



By THE AUTHOR of THE WIZARD of OZ THE LAND of OZ FATHER GOOSE Etc.

L. FRANK BAUM'S NEW WONDER STORY FOR CHILDREN John Dough and The Cherub. Pictures by John R. Neill.

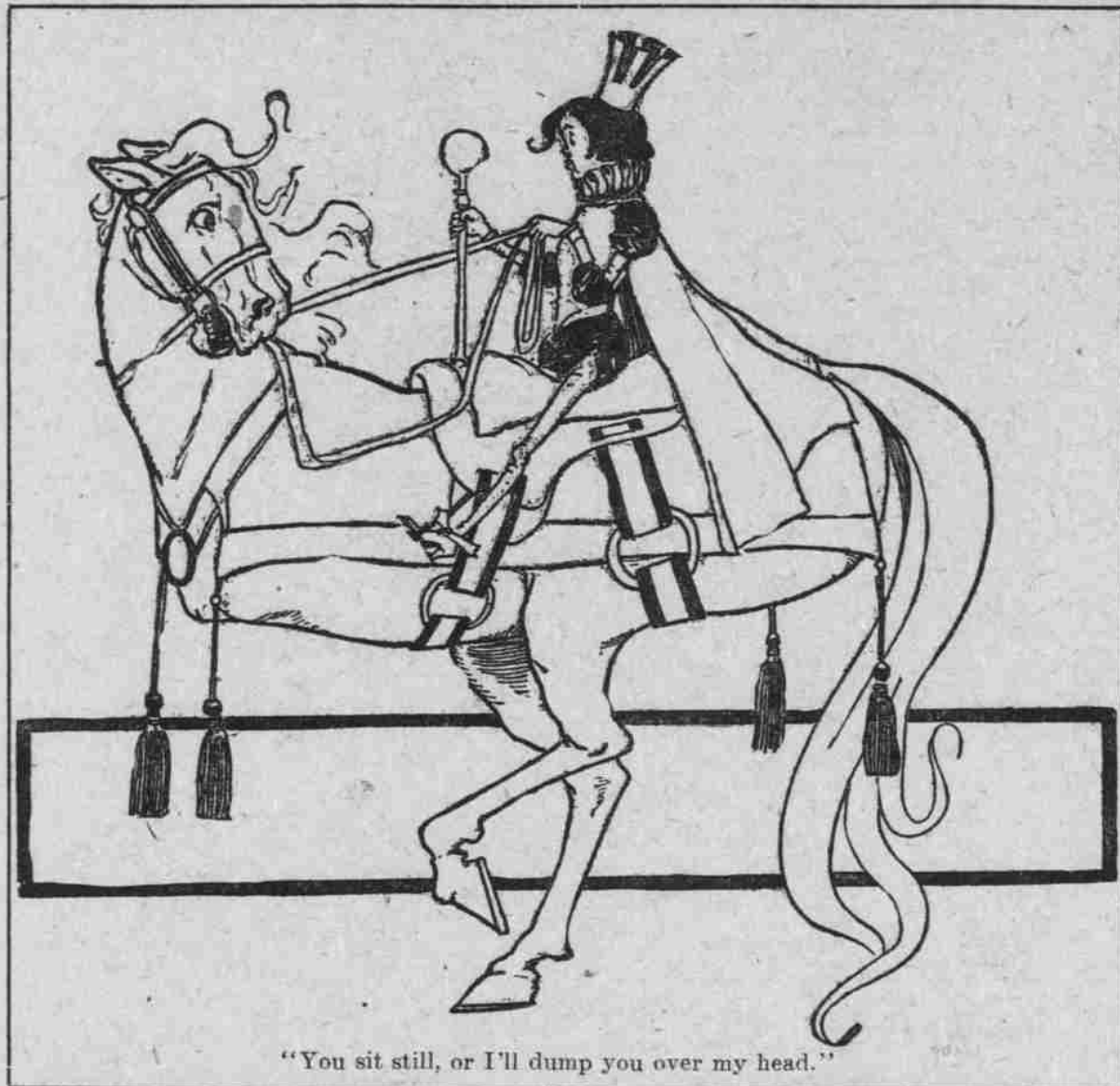
IS THE CHERUB A GIRL OR A BOY?



THE LADY EXECUTIONER

PRESENTLY Chick returned, looking bright and happy as ever, but when the child heard the tale of John's wanderings in the rain he received a sound scolding for being so careless. "You mustn't pay any attention to the inventors," said the Cherub. "This Isle is full of 'em, and most of their inventions won't work."

"You are accused of being foolish," said the kinglet, with a broad grin upon his freckled face. "Sire, at the battle of Waterloo—" "Never mind a battle of Waterloo," interrupted his Majesty. "I am told you are scattered all over the world as the result of your foolishness."



"You sit still, or I'll dump you over my head."

"Oh, they're not useful at all," replied Chick, laughing. "but these folks are all trying to do something queer, and most of them are doing it. Now we'll climb this tower, and I'll show you what I call a really fine invention."

So up they climbed to the top of one of the turrets, winding round and round a narrow staircase until they came upon a broad platform. And on this platform rested a queer machine that somewhat resembled a bird, for it had two great wings and a big body that glittered as brightly as if it were made of silver.

right arm, seized his hair firmly, and lifted the head from his shoulders. "It is true I lost my head at Santiago," he said, "but I could not help it."

John was astonished. The old general seemed to come to pieces very easily. He had tucked his head under his right elbow, and now stood before the kinglet on one foot, presenting a remarkably strange appearance.



"I lost my head at Santiago."

He then allowed John to enter the tiny room in the bow of the bird, which was just big enough to allow two to sit close together. And in front of the seat were various push buttons and a silver lever, by means of which the flight of the machine was controlled.

"It is very simple," said Imar, proudly. "Even Chick could guide the machine, if properly instructed. The only fault of the invention is that the wings are too light to be strong, and that is why I do not take any long trips in it."

"I understand," answered John. "It's quite a distance to the ground, if anything happened to break." "True," acknowledged Imar, sadly, "and I do not wish to break my neck before I am able to make a bigger and better machine."

"That is not to be wondered at," said John. "Then he thanked the inventor and followed Chick down the winding stairs and through the halls until they again reached their own room, where they sat and talked until darkness came and drove the incubator baby to its snowy couch. As for the gingerbread man, he never required sleep or rest; so he sat quietly in a chair and thought of many things until a new day dawned."

By morning the rain had ceased and the sun arose in a blue sky and flooded the Isle with its warm and brilliant rays. The incubator baby was so happy this pleasant day that it fairly danced away to get its regular breakfast of milk and oatmeal.

But John Dough's little friend was back at his side before long, and together they went hand in hand through the halls of the castle to the throne room of the kinglet.

They found his Majesty already seated in the throne, with the fat Nebble asleep at one side of him and the girl executioner carefully sharpening her sword at the other side.

"This is my busy day," said the kinglet, nodding graciously to Chick and the gingerbread man. "There are too many useless people in my kingdom, and I'm going to kill off some of them. Sit down and watch the flash of the executioner's sword."

Then he turned to his guards and commanded: "Bring in the General." Immediately they ushered before the kinglet a soldierly man clothed in a gorgeous uniform. His head was erect and his countenance calm and set. The eyes seemed dull and listless, and he walked stiffly, as if his limbs were rheumatic.

very unwise to get so broken up, but there is nothing left for the Royal Executioner to do." The girl sighed and felt the edge of her blade, and the old general replaced his head, had his leg and arm again strapped to his body by the guards, and hobbled away after making a low bow before the throne.

Just then a great noise of quarrelling and fighting was heard near the doorway, and while all eyes were turned toward the sound, a wooden Indian sprang into the hall, waving a wooden tomahawk over his head and uttering terrible war whoops.

Following him came a number of the Brotherhood of Fallings, trying to capture the Indian. The awkward tripped up and fell flat on his face; the unlucky got in the way of the tomahawk and received a crack on the head that laid him low; the Blunderer was kicked on the shin so violently that he howled and limped away to a safe distance. But just before the throne the Disagreeable, the Bad-Tempered and the Ugly managed to throw a rope about the Indian's arms and bind them fast to his body, so that he ceased to struggle.

"What's the trouble?" asked the kinglet. "Sire," said the Indian, proudly, "once I had the honor to be a beautiful sign in front of a cigar store, and now these miserable Fallings dare to insult me."

"He claims his name is Wart-on-the-Nose," answered the Disagreeable, "and any one can see there is no wart at all on his nose." "So we decided to fight him," added the Ugly. "And he dared to resist," said the Bad-Tempered. "I am a great chief," the Indian declared, scowling fiercely. "I am made of oak, and my point is the best ready-made that can be purchased."

the Indian, sulkily. "Are not white girls called Rose and Violet when they have not that color? John Brown was white and Mary Green was white. If the white people deceive us about their names, I also have a right to deceive." "Now, by my—my—my—" The kinglet jabbed the fat man with his scepter.

"Haldom!" yelled Nebble, with a jump. "By my haldom!" said the kinglet. "I will allow no one in my kingdom to tell an untruth. There being no wart on your nose you must die the death! Executioner, do your duty!"

The Fallings tripped up the Indian so that he fell upon his face, and then the girl advanced solemnly with her sword. Three times she swung the glittering blade around her head, and then she glanced at the kinglet and said: "Well!" "Well, what?" asked His Majesty.

"I can, but I won't," said the horse, in a cross tone, for it appeared the animal was able to talk. "I'll thrash you soundly if you don't behave!" scowled the kinglet. "I'll kick you in the ribs, if you dare to threaten me!" returned the horse, laying back its ears. "Why, you miserable little freckle-faced kinglet, I could run away with you and break your neck, if I wanted to."

"That's true," said his Majesty, meekly. "I beg your pardon for my harsh words. Let us be friends, by all means!" The horse snorted, as if with contempt, and the guards finally managed to hoist the little kinglet to his seat upon the animal's back.

"Throw away that mace!" cried the horse. His Majesty obeyed at once. "Now," said the animal, "you sit still and behave yourself, or I'll dump you over my head. Understand?" "I understand," said the kinglet. "Very good!" declared the horse. "When you're on your throne you're a tyrant; but when you're on horse-back you're a coward, because you're at my mercy, and you know it. Now, we are off."

The beast pranced down the hall and out of the arched entrance, bearing the kinglet upon his back; and when they were gone John and Chick started to take a walk along the beach of the seashore. But no sooner had they stepped into the courtyard than an awful yell saluted their ears, and before them stood the form of the terrible Arab!

"He must have broken loose!" cried Chick. "Let us run, John Dough, before he can eat you." At once John turned to fly, with Chick grasping his hand to urge him on. All Duhh had, indeed, succeeded in breaking through the iron grating of his prison, and had even managed to untie his hands. But his legs were still firmly bound together from his ankles to his knees, so that he could only move toward them by hopping.

Nevertheless, at sight of the gingerbread man, who was mixed with his precious Ellixir, the Arab began bounding toward his victim with long nops, and had John and Chick not run so fast as they did it is certain the Arab would soon have overtaken them. Through the throne room they fled, with All Duhh just behind them, and then they began mounting the marble stairways to the upper stories of the castle.

Their pursuer, nothing daunted by his bound legs, hopped up the stairs after them with remarkable swiftness. "Hurry!" cried Chick; "hurry, John Dough, or you'll be eaten." They came to the second flight of stairs, and still the Arab followed.

"We are lost," said John, in despair. "He'll surely get me this time." But Chick tugged at his puffy brown hand and hurried him on, for the incubator baby at that very moment thought of a clever way to save the gingerbread man. Still holding John's hand, the child ran through the upper passages to the foot of the tower of Imar, and began climbing up the steep stairs as fast as possible. Luckily for the fugitives, these stairs to the tower were very difficult for All Duhh to climb by hopping. When he was half way up he lost his balance and tumbled down again, and this accident gave John and Chick time to enter the body of the bird flying machine, which still lay stretched upon the roof of the tower.

"Quick!" shouted the child, shutting and fastening the silver door behind them. "Pull over that lever and away we go!" "Is it safe to be eaten?" inquired Chick. John quickly grabbed the lever, pulled it over, and the huge bird fluttered its wings once or twice and rose slowly into the air. It sailed away from the roof just as the Arab appeared at the top of the stairs.

"Stop!" screamed All Duhh. "You're mine, John Dough. Come back and be eaten." "Don't mind him," said the Cherub, peeping at the Arab through a little window in the bottom of the bird's body. "And don't worry about this flying machine, either. Imar has told me how to run it, and it will carry us somewhere, never fear; this button just I pushed is to start it, and there's another button somewhere to stop it."

"I don't remember. But never mind that; we don't want to stop just yet, anyhow." John stooped to look through the little window, and saw spread out beneath him the Isle of Phreex. The Brotherhood of Fallings stood upon the shore watching the bird.

"Why, it seems to me very easy to get out of the difficulty, Your Majesty. The Indian's only offense is that he has no wart on his nose." "But that is a great offense!" cried the kinglet. "Well, let us whittle a wart on his nose," said John, "and all will be well." The kinglet looked at him in astonishment. "Can that be done?" he asked.

"Certainly, your Majesty. It is only necessary to carve away some of the wood of his nose, and leave a wart." "I'll do it!" shouted the kinglet, in great delight. And he at once sent for the Royal Carpenter and had the man whittle the Indian's nose until a beautiful wart showed plainly on the very end.

"Good!" said the King. "Good!" echoed the Indian, proudly. "Now none of those miserable Fallings dare say my name is not suitable." "I'm very sorry about that cleaver," remarked the kinglet. "You'll have to carry it around wherever you go."

"That's all right, I'll add to my name and call myself Wart-on-the-Nose-and-Cleaver-in-the-Neck. That will be a fine Indian name, and no one can prove it is not correct." Saying this, the wooden Indian bowed to the kinglet, gave a furious war-whoop, and stalked stiffly from the room.

"Bring on the next prisoner!" shouted the kinglet, and both Chick and John gave a gasp of surprise as Imar was brought into the room. The inventor of the flying machine, however, did not seem the least bit frightened, and bowed calmly before the throne. "What's the charge against this man?" inquired the kinglet.

"He's accused of being a successful inventor," said one of the guards. "The other inventors claim no one who succeeds has a right to live in the Isle of Phreex." "Quite correct," replied his Majesty. "Cut off his head, Maria." "Alias, Sire! my sword is broken!" she exclaimed. "Then get another." "But I have no other sword that is sharpened," she protested. "Then sharpen one!" retorted the kinglet, frowning. "Certainly, your Majesty. But a sword cannot be

properly sharpened in a minute. It will take until tomorrow, at least, to get it ready." "Then," said the kinglet, "I'll postpone the execution until tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock. If you're not ready by that time I'll get a new Royal Executioner and you'll lose your job."

"I shall be ready," said the girl, and walked away arm in arm with the sad young man, on whom she smiled sweetly. "It's all right," whispered Chick to John. "Imar won't get hurt, for the kinglet will forget all about him by tomorrow."

"And now, my guards," said his Majesty, stretching his arms and yawning, "bring hither my two-legged horse, that I may take a ride around my kingdom." So presently the guards led in a big, raw-boned nag that had two legs instead of four, and these two set in the middle of its body. It seemed rather frisky and pranced around in a nervous manner, so that the kinglet had great difficulty in mounting the horse's back, whereon was a saddle made of purple velvet and cloth of gold.

"Hold still, can't you?" cried the kinglet. "I can, but I won't," said the horse, in a cross tone, for it appeared the animal was able to talk. "I'll thrash you soundly if you don't behave!" scowled the kinglet. "I'll kick you in the ribs, if you dare to threaten me!" returned the horse, laying back its ears. "Why, you miserable little freckle-faced kinglet, I could run away with you and break your neck, if I wanted to."

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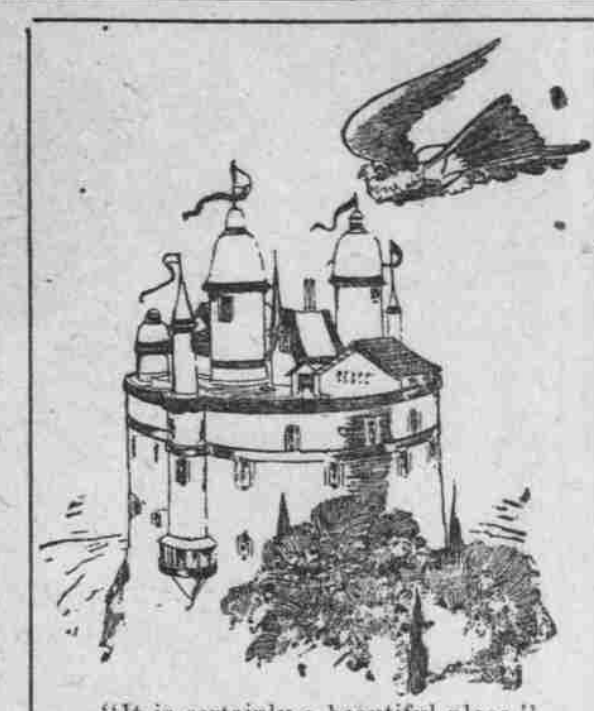
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ing the flight of the machine, and the kinglet was riding along calmly upon his two-legged horse without any idea that the incubator baby and the gingerbread man were leaving his kingdom for good and all and he would probably never see them again.

The great bird flew steadily westward, and Chick laughed and chatted, and seemed to enjoy the journey immensely. They were flying over the ocean now, and before long the Isle they had left became a mere speck upon the water.

"Where are we going?" John asked. "I don't know," answered Chick. "Imar was always afraid to go very far from the island with it. We'll just have to wait and find out."

This was not very encouraging, but it was too late to return now, the Isle of Phreex being lost in the vastness of the great sea. Moreover, John reflected that he would be in greater danger there from All Duhh than in riding in an unfired flying machine. The only thing to do was to continue the flight through the air until they sighted some other land—provided the machine did not suddenly break down. It seemed to be all right just at present, and John's admiration of Imar's genius in constructing it grew steadily as the bird hopped on and on without a sign of giving out.

Chick wasn't frightened, that was certain. The baby laughed and sang little songs, and seemed as happy and contented as when upon firm land; so John gradually forgot his fears. The sun had sunk low upon the horizon, and was looking for a good place to dive into the sea, when the voyagers discovered something far ahead of them that glittered brightly upon the water. Neither could determine what the glitter meant, until they drew nearer and saw a small, rocky islet, upon which was perched an enormous palace that seemed to be made of



"A beautiful wart that showed plainly on the end."

pure gold, having many crystal windows set in its domed and sides. "It is certainly a beautiful place," said John. "Let us land upon the islet!"

"All right," returned Chick. "I'll see if I can find out which button stops the thing." The baby pushed one of the buttons, and at once the bird shot up higher into the air. "That isn't it," cried John, in sudden alarm. Chick pushed another button, and the machine began whirling around in short circles.

"Dear me!" said John; "what's going to happen to us?" Chick laughed and pushed another button. "One of 'em must be to stop," declared Chick, cheerfully; "and there's only two more left."

The bird paused, with a quick trembling of its wings, and slowly fluttered downward. "Oh, now we're all right," gasped Chick, "there's only one button left; and when I push it, John Dough, you must pull back the silver lever and steer straight for the golden palace."

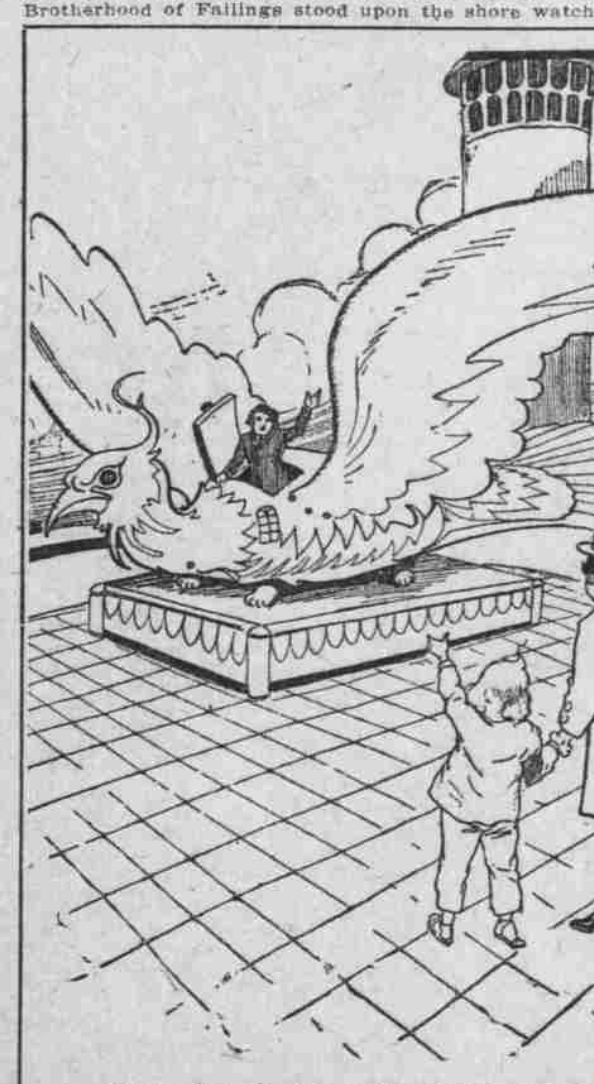
Down down they sank, and fortunately, the descent was made to the flat roof of a wing of the palace. When they had almost reached it, Chick, who was watching the roof through the little window, pushed the last button, while John threw over the lever.

Immediately the flying machine fell with a thump that made the gingerbread man's teeth knock together. "Wow!" said Chick. "That was a jolt and a half! I hope nothing's broken."

"For my part, I rather like flying through the air. You never know what's going to happen next. And see how lucky we are! This is the only part of the palace roof that is flat, and we struck it to a dot. If we'd fallen upon one of those spikes—pointing to the numerous spires and minarets—our clocks would have stopped by this time."

"You have a queer way of expressing yourself, my friend," said John, looking upon the child gravely. "The vast knowledge I gained by means of the Ellixir taught me nothing of your methods of twisting language."

"That's too bad," answered Chick. "I can't always figure out what you mean to say; but you always know what I mean, don't you?" "Almost always," John acknowledged. "Then don't complain," said the baby, sweetly, and the gingerbread man looked at his feet with a puzzled expression, and then back into the child's smiling face, and sighed. (Continued next week.)



"The door in the body of the bird opened."