him; but his efforts were unavailing and the horses drew nearer and nearer to the affrighted earth,

bearing behind them the chariot of the sun and its terrified driver.

“The heat was now so intense that in some places the earth caught fire and was burned into dreadful deserts, some of which are still to be seen, while the rivers boiled and many of the smaller streams dried up entirely. The unfortunate inhabitants of that part of the world did their utmost to escape from the vicinity of the misguided chariot of the sun, but their efforts were all in vain; one and all they were burned until their skins were entirely black, those further away from the great heat becoming only brown or yellow, and it was only those tribes which lived at a great distance from where the flaming chariot approached the earth who retained their natural pale skins.

“But, in the meantime, the attention of the World-maker had been called to the mismanagement of the youth and, filled with alarm at the threatened destruction of heaven and earth and with anger against the rash young man who had so presumptuously undertaken more than he could accomplish, he hurled a thunderbolt which struck the fainting driver from his seat in the chariot and cast him down, flying through the air like a comet or flaming meteor, until he reached and vanished into the depths of a river.

“Now the sun had three daughters, sisters of the unfortunate young man, who wept over the fate of their brother till at length the World-maker, having compassion on their sorrow, changed them into trees which overhung

the banks of the river into which the youth had vanished. And they still continued to weep but their tears, on falling into the water, became changed into the substance now called amber, which was highly prized by the people of that land."

"But what became of the chariot of the sun?" asked Dorothy, as the beads finished speaking.

"Oh, the sun took charge of it again as soon as he had recovered from his first bitter grief at his son's death, and the steeds never again dared stray from their proper course. Now, really, we cannot tell you any more about it."

"I happen to know that this turquoise has a rather interesting story; suppose you let it come next," suggested the Invisible Sprite, and Dorothy gladly agreed.

THE TURQUOISE'S STORY.



THE turquoise in question was a rather large, square stone, pierced with a hole through the centre and inscribed with what appeared to be some savage form of writing. Dorothy had a vague idea that her mother had procured this "charm" from an Indian medicine-man during a visit to the west some years before.

"Long before the pale faces first came to this country," said the turquoise, "there lived on the western prairies a mighty chieftain to whom the Great Spirit had given only one child. This child was a little maid named Wahneto, and she was so fair that members of far distant tribes came often to gaze upon and marvel over her beauty which grew ever greater as the days passed by. But she guessed nothing of the reason why so many strangers visited her father's wigwam; she had never been told how lovely she was and, when she was ten years old, she still cared more about the beautiful flowers and queer animals which were to be found on the prairies which surrounded her home than she did about her own looks or those of anybody else. Wandering about the prairies she spent long and happy hours, gathering and making wreaths and garlands of flowers, and trying to tame and make play-

mates of the small beasts and birds which she met. Her father never interfered with any of these innocent amusements for the child wore a powerful charm, myself in fact, hung on a thong of deerskin about her neck, which assured her safety wherever she might be, and she was so kind and considerate to all animals that there was little danger of her getting into trouble.

“But one evening fear and consternation reigned in the wigwam of Wahneto’s father. The little beauty had, as usual, gone out for a stroll early in the afternoon, but it was now long after sunset and she had not returned. Had the charm, her safeguard, been in any way loosened from her neck? If so, in what danger might she not be? It was with sad faces and hearts full of forebodings that a number of Indians set out in search of the little wanderer.

“In the meantime, the small Indian maiden was indeed in a sorrowful plight. Somehow, it had seemed to her that the flowers were larger and lovelier than usual that day, and that she had gradually wandered farther and farther from home, continually spying new beauties in the distance and for them casting away the less fair blossom she had already plucked. And at last, in the course of her walk, for she had gone much farther out on the prairie than she had ever been before, and just as she first noticed that the sun was fast sinking toward the western horizon, she came upon a group of strange animals, quite unlike any that she had ever seen. However, she was not at all alarmed but instantly determined to approach and ask them in which direction her home lay, for she had

come so far that she had lost all idea of the direction in which she should turn to retrace her steps. These animals resembled nothing so much as large rats, but the little Indian had never felt the slightest fear of any creature and confidently drew near them. But alas! she stumbled over a small stone and, in striving to recover her balance, set her foot upon the fine, long tail of one of the strange animals. And then what a to-do there was and what a howl the creature set up! In an instant poor Wahneto was surrounded by the enraged beasts who, with bared teeth and fiendish grimaces, seemed to threaten her with some dire mischief in return for the accident of which one of their number had been the victim. As has been said, Wahneto had never known what fear was, but now, for once in her life, she was thoroughly frightened. However, she retained presence of mind enough to grasp her charm firmly in her hand, and the large rat-like creatures, seeing that she was thus protected, dared do her no real harm; but all night long they raged about her with gnashing teeth and horrible cries and thus, when the sun rose, were they found by the searching Indians who had vainly looked for Wahneto through the long hours of the night. And so angry were the braves at the manner in which the little maiden had been treated for an accident which was not her fault, that they cut off the tail of every one of the animals, leaving but a short stump. And to punish them still further, they shot arrows into them until the supply which they had brought with them from home was exhausted, after which they bore away



Found by the searching Indians who had vainly looked
for Wahneto through the long hours of the night

(Page 36)



the little Wahneto in triumph to her wigwam, leaving the creatures which are now called porcupines to mourn alone over their mutilated tails and bristling skins."

"Poor little Wahneto! how glad she must have been to see her friends after being alone in the dark all night with those horrid animals. It served them right that the Indians shot them full of arrows."

"Who do you choose to come next?" asked the Invisible Sprite.

"This little hand, I think," replied Dorothy, returning the turquoise to its place in the jewel casket and taking out a tiny coral ornament carved in the shape of a hand. The forefinger and little finger were extended, but the two others were held down in the palm by the diminutive thumb; and Dorothy, who had once or twice seen the trinket hanging from her mother's watch chain, had been told by that lady on one occasion that the Italians (for it had come from Naples) considered it a powerful charm to ward off the "evil eye."

THE CORAL HAND'S STORY.



HERE I used to live beneath the sea," began the coral hand, "there were many curious creatures of whom you have probably never even heard. There, for instance, is the sea-urchin; do you know anything about him?"

Dorothy knit her brow until there were several quite deep wrinkles on its smooth surface.

"I've heard of sea-urchins," she finally said, rather doubtfully, "that is, I've heard the name; but I don't know what they are or anything about them."

"Well, I just happen to remember a story that I once heard about sea-urchins, that is why I asked," said the coral hand. "It may interest you, so I think I will tell it.

"When the ocean was first made, every part of it was inhabited by seafolk who were divided into different nations just as the landfolk are now. They were quite highly civilized and their countries were always well governed. Being a polite, gentle people, they were anxious that their children should be well educated and grow up to be creditable citizens of their respective places of residence. It was not considered just the proper thing for

the little girls to go to school; they were kept at home and taught there by visiting governesses how to comb their beautiful, sea green hair and sing sweet songs, and in their gardens were always placed rocks upon which they were trained to recline in graceful attitudes. And as these three things were all that mermaidens were expected to know, it may be seen that their studies were not very arduous.

“But with the boys it was different. When they reached a certain age, they were always sent away to great training schools which were situated in convenient places in the sea, and there they were taught to do many things. In the first place, they were instructed how to chop and saw wood, and this was one of the most important parts of their education for the following reason: when, as too often happened, there was a great storm on the surface of the sea, the winds and waves often sank the huge wooden boats in which the landfolk made their way over the waters, and these were just as likely as not to settle down through the waves directly upon the houses and gardens of some of the unfortunate merfolk. Then all the mermen in the neighborhood would gather around and saw and split and chop until the mass was removed and the pieces carried to a place near shore whence the waves could easily cast them upon the land, for the tidy merfolk did not wish to have their clean sands strewn with rubbish.

“Often in this work they came across the bodies of landfolk, some of whom they thought might have been

quite pleasant to look upon had it not been for the fact that they had curiously forked lower extremities instead of nice scaly tails, so whenever they came across one of the deformed creatures they buried it at once, for they did not like to look upon monstrosities.

“Another thing that the little merlads had to learn to do was to collect pearls for the female members of their respective families who, on gala occasions, were fairly covered with strings of these lustrous jewels. Now it may seem that this occupation would not be difficult for a merboy, but such is not the case. The oyster must be treated gently but firmly or else the incautious pearl-gatherer, when he least expects it, may find the shells of the bivalve closing upon his hand which, it is needless to say, is a situation far from pleasant.

“As may be imagined, the lads were not best pleased at being sent away to these training schools and taught to do all manner of hard work while their sisters stayed at home and did nothing but lie around on comfortable rocks, singing and combing their hair, and the injustice of the system was a frequent subject of conversation at the schools. And at length a venturesome lad who was rather a ringleader announced, one morning, to his fellow students (when the teacher happened to have left the room for a few minutes) that he no longer intended to comb his hair in the mornings.

“‘My sisters,’ said he, ‘have nothing to do but comb their hair; that is the greater part of their education. Now, since our education consists of far harder and more

unpleasant duties, it is not fair that we should be forced to do our own lessons and theirs too. For my part, I intend to stop combing my hair; it will save valuable time which I may devote more profitably to my regular education, and I shall no longer feel that I am being treated unjustly.'

"The other lads at once saw the truth of his remarks and the very next morning every boy in the sea (for news of the intended action had been carried by swift swimming fishes to every training school) appeared at breakfast with uncombed hair. Naturally the teachers, for merfolk are notoriously tidy in their personal appearance, were terribly shocked and at once ordered the boys back to their rooms to finish their toilets before coming to table. But the lads replied that their minds were made up; they refused firmly and finally to acquire their sisters' educations and their own, too, and nothing that their masters said had any effect on them. Day after day they left their hair uncombed and, as may be imagined, by the end of a week each boy's head was in a terrible condition and looked like nothing so much as the head of a modern foot-ball player.

"The teachers and parents of the rebels tried by every means in their power to force them to submit, but it was all in vain. And then the despairing merfolk, feeling that their efforts were useless, that the lads had brought their fate upon themselves and that the sea could no longer be disgraced by such untidy creatures, went to a wise old merwoman who, by means of a spell, changed the unruly

boys, one and all, into the curious, marine creatures that we now call sea-urchins.

“Now they cannot comb their hair if they want to,” she remarked, with a hoarse chuckle and, sure enough, they couldn’t, for in place of hair, they had nothing but stiff bristles sticking out all over them. And to this very day, in memory of their former disobedience, the remnant of the merfolk dislike and avoid them.”

“It seems to me that was a pretty severe punishment for such a little thing as not combing their hair,” said Dorothy.

“But the merfolk don’t consider it a little thing,” said the coral hand. “Combing their hair is one of the first duties of the merfolk, and not even the relatives of the disobedient boys thought that they had been harshly treated.”

“Who shall speak now?” asked the Invisible Sprite, as the coral hand ceased and Dorothy laid it carefully back in its place.

“I should like to hear a story from this moonstone,” said she, picking out a beautiful brooch, a moonstone surrounded by diamonds.

“There is a story that a moonbeam once told me as I lay in my old home, before I was found by man, that I might tell,” said the moonstone, reflectively; “it’s about an owl. Should you care to hear it?”

“Yes, indeed,” replied Dorothy, heartily, so the moonstone at once began his recital.

THE MOONSTONE'S STORY.



ONCE there was an owl who lived in a hole in a hollow tree. It was a very comfortable hole and the fields near by were full of fat, juicy fieldmice which were to be had for the catching, so that the owl might have been very happy indeed had it not been for the fact that a Moonlight Elf had lately fallen into the habit of coming, during the first hour after sunrise every morning, to practice singing directly under his front entrance, thus disturbing his solemn meditations.

“Now it may seem that this was a very small matter to trouble the owl, and it is true that the Moonlight Elf himself was very small indeed, but his voice was not and his trills and flourishes rang out loud and clear in the still morning air and made the poor owl feel quite miserable.

“The trouble was that the King of the Elves, who was passionately fond of music, had promised the hand of his lovely only daughter to that one of his people who should sing the most beautiful song at a great competition which was to take place at an early date. Of course all the unmarried young men of the Elves were intensely interested and, selecting quiet nooks and corners of the woods and fields, tried over and over again the sweetest

songs that they could think of. And the Moonlight Elf, who had long loved the dainty little Princess of the Elves from afar, felt that here, at last, was a chance for him to win her; so he set about the cultivation of his voice in good earnest, selecting, as has been said, the tree inhabited by the owl as the place where he did his practicing.

“Just at this particular time, the owl was earnestly engaged in trying to solve an extremely important scientific problem: why rats, being several times as large as mice, were not also several times as tender, and it may be easily imagined that he was not best pleased by the Moonlight Elf’s interruptions to his flow of profound thought. He stood it for a number of mornings as patiently as he could, hoping that the tiny creature would catch cold from the heavy dew which lay thick on the grass, or that his vocal chords would get out of order or that anything, no matter what, would happen to prevent his coming. But the Moonlight Elf never got sick, and nothing ever kept him home. As punctually as the sun, every morning would he trip lightly across the field to the tree and set about his practicing with the greatest gusto, for his voice was growing purer and sweeter and stronger, and the song which he meant to sing was one that showed it to the best advantage, so that he felt that the Princess was already as good as his.

“If the owl had not been an extremely conservative owl of the old school, he would have moved away and let the noisy Elf have the place to himself; but he had lived in that particular hole for at least twenty years and felt

that he could not bear to leave it and go into newer and more fashionable quarters. So, after much thought on the subject, he concluded to speak to the small disturber of the peace and ask him, if he *must* make such strange and unusual noises, to please do it elsewhere.

“So the very next morning, when the Elf appeared on the scene, the owl poked out his head and informed the little creature that that tree was his, that he had lived in it for many years and that he wished no further disturbance in its neighborhood. This made the Moonlight Elf very unhappy, for it chanced that this tree was the only quiet place not already occupied by some one practicing for the great competition, and he humbly begged the owl to allow him to come a few more mornings to practice, but the bird sternly refused to listen to his appeal.

“‘If you do not hold your tongue and leave me in peace,’ said he, ‘I will turn you into a dandelion-top and blow you away; and then where will you be and what will you do when the great singing contest takes place?’

“At this terrible threat (which he knew the owl was quite powerful enough to carry into effect) the Moonlight Elf turned pale and sat down dejectedly, closing his lips so firmly that one would have thought he never intended opening them again. But he soon fell to thinking of the beautiful little Princess and, almost without knowing it, he opened his mouth and began singing again, to the great annoyance of the owl who had believed him effectually silenced and had gone back to his studies. Finding

it impossible, however, to pursue his deep line of thought while thus disturbed, he determined to put his threat into execution for, though usually soft-hearted, except where rats or mice were concerned, he felt that the thoughtless singer needed a lesson.

“Hastily looking through the few books of magic which he was fortunate enough to possess, he soon found the spell which would turn one into a dandelion-top. So he began to make the necessary passes and motions with his wings, saying at the same time, ‘I desire that the Elf at the foot of my tree shall become a dandelion-top,’ when, happening to glance from the entrance of his hole to observe how the incantation was working, he saw, to his horror, that the Moonlight Elf was nowhere in sight but that, seated at the foot of his tree, her golden hair already turning white and fluffy like a dandelion gone to seed, was the Princess of the Elves!

“It may be imagined how quickly the owl caught up his book of magic and reversed the spell, turning the lovely hair of the tiny Princess back to its original color. And the affair was such a lesson to him (for he knew that it would have fared hardly with him had he really destroyed the Princess of the Elves and thus called down upon himself the wrath of her people) that ever after he took pains to ascertain the identity of every person who approached him by asking ‘Who?’ And other owls gradually took up the same custom, and to this very day, if you go near the dwelling place of one of these birds, he will ask you who you are.



“If you do not hold your tongue and leave me in peace,
I will turn you into a dandelion-top”

(Page 45)



“As for the Moonlight Elf, he sang so sweetly when the day of the great competition arrived that the King of the Elves at once bestowed upon him the hand of the Princess, and they both lived happily ever after, neither of them ever knowing how near they had come to being changed into a dandelion-top and blown away.”

“Next!” cried the Invisible Sprite, briskly, as the moonstone finished speaking, so Dorothy picked out a curiously bright pebble, set in an ancient-looking ring which she did not remember having seen before.

“I don’t know what kind of a stone this is,” she said, half doubtfully; “but it looks as though it could tell an interesting story.”

“That is a cairngorm, a stone much esteemed in Scotland, its native land. The story it will tell you is a rather good one and I think that you will like it,” said the Sprite.

“I will try to tell it in as interesting a manner as I can,” said the cairngorm, and at once began its tale.

THE CAIRNGORM'S STORY.



HEIGHO!" sighed the jewel, in a voice that sounded like the faint echo of a hunting horn. "It is many years since any one has cared to hear anything about me. In fact, I have not spoken since leaving bonny Scotland, the land of the Good People. I suppose you know all about them?"

Dorothy looked puzzled. "No," she admitted, "I don't think that I do. Who are they?"

"The Good People," said the cairngorm, "is the name by which the fairies are known in Scotland, for the Scotch have a superstition that they dislike being spoken of by their own name and will punish any one who is unwary enough to use it. If you like, I will tell you something which happened many years ago in which the Good People played some part; it may prove of interest to you."

"I'm sure it will and I should love to hear it," responded Dorothy. "I like dearly to hear all kinds of stories, but I think that the ones about the fairies are the very nicest."

"Years and years ago," began the cairngorm, "the greater part of Scotland was covered by dense forests through which the fallow deer and the Good People

roamed at will, the former by day and the latter by night. They never interfered in the least with each other but were very good friends indeed, and made common cause against the race of man which was just beginning to make itself more than usually disagreeable by invading the forests, cutting down trees, searching out and defiling by their use the springs long enjoyed in undisputed quiet by the Good People and, worst of all, slaying and devouring any deer who was unfortunate enough to come in their way.

“Now the deer people stood this state of affairs as long as they could, but at last they found that their numbers were growing sadly diminished. So the King of the Deer, a splendid stag of many tines, made his way, one bright moonlight night, to the place where the Good People were holding their revels and, kneeling humbly before their King, set forth the straits to which the unhappy deer were being reduced and begged for help against the wicked beings who were bringing all this trouble upon them.

“The King of the Good People rested his little chin upon his tiny palms and thought very hard for several minutes, then he sat up straight once more and gave forth the result of his cogitations.

“‘The race of deer will never be safe from destruction unless one of their number attains to all the wisdom of which man is capable,’ he said, slowly and impressively. ‘And a deer can only become the possessor of such wisdom by being brought up and trained among mankind without any one’s knowing that he is a deer.’

“‘But that cannot be,’ said the stag, in despair; ‘no deer could live among men without it’s being known what he was, and think of the risk of his being eaten!’ and he shuddered at the very thought.

“‘That would be very true if the venturesome deer should retain his own shape,’ returned the King of the Good People, calmly; ‘but I have another plan in mind and if you will listen carefully, I think you will see for yourself that there is no such risk attached to its carrying out. You have perhaps heard that the Queen Consort of the ruler over these men has lately given birth to a man child?’

“The stag bowed his antlered head, such news had indeed penetrated the depths of the forest some days since.

“‘Well, this is my plan,’ said the diminutive King: ‘you know that we fairy folk often, in sport and for the bewilderment of the race of humans, and sometimes for reasons of our own, change in their cradles certain children of men. Now I have power enough to transform your youngest son into a babe very like this last addition to the family of the King of the Men. And he can then be brought up in all honor and wisdom with the training that befits a human prince, while I will bring to you the royal babe to be trained up and cared for as you shall see fit.’

“‘But will my fawn be kindly treated?’ asked the anxious father. ‘I would almost sooner that my whole race should perish than that one hair of his soft hide should be injured.’

“‘Nay, there’s no danger of that,’ was the reply; ‘the King’s son is, after the King himself, the person treated with the most consideration among men. And I have no doubt that he will be as well, if not better, cared for in his new home as if you had him yourself.’

“So the King of the Deer suffered himself to be persuaded; and the very next night, while the nurse of the infant Prince was nodding by his cradle, a number of the Good People noiselessly entered the room and removed the babe, while others brought in and laid in his place a child as like him as two peas, save for the fact that the eyes of the changeling were large and brown like those of a fawn, while those of the true Prince were blue as the sky.

“When the nurse awoke and found the babe in the cradle regarding her with those great, brown eyes, she was sore troubled for she knew that this was not the real Prince and at once guessed that the Good People had been there. But she dared make no outcry for she knew that if the matter came to the ears of the King she would most likely lose her life for daring to sleep at her post. The Queen had been quite unwell ever since the birth of the child, and she had not noticed his eyes, while the King and the courtiers had seen him only once or twice while he was asleep, so that the nurse felt she was safe if she could but keep her own counsel.

“The days, weeks, months, and years went by, and no one ever dreamed of questioning whether the Prince with the great brown eyes was indeed the rightful Prince. It

is true that he loved dearly to roam the forests and would sometimes stay away from the palace overnight, just to enjoy the pleasure of sleeping on the cool, soft moss under the trees, and that he could run swifter than the wind and leap several times higher than any other youth in the kingdom; but the King himself was fond of sports of all kinds, and was only gratified that his son should so distinguish himself. And this brown-eyed Prince was diligent at his studies and learned so willingly and quickly that all of his masters declared it a pleasure to teach him anything. And so time went on till he was a tall, beautiful, learned youth of twenty, and as good as he was handsome.

“In the meantime, the true Prince, though he had retained his original shape, had lived with the deer in the forest. His large blue eyes were his only beauty, for his back was crooked, one leg was shorter than the other, and his face had never, even in babyhood, been an attractive one. Still, he too was happy, for he loved to lie on the soft moss and listen to the singing of the birds and watch the white clouds drift across the blue sky and make up little songs to himself. And the King of the Deer often thought that, if he but knew it, the King of the Men should be very grateful to him for taking away this misshapen dreamer and giving him his handsome son in exchange. Still he was always very kind to the blue-eyed Prince, for he remembered that it was through him that he had, though he knew it not, lost everything that Princes generally hold dear.

“One night, just as the brown-eyed Prince in the King’s palace was starting to get ready for bed, several of the Good People suddenly appeared and, after making him promise to tell no one, told him the secret of his birth. The Prince was, after all, not as much surprised as might have been expected, for several hints that his nurse had at different times let fall in his hearing, had convinced him that there was something strange about his infancy. He asked a few days in which to think over matters and promised that he would then let the Good People and, through them, his father, know what he intended to do.

“What he would have decided to do will never be known for, just before the few days were over, the King of the Men fell sick and died, and the brown-eyed Prince was at once chosen King by his admiring subjects. And then he made a law that certain parts of the forest should be reserved for his use alone and that none should hunt therein; and when the Good People waited upon him, he told them this, and they and the deer at once removed to those places where they were never more molested.

“As for the blue-eyed Prince, he who was now King of the Men sought him out and tried to persuade him to return to his own palace and people; but he refused to do so, saying that he was far happier in the wild woods among the deer than he could ever hope to be at court.”

“I have read that Kings sometimes had forests where they wouldn’t let people hunt,” remarked Dorothy; “but I never knew before why it was.”

“That was the way the custom began,” said the cairngorm. “But I have told you quite a long story and it is time some one else had a chance,” so the little girl replaced the ring and picked up a handsome bracelet, glowing with great red rubies.

“What can you tell me, you beautiful stones?” she asked.

“Perhaps you would like to hear why some rubies are called ‘pigeon-blood rubies,’” said one of the largest stones.

“Yes, I should. I’ve often seen that name in books and wondered how it came to be given to them,” responded Dorothy.

THE RUBY'S STORY.



SO FAR back in the past that no one can remember it," began the largest ruby, "all of the birds dwelt in a far distant country, the nobles and rulers over which were men-

folk, each of whom had a certain species of bird under his protection. And these nobles were, in their turn, vassals to a mighty King whose will was law to every creature throughout the length and breadth of his domain except one. This one was his only daughter, a lovely Princess with great, blue, forget-me-not eyes and hair that seemed of spun gold and reached to the hem of her pretty embroidered gown whenever she let it down, which she did very often for, as may be imagined, such a weight was too much for the small, proudly poised head and long, slender neck, of the Princess to bear for any length of time when it was fastened up. As for the lovely eyes of this fair maiden, they were forget-me-not eyes in fact as well as in color for, in her cradle, the fairy Godmother of the tiny Princess had laid upon them this spell, that no man who ever had a good look into their azure depths should be able, try as he might, to forget them.

"The King, of course, was immensely proud of his lovely daughter and it was seldom indeed that her will

was not his will also, for nothing in his life had pained him more than the look of hurt surprise which the Princess had turned upon him on the very few occasions when they had failed to agree, and as the King, with advancing age, was becoming rather fat and lazy and the Princess always managed to get her own way in the end, by hook or by crook, he had lately fallen into the way of allowing her, without protest, to do precisely as she pleased.

“Things went on thus very comfortably for a time and the King spent all the hours he could spare from the affairs of his kingdom in taking long naps, while the Princess followed her own sweet will and was very happy indeed, for all the neighboring Princes and all the handsome young noblemen of that part of the world dangled around her constantly, trying their best to win her admiration and regard, but as yet the Princess seemed to have no preference and positively refused to look with favor upon the suit of any one of them.

“Now, though as has been said, the King, for the sake of peace and happiness, was ready to make nearly any concession to the wishes of his daughter, there was one point and one only upon which he stood firm. In the early part of his reign, just after he had ascended the throne, in fact, the monarch had received what he considered a mortal insult from one of the principal noblemen of his kingdom, the Duke of Pigeons, who had dared to question the quality of some verses which the new King (there being at that time no Poet Laureates) had written

in honor of his accession. And the monarch had never forgiven this but had banished the Duke to his own lands bidding him, and his family as well, to stay within his own boundaries and to refrain from visiting court.

“The Duke, who with advancing years realized the enormity of his offense, was willing enough to obey his offended monarch; but it chanced that he had a son who, at the time the decree of banishment had gone forth, was a mere toddling babe, but who was now a tall, handsome young man with the blackest of hair and the most flashing of hazel eyes. This fiery young lord resented bitterly the fact that he was being kept virtually a prisoner on account of an indiscretion of his father, especially one committed so long ago; and, besides, he had once seen a picture of the Princess with the forget-me-not eyes and it had made such an impression on him that he determined, come what might, that he would seek her at her father’s court and make her his bride.

“So one dark night, saying nothing of his purpose and destination to his father, he crept stealthily from the castle and, by the time the sun rose, was well on his way to the palace of the King.

“As soon as her eyes rested upon him, the Princess’s wayward fancy was caught and held by this dark-eyed stranger who was so plainly devoted to her, and in a few weeks the whole court was expecting every day to hear of their engagement. For some time, however, the young lord deferred asking the father of his beloved for her hand, knowing that such a course could not fail to reveal

the name of his father and recall his offenses to the King's mind; but at last it could be put off no longer so, mustering up what courage he could, he one day sought an audience of the monarch and, in formal terms, asked permission to marry his fair daughter.

“Dear me, how enraged the King was when he learned the parentage of the presumptuous young lord! The rash youth was at once cast into a dungeon, lighted by one tiny window, while the unhappy Princess, because she wept and begged his release and refused to promise that she would never speak to him again, was locked up in a high tower, with only her old nurse for company, until she should, for once in her life, agree to obey her father.

“But the young lord, having expected nothing else, was neither surprised nor alarmed by this treatment. He had in reserve a plan for communicating with his loved one of which the King knew nothing. When it had become so dark that the guards outside of the prison could see nothing, he took a small golden whistle from a chain on which it had hung at his neck and blew on it one soft note. And almost immediately, there was a rustle of wings and a snow white pigeon squeezed through the bars of the tiny window and, cooing joyfully, perched upon the prisoner's shoulder. This pigeon was one of the Duke's most trusted subjects, so the young man had no hesitation about intrusting it with a note to deliver to the Princess.

“The Princess was delighted to hear from her lover and at once wrote a most affectionate reply. And for

many nights the two young people kept up a correspondence with the help of the faithful pigeon, while the puzzled King could not account for the good spirits which they both maintained in captivity.

“Unfortunately, this state of affairs could not last forever. Early one morning, just at break of day, as the pigeon was making his last trip between the dungeon and the tower, one of the guards of the young lord saw and shot at the faithful messenger which, though sore wounded, had just strength to flutter through the Princess’s window and drop dead at her feet. The Princess was deeply grieved by this sad event and wept bitterly while she stroked the ruffled, blood-stained feathers of the dead bird, quite forgetting, for a time, to read her lover’s letter. And, just as she turned at last to open the missive, she was startled by seeing a strange, little old woman at her elbow.

“‘How did you get in here?’ she asked in astonishment, for she knew her father had given strict orders that no one was to be admitted to the tower.

“‘I am your fairy Godmother, and I walked in. I should like to see any one stop me,’ and the little old woman chuckled to herself at the very thought. ‘Your father’s ridiculous conduct has been called to my notice and, as I consider your marriage with the son of the Duke of Pigeons a very suitable one, I intend to bring the King to his senses. I promise you, before night he will come to you and freely consent to your union with the young man in question.’

“‘Oh, dear Godmother, how happy you have made me!’ cried the Princess, beaming with delight. ‘Except for this poor pigeon,’ she added, as her eyes fell upon the dead bird.

“‘Don’t let that trouble you any longer,’ said the Godmother, waving her wand, and behold! where the dead bird had been was a pile of flashing, glowing red jewels.

“The Princess ran to them in delight and, while she was still admiring them and the Godmother was explaining that they were a rare and costly kind of precious stone, to be known henceforth as ‘pigeon-blood rubies,’ the King entered, accompanied by the young lord and the lovers were soon clasped in each others arms, while the monarch extended his hands in blessing above their heads.”

Dorothy replaced the bracelet thoughtfully; she had enjoyed the story very much and was so busy thinking about it that she almost forgot to pick out another jewel until the Invisible Sprite reminded her that time was passing. Then she took from the box a ring of beautiful, rainbow-hued opals and announced her desire that they should have next turn. So the opals told her their story, speaking all in chorus.

THE OPAL'S STORY.



IN THE Southern part of North America, when all the land was inhabited by dark-skinned races, there once lived a most lovely Princess who ruled over the races of people known as Aztecs. This Princess was straight as an arrow, she had wonderful long, wavy black hair and great, coal-black eyes; and her people were very proud of her beauty and would have been only too glad to love her as such a Princess deserved to be loved had it not been for one thing—this lovely, dark-skinned maiden, in spite of her beauty and royal blood, had no heart!

“She had not been born without a heart, indeed she had in early childhood been noted for the tenderness of that organ. One morning she had awakened from a sound sleep and complained of an icy sensation in her breast; and the court physicians, when hastily summoned by the alarmed attendants, had, to their dismay, discovered that, though they could not say positively that the heart of the Princess had been removed from her body, no trace of its presence, as far as any pulsation was concerned, could be felt.

“At first they were sure that the Princess would die, for never in all the annals of medicine had any one been

known to survive after their heart had ceased to beat; but, to their joy and amazement, the Princess not only continued to live, but she managed to make every one around her unpleasantly aware of the fact. Before this unhappy event, as has been said, the Princess had been sweet and good and lovable, while now, whatever had befallen her heart, she was either icily sarcastic or hotly passionate, and woeful, indeed, was the lot of any one of her attendants who chanced to incur her displeasure. The cruel Aztec custom of sacrificing human beings to their heathen gods, which before had caused her to shed tears of pity and long for the day when she should be old enough to make laws abolishing such rites, now seemed to give her great pleasure and it was seldom that she missed witnessing a sacrifice. While for quite trivial offenses she would order any of her people who offended her to die by some painful death.

“Now when they were both children, before the loss of her heart and her consequent change of disposition, the Princess had been deeply loved by the son of a neighboring King, and it is not too much to say that she fully returned his affection. But since that fatal morning when it was discovered that her heart no longer beat, all her tenderness for him had seemed to die out and she would no longer allow him in her sight, driving him from her presence with cruel, biting speeches which made him turn pale with anguish. Of course the Prince was certain that his love was not to blame for her conduct, since doubtless some evil spirit had entered into her; so he set forth

on a journey to visit all the great doctors of that part of the world. None of those to whom he went could help, and at last, in desperation, he bethought himself of a wise old hermit who for many years had inhabited a cave in the side of a burning mountain.

“And, sure enough, this learned man had but to consult a few of his ancient picture-writings, when he was able to tell the Prince that the missing heart had been stolen by an evil spirit and was now hidden away in the midst of a dense jungle, where it was guarded day and night by two huge snakes, which spat smoke and flame at any disturber of their peace, and two great eagles, which circled high in air, swooping down upon and carrying away captive to devour at their leisure any rash person who might seek to take the heart from them.

“When he heard this, the poor Prince was sorely troubled, for many of the jungles in that part of the world are almost impenetrable, and there were the snakes and the eagles to be reckoned with, even if he should succeed in finding the place; so that, dearly as he loved the Princess, he was almost on the point of giving up the undertaking and going home in despair, when the sage asked him if he, as did many of the youth of that country, possessed a pet ocelot.

“‘Yes, I have an ocelot, but what has that to do with the recovery of the missing heart?’ asked the Prince, rather impatiently.

“‘It has a great deal to do with it, as you will find out if you listen carefully to what I have to say,’ replied

the hermit. 'I have told you that any one of the human race who attempts to approach the guarded heart is almost certain to be annihilated by its fierce guardians, but on the other hand an animal, a creature of the jungle, would not be suspected of any design to steal it, and so would be quite likely to get a chance to abstract it without their knowledge. Bring your ocelot to me, and I will instruct him how he is to help you.'

"So the Prince made all speed back to his home and, in an almost incredibly short time, was back at the cave of the hermit with the ocelot at his heels.

"The ocelot was a docile, cream-colored animal with large, amber eyes; he loved his master devotedly and, after listening attentively to all that the hermit had to say and promising implicit obedience to his directions, set off to find the jungle where the heart was kept by its fearful guardians. In the meantime, the Prince sat down on a moss-covered stone near the hermit's cave, where he conversed with the learned man and waited with what patience he might for his pet's return.

"The ocelot had little difficulty in deciding which forest to search, for a certain dense jungle in the northern part of the country had long had the name of being haunted, and was most likely to be the abode of any evil spirit or his servants. So toward this place the faithful animal bent his steps, bounding along so swiftly and lightly that he soon reached its outskirts. And then, though as yet he saw nothing that in that part of the world would be considered extraordinary, his difficulties

and dangers commenced: thick vines and dense growths of spine and thorn-covered plants filled the spaces between the tree trunks, and through these the ocelot must force its slender body; huge serpents glared upon him with their cold, glassy eyes and strove to clasp him in a death-giving embrace; and several times, where the ground was moist and swampy, great alligators rose from their lairs in the undergrowth and vainly clashed their jaws as they attempted to seize him; but the dauntless animal, heeding these dangers only enough to avoid them, kept on his way.

“And finally, when spent with toil he began to despair of ever fulfilling his master’s mission, he saw far ahead of him a great smoke as from some smouldering fire; and then he took heart again and hastened on, for he knew that this smoke was the breath of the fiery serpents which guarded the heart of the Princess. He now crept stealthily forward, trying to avoid stirring even a leaf lest the watching eagles which soared always in the air above the centre of the jungle should see him advancing and guess at his purpose, though if they did catch sight of him, there was always the chance that they might think him only some ordinary inhabitant of the forest who had wandered that way merely through curiosity.

“And that was precisely what they did think, showing the wisdom of the hermit in sending the ocelot on this errand. The animal not only escaped the particular notice of the eagles but, treading as noiselessly as only the cat kind can, passed through the smoke of the serpents’ fiery breath, sprang lightly, without touching or

disturbing it, over the tail of one of them which he encountered in the midst of the murky gloom and, before any of the four guardians had realized the danger threatening the treasure which they watched, had seized in his teeth the crystal casket containing the heart and, though sorely weighed down and encumbered by his burden, was speeding like an arrow for the outskirts of the jungle.

“For a moment the eagles and the serpents were too much stupified by surprise to move; but their senses soon returned to them and they took up the pursuit, full of rage and fury at having been outwitted by such a small and insignificant animal. The circling eagles, shrieking wildly, tried their best to dash through the dense growth of trees and bushes, but the thorns and spikes which had impeded the progress of the ocelot now did him good service by piercing the breasts of the enraged birds whenever they tried to swoop down upon him. As for the serpents, they glided at their best speed through the forest in pursuit of the flying ocelot, breathing out smoke and flame as they went, so that many of the trees caught fire and cinders fell upon and scorched the brave little animal.

“But, though his breath now came in great gasps and his limbs trembled with weakness, burnt with fire and torn by thorns as he was, the ocelot kept steadily on, for through the trees ahead of him he could see daylight, and he knew that he was near the edge of the jungle and that his four enemies could not pursue him beyond its confines.

“Gathering his strength for one final effort, the ocelot flung himself forward and a moment later, blackened and burnt and with his strength quite exhausted, broke his way through the outskirts of the jungle and flung himself on the grassy bank of a little brook where, after bathing his torn and blistered feet and drinking deeply, he coiled himself around the precious casket and slept soundly for a long time.

“Some hours later, he awoke stiff and sore from his wounds but nearly recovered from his fatigue and, picking up his burden, went as swiftly as he could to where his master and the hermit were waiting. They had been quite concerned over his long absence and were glad enough, you may be sure, to see the brave little animal returning and to see that he had brought with him that of which he had gone in search.

“After they had examined the casket and made sure that it contained the missing heart, as well as an opal of great size, the hermit and the Prince turned their attention to the ocelot and dressed his wounds which, in addition to many blisters and scratches, consisted principally of innumerable small black burns upon his cream-colored fur; and to this very day, all ocelots have their hides marked with round black spots in memory of this ancestor of theirs.

“That very night, while the Princess was asleep, the hermit, by means of some magic process known only to himself, replaced the heart in her breast; and the next morning she awoke so charming and sweet-tempered that

the Prince was more in love with her than ever and, as all of her early tenderness for him had revived, they were married a very few days later. It was never discovered who was the owner of the great opal which had been found in the casket with the heart, so the Princess had it set in the front of one of her handsomest gold crowns, where it glowed and flashed in a manner to excite the admiration of all beholders.

"It is scarcely necessary to say that the ocelot was, for the remainder of his life, an honored member of the court where he slept on softer cushions and ate daintier food than any ocelot has ever done before or since. As for the eagles and the fiery serpents, they were never seen again, but the natives have to this day a tradition that they are still hiding in the remotest depths of the forest, waiting to fall upon any unfortunate person who may venture to approach their retreat."

"I like that story *very* much," cried Dorothy, as the opal paused. "I've always thought that the ocelot in the Park was beautiful, and now I'm sure that he is brave and good, like his ancestor."

The opals quite glowed with pleasure as the little girl put them back in their place.

"Whose turn next?" asked the Invisible Sprite, seeing that she seemed at a loss about her next choice.

"This sapphire, I think," said Dorothy, after a moment's hesitation, picking out a handsome diamond and sapphire ring.

THE SAPPHIRE'S STORY.



HERE once lived in the Island of Siam," began the gem, plunging at once into its story, "a handsome, yellow-skinned young Prince who had always been as happy as the day is long and who, as he was perfectly contented himself and tried to make every one else so, was dearly loved by his father's subjects.

"But one day (whether he got out of bed the wrong way that morning, or whether he had been perfectly happy for so long that it was necessary for something to go wrong just by way of striking a balance, will never be known) he came down to breakfast in the worst of tempers. Although an unusually nice meal had been provided that morning, he declared crossly that there was nothing on the table fit to eat. So, instead of seating himself, he went to one of the windows and amused himself by shying soft-boiled eggs and spoonfuls of steamed rice at the passers by, shouting with ill-humored merriment whenever he succeeded in hitting any one. Of course his subjects objected to this treatment, and a delegation of them soon waited upon the King to complain of the conduct of his son; for the youth had ordered a fresh supply of eggs and was still busily engaged in his newly found occupation.

“The King was naturally scandalized, for he feared such behavior might cause his son to be disliked; so he at once sent for and remonstrated with him. And the Prince, with tears in his slanting eyes, declared that he did not know what was the matter with him, but that he felt cross and unhappy and wanted every one else to feel the same.

“‘You must be in love,’ said the King, thoughtfully. ‘I remember that is just the way I felt when I was courting your mother and did not know yet whether she cared for me or not. Now the question is, whom are you in love with?’

“‘I don’t know,’ said the Prince, with a sigh; ‘certainly not with any of the yellow-skinned girls whom I have seen in this country.’

“‘What do you mean?’ asked the King, curiously. ‘Have you ever seen any girl other than our Siamese maidens, and, if so, where?’

“The Prince hesitated. ‘It is true,’ said he at last, ‘that I have never seen the maiden for whom I long, that is, never with my waking eyes. But every night for weeks past a lovely being with golden hair, a fair, white skin and eyes like the sapphire in the new ring you lately brought me from Ceylon, has appeared to me in my dreams. Last night she came as usual, but it was only to announce that it was her last visit, and that we must say good-bye! I asked in despair if we were never to meet again and she replied that she could not say, that it depended upon me; if I should take my new sapphire

ring and roam the wide world round, asking every one I met if they had seen a Princess whose eyes were the color of the gem, it was possible that I might at last find her. But, she added, with tears in her beautiful eyes, she could never expect me, the only son of a rich and powerful King, to leave my comfortable home and travel about through strange lands on the chance of finding a Princess no matter how fair. And then she said good-bye and vanished before I could speak again. I am the most unhappy Prince in the world; I feel that I must see my blue-eyed Princess but how to find her I do not know. Can you suggest anything to help me?’

“The King thought very hard for several minutes. ‘Since the Princess,’ said he, at last, ‘says that the only way you can find her is by looking for her, I suppose that you had better start at once. For I positively cannot have you stay here to alienate my subjects by throwing eggs at them which, besides being unpleasant, is very wasteful and extravagant. I shall let you take my old white elephant to travel on, and you may have one of my royal Siamese cats to attend you on your journey.’

“‘What about my baggage?’ asked the Prince, rather anxiously.

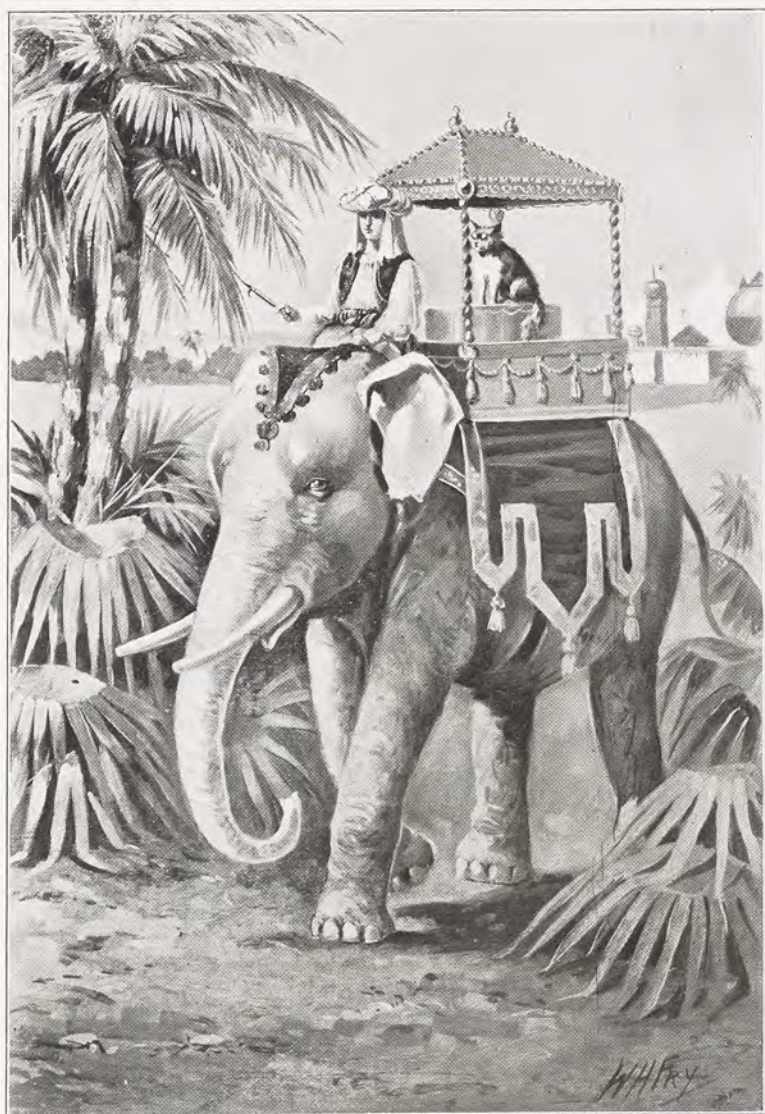
“‘The white elephant will, of course, carry a trunk, and if you can’t get along with a single trunk for one person and two animals you’ll have to take the rest of your things in pasteboard boxes,’ said the King, rather crossly, for it had just come to his mind that he had ordered an omelet for lunch and he was very fond of

omelets, but it had occurred to him that the Prince had that morning used all of the eggs in the palace to throw out of the window.

“Well, to make a long story short, the Prince set out, mounted on the white elephant and accompanied by the Siamese cat, to find the blue-eyed Princess. He carried with him a large tin cake box containing a fine plum cake; and in the very middle of this cake was hidden the sapphire ring by whose aid he was to identify the Princess. You see, without this ring he would be unable to find his lady love, and it was valuable and might be stolen from him and so small that he might easily lose it; but, hidden carefully in the cake, thieves would never think of looking for it and there would be little or no danger of losing it, while, at the same time, the cake could gradually be used as provisions for the journey.

“For some time they traveled on (though how they crossed the sea and reached the mainland has never been discovered) without meeting with any adventures worthy of note. None of the people in the lands which they at first visited had ever heard of, much less seen, a blue-eyed Princess; all of their Princesses had large brown or black eyes.

“But as the Prince went further and further north, the complexions of the people gradually became fairer and fairer till nearly every kingdom which he came to had at least one blue-eyed Princess; and as he had to visit each one and compare her eyes with the jewel in his ring (by this time the plum cake had been all eaten and he



The Prince set out, mounted on the white elephant and accompanied by the Siamese cat

(Page 72)



wore the ring under his glove), he did not get along as fast as he had at first. But nowhere, search as he might, could he find the Princess of his dreams and, though his faithful companions, the white elephant and the Siamese cat, tried their best to keep up his spirits, he became very despondent and began to fear that he should never see her more.

“At last the unhappy Prince had traveled through every kingdom of which he had ever heard and, sick with disappointment and hope deferred, was just begging his trusty white elephant to take him back to his own land where he might die in peace, for he felt that he could not live without his Princess, when the Siamese cat, who had often acted as a newsgatherer and secured information as to their future route, came hurrying in. His whiskers were quivering and his tail swelling with excitement, for he had made all haste to tell his master that there was still one kingdom in the world which they had not visited and that the Princess of this kingdom, though it was but a small one, a mere rock, indeed, inhabited by a few fisherfolk, was famed for the beauty of her great blue eyes; so that it was very possible that she might be the desired Princess.

“The Prince had very little real hope that, at this late day, his search would be successful, still they took ship and set sail at once for the island kingdom, which they reached that very night, just as the sun was sinking in the west.

“Two or three fishermen, surprised by the arrival of a vessel at that unusual hour, hurried down to the beach

to welcome the travelers; and the Prince, thinking that he might as well put the matter to the test at once, produced his ring and asked if they had ever seen any one whose eyes were of that color. And, to his inexpressible joy, they one and all, without the slightest hesitation, declared that the jewel was of the exact shade which they had so often admired in the eyes of their beloved Princess.

“Of course, the Prince was highly delighted by this news; and you may be sure that he lost no time in hastening to the palace and throwing himself at the feet of the lovely Princess, who, he saw at one glance, was the lady of his dreams!

“And the Princess evidently had some recollection of their having met before, for she flushed crimson and dropped her long, curling black lashes over her wonderful eyes in the prettiest way imaginable. And, although this was their first real meeting, they had long loved one another, there was no possible reason for delaying their wedding. So they were married at once, the white elephant and the Siamese cat being present, as well as the entire court of the Princess.

“There being no longer anything to wait for, the Prince and his bride and their two faithful attendants at once started for Siam which they reached safely; and glad enough, you may be sure, was the old King to welcome them, for he had been so lonely during the absence of his son that he felt willing that the young man should throw nearly anything he liked at his subjects if he would only

come home again. But the Prince had now no desire to do anything of the sort and they all, even the white elephant and the Siamese cat, lived happily ever after, and if they are not dead, they must be living still."

"I am so glad that the poor Prince found the Princess," said Dorothy, replacing the ring; "it would have been dreadful if he hadn't. I wonder if this amethyst's story is an interesting one," and she lifted and examined curiously a quaint-looking old brooch, a large square amethyst surrounded by pearls.

THE AMETHYST'S STORY.



Cross the Hudson River, in the state of New Jersey (though at that time it was not called so and was inhabited only by Indians) there once dwelt in a beautiful spacious cave a numerous tribe of lizards. They were very happy in their home for its entrance was so small that no creature larger than themselves could pass through, and there they spent the greater part of their time, emerging only at intervals to procure food and gather amethyst crystals. These crystals were to be found among the rocks near at hand, and the lizards transported them to their cave where they stored them in neat piles of their own, each reptile vying with his fellows in trying to secure and add to his collection the largest and finest colored amethysts. Indeed, the deep purple hue of the stones seemed to give them precisely the same delight that a beautiful picture gives to a true art lover; and during most of their leisure hours, the lizards were to be seen with their long, lithe bodies coiled among the jewels, feasting their eyes with every sign of satisfaction on the lights and shades of the treasures.

“The chief of the lizards, a larger and stronger reptile than any of his followers (indeed, it was partly because

of his size that he had been chosen chief), loved amethysts quite as well as any of his subjects, but, owing to that very largeness which had gained him his chieftainship, he was unable to penetrate the small cracks where the most perfect and desirable of the crystals were to be found; and, consequently, his collection of amethysts was about the poorest owned by any one of the lizard people.

“Now this, of course, was very annoying to him, both as a lizard and as a chief, and, after thinking the matter over for some time, he reached the following conclusion: he had a fair, young daughter whose slender, graceful tail was the envy and admiration of all beholders, and the front foot of this lovely lizard he promised to bestow upon that youth who should collect and present to him the largest and finest collection of amethysts.

“The unhappy daughter was in despair when her father coolly announced his intentions, for her affections were already set upon a noble young lizard of the opposite sex though, unfortunately, he was neither the most active nor industrious of his kind, and his pile of jewels was far from being the largest and finest in the cave. Still, the beautiful young lizard sent for him, and they put their heads together in council. The noble young lizard who, to say the least, was far from having a brilliant mind, could think of no way by which he might win his lady-love; but she was determined that win her he must and should, and soon sketched out a plan which, she felt sure, could not fail to attain that end.

“It was not thought exactly proper for the lady liz-

ards to take part in the jewel collecting, which was supposed to spoil the shape of their tails; but, late that night while all the other inhabitants of the cave were sleeping soundly, the lovers slipped out and away to the spot where the largest and most perfect amethysts had always been found. And, once there, the fair young lizard made her way down one narrow crevice after another, bringing to light the crystals which she there found; nor were her labors without their reward, for the finest stones were to be met with far down in the cracks where the stouter male lizards had been unable to penetrate but where she, being so slender, had no difficulty in making her way. And so well did the noble young lizard do his share of the work that, long before day dawned, he had carried all of the stones found by his companion to the cave, and he and she were sleeping soundly among their relatives and friends.

“You may be sure that the other lizards rubbed their eyes and looked again and again when they awoke and saw the great pile of amethysts which had been brought to the cave during the night; and the chief declared himself so well satisfied with the collection (which contained some stones of great beauty, far superior to any ever found by any other lizard) that his daughter and the young noble, were married that very day, amid the greatest rejoicings. And no one ever discovered that the fair young lizard had accompanied her lover on that nocturnal excursion and aided him in collecting the jewels which had won her foot.

“And the lizards grew gradually more and more fond of their amethysts, so that they could not bear to leave them even to go out to look for food, and the entrance, being small to begin with and now entirely unused, became at last quite closed up. And in that little cave, for all that is known to the contrary, though the entrance may never be discovered, the lizards may be lying yet, gloating over their treasures.”

“I think that the fair young lizard was very brave,” said Dorothy. “I shouldn’t like to go down a crack in the rock on a dark night, even to find jewels.”

“Don’t dawdle so,” said the Invisible Sprite, sharply, and the little girl hastily replaced the amethyst and selected a pin containing a single large stone of a brilliant-yellow hue.

“I don’t know what this is,” she said; “but it is very beautiful, and I should like to listen to what it has to say.”

THE TOPAZ'S STORY.



“I AM a topaz,” said the stone, in rather an offended tone; “as I think you might have known if you had noticed my color.”

“Why, of course; how stupid of me! I’ve often heard people say ‘as yellow as a topaz,’ and I’m sure I would have remembered if I’d only thought a moment,” replied Dorothy.

“The King of the Thousand Isles,” began the topaz, evidently mollified by the little girl’s explanation, “was truly the merriest monarch in the world; and his subjects were so devoted to him that it made them happy only to hear him laugh and, as he had an exceedingly loud voice and the sound of his mirth rang far and wide through his domain, it was the jolliest kingdom that one could hope to find. To be sure not much work was accomplished, because in that country it was considered etiquette to stop whatever one was doing, say reverently, ‘God bless our King!’ and then join heartily in the laugh whenever the sound of the monarch’s ‘Ha, ha!’ smote upon one’s ears. And this happened so frequently and so disturbed the more serious-minded people that they and all the scholars of the land moved away into the neighboring kingdoms, where they would not have to laugh unless

they happened to feel like it; so that, at last, the kingdom of the Thousand Isles came to be inhabited only by the jolliest and most frivolous of human creatures.

“Now after this condition of things had held for many years, some sensible persons from another country visited the kingdom of the Thousand Isles and inquired anxiously of its inhabitants as to the origin of its name, as well they might for the only isle in the whole kingdom was a tiny affair, scarce an acre in extent, which lay in the lake in front of the palace. Some wag, hearing this question, assured the seekers after knowledge that the name of his ruler was really the King of the Thousand Smiles and, though the foreigners could not quite believe this (having so often seen the name printed in their histories and geographies), still, they acknowledged gravely, it was a most plausible explanation, and the present inappropriate name might really, in some remote age, have been corrupted from that suggested by the joker.

“But, one unfortunate day, one of his courtiers chanced to mention this question before the King, and when he came to think of it he found it quite the funniest thing that he had ever heard since he was a lad, that he should nominally be the ruler over a thousand islands when in reality there was but one in the whole kingdom. And he laughed so heartily that the poor courtiers and all of the people, though they didn't dare say so, were terribly tired trying to keep pace with his mirth.

“As soon as he stopped laughing, however, and came to think the matter over, it did not seem quite so funny

to the King of the Thousand Isles that he was unable to tell whence the name of his kingdom was derived; and the longer he thought about it the more it puzzled him and the more curious he became, till at last he forgot to laugh for quite a long time and his subjects began to feel worried about the state of his health.

“The King of the Thousand Isles had, for once in his life, seriously made up his mind; he determined that, cost him what trouble it might, he would find out why his dominions had been so foolishly named; so he sent for all the wise men of the neighboring kingdoms and offered them large rewards if they could tell him what he so earnestly wished to know. But not one could answer his question, and the poor King grew daily paler and thinner till his anxious people feared that his thirst for knowledge was in a fair way to cause his death.

“At last, one day, when the King, wan and languid, was lying on a couch without even the ghost of a smile upon his formerly merry countenance, one of the courtiers chanced to think of an aged witch-wife who lived in the cave of the tiny islet in the palace lake. This witch-wife had, when the more serious minded of the people withdrew from the land, removed to the aforesaid island which had ever since been her home; and, as she had never been known to laugh or to appear to enjoy herself, her reputation for wisdom was deservedly great.

“As soon as the courtier mentioned this witch-wife, the King and all the rest of them marveled greatly that they had not thought of her before. Feeling that she

would be able to answer the vexed question if any one could, the monarch arose from his couch and telephoned down to the boat landing; and by the time he and his followers had found their hats and reached the dock, they found everything ready for their start.

"The islet was soon reached for it lay but a short distance from the shore and then, leaving the rest of his people to mind the boats, the King and two of his courtiers entered the gloomy cavern which was the home of the witch-wife.

"It cannot be denied that the King felt some slight degree of uneasiness as he passed the entrance to this dark abode and found himself face to face with the witch-wife who, in one corner of the cave, seemed to be playing idly with a large, golden-yellow stone which, as she turned it, sometimes flashed forth luminous rays. Gathering up his courage, however, he went boldly forward.

"'Can you tell me, madam,' he asked, 'why this kingdom of mine is called the kingdom of the Thousand Isles, when in reality there is but one isle within all its boundaries?'

"But the witch-wife, like one daft, only continued to play with the bright stone and croon over and over to herself, 'Miles, miles, miles, miles!' and they could get nothing else out of her.

"So the King and his two companions at last turned sorrowfully away and left the cavern; but just as they were entering their boats, the witch-wife came running and, still muttering, 'Miles, miles!' pressed the gem with

which she had been toying into the hand of the astonished monarch and fled back to her cave.

“All the way back to the mainland, the King admired and examined the stone, which was now discovered to be a great golden topaz, and which he at once determined should hold the place of honor in his next new crown. And as he turned the gem to gaze now upon this side, now upon that, he found himself taking up the word of the old witch-wife and murmuring, ‘Miles, miles, miles!’ over and over to himself, though he could not for the life of him tell why he did so.

“But just as, carefully clutching the precious topaz, he set foot upon land, a sudden inspiration came to him.

“‘Pray, do you happen to remember the extent of our royal domains?’ he asked, turning to a courtier who had just followed him from the boat.

“‘I do not know that it has been measured of late years, your majesty,’ replied the man, respectfully; ‘but I should judge that your kingdom is about one thousand miles square.’

“‘Eureka!’ cried the king, hopping up and down on one foot in his delight. And then, before his astonished attendants could ascertain the cause of this demonstration, he burst into a fit of laughter that lasted nearly an hour and which carried joy to the hearts of all his subjects, for they knew that the happiness of their beloved King was now restored.

“As soon as he could stop laughing long enough to speak, the King ordered that surveyors should at once go

out and measure his kingdom and, sure enough, they found it to be exactly one thousand miles square. And, what is more, an inspection of the most ancient records, which had not been looked at for many generations, showed plainly that the original name of the territory had been 'the kingdom of the Thousand Miles,' the letter M having been omitted at some later date, probably through the carelessness or laziness of some copyist.

"The King of the Thousand Isles (since people were so used to calling him by that title, he thought that they might as well continue) was now once more happy and laughed even longer and louder than he had done in the old days. He sent a magnificent reward to the old witch-wife, but his messengers failed to find her in the cave and it was never known what had become of her. As for the beautiful topaz, he had it set in his finest crown, and if you ever chance to visit that country you may see it among the crown jewels."

"It must be nice to live in a place where every one is so happy," said Dorothy, thoughtfully, as she put the topaz pin carefully back in its place.

"But unless you have some sorrow to contrast with it, how can you tell how happy you are?" asked the Invisible Sprite, sagely. "But the evening is passing; pick out the next story teller."

"This diamond; I've always admired it," said Dorothy, selecting a ring containing a single huge gem, "and I'm sure it can tell me something interesting."

THE DIAMOND'S STORY.



IN FAR off Arabia," said the diamond, "there lived, many years ago, a certain King who might have been very popular with his people if he had only attended to the affairs of his own household, or at least those which concerned the welfare of the kingdom. But no, nothing would do him but to go around poking his royal nose into his subjects' private business which, as may be imagined, did not please them at all.

"Now you may perhaps have heard that in Arabia and other eastern countries, there were formerly to be found creatures called genii, a race of supernatural beings who were generally the slaves of wise persons who knew how to control them and make them useful. The genii are so powerful that it is a mystery how they can consent to be ruled over by paltry man, but such is the fact, nevertheless, and the King of whom I speak had several genii among his followers. And very useful he found them, to be sure, for, having the power of making themselves invisible at will, they were able to be present at any secret occasion, and would invariably retail to their master all that had taken place; so that it came to pass that the King's ministers and courtiers were in a chronic

state of terror, for their most trivial words and actions, whispered or done no matter how privately, were sure to reach the ear of their master who took the greatest delight in showing his knowledge of what had taken place.

“Nor was this all. The affairs of his people were so much more interesting to him than his own that no one in the whole kingdom found it possible to have a secret from the King, and this was felt by every one, more especially the women, to be a most deplorable state of affairs.

“Things went on thus for a long time; but at length a number of his subjects who found themselves together, having traveled to a neighboring kingdom to see some far-famed curiosities, put their heads together and consulted earnestly as to how they might discover the manner in which their King acquired so much secret knowledge.

“‘He must have some of the genii in his employ,’ said one learned man at last, when the discussion had lasted for some time (you see, being in a strange country, they were less afraid to speak out, for there was not so much danger of their being overheard by spies). ‘And there must be some talisman whose possession makes him ruler over them. If we could only get hold of this talisman, his power would be gone, and our secrets would be safe from him. Can any one recollect any particular object which the King has constantly by him?’

“Well, they all thought very earnestly, but no one could remember anything of the sort, till at last a fair, shy-looking girl who had not previously spoken, announced

timidly that, for her part, she had never seen the King their master without the huge diamond, as large as a pigeon's egg, which he wore pendant to a chain about his neck. And when the others came to think of it, they remembered that it was true this jewel always formed a conspicuous part of their monarch's attire.

“‘The real test,’ said the learned man who had before spoken, ‘will be for some one to creep into his sleeping-chamber at night and see if he still wears the diamond during his slumbers. If such proves to be the case, there can no longer be the slightest doubt that it is the talisman which he must constantly carry on his person in order to maintain his power over the genii. Who will volunteer to ascertain the truth of the matter? Remember that no one is allowed to enter the King's chamber after he has retired for the night, and that death will be the reward of any one found so doing.’

“For a few minutes there was silence, for no one seemed inclined to enter upon this dangerous undertaking; but at length a rich, young noble stepped boldly forward and declared himself ready for the perilous mission.

“‘I might just as well tell you why I am going to do this,’ he continued frankly. ‘Every one knows that I have long been a most devoted suitor of the Princess Lorine; but the King our master frowns upon my pretensions because he destines her hand for the eldest son of the King of the Eastern Isles, a red-haired, freckled, ungainly youth who squints, and whom the Princess detests quite as much

as I do. And every time she and I have met in secret to exchange a few words of love and try to devise some plan whereby she may escape the doom fast drawing near to her, the secret emissaries of the King her father have given him warning and we have been at once discovered and separated. Therefore, for the sake of the Princess Lorine and of myself, to say nothing of all you other good people, I am anxious that this state of affairs should end. This very night, if I find it possible to reach the palace in time, I shall find out the truth about the diamond; and if it really is a talisman, you may be sure that it will not take me long to become its owner. Farewell; I think that by fast riding I can reach our capitol before sunset.'

"The others of the company bade him good-bye and good fortune as he spurred rapidly away, and soon even the dust cloud raised by the passage of his horse had settled down in the distance.

"The steed he bestrode was a good one and the young nobleman pressed rapidly forward, not even stopping for his lunch, so anxious was he to reach his destination. And, as he went, he improved the time by devising a plan of operations which, he felt sure, could not fail unless, indeed, one of the genii had been far enough afield to hear and convey word to the King of the conference held that morning. But this, he felt, was scarcely likely, for it chanced to be a holiday and the King was giving a grand entertainment to his subjects, so that the nobleman knew the genii would have enough to do at home without

snooping around foreign kingdoms, listening to the conversation of a few travelers.

“And, when he was allowed to reach home and eat his dinner unmolested, he was certain that this view of the case was the correct one; so that it was with a light heart and congratulating himself upon his good fortune, he put on his best clothes and made his way to the palace where the King was entertaining that evening.

“The monarch was surprised to see the traveler but received him with unusual graciousness, even allowing him to kiss the fair hand of the beautiful Princess Lorine, an honor which had been denied him for some time.

“The young nobleman took this for a favorable omen and, feeling now assured of the success of his undertaking, and gradually withdrawing himself from the company, he secretly made his way up the back stairs (for he was well acquainted with the interior of the palace, having often during boyhood played hide and seek with the Princess among its corridors). He fortunately met no one and safely reached the King's chamber where he ensconced himself under the bed. And then, having some time to wait and being tired by his journey, he fell into a sound sleep from which he did not waken until long past midnight, when the King and his attendants entered the room. The monarch was apparently very tired and in an extremely bad humor for, bidding his servants curtly to undress him and be quick about it (which you may be sure they were), he lapsed into a moody silence. He was soon prepared for rest and got into bed; and then his

attendants respectfully retired and all was silent except for the King's heavy breathing which, in a few minutes, developed into a pronounced and well-defined snore.

"As soon as his ears assured him that his royal master was safely in the land of dreams, the young nobleman crept cautiously from his hiding place. A lamp had been left burning and by its light he looked eagerly at the sleeping King. Yes, there was the diamond, glowing and sparkling like a great sleepless eye, in full view upon the sleeper's breast!

"As softly as he could, the young nobleman stooped and undid the clasp of the chain which he then drew gently from its place on the King's neck; and the latter, though he murmured in his sleep and tossed his arms as though disturbed by some evil dream, never woke.

"The nobleman made his way safely out of the palace with his booty and, on reaching his own home, hid it carefully away. But it was supposed by him and by two wise men whom he later consulted that the genii had watched the disposal of the gem and had made way with it; for when he went the next day to look for it, he found that it had disappeared and it was never seen again.

"As for the King, he made a great stir over the loss of the diamond; but he dared tell no one why it was specially valuable to him. And no one ever knew except the young nobleman and those who had laid the plot with him, and they stood enough in dread of the King's vengeance, should he ever learn the truth, to prevent their telling any one.

“A few days later, news came that the ugly Prince of the Eastern Isles was dead; and then the King withdrew his objections to the marriage of the Princess Lorine and the young nobleman, so they had a grand wedding and lived happily ever after.”

“Thank you very much for your story,” said Dorothy, setting the diamond back in its place. “What is this queer-looking red stone?” taking up a large seal with a coat of arms engraved upon it.

“That is a carnelian,” answered the Invisible Sprite; “perhaps its story had better come next.”

“Very well,” said Dorothy, contentedly, and settled herself in a slightly more comfortable position to listen.

THE CARNELIAN SEAL'S STORY.



GREAT many years ago all toads and frogs used to walk just like all the rest of the animals; but the frogs at length tired of this slow means of progress and made up their minds that by using their hind-legs together, in a strong, well-directed kick, they would be able to cover ground with less effort and to move much more quickly than they could have done by sticking to the old way. So they practiced jumping and leaping about until they became very proficient indeed, and all of the other creatures who lived near them were filled with envy and admiration.

“The toads especially, distant relatives and humble admirers of the frogs, could not sufficiently express their wonder and delight at the agility of their pretty green and white neighbors; and very shortly they held a meeting and decided to establish a school where the youngest and least corpulent of their race might learn to execute the graceful leaps and bounds so easily performed by the active frogs.

“This school was duly started and the master, a large and learned bull-frog, soon found his time taxed to the

utmost, for the youthful toads came in swarms to learn how to jump in a frog-like manner.

“But there was one exception to this general thirst for knowledge. One rather stout young toad persisted in coming to school, but he persisted with equal firmness in declining to learn to hop in the manner affected by his schoolmates. The bull-frog was in despair; he was organizing a jumping-drill to show the proficiency of his pupils, and the obstinate young toad could not be left out because his father was one of the most influential toads in the vicinity. How could he be made to take part with the others in a way that should not disgrace his teacher?

“The bull-frog thought very hard over this problem, so hard, indeed, that his feet became quite dry and he felt very uncomfortable. And at last, just as he was deciding in despair that the only thing left for him to do was to resign his position, a bright idea suddenly entered his mind. He had noticed that his obstinate scholar, when the order ‘Hop, toads!’ was given, always settled himself more firmly in his seat, as though to express his contempt for all authority; so the very last night before the exhibition, he stayed after the scholars had gone home and carefully affixed a large pin to the back of the offending toad’s chair, but in such a manner that its presence should not be noticed unless the occupant of the chair leaned far back in his seat. Having achieved this to his satisfaction, the bull-frog went home, feeling more relieved and hopeful for the success of the morrow’s exhibition than he had done for some time.

"The next day was a delightfully moist one, with no scorching sun to annoy and burn the spectators, and it was in a very happy frame of mind that their friends and relatives gathered to witness the jumping of the young toads. Several of the most agile scholars gave skillful examples of jumping and hopping by twos and threes which elicited immense applause; and finally the last, but most important feature on the programme came—the jumping, at a given signal, of the entire school.

"The bull-frog stood up, took a final look at his scholars, not excepting the disobedient one, and gave the order, 'Hop, toads!'

"And then what appeared to the spectators a most extraordinary thing occurred. As had always been his custom, the obstinate toad settled firmly back in his chair, just to show that he did not have to mind the teacher. But, finding himself this time almost transfixed by the pin, he gave a dismal squeak and jumped with the rest; only, instead of stopping at the end of two or three jumps and returning to his place, as did the others, he kept straight on and, when he vanished in the distance, was apparently going at the same rate of speed as when he started.

"As for the exhibition, it was voted a grand success; the bull-frog was given an appointment for life and spent all the rest of his existence in teaching the young idea how to jump. And some men who once heard him drilling his classes and giving the order 'Hop, toads!' have ever since called the whole race of toads by that name.

“The obstinate young toad was never seen or heard of again and for all that is known to the contrary, he may be still hopping around the world; and his relatives beg that any one who meets him will tell him that they are anxiously waiting for his return home.”

“Poor toad! How surprised he must have been,” said Dorothy, as the seal finished. “What can this beautiful bracelet tell me?” holding up a circle of finely matched garnets which glowed and shone in the gaslight.

“I believe that their story is about Indians,” replied the Invisible Sprite; “but you shall hear it and judge for yourself.”

THE GARNET'S STORY.



HAVE you ever seen a rattlesnake?" asked one of the garnets which seemed to be spokesman for the rest.

"Yes," replied Dorothy; "I saw some when I went to the Zoological Gardens.

They are very curious, and it seems so funny that they should have rattles on their tails."

"Those rattles are precisely what I intend to tell you about," said the garnet. "Once upon a time the creatures now called rattlesnakes, except that they were capable of inflicting a venomous bite and were reputed to have very bad tempers, differed very little from the other reptiles which inhabited the same territory, for all had tails terminating in a sharp point. But, as has been said, their tempers and dispositions, even in those remote days, left much to be desired; and it was whispered among the Indians who then lived everywhere in this country, that these serpents were under the special protection of the evil spirits who opposed the Trues (or good spirits), and that they were so revengeful that they never failed to inflict a severe punishment on any one who, no matter whether intentionally or not, did them an injury.

"Now it chanced that in a certain tribe in the west,

there was a young brave who was the proud father of a fine, healthy papoose, a fat, toddling piece of humanity who was just learning to walk, and this brave, while hunting on the plains one day, had the misfortune to so guide his horse that it stepped on and caved in the top of a rattlesnake hole. Naturally the occupants of the ruined habitation were intensely angry and sallied forth to punish the destroyer of their home; but he whipped up his pony and, although pursued for some distance, managed to escape for the time, though he felt in his heart a dismal foreboding that evil would yet befall him, for he remembered all the tales he had heard of the vengefulness of these snakes.

“Several days passed quietly, however, and the Indian, finding that nothing out of the way occurred, began to hope that the serpents had failed to recognize him or to track him to his home. But he was soon to see that this was not so, and that the reptiles, true to their traditions, had not only made preparations to repay the harm he had accidentally done them, but that they had chosen the method likely to inflict the most pain on him whom they chose to consider their enemy.

“One evening, a week or more after his horse’s unfortunate misstep, the Indian brave, tired and hungry after a day’s hunting, returned as usual to his lodge for his evening meal. Even from a distance the place seemed to him strangely deserted, and as he drew near he saw that neither his bright-eyed young wife nor the fat, toddling baby were visible. Still this gave him no great concern, for his wife

might, as she had often done before, have dropped into a neighboring lodge to gossip with some of her friends, taking the child with her, and have stayed longer than she intended. So he turned his horse loose to shift for itself, knowing that the animal would not stray, and then entered the lodge to see if he could find food to stay his hunger until his wife's return, for he had eaten nothing since early morning.

“He lifted the deerskin which hung over the entrance and served as a door, and then a sight met his eyes which struck him motionless and chilled the very blood in his veins. On a heap of skins in one corner of the lodge, her head drooping over a pair of moccasins on which she had been working when overcome by sleep, reclined his wife; while near the fire which illuminated the interior of the hut and in its full glare, rolling, tumbling and crowing with glee, was his baby son, the very centre of a mass of rattlesnakes which he was handling and playing with as fearlessly as though they had been his ordinary toys all his life! Speechless with horror and shaking with fear, as any peril of his own could never have made him, the unhappy father, whose presence had not been observed by the reptiles, noiselessly replaced the deerskin covering and hastened away to find the medicine-men of his tribe. For they, he knew, often handled the deadly snakes and felt no fear of them. In a shorter time than one would have believed possible, he had returned with these learned men and, finding the situation apparently unchanged, the wife still sleeping and the babe evidently still unharmed and

delighted with his strange playfellows, the medicine-men at once began their incantations.

“How they did it, none can say, but as they leaped and danced, singing their magic songs and shaking the charms which they wore about their necks in time to the dance, the snakes gradually began to loosen their coils from the laughing child. As the mystic rites proceeded, the sleeping woman opened her eyes and was about to sit up but her husband, fearing some miscarriage of affairs should she see the peril of her child, ordered her, in a stern whisper, to shut her eyes and lie back again and, with the unquestioning obedience of an Indian woman, she obeyed her lord and master.

“As the snakes relaxed their hold of the babe, they were seized by the fearless medicine-men and thrust into bags provided for that purpose, and still the magic song and dance was kept up. At length the last serpent had loosened its coil from the child’s neck and lay writhing on the floor when it was quickly lifted by one of the medicine-men who, with his fellows, now withdrew, bearing the snakes with them.

“As for the child, bereft thus of the playthings which had so pleased him, he immediately set up a howl and was with difficulty appeased by his parents who, now that the danger, which the mother was just beginning to realize, was past, could not lavish enough caresses on their son who, as examination showed, had not the slightest injury by which to remember the experience which might so easily have cost him his life.

“The snakes were let go by the medicine-men, but not until a small, dried gourd, filled with pebbles which would make a rattling sound when the creature moved and so warn people of its approach, had been firmly attached to the tail of each reptile. And, finding this plan a good one and that it saved many lives, the Trues placed a permanent rattle upon the tail of each snake of this species and ordered that they should always give warning of their approach by shaking it, a command which they obey to the present time.”

“How was it that the snakes didn't hurt the baby?” asked Dorothy.

“He didn't show the slightest fear of them and this fact surprised them so that they didn't bite. There are still Indians in the west who perform the Rattlesnake Dance and handle the reptiles without being injured,” replied the garnet.

“Yes, I have seen pictures of them,” said Dorothy. “Well, Invisible Sprite, who is to tell the next story?”

There was no answer but a hearty laugh and Dorothy, rubbing her eyes in amazement, looked up to see her father and mother, still in evening dress, bending over her.

“You look like some little Fairy Princess, gloating over your jewels, Dorothy,” said her father, still smiling.

“My dear, how is it you were not in bed long ago?” asked her mother, kissing the rosy, upturned face.

“I think Thérèse must have forgotten me. But oh! I've had such a delightful evening, mother dear, and it's

been so short, too. I must tell you all the stories that the Invisible Sprite made your jewels tell me," said Dorothy, eagerly, handing her mother the keys to the jewel casket.

"Not to-night, dear, it's too late," said her mother, gently. "To-morrow you shall tell me all about it." And with a good night kiss from each of her parents, Dorothy went away to bed to dream of the Invisible Sprite and of all the wonderful tales she had heard.

THE END.



