

THE ADMIRAL'S CARAVAN



By
CHARLES E. CARRYL.

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Title: The Admiral's Caravan

Author: Charles E. Carryl

Illustrator: Reginald B. Birch

Release date: January 21, 2008 [eBook #24379]

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/24379

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE
ADMIRAL'S CARAVAN ***

THE ADMIRAL'S CARAVAN

BY

CHARLES E. CARRYL

AUTHOR OF "DAVY AND THE GOBLIN"

**WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
REGINALD B. BIRCH**

The
Riverside
Press

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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"THE ADMIRAL, MAKING A DESPERATE ATTEMPT
TO GET A VIEW OF HIS LEGS THROUGH HIS SPY-
GLASS."

"THE ADMIRAL, MAKING A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO GET A
VIEW OF HIS LEGS THROUGH HIS SPY-GLASS."

TO CONSTANCE

SWEET CHATTERBOX, 'T IS THOU THAT HAST BEGUILED
MY FANCY, AS IT DREW THE LITTLE CHILD
WHO IN THESE PAGES LIVES; HER GENTLE WAYS
ARE BUT THE REFLEX OF THY ROUND OF DAYS.
THE TRIP OF SYLLABLE I HELD SO DEAR,
AND ALL THY SMALL REMARKS, ARE TREASURED HERE—
CHARMED BY THE ALCHEMY OF LOVE TO STAY
THE WHILE THY BLISSFUL CHILDHOOD SLIPS AWAY.
KIND LITTLE HEART, THAT KNOWS NO SELFISH THOUGHT,
READ HERE THE TALE THAT THOU, THYSELF, HAST
WROUGHT!

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CHAPTER I

DOROTHY AND THE ADMIRAL

The Blue Admiral Inn stood on the edge of the shore, with its red brick walls, and its gabled roof, and the old willow-trees that overhung it, all reflected in the quiet water as if the harbor had been a great mirror lying upon its back in the sun. This made it a most attractive place to look at. Then there were crisp little dimity curtains hanging in the windows of the coffee-room and giving great promise of tidiness and comfort within, and this made it a most delightful place to think about. And then there was a certain suggestion of savory cooking in the swirl of the smoke that came out of the tall, old-fashioned chimneys, and this made it a most difficult place to stay away from. In fact, if any ships had chanced to come into the little harbor, I believe everybody on board of them, from the captains down to the cabin-boys, would have scrambled into the boats the moment the anchors were down and pulled away for the Blue Admiral Inn.

THE
ADMIRAL.
THE ADMIRAL.

THE
HIGHLAND
ER. THE
HIGHLANDER.

But, so far as ships were concerned, the harbor was as dead as a door-nail, and poor old Uncle Porticle, who kept the inn, had long ago given up all idea of expecting them, and had fallen into a melancholy habit of standing in the little porch that opened on the village street, gazing first to the right and then to the left, and lastly at the opposite side of the way, as if he had a faint hope that certain seafaring men were about to steal a march upon him from the land-side of the town. And Dorothy, who was a lonely little child, with no one in the world to care for but Uncle Porticle, had also fallen into a

habit of sitting on the step of the porch by way of keeping him company; and here they passed many quiet hours together, with the big robin hopping about in his cage, and with the Admiral himself, on his pedestal beside the porch, keeping watch and ward over the fortunes of the inn.

Now the Admiral was only a yard high, and was made of wood into the bargain; but he was a fine figure of a man for all that, being dressed in a very beautiful blue coat (as befitted his name) and canary-colored knee-breeches, and wearing a fore-and-aft hat rakishly perched on the back of his head. On the other hand, he had sundry stray cracks in the calves of his legs, and was badly battered about the nose; but, after all, this only gave him a certain weather-beaten appearance as if he had been around the world any number of times in all sorts of company; and for as long as Dorothy could remember he had been standing on his pedestal beside the porch, enjoying the sunshine and defying the rain, as a gallant officer should, and earnestly gazing at the opposite side of the street through a spy-glass.

Now, what the Admiral was staring at was a mystery. He might, for instance, have been looking at the wooden Highlander that stood at the door of Mr. Pendle's instrument-shop, for nothing more magnificent than this particular Highlander could possibly be imagined. His clothes were of every color of the rainbow, and he had silver buckles on his shoes, and brass buttons on his coat, and he was varnished to such an extent that you could hardly look at him without winking. Then his hair and his whiskers were so red, and his legs were so pink and so fat and so lifelike, that it seemed as if you could almost hear him speak; and, what was more, he had been standing for years at the door of the shop, proudly holding up a preposterous wooden watch that gave half-past three as the correct time at all hours of the day and night. In fact, it would have been no great wonder if the Admiral had stared at him to the end of his days.

SIR WALTER ROSETTES.

SIR WALTER ROSETTES.

Then there was Sir Walter Rosettes, a long-bodied little man in a cavalier's cloak, with a ruff about his neck and enormous rosettes on his shoes, who stood on a pedestal at old Mrs. Peevy's garden gate, offering an imitation tobacco-plant, free of charge, as it were, to any one who would take the

trouble of carrying it home. This bold device was intended to call attention to the fact that Mrs. Peevy kept a tobacco-shop in the front parlor of her little cottage behind the hollyhock bushes, the announcement being backed up by the spectacle of three pipes arranged in a tripod in the window, and by the words "Smokers' Emporium" displayed in gold letters on the glass; and, by the way, Dorothy knew perfectly well who *this* little man was, as somebody had taken the trouble of writing his name with a lead-pencil on his pedestal just below the toes of his shoes.

And lastly there was old Mrs. Peevy herself, who might be seen at any hour of the day, sitting at the door of her cottage, fast asleep in the shade of her big cotton umbrella with the Chinese mandarin for a handle. She wasn't much to look at, perhaps, but there was no way of getting at the Admiral's taste in such matters, so he stared through his spy-glass year in and year out, and nobody was any the wiser.

Now from sitting so much in the porch and turning these things over in her mind, Dorothy had come to know the Admiral and the Highlander and Sir Walter Rosettes as well as she could possibly know persons who didn't know her, and who couldn't have spoken to her if they *had* known her; but nothing came of the acquaintance until a certain Christmas eve. Of course, nobody knew better than Dorothy what Christmas eve should be like. The snow should be falling softly, and just enough should come down to cover up the pavements and make the streets look beautifully white and clean, and to edge the trees and the lamp-posts and the railings as if they were trimmed with soft lace; and just enough to tempt children to come out, and not so much as to keep grown people at home—in fact, just enough for Christmas eve, and not a bit more.

Then the streets should be full of people hurrying along and all carrying plenty of parcels; and the windows should be very gay with delightful wreaths of greens, and bunches of holly with plenty of scarlet berries on them, and the greengrocers should have little forests of assorted hemlock-trees on the sidewalks in front of their shops, and everything should be as cheerful and as bustling as possible.

And, if you liked, there might be just a faint smell of cooking floating about in the air, but this was not important by any means, as it might happen at

any time.

Well, all these good old-fashioned things came to pass on this particular Christmas eve except the snow; and in place of that there came a soft, warm rain which was all very well in its way, except that, as Dorothy said, "It didn't belong on Christmas eve." And just at nightfall she went out into the porch to smell the rain, and to see how Christmas matters generally were getting on in the wet; and she was watching the people hurrying by, and trying to fancy what was in the mysterious-looking parcels they were carrying so carefully under their umbrellas, when she suddenly noticed that the toes of the Admiral's shoes were turned sideways on his pedestal, and looking up at him she saw that he had tucked his spy-glass under his arm, and was gazing down backward at his legs with an air of great concern.

This was so startling that Dorothy almost jumped out of her shoes, and she was just turning to run back into the house when the Admiral caught sight of her, and called out excitedly, "Cracks in my legs!"—and then stared hard at her as if demanding some sort of an explanation of this extraordinary state of affairs.

Dorothy was dreadfully frightened, but she was a very polite little girl, and would have answered the town pump if it had spoken to her; so she swallowed down a great lump that had come up into her throat, and said, as respectfully as she could, "I'm very sorry, sir. I suppose it must be because they are so very old."

"THE ADMIRAL,
MAKING A
DESPERATE
ATTEMPT TO GET
A VIEW OF HIS
LEGS THROUGH
HIS SPY-GLASS."

"THE ADMIRAL,
MAKING A DESPERATE
ATTEMPT TO GET A
VIEW OF HIS LEGS

THROUGH HIS SPY-
GLASS."

"Old!" exclaimed the Admiral, making a desperate attempt to get a view of his legs through his spy-glass. "Why, they're no older than *I* am"; and, upon thinking it over, this seemed so very true that Dorothy felt quite ashamed of her remark and stood looking at him in a rather foolish way.

"Try again," said the Admiral, with a patronizing air.

"No," said Dorothy, gravely shaking her head, "I'm sure I don't know any other reason; only it seems rather strange, you know, that you've never even seen them before."

"If you mean my legs," said the Admiral, "of course I've seen them before—lots of times. But I've never seen 'em behind. That is," he added by way of explanation. "I've never seen 'em behind before."

"But I mean the cracks," said Dorothy, with a faint smile. You see she was beginning to feel a little acquainted with the Admiral by this time, and the conversation didn't seem to be quite so solemn as it had been when he first began talking.

"Then you should say 'seen 'em before *behind*,'" said the Admiral. "That's where they've always been, you know."

Dorothy didn't know exactly what reply to make to this remark; but she thought she ought to say something by way of helping along the conversation, so she began, "I suppose it's kind of——" and here she stopped to think of the word she wanted.

"Kind of what?" said the Admiral severely.

"Kind of—cripplesome, isn't it?" said Dorothy rather confusedly.

"Cripplesome?" exclaimed the Admiral. "Why, that's no word for it. It's positively decrepitoodle——" here he paused for a moment and got extremely red in the face, and then finished up with "——loodelarious," and stared hard at her again, as if inquiring what she thought of *that*.

"THE ADMIRAL SAT UP AND
GAZED ABOUT WITH A
COMPLACENT SMILE." "THE
ADMIRAL SAT UP AND GAZED ABOUT
WITH A COMPLACENT SMILE."

"Goodness!" said Dorothy, drawing a long breath, "what a word!"

"Well, it *is* rather a word," said the Admiral with a very satisfied air. "You see, it means about everything that can happen to a person's legs—" but just here his remarks came abruptly to an end, for as he was strutting about on his pedestal, he suddenly slipped off the edge of it and came to the ground flat on his back.

Dorothy gave a little scream of dismay; but the Admiral, who didn't appear to be in the least disturbed by this accident, sat up and gazed about with a complacent smile. Then, getting on his feet, he took a pipe out of his pocket, and lit it with infinite relish; and having turned up his coat-collar by way of keeping the rest of his clothes dry, he started off down the street without another word. The people going by had all disappeared in the most unaccountable manner, and Dorothy could see him quite plainly as he walked along, tacking from one side of the street to the other with a strange rattling noise, and blowing little puffs of smoke into the air like a shabby little steam-tug going to sea in a storm.

Now all this was extremely exciting, and Dorothy, quite forgetting the rain, ran down the street a little way so as to keep the Admiral in sight. "It's *precisely* like a doll going traveling all by itself," she exclaimed as she ran along. "How he rattles! I suppose *that's* his little cracked legs—and goodness gracious, how he smokes!" she added, for by this time the Admiral had fired up, so to speak, as if he were bound on a long journey, and was blowing out such clouds of smoke that he presently quite shut himself out from view. The smoke smelt somewhat like burnt feathers, which, of course, was not very agreeable, but the worst of it was that when Dorothy turned to run home again she discovered that she couldn't see her way back to the porch, and she was feeling about for it with her hands stretched out, when the smoke suddenly cleared away and she found that the inn, and Mr. Pendle's shop, and Mrs. Peevy's cottage had all disappeared

like a street in a pantomime, and that she was standing quite alone before a strange little stone house.

CHAPTER II

THE FERRY TO NOWHERE

The rain had stopped, and the moon was shining through the breaking clouds, and as Dorothy looked up at the little stone house she saw that it had an archway through it with "FERRY" in large letters on the wall above it. Of course she had no idea of going by herself over a strange ferry; but she was an extremely curious little girl, as you will presently see, and so she immediately ran through the archway to see what the ferry was like and where it took people, but, to her surprise, instead of coming out at the water side, she came into a strange, old-fashioned-looking street as crooked as it could possibly be, and lined on both sides by tall houses with sharply peaked roofs looming up against the evening sky.

"THEY'RE ENTIRELY
DIFFERENT FROM MINE,
ANYHOW,' SAID THE STORK."

"THEY'RE ENTIRELY DIFFERENT
FROM MINE, ANYHOW,' SAID THE
STORK."

There was no one in sight but a stork. He was a very tall stork with red legs, and wore a sort of paper bag on his head with "FERRYMAN" written across the front of it; and as Dorothy appeared he held out one of his claws and said, "Fare, please," in quite a matter-of-fact way.

Dorothy was positively certain that she hadn't any money, but she put her hand into the pocket of her apron, partly for the sake of appearances, and partly because she was a little afraid of the Stork, and, to her surprise, pulled out a large cake. It was nearly as big as a saucer, and was marked "ONE BISKER"; and as this seemed to show that it had some value, she handed it to the ferryman. The Stork turned it over several times rather suspiciously, and then, taking a large bite out of it, remarked, "Very good fare," and dropped the rest of it into a little hole in the wall; and having

done this he stared gravely at Dorothy for a moment, and then said, "What makes your legs bend the wrong way?"

"Why, they don't!" said Dorothy, looking down at them to see if anything had happened to them.

"They're entirely different from mine, anyhow," said the Stork.

"But, you know," said Dorothy very earnestly, "I couldn't sit down if they bent the other way."

"Sitting down is all very well," said the Stork, with a solemn shake of his head, "but you couldn't collect fares with 'em, to save your life," and with this he went into the house and shut the door.

"It seems to me this is a very strange adventure," said Dorothy to herself. "It appears to be mostly about people's legs," and she was gazing down again in a puzzled way at her little black stockings when she heard a cough, and looking up she saw that the Stork had his head out of a small round window in the wall of the house.

"Look here," he said confidentially, "I forgot to ask what your fare was for." He said this in a sort of husky whisper, and as Dorothy looked up at him it seemed something like listening to an enormous cuckoo-clock with a bad cold in its works.

"IT SEEMED LIKE LISTENING TO AN ENORMOUS
CUCKOO-CLOCK."

"IT SEEMED LIKE LISTENING TO AN ENORMOUS CUCKOO-
CLOCK."

"I don't think I know exactly *what* it was for," she said, rather confusedly.

"Well, it's got to be for *something*, you know, or it won't be fair," said the Stork. "I suppose you don't want to go over the ferry?" he added, cocking his head on one side, and looking down at her, inquiringly.

"Oh, no indeed!" said Dorothy, very earnestly.

"*That's* lucky," said the Stork. "It doesn't go anywhere that it ever gets to. Perhaps you'd like to hear about it. It's in poetry, you know."

"Thank you," said Dorothy politely. "I'd like it very much."

"All right," said the Stork. "The wersed is called 'A Ferry Tale'; and, giving another cough to clear his voice, he began:

*Oh, come and cross over to nowhere,
And go where
The nobodies live on their nothing a day!
A tideful of tricks is this merry
Old Ferry,
And these are the things that it does by the way:*

*It pours into parks and disperses
The nurses;
It goes into gardens and scatters the cats;
It leaks into lodgings, disorders
The boarders,
And washes away with their holiday hats.*

*It soaks into shops, and inspires
The buyers
To crawl over counters and climb upon chairs;
It trickles on tailors, it spatters
On hatters,
And makes little milliners scamper up-stairs.*

*It goes out of town and it rambles
Through brambles;
It wallows in hollows and dives into dells;
It flows into farm-yards and sickens
The chickens,
And washes the wheelbarrows into the wells.*

*It turns into taverns and drenches
The benches;
It jumps into pumps and comes out with a roar;
It pounds like a postman at lodges—
Then dodges*

And runs up the lane when they open the door.

*It leaks into laundries and wrangles
 With mangles;
It trips over turnips and tumbles down-hill;
It rolls like a coach along highways
 And byways,
But never gets anywhere, go as it will!*

*Oh, foolish old Ferry! all muddles
 And puddles—
Go fribble and dribble along on your way;
We drink to your health with molasses
 In glasses,
And waft you farewell with a handful of hay!*

"What do you make out of it?" inquired the Stork anxiously.

"I don't make anything out of it," said Dorothy, staring at him in great perplexity.

"I didn't suppose you would," said the Stork, apparently very much relieved. "I've been at it for years and years, and I've never made sixpence out of it yet," with which remark he pulled in his head and disappeared.

"I don't know what he means, I'm sure," said Dorothy, after waiting a moment to see if the Stork would come back, "but I wouldn't go over that ferry for *sixty* sixpences. It's altogether too frolicky"; and having made this wise resolution, she was just turning to go back through the archway when the door of the house flew open and a little stream of water ran out upon the pavement. This was immediately followed by another and much larger flow, and the next moment the water came pouring out through the doorway in such a torrent that she had just time to scramble up on the window-ledge before the street was completely flooded.

**"DEAR ME!" SHE EXCLAIMED, 'HERE COMES ALL THE
FURNITURE!'"**

"DEAR ME!" SHE EXCLAIMED, 'HERE COMES ALL THE FURNITURE!'"

Dorothy's first idea was that there was something wrong with the pipes, but as she peeped in curiously through the window she was astonished to see that it was raining hard inside the house—"and dear me!" she exclaimed, "here comes all the furniture!" and, sure enough, the next moment a lot of old-fashioned furniture came floating out of the house and drifted away down the street. There was a corner cupboard full of crockery, and two spinning-wheels, and a spindle-legged table set out with a blue-and-white tea-set and some cups and saucers, and finally a carved sideboard which made two or three clumsy attempts to get through the doorway broadside on, and then took a fresh start, and came through endwise with a great flourish. All of these things made quite a little fleet, and the effect was very imposing; but by this time the water was quite up to the window-ledge, and as the sideboard was a fatherly-looking piece of furniture with plenty of room to move about in, Dorothy stepped aboard of it as it went by, and, sitting down on a little shelf that ran along the back of it, sailed away in the wake of the tea-table.

CHAPTER III

THE CRUISE OF THE SIDEBOARD

The sideboard behaved in the most absurd manner, spinning around and around in the water, and banging about among the other furniture as if it had never been at sea before, and finally bringing up against the tea-table with a crash in the stupidest way imaginable, and knocking the tea-set and all the cups and saucers into the water. Dorothy felt very ridiculous as you may suppose, and, to add to her mortification, the Stork ferryman suddenly reappeared, and she could see him running along the roofs of the houses, and now and then stopping to stare down at her from the eaves as she sailed by, as if she were the most extraordinary spectacle he had ever seen, as indeed she probably was. Sometimes he waited until the sideboard had floated some distance past him as if to see how it looked, gazed at from behind; and then Dorothy would catch sight of him again far ahead, peering out from behind a chimney, as if to get a front view of the performance. All this was, of course, very impertinent, and although Dorothy was naturally a very kind-hearted little child, she was really quite gratified when the Stork finally made an attempt to get a new view of her from the top of an unusually tall chimney, and fell down into it with a loud screech of dismay.

Presently the street ended at a great open space where the water spread out in every direction, like a lake. The day seemed to be breaking, and it was quite light; and as the sideboard sailed out into the open water, Dorothy caught sight of something like a fat-looking boat, floating at a little distance and slowly drifting toward her. As it came nearer it proved to be Mrs. Peevy's big umbrella upside down, with a little party of people sitting around on the edge of it with their feet against the handle, and, to Dorothy's amazement, she knew every one of them. There was the Admiral, staring about with his spy-glass, and Sir Walter Rosettes, carefully carrying his tobacco-plant as if it were a nosegay, and the Highlander, with his big watch dangling in the water over the side of the umbrella; and last, there was the little Chinese mandarin clinging convulsively to the top of the handle as if he were keeping a lookout from the masthead.

"THE ADMIRAL EXCLAIMED: 'THERE SHE IS! I CAN SEE HER
QUITE PLAINLY!'"

"THE ADMIRAL EXCLAIMED: 'THERE SHE IS! I CAN SEE HER QUITE PLAINLY!'"

The sideboard brought up against the edge of the umbrella with a soft little bump, and the Admiral, hurriedly pointing his spy-glass at Dorothy so that the end of it almost touched her nose, exclaimed excitedly, "There she is! I can see her quite plainly," and the whole party gave an exultant shout.

"How are you getting on *now*?" inquired Sir Walter, as if he had had her under close observation for a week at least.

"I'm getting on pretty well," said Dorothy, mournfully. "I believe I'm crossing a ferry."

"So are we," said the Admiral, cheerfully. "We're a Caravan, you know."

"A Caravan?" exclaimed Dorothy, very much surprised.

"I believe I said 'Caravan' quite distinctly," said the Admiral in an injured tone, appealing to the rest of the party; but no one said anything except the Highlander, who hastily consulted his watch and then exclaimed "Hurrah!" rather doubtfully.

"I understood what you said," explained Dorothy, "but I don't think I know exactly what you mean."

"Never mind what he means," shouted Sir Walter. "*That's* of no consequence."

"No consequence!" exclaimed the Admiral, flaring up. "Why, I mean more in a minute than you do in a week!"

"You *say* more in a minute than anybody could mean in a month," retorted Sir Walter, flourishing his tobacco-plant.

"*I* can talk a year without meaning *anything*," said the Highlander, proudly; but no one took any notice of this remark, which, of course, served him right.

The Admiral stared at Sir Walter for a moment through his spy-glass, and then said very firmly, "You're a pig!" at which the Highlander again

consulted his watch, and then shouted, "Two pigs!" with great enthusiasm, as if that were the time of day.

"And you're another," said Sir Walter, angrily. "If it comes to that, we're all pigs."

"Dear me!" cried Dorothy, quite distressed at all this. "What makes you all quarrel so? You ought to be ashamed of yourselves."

"We're all ashamed of one another, if *that* will do any good," said the Admiral.

"And, you see, that gives each of us two persons to be ashamed of," added Sir Walter, with an air of great satisfaction.

"But that isn't what I mean at all," said Dorothy. "I mean that each one of you ought to be ashamed of *himself*."

"Why, we're each being ashamed of by two persons already," said the Admiral, peevishly. "I should think *that* was enough to satisfy anybody."

"But that isn't the same thing," insisted Dorothy. "Each particular him ought to be ashamed of each particular self." This remark sounded very fine indeed, and Dorothy felt so pleased with herself for having made it that she went on to say, "And the truth of it is, you all argue precisely like a lot of little school-children."

Now, Dorothy herself was only about four feet high, but she said this in such a superior manner that the entire Caravan stared at her with great admiration for a moment, and then began to give a little cheer; but just at this instant the umbrella made a great plunge, as if somebody had given it a sudden push, and the whole party tumbled into the bottom of it like a lot of dolls.

"What kind of a boat do you call this?" shouted Sir Walter, as they all scrambled to their feet and clung desperately to the handle.

"It's a paragondola," said the Admiral, who had suddenly become very pale. "You see, it isn't exactly like an ordinary ship."

"I should think not!" said Sir Walter, indignantly. "I'd as lief go to sea in a toast-rack. Why don't you bring her head up to the wind?" he shouted as the paragondola took another plunge.

"I can't!" cried the Admiral, despairingly; "she hasn't got any head."

"Then put me ashore!" roared Sir Walter, furiously.

Now this was all very well for Sir Walter to say, but by this time the paragondola was racing through the water at such a rate that even the sideboard could hardly keep up with it; and the waves were tossing about in such wild confusion that it was perfectly ridiculous for any one to talk about going ashore. In fact, it was a most exciting moment. The air was filled with flying spray, and the paragondola dashed ahead faster and faster, until at last Dorothy could no longer hear the sound of the voices, and she could just see that they were throwing the big watch overboard as if to lighten the ship. Then she caught sight of the Highlander trying to climb up the handle, and Sir Walter frantically beating him on the back with the tobacco-plant, and the next moment there was another wild plunge and the paragondola and Caravan vanished from sight.

CHAPTER IV

TREE-TOP COUNTRY

It was a very curious thing that the storm seemed to follow the Caravan as if it were a private affair of their own, and the paragondola had no sooner disappeared than Dorothy found herself sailing along as quietly as if such a thing as bad weather had never been heard of. But there was something very lonely about the sideboard now, as it went careering through the water, and she felt quite disconsolate as she sat on the little shelf and wondered what had become of the Caravan.

"If Mrs. Peevy's umbrella shuts up with them inside of it," she said mournfully to herself, "I'm sure I don't know what they'll do. It's such a stiff thing to open that it must be perfectly awful when it shuts up all of a sudden," and she was just giving a little shudder at the mere thought of such a thing, when the sideboard bumped up against something and she found that it had run into a tree. In fact, she found that she had drifted into a forest of enormous trees, growing in a most remarkable manner straight up out of the lake; and as she looked up she could see great branches stretching out in every direction far above her head, all interlaced together and covered with leaves as if it had been midsummer instead of being, as it certainly was, Christmas day.

**"THE SIDEBOARD SLOWLY FLOATED ALONG THROUGH
THIS STRANGE FOREST."**

**"THE SIDEBOARD SLOWLY FLOATED ALONG THROUGH THIS STRANGE
FOREST."**

As the sideboard slowly floated along through this strange forest, Dorothy presently discovered that each tree had a little door in it, close to the water's edge, with a small platform before it by way of a door-step, as if the people who lived in the trees had a fancy for going about visiting in boats. But she couldn't help wondering who in the world, or, rather, who in the trees, the people went to see, for all the little doors were shut as tight as wax, and had notices posted up on them, such as "No admittance," "Go away," "Gone to

Persia," and many others, all of which Dorothy considered extremely rude, especially one notice which read, "Beware of the Pig," as if the person who lived in that particular tree was too stingy to keep a dog.

Now all this was very distressing, because, in the first place, Dorothy was extremely fond of visiting, and, in the second place, she was getting rather tired of sailing about on the sideboard; and she was therefore greatly pleased when she presently came to a door without any notice upon it. There was, moreover, a bright little brass knocker on this door, and as this seemed to show that people were expected to call there if they felt like it, she waited until the sideboard was passing close to the platform and then gave a little jump ashore.

The sideboard took a great roll backward and held up its front feet as if expressing its surprise at this proceeding, and as it pitched forward again the doors of it flew open, and a number of large pies fell out into the water and floated away in all directions. To Dorothy's amazement, the sideboard immediately started off after them, and began pushing them together, like a shepherd's dog collecting a flock of runaway sheep; and then, having got them all together in a compact bunch, sailed solemnly away, shoving the pies ahead of it.

Dorothy now looked at the door again, and saw that it was standing partly open. The doorway was only about as high as her shoulder, and as she stooped down and looked through it she saw there was a small winding stairway inside, leading up through the body of the tree. She listened for a moment, but everything was perfectly quiet inside, so she squeezed in through the doorway and ran up the stairs as fast as she could go.

DOROTHY MAKES A CALL IN THE TREE-TOP COUNTRY.
DOROTHY MAKES A CALL IN THE TREE-TOP COUNTRY.

The stairway ended at the top in a sort of trap-door, and Dorothy popped up through it like a jack-in-the-box; but instead of coming out, as she expected, among the branches of the tree, she found herself in a wide, open field as flat as a pancake, and with a small house standing far out in the middle of it. It was a bright and sunny place, and quite like an ordinary field in every way except that, in place of grass, it had a curious floor of branches, closely braided together like the bottom of a market-basket; but, as this seemed

natural enough, considering that the field was in the top of a tree, Dorothy hurried away to the little house without giving the floor a second thought.

As she came up to the house she saw that it was a charming little cottage with vines trained about the latticed windows, and with a sign over the door, reading—

THE OUTSIDE INN

"I suppose they'll take me for a customer," she said, looking rather doubtfully at the sign, "and I haven't got any money. But I'm very little, and I won't stay very long," she added, by way of excusing herself, and as she said this she softly pushed open the door and went in. To her great surprise, there was no inside to the house, and she came out into the field again on the other side of the door. The wall on this side, however, was nicely papered, and had pictures hanging on it, and there were curtains at the windows as if it had been one side of a room at some time or another; but there was a notice pasted up beside the door, reading—

THE INN-SIDE OUT

as if the rest of the house had gone out for a walk, and might be expected back at any time.

Now, as you may suppose, Dorothy was quite unprepared for all this, and she was looking about in great astonishment when she suddenly discovered that the furniture was at home, and was standing in a rather lonely manner quite by itself in the open field. It was, moreover, the strangest-looking furniture she had ever seen, for it was growing directly out of the floor in a twisted-up fashion, something like the grapevine chairs in Uncle Porticle's garden; but the oddest part of it all was a ridiculous-looking bed with leaves sprouting out of its legs, and with great pink blossoms growing on the bed-posts like the satin bows on Dorothy's little bed at the Blue Admiral Inn. All this was so remarkable that she went over to where the furniture was standing to take a closer look at it; and as she came up alongside the bed

she was amazed to see that the Caravan, all three of them, were lying in it in a row, with their eyes closed as if they were fast asleep. This was such an unexpected sight that Dorothy first drew a long breath of astonishment and then exclaimed, "Jiminy!" which was a word she used only on particular occasions; and, as she said this, the Caravan opened their eyes and stared at her like so many owls.

"Why, what are you all doing here?" she said; at which the Admiral sat up in bed, and after taking a hurried look at her through his spy-glass, said, "Shipwrecked!" in a solemn voice and then lay down again.

"Did the paragoner shut up with you?" inquired Dorothy, anxiously.

"Yes, ma'am," said the Admiral.

"And squashed us," added Sir Walter.

"Like everything," put in the Highlander.

"I was afraid it would," said Dorothy, sorrowfully; "I s'pose it was something like being at sea in a cornucopia."

"Does a cornucopia have things in it that pinch your legs?" inquired Sir Walter, with an air of great interest.

"Oh, no," said Dorothy.

"Then it wasn't like it at all," said Sir Walter, peevishly.

"It was about as much like it," said the Admiral, "as a pump is like a post-captain"; and he said this in such a positive way that Dorothy didn't like to contradict him. In fact she really didn't know anything about the matter, so she merely said, as politely as she could, "I don't think I know what a post-captain is."

"I don't either," said the Admiral, promptly, "but I can tell you how they behave"; and sitting up in bed, he recited these verses:

*Post-captain at the Needles and commander of a crew
On the "Royal Biddy" frigate was Sir Peter Bombazoo;
His mind was full of music, and his head was full of tunes,*

And he cheerfully exhibited on pleasant afternoons.

THE EXTRAORDINARY POST-CAPTAIN (1).

*He could whistle, on his fingers, an invigorating reel,
And could imitate a piper on the handles of the wheel;
He could play in double octaves, too, all up and down the
rail,
Or rattle off a rondo on the bottom of a pail.*

THE EXTRAORDINARY POST-CAPTAIN (2).

*Then porters with their packages, and bakers with their
buns,
And countesses in carriages, and grenadiers with guns,
And admirals and commodores, arrived from near and far
To listen to the music of this entertaining tar.*

*When they heard the Captain humming, and beheld the
dancing crew,
The commodores severely said, "Why, this will never do!"
And the admirals all hurried home, remarking, "This is most
Extraordinary conduct for a captain at his post."*

"HE DID A LITTLE FIFING ON THE EDGES OF THE NOTE."

"HE DID A LITTLE FIFING ON THE EDGES OF THE NOTE."

*Then they sent some sailing-orders to Sir Peter, in a boat,
And he did a little fifing on the edges of the note;
But he read the sailing-orders, as, of course, he had to do,
And removed the "Royal Biddy" to the Bay of Boohgabooh.*

*Now, Sir Peter took it kindly, but it's proper to explain
He was sent to catch a pirate out upon the Spanish Main;
And he played, with variations, an imaginary tune
On the buttons of his waistcoat, like a jocular bassoon.*

*Then a topman saw the Pirate come a-sailing in the bay,
And reported to the Captain in the customary way.*

*"I'll receive him," said Sir Peter, "with a musical salute!"
And he gave some imitations of a double-jointed flute.*

*Then the Pirate cried derisively, "I've heard it done before!"
And he hoisted up a banner emblematical of gore.
But Sir Peter said serenely, "You may double-shot the guns
While I sing my little ballad of 'The Butter on the Buns.'"*

*Then the Pirate banged Sir Peter and Sir Peter banged him
back,
And they banged away together as they took another tack.
Then Sir Peter said politely, "You may board him, if you
like"—
And he played a little dirge upon the handle of a pike.*

*Then the "Biddies" poured like hornets down upon the
Pirate's deck,
And Sir Peter caught the Pirate, and he took him by the
neck,
And remarked, "You must excuse me, but you acted like a
brute
When I gave my imitation of that double-jointed flute."*

*So they took that wicked Pirate, and they took his wicked
crew,
And tied them up with double knots in packages of two;
And left them lying on their backs in rows upon the beach
With a little bread and water within comfortable reach.*
**"SIR PETER CAUGHT THE PIRATE, AND HE TOOK HIM BY THE
NECK."
"SIR PETER CAUGHT THE PIRATE, AND HE TOOK HIM BY THE NECK."**

*Now the Pirate had a treasure (mostly silverware and gold),
And Sir Peter took and stowed it in the bottom of his hold;
And said "I will retire on this cargo of doubloons,
And each of you, my gallant crew, may have some silver
spoons."*

*Now commodores in coach-and-fours, and corporals in
cabs,
And men with carts of pies and tarts, and fishermen with
crabs,
And barristers with wigs, in gigs, still gather on the strand—
But there isn't any music save a little German band.*

"I think Sir Peter was perfectly grand!" said Dorothy, as the Admiral finished his verses. "He was so composed."

"So was the poetry," said the Admiral. "It *had* to be composed, you know, or there wouldn't have been any."

"*That* would have been fine!" remarked the Highlander.

The Admiral got so red in the face at this, that Dorothy thought he was going into some kind of a fit; but just at this moment there was a sharp rap at the door, and Sir Walter exclaimed, "*That's* Bob Scarlet, and here we are in his flower-bed!"

"Jibs and jiggers!" said the Admiral, "I never thought of that. What do you suppose he'll do?"

"Pick us!" said the Highlander, with remarkable presence of mind.

"Then tell him we're all out," said the Admiral to Dorothy in extreme agitation, and with this, the whole Caravan disappeared under the bed with all possible despatch.

"We *are* out, you know," said Dorothy to herself, "because there's no *in* for us to be in"; and then she called out in a very loud voice, "We're all out in here!" which wasn't exactly what she meant to say, after all.

But there was no answer, and she was just stooping down to call through the keyhole when she saw that the wall-paper was nothing but a vine growing on a trellis, and the door only a little rustic gate leading through it. "And, dear me!—where has the furniture gone to?" she exclaimed, for the curly chairs had changed into flower-pot stands, and the bed into a great mound of waving lilies, and she found herself standing in a beautiful garden.

CHAPTER V

BOB SCARLET'S GARDEN

Being in a garden full of flowers at Christmas-time is a very fine thing; and Dorothy was looking about with great delight, and wondering how it had all happened, when she suddenly caught sight of a big robin walking along one of the paths, and examining the various plants with an air of great interest. He was a very big robin, indeed—in fact, he was about as large as a goose; and he had on a gardener's hat, and a bright red waistcoat which he was wearing unbuttoned so as to give his fat little chest plenty of room; but the most remarkable thing about him was that he was walking about *with his hands in his waistcoat-pockets*.

Dorothy had never seen a robin do this before, and she was looking at him in great astonishment, when he chanced to turn around to take a particular look at a large flower, and she saw that he had two caterpillars neatly embroidered on the back of his waistcoat so as to form the letters B. S.

"HE WAS WALKING ABOUT WITH HIS HANDS IN HIS
WAISTCOAT-POCKETS."

"HE WAS WALKING ABOUT WITH HIS HANDS IN HIS WAISTCOAT-POCKETS."

"Now I wonder what B. S. means," she said to herself with her usual curiosity. "It *stands* for Brown Sugar, but, of course, it can't be that. Perhaps it means Best Suit, or Bird Superintendent, or—or—why it must mean Bob Scarlet, to be sure!" and clapping her hands in the joy of this discovery, she ran after the Robin to take a nearer look at him and, if possible, to have a little conversation.

But Bob Scarlet proved to be a very difficult person to get near to. Over and over again Dorothy caught sight of the top of his hat beyond a hedge, or saw the red waistcoat through the bushes; but no matter how quickly she stole around to the spot, he was always gone before she got there, and she would see the hat or the waistcoat far away, in another part of the garden, and would hurry after him only to be disappointed as before. She was

getting very tired of this, and was walking around rather disconsolately, when she happened to look at one of the plants, and discovered that little sunbonnets were growing on it in great profusion, like white lilies; and this was such a delightful discovery, and such an exceedingly interesting circumstance, that she instantly forgot all about Bob Scarlet, and started away in great excitement to examine the other plants.

"THERE WERE PLANTS LOADED DOWN WITH LITTLE
PINAFORES, AND SHRUBS WITH SMALL SHOES GROWING ALL
OVER THEM."

"THERE WERE PLANTS LOADED DOWN WITH LITTLE PINAFORES, AND SHRUBS
WITH SMALL SHOES GROWING ALL OVER THEM."

There was a great variety of them, and they all were of the same curious character. Besides the bonnet-bush, there were plants loaded down with little pinafores, and shrubs with small shoes growing all over them, like peas, and delicate vines of thread with button-blossoms on them, and, what particularly pleased Dorothy, a row of pots marked "FROCK FLOWERS," and each containing a stalk with a crisp little frock growing on it, like a big tulip upside down.

"They're only big enough for dolls," chattered Dorothy, as she hurried from one to the other, "but, of course, they'll grow. I s'pose it's what they call a nursery-garden. Just fancy—" she exclaimed, stopping short and clasping her hands in a rapture,—"just fancy going out to pick an apronful of delightful new stockings, or running out every day to see if your best frock is ripe yet!" And I'm sure I don't know what she would have said next, but just at this moment she caught sight of a paper lying in the path before her, and, of course, immediately became interested in *that*.

It was folded something like a lawyer's document, and was very neatly marked in red ink "MEMORUMDRUMS"; and after looking at it curiously for a moment, Dorothy said to herself, "It's prob'bly a wash-list; nothing but two aprons, and four HDKeffs, and ten towels—there's always such a *lot* of towels, you know," and here she picked up the paper; but instead of being a wash-list, she found it contained these verses:

*Have Angleworms attractive homes?
Do Bumblebees have brains?*

*Do Caterpillars carry combs?
Do Dodos dote on drains?
Can Eels elude elastic earls?
Do Flatfish fish for flats?
Are Grigs agreeable to girls?
Do Hares have hunting-hats?
Do Ices make an Ibex ill?
Do Jackdaws jug their jam?
Do Kites kiss all the kids they kill?
Do Llamas live on lamb?
Will Moles molest a mounted mink?
Do Newts deny the news?
Are Oysters boisterous when they drink?
Do Parrots prowl in pews?
Do Quakers get their quills from Quails?
Do Rabbits rob on roads?
Are Snakes supposed to sneer at snails?
Do Tortoises tease toads?
Can Unicorns perform on horns?
Do Vipers value veal?
Do Weasels weep when fast asleep?
Can Xylophagans squeal?
Do Yaks in packs invite attacks?
Are Zebras full of zeal?*

P. S. Shake well and recite every morning in a shady place.

"I don't believe a single one of them, and I never read such stuff!" exclaimed Dorothy, indignantly; and she was just about to throw down the paper when Bob Scarlet suddenly appeared, hurrying along the path, and gazing anxiously from side to side as if he had lost something. As he came upon Dorothy, he started violently, and said "Shoo!" with great vehemence, and then, after staring at her a moment, added, "Oh, I beg your pardon—I thought you were a cat. Have you seen anything of my exercise?"

"Is this it?" said Dorothy, holding up the paper.

"That's it," said the Robin, in a tone of great satisfaction. "Shake it hard, please."

Dorothy gave the paper a good shake, after which Bob Scarlet took it and stuffed it into his waistcoat-pocket, remarking, "It has to be well shaken before I take it, you know."

"Is that the prescription?" said Dorothy, beginning to laugh.

"No, it's the postscription," replied the Robin, very seriously; "but, somehow, I never remember it till I come to it. I suppose it's put at the end so that I won't forget it the next time. You see, it's about the only exercise I have."

"I should think it was very good exercise," said Dorothy, trying to look serious again.

"Oh, it's *good* enough, what there is of it," said the Robin, in an offhand way.

"But I'm sure there's *enough* of it," said Dorothy.

"There *is* enough of it, such as it is," replied the Robin.

"Such as it is?" repeated Dorothy, beginning to feel a little perplexed. "Why, it's *hard* enough, I'm sure. It's enough to drive a person quite distracted."

"Well, it's a corker till you get used to it," said the Robin, strutting about. "There's such a tremendous variety to it, you see, that it exercises you all over at once."

This was so ridiculous that Dorothy laughed outright. "I should *never* get used to it," she said. "I don't believe I know a single one of the answers."

"*I* do!" said Bob Scarlet, proudly; "I know 'em all. It's 'No' to everything in it."

"Dear me!" said Dorothy, feeling quite provoked at herself, "of course it is. I never thought of that."

"And when you can answer *them*," continued the Robin, with a very important air, "you can answer anything."

Now, as the Robin said this, it suddenly occurred to Dorothy that she had been lost for quite a long time, and that this was a good opportunity for getting a little information, so she said very politely: "Then I wish you'd please tell me where I am."

"Why, you're *here*," replied the Robin, promptly. "That's what *I* call an easy one."

"But *where* is it?" said Dorothy.

"Where is *what*?" said the Robin, looking rather puzzled.

"'WHY, THE PLACE WHERE I AM,' SAID DOROTHY."

"'WHY, THE PLACE WHERE I AM,' SAID DOROTHY."

"Why, the place where I am," said Dorothy.

"That's here, too," replied the Robin, and then, looking at her suspiciously, he added, "Come—no chaffing, you know. I won't have it."

"But I'm *not* chaffing," said Dorothy, beginning to feel a little provoked; "it's only because you twist the things I say the wrong way."

"What do you say 'em the wrong way for, then?" said Bob Scarlet, irritably. "Why don't you get 'em straight?"

"DOROTHY STARTED OFF AT
ONCE, AS FAST AS SHE COULD
RUN." "DOROTHY STARTED OFF AT
ONCE, AS FAST AS SHE COULD RUN."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Dorothy, now quite out of patience. "How dreadfully confusing it all is! Don't you understand?—I only want to know where the place is where I am now,—whereabouts in the geography, I mean," she added in desperation.

"It isn't in there at all," said Bob Scarlet, very decidedly. "There isn't a geography going that could hold on to it for five minutes."

"Do you mean that it isn't *anywhere*?" exclaimed Dorothy, beginning to feel a little frightened.

"No, I don't," said Bob Scarlet, obstinately. "I mean that it is anywhere—anywhere that it chooses to be, you know; only it doesn't *stay* anywhere any longer than it likes."

"Then I'm going away," said Dorothy, hastily. "I won't stay in such a place."

"Well, you'd better be quick about it," said the Robin, with a chuckle, "or there won't be any place to go away *from*. I can feel it beginning to go now," and with this remark Bob Scarlet him self hurried away.

There was something so alarming in the idea of a place going away and leaving her behind, that Dorothy started off at once, as fast as she could run, and indeed she wasn't a moment too soon. The garden itself was already beginning to be very much agitated, and the clothes on the plants were folding themselves up in a fluttering sort of a way as she ran past them; and she noticed, moreover, that the little shoes on the shoe-shrub were so withered away that they looked like a lot of raisins. But she had no time to stop and look at such things, and she ran on and on until, to her delight, she came suddenly upon the little trap-door where she had come up. There wasn't a minute to spare, and she jumped down into the hole without so much as stopping to look back at the vanishing garden, and hurried down the little stairway. It was as dark as pitch, and as she ran down, going around and around, on the winding stairs, she could hear them folding up behind her like the slats of a blind; and she had just time to rush through the door at the bottom, when the trunk of the tree flapped inward like an empty bag and then shot up into the air.

CHAPTER VI

IN THE TOY-SHOP

"IT IS A SHELF!" SHE
EXCLAIMED. "IT IS A SHELF!"
SHE EXCLAIMED."

The first thing that Dorothy did was to draw a long breath over her narrow escape, and the next thing was to look up into the air to see what had become of the tree, and she saw the braided floor of the garden floating away, far above her head, with the flapping trunks of the trees dangling from it like a lot of one-legged trousers. This was a rather ridiculous spectacle, and when the floor presently shriveled up into a small brown patch, like a flying pancake, and then went entirely out of sight, she said "Pooh!" very contemptuously and felt quite brave again.

"It wasn't half so solemn as I expected," she went on, chattering to herself; "I certainly thought there would be all kinds of phenomeners, and, after all, it's precisely like nothing but a big basket of old clothes, blowing away. But it's just as well to be saved, of course, only I don't know where I am any more than I did before. It's a kind of wooden floor, I think," she added, stamping on it with her little shoe; "and, dear me! I verily believe it's nothing but a shelf. It *is* a shelf!" she exclaimed, peeping cautiously over the edge; "and there's the real floor ever so far away. I can never jump down there in the world without being dashed to destruction!"—and she was just thinking how it would do to hang from the edge of the shelf by her hands and then let herself drop (with her eyes shut, of course) when a little party of people came tumbling down through the air and fell in a heap close beside her. She gave a scream of dismay and then stood staring at them in utter bewilderment, for, as the party scrambled to their feet, she saw they were the Caravan, dressed up in the most extraordinary fashion, in little frocks and long shawls, and all wearing sunbonnets. The Highlander, with his usual bad luck, had put on *his* sunbonnet backward, with the crown over his face, and was struggling with it so helplessly that Dorothy rushed at him

and got it off just in time to save him from being suffocated. In fact, he was so black in the face that she had to pound him on the back to bring him to.

"THE HIGHLANDER, WITH HIS USUAL BAD LUCK, HAD PUT ON HIS SUNBONNET BACKWARD."

"THE HIGHLANDER, WITH HIS USUAL BAD LUCK, HAD PUT ON HIS SUNBONNET BACKWARD."

"We're disguised, you know," said the Admiral, breathlessly. "We found these things under the bed. Bob Scarlet isn't anywhere about, is he?" he added, staring around in an agitated manner through his spy-glass.

"About?" said Dorothy, trying to look serious. "I should think he was about five miles from here by this time."

"I wish it was five thousand," exclaimed Sir Walter, angrily, smoothing down his frock. "Old Peckjabber!"

"Why, what in the world is the matter?" said Dorothy, beginning to laugh in spite of herself.

"Matter!" exclaimed the Admiral, his voice fairly trembling with emotion; "why, look here! We was all shrinking away to nothing in that wanishing garden. Bob Scarlet himself was no bigger than an ant when we came away."

"And we wasn't any bigger than uncles," put in the Highlander.

"*You're* not more than three inches high this minute," said Sir Walter, surveying Dorothy with a critical air, with his head cocked on one side.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Dorothy, with a start. "It seems to me that's extremely small. I should think that I'd have felt it coming on."

"It comes on sort of sneaking, and you don't notice it," said the Admiral. "*We'd* have been completely invisibile by this time if we hadn't jumped overboard."

"It was an awful jump!" said Dorothy, solemnly. "Didn't it hurt to fall so far?"

"Not at all," said the Admiral, cheerfully. "The falling part of it was quite agreeable—so cool and rushing, you know; but the landing was tremendous severe."

"Banged us like anything," explained the Highlander; and with this the Caravan locked arms and walked away with the tails of their shawls trailing behind them.

"What strange little things they are!" said Dorothy, reflectively, as she walked along after them, "and they're for all the world precisely like animated dolls—movable, you know," she added, not feeling quite sure that "animated" was the proper word,— "and speaking of dolls, here's a perfect multitude of 'em!" she exclaimed, for just then she came upon a long row of dolls beautifully dressed, and standing on their heels with their heads against the wall. They were at least five times as big as Dorothy herself, and had price-tickets tucked into their sashes, such as "2/6, CHEAP," "5s., REAL WAX," and so on; and Dorothy, clapping her hands in an ecstasy of delight, exclaimed: "Why, it's a monstrous, enormous toy-shop!" and then she hurried on to see what else there might be on exhibition.

"Marbles, prob'bly," she remarked, peering over the edge of a basket full of what looked like enormous stone cannon-balls of various colors; "for mastodons, *I* should say, only I don't know as *they* ever play marbles,—grocery shop, full of dear little drawers with real knobs on 'em, —'pothecary's shop with *true* pill-boxes," she went on, examining one delightful thing after another; "and here's a farm out of a box, and all the same funny old things—trees with green shavings on them and fences with feet so they'll stand up, and here's the dear fam'ly, same size as the trees and the houses, of course, and—oh! I beg your pardon," she exclaimed, for her frock had touched the farmer and knocked him over flat on his back. "And here's a Noah's Ark, full of higgledy-piggledy animals—why, what are you doing here?" she cried, for just at that moment she suddenly discovered the Caravan, all huddled together at the door of the ark, and apparently discussing something of vast importance.

"We're buying a camel," said the Admiral, excitedly; "they've got just the one we want for the Caravan."

"His name is Humphrey," shouted the Highlander, uproariously, "and he's got three humps!"

"Nonsense!" cried Dorothy, bursting into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. "There never was such a thing."

"They have 'em in arks," said the Admiral, very earnestly. "You can find *anything* in arks if you only go deep enough. I've seen 'em with patriarchs in 'em, 'way down at the bottom."

"Did *they* have any humps?" inquired the Highlander with an air of great interest.

Dorothy went off again into a burst of laughter at this. "He's really the most ignorant little creature I ever saw," she said.

"I thought they was something to ride on," said the Highlander, sulkily; "otherwise, I say, let 'em keep out of arks!" The rest of the Caravan evidently sided with him in this opinion, and after staring at Dorothy for a moment with great disfavor they all called out "Old Proudie!" and solemnly walked off in a row as before.

"I believe I shall have a fit if I meet them again," said Dorothy to herself, laughing till her eyes were full of tears. "They're certainly the foolishest things I ever saw," and with this she walked away through the shop, and was just beginning to look at the toys again, when she came suddenly upon an old dame sitting contentedly in the shop in a great arm-chair. She was eating porridge out of a bowl in her lap, and her head was so close to the edge of the shelf that Dorothy almost walked into her cap.

"Drat the toys!" cried the old dame, starting so violently that her spectacles fell off her nose into the porridge. "Drat the new-fangled things!"—and here she aimed a blow at Dorothy with her spoon. "They're enough to scare folks out of their senses. Give *me* the old-fashioned kind—deaf and dumb and blind and stiff"—but by this time Dorothy, almost frightened out of her wits, had run away and was hiding behind a doll's sofa.

"*She's* a nice person to have charge of a shop," she exclaimed indignantly, as she listened to the old dame scolding to herself in the distance. "The idea of not knowing human persons when you see them! Of course, being so

small *is* rather unusual, and it's really quite dangerous, you know," she went on, giving a little shiver at the thought of what might have happened. "Just fancy being wrapped up in a piece of stiff paper by mistake—shrieking wouldn't do the least good because, of course, she's deaf as anything—"

"How much are you a dozen?" said a voice, and Dorothy, looking around, saw that it was a Dancing-Jack in the shop-window speaking to her. He was a gorgeous creature, with bells on the seams of his clothes and with arms and legs of different colors, and he was lounging in an easy attitude with his right leg thrown over the top of a toy livery-stable and his left foot in a large ornamental tea-cup; but as he was fastened to a hook by a loop in the top of his hat, Dorothy didn't feel in the least afraid of him.

"Thank you," she replied with much dignity, "I'm not a dozen at all. I'm a single person. That sounds kind of unmarried," she thought to herself, "but it's the exact truth."

"YOU KNOW YOUR SIZE DOES COME IN DOZENS, ASSORTED,"
CONTINUED THE JACK."

"YOU KNOW YOUR SIZE DOES COME IN DOZENS, ASSORTED," CONTINUED THE
JACK."

"No offense, I hope," said the Jack, looking somewhat abashed.

"No—not exactly," said Dorothy rather stiffly.

"You know, your size *does* come in dozens—assorted," continued the Jack, with quite a professional air. "Family of nine, two maids with dusters, and cook with removable apron. Very popular, I believe."

"So I should think," remarked Dorothy, beginning to recover her good nature.

"But of course *singles* are much more select," said the Jack. "*We* never come in dozens, you know."

"I suppose not," said Dorothy, innocently. "I can't imagine anybody wanting twelve Dancing-Jacks all at the same time."

"It wouldn't do any good if they did want 'em," said the Jack. "They couldn't get 'em,—that is, not in *this* shop."

Now, while this conversation was going on, Dorothy noticed that the various things in the shop-window had a curious way of constantly turning into something else. She discovered this by seeing a little bunch of yellow peg-tops change into a plateful of pears while she chanced to be looking at them; and a moment afterward she caught a doll's saucepan, that was hanging in one corner of the window, just in the act of quietly turning into a battledore with a red morocco handle. This struck her as being such a remarkable performance that she immediately began looking at one thing after another, and watching the various changes, until she was quite bewildered.

"It's something like a Christmas pantomime," she said to herself; "and it isn't the slightest use, you know, trying to fancy what anything's going to be, because everything that happens is so unproblesome. I don't know where I got *that* word from," she went on, "but it seems to express exactly what I mean. F'r instance, there's a little cradle that's just been turned into a coal-scuttle, and if *that* isn't unproblesome, well then—never mind!" (which, as you know, is a ridiculous way little girls have of finishing their sentences.)

By this time she had got around again to the toy livery-stable, and she was extremely pleased to find that it had turned into a smart little baronial castle with a turret at each end, and that the ornamental tea-cup was just changing, with a good deal of a flourish, into a small rowboat floating in a little stream that ran by the castle walls.

"Come, *that's* the finest thing yet!" exclaimed Dorothy, looking at all this with great admiration; "and I wish a brazen knight would come out with a trumpet and blow a blast"—you see, she was quite romantic at times—and she was just admiring the clever way in which the boat was getting rid of the handle of the tea-cup, when the Dancing-Jack suddenly stopped talking, and began scrambling over the roof of the castle. He was extremely pale, and, to Dorothy's alarm, spots of bright colors were coming out all over him, as if he had been made of stained glass, and was being lighted up from the inside.

"I believe I'm going to turn into something," he said, glaring wildly about, and speaking in a very agitated voice.

"Goodness!" exclaimed Dorothy in dismay; "what do you suppose it's going to be?"

"I think—" said the Jack, solemnly,—"I think it's going to be a patchwork quilt," but just as he was finishing this remark a sort of wriggle passed through him, and, to Dorothy's amazement, he turned into a slender Harlequin all made up of spangles and shining triangles.

Now this was all very well, and, of course, much better than turning into a quilt of any sort; but as the Dancing-Jack's last remark went on without stopping, and was taken charge of, so to speak, and finished by the Harlequin, it mixed up the two in a very confusing way. In fact, by the time the remark came to an end, Dorothy didn't really know which of them was talking to her, and, to make matters worse, the Harlequin vanished for a moment, and then reappeared, about one half of his original size, coming out of the door of the castle with an unconcerned air as if he hadn't had anything to do with the affair.

"It's dreadfully confusing," said Dorothy to herself, "not to know which of two persons is talking to you, 'specially when there's really only one of them here"; but she never had a chance to find out anything about the matter, for in the mean time a part of the castle had quietly turned upside down, and was now a little stone bridge with the stream flowing beneath it, and the Harlequin, who was constantly getting smaller and smaller, was standing with one foot in the boat as if he were trying to choose between taking a little excursion on the water and going out of sight altogether.

"Excuse me—but did you say anything?" said Dorothy, feeling quite sure that there was no time to be lost.

"All that *I* said was 'quilt,'" replied the Harlequin; "I suppose there's no particular harm in that?"

"Oh, dear, no!" said Dorothy, hastily; "only it seems a rather queer way of beginning a conversation, you know."

"It's as good as any other way if it's all you have to say," said the Harlequin, and by this time he had both feet in the boat, and had evidently decided on the water excursion, for, before Dorothy could think of anything more to say to him, he sailed away under the bridge and disappeared.

"HE SAILED AWAY UNDER THE BRIDGE."
"HE SAILED AWAY UNDER THE BRIDGE."

CHAPTER VII

THE SONG IN THE DELL

"I'm sorry he's gone," said Dorothy to herself, gazing with longing eyes after the Harlequin. "He wasn't much to talk to, but he was awful beautiful to look at"; and, having relieved her mind by this remark, she was just starting to take another walk through the shop when she suddenly caught sight of a small door in one corner. It wasn't much larger than a rat-hole, but it was big enough for her to go through, and that, of course, was the important thing; and as she never could bear to go by strange doorways until she knew where they led to, she immediately ran through this one, and, quite to her surprise, found herself outside the toy-shop.

There was a steep bank here sloping down from the wall of the shop, and Dorothy was much interested at discovering that it was completely overgrown with little green rocking-chairs. They were growing about in great confusion, and once or twice, when her frock happened to brush against them, quite an avalanche of them went clattering down the bank and broke up at the bottom into curious little bits of wood like jackstraws. This made climbing down the bank very exciting, but she got safely to the bottom at last, and was just starting off for another journey of discovery when she came suddenly upon the toy farm-house standing quite by itself in the open country. None of the family was present except the Farmer, who was standing in front of the house, staring at it in a bewildered way as if he had never laid eyes on it before. He was a plain-featured man, with a curious little hat something like the lid of a coffee-pot, and with a great number of large yellow buttons arranged on the front of his coat like a row of cream-tarts; and, after the manner of all toy-farmers, he was buried to the ankles in a round piece of wood to keep him from falling over.

Now Dorothy had always particularly wanted to see the inside of a toy farm-house, and, as this seemed to be an excellent opportunity, she walked up to the Farmer and said, very politely, "Can I see your house?"

"I should think you could if you looked at it," said the Farmer, staring first at her and then at the house, as if he were greatly surprised at the question; "*I can see it easily enough.*"

"But I mean, can I go over it?" said Dorothy, rather confused by this answer.

The Farmer rubbed his nose and looked thoughtfully at the roof of the house for a moment and then said, rather sulkily, "Yes, I suppose you can, but you must agree not to knock off the chimbleys."

"Dear me," said Dorothy, beginning to laugh, "that isn't what I mean at all. I mean, can I go through it?"

The Farmer, after turning over this proposition in his mind with great deliberation, got down on his hands and knees and took a long look through the little door in the front of the house, and then getting up on his feet again, said, very seriously, "I don't see anything to prevent it; there's another door at the back,"—and walked gravely away. He did this in a very peculiar way, by a sort of sidelong roll on his round wooden block like a barrel being worked along on one end; and, as Dorothy stood watching this performance with great interest, he presently fell over one of the little rocking-chairs, and coming down heavily on his back, rolled away on the edge of his block and the rim of his little round hat without making the slightest attempt to get on his feet again.

"I shall look precisely like a elephant with a pagoda on his back," said Dorothy, as she got down on her hands and knees and crawled through the little door into the house, "but I'm going to see what it's like while I have the chance. All hollow, right up to the roof, just as I expected," she exclaimed. "I s'pose that's so the fam'ly can stand up when they come inside." But there was nothing in the house but a lot of old umbrellas tied up in bundles and marked "DANGEROUS," and as she didn't think these were very interesting, and as, moreover, her head by this time was out of the door at the back, she crawled through without stopping and scrambled up on to her feet again.

"Oh, lovely!" cried Dorothy, clapping her hands in a rapture of delight; for she found herself in a beautiful wood—not a make-believe affair like the toy-farm, but a real wood with soft grass and pads of dark-green moss growing underfoot, and with ferns and forest flowers springing up on all sides. The wind was rustling pleasantly in the trees, and the sunlight, shining down through the dancing leaves, made little patches of light that chased each other about on the grass, and, as Dorothy walked along, she felt happier than she had at any time since losing the Blue Admiral Inn. To be sure, it wasn't the easiest matter in the world to get along, for as the trees and the bushes and the blades of grass were all of the natural size and Dorothy was no bigger than a wren, she fell over a good many twigs and other small obstacles, and tumbled down a great many times. Then, too, she found it rather trying to her nerves, at first, to meet with rabbits as big as horses, to come suddenly upon quails whistling like steam-engines, and to be chattered at by squirrels a head taller than she herself was; but she was a very wise little child about such matters, and she said to herself, "Why, of course, they're only their usual sizes, you know, and they're sure to be the same scary things they always are,"—and then she stamped her foot at them and said "Shoo!" very boldly, and, after laughing to see the great creatures whisk about and dash into the thicket, she walked along quite contentedly.

"SHE FOUND IT RATHER TRYING TO HER NERVES, AT FIRST, TO
MEET WITH RABBITS AS BIG AS HORSES."

"SHE FOUND IT RATHER TRYING TO HER NERVES, AT FIRST, TO MEET WITH
RABBITS AS BIG AS HORSES."

"—TO BE CHATTERED AT BY SQUIRRELS A HEAD TALLER THAN
SHE HERSELF WAS."

"—TO BE CHATTERED AT BY SQUIRRELS A HEAD TALLER THAN SHE HERSELF
WAS."

Presently she heard a voice singing. It seemed to come from a thick part of the wood at one side of the path; and, after hesitating a moment, Dorothy stole into the bushes, and, creeping cautiously along until she was quite near the sound, crouched down in the thicket to listen.

It was a very small voice, and it was singing this song:

*I know a way
Of hearing what the larks and linnets say.*

*The larks tell of the sunshine and the sky;
The linnets from the hedges make reply,
And boast of hidden nests with mocking lay.*

*I know a way
Of keeping near the rabbits at their play.
They tell me of the cool and shady nooks
Where waterfalls disturb the placid brooks
That I may go and frolic in the spray.*

*I know a way
Of catching dewdrops on a night in May,
And threading them upon a spear of green,
That through their sides translucent may be seen
The sparkling hue that emeralds display.*

*I know a way
Of trapping sunbeams as they nimbly play
At hide-and-seek with meadow-grass and flowers,
And holding them in store for dreary hours
When winds are chill and all the sky is gray.*

*I know a way
Of stealing fragrance from the new-mown hay
And storing it in flasks of petals made,
To scent the air when all the flowers fade
And leave the woodland world to sad decay.*

*I know a way
Of coaxing snowflakes in their flight to stay
So still awhile, that, as they hang in air,
I weave them into frosty lace, to wear
About my head upon a sultry day.*

Dorothy, crouching down in the thicket, listened to this little song with great delight; but she was extremely sentimental where poetry was concerned, and it happened that when she heard this last verse she clasped her hands in a burst of rapture and exclaimed in quite a loud voice, "Oh,

delicious!" This was very unfortunate, for the song stopped short the instant she spoke, and for a moment everything was perfectly silent; then the little voice spoke up again, and said, "Who is that?"

"It's I," said Dorothy.

"It's two eyes, if it comes to that," said the little voice; "I can see them through the bushes. Are you a rabbit?"

"No," said Dorothy, laughing softly to herself, "I'm a child."

"Oh!" exclaimed the voice. It was a very little Oh; in fact, it sounded to Dorothy as if it might be about the size of a cherry-stone, and she said to herself, "I verily believe it's a fairy, and she certainly can't be a bit bigger than my thumb—my regular thumb, I mean," she added, holding up her hand and looking at the size of it with great contempt.

Then the little voice spoke up again and said, "And how big are you?"

"I'm about three inches tall," said Dorothy; and she was so excited by this time at the prospect of seeing a real live fairy for the first time in her life, that she felt as if a lot of flies were running up and down on the back of her neck.

"Dear me!" exclaimed the little voice, expressing great astonishment in its small way. "Why, there's hardly enough of you to put in a corner."

Dorothy reflected for a moment and then called out, "But, you know, *that* depends altogether on the size of the corner."

"Oh, no, it doesn't!" said the little voice, very confidently. "All corners are the same size if you only get close enough to 'em."

"Dear me!" said Dorothy to herself, "how very intelligent she is! I *must* have a look at her"; and, pushing the leaves gently aside, she cautiously peeped out.

"PUSHING THE LEAVES GENTLY ASIDE, SHE CAUTIOUSLY
PEEPED OUT."

"PUSHING THE LEAVES GENTLY ASIDE, SHE CAUTIOUSLY PEEPED OUT."

It was a charming little dell, carpeted with fine moss, and with strange-looking wild flowers and tall nodding grasses growing about the sides of it; but, to Dorothy's astonishment, the fairy proved to be an extremely small field-mouse, sitting up like a little pug-dog and gazing attentively at the thicket: "and *I think*"—the Mouse went on, as if it were tired of waiting for an answer to its last remark—"I think a child should be six inches tall, *at least*."

This was so ridiculous that Dorothy had to put her hand over her mouth to keep from screaming with laughter. "Why," she exclaimed, "I used to be"—and here she had to stop and count up on her fingers as if she were doing a sum—"I used to be eight times as big as *that*, myself."

"Tut, tut!—" said the Mouse, and the "tuts" sounded like beads dropping into a pill-box—"tut, tut! Don't tell me such rubbish!"

"Oh, you needn't *tut* me," said Dorothy. "It's the exact truth."

"Then I don't understand it," said the Mouse, shaking its head in a puzzled way. "I always thought children grew the other way."

"Well, you see,—" said Dorothy, in her old-fashioned way,—"you see, I've been very much reduced." (She thought afterward that this sounded rather as if she had lost all her property, but it was the only thing she could think of to say at the time.)

"I *don't* see it at all," said the Mouse, fretfully, "and what's more, I don't see *you*, in fact, I don't think you ought to be hiding in the bushes and chattering at me in this way."

This seemed to Dorothy to be a very personal remark, and she answered, rather indignantly, "And why not, I should like to know?"

"Because,"—said the Mouse in a very superior manner,—"because little children should be seen and not heard."

"Hoity-toity!" said Dorothy, very sharply. (I don't think she had the slightest idea of what this meant, but she had read somewhere in a book that it was an expression used when other persons gave themselves airs, and she thought she would try the effect of it on the Mouse.) But, to her great

disappointment, the Mouse made no reply of any kind, and after picking a leaf and holding it up to its eyes for a moment, as if it were having a cry in its small way, the poor little creature turned about and ran into the thicket at the further side of the dell.

THE MOUSE LAMENTS.
THE MOUSE LAMENTS.

Dorothy was greatly distressed at this, and, jumping out of the bushes into the dell, she began calling, "Mousie! Mousie! Come back! I didn't mean it, dear. It was only an experiment." But there was no answer, and, stooping down at the place where the Mouse had disappeared, she looked into the thicket. There was nothing there but a very small squirrel eating a nut; and, after staring at her for a moment in great astonishment, he threw the nut in her face and scampered off into the bushes.

"Nice manners, upon my word!" said Dorothy, in great indignation at this treatment, and then, standing up, she gazed about the dell rather disconsolately; but there was no living thing in sight except a fat butterfly lazily swinging up and down on a blade of grass. Dorothy touched him with her finger to see if he were awake, but the Butterfly gave himself an impatient shake, and said, fretfully, "Oh, don't," and, after waiting a moment, to be sure that was all he had to say, she walked mournfully away through the wood.

CHAPTER VIII

SOMETHING ABOUT THE CAMEL

The wood wasn't nearly so pleasant now as it had been before, and Dorothy was quite pleased when, after walking a little way, she came in sight again of the bank covered with rocking-chairs, and running up, she hurried through the little door into the toy-shop.

Everything was just as she had left it, and the stream was running merrily under the castle bridge; but just as she was going by, the bridge itself began hitching up in the middle and pawing, as it were, at the banks of the stream in such an extraordinary manner that she stopped to see what was going to happen.

"It's sure to be something wonderful," she said to herself, as she stood watching it, and she was quite right about this, for the bridge presently turned into a remarkably spirited rocking-horse (dappled, with black spots scattered about), and after rocking back and forth once or twice, as if to be sure it really *was* a horse, settled down perfectly still as if it never expected to be anything else. In fact, with the exception of a large fly, about as big as one of Dorothy's feet, that was buzzing about, everything in the window was now perfectly quiet, and drawing a long breath of relief, she walked away through the shop.

"AND FOUND THE CARAVAN SITTING IN A ROW ON A
LITTLE BENCH AT THE DOOR."

"AND FOUND THE CARAVAN SITTING IN A ROW ON A LITTLE BENCH AT
THE DOOR."

As she walked along on the shelf, she presently came to the grocer's shop and found the Caravan sitting in a row on a little bench at the door. The Admiral had the Camel in his lap, and they were all gazing at it with an air of extreme solicitude. It was a frowsy little thing with lumpy legs that hung down in a dangling way from the Admiral's knees, and Sir Walter was busily employed trying to make it drink something out of a bottle.

"What are you giving him?" inquired Dorothy, curiously.

"Glue," said the Admiral, promptly. "He needs stiffening up, you see."

"Goodness gracious, what an awful dose!" said Dorothy, with a shudder.

"*That* doesn't make any difference so long as he won't take it," said Sir Walter; and here he flew into a tremendous passion, and began beating the Camel about the head so furiously with the bottle that Dorothy cried out, "Here—stop that instantly!"

"*He* doesn't mind it no more than if he was a bolster," put in the Highlander. "Set him up again and let's see him fall down," he added, rubbing his hands together with a relish.

"Indeed, you'll do nothing of the sort," exclaimed Dorothy, with great indignation; and, snatching the Camel from the Admiral's lap, she carried him into the grocer's shop and set him down upon the floor. The Camel looked about for a moment with a very mournful expression on his face, and then climbed into one of the drawers that was standing open, and pulled it to after him as a person might close a door, and Dorothy, after watching this remarkable performance with great wonderment, went out again.

The Caravan had lost no time, and were standing on the bench, putting up a little sign on the front of the shop with "CAMEL FOR SALE" on it, and Dorothy, trying not to laugh, said, "Is this your shop?"

"Yes," replied the Admiral, with an important air. "The grocer's been sold for a cook because he had an apron on, and we've taken the business."

"What are you going to keep?" asked Dorothy, who was vastly amused at this idea.

"Why, we're going to keep the shop," said the Admiral, climbing down from the bench and staring at her in great surprise.

"But you must certainly keep things to sell," said Dorothy.

"How can we keep things if we sell 'em?" inquired Sir Walter.

"Well, you can't sell anything unless you keep it in the shop, you know," persisted Dorothy, feeling that she was somehow or other getting the worst of the argument.

"Bosh!" said the Admiral, obstinately; "you *can't* keep things you sell—that is," he added, "not unless your customers are crazy"; and with this remark the Caravan went into the shop and shut the door in Dorothy's face, as if she wasn't worth talking to any longer.

Dorothy waited for a moment to see if they were coming out again, and then, as there was a noise inside as if they were piling up the drawers against the door by way of a barricade, she walked slowly away through the toy-shop.

"HE DROPPED HIS LITTLE
BOOK, WITH AN APPEARANCE
OF GREAT AGITATION, AND
HURRIED AWAY." "HE DROPPED
HIS LITTLE BOOK, WITH AN
APPEARANCE OF GREAT AGITATION,
AND HURRIED AWAY."

She had had such a variety of adventures in the shop by this time that she was getting quite tired of the place, and she was walking along rather disconsolately, and wishing there was some way of growing to her natural size, and then getting back again to poor old Uncle Porticle and the Blue Admiral Inn, when, as she went around the corner of the little apothecary's shop, she came suddenly upon Bob Scarlet. To her great surprise, he was now just about the size of an ordinary robin; but he had on his red waistcoat, and had quite as important an air as ever, and he was strolling about examining the various toys, and putting down the price of everything in a little red book, as if he were thinking of going into the business himself.

"Now, I wonder how he ever got to be *that* size," thought Dorothy, as she hid behind a little pile of lead-pencils and watched him over the top of them. "I suppose he's eaten something, or drunk something, to make him grow, the way they do in fairy stories; because the Admiral certainly said he wasn't any bigger than an ant. And, oh! I wish I knew what it was," she

added, mournfully, as the tears came into her eyes at the thought of how small she was, "I *wish* I knew what it was!"

"If I wasn't a little afraid of him," she went on, after she had had a little cry, "I'd ask him. But likely as not he'd peck at me—old peckjabber!" and here she laughed through her tears as she thought of the Caravan in their little sunbonnets. "Or p'r'aps he'd snap me up! I've often heard of snapping people up when they asked too many questions, but seems to me it never meant anything so awful as that before"; and she was rambling on in this way, laughing and crying by turns, when at this moment Bob Scarlet came suddenly upon a fine brass bird-cage, and, after staring at it in a stupefied way for an instant, he dropped his little book, with an appearance of great agitation, and hurried away without so much as looking behind him.

Dorothy ran after him, carefully keeping out of sight in case he should turn around, and as she went by the bird-cage she saw that it was marked "PERFECTLY SECURE" in large letters. "And *that's* what took the conceit out of you, mister," she said, laughing to herself, and hurried along after the Robin.

**"A DOOR AT THE BACK OF THE
SHOP OPENED AND THEY ALL
RUSHED OUT." "A DOOR AT THE
BACK OF THE SHOP OPENED AND THEY
ALL RUSHED OUT."**

As she caught sight of him again he was just scurrying by the grocer's shop, and she could see the faces of the Caravan watching him, over the top of a little half-blind in the window, with an expression of the greatest concern, and the next moment a door at the back of the shop opened and they all rushed out. They had on their sunbonnets and shawls, and Dorothy saw that the Admiral was carrying the Camel under his arm; but before she could say a word to them they had scampered away and were out of sight.

By this time the toy-shop itself was all in a commotion. Dolls were climbing down from the shelves and falling over each other; the big marbles had in some way got out of the basket and were rolling about in all directions; and Dorothy could see the old dame at the further end of the

shop, running about and frantically striking at one thing after another with her spoon. To make matters worse, quite a little army of tin soldiers suddenly appeared, running confusedly about, with the drawers from the little grocer's shop upside down on their heads, and all calling "Fire!" at the top of their voices. As they couldn't see where anybody was going, or where they were going themselves, it made the situation very desperate indeed.

Dorothy was frightened almost out of her wits, but she ran on in a bewildered sort of a way, dodging the rolling marbles and upsetting the dolls and the soldiers in great numbers, until she fortunately caught sight of the little rat-hole of a door, and, rushing through it, she hurried down the bank, knocking the green rocking-chairs about in every direction, and ran off into the wood as fast as she could go.

TAIL-PIECE TO CHAPTER VIII.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAMEL'S COMPLAINT

Dorothy ran along until she thought she was quite safe, and then stopped to look back and listen. There was a confused sound of shouts and cries in the distance, but nothing seemed to be coming after her, so, after waiting a moment to get her breath, she walked quietly away through the wood.

"What a scene of turmoil it was!" she said to herself. (You see, she was trying to express herself in a very dignified and composed manner, as if she hadn't been in the least disturbed by what had happened.) "I presume—" she went on, "I presume it was something like a riot, although I really don't see what it was all about. Of course I've never been in a riot, but if it's anything like *that*, I shall never have anything to do with one";—which certainly was a very wise resolution for a little girl to make; but as Dorothy was always making wise resolutions about things that were never going to happen, I really don't think that this particular one was a matter of any consequence.

She was so much pleased with these remarks that she was going on to say a number of very fine things, when she came suddenly upon the Caravan hiding behind a large tree. They were sitting in a little bunch on the grass, and, as Dorothy appeared, they all put on an appearance of great unconcern, and began staring up at the branches of the tree, as if they hadn't seen her.

"They've certainly been doing something they're ashamed of," she said to herself, "but they can't deceive me with any such behavior as *that*"; and just then the Admiral pretended he had just caught sight of her and said, with a patronizing air, "Ah! How d' ye do? How d' ye do?" as if they hadn't met for quite a while.

"You know perfectly well how I do, and I consider that a very foolish remark," replied Dorothy, speaking in a very dignified manner, and not feeling at all pleased with this reception; and then noticing that Humphrey was nowhere to be seen, she said severely, "Where's your Camel?"

"Camels is no good," said the Admiral, evasively. "Leastwise *he* wasn't."

"Why not?" said Dorothy. She said this very sternly, for she felt morally certain that the Admiral was trying to conceal something from her.

"Well, you see," said the Admiral, uneasily, "he talked too much. He was always grumbling."

"Grumbling about what?" said Dorothy.

"Oh, about a wariety of things," said the Admiral. "Meals and lodgings and all that, you know. I used to try to stop him. 'Cammy,' I says—"

"'Cammy' is short for camel," explained Sir Walter, and Dorothy laughed and nodded, and the Admiral went on—

"'Cammy,' I says, 'don't scold so much'; but lor! I might as well have talked to a turnpike-gate."

"Better," put in Sir Walter. "*That* shuts up sometimes, and *he* never did."

"Oh, jummy!" said the Highlander, with a chuckle, "*that's* a good one!"

"But what was it all about?" persisted Dorothy.

"*You* tell her, Ruffles," said the Admiral.

"Well," said Sir Walter, "it was all the same thing, over and over again. He had it all in verses so he wouldn't forget any of it. It went like this:

*"Canary-birds feed on sugar and seed,
Parrots have crackers to crunch;
And, as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
Have chickens and cream for their lunch.
But there's never a question
About MY digestion—
ANYTHING does for me!"*

*"Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair,
Chickens can roost upon rails;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable,*

*And oysters can slumber in pails.
But no one supposes
A poor Camel dozes—
ANY PLACE does for me!*

*"Lambs are inclosed where it's never exposed,
Coops are constructed for hens;
Kittens are treated to houses well heated,
And pigs are protected by pens.
But a Camel comes handy
Wherever it's sandy—
ANYWHERE does for me!*

*"People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
Or mounted the back of an ox;
It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
Or try to bestraddle a fox.
But as for a Camel, he's
Ridden by families—
ANY LOAD does for me!*

*"A snake is as round as a hole in the ground,
And weasels are wavy and sleek;
And no alligator could ever be straighter
Than lizards that live in a creek.
But a Camel's all lumpy
And bumpy and humpy—
ANY SHAPE does for me!"*

Now, Dorothy was a very tender-hearted little child, and by the time these verses were finished she hardly knew whether to laugh or to cry. "Poor old, feeble-minded thing!" she said, compassionately. "And what became of him at last?"

There was a dead silence for a moment, and then the Admiral said solemnly:

"We put him in a pond."

"Why, that's the most unhuman thing I ever heard of in all my life!" exclaimed Dorothy, greatly shocked at this news.

THE CARAVAN DISCIPLINE THE CAMEL.
THE CARAVAN DISCIPLINE THE CAMEL.

"Well," said the Admiral, in a shamefaced sort of way, "we thought it was a good thing to do—for us, you know."

"And *I* call it proud and unforgiving," said Dorothy, indignantly. "Did the poor creature say anything?"

"Not at first," said the Admiral; "but after he got in he said things."

"Such as what?" said Dorothy.

"Oh, we couldn't make out *what* he said," replied the Admiral, peevishly. "It was perfectly unintelligible."

"Kind of gurgly," put in the Highlander.

"Did he go right down?" inquired Dorothy, very anxiously.

"Not a bit of it," said the Admiral, flippantly. "He never went down at all. He floated, just like a cork, you know."

"Round and round and round," added Sir Walter.

"Like a turnip," put in the Highlander.

"What do you mean by *that*?" said Dorothy, sharply.

"Nothing," said the Highlander, looking very much abashed; "only I thought turnips turned round."

Dorothy was greatly provoked at all this, and felt that she really ought to say something very severe; but the fact was that the Caravan looked so innocent, sitting on the grass with their sunbonnets all crooked on their heads, that it was as much as she could do to keep from laughing outright. "You know," she said to herself, "if it wasn't for the Highlander's whiskers, it'd be precisely like a' infant class having a picnic; and after all, they're

really nothing but graven images"—so she contented herself by saying, as severely as she could:

"Well, I'm extremely displeased, and I'm very much ashamed of all of you."

The Caravan received this reproof with great cheerfulness, especially the Admiral, who took a look at Dorothy through his spy-glass, and then said with much satisfaction: "Now we're each being ashamed of by *three* persons"; but Dorothy very properly took no notice of this remark, and walked away in a dignified manner.

CHAPTER X

THE SIZING TOWER

As Dorothy walked along, wondering what would happen to her next, she felt something tugging at her frock, and looking around she saw that it was the Highlander running along beside her, quite breathless, and trying very hard to attract her attention. "Oh, it's you, is it?" she said, stopping short and looking at him pleasantly.

"Yes, it's me," said the Highlander, sitting down on the ground as if he were very much fatigued. "I've been wanting to speak to you privately for a very long time."

"What about?" said Dorothy, wondering what was coming now.

"Well," said the Highlander, blushing violently and appearing to be greatly embarrassed, "you seem to be a very kind-hearted person, and I wanted to show you some poetry I've written."

"Did you compose it?" said Dorothy, kindly.

"No," said the Highlander; "I only made it up. Would you like to hear it?"

"Oh, yes, indeed," said Dorothy, as gravely as she could; "I should like to hear it very much."

"It's called"—said the Highlander, lowering his voice confidentially and looking cautiously about—"it's called 'The Pickle and the Policeman';" and, taking a little paper out of his pocket, he began:

"There was a little pickle and his name was John—"

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Dorothy, "I don't think that will do *at all*."

"Suppose I call him *George*?" said the Highlander, gazing reflectively at his paper. "It's got to be something short, you know."

"But you mustn't call him *anything*," said Dorothy, laughing. "Pickles don't have any names."

"All right," said the Highlander; and, taking out a pencil, he began repairing his poetry with great industry. He did a great deal of writing, and a good deal of rubbing out with his thumb, and finally said triumphantly:

"There was a little pickle and he hadn't any name!"

"Yes, that will do very nicely," said Dorothy; and the Highlander, clearing his voice, read off his poetry with a great flourish:

*"There was a little pickle and he hadn't any name—
In this respect, I'm just informed, all pickles are the same.
A large policeman came along, a-swinging of his club,
And took that little pickle up and put him in a tub."*

"That's rather good about taking him up," said the Highlander, chuckling to himself; "so exactly like a policeman, you know."

"Oh, yes, indeed," said Dorothy, who was ready to scream with laughter. "What's the rest of it?"

"There isn't any more," said the Highlander, rather confusedly. "There was going to be another verse, but I couldn't think of anything more to say."

"Oh, well, it's very nice as it is," said Dorothy, consolingly; and then, as the Highlander put up his paper and went away, she laughed till her eyes were full of tears. "They are *all* funny," she said at last, as she walked away through the wood, "but I think *he's* funnier than all of 'em put together"—which, by the way, was not a very sensible remark for her to make, as you will see if you'll take the trouble to think it over.

**"THERE ISN'T ANY MORE," SAID THE HIGHLANDER, RATHER
CONFUSEDLY."**

"THERE ISN'T ANY MORE," SAID THE HIGHLANDER, RATHER CONFUSEDLY."

But presently, as she strolled along, she made a discovery that quite drove the Highlander and his ridiculous poetry out of her head. It was a tower in the wood; not an ordinary tower, of course, for there would have been

nothing remarkable about that, but a tower of shining brass, and so high that the top of it was quite out of sight among the branches of the trees. But the strangest thing about it was that there seemed to be no possible way of getting into it, and Dorothy was very cautiously walking around it to see if she could find any door when she came suddenly upon the Caravan standing huddled together, and apparently in a state of great excitement.

"What is it?" asked Dorothy, eagerly.

"Hush!" said the Admiral, in an agitated whisper. "We think it's where Bob Scarlet changes himself"—and as he said this there was a tremendous flapping of wings, and down came Bob Scarlet through the branches and landed with a thump a little way from where they were standing. He was as big as a goose again, and his appearance was so extremely formidable that the Caravan, as one man, threw themselves flat on their faces in a perfect frenzy of terror, and Dorothy herself hid in the grass, with her heart beating like a little eight-day clock. But Bob Scarlet fortunately paid no more attention to any of them than if they had been so many flies, and, after strutting about for a moment with his usual important air, strolled away in the direction of the toy-shop.

"Now what do you make of *that*?" said the Admiral, lifting up his head. "He went in at a little door not five minutes ago, and he wasn't any bigger than an every-day bird."

"I'm sure I don't know *what* to make of it," said Dorothy. "But where is the door?" she added, running around the tower and looking at it on all sides.

"It went up after him," said the Admiral, "like a corkscrew."

"And it's coming down again, like a gimlet!" shouted the Highlander; and, as they all looked up, sure enough there was the little door slowly coming down, around and around, as if it were descending an invisible staircase on the outside of the tower. They all watched this performance with much interest, and as the door touched the ground it opened, and, to Dorothy's amazement, out came the little field-mouse.

"What is it?" cried Dorothy, as they all crowded around the little creature. "Do tell us what it all means."

"It's a Sizing Tower," said the Mouse, its little voice trembling with agitation. "You get big at the top, and little at the bottom. I wouldn't go up there again—not for a bushel of nuts."

"Were you pretty big?" inquired Sir Walter.

"Monstrous!" said the Mouse, with a little shudder; "I was as big as a squirrel; and while I was up there, Bob Scarlet flew up and came down with the door, and there I was."

"*That* was a precious mess!" remarked the Highlander.

"Wasn't it now!" said the Mouse. "And if he hadn't taken it into his head to come up again and *fly down*, I'd 'a' been there yet."

"Why, it's the very thing for us!" cried Dorothy, clapping her hands with delight as a happy thought occurred to her. "Let's all go up and get back our regular selves."

"You go first," said the Admiral, suspiciously, "and call down to us how it feels." But Dorothy wouldn't hear of this; and after a great deal of arguing and pushing and saying "*You* go in first," the whole party at last got squeezed in through the little doorway. Then the Mouse sat up on its hind legs and waved a little farewell with its paws, and the door softly closed.

"If we begin to grow *now*," said the Admiral's voice in the dark, "we'll all be squeegeed, *sure*!"

"What an extraordinary thing!" exclaimed Dorothy; for they had come out into a street full of houses.

"What *I* want to know is what's become of the door," said Sir Walter, indignantly, staring at a high wall where the door had been, and which was now perfectly blank.

"I'm sure I don't know," said Dorothy, quite bewildered. "It's really quite mysterious, isn't it?"

"It makes my stomach tickle like anything," said the Highlander, in a quavering voice.

"What *shall* we do?" said Dorothy, looking about uneasily.

"Run away!" said the Admiral, promptly; and without another word the Caravan took to their heels and disappeared around a corner. Dorothy hurried after them, but by the time she turned the corner they were quite out of sight; and as she stopped and looked about her she discovered that she was once more in the Ferryman's street, and, to her great delight, quite as large as she had been when she left the Blue Admiral Inn.

CHAPTER XI

THE DANCING ANIMALS

It seemed to be evening again, and, although the Ferryman was nowhere in sight, Dorothy knew the place the moment she looked up and saw the peaked roofs outlined against the sky. The houses were quaint, old-fashioned-looking buildings with the upper parts jutting far out beyond the lower stories and with dark little doorways almost hidden in the shadows beneath; and the windows were very small casements filled with diamond-shaped panes of shining green glass. All the houses were brilliantly lighted up, and there were great iron lamps swung on chains across the street, so that the street itself was almost as bright as day, and Dorothy thought she recognized it as a place she had once read about where nobody but astrologers lived. There was a confused sound of fiddling going on somewhere, and as Dorothy walked along she could hear a scuffling noise inside the houses as if the inhabitants were dancing about on sanded floors. Presently, as she turned a corner, she came upon a number of storks who were dancing a sort of solemn quadrille up and down the middle of the street. They stopped dancing as she came along, and stood in a row gazing gravely at her as she passed by and then resumed their quadrille as solemnly as before.

The strangest thing about the fiddling was that it seemed to be going on somewhere in the air, and the sound appeared to come from all directions at once. At first the music was soft and rather slow in time, but it grew louder and louder, and the fiddles played faster and faster, until presently they were going at such a furious rate that Dorothy stopped and looked back to see how the storks were getting on in their dancing; and she could see them in the distance, scampering up and down the street, and bumping violently against one another in a frantic attempt to keep time with the music. At any other time she would have been vastly amused at this spectacle; but just then she was feeling a little afraid that some of the astrologers might come out to see what was going on, and she was therefore quite relieved when the storks presently gave up all hope of finishing their quadrille, and rising in

the air with a tremendous flapping of wings, flew away over the tops of the houses and disappeared. Strangely enough, the sound of the fiddling followed them like a traveling band, and grew fainter and fainter until it finally died away in the distance.

But the scuffling noise in the houses continued, and Dorothy did just what you'd suppose such a curious little child would have done—that is, she stole up and peeped in at one of the windows; but she could see nothing through the thick glass but some strange-looking shadows bobbing confusedly about inside. Of course you know what she did *then*. In fact, after hesitating a moment, she softly opened the door of the house and went in.

The room was full of animals of every description, dancing around in a ring with the greatest enthusiasm; and as Dorothy appeared they all shouted, "Here she is!" and, before she could say a single word, the two nearest to her (they were an elephant and a sheep, by the way) seized her by the hands, and the next moment she was dancing in the ring. She was quite surprised to see that the elephant was no bigger than the sheep; and, as she looked about, it seemed to her, in the confusion, that all the animals in the room were of precisely the same size.

**"AN ELEPHANT AND A SHEEP SEIZED HER BY THE HANDS, AND
THE NEXT MOMENT SHE WAS DANCING IN THE RING."**

**"AN ELEPHANT AND A SHEEP SEIZED HER BY THE HANDS, AND THE NEXT
MOMENT SHE WAS DANCING IN THE RING."**

"Isn't it rather unusual—" she said to the Sheep (it seemed more natural, somehow, to speak to the Sheep)—"isn't it rather unusual for different animals to be so much alike?"

"Not in *our* set," said the Sheep, conceitedly. "We all know who's who. Of course we have to mark the pigs, as they're so extremely like the polar-bears;" and Dorothy noticed that two pigs, who were dancing just opposite to her, had labels with "PIG" on them hung around their necks by little chains, as if they had been a couple of decanters—"only," she thought, "it would have been 'SHERRY' or 'MADEIRA' instead of 'PIG,' you know."

"I suppose you all came out of a Noah's Ark," she said presently, at a venture.

"Of course. Largest size, I believe. How *very* clever you are!" said the Sheep, admiringly. "By the way," she added, confidentially, "do you happen to know what a tapir is?"

"I believe it's something to light, like a candle," said Dorothy.

"Does it ever go out of its own accord?" inquired the Sheep.

"It *ought* not to," said Dorothy.

"Then that accounts for the trouble we've had," said the Sheep, with a satisfied air. "Those two tapirs dancing over there are always in everybody's way, and we've had to *put* them out over and over again."

This sounded like a joke; but the Sheep was so serious that Dorothy didn't dare to laugh, so she said, by way of continuing the conversation, "I don't see any birds here."

"Oh dear, no!" exclaimed the Sheep; "you see, this is really a quadrupedrille. Of course *you're* all right, because it's precisely as if you were dancing on your hind feet. In fact," she added, nodding approvingly, "you look almost as well as if you were."

"Thank you!" said Dorothy, laughing.

"There was a seal that wanted to join," the Sheep went on. "He pressed us very hard, but he never made the slightest impression on us;" and there was a twinkle in the Sheep's eyes as she said this, so that Dorothy felt morally certain it *was* a joke this time; but, before she could make any reply, the Elephant called out "Recess!" and the animals all stopped dancing and began walking about and fanning themselves with little portfolios which they produced in such a mysterious manner that Dorothy couldn't see where in the world they came from.

"Now, look here," said the Elephant,—he seemed to be a sort of Master of Ceremonies, and the animals all clustered about him as he said this,—"why can't *she* dance with the Camel?" and he pointed out Dorothy with his portfolio.

"She can!" shouted the animals in chorus. "Come on, Sarah!"—and the Camel, who had been moping in a corner with her head against the wall,

came forward with a very sulky expression on her face.

"Her name is Sahara," whispered the Sheep, plucking at Dorothy's frock to attract her attention, "but we call her Sarah to save time. She's kind of grumpy now because the other Camel stayed away, but she'll titter like a turtle when she gets to dancing."

"I don't know what relation she is to Humphrey," thought Dorothy, as the Camel took her by the hand, "but she's certainly big enough to be his great-grandmother ten times over." Before she had time to think any more about it, however, the Elephant called out, "Ladies change!" and the dancing began again harder than ever.

It was a very peculiar dance this time, and, as near as Dorothy could make it out, consisted principally in the animals passing her along from one to another as if they were each anxious to get rid of her; and presently she discovered that, in some unaccountable manner, she had been passed directly through the fireplace into the next house; but as this house was quite as full of dancing animals as the other, this didn't help matters much except that it got Sarah out of the way—"and *that*," said poor little Dorothy to herself, "is certainly *something*!"

THE ANIMALS CROSSING OVER. THE ANIMALS CROSSING OVER.

Just then the Elephant, who had mysteriously appeared from a pantry in one corner of the room, shouted out, "All cross over!" and the animals began to crowd out of the house into the courtyard, and then, pushing in great confusion through a large gateway, rushed across the street and into the house on the other side of the way. Dorothy was quite taken off her feet in the rush, but, watching her chance, she hid behind a large churn that was standing conveniently in the middle of the street; and when they had all passed in, she ran away down the street as fast as she could go.

She ran on until she had got quite out of the Ferryman's street, and was walking along in the open country, feeling quite pleased with herself for having so cleverly escaped from the dancing-party without having to take the trouble of saying "Good night" to the Elephant, when she saw, in the

moonlight, something white lying beside the road, and going up to it, she discovered it was a letter.

CHAPTER XII

THE CARAVAN COMES HOME

The letter was lying on a flat stone, with several lumps of sugar laid on it like paper-weights to keep it from blowing away. It wasn't at all a nice-looking letter; in fact, it looked as if it had been dragged over the ground for a long distance; and Dorothy, after observing all this, was just turning away when she chanced to look at the address and saw that the letter was intended for her. The address was written in a very cramped little hand, and the writing was crowded up into one corner as if it were trying to get over the edge of the envelope; but the words were "TO DOROTHY," as plain as possible.

"What a very strange thing!" she said to herself, taking up the letter and turning it over several times rather distrustfully. "I don't think it looks very nice, but it may be something important, and I s'pose I ought to read it"; and saying this, she opened the letter. It was printed in funny little letters something like bird-tracks, and this was what was in it:

We are in a bad fix. The fix is a cage. We have been seezed in a outburst of ungovernerrubble fury by Bob Scarlet. He says there's been too many robbin pies. He goes on, and says he is going to have a girl pie. With gravy. We shrieked out that we wasn't girls. Only disgized and tuff as anything. He says with a kurdling laff we'll do. O save us. We wish we was home. There is no male and we send this by a noble rat. He is a female.

THE CARAVAN.

"Now, *that's* the most ridiculous letter I ever got," said Dorothy, gazing at it in blank astonishment; "and I don't *think* it's spelled very well either," she added rather doubtfully as she read it again; "but of course I must go and help the poor little creatures. I ought to feel frightened, but I really feel as brave as an ox. I s'pose *that's* because I'm going to help the unfortunate"; and putting the letter in her pocket, she started off.

"It's perfectly surprising," she said to herself as she ran along, "the mischief they get into! They're really no more fit to be going about alone than so many infants"; and she was so pleased with herself for saying this that she began to feel quite large and bold. "But it was very clever of 'em to think of the rat," she went on, "and of course *that* accounts for the sugar. No one but a rat would ever have thought of using sugar for paper-weights. If I wasn't afraid of a rat I'd wish it hadn't gone away, though, for I haven't the slightest idea where the Caravan is, or which way I ought to go."

But it presently appeared that the noble rat had arranged the whole matter for her; for as Dorothy ran along she began to find lumps of sugar set up at intervals like little mile-stones, so that she shouldn't miss the road.

"It's precisely like Hop-o'-my-thumb and his little crumbs of bread," she said, laughing to herself when she saw these, "only better, because, you see, the birds can't carry them off."

The rat, however, seemed to have had a very roundabout idea of a road, for the lumps of sugar were scattered zigzag in every direction, and, at one place, led directly through a knot-hole in a fence as if nobody could possibly have any trouble in getting through *that*; but, as the little mile-stones appeared again on the other side of the fence, Dorothy scrambled over and ran on. Then she found herself climbing over rocks and wading through little puddles of water where the sugar was set up on stones in the most thoughtful way, so that it shouldn't melt; and in another place the lumps were stuck up in a line on the trunk of a large tree, and, after leading the way through a number of branches, suddenly descended on the opposite side of the tree into a little bog, where Dorothy stuck fast for several minutes and got her shoes very much soiled. All this was very provoking, and she was beginning to get a little out of patience, when the lumps of sugar suddenly came to an end at a small stone wall; and, looking over it, she spied the Caravan in their cage.

The cage proved to be an enormous rat-trap, and the Caravan, with remarkable presence of mind, had put their legs through between the wires at the bottom of it, and were walking briskly along, holding up the cage with their hands. The news of this extraordinary performance had evidently been spread abroad, as the Ferryman and a number of serious-looking

storks were escorting the Caravan with an air of great interest, and occasionally taking to their heels when the Admiral chanced to look at them through the wires with his spy-glass. There was a door, to be sure, in the side of the trap, quite big enough for the Admiral, and Sir Walter, and the Highlander to come out of, all in a row if they liked, but they evidently hadn't noticed this—"and I'm not going to tell 'em about it, just yet," said Dorothy to herself, "because they deserve to be punished for their capers. But it's really quite clever of 'em to put their little legs through in that way," she went on, "and extremely convenient—that is, you know," she added thoughtfully, "so long as they all want to go the same way"; and, with this wise reflection, she scrambled over the wall and ran after the procession.

The Admiral and Sir Walter seemed greatly mortified when Dorothy appeared, and she saw that Sir Walter was making a desperate attempt to pull up his legs into the cage as if he hadn't anything whatever to do with the affair. The Highlander, however, who always seemed to have peculiar ideas of his own, shouted out "Philopene!" as he caught sight of her, and then laughed uproariously as if this were the finest joke in the world; but Dorothy, very properly, took not the slightest notice of his remark.

"How did you ever get into *this* scrape?" said she, addressing the Admiral as the head of the family.

"It was easy enough to get into," said the Admiral, peevishly; "we just fell into it through the hole in the top. But there wasn't any scrape about it until we tried to get out again. *Then* we got scraped like anything."

"Needles was nothing to it," added Sir Walter, solemnly.

"Nor cats," put in the Highlander.

"I'm very sorry," said Dorothy, compassionately; "and are you really going to be made into a pie?"

"Oh, dear, no!" said the Admiral. "We got excused."

"Excused?" exclaimed Dorothy, very much surprised.

"Well, it was something like that," said Sir Walter, confusedly. "You see, Bob Scarlet didn't exactly like to come in here after us—"

"Unconquerable aversion to cages," explained the Admiral.

"And so he goes off after hooks to pull us out with," continued Sir Walter—

"And we invents this way of going about, and comes away!" added the Admiral triumphantly.

"And where are you going now?" said Dorothy; for by this time they were running so fast that she could hardly keep up with them.

**"BY THIS TIME THEY WERE RUNNING SO FAST THAT SHE
COULD HARDLY KEEP UP WITH THEM."**

**"BY THIS TIME THEY WERE RUNNING SO FAST THAT SHE COULD HARDLY KEEP
UP WITH THEM."**

"We're going to the Ferry," said the Admiral, "and these pelicans are showing us the way"; and as he said this the whole party hurried through a little archway and came out at the waterside.

An old stage-coach without any wheels was floating close up against the river-bank, and quite a little party of the dancing animals was crowding aboard of it, pushing and shoving one another, and all talking in the most excited manner; and as Dorothy found herself next to her old friend the Sheep, in the crowd, she inquired anxiously, "Where are you all going?"

"We don't know exactly," said the Sheep, "but we've all taken tickets to different places so as to be sure of getting *somewhere*"; and with this remark the Sheep disappeared in the crowd, leaving Dorothy very much bewildered.

By this time the Caravan had, by great exertions, climbed up on top of the coach and were sitting there in the cage, as if it had been a sort of cupola for purposes of observation; and, indeed, the Admiral was already quite absorbed in taking in various points of interest with his glass. The storks, meanwhile, had crowded into the coach after the animals, and had their heads out through all the windows as if there were no room for them inside. This gave the coach somewhat the appearance of a large chicken-coop with too many chickens in it; and as Dorothy didn't fancy a crowd, she climbed up on the box. As she did so, Sarah, the Camel, put her head out of the front window and, laying it in Dorothy's lap, murmured, "Good-evening," and

went comfortably to sleep. The next moment the fiddles in the air began playing again and the stage-coach sailed away.

Dorothy never knew exactly what happened next, because everything was so confused. She had an idea, however, that they were all singing the Ferry Song, and that they had just got to a new part, beginning—

"It pours into picnics and swishes the dishes,"

when a terrible commotion began on top of the coach, and she saw that Bob Scarlet had suddenly appeared inside the cage *without his waistcoat*, and that the Caravan were frantically squeezing themselves out between the wires. At the same moment a loud roaring sound arose in the air, and the quadrupeds and the storks began jumping out of the windows in all directions. Then the stage-coach began to rock violently, and she felt that it was about to roll over, and clutched at the neck of the Camel to save herself; but the Camel had slipped away, and she found she had hold of something like a soft cushion—and the next moment the coach went over with a loud crash.

**"IT SLOWLY CHANGED TO A BIRD-CAGE WITH A ROBIN
SITTING IN IT."**

"IT SLOWLY CHANGED TO A BIRD-CAGE WITH A ROBIN SITTING IN IT."

Dorothy gave a little scream as the coach went over, and then held her breath; but instead of sousing into the water as she expected, she came down on top of it with a hard bump, and, very much to her astonishment, found herself sitting up on a carpeted floor. For a moment the rat-trap, with Bob Scarlet inside of it, seemed to be floating around in the air like a wire balloon, and then, as she rubbed her eyes and looked again, it slowly changed into a bird-cage with a fat robin sitting in it on a perch, and peering sharply at her sideways with one of his bright little eyes; and she found she was sitting on the floor of the little parlor of the Blue Admiral Inn, with her little rocking-chair overturned beside her and the cushion firmly clutched in her hand. The coach, and the dancing animals, and the Ferryman and his storks had all disappeared, which was a very fortunate thing, as there wasn't

room for them in the parlor; and as for the roaring sound in the air—why, Uncle Porticle was fast asleep in his big arm-chair, with his handkerchief spread over his face, and I think it more than likely that he had something to do with the sound.

Dorothy stared about for a moment, and then, suddenly remembering the Caravan, she jumped up and ran to the window. It was snowing hard, and she saw through the driving snowflakes that the Highlander and Sir Walter Rosettes were standing on their pedestals, complacently watching the people hurrying by with their Christmas parcels; and as for the Admiral, he was standing on *his* pedestal, with a little pile of snow like a sugar-loaf on top of his hat, and intently gazing across the street through his spy-glass.

TAIL-PIECE TO CHAPTER XII.

THE END.

Transcriber's Note.

Illustrations have been placed as close to the original position as layout allows; where the illustration has had to be moved to a different page the page reference in the List of Illustrations has been updated.

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*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE ADMIRAL'S
CARAVAN ***

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