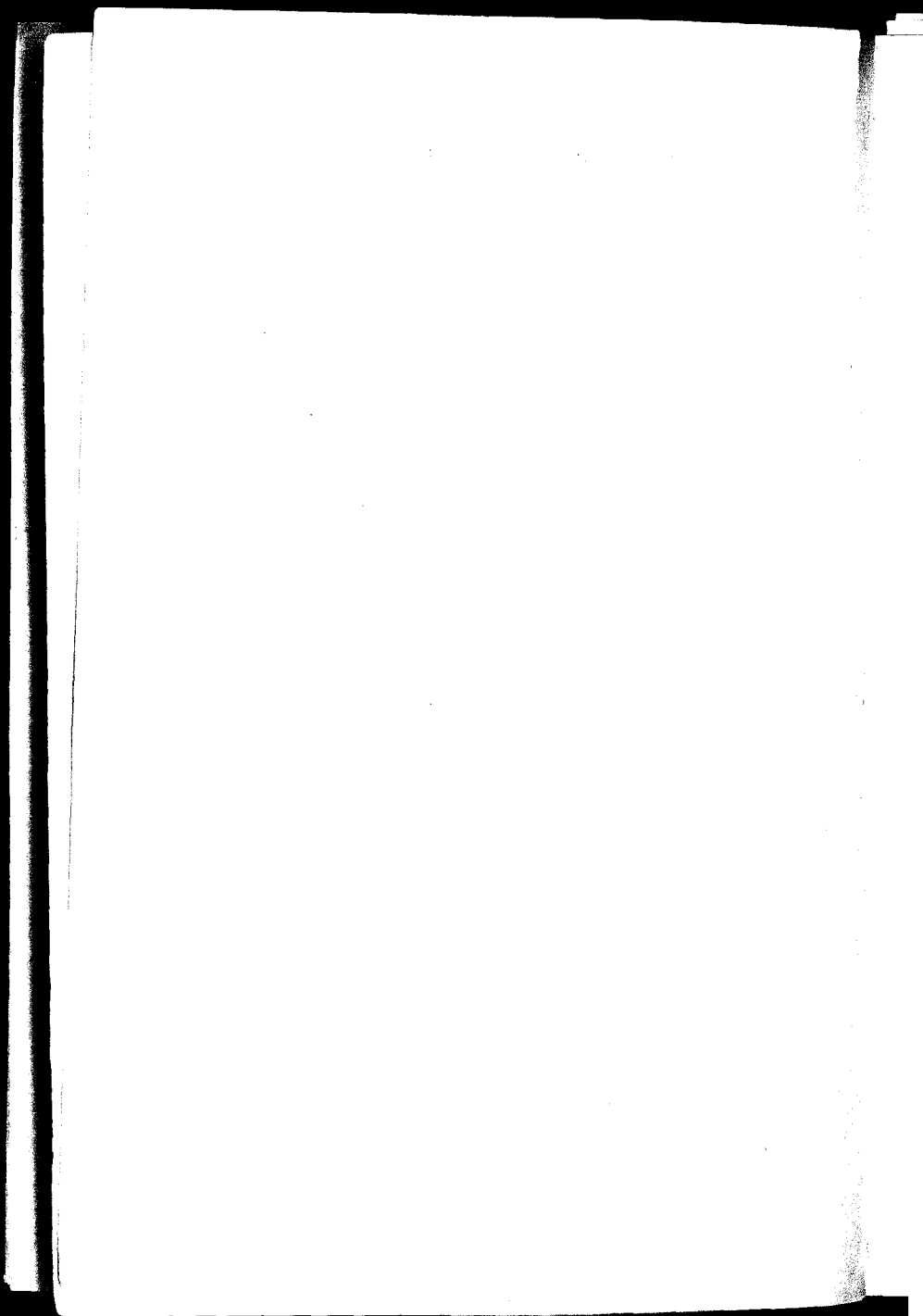
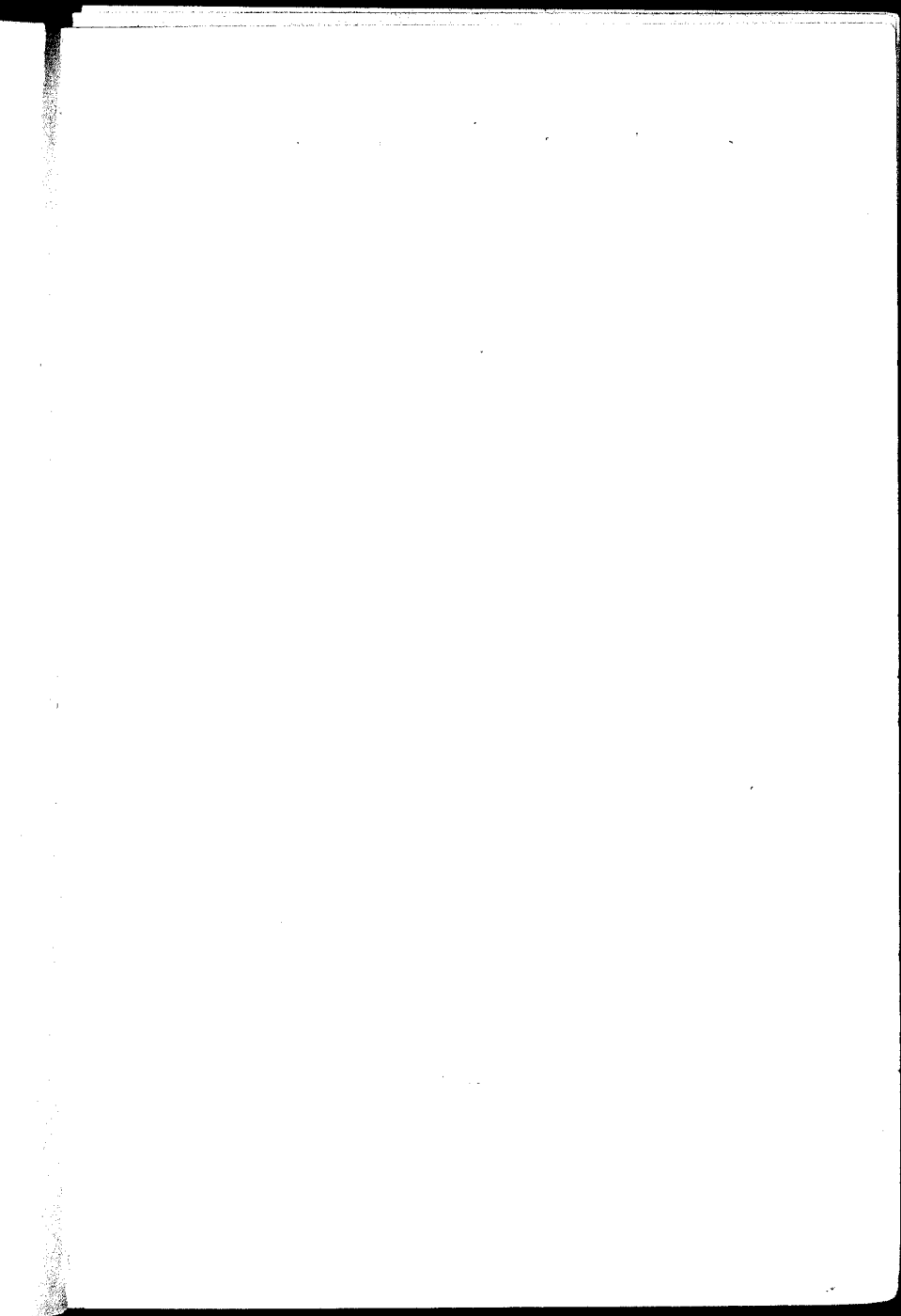
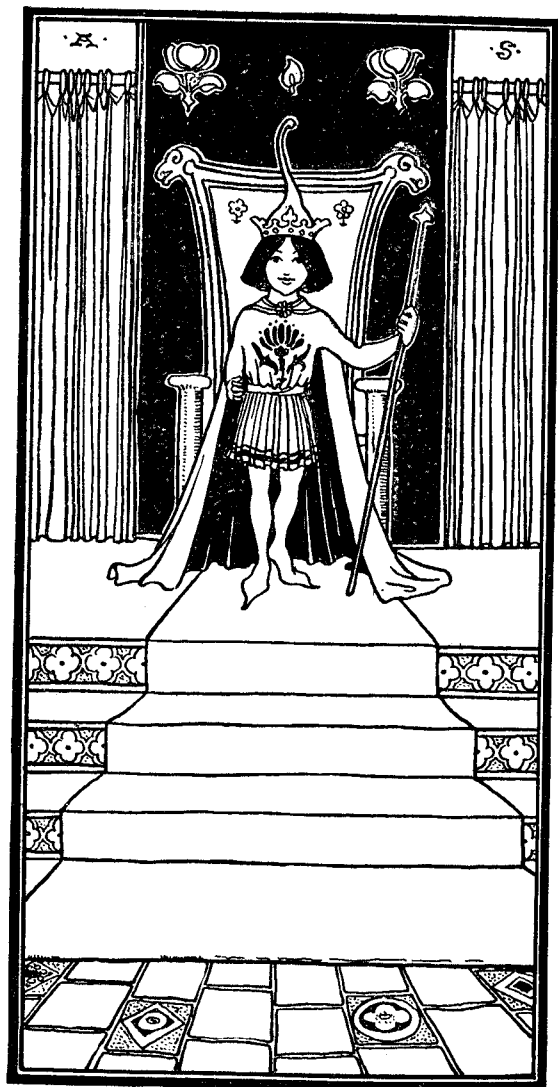


THE PRINCE OF THE PIN ELVES







HIS MAJESTY.

THE
PRINCE OF THE PIN ELVES

BY
CHARLES LEE 'SLEIGHT
"

Illustrated by
AMY M. SACKER



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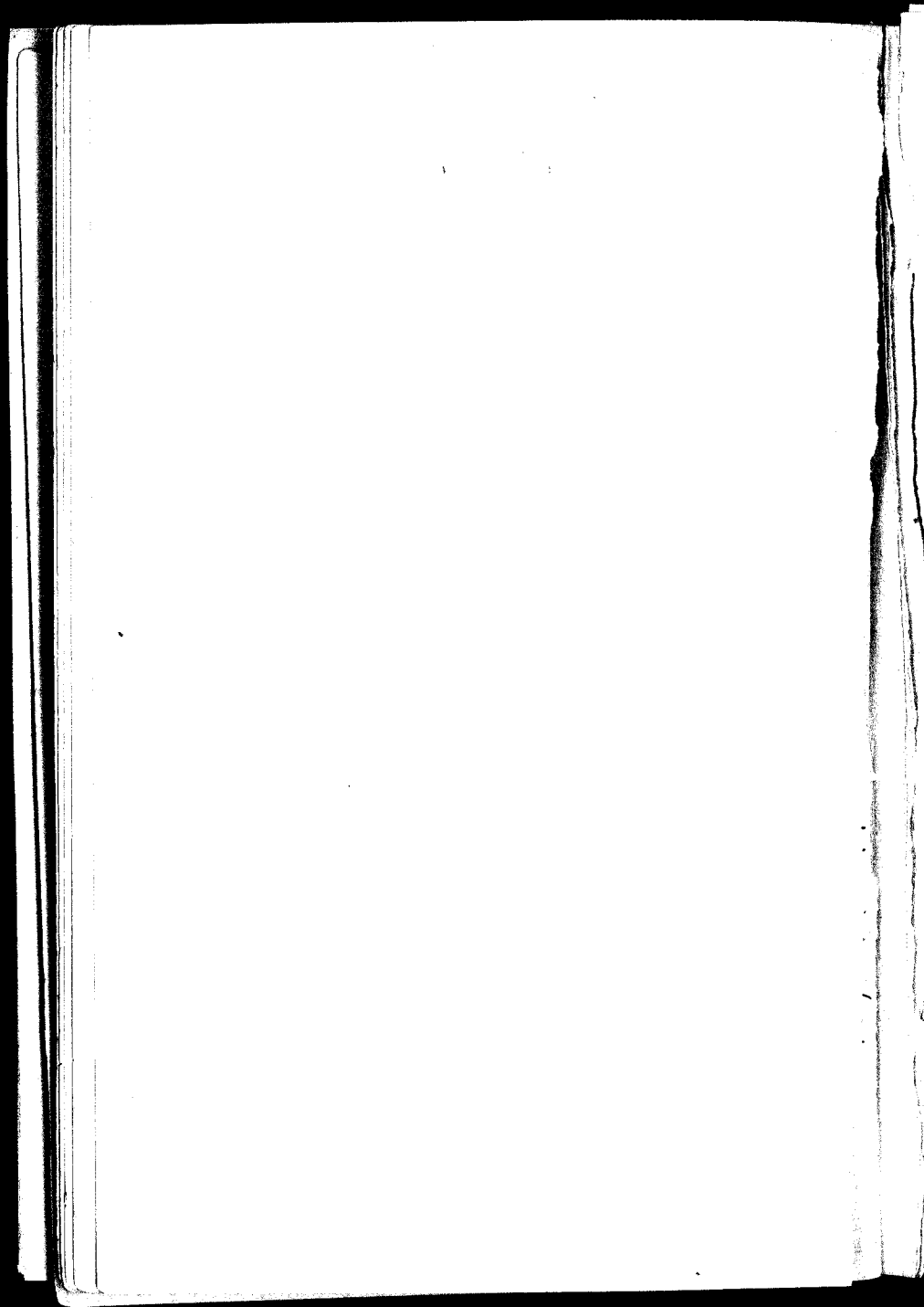


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1911-12



THE PRINCE OF THE PIN ELVES.

CHAPTER I.

WHERE THE PINS GO.

"I WONDER where all the pins go," said Harry to himself, as he examined the lapel of his coat, where he was sure he had stuck two or three that very morning.

Of course Harry was not the first boy who had thus wondered, but it was the first time the question had ever occurred to him. If he wanted a pin the only sure place to find one was on his mother's cushion, because that was kept filled with new ones. But what became of all the old ones? He himself would sometimes lose several in a day, and yet he hardly ever found one, no matter how carefully he might look.

Just now, however, he saw one lying in the path before him, and was about to pick it

up, when suddenly it vanished from sight. He rubbed his eyes and looked again, but it was certainly gone.

"That's funny!" he thought; "I'm sure it was there."

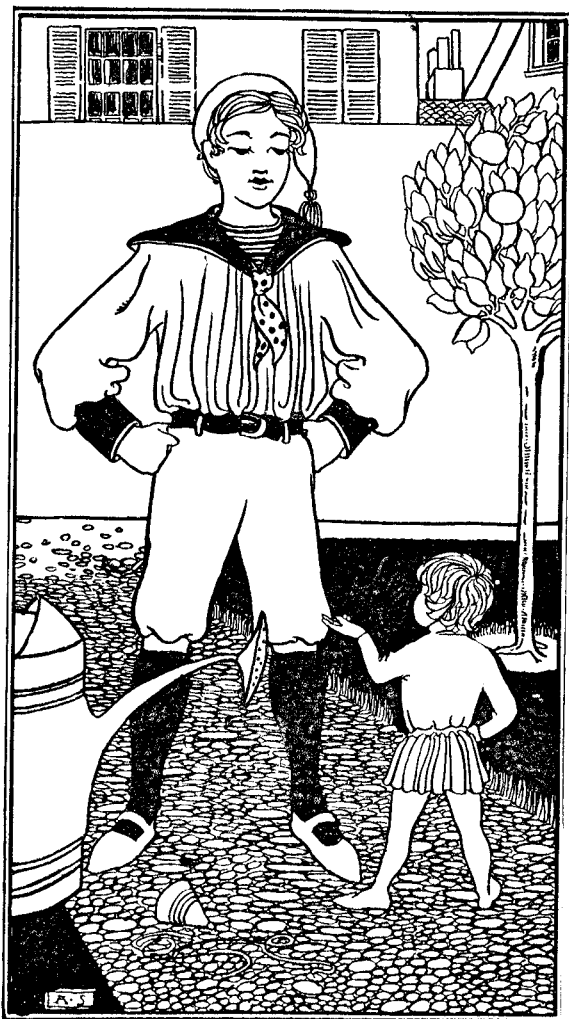
Stooping over, he put out his hand and seemed to touch something soft. He closed his hand and started back, when to his amazement he found in his grasp an object that looked like a small, round, pointed hat.

Now Harry knew a thing or two. He had read all about fairies and elves, and had seen pictures of them, and he concluded at once that this must be an elf's hat. He put it on his head without delay, and sure enough, just as he expected, there stood an elf before him.

"Please give me back my hat," said the little creature, in a beseeching tone.

"No, no," replied Harry. "I've read about you elves, and I know you are my servant while I have your hat. I want to see where you live, and all that. And—oh! yes," he exclaimed as a thought struck him; "what became of that pin that was here in the path? Did you take it?"

The elf nodded, and held out his hand, in which lay the pin.



"PLEASE GIVE ME BACK MY HAT."

4-10-11

4-12-13

"So that is the reason it disappeared," said Harry. "Why did you pick it up?"

"That's my work," responded the elf. "I belong to the Pin Elves. We have to gather up the pins that you mortals lose or throw away."

"How funny!" cried Harry. "But what do you do with them?"

“Well,” replied the elf, “a long time ago our king ran a needle in his foot. Now we have a law that whoever injures the King’s person shall be banished. Of course the King could not banish himself, so he had to banish all the needles. No sewing could be done after that, so we gradually took to using pins for fastening our clothes together, and now we need so many that most of our work is pin-gathering. That is the reason we are called the Pin Elves.”

Harry looked at the little fellow curiously and saw that his garments had neither button nor sewed seam. Shoes, stockings, tight breeches, belted coat,—all were fastened together with pins.

"But I thought that you elves worked at night only," said Harry.

“So we do, usually,” responded the elf, “but some of us occasionally are sent out on a dark, cloudy day like this, when there is little danger

of the sun shining upon us. I had bad luck last night, didn't find a pin, so my master made me come out again to-day."

"Well, I am your master now," said Harry, "so you can stop work and go home. Only, you must take me with you."

Off they started, the elf leading, in the direction of Central Park. The elfin hat which Harry wore made him invisible, and the elf himself of course was visible only to Harry; therefore they attracted no attention as they walked up the Avenue and along Fifty-ninth Street. They entered the Park at the Sixth Avenue gate, and went a little way until they came to a small rock with a rather flat top.

The elf scrambled up on this, and sticking a pin in a little hole in the centre and pressing upon it thrice, sang in a queer, croaking voice the following :

"Pin, pin, let me in.
Needles are banished,
All of them vanished;
I am a trusty Pin."

Immediately a door in the rock opened, disclosing a flight of stairs, down which the elf conducted Harry. The stairs ended in a small,

well-lighted room, with several passage-ways leading out of it. They entered one of these, and after walking a short distance, came to a long, steep incline, the floor of which shone like polished glass.

"Hold on!" cried Harry in alarm; "that's too steep and slippery to walk on. It looks like glass."

"It is glass," said the elf, "and we are going to slide down. You needn't be afraid. It's safe enough, and I'll go in front."

He sat down on the brow of the hill, and continued: "You sit down behind me and stick your feet on each side of me, and I'll steer you straight. All ready? Well, here goes! Hold on to my hat!"

Whiz! away they went, and in about ten seconds reached the bottom, where a short, level space with a gentle rise at the end of it brought them to a gradual standstill.

"Glorious!" exclaimed Harry, springing to his feet. "Beats coasting all hollow! Let's go back and try it again."

"No, we must hasten on," replied the elf; "the King holds a reception this afternoon, and no one is permitted to be absent."

They hurried along the passage and presently came to a door, before which stood two tall elves, each one armed with a long spear. Harry's elf whispered a word to these guards, and they instantly opened the door.

On they trotted; that is, the elf trotted, but Harry simply walked at a good pace, through several more passage-ways, until finally they reached another door, guarded like the first, through which they were admitted to the Grand Royal Reception Hall.

It was a room of immense size, brilliantly lighted by what seemed to be strings of precious stones festooned from the lofty ceiling. At the further end, on a raised dais, was the King, seated upon a throne of gold, with his royal body-guard of five hundred picked soldiers stationed near him. On a lower platform at the right of the King were seated a few persons, who, Harry's elf informed him, were members of the royal family.

The hall was otherwise quite vacant, as the reception was just beginning, so they stood at one side and watched the elves coming in.

"There is my old master, the Lord of the Safety-Pin," said the elf to Harry, as a surly-

looking elf entered, whose clothes were fastened with numerous safety-pins. "See him scowl at us; he knows you are my master now. Those elves behind him are his knights. Each knight has two esquires and twelve retainers; any retainer who finds a good safety-pin becomes an esquire, and if he finds another he is made a knight; but he can't become a lord until he has found enough to pin all his clothes together. There is only one lord of that order, because you mortals don't lose many good safety-pins, and a broken one doesn't count.

"Those two fellows coming now are Knights of the Breast-Pin. Each of them found one breast-pin, and the King made them knights. They are the only members of their order.

"Here come the Black-Pins. There are six lords, seventy-two knights, a hundred and forty-four esquires, and I don't know how many retainers. They are rather a common lot," he added contemptuously.

After the Black-Pins had passed, there entered a pompous elf with a large hat-pin hanging like a sword from his belt. At sight of him Harry's elf bowed very low.

"Who is that?" asked Harry.

"One of the Hat-Pins," replied the elf in a whisper; "belongs to the royal family, you know. The King's sceptre is a gold-headed hat-pin, and any one who finds a hat-pin is made a member of the royal family."

Just then a messenger summoned them to appear before the King.

"There is one rule you must bear in mind, while you are in this hall," said the elf to Harry, as they followed the messenger; "no one is permitted to turn his back to the King."

Half-way down the hall they came to the Lord of the Safety-Pin, who looked so ugly and hateful that Harry could not help smiling. Just after they passed him, Harry felt a sharp pin-prick in his leg, and turning about hastily, discovered that it had been inflicted by the Lord of the Safety-Pin himself.

"Ha! ha!" cried that individual, with a malicious grin, "*you have turned your back on the King!*"

The King spoke a few words to his body-guard, and instantly a large number of them started towards Harry.

"Quick! you must escape!" cried the elf whose hat he possessed. "Follow me."

Harry was inclined to stand his ground, but on second thoughts it seemed wiser to run, so he followed his little friend through a side doorway and on through many corridors and up numerous flights of stairs until they arrived at the chamber where they had first entered. The elf ran up the steps, and taking a pin from his coat inserted it in a small hole in the rock overhead, and said :

“ Pin, pin,
Trusty and stout,
I am within
And want to get out.”

The door in the rock opened, and they stepped out into the open air.

“ We’re safe now,” said the elf, and he slammed the door shut, just as the foremost of the pursuing soldiers began to mount the stairs. “ Now, please give me my hat !” he added imploringly.

“ Not yet,” said Harry. “ You must go home with me ; I’m not going to walk the streets bareheaded and visible.”

When they reached the house Harry bade the elf wait a minute, and removing the elfin hat from his head, he went up to his mother’s

room, and took an old hat-pin from a closet. Stopping on his way back at the sitting-room door, he obtained his mother's permission to keep it, and then ran out to the elf.

"You have been a good servant," said he, "and here is your reward."

The elf's little black eyes sparkled with pleasure as he took it, and he drew himself up proudly, saying: "Now I shall become a member of the royal family. And here," he continued, drawing a pin from his coat, and handing it to Harry, "is a token of my gratitude. If you ever want to see me, go to that rock in the Park; in the centre of the top you will find a small hole; stick this pin in the hole, and while you press upon it thrice, repeat these words:

"Pin, pin, let me in.
Needles are banished,
All of them vanished;
A mortal wants to get in."

"Thank you," said Harry. "Good-by, little chap. Here's your hat," and he tossed it to the elf, who instantly disappeared.

"Well," thought Harry, as he entered the house, "I've certainly found out where the pins go."

CHAPTER II.

TAKEN PRISONER.

ONE Saturday, some months after Harry's adventure among the Pin Elves, an irresistible desire came over him to pay another visit to the little underground people; so having obtained his mother's consent to spend the afternoon in the Park, he took the pin given him by his elfin friend, put in his pocket a little gift for him, and started off.

The rock which contained the hidden door was situated close to a footpath, and when he reached it he sat down upon it as if to rest, and looked about to see if any one were watching him. No one was in sight but a Park policeman, who had just passed by, and he was disappearing from view among the shrubbery. So Harry hurriedly examined the centre of the rock, and in a few moments

found the hole. Inserting the pin, he pressed upon it thrice, and repeated

“Pin, pin, let me in.
Needles are banished,
All of them vanished;
A mortal wants to get in.”

Instantly the door in the top of the rock opened, and Harry found himself lying on the grass beside the rock. In his excitement he had forgotten just where the door was, and, as he was resting exactly on top of it, when it sprang open it naturally threw him off the rock. Fortunately he was not hurt, though he was very much surprised.

It took but a moment, however, to pick himself up, snatch the elfin pin from the hole, and spring down the stone steps through the open doorway. As his foot touched the bottom, the trap-door in the rock above shut noiselessly.

The chamber in which he found himself was empty, so he entered the passageway which he had traversed with the elf on his former visit, slid down the glassy incline, and walked onwards until he came to the first door. As no one was there, and as there seemed to be no way for him to open the door, he knocked upon it

as loudly as possible, and stepping back a little waited for a response.

Suddenly the door opened about half-way, but closed again just as suddenly without any one appearing. After waiting awhile longer, Harry knocked again till his knuckles were sore, and when no answer came, he kicked vigorously against the rocky barrier.

Finally he grew tired, and sat down. What to do next he hardly knew. It was impossible to go back the way he came, as he could not walk up the glassy incline. He had seen no passageway opening out of the one in which he was, and there seemed to be no other door than the one just ahead. Evidently, there was nothing to do but to wait until some of the elves happened along that way.

The silence at first was painful; but after a little while he fancied he heard mysterious sounds around him, like the rustling of garments, and soft footfalls, and once or twice what seemed to be a faint whispering. No one was visible, and he had almost concluded that he had merely imagined the sounds, when there came a sharp click just beside him, as if a piece of metal had struck the rocky side of the passageway.

He sprang to his feet, much startled and frightened, but there was nothing to be seen, and as he listened intently, he could not hear the slightest sound.

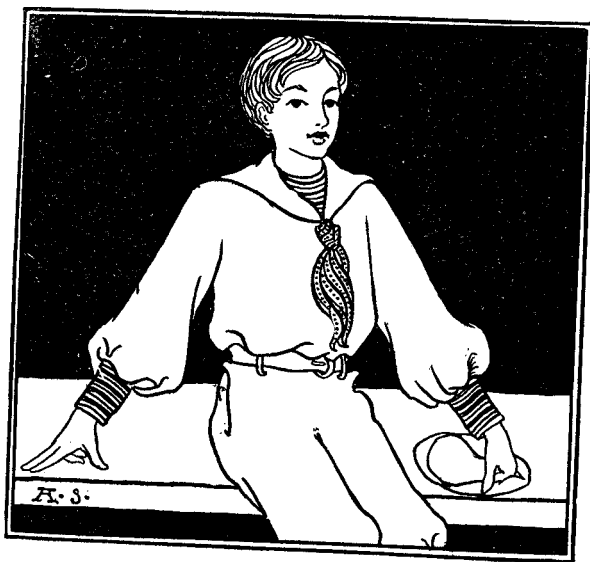
"Pshaw! I'm simply nervous!" he exclaimed, seating himself again.

But scarcely had he become quiet, when he felt something like a rope drawn tightly about his arms and feet, and then he was pulled over on his back upon the ground. He made a desperate effort to free himself, but both arms and legs were so strongly bound that all struggling was in vain; so he lay there perfectly quiet, half frightened out of his wits.

In a few moments, he was dragged on his back upon what seemed to be a long, wide board, and then the board, with him upon it, was lifted up and carried through a number of passageways, and finally set down again on the ground. The board was then gently pulled from under him, there was a confused rustling sound, the bonds on his limbs suddenly loosened, and all became quiet.

Harry sprang to his feet and found himself in a small chamber about twelve feet square, with apparently neither door nor window. Of course

he knew there must be a doorway somewhere, as he had just been brought through one ; but he was unable to discover any sign of it now. The room was well lighted in some way from



the lofty ceiling, and contained a long, low couch along one of the walls.

Harry carefully examined his prison, and then sat down on the edge of the couch, and gave a long whistle.

"Well!" he cried, "this *is* a lark and no mistake! I wish I could get out of this hole."

But it needed only a glance at those bare stone walls to show him the uselessness of such a wish. Finally he gave up thinking about his strange situation, and being thoroughly tired out, threw himself back on the couch, and was soon fast asleep.

On awakening, the first object that met his gaze was a low table beside him, covered with a tempting display of food.

"Well!" he exclaimed, rubbing his eyes in amazement, "if it isn't just like magic!"

The food smelled good, and also tasted good, as he soon discovered; and when he had finished eating there was little of it left. After that, he walked around the room a number of times, and then lay down and slept again.

When he awoke the second time, the little table had disappeared. While he lay there, half dozing, he saw a door in the opposite side of the room noiselessly open and immediately close again. A moment later, something soft touched his head, and he beheld his old elfin friend standing beside him, nodding and grinning.

"Hallo!" cried Harry, sitting upright, "how did you get here?"

"Sh — sh!" said the elf, "don't talk so loud! I came in at the door just now."

"How's that? I didn't see you," said Harry.

"No, of course not," was the reply; "we elves are invisible to any mortal who hasn't one of our hats on. You see me now because I just put my hat on your head."

"Well, say, old fellow, or whatever your name may be — what is your name, by the way?"

"Wamby," answered the elf.

"Well, Wamby," continued Harry, "why am I shut up here, and what is going to be done with me?"

The elf answered: "You are shut up because at your former visit you turned your back on the King. When to-day you came to that door near the foot of the hill of glass, you could see no one because you hadn't one of our hats on; but the two guards were there, and while one remained to watch you, the other carried the news to the King. Instantly, a body of soldiers was sent to seize you, and carry you to this

prison. I was unable to prevent it, but I made up my mind to see you, and so I deliberately turned *my* back on the King and, of course, was at once arrested and brought here as a prisoner too. As to what is to be done with us, I believe they intend to send us down to work with the Gnomes."

"Where is that?" asked Harry. "And who are the Gnomes?"

"Why, the Gnomes are the elves who work in the mines far down in the earth, way down below where we are. They are bad fellows, those Gnomes, black and ugly, and awfully old. They dig gold and silver and iron, and have big forges where they make lots of things. It's very hot down there, and they have to stay there all the time. One of the worst punishments that can befall a Pin Elf is to be sent to work with the Gnomes. No one ever is permitted to return, and there is no chance to escape from the mines."

"Well, can't we escape from this place before they carry us down to the Gnomes?" asked Harry.

Wamby shook his head dolefully. "No," he replied; "they've taken away the pin with which

I opened doors, and we can't get out any other way."

"Here is the pin you gave me," said Harry. "Won't that do just as well?"

Wamby eagerly took the pin, but his countenance soon fell again. "I'm afraid it's no use for us to try," he said; "come over here and look. Don't speak a word."

Going across to the opposite side of the room, he waited till Harry was close beside him, and then sticking the pin in a hole in the wall, he pressed upon it thrice, and whispered:

"Pin, pin,
Trusty and stout,
I am within,
And want to look out."

The door opened a crack, and Wamby stepped aside and motioned Harry to take a peep. Harry did so, and saw that the passageway was fairly filled with elves of the largest size, each one armed with a long spear. He counted them, and found there were fifty keeping careful guard. Then the door closed quietly.

Wamby turned around and threw himself hopelessly upon the couch. "Take that pin

out of the hole," he said; "it may be of use to us some time."

Harry snatched it out impatiently, and dropped it on the floor. "Pshaw!" he exclaimed.

"What's the matter?" inquired the elf.

"I dropped the pin and can't find it again," said Harry. "Oh! here it is, sticking in a hole in the floor."

"What! in a hole?" cried Wamby, springing up excitedly. "Don't touch it! Let me see! If there's a hole, there must be a trap-door; and if there is, it will give us a chance of escape."

He kneeled down and rapped softly upon the floor, and listened intently.

"Yes, there's a door here. Stand aside, and I'll show you."

He pressed upon the pin and repeated the usual words, and a trap-door opened in the floor, revealing a narrow passage, with stone steps descending.

"Where does it lead to?" asked Harry.

"I don't know," Wamby replied; "but we can soon find out." He considered a moment, and then continued, "We'd better wait awhile, though. They'll bring in our food before long,

and if they find us gone they will start at once in pursuit and catch us. But if we wait until after the food is brought, it will give us time to get away a good distance before our flight is discovered."

It was well they took that precaution, for hardly was the trap-door closed when the other door opened, and four elves appeared, bearing a table laden with eatables. After the meal was despatched, Harry put in his pockets the food that remained, as it might be some time before they could obtain any more. Then, waiting until the four elves had returned and removed the empty table, they opened the trap-door and descended a few steps, when the door above them silently closed, and they were in total darkness.

CHAPTER III.

PURSUED.

"WHAT shall we do now?" asked Harry in dismay, catching Wamby by the arm. "We can never go on in this darkness."

"Wait a minute, and I'll show you," replied the elf.

He seemed to search about his person for something, and presently held out his hand, in which was a box containing a little round object that shone like an electric light, and lighted up the passageway brilliantly.

"What is it?" inquired Harry in wonder.

"A kind of gem that the gnomes make. We use them to light up all our rooms, and when one is put in a box like this it is like a dark lantern, only better, being so small and bright. But, come on! we are wasting precious time."

The stone stairs seemed interminable, but at last they reached the bottom, and hurried along

a corridor that still slanted slightly downward. After a long walk they came to the brow of a steep incline.

"What's this?" asked Harry, "another hill of glass?"

"Yes," Wamby replied, sitting down. "Sit down behind me and we'll slide."

"Look here!" exclaimed Harry, "we've been going down for an hour or more, and if we don't stop I'm afraid we'll come to the centre of the earth. Where does this road lead to, I'd like to know?"

"Well," answered Wamby calmly, "I think, from the way it keeps going down hill, that it must lead to the Gnomes; in fact, I am quite sure that this is the way they take prisoners there."

"If that's the case," said Harry, "please excuse me from going any further. I may be carried down, but I'm not such a fool as to go down of my own free will."

"Oh, come on!" said Wamby; "don't be afraid! If we go down of our own accord we can come back at any time. You'll understand later. Although I have never been to the Gnomes, I have often heard the soldiers,

who have taken prisoners there, tell stories about the trip, and I think I know pretty well what the remainder of the road is like. Sit down close behind me and take hold of my belt, and keep your mouth tightly shut."

"All right, go ahead," said Harry.

Away they went, faster and faster, until Harry felt as if his breath were gone. Would the hill never end?

"Can't — you — put on — the brakes — Wamby?" he gasped.

"Keep your mouth shut, and hold on!" shrieked the elf.

"Hold on!" thought Harry, "I wish I could hold on!"

But they reached the foot of the hill safely after awhile. Harry sat still until he had recovered his breath, and then, slowly arising, ruefully rubbed his benumbed legs, and said:

"I tell you what, old chap, if you ever want me to slide down that place again, you'll have to provide a cushion for me."

Wamby chuckled, and trotted onward. After another long walk through a level corridor they came to the entrance of an immense chamber or cave, so large that they could see neither

the roof, nor opposite sides. The floor was smooth and glistening, and reflected the light which Wamby held aloft.

"What is the floor — glass?" asked Harry.

"No," replied the elf, "it's water. We shall have to go the rest of the way in a boat. Let me show you something," he continued, catching Harry by the sleeve, and shutting the lid of his lantern box. "Look way over there, a little to the left, and tell me what you see."

"Why, it looks like a little red star. It flickers a good deal. Sometimes it blazes up brightly, and then it gets so faint that I can scarcely see it. What is it?"

"It is where the Gnomes live. That star, as you call it, is the light from their furnace fires; and when I tell you it is as bright as day over there, you can see how far away it must be from us."

"But how can we ever get there?" demanded Harry.

"You'll see presently," was the answer. "First, let us eat some of that food you brought. I'm hungry."

They hastily swallowed a few mouthfuls, and quenched their thirst with a draught of cool, clear water from the lake,

"Now, give me that pin," said Wamby. Opening a large door at one side, he disclosed a room with the floor covered with water, on which floated a sail-boat with its sails all set. "Here," he continued, "take hold of that bow-line, and while I shove, you pull the boat around alongside of the landing-place there. Now, fasten the stern-line over that stone post, and get in the boat, and shove the bow out a little."

Meanwhile Wamby had taken a piece of hose from the room, and fastening one end on the wall, he placed the other end on the edge of the landing-place with the nozzle pointing straight at the red star. Then he turned a stop-cock, and instantly there came a strange, rushing sound from the nozzle of the hose.

"What's that?" cried Harry, much alarmed.

"Oh! that is only the wind that I just turned on," said Wamby. "All we have to do is to push the boat in front of this hose, and the wind will blow us across the lake."

"But how can we get back again if it blows so hard from this side?" inquired Harry.

"Easy enough," responded Wamby. "This wind only blows long enough to carry us across, and then stops of itself. Now I'll put my

lantern-box on this shelf, so that when we come back we'll know where to steer. We won't need it till we get back again. And now we're all ready."

He cast off the stern-line and was just about to step aboard, when he suddenly stopped, and cried, "Listen!"

Harry listened, but could hear nothing. The elf's ears were sharper, though, and he exclaimed, "I hear the sound of rapid footsteps up the passageway. Push off from shore—quick!"

Springing into the boat, he grasped a pole and shoved off a few feet from the edge. No sooner had he done so, when the fifty elves who had been guarding them came running up, waving their spears and shouting to them to return. Of course they refused, whereupon the leader of the soldiers ran to the hose and turned off the wind. Then he held aloft his spear, and cried, "In the King's name, surrender!"

At the sound of that, Wamby fairly trembled, and seemed disposed to obey. But Harry pushed him aside, and called out boldly, "What do you want?"

"We want you to give yourselves up as prisoners. If you refuse, we shall have to swim out and capture you."

Harry turned to Wamby: "What do you say? Shall we fight them?"

Poor little Wamby shook his head hopelessly.

"I'll fight if you command me to; I am your servant; but it will do no good. There are too many of them."

"What can we do, then?" inquired Harry.

"Nothing, except go back," said Wamby.

"Dear me! I wish I had my hat-pin now!"

"What good would that do?"

"Why, then we could control them. But they took away my hat-pin, of course, when they arrested me."

Harry thrust his hand in his pocket and drew forth a package. "See here, Wamby," said he, "here's a hat-pin that I brought down as a present for you, but I forgot all about it till this moment. Would this be any good?" He opened the package and showed a large, gold-headed hat-pin, much like the one belonging to the King, only handsomer.

"Just the thing!" cried Wamby. And grasping the pin in his hand he held it up before him, and sprang upon the seat in the boat's stern, shouting: "Behold the royal emblem!"

At the sight, every soldier dropped his spear, and bowed low to the ground.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Wamby. "You have made a mistake, my brave men, but we'll overlook it this time. You, Smithkin, go and turn on the wind!"

The leader of the soldiers, thus commanded, immediately obeyed.

"Rise!" said Wamby. "Have you food with you?"

Smithkin bowed low, and replied: "We have, most noble possessor of the royal hat-pin."

"Then hearken," continued Wamby. "Sit down where you are, and remain seated until we return." Then, turning to Harry, he grinned and said, "Shove the boat over into the wind."

"Will they stay here?" whispered Harry.

"Oh! yes; never fear. They wouldn't dare leave," answered Wamby, sticking the hat-pin in his belt, and pushing the boat along.

Presently the wind struck the sails, the boat started rapidly forward into the gloom, and Wamby, sitting down in the stern, took the tiller and steered for the little red spot that showed where the Gnomes lived.

CHAPTER IV.

A TRIP TO THE GNOMES.

"WAMBY," said Harry, after they had sailed for some time in silence, "what are we going to the Gnomes for?"

"I have some friends there that I want to see," replied Wamby.

"Are there many of the Pin Elves there?"

"A great many. I once counted up over five hundred that I knew of, and there are a large number of others who have been sent there."

"What are they sent for, breaking the laws?"

"Oh! no. I myself am the only one I ever knew of who deliberately broke a law. The others were banished for displeasing the King. For instance, twelve friends of mine were sent to the Gnomes at one time, simply because they contradicted the King. He declared that

the katydids had more beautiful voices than the crickets, and because they refused to agree with him they were banished. Then there was Kitey, a dear friend of mine, but an awful big fool in one way. He was so afraid of turning his back on the King that he never took his eyes off the King's face when in the royal presence. One day at a banquet Kitey sat next to me, and I told him a funny story and made him laugh. Of course he was looking at the King all the time, and just then the King unluckily spilt some soup on his royal mantle, and seeing Kitey looking at him and laughing, he thought he was laughing at *him*; so away Kitey went to the Gnomes."

"It's shameful!" exclaimed Harry, indignantly. "Why do you stand it? I should think all of you would hate such a wicked King."

"Well, everybody does hate him," said Wamby, "except a few persons, like the Lord of the Safety-Pin, who are the King's favorites. But what can you do?"

"Do!" cried Harry, "why, elect another King."

"Elect another King!" repeated Wamby, as if bewildered at the very idea.

"Yes," said Harry. "He's the wickedest old tyrant I ever heard of. If most of you dislike him, the best thing to do is to choose some good elf as King, and send the old one off."

"But that would be rebellion," said Wamby, faintly. The project was so bold that it fairly took his breath away.

"No," answered Harry, "it would be a revolution, and that is perfectly right in a case like this."

"But the King has all the soldiers under his command," said Wamby.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Harry, "what do they amount to! There must be thousands of you Pin Elves, and you could easily conquer five hundred soldiers."

"It's all well enough to talk," returned Wamby, "but you forget another very serious fact, and that is the effect of the royal hat-pin, and the awe and terror it always inspires. You yourself have seen how easily I controlled those soldiers with the hat-pin; but imagine how much greater would be the effect if it were in the King's hands."

"That's so," said Harry, "I never thought of that."

After a long silence he crawled back to the stern of the boat, and sat down beside Wamby.



"Look here, Wamby," he said, "I have an idea." And then he began a long whispered conversation with the elf, as if afraid to let even the darkness around them hear what he had to say.

Finally Wamby said, "Well, I am doubtful about it; but you are my master, and if you command me to do it, I shall have to obey."

"That's so. I forgot I had your hat on my head," said Harry, feeling to make sure that the hat was still there. "Well, then, I command you to do it. Does that settle the matter?"

"Yes, that settles it," replied the elf.

Meanwhile, they had been drawing near the other shore. The little red star had been

gradually growing larger and brighter, and they began now to see clearly the brilliant, ruddy, furnace fires, and to distinguish the forms of Gnomes moving about at their work. The heat had become so intense that Harry took off his coat and vest, and wet his head a number of times with the cool water.

As they drew close to the shore, Wamby steered the boat aside out of the direct current of wind, and it gradually slowed up and stopped alongside of a landing-place. They both stepped out, and Wamby made the boat fast.

"You'd better take a good drink," said he to Harry, "and wet your handkerchief and tie it around your head. It's awfully hot here."

"How do they stand it?" asked Harry.

"Oh! the Gnomes are used to it. But you notice there are no Pin Elves here. It is too hot for them. They work in the mines, digging out the metal. Of course it's warm enough there, but not nearly so bad as this."

He drew forth the hat-pin from his belt, and held it up before some soldiers standing near, "Here, you!" he said to one of them, "keep guard over that boat!" Then addressing

another soldier : " And you, go ahead and lead us straight to your King. Trot along lively ! We haven't any time to spare, and even if we had, it's too hot to loiter here."

They hastened away as fast as possible, but although they were running briskly, and although Harry himself was most anxious to escape from the terrible heat, he could not refrain from casting several curious glances about him. It was indeed a strange and weird scene. Long rows of fiercely glowing furnaces, with scores of misshapen, hideous-looking Gnomes busily at work ; some bringing loads of freshly-dug ore in funny little wheelbarrows ; some tending the fires and stirring the red-hot coals with long pokers ; some with big ladles skimming the refuse from the top of the molten metal, or pouring it from the crucibles into moulds ; some trotting away with barrows full of new-made gold and silver bars. Then, further along, were hundreds of forges, with Gnomes still more ugly working the metals into all sorts of beautiful and curious forms.

Had it not been so terribly hot, Harry would gladly have stopped and watched them ; but as it was, he was very willing to hurry by as fast as

his legs could carry him, and was thankful when they entered a corridor and shut a stone door behind them. It was still warm, of course, being so far down in the earth, but the temperature was comfortable, as compared with the intense heat from the fires.

Presently they reached a large hall, with the floor covered with pure gold, the sides covered with silver, and the ceiling inlaid with countless precious stones. The light was so brilliant and dazzling that Harry was half blinded, and had to shade his eyes for some moments before he could see anything.

At the further end of the hall was the King of the Gnomes on his throne. On each side of him sat the Grand Prime Minister and the Grand Recorder, and beside them were ranged a double row of armed soldiers.

It seemed to Harry that the Gnomes had picked out the oldest and ugliest one of their number for King, and then the next two ugliest ones for Prime Minister and Recorder. The King had an immense gray beard, so long and bushy that the ends of it were spread out on the floor in front of him like a rug. In his right hand he held, as a sceptre, a small golden

pickax, to show that all the wealth of his kingdom came from the mines.

As Harry and Wamby drew near the throne, the King growled forth, "What do you want?"

Wamby held forth the hat-pin, and replied, "We are come to demand of you to deliver to us every Pin Elf now in Your Majesty's dominions."

"Hum! hah!" growled the King, frowning terribly. He looked first at the Grand Prime Minister, and then at the Grand Recorder, as much as to say, "What do you think of that?"

Those two worthies of course knew better than to make any reply. They simply bowed very low, as if to say, "We think whatever Your Majesty is pleased to think."

Then the King stared at his golden pickax with his right eye, which, by the way, was much larger than the other eye, and had a most horrible glare.

"Hum! hah!" he muttered again, and turned that awful eye of his upon Harry.

The poor boy was shaking in his shoes from fright, but he returned the King's gaze with a bold countenance.

"Shall we run, Wamby?" he whispered.

"No, keep still, or we're lost!" replied the elf.

Finally the King summoned an officer, and said, in a snarling tone, "Take a hundred soldiers, and bring hither all of the Pin Elves in my dominions. Begone!"

Presently the officer returned with the elves. They looked astonished and bewildered when they saw Harry and Wamby, and bowed low to the King of the Gnomes and then to the royal hat-pin, but of course were afraid to say a word.

"There they are," growled the King, with a rather menacing wave of his pickax. "Take them, and begone!"

Nothing loth, they all retired from the room as fast as they could back out.

"Now I'll run ahead and get the boats ready," said Wamby, "and the rest of you hurry after me before the King has a chance to change his mind and stop us."

By the time they reached the lake, Wamby had a fleet of boats in waiting, and had adjusted a piece of hose and turned on the wind. It took but a moment for them to tumble aboard and push the boats into the wind, and they were soon sailing rapidly towards home.

CHAPTER V.

CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

WHEN they arrived at the opposite side of the lake they found the fifty soldiers seated on the exact spot where they had left them.

A number of Gnomes had been brought over in order that they might take their own vessels back, and the first thing Wamby did was to order the wind turned on, and start the fleet of the Gnomes on their homeward way. Next, he commanded the soldiers to arise, proceed a little distance up the passageway, and take their station at the entrance of another passageway leading off towards the right, which Harry had not noticed before.

"It leads up to the Grand Royal Reception Hall," explained Wamby, in answer to an inquiry from Harry. "Of course you know it is impossible to go back the way we came down."

Then Wamby led Kitey aside from the other elves, and whispered to him long and earnestly. As Kitey listened he looked first amazed and then delighted, and finally a broad grin overspread his face, and with a knowing nod he ran off and began in a low voice to address the various groups of elves scattered about.

"Did you tell Kitey everything?" inquired Harry.

"Yes," replied Wamby, "and he is telling the others. We can trust them all."

"How about the soldiers? do they know?" asked Harry.

Wamby shook his head. "I am doubtful about that Smithkin. I don't know whether to trust him or not."

"Do you think he smells a rat?" queried Harry.

"Think he does what?"

"Suspects — mistrusts something," explained Harry.

"Oh!" said Wamby. "Yes, I do. You see, he knows well enough that the King would never release all these elves from the mines, and ever since we came back he has been casting suspicious glances at us, as if he were trying to find

out what we were about. He's a treacherous fellow. I'm afraid of him."

"Then," said Harry, "don't tell him anything. Wait until we get arms for all these fellows, and we can defy those fifty soldiers."

"But the trouble is," observed Wamby, "that Smithkin is the only one who knows the way back, and where the armory is."

Harry pondered a moment. "It seems to me the best plan is this," said he. "You order Smithkin to lead us to the King. You, Kitey, and I will go ahead with Smithkin, the released elves will come next, and the soldiers bring up the rear. Then Smithkin can't communicate with his men, and we can watch him closely, and easily disarm and bind him at the least sign of treachery."

The plan impressed Wamby favorably. He gave orders to that effect, and they were soon hastening on the way to the Grand Royal Reception Hall. They traversed a number of passages, and climbed many long flights of steps. All went well for a time. Although Smithkin was glum and sullen, he certainly was leading them in the

right direction, and they saw no reason to suspect him.

At length they came to a place where the passageway expanded into a long and rather narrow room. When they reached the further end of the room, Smithkin examined the wall closely, and then a disconcerted look came into his face.

"I can't find any door here," said he. "One of my men knows where it is, though; I'll go back and ask him."

Harry followed him through the throng to the other end of the room. All of the released elves were in the room, but the soldiers had halted in the passageway. Calling one of them to him, Smithkin asked, "Where is the lower door?"

"There is the place," replied the soldier, pointing to the wall on one side of the passageway behind where Harry was standing.

Smithkin drew forth a pin, and said to Harry, "Will your honor please step aside a moment?"

Harry drew back a few steps into the room; thus there was no one in the passageway but the soldiers. As soon as Harry was well in

the room, Smithkin inserted the pin in a hole, pressed upon it thrice, and said :

“ Pin, pin,
Let them in ;
Open the door,
Open the *floor* ! ”

Instantly the whole floor of the room swung downwards, like an immense trap-door, and dumped all but the soldiers upon a slippery incline below. Away they went, sliding and rolling and tumbling over one another, until they landed in a confused heap at the bottom. Then the trap-door swung shut, and left them in darkness.

Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, though a number of them were bruised and scratched considerably. After order was restored Harry and Wamby talked over the situation, and came to the conclusion that this room and trap-door were mainly intended to prevent the Gnomes from ever invading the domains of the Pin Elves ; and that Smithkin, suspecting all was not right, made up his mind it would be a good plan to imprison them until he could find out from the King the real state of affairs.

"We are literally caught in a trap," said Harry.

Just then one of the elves exclaimed, "I've found a little box on the floor."

"Bring it here!" shouted Wamby. "It's my lantern-box. It flew out of my hands when I fell."

The light thus found cheered their spirits not a little. They could see that they were in a large chamber, with apparently no other mode of exit than the way by which they had entered.

"There must be some way to get out," said Wamby. "You fellows sound the floor and walls, and see if you cannot discover a door somewhere."

But their search proved vain. Not a sign of a door was to be found, though they examined carefully every square inch of the floor and of the walls, as high up as they could reach.

"There's nothing for us to do, then," said Wamby, "but wait and see what will happen."

And wait they did, for some time, and then what happened was the most unlooked-for thing that could possibly occur. The trap-door above opened an instant; there was a sound of mocking laughter, the door closed again, and a mo-

ment after Smithkin himself came sliding and rolling down the hill of glass, and landed in a heap in the centre of the room.

Such a crushed and crestfallen Smithkin as he was! They gathered about him and asked what was the matter.

"Matter!" growled the discomfited soldier, rising and stamping his foot in a rage, "mutiny is the matter! Rebellion is the matter! My soldiers have defied me. The King shall know of it, and every one of them shall be sent to the Gnomes!"

"Here, leave him to me," said Wamby, taking Smithkin by the arm and drawing him aside.

After a long talk with him, Wamby returned to the others, and said, "He has had some trouble with his men, and they dumped him down here out of revenge. But it will turn out to our advantage, for he knows where the door is that leads out of this hole. Give me your pin, Harry. Smithkin's is in possession of the soldiers above."

Harry drew a pin from the lapel of his coat and handed it to him. "Now show me the place," said Wamby. Smithkin led him to the

foot of the hill of glass, and pointed to a little pin-hole in the incline, about a foot from the bottom.

"Well!" muttered Wamby, "no wonder we couldn't find it! Who would ever think of looking for a door there?"

He inserted the pin, and pressing upon it thrice, repeated:

"Pin, pin,
Trusty and stout,
We are within
And want to get out."

But no door opened. Again he pressed the pin and repeated the words, and again there was no response.

"Are those the right words for this door, Smithkin?" he asked of the soldier.

"Yes," said Smithkin; "try again."

He did so a number of times, but all in vain. At last he turned to Smithkin with a suspicious look, and cried, "You are deceiving us, you villain!"

The other elves began to gather around the unfortunate soldier, with menacing looks and muttered threats of vengeance, but he pro-

tested that he told the truth. "The door is there, for I have seen it opened," he said. "Something must be wrong."

Wamby thereupon drew forth the pin, and after one glance at it, said to Harry, "Why, you gave me a common pin!"

"Won't it do?" asked Harry; "what difference does it make?"

"A great deal," answered Wamby; "only a door-pin, made for the purpose, will open doors. Why need I ask for *your* pin, if any common one will do? And how do you suppose it would be possible to keep any Pin Elf in prison, when each one's clothes are fastened on with dozens of common pins?"

"Sure enough," replied Harry; "I never thought of that."

He searched one lapel of his coat, and then the other, and then looked at Wamby with a blank countenance, and said, "The door-pin is gone!"

"Gone!" cried Wamby, as a look of despair settled on his face; "then we are lost!"

He was silent a moment. Then he smote his little hands wildly together, and cried, "It's the work of some of those mean, ugly, thievish,

tricky Gnomes! They must have taken the pin when you left your coat in the boat." He suddenly felt in his belt, and said to Harry in a hoarse whisper, "They have stolen the hat-pin also!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE TABLES TURNED.

"Look here, Wamby," said Harry, "don't get excited. Let's talk over the matter. There must be some way for us to get out."

Wamby shook his head disconsolately.

"Maybe the soldiers can help us," Harry went on. "They are able to open the door above; couldn't we induce them to get ropes and draw us out?"

"'Tisn't possible," replied Wamby. "In the first place, we can't communicate with them unless they open the trap-door, and you must remember that they are afraid of us as well as of Smithkin, for they consented to our being dumped down here; then again, even if they were willing to draw us out, how could they get the rope necessary? Certainly, they wouldn't dare go near the King, after having let us escape."

Just then there was a loud shriek from one of the elves at the other end of the room, followed by a chorus of shrill, elfish laughter.

"What's the matter?" asked Wamby rather sternly.

"Kitey sat down on a pin," was the reply, "and he jumped up at least a foot high."

Kitey was seen rubbing himself and examining the skirt of his jacket, and then suddenly he uttered a surprised exclamation and ran up to Wamby.

"Here's the door-pin!" he cried; "it was sticking in my coat."

"How did it get there?" demanded Wamby.

"Perhaps," said Harry, "when we tumbled down here it got loose and stuck in Kitey's jacket. I remember now, I fell on top of Kitey."

Wamby eagerly seized the pin, and putting it in the hole, pressed upon it and repeated the usual words. The door opened and revealed a flight of steps immediately under the incline. They ascended these, and at the top Smithkin showed them a door through which they emerged in the passageway near where the soldiers were. At sight of them the soldiers

scampered into the room containing the trap-door.

Wamby's quick eye noted that they had neglected to remove Smithkin's door-pin from the hole, so he ran up, and placing his finger on



the head of the pin, shouted "Surrender instantly, or I'll dump you all down below! Lay down your arms and walk out here, and I'll promise to treat you well."

Without hesitation the scared soldiers dropped their spears, and hurried out into the passageway.

"Now," said Wamby, drawing forth the pin, "Kitey, you take fifty of our men and arm them with those spears, and keep guard over these soldiers."

Then Wamby nodded to Harry, who in a second seized Smithkin, took away his spear, and held him fast while two of the elves bound his hands behind him.

"Guard him closely, and keep him separate from the rest," ordered Wamby.

After Smithkin had been removed to a distance, Wamby turned to the disarmed soldiers and said, "Do any of you know where the royal armory is?"

"Smithkin is the only one who knows," one of the men replied. "We common soldiers were never allowed to go to the armory."

Wamby beckoned Harry aside, and whispered, "What can we do now? It seems impossible to arm the rest of our men."

"I have a scheme that may answer," said Harry. And he whispered the scheme in Wamby's ear.

Wamby pondered a minute. "It's very bold," he said, "but it strikes me as the only course open to us. Let us try it."

Then, returning and addressing the soldiers :
"Do you fellows know the way to the Grand
Royal Reception Hall?"

The soldiers consulted together a moment,
and then one of them stepped forward, and
answered, "I know the way."

"I want you to lead us there," said Wamby.
"If we succeed in what we are about to at-
tempt, I promise that each one of you fifty will
be well rewarded. If we fail, you will be no
worse off than you are now. Will you conduct
us?"

The spokesman nodded, and answered boldly,
"We will. We are under your orders."

They forthwith proceeded under the guid-
ance of the spokesman, and soon came to a
large chamber, somewhat broader than the one
containing the trap-door. Here the soldier
stopped, and pointing to a passageway at the
other end of the chamber, said in a low tone,
"The Hall is at the end of that short pas-
sageway. The door is the one you may have
seen on the left of the King, near the throne.
There are two soldiers guarding the door, but
if you will permit one of my companions and
myself to go to them alone, I think we can

entice them to this room, and you can capture them."

Wamby looked at him sharply. "I'll trust you," said he; "take a man with you, and go."

When they had gone, Wamby ordered the elves to stand along the walls so as not to be seen by any one in the passageway, and then he placed his fifty armed men on each side of the entrance.

After a little silent waiting, the two soldiers came running into the chamber, followed closely by the two guards. The latter of course were speedily captured, disarmed, and bound.

"Now," said Wamby to his armed followers, "you men remain concealed as before on each side of this entrance, and await further orders. And the rest of you keep where you can't be seen from the passageway."

Beckoning to Harry, he entered the passageway and came to the door at the end.

"First let us take a peep," said he; and opening the door on a crack, they looked out into the Reception Hall.

After the door closed, Harry whispered, "There are only a few of the body-guard there. No doubt the King has heard of our escape

from the prison, and sent most of his soldiers to find us. Are you all ready? Be sure to shut the door after I come out, and keep it shut as long as you can. I am ready."

Wamby pressed upon the pin, and the door swung open. With a yell loud enough to scare a thousand elves, Harry dashed up to the throne, picked the little King up bodily, and rushed back through the doorway before any of the soldiers had a chance to touch him. Without stopping he ran on to the chamber, and laying the King down, called out, "Here, some of you fellows, come and help me!" For by this time the King was struggling, scratching, and biting like a vicious cat.

But not an elf moved. They simply looked on in amazement and fear.

"Afraid, eh?" cried Harry. "Well, perhaps you'd better not have a hand in it."

Placing one knee on the King's body, he drew forth the royal hat-pin and stuck it in his own coat. Then he took off the crown and placed it over Wamby's hat on top of his own head, and loosing the royal mantle, pinned it over his own shoulders.

"Now," said he, springing up, "*I* am king.

Take that fellow and bind him. Don't hurt him, though," he cried, as he saw the vengeful, angry looks with which the elves rushed upon their disrobed tyrant. "Any one that injures him will be sent back to the Gnomes. He'll be punished in due time. You men that are armed, follow me to relieve Wamby."

They were just in time; for, notwithstanding Wamby's efforts, the door was being gradually forced open by the ex-King's body-guard.

"Let 'em come, Wamby!" shouted Harry.

As the door flew open, Harry stepped forward with a stern, commanding look, and held up the royal hat-pin. The soldiers stopped, looked in bewilderment at the crown on his head, and then bowed low to the floor.

"Drop your spears! Rise! March into that chamber!" cried Harry. The terrified soldiers instantly obeyed. "Kitey," called Harry, "have some of our men arm themselves with those spears, and follow me."

By this time a large crowd of the elves in the Hall had gathered about the doorway.

"Clear the way to my throne," commanded Harry, addressing his fifty armed men. "Come, Wamby," he continued, and marching solemnly

forward, he ascended the steps to the throne and seated himself, motioning Wamby to a seat on his right, and Kitey to one on his left.

"Now," began Harry, — and then he suddenly stopped and glared at Wamby, whose face showed an almost irresistible tendency to burst out laughing.

"What are you grinning at?" demanded Harry sternly.

"Please excuse me, master," said Wamby; "but you do look awfully funny!"

He certainly did look comical. The King's mantle was like a little baby's cape on his shoulders, and the collar of it would not reach half-way around his neck. Wamby's pointed hat was so small that it simply perched on top of his head. And the crown, with the hat poking through it, while it was very beautiful, with its gold and diamonds and rubies, yet looked like some little toy crown.

As Harry thought of it all, he nearly burst out laughing himself, especially when he noticed how solemnly he was holding up that ridiculous hat-pin sceptre. But of course he realized that it would never do to laugh as long as he was king, so he frowned very hard at Wamby, and

said in a solemn tone, to one of his fifty armed men, "Cause all of the Pin Elves to assemble in my presence. Take some soldiers with you and bring hither also the former King and Smithkin."

"Now," continued Harry, when this had been done, "let us proceed to business."

But before he had a chance to say more, there was a loud knock on the outside of the door by which they had come in, and, as if in answer to it, another loud knock was heard on a door at the opposite side of the Hall.

Harry leaned over towards Wamby, and whispered, "What does that mean?"

Wamby shook his head seriously, and replied, "I don't know."

CHAPTER VII.

A NEW KING.

EVERYBODY looked at everybody else, and then all looked at Harry, as if to say, "What shall we do?"

Harry pondered a minute, and finally ordered a troop of his armed men to proceed to the nearest door first, and see who was there. They did so, and soon returned, followed by a large number of the ex-King's body-guard. The soldiers looked much bewildered at seeing Harry on the throne, but as he held up the sceptre they all bowed very low before him.

"Where have you been?" demanded Harry.

The leader bowed low again, and answered, "If it please Your Royal Majesty, we were sent by the King—that is, by the *former* King—to look for you and Wamby."

"Well," said Harry, "you have found us, so you may go and stand along the wall over there."

The soldiers obeyed, and ranged themselves along the wall like a lot of naughty schoolboys.

The other door being opened, a second body of soldiers entered, and were ordered to stand along the opposite wall.

"Now," said Harry, "let us again proceed to business. Bring the ex-King before me."

When the former King was brought, Harry proceeded: "You are charged with being a tyrant. You have unlawfully punished over a thousand of your subjects, and have been a bad fellow in other ways, so I hear. Have you anything to answer?"

The deposed monarch looked sullen, and made no reply.

"Well," said Harry, "I'll put it to a vote. All who know that the charges against the ex-King are true, please say 'aye.'"

A perfect chorus of "ayes" rang through the Hall.

"Now, all who believe the charges are false, say 'no,'" continued Harry.

"No!" yelled the Lord of the Safety-Pin.

"You're a prisoner yourself and haven't any right to vote," said Harry. "Bring that fellow here."

The Lord of the Safety-Pin shook his little fist at Harry, as he stood before him, and cried out shrilly, "You are a common mortal, and have no right to be our king! I hate you! You stole my slave Wamby. I'm glad I stuck you with a pin. 'Twas I had you and Wamby arrested! 'Twas I—"

When he had gotten thus far, he choked and spluttered with rage.

"Here!" cried Harry, "hand him up to me!" Taking the vicious little fellow by the collar, he laid him across his knee and gave him a sound spanking, while the assembled elves danced and shouted with delight.

"Take from him all his safety-pins," said Harry, "and give them to Wamby, who will divide them among the most worthy of the esquires and retainers of the Safety-Pin Order. Then shut up the fellow in prison for two months, and after that let him begin over again as a common Pin Elf."

"And now," went on Harry, "for the third time, let us dispose of the ex-King. Which one of you elves has been down with the Gnomes the longest?"

Kitey arose and said, "If it please Your

Royal Majesty, I have ; fifteen years ago, as you mortals count time, was I banished to the mines."

"Is that correct according to records?" Harry asked of the Grand Royal Recorder.

"If it please Your Royal Majesty, it is correct," responded that individual.

"Then listen to my sentence," said Harry. "The ex-King is to be sent to the Gnomes to work in the mines for fifteen years. After that he is to become a retainer in the Order of the Hat-Pin, with a chance to work his way up, if he behaves himself. If any of you object to the sentence, don't be afraid to speak out." For he noticed that many of the elves looked dissatisfied.

"The sentence is too light," cried a number of voices.

"Well," said Harry, "we mustn't be too hard. Since I have been king I can see how easy it is to be tyrannical.

"Now bring Smithkin here. Smithkin, I forgive you. You were faithful to your former master, be just as faithful to your new king. But you must begin over again as a common soldier, so that by obedience you may learn better how to command.

"As for you fifty soldiers who led us hither, each one of you is hereby appointed an officer over fifty men.

"The elves who have been in the mines are to take the positions they had before they were banished.

"Have you all those orders written down in the records?" he demanded of the Grand Recorder.

"I have, Your Majesty," was the reply.

"Kitey," continued Harry, "I appoint you Grand Royal Prime Minister. Get up, Wamby, and give him that seat at my right."

Wamby complied, but his face wore a disappointed and grieved look, as if he thought it hardly fair for Harry to pass by him and give to Kitey the place of honor.

"Now," said Harry, "I am going to abdicate, and you must elect a new king."

So saying, he attempted to rise, but found himself unable to do so. The throne was made for a Pin Elf, not for a good-sized boy, and it was so small that Harry had become wedged fast. The elves perceived at once what the trouble was, and forgetting all fear and decorum, laughed and danced about with glee, shouting,

"You've got to stay on the throne! You can't get away! You'll have to be our king always!"

But after tugging away until he grew red in the face, Harry managed to wriggle loose and stand up.

"No, no," he cried; "you must have a Pin Elf for your King. I have been here a long time, and want to go home; my folks will be very anxious about me. I nominate Wamby as king, — all who are in favor of the nomination say 'aye.'"

The elves saw that Harry meant it, and all shouted "aye" lustily.

"Sit down, Wamby," said Harry. For little Wamby was standing in open-mouthed wonder, and seemed hardly to understand what was being done. Harry handed him the hat-pin, and put on him the crown and royal mantle.

"Do you all promise to be faithful to Wamby, and obey him as long as he is a good king?" cried Harry.

"We do," was the unanimous response.

"Now, Wamby, stand up," said Harry. "Do you promise to be a good, kind king, and to rule according to the laws?"

"I do," replied Wamby.

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"Everything is settled, then," said Harry, stepping down from the dais; "so, wishing you all good luck and good-by, I'll go. Good-by, Wamby. Here's your hat."

"Wait a moment," said Wamby; and turning to the crowd of elves, he addressed them as follows: "Fellow Pin Elves, although Harry refuses to remain king over us, a position he well deserves, I feel sure he will not decline election as a prince of the royal family of Hat-Pins." This suggestion met with great approval, and Harry was unanimously elected a Prince of the Hat-Pins, with all the rights and privileges of the order.

When the ceremony was over, Harry once more said good-by to all the elves. He took off Wamby's hat, but as soon as it was removed, Pin Elves and throne and everything disappeared, and he was standing in a bare, empty room.

"This won't do," he cried. "I must keep the hat on till I get above ground." And he clapped it on top of his head again, when instantly everything became once more visible.

"We'll all accompany you to the entrance," said Wamby.

So off they went in grand style, Wamby and

Harry ahead, with Kitey on one side, and on the other side the Grand Royal Recorder, an old, withered elf, with large, gold-bowed spectacles perched on his sharp nose, and a big pen behind his ear; then came some of the soldiers; next, the lords, with their knights and esquires; then more soldiers, and in the rear a large multitude of the ordinary elves.

Finally they reached the chamber with the trap-door that opened into Central Park. Wamby and Kitey, with a number of others, ascended the steps with Harry. When they reached the top, Harry turned and waved good-by to the elves below.

"Oh," cried Wamby, "I've forgotten something. Where is the Grand Royal Treasurer?"

A tall elf, with a pouch hanging at his side, stepped forward.

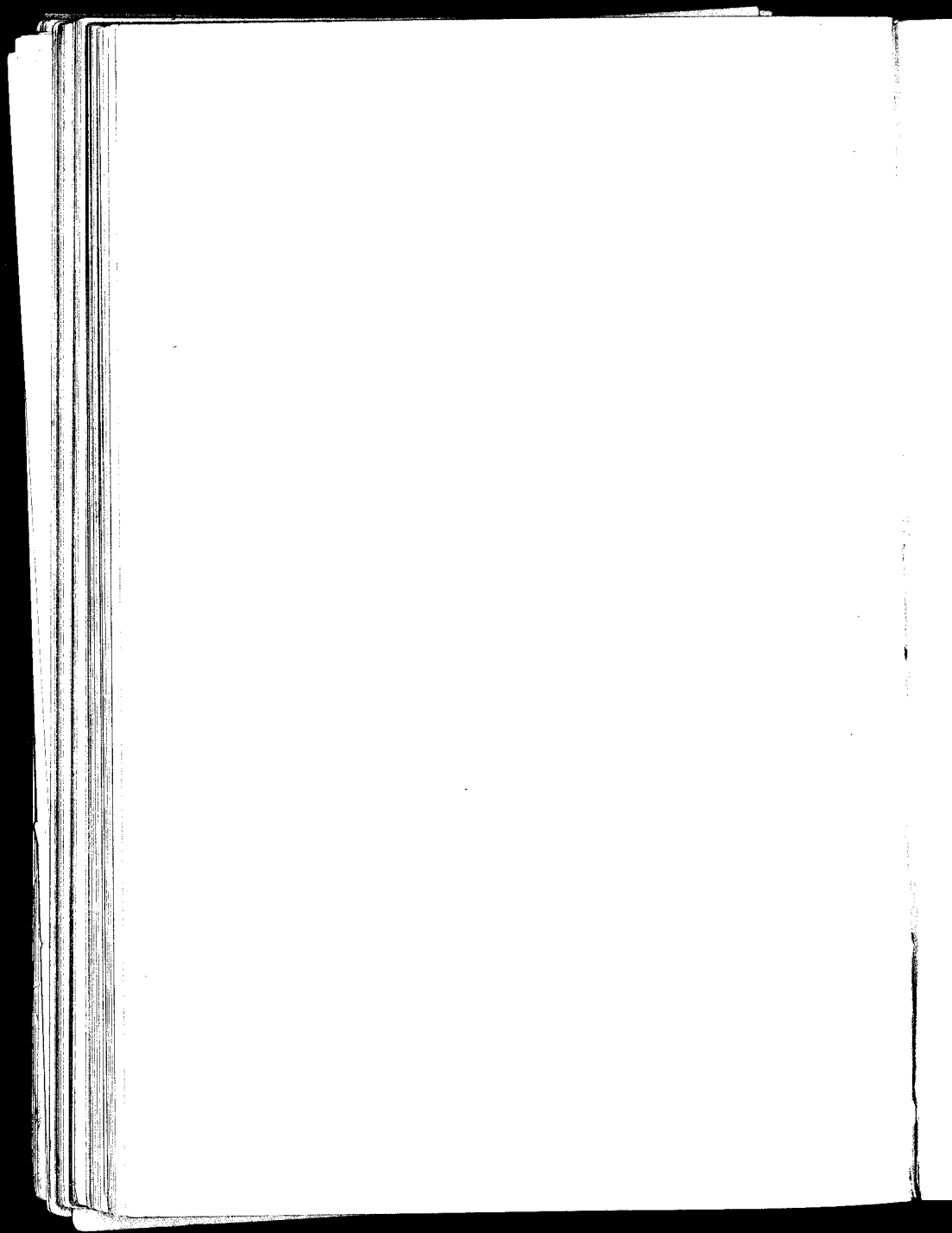
"Have you jewels in your pouch?" inquired Wamby.

"I have, Your Majesty," replied the Treasurer, and he opened the pouch.

Harry looked, and rubbed his eyes in amazement, for the pouch was crammed full of flashing and sparkling diamonds, rubies, and emeralds of immense size.



"HE PUT THE . . . JEWELS . . . IN A LITTLE BOX,"



Wamby smiled at the expression on Harry's face. "Help yourself, Prince," said he. "Keep them as a slight token of my gratitude."

"I don't want them all," said Harry. "One of them alone is worth a fortune. I shall just take one of each kind, and thank you, old chap," and selecting three of the precious stones, he slipped them into his pocket.

"Here is your door-pin," said Wamby. "I shall be glad to have you come down again at any time. Will you promise to come if I ever need you?"

"Why, certainly," answered Harry.

"Then listen," said Wamby; "if you should see a little green twig sticking in the pin-hole in the centre of this rock, it will be a sign that I want you. Now let me see if the coast is clear."

Inserting his own door-pin in the hole overhead, he repeated:

"Pin, pin,
Trusty and stout,
I am within
And want to look out."

"All right," he said, as he glanced through the crack of the door; "no one is near the

rock. But a Park policeman is coming in the distance, so we must hurry."

Harry hastily snatched off Wamby's hat, and holding it out felt Wamby take it. Of course the elves became invisible the instant the hat was off. Then the door opened, and Harry felt his legs grasped by a number of elfish hands, and he was lifted up bodily and tossed through the opening so violently that he rolled off the rock upon the grass.

When he jumped up, he was sure he heard Wamby's voice, shouting, "Good-by, Prince Harry!" and it seemed to him that he could see the trap-door just settling into place. But as the Park policeman came up at that moment, he looked away from the rock and began brushing the dust from his clothes. When he reached his room at home, he put the wonderful door-pin, with the jewels Wamby had given him, carefully in a little box. "I have had some surprising adventures," he thought, "and, at any rate, I have given the Pin Elves a good king."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PASSAGE OF THE TOAD.

A FEW weeks later Harry went to the Park again. When he came to the rock he saw a little green twig sticking in the pin-hole.

"Halloa!" he cried. "Has Wamby got into trouble already? I hope he hasn't been playing the tyrant himself. Well, at any rate, I must help him, as I promised to do."

He had neglected to bring the door-pin with him, so he hastened back to get it.

"What else can I take?" he said to himself. "I wish I had a weapon of some kind."

The nearest approach to a weapon that he could find, however, was simply a little pop-gun, or pop-pistol rather, belonging to his younger brother, and a steel paper-cutter shaped like a knife. These he slipped into his pockets, and then hurried back to the rock in the Park.

The chamber beneath the trap-door was

vacant when he descended into it. Knowing that extreme wariness and caution were necessary, he examined every part of the chamber carefully before proceeding further, and was rewarded by the discovery of an elfin hat thrust into a crevice of the rock about the height of his head from the floor.

"It looks like Wamby's," he said, putting the hat on his head. "The little chap must have placed it here for me."

He went forward cautiously, without seeing anything amiss until he drew near to the door where the two guards were stationed, when suddenly he stopped and uttered an exclamation of dismay; for there, guarding the door, stood two tall, hideous Gnomes. The reason they had not noticed him was because just at that moment they were occupied in opening the door.

Harry stood rooted to the spot in amazement for an instant. But when the door opened and showed him a large troop of armed Gnomes coming through it towards him, he regained control of himself quickly enough, and turned and ran back along the passageway at full speed.

The Gnomes at once caught sight of him and started in hot pursuit. Harry was fleet-footed, but he soon discovered that Gnomes are terrible fellows in a race, and that his pursuers were slowly gaining upon him.

At the foot of the hill of glass was the entrance to a side-passage. Into this the boy dashed, and a short distance further dodged into a cross-passage, along which he had run but a few paces when he stumbled and fell across an open trap-door in the floor. Luckily, the opening was small, or he would surely have plunged down head foremost to destruction.

His pursuers were out of sight, and scarcely knowing what he was doing, he sprang through the trap-door, and pushing the door up into place, crouched upon the steps beneath it. A moment later he could hear the troop of Gnomes rushing along the passage just above his head.

"Ha, ha!" he chuckled to himself. "Trot along, my boys, — but you'll have a hard time finding me!"

When he had recovered his breath, he felt his way down to the bottom of the stone steps, and began slowly creeping forward.

"I don't like this," he muttered. For the

place was pitch-dark. "I'm liable to tumble into some pitfall, or maybe slide head first down one of those beastly hills of glass."

There was nothing to do, though, but feel his way along in a very stealthy, uncanny fashion that made the cold creeps course up and down his backbone.

"Gracious! this is perfectly awful!" he exclaimed, as his hand touched a specially cold spot on the rock, that felt like something slimy and alive. "I thought it was a snail, or something!"

He stopped, and wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead.

"Pshaw!" he continued, "what a big fool I am! Afraid of the dark! I'm a brave one to rescue Wamby!" and mustering up courage, he went on more boldly.

Presently a faint light appeared in the distance ahead, causing him to renew his wariness and slacken his pace. As he softly advanced, he descried an elf sitting in the passage, with a lantern-box on the floor beside him. Harry hesitated an instant, but thinking he had nothing to fear from one Pin Elf, he advanced openly. Upon hearing the footsteps the elf immediately

shut his lantern-box, but as he leaned over to do so, the light flashed in his face brightly, and showed Harry that it was his old friend Kitey.

"Halloa, Kitey, old fellow, what are you doing here?" exclaimed Harry.

"Is it you, Prince Harry?" said Kitey, in a tone of delight; and opening his lantern-box again, he ran forward and embraced Harry's feet.

"Why, little chap, what's the trouble?" inquired the boy.

"How did you get down here?" asked the elf in return. "Don't talk loud, or we may be overheard."

In a few words Harry related his escape from the Gnomes.

"So I left that trap-door open in my hurry!" said Kitey, at the conclusion of the narrative. "It is lucky you found it, instead of those rascally Gnomes."

"But what are the Gnomes doing here?" asked Harry; "and why are you hiding? and what has become of Wamby?"

"Sit down, Prince, and I will tell you all about it," said Kitey. "After you left us everything went along nicely for awhile. Catti-

sack, the ex-King, was sent down to the Gnomes, and old Grumpy, the Lord of the Safety-Pin, was imprisoned. But Grumpy, the old sneak, behaved so nicely that Wamby felt sorry for him, and set him free, and restored him to his former position. That was the real beginning of the mischief.

"Old Grumpy immediately began secretly forming a party against Wamby, and was almost ready to begin a rebellion, when Wamby discovered the plot, and sent Grumpy to the Gnomes. That was the second blunder.

"Soon after that, Wamby took it into his head that the soldiers needed another commander, and as Smithkin was experienced, and had been behaving beautifully, he reinstated him in his old position. That was the third blunder.

"Of course, Prince Harry, you know I am not blaming King Wamby,—at the time we all thought he was doing just right; but it seems he wasn't, for Cattisack and Grumpy at once began plotting with the King of the Gnomes, and out of revenge offered to deliver to him the Pin Elf dominions. They both knew all the secret passageways, and how many

soldiers we had, and where the guards were stationed, and so it was very easy for them to lead the whole army of the Gnomes right to the Grand Royal Reception Hall.

"It all happened yesterday. Wamby was sitting on his throne holding a reception, and I was seated on his right. All of a sudden the door to the left of the throne opened a little, and then closed again. It was done quickly and quietly, but I was looking in that direction and saw through the doorway a Gnome's ugly face. Instantly surmising that something was wrong, I darted forward and slipped all the bolts in the door. That made the door impregnable against any assault of the Gnomes, and we should have been safe, had it not been for that Smithkin. He must have been in collusion with Cattisack, for no sooner had I secured the door than Smithkin ran thither, dashed me aside, undid the bolts, and admitted the Gnomes army.

"Even then we could easily have held our own and driven them back, for, you know, one Pin Elf is equal to three Gnomes, because we are so quick and active, and they are so slow and heavy; but some of the Safety-Pin men

rallied around old Grumpy, and at least half of the body-guard went over to Smithkin, and as the rest of us were entirely unprepared they soon got the better of us.

"Seeing that all was lost, Wamby whispered to me, 'Quick, Kitey! while there is a chance, run up to the rock in Central Park and stick a little green twig in the pin-hole, as a signal to our good Prince Harry; and put my hat in the chamber, where he can find it.'

"Fortunately, in the excitement of the conflict, the Gnomes had neglected to guard any of the doors, and I escaped without being seen, and placed the green twig in the hole. On my return, however, I discovered six Gnomes on guard outside the door, so I quietly retreated and made my way down here, where I have been ever since."

"Aren't we in danger of being discovered here?" inquired Harry.

"Oh, no, Prince," replied Kitey; "no one would dare come here. This is the terrible Passage of the Toad."

"Passage of the Toad!" repeated Harry. "What do you mean?"

"Why," exclaimed Kitey, "this passage was

constructed ages ago, as a secret means of escape, in case our dominions should be invaded. It leads from the Grand Reception Hall, and branches off into several small passageways, and we are in one of those smaller, branching passageways. But just as the whole thing was completed, a toad made its appearance in the main passage. Of course the entrances were at once closed, and no one ever after ventured to enter. It was only necessity that drove me hither."

"But, Kitey, I don't understand you. How could a toad get in the passage? and if he did get in, what difference did it make?"

"I can't tell you how he got in," replied Kitey, "but he certainly was there, and doubtless is there to this day. And you ask, what difference does it make? Why, don't you know that elves cannot bear the contact, or even the near presence, of a toad? It prostrates us completely. So there was nothing for us to do but shut up the passage, which has been called by us ever since the Passage of the Toad. Evidently, the horrible creature is not near this branch passage where we are now, or I should hardly have been able to come down here."

"Well, never mind the toad at present," said Harry. "What do you suppose has become of Wamby and the rest of the Pin Elves?"

"I think they have been sent down to work in the mines, and the Gnomes have taken possession of our kingdom," answered Kitey.

"In other words," said Harry, "the Gnomes are on top, and the Pin Elves down below. The wicked elves have ousted the good elves and made slaves of them."

"Exactly!" replied Kitey. "That is what I believe has taken place." He sighed dolefully, and continued: "Poor Wamby! I wish we could help him. It is awful to have to work down in Gnome Land. I was there, and know all about it."

"That's so!" exclaimed Harry eagerly; "I suppose you know all about the ins and outs of the place. Your knowledge may be a great help to us if we go down to rescue our friends. Meanwhile, I should like to know if they are really there now, and whether the Gnomes are in possession of our dominions."

"You might find out, if you are not afraid of the toad," said Kitey. "This little passage will lead you to the main passage, and if you follow

that to the end you will find a flight of steps and a trap-door at the top of them opening into the Reception Hall. The door opens in the floor of the dais, just behind the throne. You can take a peep through it and see what is taking place in the Hall.

"I'll do it!" cried Harry, springing up. "Just lend me your lantern-box, so that I can see my way."

"One word, Prince, before you go," said Kitey. "Find out where the toad is, and please keep him away from this place. Above all, do not touch him! for if you do, I cannot endure your presence."

"All right, old chap," returned Harry, "I'll bear it in mind. Don't you be afraid of Mr. Toad! I'll look after him, and will be back here soon."

CHAPTER IX.

A PERILOUS TRIP.

IN the main passage Harry found the toad, a small and rather thin creature, not at all dangerous-looking. As Harry held the light close to it, the little animal blinked its eyes as though half-blind, and seemed too dispirited to hop away.

"Poor little hoppy!" said the boy; "I bet you're almost starved to death here. Never mind! I'll take you back on top of the earth when I go."

The toad was plainly in no condition to travel as far as Kitey, so Harry let him remain where he was, and went on to the end of the passage and mounted the steps.

Kitey had directed him where to find the pin-hole in the trap-door above, and when he had inserted the pin, he shut the lantern-box, pressed upon the pin three times, and said :

“Pin, pin,
Trusty and stout,
I am within
And want to look out.”

The door opened slightly and he peeped through, and seeing no one upon the dais, he opened the door wide, and crawling through, peered cautiously around the edge of the throne.

The Hall was empty, and Harry's first thought was that perhaps he had lost the elfin hat from his head, and therefore the Hall only seemed empty. But the hat was still there when he felt for it, so he quietly remained waiting for some one to appear. After a time a number of Gnomes entered, bearing dishes of various kinds of food, which they deposited upon a table near the throne. Then they all withdrew.

Quick as a flash Harry darted forward, and dumping the food from the dishes upon the table-cloth, he gathered up the cloth by the corners, and carried it with its savory contents down through the trap-door to the passageway, and then ran up the steps again to his hiding-place behind the throne. Just as he reached his position, two doors opened. Through one

filed the servants who had set the table, and through the other came the King of the Gnomes with his attendants.

Imagine, if you can, how they all looked when they beheld the empty table and the empty dishes scattered around on the floor!

The servants were so astonished at the sudden and mysterious disappearance of the food, that they forgot even to make obeisance to the King. As for the King, he became black in the face with rage, and his terrible right eye fairly flashed fire.

"Where are the viands?" he growled through his bushy beard.

The Head Caterer, who had been staring open-mouthed at the table, tremblingly prostrated himself, and said, "If it please Your Royal Majesty, the table was duly set anon, but the viands have disappeared, I know not where."

"Disappeared!" quoth the King; "how dare you allow the royal victuals to disappear? Produce more food at once!"

"I cannot, Your Majesty," whimpered the Caterer; "the cooking-fire has gone out."

"Glumdozo!" roared the King in a mighty voice, and every Gnome present trembled at the

sound of the word, which made Harry suppose it was a terrible Gnomian oath. Thereupon the King grasped his golden pickaxe by the handle, and hurled it at the luckless Caterer.

Fortunately for himself the Caterer was peering out of the corner of his eye, and adroitly dodged the pickaxe, which bounded along the floor and smashed a number of the rare and costly dishes.

"Hummelskrash!" roared the King. "Take the knave and his fellows to work in the mines with the Pin Elves, and tell Wamby to assign them the hottest and hardest work there.

The poor Caterer and the rest of the Gnomes who had served the dinner were at once hustled away, and the King, with his courtiers, approached the dais. Harry waited long enough only to see that Cattisack, Grumpy, and Smithkin were among the King's followers, and then he retreated hurriedly through the trap-door and made his way back to Kitey.

"Are you hungry, old chap?" were the first words he uttered.

"Hungry!" exclaimed Kitey, "I'm nearly starved!"

"Then let us fall to without delay," said

Harry, opening the table-cloth and seating himself on the floor beside it.

"Did you see the toad?" asked Kitey anxiously.

"Yes. Don't worry about him, for he's too starved to hop far. I have found out the state of affairs. The Gnomes have possession of our dominions, and our people, all except Cattsack, Grumpy, and Smithkin, and a few of their adherents, are banished to the Gnomes' old quarters."

Then he told Kitey all that had happened during his absence. They both nearly choked with suppressed laughter during the recital, but at its conclusion Kitey grew very sober, and said, "I wish we could help Wamby and the others to escape."

Harry was thoughtful a moment. "Where do the rest of these branching passages lead?" said he.

"I have it!" cried Kitey excitedly. "If that horrible toad would keep out of the way, I could take you to one passage that leads in the right direction."

"All right," said Harry, "I'll attend to the toad."

Tearing off a small piece of the table-cloth, he continued, "I'll tie him up in this piece, and while I am gone you can wrap up the rest of the food in the table-cloth for us to take with us."



Proceeding to where the toad was, Harry made a little bag of the piece of cloth and gently tied the animal in it.

"I'm sorry to do it, hoppy," he said; "but if you'll only be quiet a little while, I'll take you out of this hole when I go."

When he came back, Kitey was awaiting him with the food tied up. Shouldering the bundle, Harry followed the elf to the main passage, and thence to one of the other smaller passages branching off. This they followed for a distance till they came to a long, descending stairway, at the bottom of which was a door. Opening the door, Kitey held aloft his light.

"Why, it's an underground river!" Harry exclaimed in surprise.

And so it was, a gently flowing stream of water, so clear and limpid that one could see plainly the smooth, rocky bottom. The stream was about forty feet wide, and the roof of the tunnel through which it flowed was perhaps fifteen or twenty feet high above the surface of the water.

"Where does it come from?" asked Harry.

"I don't know," Kitey replied. "It must come from above ground somewhere. But, although I don't know exactly where the stream comes from, I can tell you where it goes, and that is straight to the lake that you crossed when you went to the country of the Gnomes. Can't we go this way to see Wamby and help him?"

"Perhaps," Harry said, glancing about. "Is there a boat here?"

"None that I know of," said Kitey; "but I am sure, Prince, that you can devise some way of getting there without a boat."

Harry pondered for several minutes. "A raft would answer the purpose, if we only had something to make it of. I say, Kitey, give me that lantern, and you wait here till I come back." And he hurried up the passage.

Not long after, Kitey beheld him returning down the long stairway with a low, broad table on his back.

"Where did you get it?" exclaimed the elf.

"In the Reception Hall," the boy replied, as he deposited his burden on the floor. "The Hall was empty, and it was the only thing I could find that might do. I broke one of the other tables and brought these two pieces of board to steer with. What fun it would be to see the old King when he discovers it! I bet he'll say something worse than 'hummyslash!' or whatever the word is. Now, old man, let me slide this thing into the water." And turning the table bottom side up, he carefully launched it.

"Tight as a drum, and floats like a cork!" he cried delightedly. "Let me try my weight upon it. All right! it bears beautifully. I'll put the food in the bow, and you can sit in the stern, and steer with that short piece of board; and I'll sit in the middle and use that longer board, to keep the craft from turning around or running against the sides of the tunnel. All aboard! Off we go, then!"

The little lantern-box had been tied to one of the front table-legs in such a way as to keep the light from shining in their eyes and yet light up the tunnel ahead of them. The only trouble they had was to keep their improvised boat from drifting sidewise; but a little practice enabled them to overcome that tendency, and they were soon floating easily and gently down the stream.

"Isn't this jolly!" exclaimed Harry. "We're running along at a good pace now, you can tell by looking at the sides of the tunnel."

"Our speed has been increasing a great deal for the last few moments," said Kitey. "You know we moved quite slowly when we started. Listen, Prince! do you hear anything?"

"I hear nothing unusual," replied Harry, putting his hand to his ear,

"Listen again!" said Kitey; "it is growing louder every second."

Harry did so. "Why," said he, "it seems to me I do hear some kind of a noise ahead. A kind of a roaring sound. Say, Kitey, old man, it sounds like a waterfall!"

By this time they were being carried along at a terrific pace, but the water was smooth and glassy, with only an occasional ripple to indicate how rapidly it was gliding downward.

The elf sprang to his feet and peered forward. "There are rapids ahead. I can see the foam and waves. Here they are! Quick, Prince, hold on for your life!" and he crouched down and grasped the edge of the table.

Harry threw down his piece of board and clutched a table-leg, and so they hung on for dear life, expecting every moment to be dashed over a waterfall, or to be spilled out in the boiling and foaming waters. But their stanch little craft kept right side up in fine shape, although it behaved very queerly otherwise. Sometimes it bobbed along sideways, sometimes it dashed forward stern foremost; once it struck an eddy, and began spinning around till they grew dizzy; once it slid upon the

back of a partially submerged rock, stuck there a moment, and then plunged forward, splashing them from head to foot.

But no waterfall appeared, and gradually the water grew quieter, and they were floating tranquilly along out of danger.

"Tell you what it is, Prince," said Kitey, "that was a narrow escape. Were you scared?"

"Scared!" replied the boy; "I'd have given anything to have been on top of the solid ground, especially that time we stuck on the rock, hey, old man?"

"Yes, sir!" said the elf emphatically. "But we're all right now," he added, as the sides and roof of the tunnel suddenly disappeared from view, "for here we are on the lake, and there is the light of the Gnomes' fires in the distance."

While he was speaking, the table gradually slackened its pace, and finally came to a standstill on the calm bosom of the lake.

CHAPTER X.

THE THREE JEWELS.

"I THINK we shall have to paddle our own canoe," said Harry. "Get on this side with your board, and I'll take the other side. It will be slow work, but we can do no better."

The plan did not work, however, for Kitey's piece of board was too heavy for the little fellow, so Harry endeavored to paddle the craft alone; but their progress was so slow and crooked that they would probably have been there to this day had they found no other means of propulsion.

"I think it would go straighter," Kitey suggested, "if you should give one stroke at a time on each side, and make the strokes even."

To which Harry replied, "I say, old fellow, if you know so well how to paddle this vessel, you'd better do it, and I'll resign. I think,

though, if you 'tend to your own knitting, and steer a little, it will go easier."

"Steer!" Kitey said, in an injured tone; "how can a little fellow like me steer, when you take one weak stroke on one side, and then two great, big strokes on the other, and turn the table half-way around?"

As they were creeping, or rather wobbling, slowly along, most of the time sidewise like a crab, all of a sudden they ran into a strong current of wind, blowing directly towards the land of the Gnomes.

"Hurrah!" shouted Kitey. "The wind is turned on over at our place and will help us across."

"It will do more than help," said Harry. "I'm going to make it do all the work."

So saying, he hastily untied the table-cloth and emptied out the food, and then fastened the cloth across the two front legs of the table and made a very fair substitute for a sail.

"Now," said he, "we'll both steer, and perhaps we can keep the old craft headed straight."

After that they went along finely, and at a fair rate of speed, and eventually drew near the landing-place at Gnome Land.

"What plan have you in view, Prince Harry?" inquired Kitey.

"I have no plan at present," Harry answered, much to the elf's astonishment, for he thought that Harry had a plan ready for any emergency which might arise.

"I want to find out how Wamby and the rest are situated," explained Harry; "we'll consult with him before we settle upon any definite plan of action."

Great was the excitement as they sailed up to the landing-place in their strange boat. In a second the shore was crowded with Pin Elves, dancing with glee, gesticulating wildly, and asking innumerable questions.

"Stand back, and give us room to land!" said Harry peremptorily. "I can't answer any questions now," he added, for he noticed that some Gnomes, who were poking the fires near by, had stopped work and pricked up their ears to hear what was said. "Tell me where Wamby is."

"In the Reception Hall," shouted an officious little chap. "I'll show you the way, master."

"Never mind," said Harry, "we'll find him. Go ahead, Kitey, and I'll follow!"

The elves fell back and bowed low as Kitey advanced, but no one ventured to follow him and Harry.

The two comrades made their way rapidly to the entrance of the Grand Royal Reception Hall, and were delighted, on being ushered in, to see Wamby seated on the throne at the further end. The little fellow did not wait for them to reach him, but before they were half-way down the Hall rushed forward joyfully to meet them.

"Oh, Prince! master!" he cried, and began hugging Harry's feet.

Harry lifted him up in both hands and gave him a gentle squeeze. "How d'ye do, old chap!" he exclaimed. "I'm awfully glad to find you safe!"

"And here's Kitey, too!" cried Wamby, embracing his old friend. "Come and sit down and tell me where you have been, and how you came here."

When they had told their story, Wamby discussed with them their future plans. They finally decided to gather all of the Pin Elves together, and attempt to recover their own dominions from the Gnomes.

While messengers were sent to collect the elves, the three friends went to the landing-place.

"Why," said Harry, when they came there, "the wind is still blowing from the other side."

"Oh, I forgot about that!" Wamby cried in dismay. "It has been blowing all the time we have been here. I think the Gnomes on the other side keep it turned on, in order to prevent our sailing across."

"Well, say," said Kitey, "it seems to me if we turn on the wind here, it will be strong enough to more than counteract the other wind."

The suggestion was acted upon, and it was found that the strong current there entirely overcame the current blowing towards them. Therefore they gathered together the whole fleet of the Gnomes ships, every Pin Elf scrambled aboard, and they were soon merrily sailing towards home. The Head Caterer of the King of the Gnomes and his men were left behind. As none of the vessels were left, it was, of course, impossible for them to follow the Pin Elves.

The fleet made good progress at the start,

but the speed diminished perceptibly as they proceeded, and when they were about half-way across, every ship came to a dead standstill.

"The Caterer must have turned off the wind!" exclaimed Wamby.

"No, Your Majesty," said Kitey, "for I can feel it blowing yet. Why, that's funny! It seems to blow from both sides!"

"I know what's the matter," cried Harry. "The wind is turned on at both sides at once, and we are just in the middle, where the two opposing currents are equal; consequently, we can't go forward or back. We are stuck here."

"I don't understand how it is, Prince," said Kitey.

"Why, it's plain enough," returned Harry. "Suppose you and Wamby were pushing against each other with equal force, what would happen?"

"We'd both stand still," answered Kitey.

"Exactly!" said Harry; "and that is just our case. The wind is pushing us before and behind, and we are standing still. Now, if we could only paddle one of these boats across, we could turn off the wind, and then the rest of the fleet could sail over. There are no oars,

but these thwarts are light enough. Get two dozen of the strongest elves in here with me, and we'll soon accomplish it."

The sails being taken down, the boat under Harry's charge was paddled over. The wind was then turned off, the other vessels sailed across, and the elves disembarked.

"Now, Wamby," asked Harry, "how many weapons have you?"

"A thousand spears," replied Wamby.

It seems that the Pin Elves had all been disarmed when banished, but Wamby had at once set a number of them at work manufacturing new spears, and they had completed about a thousand when Harry arrived. With these Harry armed a thousand of the elves.

"Now," said he to Wamby, "you take the rest of the men around to the armory and procure arms for them, and then bring them to the room adjoining the Grand Reception Hall, where Kitey and I will be waiting with our force."

So saying, he and Kitey led the thousand armed elves to the place of rendezvous. When they had quietly entered the room, Harry tiptoed to the passage leading to the Reception

Hall, and suddenly rushing in, grasped by the neck the two Gnomes guarding the door there, and carried them back to the room, where they were gagged and bound. Then, leaving orders for his men to follow at a given signal, he and Kitey entered the passage, with the intention of looking into the Reception Hall.

They had gotten within about eight feet of the door, when suddenly, without any warning, the door flew open and a large body of the Gnomes rushed upon them. Poor little Kitey was seized by a dozen at once, and hustled into the Reception Hall before he had a chance to strike a blow. At the same time, a hundred Gnomes tripped up Harry with strong ropes, and despite his kicks and struggles he, too, was dragged into the Reception Hall, and was in a trice securely bound hand and foot.

Then the door was shut and bolted, although the bolting was unnecessary, for the Pin Elves had been deprived of their door-pins when they had been banished. Harry still retained his pin concealed under the lapel of his coat, but Kitey had loaned his to Wamby.

The two prisoners were carried before the King and laid upon the floor.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the King, in a snarling tone. "We Gnomes are not quite so stupid as you imagined. My spies have been watching your movements ever since you landed. The thousand elves that came with you are safe where they are; they have no door-pin, and I shall just leave them alone there, and let them starve.

"As for Wamby and his crowd — ah, here is a messenger now that will tell us about them! Make your report," he said to Smithkin, who had just entered the hall.

With an obsequious bow, Smithkin began: "If it please Your Royal Majesty, we were waiting outside the chamber with the great trap-door in the floor. Wamby and his followers presently appeared and entered the chamber without discovering our ambush. I cautiously crept forward and inserted my door-pin in the hole controlling the trap-door, and just as Wamby inserted his pin in the door leading out of the chamber, I pressed upon my pin and dumped them all into the dungeon below. As soon as the floor swung back into place, I ran forward and secured Wamby's door-pin, which had remained sticking in the hole, and I now

have the honor of presenting it to Your Majesty."

"Good!" cried the King, with a malicious chuckle. "So they're safe too. Ha, ha! I'll just let them starve with the others. Eh, Prince?" he went on, with a taunting look at Harry; "a fine Prince you are, to get your followers into such a scrape! Oh, I've a notion to kill you both at once!" he growled savagely, and shook his pickax menacingly at them. "But we'll wait till after dinner, and then my royal colleague, Cattisack, and my Lord of the Safety-Pin can have the pleasure of torturing you a little. Take the prisoners over yonder, and you, Smithkin, guard them while we eat!"

The King arose, and with two attendant Gnomes reverently bearing his great, gray beard, he walked to the table and seated himself. The whole company followed his example, and soon they were all busily eating and talking.

Meanwhile, the two prisoners had been dragged to one side of the Hall and left there, with no one but Smithkin near them.

Smithkin looked glum, and no wonder; for

after the work he had done, it was very hard to be obliged to perform guard duty and to have nothing to eat. Harry guessed his thoughts, and made up his mind to profit by his discontent.

"Smithkin," he whispered, "it's rather mean not to give you anything to eat. I would treat you better than that if you were working for me."

Smithkin scowled, and said nothing.

"Is any one in the room looking this way?" asked Harry.

The soldier glanced over the Hall, and shook his head slowly.

"Then," continued Harry, "slip your hand in my left coat-pocket, and take what you find there."

With a quick movement Smithkin did so, and drew forth the three jewels. He gave one glance at them, and then thrust them into the bosom of his jacket, and standing erect again, whispered, "What do you want me to do?"

"Simply keep your eye turned away from me for a minute," said Harry; "and don't listen very hard."

With some little effort the boy managed to get his right hand loose enough to slip it into his coat-pocket, where he had placed the paper-cutter. Drawing it out, he inserted its point under the cords that bound his hands, and after a deal of sawing was able to cut one or two of the bonds, and free his hands. It was then an easy matter to get out his penknife, cut the bonds of Kitey, who was lying close beside him, and quietly reach down and sever the cords about his own ankles.

All this while, Smithkin was staring stolidly at the opposite side of the Hall, with his back turned to the two prisoners.

"Lie perfectly still, Kitey," whispered Harry.

Then making sure that his limbs were free, he sprang to his feet, gave Smithkin a vigorous kick that sent him sprawling on his face, took Kitey in his arms, and dashing down the Hall, threw the little fellow on top of a piece of furniture like a wardrobe, standing against the wall, and vaulted up beside him.

In an instant all was hubbub and excitement. Smithkin, with a shriek, grabbed his spear and rushed after Harry. The table where Grumpy and his adherents were eating was overturned,

and my Lord of the Safety-Pin was pinned to the floor under it, yelling and howling like mad. The Gnomon soldiers started for their spears. The King of the Gnomes tried unaided to push his chair back, and in some way his feet got tangled up in his beard, his chair upset, and he lay sprawling upon his back, with his great beard flopping in the gravy and other victuals on the table.

In the midst of the rumpus some one called, "Smithkin is a traitor! He set them free!"

Instantly there was a hoarse cry from all over the Hall: "Catch Smithkin! Punish the traitor!"

"Save me, Prince!" cried the terrified soldier.

"All right," said Harry, "reach me your hand." And grasping the outstretched hand, he swung Smithkin up beside him, on top of the wardrobe.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SECRET DOOR.

SMITHKIN escaped not a moment too soon, for as he dropped in a heap beside Harry, a hundred angry Gnomes were brandishing their spears beneath. Smithkin was no coward when he had half a chance to fight and defend himself, and he brandished his own spear in return, and yelled defiance at the constantly increasing crowd.

The piece of furniture on which the besieged ones were standing, looked like a long wardrobe, and for convenience sake we shall call it a wardrobe, although really it had been used by the Pin Elves as a place for keeping their spears when they were not in use. It seemed low to Harry, but it was too high for even the tallest of the Gnomes to reach the top with his spear; so, for the present, the boy and his two companions were

secure from attack. Fortunately, the Pin Elves and Gnomes are unable to hurl their spears at an enemy. They can fight at close quarters only, by thrusting with the weapon.

Kitey, being unarmed, was directed by Harry to stand back against the wall and keep a sharp lookout over the Hall, in order to prevent any sudden surprises.

The King of the Gnomes by this time was seated upon the throne, and on each side of him sat Cattisack and Grumpy. The three were earnestly talking together.

"Prince," Kitey said in a low voice, so as not to be heard by the Gnomes below, "the King of the Gnomes seems to be consulting with our former King and the Lord of the Safety-Pin. Now he is giving orders to his attendants, and they are running down the Hall. Look, Prince! they are bringing a table and chairs, and are going to climb up here!"

"Don't get excited, old man," said Harry. "I've been waiting for them to do something of the kind."

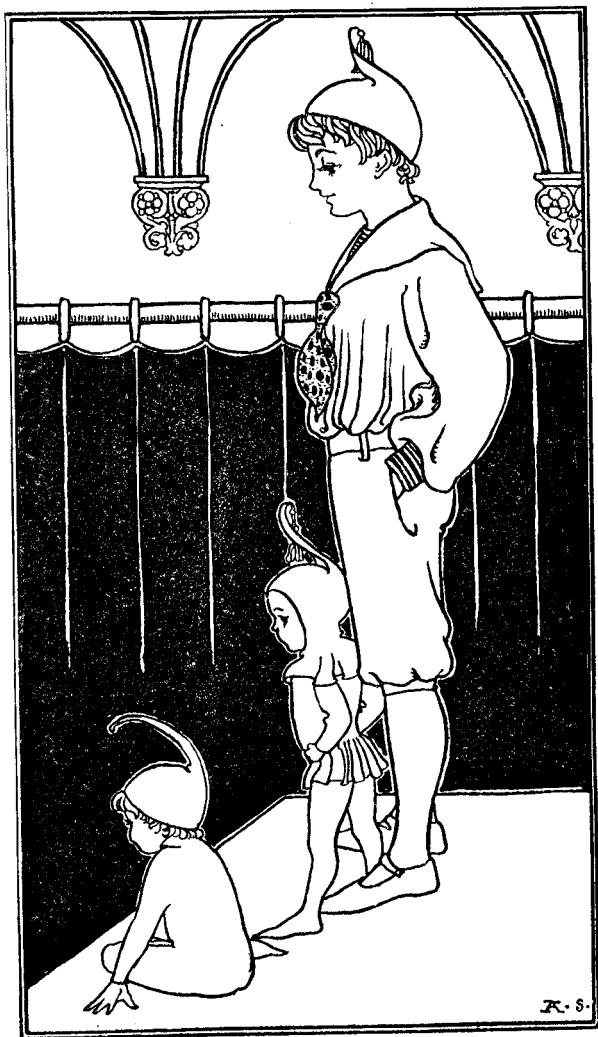
The boy stood calmly with his right hand in his coat-pocket while the Gnomes dragged a table up to the wardrobe and clambered upon it.

"Now, Smithkin!" he cried, "poke them with the butt end of your spear!" And at the same time he drew forth his little pop-gun and fired pointblank at the foremost Gnome. The cork struck the fellow between the eyes, and over he went backwards, knocking half a dozen of the other Gnomes off the table as he fell. The unexpected report of the pistol, and the disastrous result of the shot, threw the Gnomes on Smithkin's side off their guard, and with a quick, vigorous thrust of his long spear-handle, the soldier knocked four more from the table.

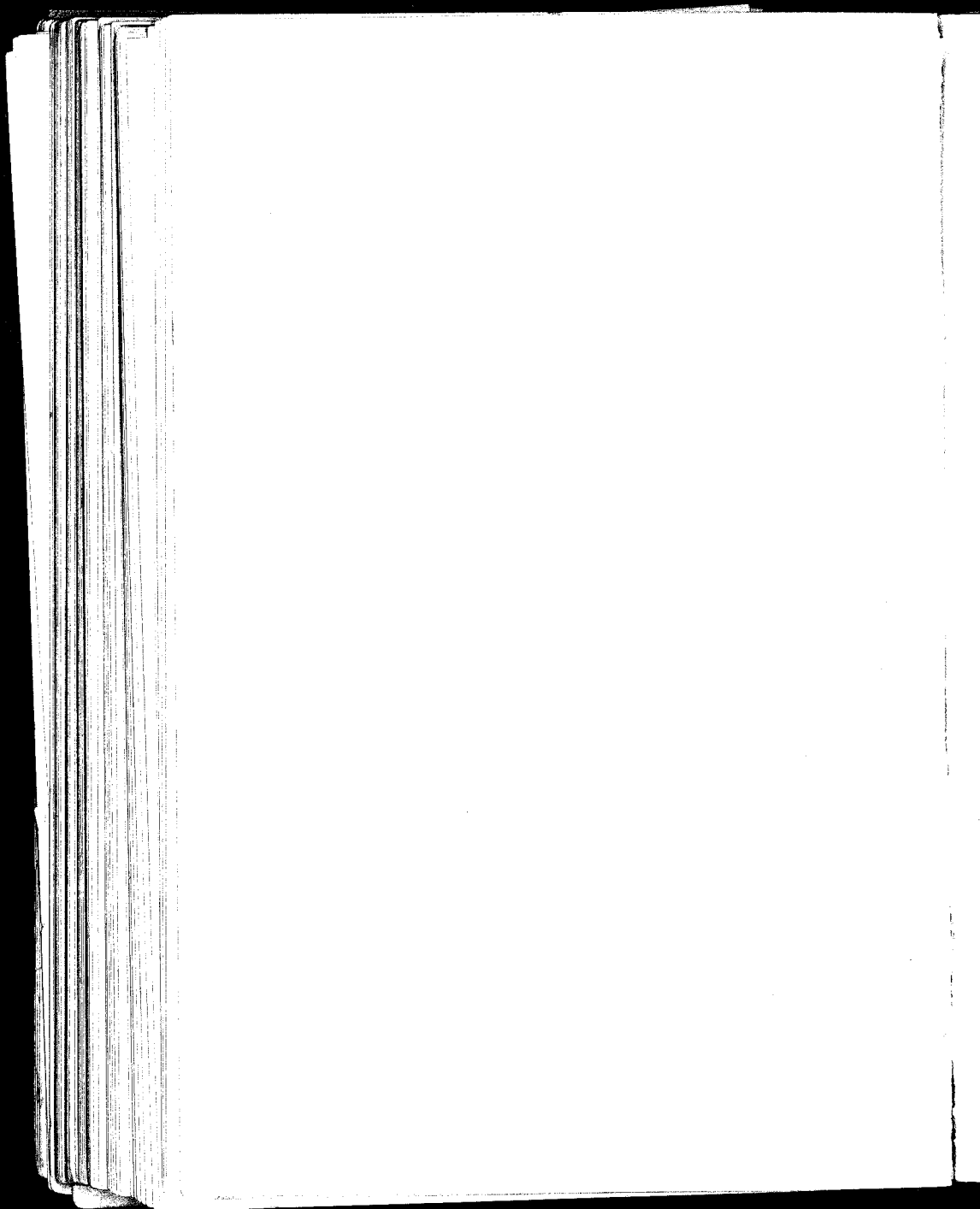
Quick as a flash Harry recovered the cork, which was attached to the pistol by a cord, and setting the spring, he pushed the cork in as tight as he could, and fired again. The report was so loud that the few Gnomes still upon the table tumbled off from sheer fright.

The King of the Gnomes, seeing that this attempt had failed, gave orders to try another plan for dislodging Harry and his companions. Soon a number of Gnomes began bringing in armfuls of wood, which they piled near the wardrobe.

"They are going to burn us out!" cried Kitey.



ON THE WARDROBE.



"Don't worry!" said Harry. "They can't do it."

And so it turned out, for whenever a Gnome ventured near and endeavored to place some wood against the foot of the wardrobe, Harry would lean over and extend his right hand, "pop!" would go the pistol, and over the Gnome would tumble.

Perhaps if a large number of them had rushed forward simultaneously, they might have accomplished their purpose; but they were afraid of the mysterious little weapon, that made such a terrible noise and knocked them senseless at a distance of several feet, and only a bold fellow now and then dared venture within range.

Finally, a messenger came with new orders from the King, and the Gnomes began laying the wood in a semicircle about eight feet from the wardrobe and extending from the wall on one side around to the wall on the other side.

"They're going to smoke us out!" exclaimed Smithkin. "Hit them with your magic weapon, Prince!"

Harry tried to do so, but the string was too short to allow the cork to reach any of them.

"Never mind," said he; "that little pile of wood is too far away to hurt us. There won't be smoke enough from it."

Smithkin shook his head dolefully. "Don't laugh until they are done!" he said.

Harry did laugh contemptuously, however, while the Gnomes set fire to the wood; but his laugh soon faded away as some of the Gnomes sprinkled a powder on the flames, and immediately a dense, black, stifling smoke slowly arose and curled towards them from all sides.

"I say, boys, they have us this time!" he cried in dismay. "We can't stand this; we'll have to jump down and fight in about half a minute."

"Look here, Prince Harry," said Smithkin, beckoning and pointing down; "here is a door in the wall close to my end of the wardrobe; perhaps we can slip through it and escape."

"I don't see any door," said Harry, stooping down, and looking at the place indicated.

"You can't see it," replied the soldier, "but it's there, and if you will quietly lift me down and give me your door-pin, I will open it."

Just then a thick cloud of smoke enveloped them, and set them coughing and choking, so

Harry hastily lowered himself to the floor and lifted his two companions down. The curtain of smoke completely screened them from the Gnomes on the other side of the fire.

Smithkin knew the exact spot in which to insert the door-pin, — for when he was commander of the King's body-guard, it was often his duty to use the various secret doors and passages of which the common Pin Elves were ignorant, — and the three comrades quietly passed into an outer passage and closed the door behind them, without any one in the Hall knowing of their escape.

In perfect silence the soldier led them onward, until they found themselves in the chamber under the rock in Central Park.

"Now, Prince," said Smithkin, "you know where we are. What are your orders?"

"You and Kitey wait here a moment," replied Harry, "and I will go around through the Passage of the Toad and see what the Gnomes are doing."

The boy hurried away and soon came to the spot in the main passage where the toad was tied up.

"Poor little hoppy!" he cried, "you're having

a hard time of it. I'll set you free from that old rag, at any rate."

Having untied the cloth in which the toad was imprisoned, he ran on to the end of the passage, mounted the steps, and gently opened the trap-door on a crack. Just as he did so, he heard the King of the Gnomes say, "Extinguish the fire! The knaves must be suffocated by this time."

Harry peeped through, and saw the Gnomes putting out the semicircle of flame. Gradually the black smoke cleared away, and the Gnomes discovered to their amazement that the top of the wardrobe was empty.

"Glumdozo!" roared the King, "the varlets have escaped!"

Search was made inside of the wardrobe and all around it, but of course it was in vain.

At this point Cattisack, the former King of the Pin Elves, leaned over and whispered to the King of the Gnomes, "Your Majesty, I think they must have escaped through a secret door near where they were."

Harry heard the whisper, for he could almost touch the two Kings from his place of concealment.

The King of the Gnomes forthwith commanded his soldiers to institute a strict search for the fugitives, but before the searchers left the Hall, the boy had softly closed the trap-door, and was on his way back to Smithkin and Kitey.

"Quick!" said he to the soldier, as he ran up to them, "lead the way at once to the prison."

Smithkin did so, and they reached the room before any of the Gnomes appeared.

"Now," said Harry, taking from his pocket the lantern-box which Kitey had loaned him, "open the trap-door, and we'll go down and rescue Wamby and the men with him."

"Oho!" exclaimed Smithkin, "so that is your plan."

They quickly made their way over the course Harry and Wamby had travelled during the boy's former visit, and when they came to the edge of the lake they turned off and proceeded to the chamber with the great trap-door. Opening the door that led to the stairs under the incline, they ran down the long flight of stairs and emerged in the dungeon where Wamby and the rest were confined.

A joyous shout greeted them: "Hurrah! here's the Prince! Here's little Kitey! Here's old Smithkin!"

Harry glanced around, and a disappointed look came into his face. "You are not armed!" he exclaimed.

"No," Wamby made reply, "we found the armory without any trouble, but it was empty; the Gnomes had removed all of the weapons, so we were unable to arm ourselves. Then, as we were on our way to join you and your men, the rascally Gnomes dumped us down here."

"Yes," said Harry, "I know about that. I am sorry, though, that you are unarmed, for that leaves us with only a thousand men ready to fight, and we cannot conquer the Gnomes with that number. However, let us get out of this hole, and join the thousand men in the antechamber above. Come quietly; there may be Gnomes spies about."

The poor fellows were glad enough to be released from their prison, and when they reached the antechamber adjoining the Grand Reception Hall they were warmly welcomed by their thousand comrades.

Leaving Kitey to tell the elves all that had

thus far happened, Harry drew Wamby and Smithkin aside for consultation.

"What is there to be done now?" he asked, after he had given Wamby a brief history of what had befallen them. "We have but a thousand men that are armed, and even they are practically useless, for the door into the Hall is bolted on the inside."

"You might go around through the Passage of the Toad," said Wamby, "and see what is taking place in the Hall."

"How can I get there?" Harry inquired.

"Why," replied Wamby, "one of the small, branching passages runs from this antechamber. The door is over in that corner. When the passage was built, the intention was to afford means of escape in various directions, so the small passages branch out on all sides."

"Then I'll go down at once," said Harry. "You quietly tell your men to be prepared for anything that may happen, and to be ready to obey without questioning any orders I may give."

When the boy reached the trap-door behind the throne, the King of the Gnomes was on the point of receiving a report from his men, who had been searching for the three fugitives.

Harry silently chuckled as he heard the King demand, "Have you found the fugitives?"

"If it please Your Majesty," was the answer, "we have looked everywhere and can discover no traces of them whatever."

"Hum! hah!" growled the King.

He stroked his beard for several minutes, and then arose, saying, "Prepare the tables for a banquet on our return in half an hour."

Having given this command, he left the Hall with his attendants, and his example was shortly followed by all of the Gnomes except the servants who were to prepare the banquet. These began to put the tables in order, and then presently brought in dishes of all kinds of tempting food.

The sight made Harry's mouth water, for he had had nothing to eat for a long time and was ravenously hungry.

"I'll run out and capture some victuals again when the Hall is empty," he said to himself, smacking his lips in anticipation. But as he waited, a picture of Wamby and the other Pin Elves in the antechamber rose before him. "Poor little beggars!" he thought. "They

are more hungry than I, and I'm going to give them a share of the food, even if I get caught by the Gnomes."

When all had been prepared, the servants withdrew as before, and left the Hall empty. This was the opportunity for which Harry was looking. He darted forth from his hiding-place to the door of the antechamber, drew back the bolts, and called to the Pin Elves, "A hundred of you that are unarmed, come quickly!"

Leading them to the tables, the boy said, "Each one of you take a dish of food and run back with it."

They did so right willingly, and in a trice the tables were entirely cleared of provisions. Harry secured a dish of food for himself, and having bolted the door again behind the Pin Elves, in order to throw the Gnomes off the scent, he ran back to his own place of concealment beneath the trap-door in the Passage of the Toad.

The King of the Gnomes was in a towering passion when he came in and found that his dinner had again mysteriously disappeared. He banished all of the servants to the mines, greatly to Harry's delight, for every Gnome

thus banished weakened the power of the Gnomes and added to the strength of the Pin Elves. Then the King ordered other servants to prepare a fresh meal, and he and his attendants left the Hall once more.

"Ho, ho ! old fellow !" cried Harry to himself, shaking his fist at the King as he passed out ; " I have a scheme this time that will upset your plans entirely, and will probably send you below, where you belong. Just you wait awhile, and I'll furnish sauce, and perhaps guests also, for your dinner ! "

CHAPTER XII.

A MIGHTY BATTLE.

WHEN the King of the Gnomes had gone, the new servants hurried away to the kitchen to help the cooks in the preparation of a second meal. As soon as the door closed behind them, Harry sprang into the room, shut the trap-door, and stealthily made his way to the door of the antechamber. Quietly slipping back the bolts, he opened it and beckoned the Pin Elves to enter the Hall.

"Don't make a noise!" he cautioned, as they swarmed in. "Those of you armed with spears take your station on each side of the main door opposite. Smithkin, you take command of them. A couple of you others run to the door leading to the kitchen, and bolt it so that the servants cannot return. And you, Kitey, see if there are any weapons in that

wardrobe, and if you find any, distribute them as far as they will go."

There were only about a hundred spears in the wardrobe, and Kitey distributed them among a hundred picked elves. These Harry placed in a line at the foot of the steps leading up to the dais. Then he seated Wamby on the throne, and directed the great body of unarmed elves to stand upon the raised dais on each side of and behind the throne.

Having thus disposed his forces, Harry said: "You hundred men are King Wamby's body-guard. Under no consideration are you to leave him. You must protect his person, and also do what you can to protect your unarmed comrades on the dais. Now, Kitey, you and I will go to help Smithkin."

Brave little Kitey had selected a terrible-looking spear about twice as long as himself, and with this resting upon his shoulder he trotted gleefully beside Harry down the long Hall.

The boy took his stand by the side of the door where the hinges were, so that he would be behind the door when it opened, and having placed Smithkin upon the other side, and directed the elves to keep close to the wall and to do

nothing till he gave the word, he awaited the coming of the Gnomes.

Thus there were ranged close to the wall on one side of the doorway, Smithkin and five hundred elves; and on the other side, Harry and Kitey with five hundred elves.

Presently the door swung open, and the advance body-guard of the King of the Gnomes marched into the Hall without looking to the right or left. The elfin soldiers remained like statues; no one moved a muscle. Harry waited, every nerve in his body quivering with suppressed excitement, until the advance-guard had passed and the King of the Gnomes himself stepped into the Hall. Then he slammed to the door, slipped the bolts into place, and shouted to the elves, "Now, capture them!"

Harry's plan had been to admit the King of the Gnomes and take him prisoner, and shut out the main body of the Gnomes themselves. Then, with the King in his power, he could bring them speedily to terms. But his plan only partly succeeded.

The Gnomes soldiers marched as soldiers should, with "eyes front," and failed to see the ambuscade laid for them. But the two

little attendants, who were bearing the King of the Gnomes' beard, were darting their sharp, black eyes in all directions, and the moment they stepped into the Hall they espied Smithkin and his men. Instantly they dropped the King's beard and rushed back into the passageway. That warned the King that something was wrong, and he hastily stepped back into the passage, just as Harry slammed the door shut. But, though the King had escaped being taken prisoner in the Hall, he was captured in another way; for the door shut upon his long, gray beard, and thus he was securely held fast.

Harry, however, did not know about that, but supposed the King had escaped entirely. The boy, therefore, turned his attention to the Gnoman soldiers in the Hall.

There were some two hundred of them, the flower of the Gnoman army, but of course they stood no chance against a thousand spry Pin Elves. Before they had time to recover from their surprise at discovering the trap they had walked into, they were surrounded by the elves, who, disdaining to use their spear-points, laid about them with the shafts of their weapons, and knocked them right and left without mercy,

and in short order had them overcome and disarmed.

"Bind them," commanded Harry, "and carry them over to yonder corner."

While they were thus engaged, a terrible shout arose from the elves upon the dais. Harry turned about and beheld Cattisack and Grumpy leading the main body of the Gnomes into the Hall, through the secret door by the wardrobe.

"Mercy on us!" cried the boy. "I forgot all about that door! Quick, Smithkin, get your men in order!"

That was easier said than done, for the elves had dropped their spears while binding the Gnomes body-guards, and before they had all recovered their weapons, the foremost of the enemy was upon them.

Harry in his excitement felt in the wrong pocket for his pop-pistol, and not finding that useful weapon, grabbed up a small table standing near, and tilting it up on edge with the top in front of him, he ran forward, pushing it along the floor, and mowed down a wide swath through the ranks of the advancing Gnomes. Again he turned, and levelled another row of them, and

yet again, sweeping another hundred of them down.

But now they began scattering over the Hall, and adroitly dodging to the right and left as he charged impetuously back and forth, and his breath also began giving out, and he found himself obliged to rest a moment.

The instant he paused, a vast swarm of the Gnomes was about him, pricking his legs with their sharp spears, clinging by scores to his feet and ankles, and some of the bolder ones even starting to climb up his legs. Two or three times the boy shook them off, and by vigorous kicking managed to clear a little space about him. But finally he could endure the torment no longer, and with a whoop and yell he dashed through the dense mass and ran madly up the Hall.

Right in his path stood Cattisack and Grumpy, grinning maliciously at his discomfiture and defeat. That was more than any boy could stand. He made straight for them, and with a tremendous kick sent them flying through the air. Then he turned aside and vaulted upon the top of the wardrobe and sat down, out of breath, his legs smarting from a hundred spear-pricks.

It gave him no little satisfaction, however, as

he looked around, to observe that Cattisack and Grumpy were lying motionless where he had kicked them. They were not killed, however, but only disabled.

Meanwhile, Smithkin and Kitey, with their companions, had been having their hands full. Two or three of them had failed to find their weapons, and had been immediately captured by the enemy; the remainder formed themselves in a circle, and for a while bravely repelled the charges of the Gnomes; but one after another went down before the repeated assaults, and at length the Gnomes broke the circle and caused a large number to seek safety in flight.

This disheartened the remainder, and they, too, were on the point of fleeing, when Smithkin thought of the two hundred and fifty Pin Elves of the old King's body-guard, who had gone over to the Gnomes with him in the last battle. They were standing together in a body not far off, taking no part in the struggle. Smithkin knew they had turned traitors chiefly because of their personal attachment to himself, and thinking he might win them back again, he waved his spear at them and gave the old battle-cry of the body-guard.

The fellows were really longing to help their old commander, and upon hearing his familiar war-cry they charged the Gnomes madly and were soon beside Smithkin, fighting like tigers.

Thus far the battle had been confined to the lower part of the Hall. But when the Gnomes found they made little impression upon Smithkin's band, a large body of them quietly withdrew, marched to the upper end of the Hall, and charged the line of men at the foot of the dais. These were, as I have said, picked elves, and being perfectly fresh, they repelled each charge without losing a man or giving way an inch.

The Gnomes then tried a new mode of attack. They retreated a little distance, and forming themselves into a wedge-shaped mass, charged straight for the throne.

Harry saw in a moment what they were about to do, and roared at the top of his voice, "Smithkin! run to help Wamby! he's in danger!"

With a yell to his men to follow, the brave commander broke through the line of Gnomes in front of him, dashed up the Hall, and reached the attacking party just as they were forcing their way up the steps of the throne. Hearing

his terrible battle-cry behind them, the Gnomes turned about and paused an instant. That brief pause saved Wamby from capture, for ere the Gnomes could turn again, Smithkin's men in two bodies were attacking them on each flank.



Smithkin himself forced his way to the commander of the Gnomes, who was standing on the lower step of the dais, directly in front of the throne. The Pin Elf commander, grasping his stout spear by the shaft, used it as a club or battle-ax, and every time he swung it back

and forth a number of Gnomes dropped senseless to the floor. Quickly he hewed a path before him, until he was face to face with the Gnomon commander. Then with a triumphant cry he raised the spear aloft and aimed a mighty blow at the fellow's head. But the commander of the Gnomes at the same time raised his own spear in both hands horizontally above his head and caught the blow upon it, and Smithkin's weapon was broken in twain.

Harry groaned aloud as he saw the defenceless plight of the Pin Elf champion.

King Wamby had been sitting on the edge of the throne, watching the conflict with breathless interest. In his hand he held the sceptre, or golden pickax, which the King of the Gnomes had left by the throne. As soon as the accident happened to Smithkin's spear, he cried out, "Here, Smithkin, take this!" and tossed the golden pickax to him.

Smithkin deftly caught the implement by the handle, leaped upon the lower step of the dais, and smote the commander of the Gnomes such a terrible blow that he dropped senseless upon the floor.

At the sight Harry was beside himself with

joy, and impetuously catching the elfin hat from his head, he threw it high in the air with a loud hurrah. Instantly he realized what he had done, for as soon as the hat was off, Pin Elves and Gnomes disappeared from view.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE DARK.

HARRY's hat fell in the midst of a group of Gnomes, and was taken possession of by one of them. Although the boy could see nothing, he could still hear what was going on in the Hall, and his heart sank within him at the hoarse shout of triumph that went up from the Gnomes as they captured the precious trophy.

Wamby's voice now came to his ears: "A golden hat-pin and the richest jewel in my treasures to any elf who will regain my hat!"

For the hat really belonged to Wamby, and of course it was of vital importance for him to get it back.

Presently Harry heard shrill voices crying, "Smithkin to the rescue! Well done! Bravely done! Hurrah! Smithkin has the hat!"

Then, after a moment of comparative quiet,

the Gnomes began to yell hoarsely, "Here comes our King! We'll conquer them now! Put the King on the throne! Down with the elves! Down with Wamby!"

At once a confused uproar sounded throughout the Hall, hoarse cries and shrill shrieks, the clashing of weapons, and the patter of many feet running to and fro. Above all could be heard ever and anon the fierce, defiant battle-cry of Smithkin, and wherever that cry came from, there was always the loudest din of battle.

Then above the racket rose poor little Kitey's shrill, piercing voice, "Smithkin has lost his weapon! Smithkin is down! Oh, Prince Harry, Wamby is captured! We are lost — lost!"

Then followed a prolonged, hoarse shout from the triumphant Gnomes.

Harry groaned once more, and shook his fist in impotent rage at the invisible enemy, whereat some of the Gnomes standing near laughed derisively.

Presently he heard the King of the Gnomes' gruff voice demand, "Have Cattisack and Grumpy been revived? Then bring them here, and seat them beside me."

All was still again for a few minutes, and then Kitey's shrill voice piped forth, "Look out, Prince, they're trying to put a rope around your feet!"

Harry reached down and felt cords about his ankles, and immediately began to kick about vigorously and to flourish his arms in the air. But he forgot how small the top of the wardrobe was, and stepping over the edge, he fell heavily to the stone floor and became unconscious.

When he came to himself, his hands and feet were bound, and he was lying upon the floor in front of the throne. Though he saw no one, he could hear the King of the Gnomes talking in a low tone with ex-King Cattisack. Finally the King of the Gnomes said in a louder tone, "Gather all of the Pin Elves together, and take them down to the mines."

The confused sounds which ensued, and the loud patter of many feet on the stone floor, indicated that the order was being carried out.

When quiet was restored, the King of the Gnomes growled forth, "And now what shall be done with that knave?"

Though Harry could not see, he felt that the big right eye was upon himself. Cattisack

seemed to make some suggestion, but he spoke too low for Harry to distinguish what he said.

"Just the thing!" exclaimed the King of the Gnomes. "Open this trap-door behind me, and dump the fellow into the Passage of the Toad."

Forthwith the boy was unceremoniously dragged on his back up the steps of the dais and dumped feet foremost down the steps of the Passage of the Toad. Then the door was closed, and he was left in utter darkness.

He lay quietly at the bottom of the stairway for a few minutes, trying to study out why he had been put in that place. Finally he laughed softly.

"Either they think I am afraid of the toad," he said to himself, "or else they believe I am bound too securely to get free myself, and that the Pin Elves will not dare to rescue me from this terrible passage."

After a hard struggle he succeeded in freeing himself from his bonds. Then he searched carefully in all of his pockets and found three matches. One of these he lighted, and made his way along the passage until he reached the spot where the smaller passages branched off, when his match went out,

"I'll save the other matches to find the pin-hole in the door," said he.

His object was to get out through the trap-door where he had first come down when he found Kitey. He believed that it would be easy to find the prison, and from there go down to the mines, where he could cheer up Wamby and the others and perhaps rescue them once more.

"Now, which of these passages is the right one?" he thought to himself. "Let me see. It was the third, — no, it was the second from this end; yes, I'm sure that is the one."

He felt his way along the wall, entered the second opening, and slowly went along the passage in the dark until he came to the end. There he found the stairs, but instead of going up as he expected, they went down; consequently he missed his footing and also went down, — on his back, — for some little distance.

"I took the wrong passage after all," he muttered, as he recovered his footing. "This is the one that leads to the river. I may as well go on to the end of it and take a look."

Cautiously he felt his way down the remainder of the steps and along the passage to the door at the end. There he lighted one

of the remaining matches, found the pin-hole, and opened the door. Holding the lighted match above his head, he stepped out upon the little stone platform or landing-place, and carefully examined the wall of the tunnel. "Even if I could find a boat," he said, half aloud, "I don't believe I'd risk going down the rapids in the dark." Consequently he decided to make the rest of the journey to the lake on foot. On the other side of the lake was the kingdom of the Gnomes. The journey in the dark was a long and severe one, but after several hours he arrived footsore and weary at the lake, and found the boat in which he and Wamby had before sailed across moored among a large fleet on the shore. To his surprise he discovered also that the wind was already turned on, but jumping on board the boat, he arrived safely on the Gnomian shore.

CHAPTER XIV.

SURPRISED.

HARRY could see no one, of course, as he walked towards the glowing furnaces, for he had no elfin hat upon his head. But the elves soon caught sight of him, and immediately began dancing about in delight, shouting, "Hurrah! hurrah! Here is Prince Harry!"

"Somebody bring me a hat," said Harry. "I can't see a single one of you."

At once a dozen of them ran forward and cried, "Here, Prince, take mine!" But before he had a chance to get hold of one of them, he heard Kitey's shrill little voice ordering the others to stand aside.

"Here is Wamby's hat, dear Prince," cried Kitey. "He left it in my care, for he knew you would come down some time."

"There, that is better," said Harry, as he

put the hat on his head. "Now, little chap, let us hurry away to see Wamby."

They found His Majesty in the Grand Reception Hall, and Harry told him everything that had befallen him since they were separated.

"I was sure you would come down soon," said Wamby, "and have had all my workmen making spears. We have enough now to arm all of the elves; but how can we get across the lake? The Gnomes not only keep the wind turned on over there, but also took away every vessel from this side."

"I think we can remedy that," replied Harry. "Can we not cross the lake on rafts or some vessels of our own construction? Or better still, I will cross alone, for I shall only require one boat; then, once on the other side, I can bring over the boats for all the rest of you."

So the elves, with Harry's help, constructed, in less than an hour's time, a temporary boat, much like a raft, made of boards nailed together, and just large enough for Harry to stand on. They also made a paddle, of a narrow board with larger ends.

The elves watched breathlessly as he with

difficulty propelled himself along, the wind against him, retarding his progress by many minutes. Undaunted and untiring in his efforts, he at last made his way to the other side of the lake, where his first act was to gather the boats together (for the Gnomes had left them unguarded, never supposing Harry could so boldly capture them), then to turn off the wind entirely, so that it should blow in neither direction. In safety he once more went back to his friends, and they all lost no time, except in grateful thanks to their Prince, in recrossing the lake to their destination.

They made their way quickly to the antechamber, but were surprised to find no guards anywhere on their way. When they reached that place, and still found no sign of a guard, and discovered, furthermore, that the door of the Reception Hall was bolted, Wamby exclaimed, "Some of the Gnomes must have seen us and carried word to the King!"

Harry considered a moment, then ordered Wamby to count the elves, to see if perchance there was a deserter in the camp. Sure enough, it was discovered that one of them was missing, and to their horror and dismay, they knew he

must have escaped, without their notice, to warn the Gnomes.

"The traitor!" exclaimed Harry; "but there is no time to cry over spilled milk. What can we do now?" After a moment's consideration he said, "I have a plan. We can all go through the Passage of the Toad to the other side of the Reception Hall and enter the Hall by the secret door near the wardrobe."

"But the toad!" said Wamby, in a trembling voice.

"You won't have to go near him," said Harry. "He is, or was when I saw him last, at the foot of the steps leading to the trap-door under the Hall, and you needn't go to that end of the main passage at all. We'll simply go through the passage that runs from this ante-chamber, and that will take us within a step of the passage that runs up near the chamber under the rock in the park. Besides, I'll go ahead and give warning if the toad is in the way."

It was finally agreed to try the plan, and they all made their way through safely, without a glimpse of the toad, and reached the secret door. But that also was bolted on the inside.

"They have been warned of our coming, as you feared," said Wamby.

"It is, indeed, so," replied Harry. "Well, suppose you and the others remain here while I reconnoitre. Be ready to rush in if I open the door."

Borrowing Wamby's lantern-box, the boy went back to the Passage of the Toad, and mounted the steps leading to the trap-door under the dais. Part way up the steps, he found the toad. The steps were very low, being built for little Pin Elves, so it was easy enough for a slender toad to hop from one to another.

"Halloa, little hoppy!" said Harry; "you're getting spry, aren't you? Just keep up courage a little longer, old fellow, and you'll be released from your prison."

Ascending to the top of the steps, the boy opened the door slightly, and peered forth.

The Hall was full of Gnomes, most of them being armed. A large guard was stationed at each door, but the main body of soldiers was in the centre of the Hall. The King was upon the throne, while a few members of his body-guard were below on the floor a little to his left.

Harry studied the situation for a minute, and then he opened the trap-door, leaped clear over the throne, rushed by the body-guard to the wardrobe, and vaulted upon the top of that familiar friendly refuge. He thought that on top of the wardrobe he would be near the secret door, and that, by watching an opportunity he could drop down, unbolt the door, and admit the Pin Elves. But now, to his chagrin, he noticed that the wardrobe had been moved some distance away from the secret door.

The Gnomes, at his appearance, stood for a moment in silent astonishment, for they supposed him to be still lying bound where they had thrown him, in the Passage of the Toad. But they speedily recovered themselves, and crowded around the wardrobe, yelling and howling with rage.

"Build a fire and smoke him out!" growled the King.

Immediately the wood was brought and laid in a semicircle and ignited, the powder was sprinkled upon the flame, and a dense, stilling smoke enveloped the boy.

"I must run for it," thought he.

He stood it as long as he could, and then he dropped to the floor, leaped through the smoke and flame, dashed through the mass of Gnomes about the fire, and ran towards the dais.

The Gnomes had been expecting him to do this, and had prepared for it. They had twisted together a number of their strongest ropes, and several lengths of this twisted rope were laid in various places along the floor, with fifty Gnomes holding the end of each length. One of these pieces of rope was stretched near the lower step of the dais, directly across the path that Harry was taking. Just before he reached it, the Gnomes who were holding it by the ends raised it several inches above the floor and hauled it taut, and the boy tripped over it and fell sprawling in front of the throne.

Before he could recover himself, the rope was wound several times about his ankles, and another piece was slipped over his head and hauled so tightly about his neck as nearly to strangle him. Both of his hands were still free, and he managed to turn partly over and grasp the rope around his neck and pull upon one side of it hard enough to loosen it somewhat.

But by this time nearly all of the Gnomes were about him, and presently they had ropes wound around both of his hands, and he was beyond the power of struggling.

Then a strange thing happened. Harry heard a shriek of terror from the throne, and looking up, he saw the King of the Gnomes, Cattisack, Grumpy, the Grand Prime Minister, and the Grand Recorder, all simultaneously fall forward from their seats and lie prone upon the steps of the dais. At the same time he felt the bonds about his neck and limbs loosen, and everything around him became as still as death.

CHAPTER XV.

ON TOP.

FOR awhile the boy was too astonished to move. At first he thought it was some trick they were trying to play upon him ; but when he slipped the bonds from his neck and limbs without meeting with any opposition, he concluded that it could be no trick, and accordingly sprang to his feet.

All of the Gnomes at that end of the Hall were lying prostrate on the floor, rigid and motionless, as if paralyzed. Harry turned one of them over, and the little fellow lay staring vacantly upwards with open eyes, and seemed as lifeless as a china doll.

At the further end of the Hall a number were running back and forth, and crying and shrieking as though they were mad. Putting his hand to his ear, Harry could hear them calling out in terror, "The toad ! the toad !"

At the sound of those words Harry hastily glanced about him, and soon discovered the little hop-toad sitting on the floor close by, blinking his eyes as if half-blinded by the light. It seems that Harry had left the trap-door open, and the little animal had hopped up the steps and out into the Hall just in the nick of time.

The boy danced about the creature, and roared with laughter. "Ha, ha, ha! what a lark!" he exclaimed. "The Gnomes are just as much afraid of a toad as the Pin Elves. Hurrah, little hoppy, you've saved the country! Let me show you, old fellow, what a wonderful power you possess."

Picking up the animal, he ran to the other end of the Hall, and as soon as he approached the Gnomes there, they too fell down paralyzed with fear.

"Good enough!" Harry cried; "we can send them down below now! Let me call in Wamby and the rest."

He was on the point of unbolting the secret door, when luckily he bethought himself.

"Hold on!" he cried; "that won't do! We don't want to paralyze the Pin Elves."

He considered a moment, and then carried the toad back to the passage, and placing him on the top step, shut the trap-door. Then, standing close to the door, he waited until the Gnomes revived and tremblingly arose to their feet.

"Listen to me!" he called, in commanding tones. "Cattisack and Grumpy, stand over there by the wardrobe and don't move. Some of you fellows gather all of your weapons together, and pile them in the corner yonder. And you,"—to the King of the Gnomes,— "take off your crown and royal mantle, and place them on the step beside your sceptre. Now, all of you go through the antechamber and down to the shore of the lake and wait there. If you dare disobey my orders, I shall come after you with the toad!"

When the last Gnome had gone, the boy bolted the door behind them, and ran across and opened the secret door. "Enter, King Wamby," he said, "and take possession of your throne and kingdom."

But the Pin Elves shrank back with fear and loathing, and some of the nearest ones fell to the ground, crying, "The toad! the toad!"

"What ails you?" exclaimed Harry. "There's no toad here; I put him back in the passage and shut the door."

"Then you must have touched him, Prince," said Kitey, "and it is the odor left upon your hands that prostrates us."

"What can I do?" Harry asked in perplexity.

"You must go down to the river and bathe your hands," answered Kitey. "Nothing but running water will remove the deadly odor of the toad. Here is my lantern-box," and he tossed the box at Harry's feet.

The boy picked up the box in his handkerchief, so as not to infect it with the odor, and hastened down to the underground river, where he washed his hands, and then went back to the Reception Hall.

Then he directed some of the elves to go down to the lake and take the Gnomes across to their own country, and then bring all of the ships back again.

"Now, Prince," said Wamby, "I have given orders for a grand royal banquet to be prepared. Meanwhile, let us go to my private apartments and rest awhile."

Harry had not as yet seen that part of the Pin Elf dominions where the elves lived, and his eyes fairly hung out with astonishment as Wamby opened a number of doors and gave him glimpses of the luxurious private rooms of the Lord of the Safety-Pin, the Grand Prime Minister, the Knights of the Breast-Pin, and others of the nobility.

But, of course, none of them could compare with the richness and splendor of the royal apartments. In three of these rooms the floor and walls were of pure gold. The first was the well-known green-and-gold room, where the King ordinarily held his court and dealt out justice; here was contained the famous couch cut from a single emerald. Next came the blue-and-gold room, with its lovely turquoises and pale blue silk hangings. Then, last, came the purple-and-gold room, where few were permitted to enter. It was lighted by the great royal amethyst that once belonged to the King of the Gnomes. On the floor a soft couch had been formed of many purple rugs for Harry's repose, and the boy was very willing to throw himself down upon it, after his arduous labors.

Presently little Kitey entered the apartment,

accompanied by Smithkin. The soldier, with some embarrassment, bowed low to Wamby, and said, "Your Majesty, I have come to ask pardon for having turned traitor, and also to restore to Prince Harry these jewels he gave me as a bribe."

He held out to Harry the three jewels, but the boy exclaimed, "Keep them, old chap; you have more than earned them by your bravery."

"You have also earned pardon for your former treachery," said King Wamby, with a gracious smile. "Here is the reward I promised for the recovery of my hat," handing him a rich jewel and a small gold hat-pin, "and I hereby restore you to your old position as commander of my body-guard."

When Smithkin had retired, Harry turned to Kitey and exclaimed, "I say, little chap, why on earth didn't you tell me the Gnomes were afraid of the toad?"

"Why," replied Kitey, "I did tell you, long ago, when you first found me in the Passage."

"No, you didn't," said Harry. "You simply said that elves were afraid of the animal."

"But Gnomes are elves," returned Kitey. "They are bad elves, it is true; but all elves,

good or bad, are afraid of toads. I thought of course you knew that all the time."

"I wish I had known it," said the boy, "for it would have saved us all that fighting. I could easily have settled the old Gnomes at the very beginning."

"What shall we do with Cattisack and Grumpy?" inquired Wamby.

"Make them common Pin Elves," said Harry; "then they will have no power and influence to stir up trouble again."

Just then a messenger announced that the banquet was served, so they repaired to the Grand Royal Reception Hall.

Harry hardly recognized it as the same room he had recently left. The golden throne, the marble steps of the dais, and everything else had been furbished and polished to look like new. Costly rugs of white mouse-skin nearly covered the floor. The lofty ceiling was newly festooned with many-colored gems that gave a rare and beautiful light. In the centre of the Hall were long rows of tables covered with all kinds of tempting viands in dishes of pure gold. The royal table was distinguished from the others by being placed upon a low platform,

and also by the exquisite precious stones that adorned every one of the golden dishes.

At the head of this table, where Harry was asked to seat himself, was a large pot-pie. The boy examined it curiously, and asked Wamby what it was.

"It is a blackbird pie," said Wamby, "especially prepared for you. I have heard that mortals consider it a dainty dish to set before a king."

"Good enough!" exclaimed Harry. "'Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie!' Very kind of you, old chap, to take so much trouble just for me."

Without more ado they all fell to and had a royal time, feasting to their hearts' content. When the dishes were well cleared of their contents, Harry made a speech, congratulating them on having effectually conquered the wicked Gnomes. Then Wamby arose and thanked the Prince, in the name of the Pin Elves, for his timely assistance. Then little Kitey made them all roar with laughter by a comical and witty address on "Our Friend and Enemy, the Toad."

After the feasting and merriment was over,

Harry declared that he must once more return to the upper earth.

"Why can't you remain always with us, Prince Harry?" said Wamby.

"Thank you, little chap," answered Harry, "I'd like to stay, but I don't want my folks to worry about me. By the way, I am going to take that poor little toad out with me."

"Then you had better go out alone through the Passage of the Toad," said Wamby. "We should like to accompany you to the entrance, but of course we cannot do so if you carry the toad with you."

"Never mind," said Harry, "I can bid you good-by here. I suppose after I am gone you will all resume your regular work of pin-gathering."

"Oh, yes," replied Wamby; "and we shall be obliged to work hard, for many good pins have been ruined and lost in the late war. I notice some of my men are hardly able to keep their garments together, and I myself at present haven't a pin to give one of them. Even a short war like ours is very expensive."

The little fellows were very sad at parting from their kind Prince. Harry had never seen

any of the elves cry, but poor little Kitey looked as if he felt like crying, and even Smithkin winked hard as he bade him farewell.



"I'll leave your hat on the dais, Wamby," said the boy; and rising from the table, he walked towards the trap-door.

Before he reached it he heard Kitey's shrill voice calling him, and the little fellow ran up to him saying, "Here's my lantern-box to

light you on the way. You can keep it, Prince, in memory of little Kitey."

"Thank you, dear old chap," said Harry, slipping the tiny box into his pocket.

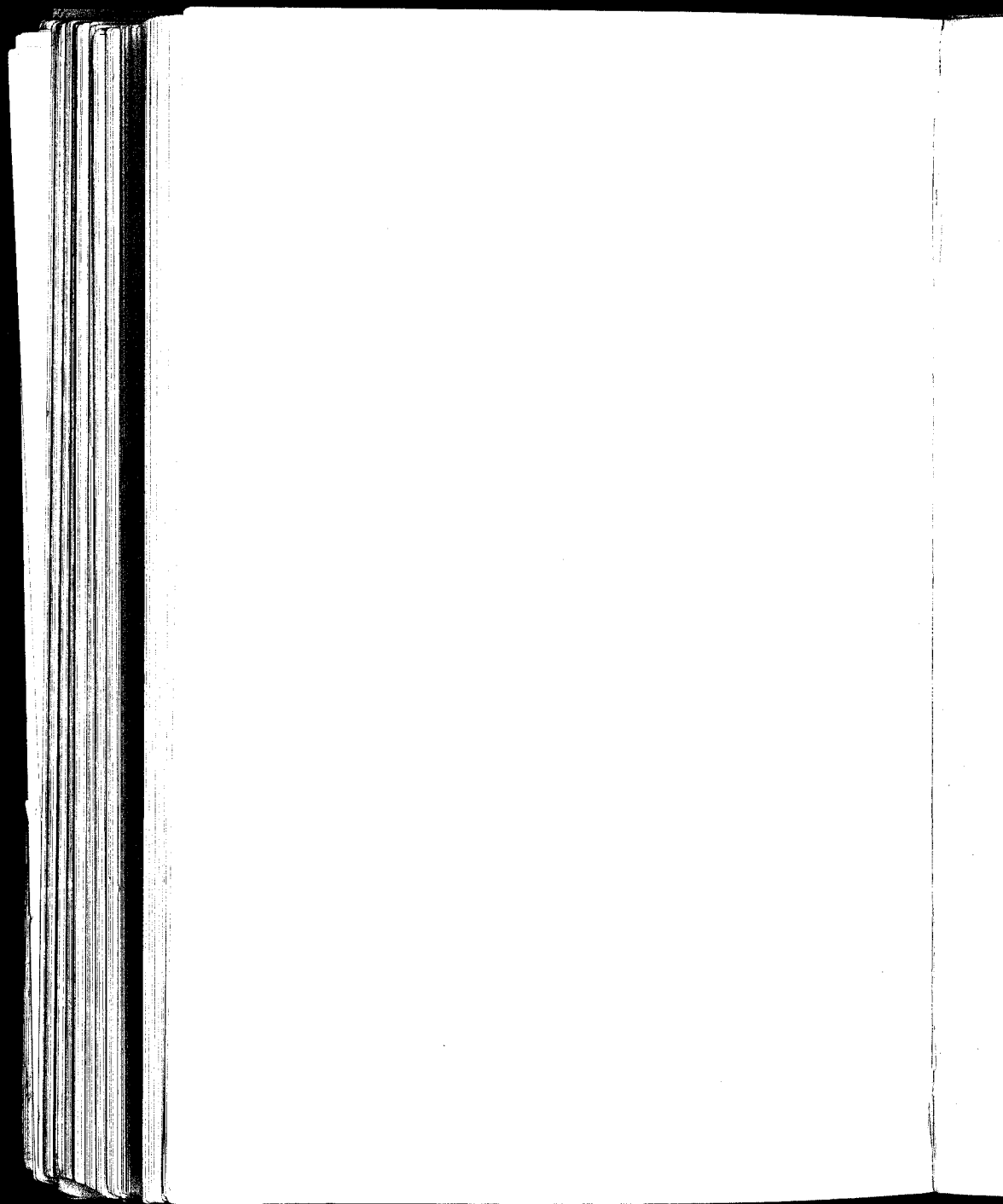
Mounting the steps of the dais, he turned and waved a final farewell to them all, and then took off Wamby's hat and placed it on the throne, and entered the trap-door. Wrapping the toad in the piece of table-cloth that was still lying in the passage, he carried the little creature along with him.

In the chamber under the rock he found his own hat where he had left it when he came down. Placing it on his head, he mounted the steps and peeped forth, and finding the coast clear, sprang out into the open air, and the trap-door of its own accord shut noiselessly behind him.

The first thing he did was to place the door-pin carefully in the little lantern-box for safe keeping. Then he opened the piece of cloth and placed the little toad on the ground, and sitting down upon the rock, watched him as he first blinked stupidly in the bright light. Master Toad soon, however, gave a tremendous hop, and disappeared in the bushes.

Harry arose and went home thoughtfully, almost wondering if he had been asleep and dreamed of all these strange adventures. But as he vividly recalled everything to mind, and especially as he felt in his pocket the little lantern-box given him by Kitey, he knew that he had actually been among the Pin Elves.

THE END.



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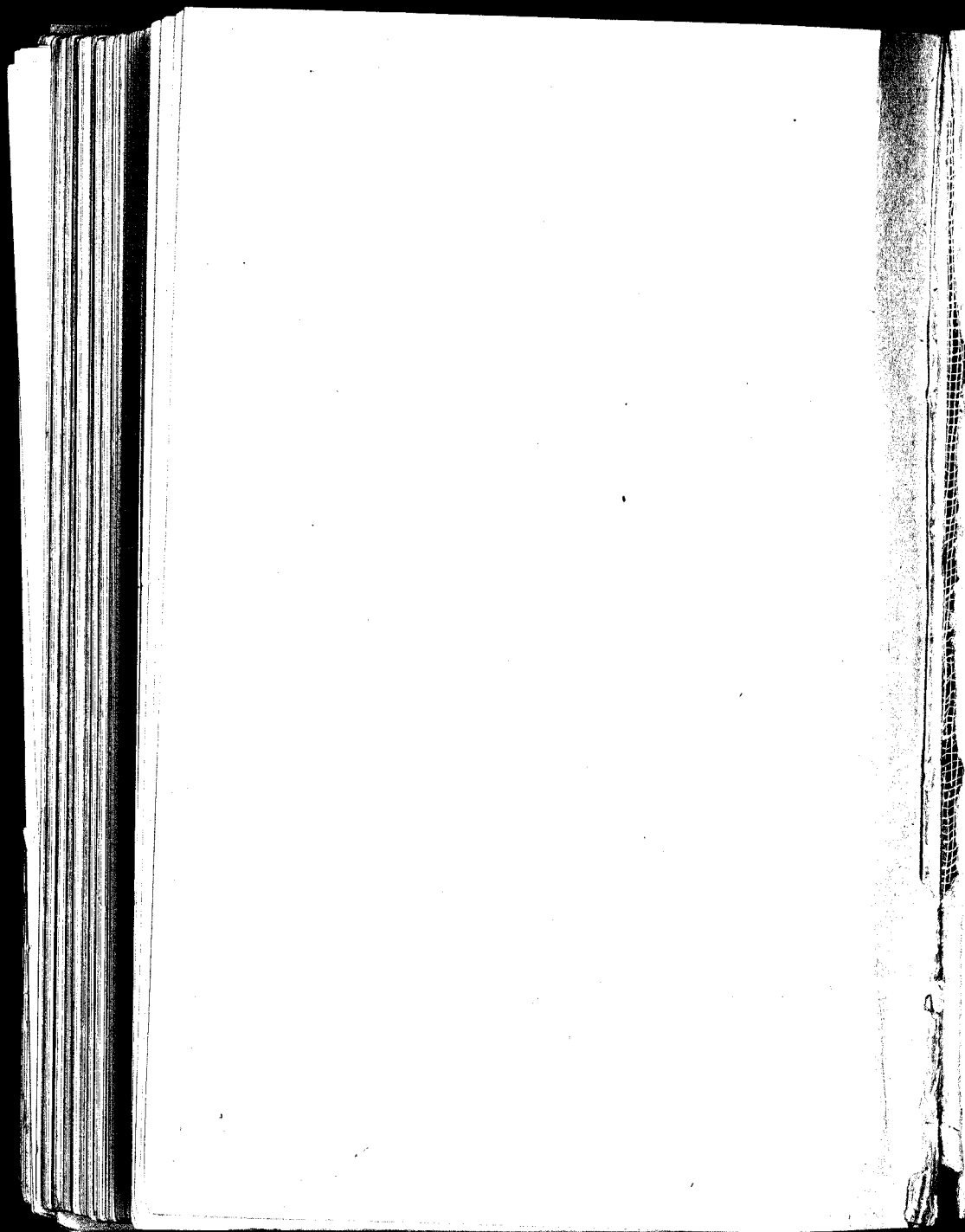
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