

BESSIE BUSYBODY TAKES A MOUNTAIN CLIMB



WELL, SIR, DO YOU KNOW I've tried five times to climb the Big Thunderhead mountain, you can see it from our house, but I never got anywhere near the top until this time. It took me more'n half a day, and I tell you I was plum tuckered out. When I reached the very highest peak I saw away off in the dim distance a beautiful white Shining Mountain.



THE MINUTE I SET eyes on it I felt drawn towards it and I couldn't keep my feet on the rock. First thing I knew some strange force slid me from the peak where I was standing, right through the air in the direction of the Shining Mountain. I didn't fall and I didn't rise, but saw the earth slipping under me, as I sailed straight ahead.



AS I GOT NEARER the mountain got shiver and shiver, and finally I shot right down toward a mysterious castle. And out in front stood a funny looking man who held a horseshoe magnet out toward me. I fell right into his arms. "Aha!" said he, "you're just the girl I want to scrub up my floors. Come with me!"



THEN HE TOOK ME INTO what he called his "laboratory" and made me scrub and scrub and scrub, until my poor back was ready to bust. As I worked away he told me that he was the great Electrical Magician of the Lodestone Isle, and explained how he had drawn me to his island with the Magic Magnet. It would draw toward it or repel from it anything the professor wished.



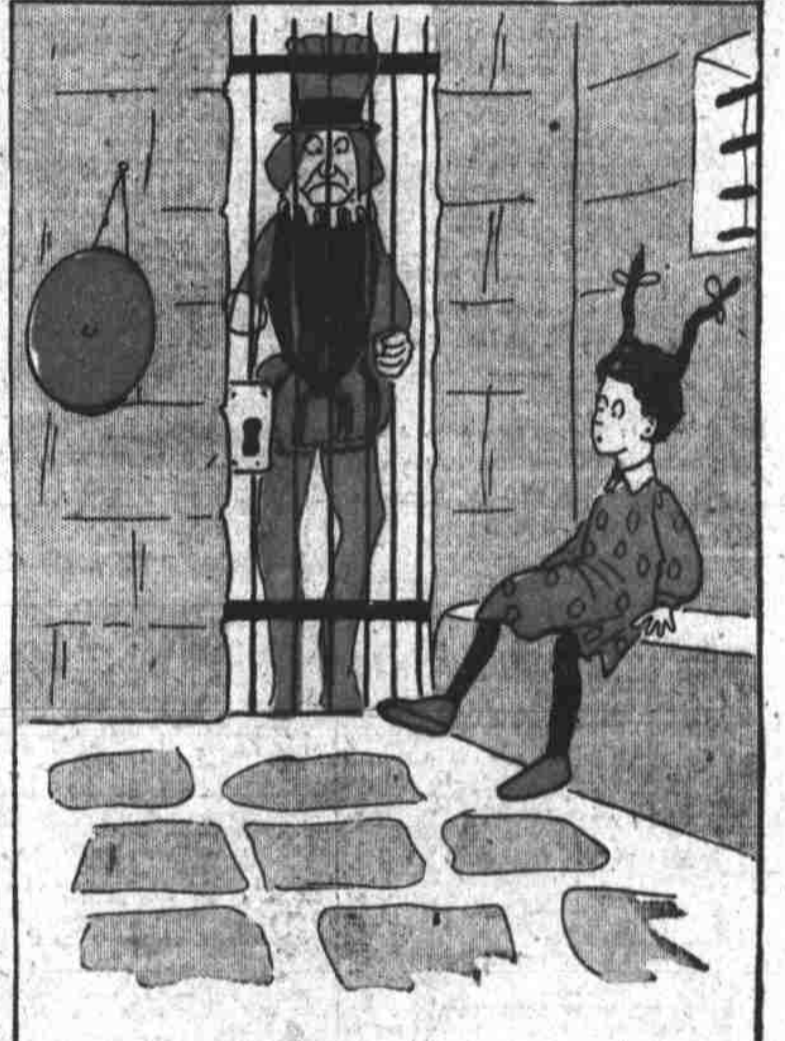
"OR IF I WANT TO move myself from one part of the world to another all I do is hold it in the direction I want to go, and it will keep drawing me toward it until I have done my journey." Then when he went out I got hold of the Magic Magnet to see what it looked like. Just as I picked it up I heard that terrible Electric Magician coming back, and I was awfully scared. "I wish I was out of here!" I said, as I thought of what a terrible prison I was in.



AS I SAID IT the Magic Magnet drew me toward it. Then I remembered the Wiz had said he held it toward the place he wanted to go, so I pointed it at a high open window. The Wiz was wild and shouted for me to come back, but the Magnet just drew me up and out of the window slick as you please.



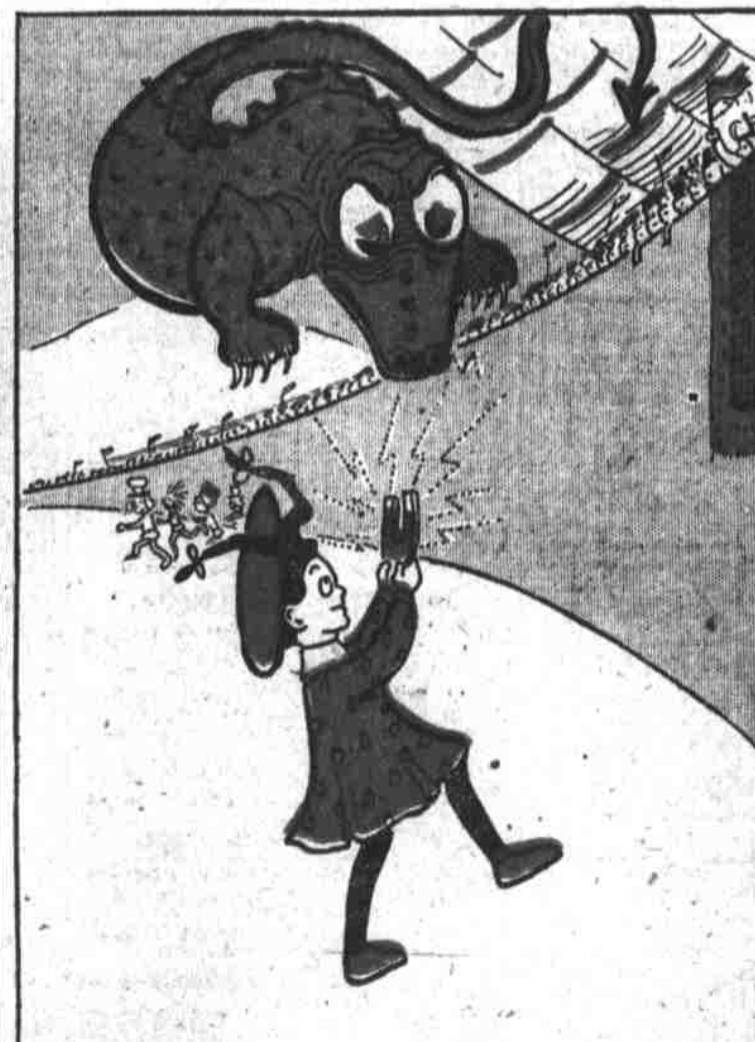
I WAS SKEERED something awful when I found myself so high up in the air, but I hung tight to the wonderful magnet and pointed it toward some distant land that just showed above the horizon. Maybe I wasn't glad to get safe on earth again! I just skipped along the road in that strange country toward a dandy big castle. First thing I knew a funny looking feller with a big spear pops out and grabs me.



THEN I WAS TUMBLED into a dungeon in the big castle, and told that I would have to stay there until the Ravenous Rinkydinks got hungry again. He explained that every stranger found within the bounds of the kingdom was fed to this terrible monster, on feast days. It was a long time before I saw daylight again.



WHEN AT LAST THEY came for me it was only to take me to a place a million times more terrible. It was a big arena just like Nero, the old Roman Fiddler, used to have where he made bonfires of the Christians. There were thousands of people yelling and waving flags. "O, say! A football game was nothing to this. A whole bunch of us poor prisoners were lined up, and then in thundered the monster Ravenous Rinkydinks and started to swallow me whole.



I SHOOK LIKE A dice-box. I just knew I'd be all tumbled up in a minute, and I wished that Ravenous Rinkydinks was a mile in the air. Well, sir, I hadn't any more than wished it, and pointed that Magic Magnet at him, when he shot straight into the sky. Maybe that arena didn't jump up and holler! Then I saw I was safe, so I just wished him back again, and there he was. I played with him and chased all around the place, until poor "Rinky" could scarcely wobble.



BY THIS TIME THE MOB was scared, and thought I was some kind of a witch, I suppose. "Burn her! Burn her!" they screamed frantically, so I thought I'd get even. First I wished all the prisoners home in their own lands, and they all vanished when I turned on the Magic. Then I wished the king down in front of me and the Rinkydinks, the Ravenous. This frightened everybody something awful.



THEN I WISHED THE KING on the Rinkydinks' back, and sent the two of 'em prancing around the arena. The people, when they saw their king in such a plight, were terror-stricken, and the services broke up in a wild-eyed panic. So I let the king go home in peace, sent the Rinkydinks to the bottom of the sea, and then I wished myself home again. The way I shot up into the air and off over the sea was a caution! — Bessie Busybody