



**AWAY
WITH THE
CIRCUS**

Winifred W. Wise



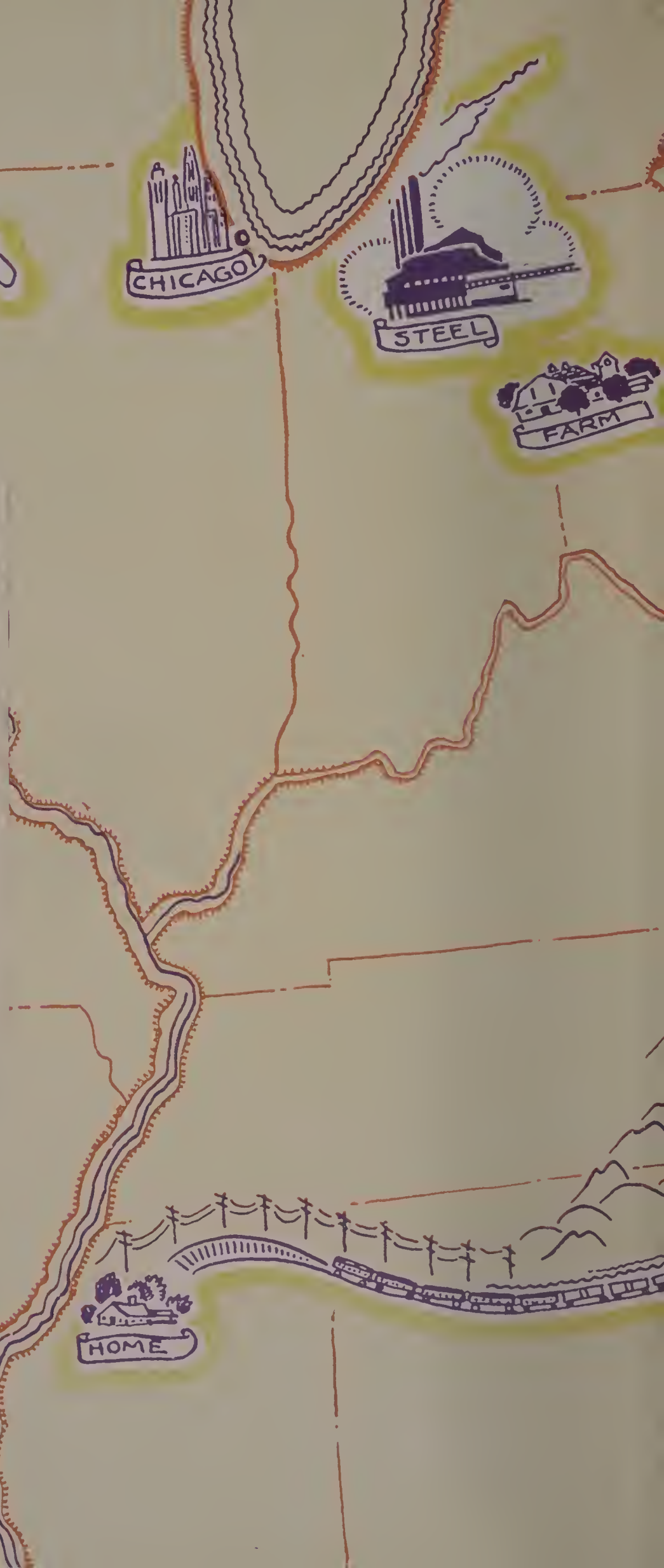
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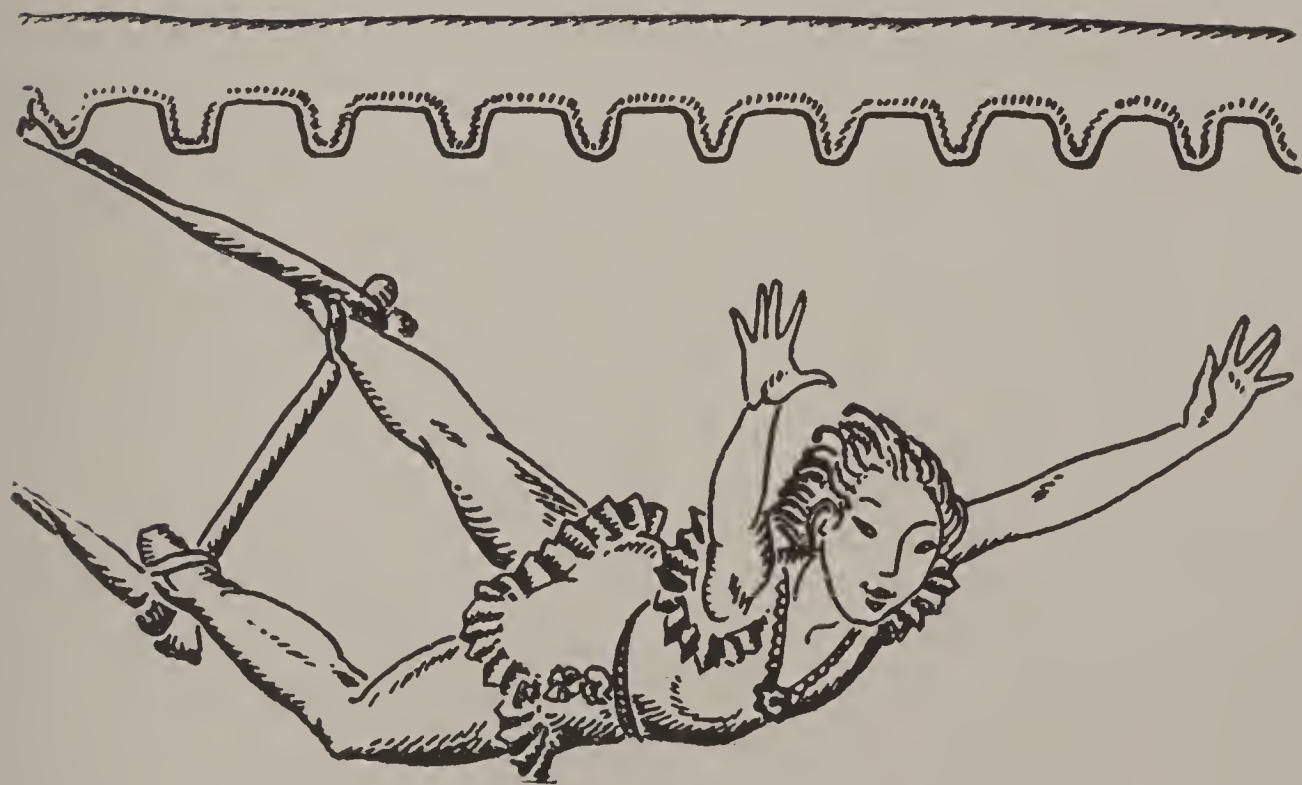
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AWAY WITH THE
CIRCUS





Away with the Circus

BY
WINIFRED W. WISE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
EMMA BROCK

JUNIOR PRESS BOOKS
ALBERT WHITMAN
& CO
CHICAGO

1936

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*Published in cooperation with the
Julius Rosenwald Fund*



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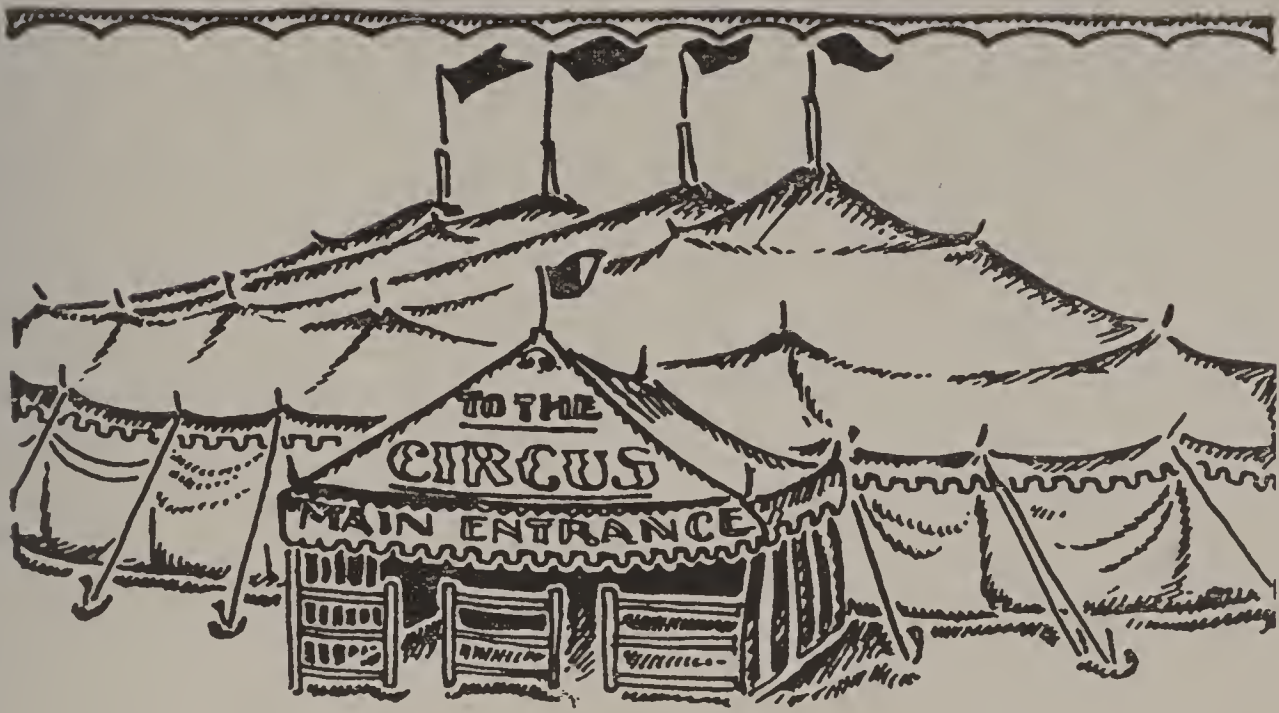
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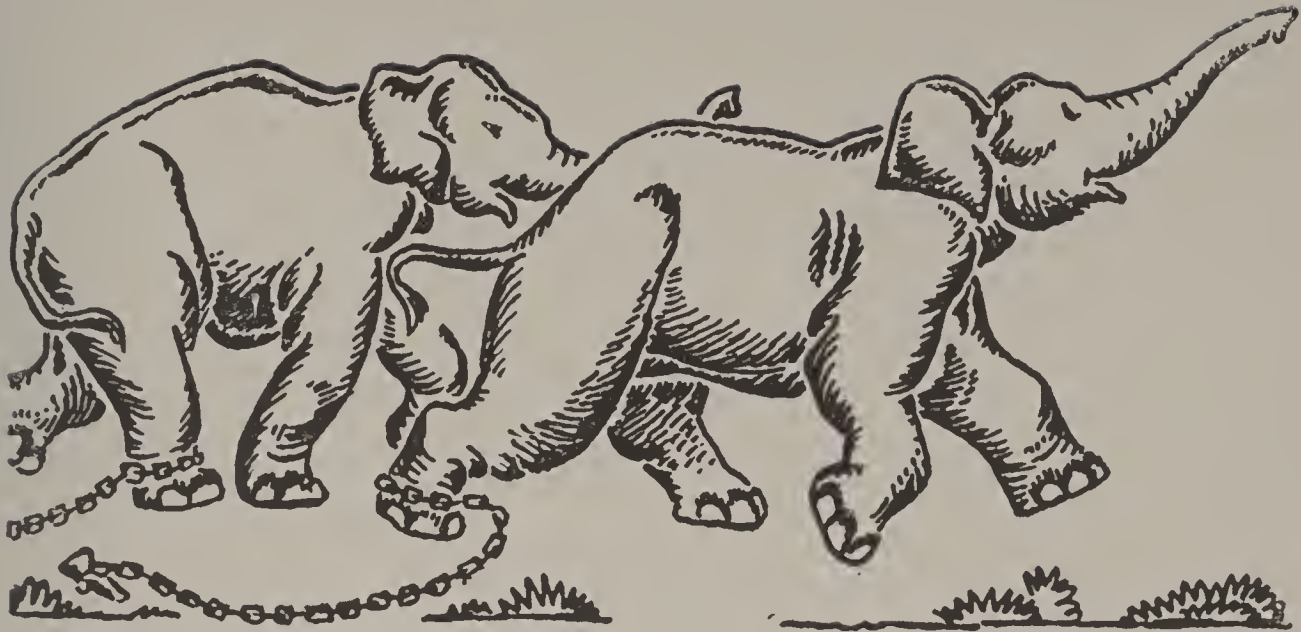
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JERRY AND JULIE LOOK DOWN THE TRACKS





I

JERRY and Julie lived with their grandmother and their dog Sassafra in a little house a few miles from town. Jerry was young, strong, and full of life. His sister Julie was sixteen, a year younger than Jerry. She was pretty as a honey-suckle blossom.

Their house stood near the railroad tracks which ran out into the world in two silver bands. When the engine came down the tracks with its long tail of cars, the engineer always waved at Julie, and she waved back.

Jerry said, "I wish I could go along with him and see what it's like where I've never been. I want to see all the people, and the cities and the boats out there."

"You stop dreaming and cut that wood, Jeremiah," scolded his grandmother, who was very old and very wise.

So Jerry went to work chopping the wood and piling the sticks in neat little rows. But he couldn't help wondering what it was like at the end of the train tracks. Suddenly he stopped, and leaned on his axe handle, and stared down the train tracks.

“Julie,” he said, “what do you suppose it’s like out there?”

Now Julie knew perfectly what her brother meant by his question because the very same thought was in her mind. It was that very question which always sent her flying out of the house to watch the train roar by and then speed away out of sight. But today she was tired of wondering without ever being able to know, and that made her contrary. She did not turn politely to answer her brother, but stood staring off into the distance and said, “Out where?”

Jerry picked up his axe and swung it sharply into a stick of wood. The wood split in two.

“Out where!” he repeated impatiently. “Out in the world, of course.”

The train had passed out of sight now, so Julie turned away from the tracks and came over to Jerry.

She said, “I don’t know what it’s like out there any more’n you, Jerry. What do you guess it’s really like out there?”

Jerry thought for a minute. “Of course, we’ve read about it in books at school. There are great cities with tall buildings that reach into the sky. There are broad roads with autos and street cars racing along. They’ve even built street car tracks above the city and dug tun-

nels below for trains. Then there are telephones. Everyone in the city has a telephone.”

“Everyone?” Julie questioned.

“Well, most everyone,” Jerry said.

“We know what it’s like, in a way,” Julie said. “But we don’t really know.”

Jerry nodded. “Reading about it in books isn’t enough. It just makes you want to know more.”

“That’s so,” Julie agreed. “I guess there’s only one way to really know. And that’s to go see for ourselves. And it doesn’t look as if we’re ever going to be able to go.”

“Julie! Julie!” their grandmother called. “You come in now and wash the dishes.”

Julie went in. And Jerry went back to chopping his wood. When he had enough wood chopped and piled, he carried it into the house. Then he whistled for Sassafra and they went for the mail.

Jerry always went for the mail eagerly. Most of the time, though, he came back empty-handed. But today there was a letter. And Jerry knew from the writing that the letter came from Uncle Bill, Grandmother’s son, who had left home many long years ago. He ran home swiftly, with Sassafra barking happily at his heels.

“Grandmother, look! A letter from Uncle Bill!”

“Goodness! Goodness!” Grandmother said, and wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron. “I wonder where my glasses are.”

Julie and Jerry both helped their grandmother find her glasses. Then they sat down to listen, while she read aloud.

“It looks as if I won’t be able to see you this year,” Uncle Bill wrote.

“Tish, tish,” their grandmother shook her head.

For years, Uncle Bill had been promising to come to see them and he never got there. But at Christmas he always remembered to send a big box with presents for Grandmother and Jerry and Julie, so Grandmother forgave him.

“I had hoped to see you for sure this year,” their grandmother read on, “but when you travel with a circus, you can’t suit yourself—especially when you’re head elephant keeper.”

Grandmother stopped reading and said, “Well, I guess there’s something to that!”

Then she read on. “But this year it does seem a pity that I won’t be able to see you because I’m coming so close. I suppose Jerry’s a pretty big boy now, and Julie, too, must be almost grown up. I was thinking about

that the other day when I learned that the circus train would pass right through—”

“Mercy!” Grandmother said.

Jerry said, “Do you suppose we can see the animal cars?”

“I don’t see why he can’t stop, just for a minute,” Julie said.

“Ho-ho,” Jerry laughed. “Stop a whole circus train just so one man can see us!”

Julie felt foolish after that and kept very still. And their grandmother read on. “Now, if you lived in a larger town, we’d stop and put up our tents and Jerry and Julie could have the time of their lives.”

“A small town’s good enough for me,” their grandmother sniffed. “He can have all the cities he wants. I like to breathe clean, fresh air, and hear the birds sing when I get up in the morning.”

When their grandmother had finished reading the letter and put it away in the drawer with all the rest of Uncle Bill’s letters, Jerry and Julie sat on, thinking.

Grandmother said, “Why don’t you finish your work and get Melissa and George and go for a picnic? I’ll pack you a lunch.”

“But, Grandmother! We might miss seeing the circus train,” Jerry said.

Now their grandmother was very old and she had learned not to waste her time waiting for uncertain things.

She said, "Most likely it won't come for a day or two yet, and you'll just lose your whole afternoon."

Julie said, "But it might come!"

So their grandmother shrugged her shoulders and said, "Well, suit yourselves!"



THE CIRCUS TRAIN



II

WHEN the moon was full, Sassafras howled at it all night long or ran through the woods. Early the next morning he began to bark excitedly. Jerry jumped out of bed and across to the door. Sassafras was barking at a huge animal with a rough gray hide loose as an old suit of clothes. It was pulling up the sweet potato vines in the garden with its long trunk and feeding itself.

“Jumping catfish! It’s an elephant!” shouted Jerry. He put on his clothes and ran outside.

Just then a smiling red-faced man came along and stroked the elephant on the trunk. The giant animal followed him away like a faithful dog.

Jerry’s eyes opened still wider when he saw red, blue, and yellow cars on the railroad tracks. He read in big black letters: BROWN’S CIRCUS AND WILD ANIMAL SHOW. He had a whole circus right in his own back yard!

Soon the red-faced man came back and asked, “You’re Jeremiah Collins, aren’t you?”

“Y-yes,” Jerry said. “And you’re my Uncle Bill!”

The red-faced man laughed warmly. “*Your* Uncle Bill, eh?” he said. Then he laughed again.

“But Uncle Bill, I thought . . .” Jerry began.

Uncle Bill nodded. “You got my letter, then? Well, this just goes to prove that once in every lifetime, a miracle really happens. The circus train broke down right here in your back yard. And we’re stuck here for the rest of the day!”

“Whew!” Jerry whistled. “Can you imagine that!”

“And now, where’s your grandmother? I want to surprise her.”

Jerry led him to the house.

“Sh-sh,” Uncle Bill warned him.

Then he tiptoed into the house and stood behind the old woman, who was cooking breakfast. When she turned around and saw him, she nearly dropped the frying pan.

“Oh, Bill!” she cried. “It’s been so long, so long!” She shed tears of joy as he held her very tightly in his arms.

Her son could stay but a short time, for he had to get back to his work with the circus. He said that since they were stuck for at least a day, the big boss had decided to pitch the tents right where they were and give

people, who had never seen a real circus before, the treat of their lives.

“You don’t mean that we’re going to have a circus right here!” Jerry said.

“That’s what I mean,” Uncle Bill said. “And it’s the best thing we could possibly do, since we’re stopped. Gives the circus people something to do and lets the animals out of the cars for a while.”

“And gives me the chance to see you!” Grandmother said, and kissed Uncle Bill again before she let him go.

As he went out the door, he called back to Grandmother, “I’ll be here again tonight before we leave.”

Jerry followed him, and Uncle Bill laughed, “I never yet met a boy who didn’t want to work around a circus. Come along and give the men a hand.”

Jerry’s knees shook as he helped the men run the wagon cages of animals down from the flat cars to the ground. Sleepy lions yawned behind the iron bars of their cages, showing fierce white teeth and red mouths. Black bears walked up and down. A big tiger looked hungrily at Jerry as though he’d like to eat him for breakfast. Before the horses were hitched to the wagons, Jerry helped to rub them down. He also held the ropes when the men raised the big brown circus tents in a field.

Pretty girls with feathers in their hats rode by on snow-white horses. Cowboys chased Indians. Clowns painted broad, red smiles on their faces, and turned handsprings. Everybody was laughing and talking. Then drums beat, and a horn blew loud and clear.

“Hurry, Jerry! Put on these clothes and ride with us in the circus parade,” shouted Uncle Bill. “We’ve got to let people know we’re here so they’ll come to the circus.” He threw Jerry a tall white hat and a bright blue suit with gold buttons on it, and Jerry hurried into the gay clothes.

Jerry climbed to the top of a wagon and sat down with the band. Away they went at the head of the circus parade playing tum, tum, t-t-TUM, tum, t-t-tum, tum, TUM, tum. Jerry was up so high that a tree branch almost knocked him off the wagon. He held onto his tall hat and looked down at the crowds, who had heard the wonderful news of the circus and come running from all the country around. He had never before in his life seen so many people.

“Hi there, Jerry,” shouted somebody. “Hi, there! Hi!” People called and waved to him all along the streets of the town.

Jerry sat up straight and was proud as a judge. When they got back to the field, Uncle Bill handed him a dol-



Jerry was as proud as a judge

lar and three tickets to the circus. Jerry took off his white hat and blue suit, and ran towards Melissa's house. But, when he saw her at the front gate, he slowed down and walked as though he had just happened that way.

"Hello, Jerry," she called. "I saw you in the parade. You looked smart as a rooster."

"I've tickets for you and me to go to the circus this afternoon, 'Lissy."

"Oh, Jerry," she cried in delight. "I'll wear my new yellow dress."

The circus parade had awakened the town. Front doors in all the little houses up and down the streets were opening wide to let everyone out to the circus. Jerry, Melissa, and Julie hurried to find seats in the big circus tent. The band played a lively tune that made their feet dance. Already people sat row upon row—hundreds of people.

The elephants and camels marched in two by two, just as the animals went into the Ark. A beautiful queen sat on a gold throne with a king—their crowns sparkled with diamonds.

"Oh, she'll fall off!" cried Julie when she saw a girl in a full white skirt standing upon the back of a galloping horse.

Far above the crowds, a man walked along a wire

holding an umbrella to balance himself. Men and women leaped across from swing to swing high in the tent. When a trainer cracked her whip, a lion jumped through a ring of fire. Jerry, Melissa, and Julie were breathless.

Afterwards, Jerry met Uncle Bill. "Well, how did you and the girls like the show?" asked the man.

"It was great. I could look at it for a month of Sundays," answered Jerry. "Gee, I wish I had a job with the circus."

"I'd like to take you along. You're just the sort of boy I used to be. Well—" Uncle Bill thought for a few minutes. At last he said, "I can fix it up for you. We need another strong young fellow."

"You mean—you can get me a job with the circus?" Jerry couldn't believe what he heard.

"Surely do. Five dollars a week, and your meals and a place to sleep. Remember, though, it will be more hard work than fun."

"I'd rather have that job than jump over the moon," cried Jerry. "But—I'll have to ask my grandmother first."

He left the two girls and ran off to the little house. At first his grandmother said he couldn't go with Uncle Bill. Then she said, "Yes," and, "No," again, rocking faster and faster in her chair.

Jerry was far too big to cry, but he felt like doing it. Instead he went outside and sat down near the pump, thinking how wonderful it would be to go away with the circus. Then his grandmother put her old hand on his shoulder and said slowly, "You can go, Jeremiah, if they'll take Julie too. She'll see that you don't pick up bad ways. You two young birds are ready to fly out of the nest."

Julie came home just then, and Jerry told her the news. She was so excited that she ran faster than he did back to Uncle Bill. He asked her, "What can you do, Julia?"

"I can work hard," she answered quickly. "I can cook and sew and wash clothes. I'll be a big help to the circus people."

"All right," said her uncle. "You and Jerry be ready tonight when the train pulls out."

Jerry and Julie ran around the house like chickens. They didn't know where to begin to get ready. Julie started to mend her stockings and her calico dresses, but she stuck her finger with the needle. Jerry went outside and chopped more wood—he meant to leave a good supply for his grandmother.

"Come in, Jeremiah," she called. "I want to press your pants."

THE LUCK STONES



III

AFTER their grandmother had packed all their things in leather bags—even to Julie’s looking glass—she opened an old teapot. In it were two white stones wrapped in dried moss. One was marked with an “L,” and the other with a “J.” The letters were a part of each stone.

“What are those?” cried Jerry and Julie. “We never saw them before.”

“They are two stones from the throat of a strange fish,” began their grandmother. “My mother gave them to me. She had them a long, long time, almost before she could remember. One stone brings you good luck, and one brings you bad.”

Grandmother was very old and very wise, and she said, “You must have the bad luck with the good—like hot pepper in the stew. It makes the meat taste better. Put out your hand, Julia. And you too, Jeremiah.”

“I have the stone with the ‘L’,” cried Julie.

“I got the ‘J’,” said Jerry looking at it hard. “That’s the bad luck stone. I know it.”

“Yes, it is,” replied his grandmother. “It stands for ‘joker,’ a mean sort of bad luck that laughs at you.”

“Take it back, Granny. I don’t want it. Take it back.”

“No, Jerry, I won’t take it back. If you stay with Julie, her stone will bring good luck to you both. If you run away from her, bad luck will follow you. Remember what I have said.”

Uncle Bill was waiting for them. It was time to go. Jerry and Julie kissed their grandmother very hard.

“Oh, Granny, we’ll be so lonesome for you,” they cried. “What shall we bring you when we come back here?”

“Dear children,” she said with tears in her eyes. “Bring me a dress of purple silk. I’m going to live a long time yet, but I want to be buried in a dress of purple silk.”

Outside the house stood Melissa and George. Melissa cried, “I’ve brought you a red necktie to remember me by, Jerry.”

“Thanks, ’Lissy. I won’t forget *you*—ever. I’ll be back one of these days.”

George gave Julie a box of candy tied with a blue ribbon and said, “I guess I’ll never see another girl so pretty. I’ll be thinking about you most of the time.”

“Maybe I’ll be thinking about you, too,” whispered Julie into his ear.

“All aboard!” shouted Uncle Bill. He lifted Julie and her bag up the steps of the train. Jerry was following along when he heard a loud barking at his heels. It was *Sassafras*.

“Good-by, good old dog,” called Jerry. The train started to move away and he leaped upon the steps. “Good-by, *Sassafras*.”

“Women in this car,” said Uncle Bill. He opened the door for Julie and then he took Jerry away to the car for men.

Julie found herself in a car full of strangers. They were sitting two by two in green seats that faced each other. One woman was so fat that she looked like a big pillow with arms and legs sticking out of it. But she called to Julie in a friendly way, “Come sit beside me, girl.”

Julie made herself as small as possible and squeezed into the seat. She could scarcely breathe. Across from them sat a woman with one leg twisted around the other in an odd sort of way.

“Don’t mind her,” said the Fat Lady. “She’s the lady that ties herself in knots.”

“Oh,” said Julie. She looked at a tiny creature in a

woman's dress and hat. The tiny creature smiled and said in a high little voice,

"Hello. How are you going to like traveling with the circus?"

"Goodness," cried Julie. "I thought you were a baby."

"No, no. I'm older than you are, but I'll never get any bigger. I'm a midget."

The Fat Lady laughed and said to Julie, "Come along. Let's get ready for bed."

"Bed?" asked Julie. "I don't see any." Then she saw a man turning over the seats and making beds out of them. He reached up and pulled down what seemed to be the upper sides of the car. They were beds, too!

"Surely we have beds, only we call them berths on the train. Upper and lower berths," the Fat Lady explained. "People traveling on trains have to sleep like anyone else."

"Of course," answered Julie in a faint little voice. She had never been away from home before, and everything seemed so strange.

She climbed to an upper berth by a ladder and undressed behind a green curtain. Then she lay down, but did not go to sleep for a long time. She liked Uncle Bill and the other circus people, and she was excited

about all the wonderful things she would see. But she heard the train wheels carrying her miles away from her grandmother. Julie held her lucky stone tightly in her hand and cried a bit.

When she woke up, it was daylight, and the train had stopped. She dressed and went outside, where men were forking hay to the camels and elephants. The monkeys jumped about their cages and screamed. With their wrinkled hands and faces, they looked like funny little old men. Above the noise, Uncle Bill shouted, "Hurry along to the cook tent, Julie."

While she set the long tables in the tent, the cook's other helpers fried huge platters of bacon and eggs, and sliced enough bread to feed an army. Surely, nobody went hungry in the circus! The cook himself was putting dozens of apple pies in the oven, but he turned around and told Julie to pull up the flag.

"What flag?" she asked.

"Here, I'll show you." He raised a flag to the top pole of the tent. "There. That means EAT to circus people. See them come running!"

Jerry was one of the first to arrive. But Uncle Bill pointed back to a row of small horse-like animals striped black and white, and ordered, "Jerry, get those zebras out of the water buckets before their stripes run."

Jerry was obeying when all the men laughed. "Don't let Bill fool you. Those zebras get dizzy from looking at their own stripes, and they'd kick you out of the circus lot. A meaner animal than a zebra was never born."

Nearly every day the circus stopped in a different town. It did not often stay two days in one place. Almost every night, it packed up after the show and traveled on through the forests, the farms, and the mountains of the South and East. Often it left the wide countryside and reached large cities where the chimney stacks of the factories were as thick as trees in the forests.

In many cities there were cotton mills. Now every year Jerry and Julie had picked bags and bags of cotton in the hot sun. Jerry used to drive wagons full of cotton to the gins, where the brown seeds were pulled out. With the money they earned, Jerry and Julie used to buy cotton cloth for shirts and dresses. They knew a great deal about cotton, but they didn't know how it was made into cloth until Uncle Bill took them to visit a cotton mill.

Here they saw cotton beaten to a soft white down and combed smooth as a girl's hair. Then clever machines spun the cotton into fine yarn. Many of the people tending the machines were no older than Jerry or Julie. Big pots of dye colored the yarn blue and yellow and pink.

Then machines working much faster than men's fingers wove the yarn over and under, over and under, weaving yards of bright new cloth.

"My!" said Julie to Uncle Bill. "If you owned this cotton mill, I'd make you give me a pretty new dress every single day."

"Perhaps I would," laughed Uncle Bill. "Anyway, I'd be rich enough to do it."



HEART OF THE UNITED STATES



IV

BACK at home, Jerry and Julie had stood and looked out to where the blue sky met the green land, and wondered what the world was like.

Lying in the summer grass and staring up at the white clouds, they had dreamed of it, placing the things that they had read at school into their own hazy dreams. They had talked often. But now, traveling with the circus, they were seeing things more wonderful than they had dreamed of or read about. Sometimes they remembered the day when they had almost given up hope of ever seeing the world for themselves. That day seemed long ago now. Already they felt very much older and far more wise.

One day, they heard the Atlantic Ocean roaring into shore like an angry beast. But the next day the great ocean was peaceful, and fishing boats sailed out from harbor. Journeying inland, they saw a white dome rising in matchless splendor. It was the Capitol of the United States.

When the circus had pitched its tents just outside

Washington, the capital city, Uncle Bill said, "I want you to have a look around Washington. If you finish most of your work before ten o'clock tomorrow morning, I'll take you on a tour. We can do it if we're back at the circus before my elephant act in the afternoon."

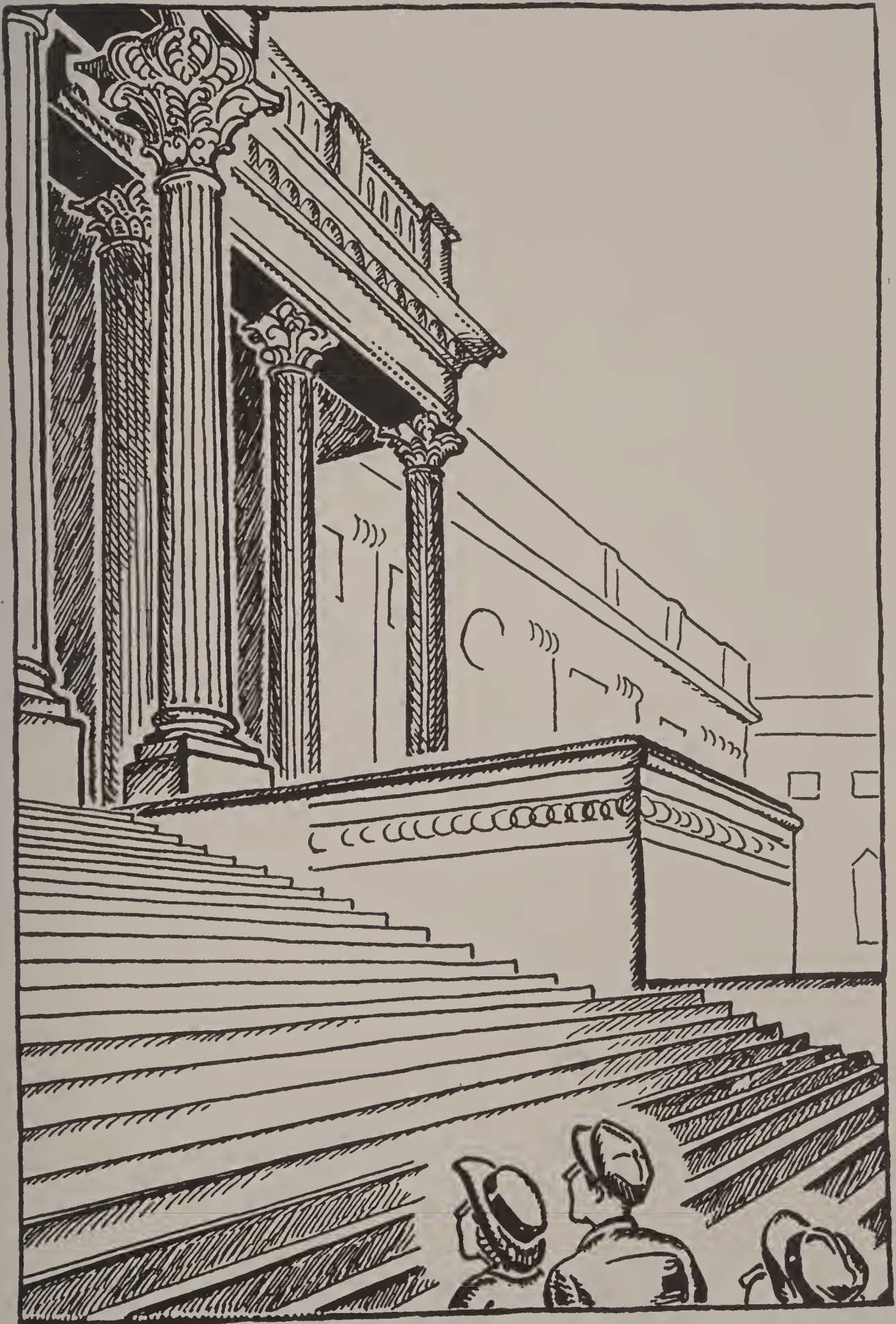
Uncle Bill treated Jerry and Julie as though they were his own boy and girl. They were very fond of him.

As they left the sight-seeing automobile, and walked up the great steps and between the huge white pillars of the Capitol, he told them that here was the very heart of the United States. He meant that here was the center of the whole country's government!

In one wing of the Capitol was the House of Representatives, or the lower house of Congress. In another wing was the Senate, or the upper house of Congress. In both houses, Julie and Jerry saw men jumping to their feet and trying to talk at once. They were not very friendly and seemed to be quarreling.

"Some of them want a certain bill to become a law, and others disagree," Uncle Bill explained. "It's just as though I wanted to make every boy in the country pay five cents every time he caught a fish.

"Suppose I were a Representative, and Jerry were too. Jerry would get up and say he thought my bill was not fair to the boys. But if enough members of Congress



They walked up the great steps

agreed with me, my fish bill would pass in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, and be sent up for the President to sign and make it a law.

“Then every boy in the country would have to pay five cents for every fish. Of course, laws deal with things far more important than boys’ fishing, but they are made in just this way.”

“Could Jerry *really* be a Representative and make laws?” asked Julie in surprise.

“Surely, when he’s old enough. So could you,” Uncle Bill answered. “You could even be Senators, or President of the United States!

“Think what a mix-up it would be if all the millions of people in this country came to Washington at once and tried to run the government! Instead the people choose men to represent them. Even a few women are chosen nowadays, although no woman has ever been President.

“When you are twenty-one, you will begin to vote. Then you, too, will have a voice in the government.”

They left the Capitol and walked down a street lined with splendid government buildings. One of these was America’s treasure house. In it were millions of dollars. Near it, they saw a beautiful white house set in lovely grounds.

“That’s the White House where the presidents of the United States have lived and worked for well over a hundred years,” said Uncle Bill. “Its stones were first painted white to cover up the smoke stains after the British burned it during the War of 1812. Since then it has always been painted white. So it is called the White House.”

“It looks so pretty!” cried Julie. “I think it’s just the place where a President ought to live.”

“The White House blazes with lights when the President and his wife have parties for many famous people,” Uncle Bill went on. “But the President also has visits from people such as you and me. On New Year’s Day he shakes hands with thousands.”

“My! I’d like to shake hands with the President,” Julie cried.

“Perhaps you will some day,” answered Uncle Bill. “Now, tell me who was the first President of the United States.”

“George Washington,” Jerry and Julie shouted together. “He was the father of his country. He was first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen.”

“What did George Washington do before he was President?”

“He ran a big plantation. Then he led the American armies against the British in the Revolutionary War. He helped to free the American colonies from the British and establish the United States.”

“Right,” Uncle Bill agreed. “Why didn’t the Americans like the British?”

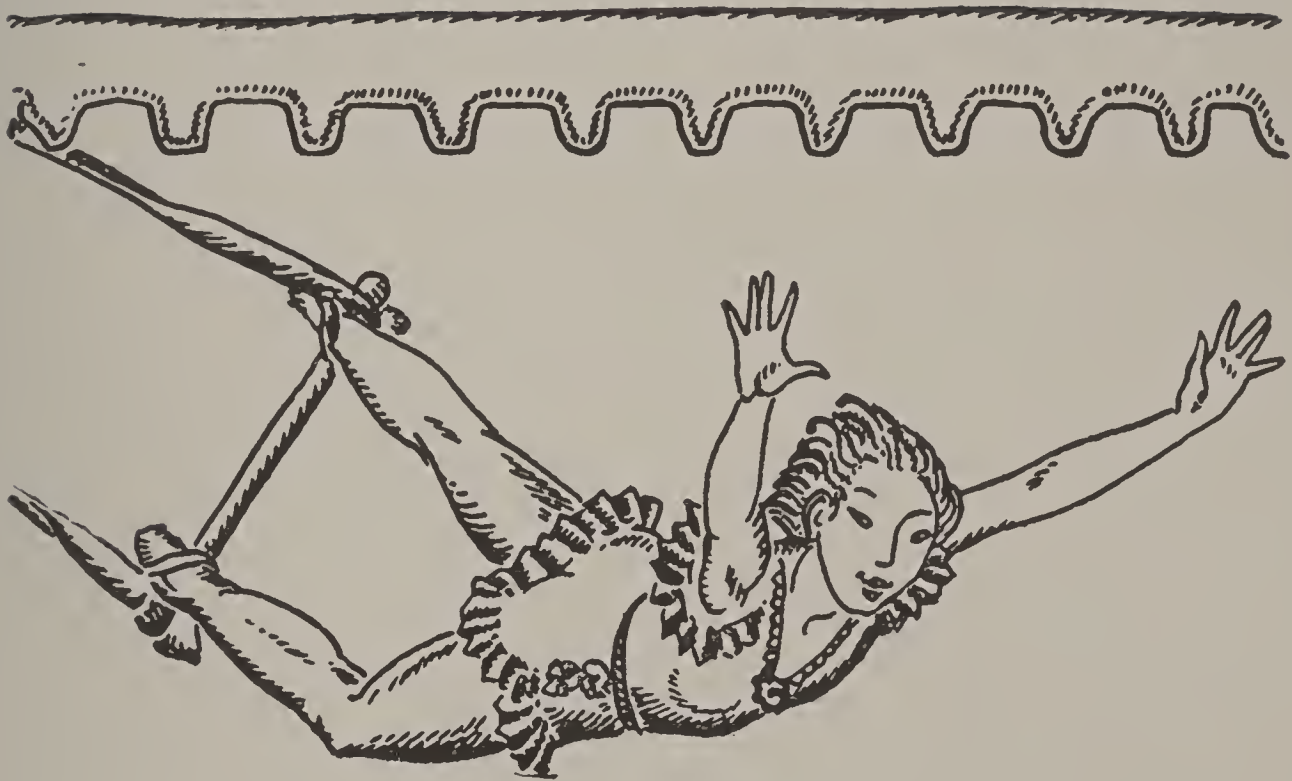
“Because they didn’t want a king ordering them around. The people wanted to be free to govern themselves and make their own laws,” cried Julie. “Why, that’s just what you were talking about up there in the Capitol.”

“Yes, it is,” Uncle Bill answered. “The American people believe that all men should be free and equal. You two seem to know a great deal about American history. I wish we had time to go on a short trip out to George Washington’s plantation, the very one you were talking about.”

“Oh, couldn’t we?” asked Julie.

Uncle Bill looked at his watch and answered, “No, we must start back to the circus grounds right away.”

CIRCUS LIFE



V

JULIE was sewing on buttons and darning stockings one Monday morning. The buttons went on a clown suit with a big hump in the back where the clown kept a baby pig during the show. The crowd always roared with laughter when he pulled it out, squealing.

The stockings Julie was darning were long and pink. They belonged to Florabel, who did daring tricks in mid-air from high swings called trapezes. For her act, Florabel wore the pink stockings and a tight pink suit covered with bright spangles. She and Julie were the same age, and were good friends. Florabel had been with the circus since she was born, for her mother and father were circus folk. There were many such families with the circus.

As she sewed, Julie watched over a baby asleep in a trunk near her. It belonged to the woman who trained the wild animals. Oscar, the chimpanzee, was chained near by. When Julie was not looking, this big man-like ape reached out a long arm and tickled the baby's feet.

Julie shooed him away, but he stole back and tipped over her sewing basket. The spools rolled everywhere. Julie was very angry, but Oscar ran to the end of his chain and climbed upon a cage out of reach.

Just then an ostrich stretched its long neck out of the bird pen and swallowed a thimble, a darning egg, and two spools of red thread. While Julie was trying to save the rest of her things, Oscar came and sat down. He tried to thread a needle, and screwed up his face in such a funny way that Julie burst out laughing. Oscar was a good deal like a human being. He often wore clothes and ate with a knife and fork.

Soon Oscar ran off to tease the hippopotamus named Baby. Baby was the best-natured animal in the circus, but she was also the ugliest. She looked something like a huge pig; indeed, she *was* a pig cousin from Africa. Sometimes Jerry played his banjo and sang a song about Baby that began:

“I’d surely make an awful fuss
Were I a hippopotamus.”

Julie was always careful to stay away from the lion and tiger cages. Though they were often as peaceful as big pussy-cats, one could never tell when they



The lions and tigers hated each other

would strike out as quick as lightning with their claws.

The lions and tigers hated each other, and growled fiercely when they did tricks together in the circus tent. Often death was at their trainer's very elbow! Her only weapons were a whip and a kitchen chair. The cats feared the chair because they could not bite all four legs at once.

Lion mothers and fathers were good parents and loved their cubs, but the tiger mates were quarrelsome. When a tigress had a cub, the father shook his cage with roars, wanting to kill it. Another jungle cat, the spotted leopard, was such a bad mother that it was a wonder her babies lived at all.

Jerry learned much about the animals as he worked about the circus. They all had to be kept clean to be healthy. Every few days the elephants were swept with brooms, and every week their toenails were cut and polished. Every morning Jerry rubbed down the horses until they shone like silk. The bareback rider scolded if she found a speck of dirt on her beautiful horse. She always dusted him with a white handkerchief to make sure he was clean.

Later on, Jerry helped to take care of the lions. He didn't like this job, for the lions raged when he cleaned out their cages with a long iron scraper. One day he

got too near the cage of the biggest lion, a true king of the jungle. Fiercely, the beast clawed Jerry's arm. Though the wound hurt badly, Jerry kept right on with his work. But Uncle Bill saw him and ordered, "Hurry along to the doctor, or you'll be sorry the rest of your life. You might lose your arm. There's poison in a cat scratch."

The doctor cleaned Jerry's arm and put medicines on it. "You got here just in time, boy," he said. "There's a bad swelling already. Never let a cut or a scratch go. The poison can run through you like fire."

Then Jerry took out the pocket book, in which he was saving his money to buy his grandmother the purple silk dress, and handed the doctor a bill. But the doctor said, "No." That was part of his job in the circus, just as it was part of Jerry's job to help take care of the animals.

Jerry was half sick for a week, hot and cold with fever. But he did his work every day just the same. Every day the doctor cleaned his wound with medicine and wrapped it in a clean white cloth. At last Jerry's arm was all right again. He was happy when Uncle Bill said, "You're the kind of fellow we want in the circus. You do your work the best you can no matter how you feel. And we want you too, Julie. You take

things as they come, the hard work along with the fun. That's the best kind of person to be all your life, let me tell you."



A GREAT CITY



VI

UNCLE BILL was really a very important man with the circus. He had one of the hardest jobs—making the herd of elephants behave. Few men could do this, for the elephants became excited at anything strange.

Uncle Bill did not try to make their work easy for Julie and Jerry, but he did get a day off for them now and then. He wished them to see as much as they could while they traveled. When the circus camped not far away from the wide, busy Hudson River, he said:

“The big boss says you can go over to New York City tomorrow. It’s a sight you’ll never forget, but don’t get lost. I’ll meet you over there at the ferry station in the afternoon.”

The next morning, Julie put on her best blue dress with the ruffles, and Jerry wore the red necktie Melissa had given him. Then they polished their shoes and took a ferry boat across the Hudson River. The sun shone on the proud strong beauty of the giant buildings called skyscrapers.

“I feel small as an ant,” cried Julie after they landed. They were walking along a street between the huge buildings. Jerry and Julie had heard and talked about such buildings, but they never had dreamed they were so big.

“So do I, but I suppose you get used to it if you live here,” answered Jerry. “I’d like to climb to the top of one of these skyscrapers.”

“Let’s try. We’d better take our lunch, though. It’ll be a long walk, and we’ll get hungry.”

They bought ham and bread and apples, and started up the stairs of the nearest building. Up and up they climbed, floor after floor. Julie’s legs ached. After stopping to eat their lunch, they went on. At last Julie sat down on the steps and cried:

“Jerry, I can’t move another inch. Seems to me we’ve gone miles already.”

“Oh, Julie, it can’t be much farther. Wait, I’ll ask this man.” Jerry ran up to a man standing in what looked like a small cage. “Sir, could you tell me how far it is to the top from here?”

“Thirty floors” he answered.

“Jumping catfish! Julie never can walk *that* far.”

“Walk?” The man laughed. “You don’t need to walk. Just take this elevator.”

Jerry and Julie stepped into the cage. The elevator man shut a door behind them and pulled a handle. They whizzed upward at breathless speed. Julie felt queer inside; her heart beat fast.

“Here you are,” said the elevator man, opening another door. “And don’t try to walk down. Just press this button here, and I’ll come back up after you.”

From behind a high wall, Jerry and Julie looked over the great city of New York. There seemed no end to it. Skyscrapers towered all around them. Airplanes roared overhead like great birds. Far below in the streets, the people were black dots. Automobiles and street cars looked like toys. So did the boats on the river.

“Gee, this is a big place!” Jerry whistled.

“You’re right,” answered a man who was enjoying the view. “It’s one of the two largest cities in the world—the other is London.”

“But where do people live? I don’t see any houses.”

“Not from here,” replied the man. “Farther out, to be sure, there are houses. But many, many people live one floor above the other in huge buildings close to their work. So many million people live on Manhattan Island and all around it that they can’t help piling up on top of each other!”

“Where do they raise their food?” Julie wanted to

know. "There's not a field or a garden in sight. Just miles of stone and brick."

"The whole country feeds New York," answered the man. "Trains bring in flour from Minnesota, meat from Chicago, vegetables and fruit from the South and West. You don't need to worry about that."

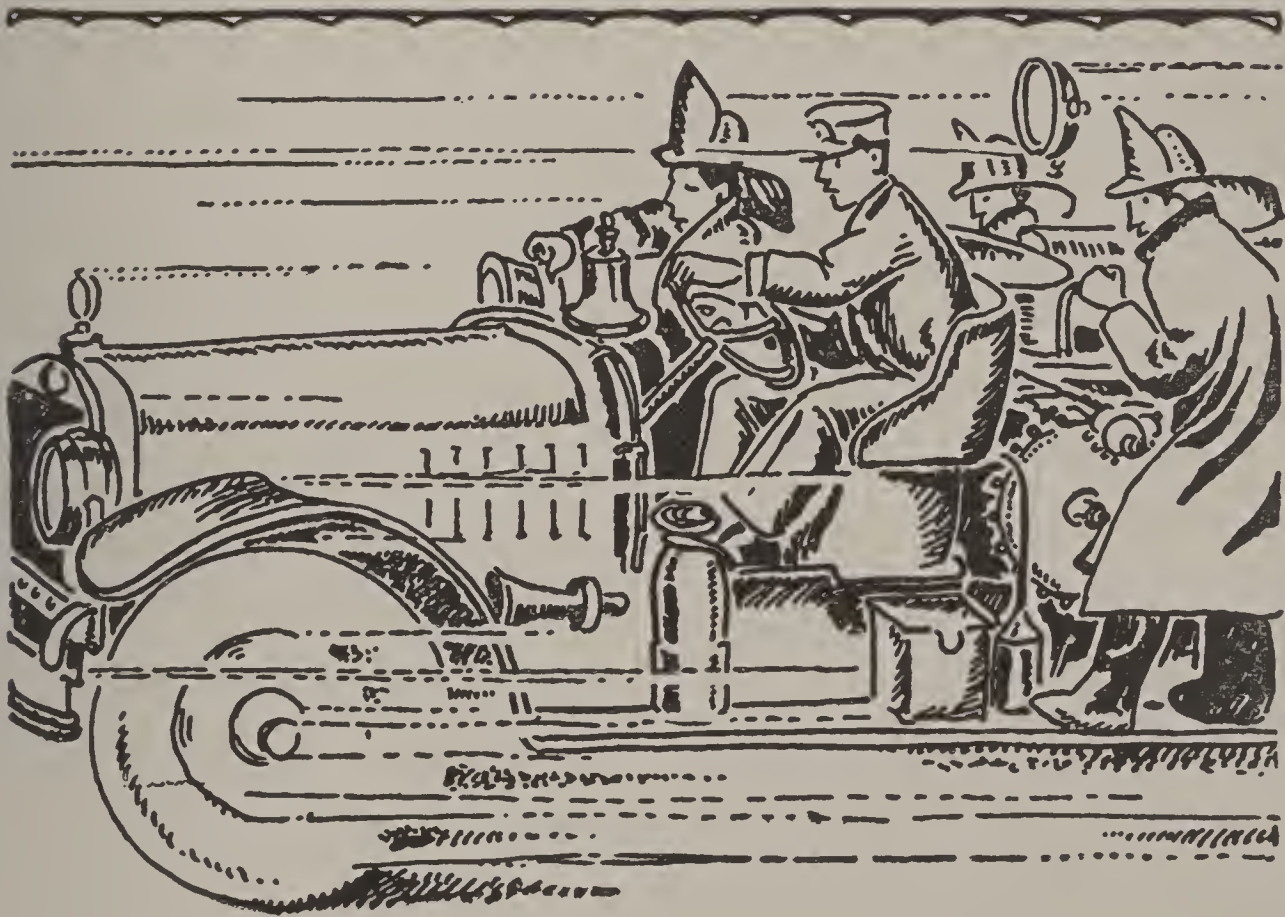
Before long it was time to meet Uncle Bill at the ferry station. They pressed the button for the elevator and whizzed down to the street. "Good-by," called the elevator man. "Don't lose your way."

"As though we would," Jerry said to Julie. "I saw how the streets run when we were up in the skyscraper. This is the way we came. No—this is."

They were lost! Crowds pushed them along the sidewalk. Everyone seemed to know where he was going but Jerry and Julie. They had left the skyscrapers behind, and now were walking along poor dirty streets alive with ragged children. The people were foreign and talked in a foreign tongue. It was all very strange, not at all like the America they knew.

Then Jerry and Julie saw black smoke pouring out a building, and frightened people running to the windows. Big red fire engines dashed up, with bells clanging and whistles blowing. The firemen raised long ladders and carried people safely down. Streams of

water shot into the flames. There was a smell of water on burned black wood, and the fire was put out before it could run from street to street.



JERRY IS A HERO



VII

THE fire excitement made Jerry and Julie forget that they were lost. But when it was over, they were glad to tell their troubles to a friendly Irish policeman. He told them to take the subway back to the ferry station.

“Subway? What’s that?” Jerry wanted to know.

“You’ll see.” The policeman led them underground down a stairway, showing them where to deposit their fares. Jerry and Julie boarded a train that came thundering toward them through a long tunnel, and then sped away. Julie was afraid to be traveling so fast underground. She thought perhaps they would hit the bottom of a skyscraper. On and on sped the train. Jerry and Julie were so bewildered that they did not get off at the ferry station. Now the tunnel was dark with only a few lights here and there.

“Where are we?” Jerry asked the man sitting next to him.

“Under the river,” came the answer.

Under the Hudson River? Every minute Jerry and

Julie expected to hear the water rushing down on them. When the train stopped and most of the people got out, Jerry and Julie followed in fear and haste. They didn't choose to be left alone under the river.

They climbed a stairway. Much to their surprise, they came out on a street. They were on the other side of the river—back in New Jersey again!

Not far away was the ferry station where they had taken the boat that very morning. Soon they were traveling back across the river—on top of it, not under it, this time. From the deck of the ferry boat they saw a great ocean-going ship coming in, a queen of the sea that towered over them. It was a wonderful sight. Jerry and Julie knew they would not forget it soon.

When they reached New York, they found Uncle Bill at the ferry station. He had been waiting two hours and was very anxious, but the story of their adventures in the subway made him laugh.

With Uncle Bill for a guide, they now felt much more sure of themselves in the great city. He took them uptown where the store windows were full of beautiful things. There were diamonds and furs and lovely dresses and hats.

“Look at this dear little straw hat with the violets on it!” cried Julie. “I wish I could buy it.”



They saw a great ocean-going ship

“Why don’t you?” asked Uncle Bill.

“It must cost a lot of money.”

“We’ll find out.” They went into the store, leaving Jerry standing on the sidewalk watching the cars whiz past.

Julie looked so pretty in the hat that she knew she must have it. Luckily the price was not high. She felt proud paying for it with money she had earned herself. And she still had money left. She wore the new hat, and put the old one in a bag. When they came out of the store, they found that Jerry had just bought a mouth organ and was trying to play *Yankee Doodle* on it.

“My goodness! New York is fun!” cried Julie. “But it’s hard to hold onto your money when you see so many things you want to buy,” she added thoughtfully. “And I’ve got to save the rest of mine to help Jerry buy Grandmother’s dress.”

Soon they climbed a stairway and boarded a train which ran along a track high above the streets.

“Trains up in the air, and trains down underground! Remember the day that I told you! Now we can see for ourselves!” Jerry burst out.

Through second story windows Julie saw girls trimming hats and men busily sewing at machines.

“Those dresses you saw in the store windows were

made in places like this. So was your hat and this suit of mine. Nearly everybody in the country wears clothes sent out from New York," explained Uncle Bill.

After they left the train, they walked over to the Hudson River and took a boat. After a short trip, they landed on an island and stood beneath the wonderful figure of the Goddess of Liberty. She held the torch of Liberty high in her hand to show the world that America is the land of freedom. Many steps led up to her crowned head, but Julie and Jerry climbed them all and at last looked out through the eyes of the Goddess. They saw great ocean ships below them.

"Back here is Ellis Island," Uncle Bill pointed out. "I stopped there when I was just a small boy coming from the Old Country with your grandmother and grandfather. There were thousands of us—people from all over Europe. We were all sick from the sea, sick with thoughts of home. But we wanted to come to the Promised Land, and here we were."

"The Promised Land?" Jerry asked. "I never thought of America that way."

"That's because you were born here," Uncle Bill replied. "You don't know how lucky you are. Since its first years, America has been the Land of Promise to folk across the sea."

It was growing dark when they again boarded the boat. The lights of New York City twinkled like stars. Suddenly they heard a woman cry, "My baby! My baby! She's fallen overboard!"

Jerry was an excellent swimmer and without a thought for himself he dived quickly and swam to the child struggling in the water. He caught her dress just as a big boat cut toward them. Already they were lost in its black shadow. Surely they would drown! Julie held her lucky stone tightly and prayed.

Somehow the boat turned away with a ringing of alarm bells. Somehow the two were safe at last. Jerry was a hero, though he had not wanted to be. Why, anyone would save a baby!



A MILLION YEARS AGO



VIII

EVERY afternoon and evening the circus began with a grand parade around the tent. All the circus folk dressed up in gay clothes and joined the parade, so that it would look very long and important. Jerry wore an Uncle Sam suit and walked on stilts that made him eight feet tall. Julie rode proudly on a camel. She had a red feather skirt and a crown of red feathers, for she was supposed to be a princess. The camel moved from side to side as he walked—it was like being on a boat.

The rest of the day Julie helped the cook, mended clothes and sewed on spangles, and helped to nurse the sick animals. She always had plenty to do. Once she made a baby elephant hold its mouth wide open while Uncle Bill gave it medicine. When a monkey had a bad cold, she wrapped it in warm blankets.

One of the lion cubs was so small that he could not fight his brothers, so he did not get enough to eat. At last the lion trainer handed the poor little thing to Julie and said, "Here. You'll have to bring him up."

The cub looked like a big yellow kitten with his long whiskers and bright eyes. Julie named him Bingo and fed him milk from a baby's bottle. Soon he was round and fat. At night, he wouldn't stay in his box under her berth on the train. He slept in her arms, a soft warm ball of fur. If she moved her feet, he jumped at them.

One morning, when she woke up, her face was covered with bits of white. She saw Bingo chasing feathers all over the berth. He had scratched a hole in the pillow. Sometimes he climbed down from the berth and chewed at every shoe he could find. This made the circus people very angry in the morning.

Jerry scolded when Bingo jumped up and stuck his paw through a piece of paper. Jerry was writing down numbers, and now he had to start all over again. He was going to add up the miles he had traveled since he left home:

Home to Charlotte, North Carolina	650 miles
Charlotte to Norfolk, Virginia	280 miles
Norfolk to Washington	160 miles
Washington to New York City	210 miles
New York City to where the circus is in Pennsylvania	110 miles

The first time he added the numbers, he got 1390

miles for the answer. When he added again, he got 1410. Julie's answer was 1470, and Uncle Bill's was 1380.

Anyway, they were well over a thousand miles from home. It looked like a very short way on the map that hung on the wall of the dining tent. On the map the states looked no bigger than pieces of a patchwork quilt, Julie said. Arkansas was colored yellow, and North Carolina green; Virginia was pink, and New York State was purple.

"A patchwork quilt like the United States would have rivers running through it and lakes spotting it," said Uncle Bill. "The edge of the quilt would be very ragged, with Texas and Florida sticking out, and the shores all cut up with bays. The quilt would not be at all neat, for there would be lumps for the mountains and hollows for the valleys. It would be like an old quilt used for a long time. Like an old quilt spotted by the rain and faded by the sun. The land is as old as time and goes clear back to the beginning of things."

Uncle Bill went on, "Millions of years ago—long before men lived on the earth—giant ferns grew in hot swamps, and strange terrible monsters crawled out of the mud. Some ran on their hind legs and leaped with great bloodthirsty jaws upon other monsters as big as

railroad engines," he said. "Would you like to see one of these jungles from ages past?"

"Where?" cried Jerry and Julie.

"Down in a coal mine. We're right in the coal-mining country here in Pennsylvania," Uncle Bill answered.

"What does coal have to do with jungles?"

"You'll see."

Uncle Bill knew the head man at one of the mines. Very early the next morning they traveled far down into the earth in a cage like an elevator. Many feet down they stepped off into a well-lighted tunnel so low that they barely stood up straight in it. Coal was all around them, black and shiny, the same sort of coal they burned in the stove back home.

"Here is your jungle." Uncle Bill pointed at the coal. "Millions of years ago the giant ferns were buried under the mud at the bottom of great oceans. More and more mud piled on the strange jungle plants and pressed them harder and harder. At last they turned into coal.

"Here, I'll prove it to you." He looked carefully along the wall of coal. "See?"

There in the coal Jerry and Julie saw the print of a fern leaf millions of years old!



"Here is your jungle"

“What happened to the monsters?” Jerry wanted to know.

“They too slipped into the mud and were buried, along with even older creatures. Today we use what is left of them and the age-old plants. We call it oil.”

They saw miners cutting the coal away with a machine and loading the coal on a small train. The miners were black from the coal, and they were working hard. But they stopped to grin when Julie cried:

“Why, look at that canary bird! What’s he doing clear down here?”

“I’ll tell you, miss,” said one of the miners. “That bird is our danger signal. When he falls over, we try to get out of here double-quick. It’s a sign of poison gas.”

Just then they heard a roar and a crash far away in the mine. Julie jumped with fright.

“They’re blowing out another tunnel through the coal,” explained the miner. He spoke broken English, for he was a foreigner like most of the miners. “They’ll hold up the roof of that tunnel with posts like those you see here. Even so, the roofs sometimes cave in and trap us down here for days. We don’t have food or water. Some of us never get out alive.”

“I should think you’d be afraid to be a miner!” Julie cried.

“Well, somebody has to work the coal. And we need the money for our wives and children.”

On the way back to the circus grounds, Jerry and Julie played a sort of game. Julie started it by exclaiming, “Think how cold I’d be in winter if nobody mined coal!”

Jerry answered, “Yes. And nobody would have wood for houses if men didn’t cut down trees in the forests.”

Each tried to think faster than the other about what would happen if everyone didn’t do his work.

“The city people would starve if the farmers didn’t feed them.”

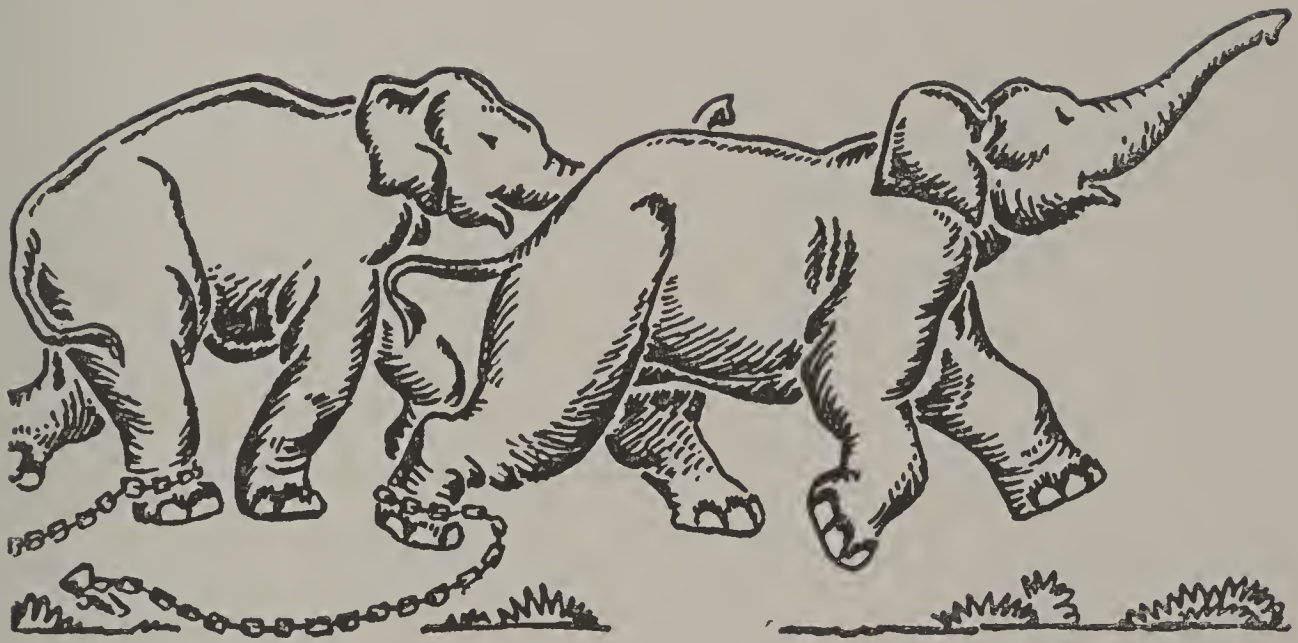
“And the farmers couldn’t buy farm machinery and clothes and automobiles from the cities.”

“If men didn’t run boats and trains, things couldn’t be carried from one end of the country to the other.”

“And if they didn’t pick cotton down South, the mills would have to stop running. There’d be no cotton cloth.”

Uncle Bill said, “You two are right. Everyone’s work is important. Nobody is so small that his job isn’t part of the big work that has to be done to keep everyone warm and fed and happy.”

RUNAWAY ELEPHANTS



IX

ONE night it was very quiet on the circus grounds. The circus was stopping for two days, and all the show people went to bed early for a good rest. Monkeys slept with their babies in their arms, camels stamped, and dreaming lions growled softly. The elephant keepers stretched out on piles of hay between the elephants. Outside the tent, the sky was bright with stars.

“It’s too quiet,” said Uncle Bill to Jerry. “I don’t like it. Don’t you see the elephants waving their trunks and looking around nervous as cats? That means a storm, or I miss my guess.”

About midnight, a clap of thunder woke them all, men and animals. Flashing forks of lightning streaked across the sky, and rain pounded down in a cloudburst.

“Get the elephants out,” shouted Uncle Bill, springing to his feet.

Before the men could obey, the elephants pulled up their stakes like so many toothpicks. Squealing with fear, they dashed around and around the animal tent.

Poles crashed, and cages tipped over. Then the maddened beasts tore through the side of the tent and escaped into the storm. Uncle Bill leaped on a horse and was after them. Jerry followed close behind, with the other circus men.

They found a trail of broken chicken coops and torn-up trees. In one place an elephant had crashed right through a small house, in the front door and out the back. The people popped their heads out of the windows in terror.

Then the storm stopped as suddenly as it had begun. By the time Uncle Bill and Jerry arrived in the main street of the town, they found the elephant Nancy sticking her trunk through the broken window of a store and eating bananas. Jo-Jo was feeding himself loaves of bread, while Mabel tossed up eggs and let them drop on her head. Amos squirted water from a fountain all over himself, and Harry blew into his own big flapping ears to show how happy he was.

When Nancy saw Uncle Bill, she knelt down and whined softly through her trunk. Nancy was the elephant queen and ruled all the other elephants. Now she seemed to say, "If you'll forgive us this time, we'll never run away again."

"Not until the next time you get scared," said Uncle

Bill under his breath. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, an old girl like you." But he knew it would do no good to punish her. "Get up, Nancy," he ordered.

As proudly as though nothing had happened, Nancy led the march back to the circus grounds. Here everything still was wild excitement. One of the lions had escaped when his cage tipped over. Even now he might be prowling through the town!

Men were out searching with lights and guns, fearful that he would spring at them from every shadow. Suddenly, ahead of them, they heard an angry roar.

"Don't shoot," cried the woman lion trainer. She walked slowly toward the lion, who was hiding in the tall, wet grass. He roared again. "Behave yourself, Rex. Stop growling at me. Do you hear? Stop growling."

She stood there talking to Rex until the men dropped a strong net over him. He fought and clawed, but soon he was back behind the bars of a cage.

"That lion wouldn't know what to do with himself if he did run wild," said one of the men. "He'd miss his meals. Always lived in a cage. Lucky we didn't have to shoot him, though. He's worth a thousand dollars."

"Gee, how much is an elephant worth?" asked Jerry.

“Oh, at least a couple of thousand. Thinking of starting a show of your own, son?”

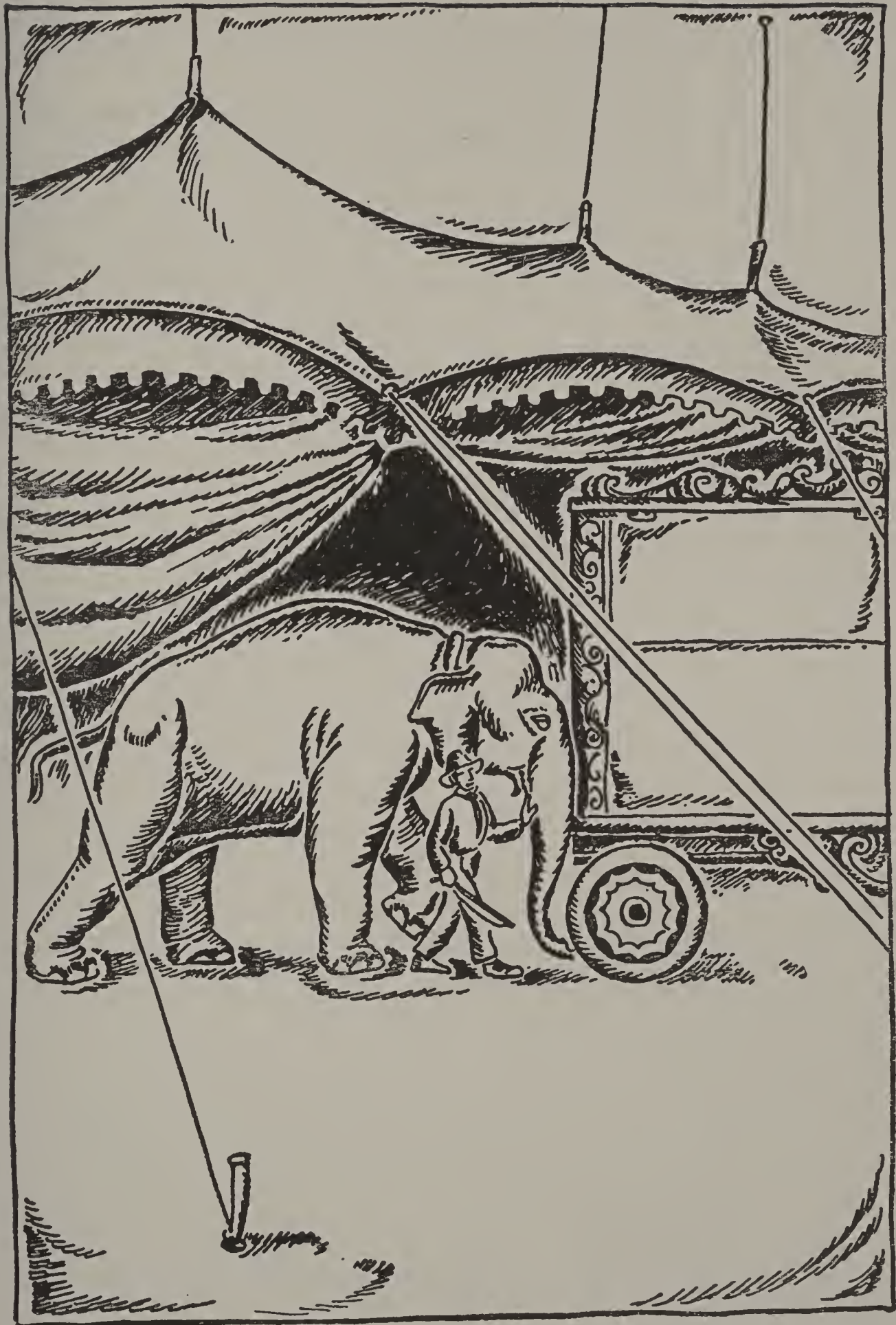
“N-no. Not for a while.”

The circus had to pay a great deal of money to cover the damage the elephants had caused. This was only the beginning of the circus folk's troubles. Every day now it rained. Everywhere they stopped the ground was deep in mud. When the wagons became stuck, the elephants had to push them out. Many of the elephants were lazy and only made believe they were working. If wise old Nancy caught one doing this, she hit him with her trunk and twisted his ear.

Acting in the big tent was not very pleasant either during the storms. The lions and tigers were nervous and clawed cruelly at their trainer. Julie's friend Florabel missed her hold on a high swing when the wind struck her. She fell into a net far below and was scared to death. But she climbed right up and tried again. All the circus folk knew that, whatever happened, “The show must go on!”

The worst of it was that very few people came to see the circus. They were afraid to sit in the tent while it was storming. Soon the circus ran short of money.

Meanwhile, the animals went right on eating. If they were not fed well, they would become cross and



The elephants had to push them out

dangerous. The big cats ate sides of beef, and the elephants fed themselves great mouthfuls of hay, besides many cabbages and loaves of bread. They stole food from each other, and begged for peanuts and ice cream.

The circus folk were not paid, and did not have much to eat. One night all they had was lard and bread and tea. Even the Fat Lady was beginning to lose weight, and the clowns forgot to be jolly. Julie was so cold and wet and hungry that she wished hard to be right back home again. Everyone was full of gloom. Suddenly Uncle Bill had an idea. He said:

“There are many farmers around here who raise a great deal of food but don’t have much money. Why can’t we trade circus tickets for food? The farmers would come to the circus even in the rain, or I miss my guess.”

“Good!” shouted the other men. “Even if your idea doesn’t work, it is surely worth trying.”

Soon the circus grounds were crowded with farmers trading bales of hay for blocks of tickets. They brought in eggs and meat and vegetables to trade for tickets. The circus folk and animals were sure of their meals once more.

GIANTS OF TODAY



X

AT last the rain stopped. Business was good again as the circus journeyed on through flat country between fields of wheat and corn, stopping only at cities. Nearly every farm had a big red barn and a tower beside it.

“That tower is a silo where the farmer stores up corn for cattle feed,” explained Uncle Bill. “This is a rich farming country now, but once it was a wilderness. The early settlers had to fight with the Indians.”

Many of the cities were black with factory smoke. At night Julie saw flames shooting into the sky from black shapes like fearful giants. These were the steel mills where iron was made into steel in fiery furnaces. Steel for ships, for railroads, for the skeletons of skyscrapers.

Now the railroad tracks ran close together with trains whistling past each other. Skyscrapers towered up ahead, and Jerry and Julie were in the great city of Chicago. The circus raised its tents in a beautiful park near Lake Michigan, a lake so big that it looked like

the ocean. Uncle Bill showed them on the map that it was one of the Great Lakes, a long busy water road east to west, west to east.

“Old Mother Nature made the Great Lakes as easily as you would dig holes in the sand. When Old Nature starts to do something, you can’t stop her any more than you can an elephant,” said Uncle Bill. “Many thousand years ago, ice piled up so high over the northern part of America that only the mountains stuck out. The ice carried rocks and dug with them. When the ice melted, it left many fish ponds behind it. The biggest of these were the Great Lakes.”

In Chicago, Jerry and Julie found three letters waiting for them—one from Melissa to Jerry, one from George to Julie, and one from their grandmother to both. The letters made them very lonesome.

“Why don’t you talk to all three of them?” asked Uncle Bill, seeing how gloomy Julie and Jerry looked.

“How?”

“Over the telephone.”

“Telephone?” cried Jerry. “I did that once—talked to Jacob’s store in town. But Grandmother is so far away. She couldn’t hear me.”

“Surely she could. People talk all over the United States that way. They even talk to people in Europe.”

“Really?” Jerry was surprised. “But Grandmother doesn’t have a telephone. Neither do Melissa or George.”

“Just send her a telegram telling the three of them to be at Jacob’s store at nine o’clock tonight. Then you can talk to them over the telephone.”

“How do you send a telegram?”

“I’ll show you. We must go to a telegraph office.”

The two walked away from the circus grounds and found a telegraph office. Jerry took a piece of paper and wrote down what he wanted to say. Then he handed the paper to a girl and paid her some money. He watched the paper closely, for he thought it would vanish in some strange way and fly down South to his grandmother. But the girl just looked at the paper and pressed down keys on a machine.

“What do I have to do next?” asked Jerry, still watching the paper.

“That’s all,” said Uncle Bill. “You’ve sent your telegram. They’ll be getting it in your home town right now.”

“How could they? The paper’s still here.”

Uncle Bill laughed. “The girl sent out your words over a wire by electricity. Electricity travels many miles along the wire in a single second.”

“Sounds like a fairy story,” cried Jerry. “Can you see electricity?”

“Sometimes. You saw plenty of it a couple of weeks ago during the storms. Remember all the lightning? That was electricity.”

At nine o'clock Jerry called Jacob's store and heard his grandmother, Melissa, and George talk as clearly as though they were right across a table in Chicago.

“Hello, Grandmother,” said Jerry. “How are you?”

“Fine, thank you, Jeremiah. Are you taking good care of Julia?”

“Sure. She's here waiting to talk to you.”

Their grandmother said she was glad they liked their jobs with the circus. George and Melissa hoped they would come home soon. It was almost like seeing the three, and Julie and Jerry were happy again. The telephone call cost a good deal of money, but it was so wonderful!

“Is electricity part of the telephone too?” Jerry asked Uncle Bill. He was anxious to know more about electricity.

“Oh, yes. It carries the sound of your voice in a special way. Electricity does many marvelous things. See those lights up in the ceiling?”

“Yes. They're the same kind they have in the stores



Julie talked to Grandmother

back home," said Julie. "Some of the houses have them too. You don't have to clean them like kerosene lamps, and they're so much brighter."

"Well, there's a twist of fine wire inside the glass of each light," Uncle Bill explained. "Electricity flows into the wire and gets it so hot that it gives out light. You know yourself how the end of a poker glows red when you stick it in a stove. Much the same thing happens in an electric light, only the wire gets hotter than red. It gets white-hot."

"Where does this electricity come from?" Jerry wanted to know.

"From great power houses. It is sent out over wires, and runs machines too. Great inventors like Thomas Edison made electricity the tool of man."

Julie thought a moment and then said, "When I was little, I used to read in fairy books about giants. They could walk hundreds of miles in one step and shout half way around the world. But I guess nowadays all of us are giants. We can travel swiftly on trains, and send our words far and wide with the telephone and telegraph. And I guess those old fairy tale giants would look small next to our skyscrapers. My goodness!"

JERRY RUNS AWAY



XI

ONE of Jerry's circus friends wanted him to stay in Chicago and work in the stockyards where thousands of animals were killed for meat. They'd have a gay time spending their money in the big city on Saturday nights, said the boy.

Jerry replied, "Julie would be angry if I left her."

"Just run away from her. Why not?" The other boy grinned. "Afraid of your sister?"

"No, I'm not. I'll stay in Chicago if I've a mind to."

But Jerry thought about the joker stone in his pocket. He remembered what his wise old grandmother had said. The stone would bring him bad luck if he ran away from Julie. Well, he'd just lose that old stone. Perhaps then he wouldn't have bad luck. He dropped the stone on the ground.

Next day Uncle Bill said, "I've found something of yours, Jerry. Here's that stone you always carry around."

Jerry lost the stone again, but the Fat Lady picked it up and gave it back to him. Again he tried to get rid of the stone, but the snake charmer found it.

Then Jerry's circus friend, whose name was Ralph, grew tired of waiting for Jerry. "What's the matter?" he asked. "Can't you make up your mind? We've only got a few more days in Chicago before we hit west."

Jerry knew that was true. Only yesterday Julie had come to remind him of that. She thought they should try to get a day off in Chicago to buy their grandmother her purple silk dress.

"Still afraid of your sister?" Ralph teased.

"Who's afraid?" Jerry wanted to know. "I'm ready to go when you are."

They agreed not to go out through the front entrance to the circus grounds because someone might see them. Instead, they would work their way around the tents to the back of the grounds and jump the fence that marked the end of the park. This was Ralph's idea, and Jerry was surprised to find that his friend had planned all so carefully. Jerry himself didn't quite like leaving this way.

But Ralph argued, "All right, suppose your sister sees you going out the regular way. How far'll you get?"

So Jerry went back to the tent where he slept and kept his clothes. He took out the wallet, in which he had been keeping the money he saved, and counted the bills—three fives were fifteen dollars and five ones made



That time he managed a footing

twenty in all. But part was to go toward buying his grandmother's purple silk dress. Some day he'd go home. Jerry separated two five-dollar bills. Then he remembered the stone. He couldn't lose it, so he might as well take it along. He wrapped it in the two five-dollar bills and placed them in the wallet and put the wallet in his pocket. That was money he wouldn't spend for himself. The rest of the money went into the purse in which he usually carried his change. That would buy him food and a place to sleep in Chicago until he found work.

He got to the end of the circus grounds before his friend, Ralph, so he waited. Soon Ralph came running up. He was breathless.

"Hurry!" Ralph said. "I just passed your sister and she called to me and wanted to know where you were. I didn't answer. Hurry! Give me a boost!"

Jerry shouldered his friend's weight and Ralph sprang over the fence. It was harder for Jerry, who had no one to help him. He jumped several times before he could get a footing. The third time he jumped, he thought he heard something drop, but that time he managed a footing.

"Well, don't take all day!" Ralph called from the other side.

Jerry did not look back, but instead scrambled to the top of the fence and dropped down to Ralph.

Uncle Bill had told Julie that she and Jerry might take the afternoon off, either that day or the next, and go into town to buy their grandmother's dress. That was why Julie was looking all over the circus grounds for her brother. She wanted to tell him. He was nowhere that he should have been, so she shouted at Ralph when she saw him rush by, "Have you seen Jerry?"

But Ralph ran on, without answering. At first, Julie thought that Ralph had not heard her. Then she began to run after him. She got to the end of the circus grounds just in time to see Jerry jump the third time and get a footing. She saw something drop. Then she watched Jerry scramble up and go over the fence.

It was such a surprise that Julie stood right where she was. Then she knew what was happening. Jerry was doing the very thing that their grandmother had warned him against. He was running away from the circus!

"Goodness!" Julie thought. "This is dreadful. I must do something right away. I must find Uncle Bill."

Had she lost her good-luck stone? She reached into her pocket. No, it was there, tied tight in the corner of her handkerchief. She breathed a sigh of relief. And

there on the ground, a few feet away, lay whatever it was that she had seen Jerry drop when he jumped. She walked over and picked up Jerry's wallet. Inside were the two five-dollar bills and the joker stone.

Julie laughed out loud and told herself, "He can't live without money, so he'll be back before long. The joker stone fooled him right at the start!"



JERRY'S NIGHT IN THE CITY



XII

JERRY fell when he jumped over the fence and it took him a minute to pick himself up.

“Hurry!” Ralph urged. “Let’s get away from here!”

Jerry was in no such hurry as Ralph. In a way he hated to leave the circus. He had made many friends among the circus people and animals. Even the sight of the brown circus tents with Lake Michigan’s fresh breezes swelling and flapping the canvas did something to Jerry. And then there was Uncle Bill! Jerry turned about and looked back.

“Always knew you were scared,” Ralph said.

“Who’s scared?” Jerry cried. “I’m not.” After that he didn’t look back.

They turned from blue Lake Michigan and walked west toward Chicago’s downtown—the Loop, Ralph called it. North and south for miles, as far north and as far south as Jerry could see, giant skyscrapers faced Lake Michigan. Jerry caught his breath. Nowhere, not even in New York, had he ever seen such a sight.

Surely, in a city like this, Jerry thought, a boy who was strong and willing to work could find work to do.

“Where are the stockyards?” he asked Ralph. “Shall we go there first and see if they can use us?”

“Plenty of time to look for work,” Ralph surprised Jerry. “I’m in no hurry. As long as I have a little money in my pocket I’m going to have some fun. How about it?”

Jerry did not agree with his friend. He thought they should try to find work first of all. But it was late in the afternoon. And now they were right in the heart of Chicago’s Loop. Signs everywhere called their attention first to one wonder and then to another. Jerry had been in New York, true enough, and seen something of a big city’s life and ways. But that had been different. Then he had been with Julie, and they were both doing what Uncle Bill had planned they should do. Now he was out in a great city with no one to depend upon but himself. Everything he saw seemed to invite him. He felt, all at once, that he owned the great city and that everything in it was his. Tomorrow morning, he decided, would be time enough to look for work.

“Suits me,” he told Ralph. “What’ll we do?”

Ralph had been in Chicago before and gone about

on his own. "How much money have you got?" he asked Jerry.

"Ten dollars," Jerry said. He did not mean to touch the money he was saving for his grandmother's dress.

"Is that all?" Ralph was disappointed.

"That's two weeks' pay," Jerry said proudly. "I figured I could live on that for a few days and by that time I'd have work."

Ralph thought for a minute. Then he said, "We might go out to Riverview Park. Yes, I guess that's our best bet."

"Suits me," Jerry agreed. He did not care to have Ralph know that he had no idea about where they were going.

They got on a street car that cut across the great city. Jerry soon saw that there were parts of Chicago very different from that first beautiful sight of tall skyscrapers facing Lake Michigan. Behind those tall buildings were factories and poor-looking small houses and brick houses, which Ralph called apartments and flats, and which spread seemingly without any end. Jerry remembered what his grandmother had said, "A small town's good enough for me. I like to breathe clean, fresh air and hear the birds sing when I wake in the morning."

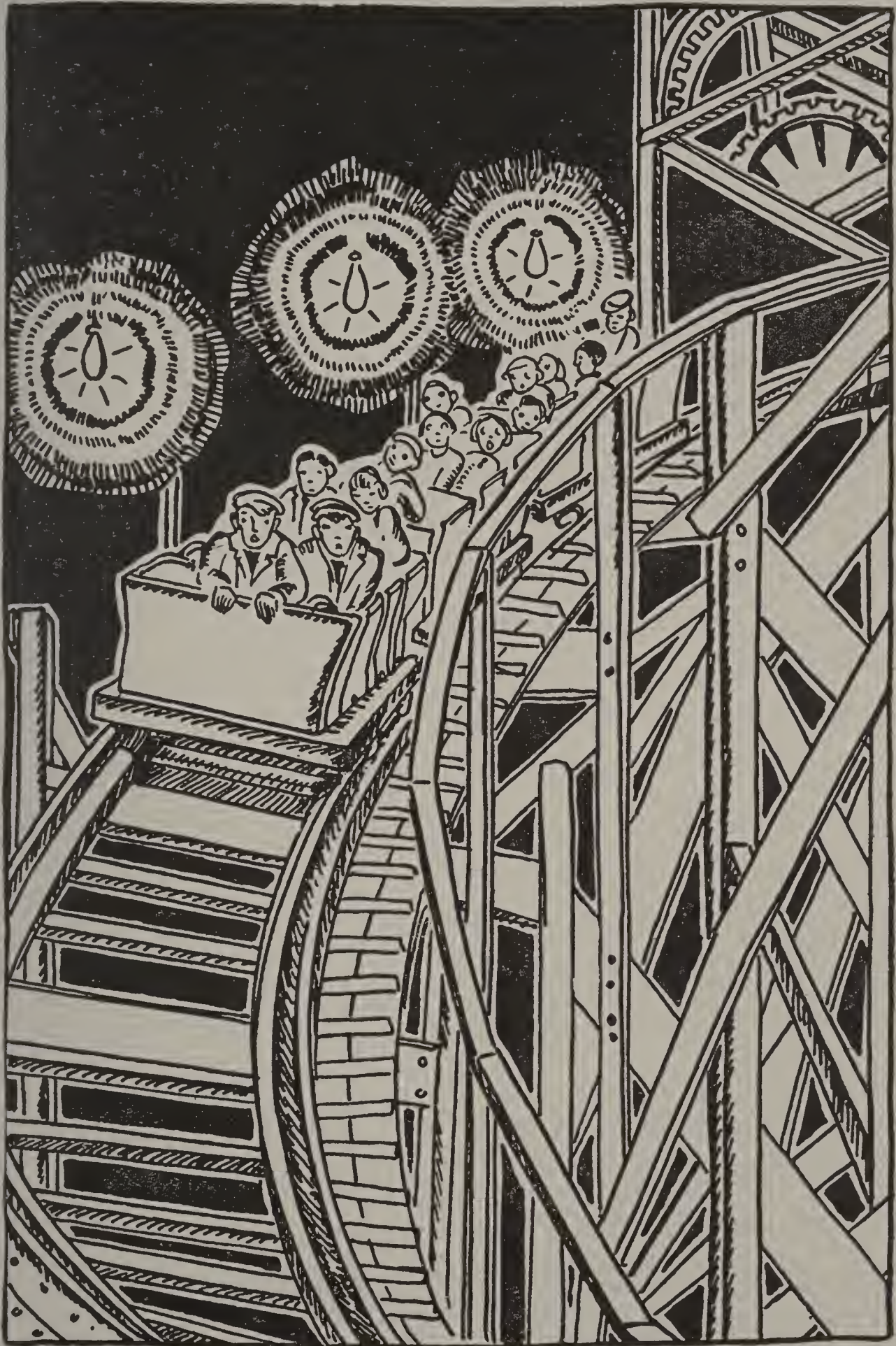
The street car twisted and turned and went on and on. Now they were passing through a still different part of the city. Here the houses and apartment buildings were larger and they looked newer. They had little squares of grass, too, in front.

At last the conductor shouted, "Riverview Amusement Park," and Jerry followed Ralph out of the street car.

Jerry had thought that there was no sight like brown circus tents spreading over circus grounds, especially once he knew all about the life that went on inside those tents and knew all the animals that lived there, too. But what he saw now took his breath away. Giant round things, with train tracks running around and around clear to their tops, cut into the sky. Already they were lighted with what looked to Jerry like millions and millions of electric lights. Then Jerry saw a tiny car climb to the very highest point on one of these tracks and suddenly drop. There was a scream.

Ralph laughed. "Roller coaster," he said. "Want to try one?"

Jerry watched the car spin around the downward circle. He felt dizzy just from watching. Then he saw a car on still another roller coaster climb to the top of its tracks and drop suddenly. Again he heard the



Jerry was sure he would fall out

scream. From the outside he could see other wonderful things, too, all lighted so that they looked unreal and magical.

“Shall we go in?” Ralph said.

“Sure,” Jerry said, and started to plunge through the gate.

“Tickets, please,” someone stopped him.

“Go ahead,” Ralph said.

Jerry pulled out a dollar bill.

“Buy mine, too,” Ralph told him. “I’ll pay you back later.”

Jerry and Ralph took many rides on the roller coasters. At first, when the car dropped suddenly or made a swift turn, Jerry was sure that he would fall out and he screamed in real fright. But soon he became used to it. After that he wasn’t afraid.

There were other things to do at Riverview Park. A giant wheel with seats along its rim, called a Ferris Wheel, lifted people high from the ground and swung them around and around. From the top of the wheel the whole park could be seen. Boats shot passengers down a steep slide into the water. There were games of chance to play, with tempting rewards to the winner.

Jerry and Ralph tried everything. They even entered the dark House of Mystery and sat inside for a minute

while a fat woman with long green ear rings told their fortunes. "Beware of someone you trust," she told Jerry. "He will deceive you!"

Jerry worried a little about the warning when he and Ralph were again outside the dark House of Mystery.

"Come on," Ralph urged him. "Let's try something else."

Jerry pulled out his coin purse. All his money was gone. At first it did not seem possible. He had had two whole weeks' pay. But there was his empty purse. He began to count back. There were the roller coaster rides, and the Ferris Wheel rides, and all the rest. And somehow Ralph had been unable to find his money just at the moment he needed it. He had kept saying, "I'll pay you back." So Jerry had paid for them both.

The empty purse frightened Jerry. He reached into the pocket where he had put his wallet just to make sure that he still had it. That, too, was gone. Somehow he had lost it.

"What are we waiting for?" Ralph asked just then.

"Ralph," Jerry said, "my money's all gone. I guess you'll have to pay me back now."

Ralph looked at Jerry in a new, hard way. "You mean you're broke!"

Jerry tried to laugh. "I guess that's right."

Ralph shrugged his shoulders. He said, "Well, that's your hard luck," and started off by himself.

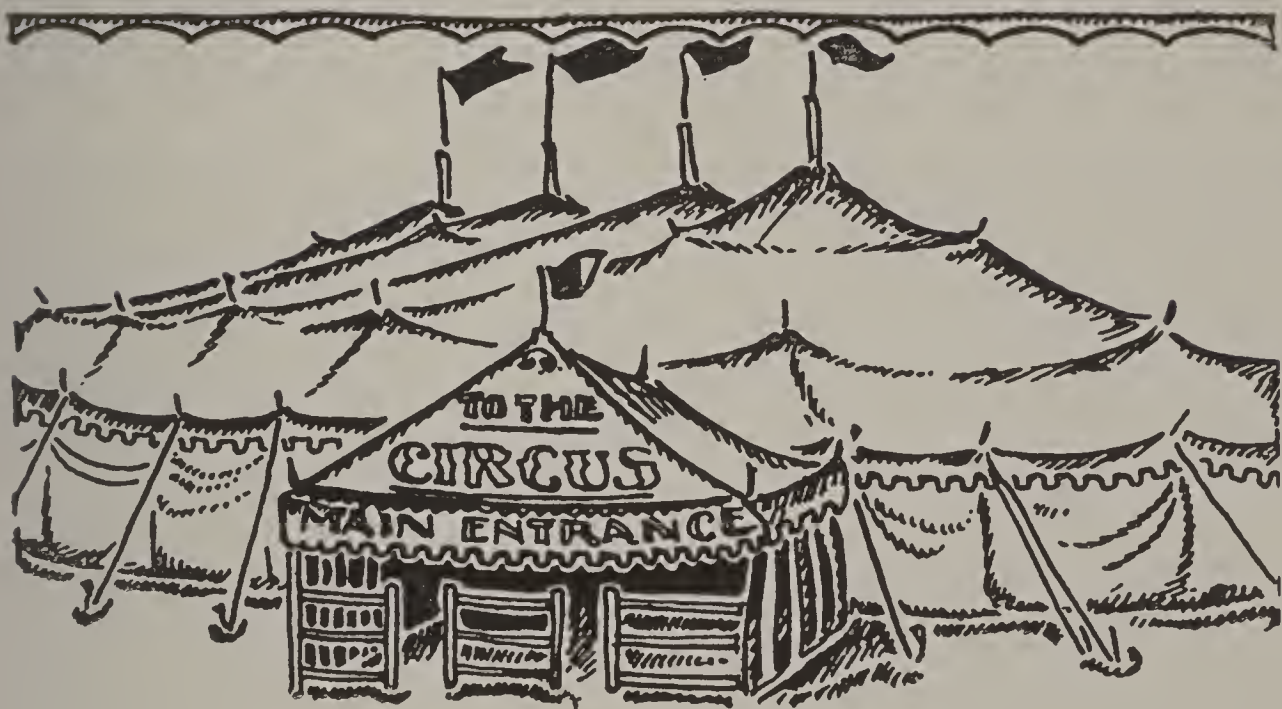
Jerry went after him and jerked him back by the arm. "What do you mean—my hard luck? What about me?"

"I don't know," Ralph said. "Go back to the circus. I can't. The big boss fired me today. That's why I was in such a hurry to get away." Then Ralph broke loose and disappeared in the crowd before Jerry could find him again.

Jerry stood very still and looked over Riverview Park. The brilliant lights still glittered from all around. But they were magic no longer. He felt tired, too, and hungry. And what was much worse, he was disappointed in Ralph. Ralph had pretended to be his friend, and he had fooled him, taken his money, and then left him when his money was all gone.

Now a terrible thought came to Jerry. He saw that Ralph had really treated him no worse than he, himself, had treated his kind Uncle Bill when he had run away from the circus. Hadn't he taken a job from his uncle and sneaked off without saying a word when it suited him to go? Jerry knew that somehow he had to get back to the circus. Uncle Bill must never know. He must never feel disappointed in him. Jerry began to walk back.

GRANDMOTHER'S DRESS



XIII

IT was daylight before Jerry again saw the brown circus tents standing up against blue Lake Michigan. He had never seen a more welcome sight.

But he was far too tired and weak to be happy. Half dead, he stumbled across the circus grounds and into the tent where he had always slept. There was his bunk, just as he'd left it. Jerry dropped into it and, almost before he could close his eyes, he fell asleep.

He dreamed that he was whirling through the sky in a roller coaster. Then the roller coaster made a sharp drop and a sudden curve. Jerry woke with a start. Everyone else was up and about his regular work. He remembered that today was the last day that the circus was stopping in Chicago. There would be much for him to do. His legs still pained from his all-night walk. Jerry groaned as he got up and stood on them. But he made up his mind that no matter how badly they hurt or how tired he felt, he would do his work just the same. No one else would have to do more than his share because he had run away.

Julie found him brushing the horses.

"Hello, Jerry," she said.

Jerry said, "Hello, Julie," and kept right on with his work. "Horses are certainly dirty today," Jerry added.

"Um-hum," Julie said. "I can see that they are." She waited a minute and then she said, "Don't you think we'd better go and get Grandmother's dress today? We won't be in a city as big as Chicago with so many dresses to choose from again, and Uncle Bill says we can take the afternoon off to go find just the right one."

"We'll be in other big towns," Jerry said. "Maybe they won't be as big as Chicago, but they'll be big enough." He was thinking that he'd have to start from scratch once again and save all his pay during the rest of their trip.

Then Julie stepped forward. "I found this yesterday, Jerry," she said and handed Jerry his wallet. "I guess you must have lost it."

Jerry took it. "Gee, Julie," he said, "thanks!" He waited a minute because he thought Julie would surely say something about where she had found it. Then when he saw that she wasn't going to, he added, "Well, if you think we can find just the right dress for Grandmother here in Chicago, maybe we'd better look today."

They found a purple silk dress in one of the big Loop stores. Julie declared it was just what their grandmother wanted.

“How do you know it will fit your grandmother?” asked the pretty young woman who had brought out the dress.

“Will it fit me?” Julie asked. “Because if it will fit me, it will fit my grandmother. We cut our dresses from the very same pattern size. Size fourteen.”

“This is a size fourteen,” the young woman said.

“Then we want it,” Julie told her. But after she had spoken, she hesitated. “How much is it?” she asked.

The dress was fifteen dollars and, with Jerry's ten dollars and Julie's nine, that was easy to manage. It left them money to spare. So they decided to buy presents for Melissa and George. Jerry tucked the box with his grandmother's dress under his arm and they started through the store.

Soon Jerry saw some stairs which seemed to move by themselves. People were standing on them, and the stairs were carrying them right up to the second floor. He and Julie decided to try them.

“That's right,” a man at the foot of the moving stairway encouraged them. “Use the escalators. Don't wait for elevators.”

Jerry and Julie jumped upon the first step. They were afraid that it would get away from them if they didn't. The stairs moved steadily up. Soon they were half way between the first and second floors. They looked down and saw the entire first floor.

"Do you suppose there's anything in the world that you couldn't buy here?" Julie said, looking down at the counters with all their different things.

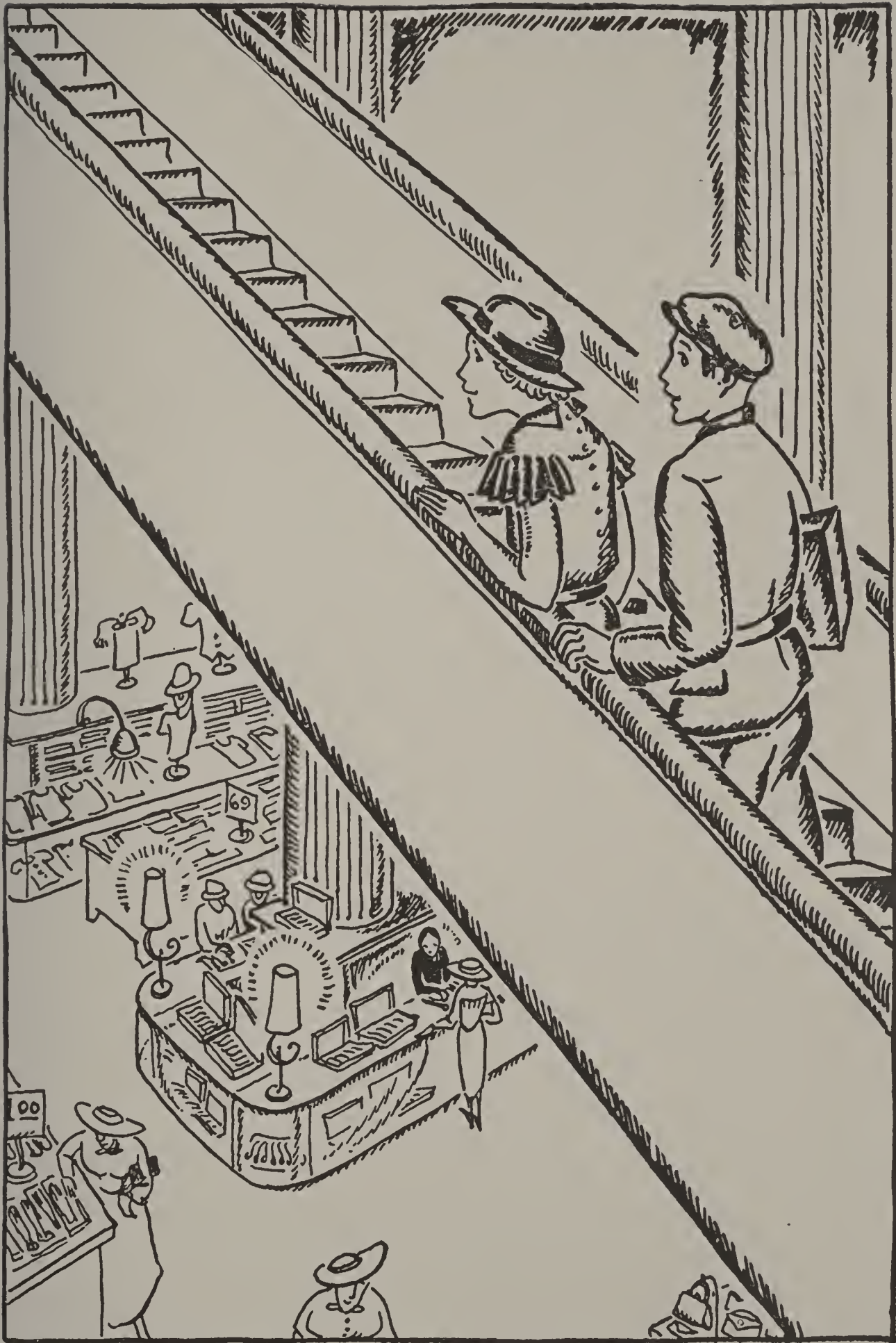
Jerry found plenty to interest him on the second floor. Here to one side was a great square space with a number of different things all run by electricity. They went over and asked a man who was standing there what they all were. The man showed them. There was an electric washing machine, and electric ironers, and even an electric dish-washing machine.

"Why, there won't be a thing left to do!" Julie exclaimed.

The man laughed and went right on showing them things. "Here's an electric toaster," he said. "You put your bread in right here. When it's toasted, it jumps out."

"How much does it cost?" Jerry asked fearfully, for he had only a few dollars left and he had made up his mind to get Melissa that toaster.

"Three dollars," the man said. "No, it's on sale today.



The stairs moved steadily up

It's only two dollars today, and it is a fine toaster."

Jerry said he would take it.

"But Jerry," Julie said, "Melissa doesn't have electricity in her house. She won't be able to use it."

"Don't you worry about that," Jerry said. "When I get home, I'm going to go to work learning all about electricity. I intend to help see that the people back there can use things like these, too. Why shouldn't they?"

They got on the moving stairway again and rode to the floor above. On this floor was a great space filled with tables and shelves of books.

"There must be thousands!" Julie exclaimed. "Do you suppose there's one that would tell George something about raising vegetables? He's always trying to make things in his garden grow better."

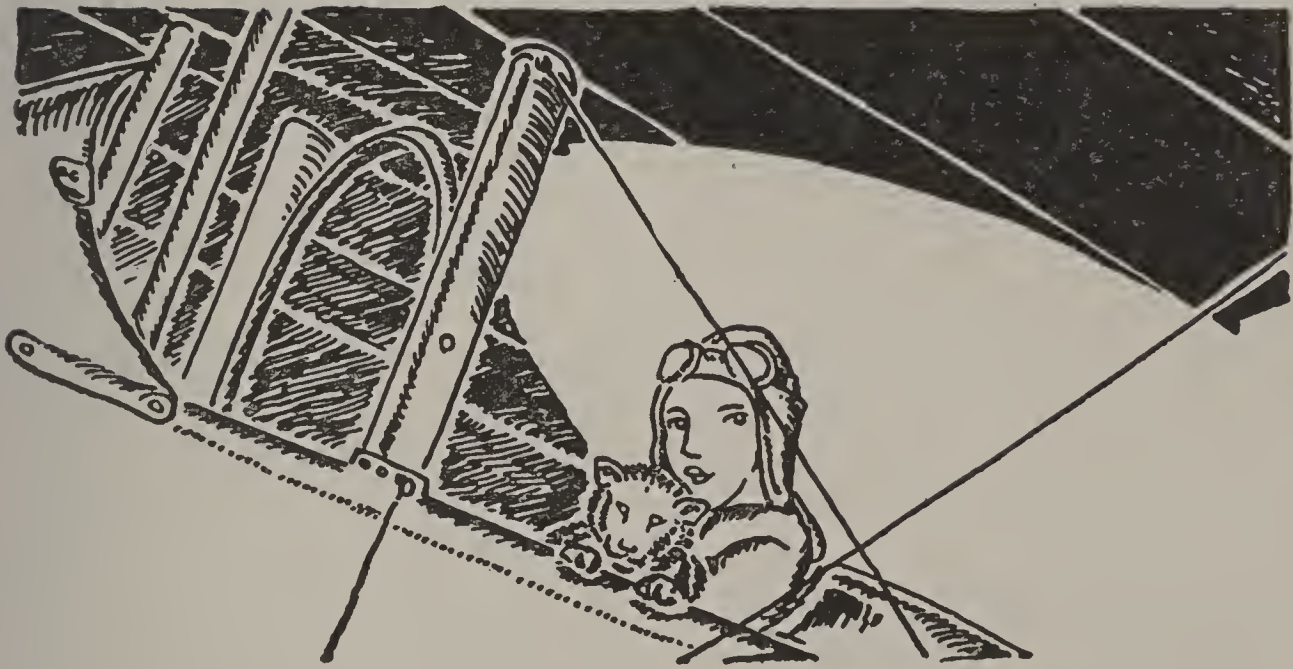
"But George doesn't read much," Jerry said.

"Never you mind," Julie said. "He would enjoy something like that."

There was such a book. A girl, scarcely older than Julie, found it at once from among all the others.

When the book was wrapped and paid for, Jerry and Julie decided they might as well go. There was still a great deal to see in the store, but it would take days and days to see all, and now their money was spent.

JULIE'S AIRPLANE RIDE



XIV

FROM Chicago the circus traveled westward. When they crossed the Mississippi River, Jerry and Julie told the other circus folk stories about the bad flood on the Mississippi down South a few years before.

“We saw people floating on housetops and holding to the highest branches of trees. Boats came along and rescued them,” said Jerry. “This all happened only a few miles from where we live.

“Our house was full of people, and others slept outside on the ground. My grandmother gave them all the clothes and food she could.”

“Yes,” added Julie. “That’s the spring we got our dog Sassafra. He lost his folks in the flood; so he came to live with us.”

One morning, when Julie was standing near the cook tent holding the lion cub in her arms, a surprising thing happened. An airplane landed on the ground and ran up close to her. Its wings and tail made it look like a great bird with wheels for feet. A friendly sort of man

jumped out of the airplane and came over to pat Bingo on the head.

“So that’s a lion cub, eh?” he asked. “Wonder what he’d do if I gave him a ride in my airplane. Want to try it, girl?”

Julie said that she would, so the aviator helped her up to a seat behind the wings of the airplane and gave her an odd leather hood like his own to wear. Then he cried, “We’re off!”

The engine roared and the airplane raced across the field. Then it rose swiftly over houses and trees. Bingo tried to jump out, but Julie held him tight. The wind whizzed past her head. She was terrified, but she tried not to show it. She remembered what the circus folk always said, “If you aren’t brave, act brave, and you *will* be brave.”

Already they were up so high that the city below looked like a toy village. The Mississippi twisted like a shining snake, and the wheat and corn fields were checks with little dots of trees. They went right through a cloud—it felt cold and wet.

“How high are we?” shouted Julie above the roar of the engine.

“Up a mile.”

When they passed a big red-and-silver airplane, Julie



They passed a big red-and-silver airplane

saw people looking out of the round windows in its side.

“They’ve flown from New York in only seven hours,” shouted the aviator. “That’s what you might call speed.”

He pointed the nose of the airplane downward. Now all the fields and houses seemed to be coming up to meet them. Julie was cold with fear, but they landed smoothly on the ground. Julie still felt the air rushing past her head. Before she could get out of her seat, a man rushed up to her carrying a moving picture camera. It was a queer-looking black thing that stood on long legs.

“Wait!” he cried. “I want to take a moving picture of you and the lion cub in the airplane. Now smile and talk. Tell me about the cub.” He pointed the camera at her. It made a whirring noise.

Julie began, “The lion’s name is Bingo. He is three months old, and I feed him milk from a baby’s bottle. He didn’t like the airplane ride a bit, but I thought it was very exciting.”

Bingo growled and scratched, but the man said, “That’s fine. You’ll see yourself in the movies next week.”

Julie was glad to see Uncle Bill in the crowd around the airplane. A first airplane ride, and having one’s

picture taken for the movies, made one feel the need of an uncle.

A week later Uncle Bill took Jerry and Julie to a movie theater which blazed with red and blue lights outside. Inside it was so dark that they stumbled in the aisles. The lighted screen at the front of the theater showed a king leaving his beautiful queen to go away to a war. It was a very thrilling play, but Julie cried in the sad parts.

After the play came pictures taken away up North in the land of snow and ice, away down South among the wild beasts of the jungles, and even under the sea. Then Julie appeared on the movie screen with Bingo. She saw herself smiling and heard herself talking, just as she really had! All this was possible because movie cameras have eyes and ears, and cleverly remember.



HOME AGAIN



XV

NOW the circus sped down to the land of cotton. It was heading toward its winter home, for fall had come. Wagons carried cotton to the gins and frost was in the air. The persimmons were red and the chinquapins were falling from their burrs.

Many of the circus folk were going to their own cottages and farms, but all the animals would stay in big barns all winter and learn new tricks. The wagons would be freshly painted red and gold. The circus girls would have new feathered skirts and sparkling crowns, and the clowns would have funnier suits than ever. In the spring, the circus would come out again and travel its long, long road.

“I’ll make a head elephant keeper out of you yet, Jerry,” said Uncle Bill. “You’ll come back with us next year. Won’t you?”

“Sure, you bet,” answered Jerry. “I’m not going to be a circus man all my life though. I want to get a job in the electricity business.”

“And how about you, Julie? Will you be a circus girl again next year?”

“I’m afraid not. I love traveling with the circus, but I ought to stay with Grandmother. She’s so old and lonely. Perhaps I can go to school in town and learn to be a teacher.”

Julie felt very sorry at leaving Bingo, for she knew he would be a full grown lion before she saw him again. She wept when she said good-by to Uncle Bill and the other circus folk. Then she and Jerry went away on the train. Julie wore the pretty hat she had bought in New York, and Jerry carried their bags and the box holding the purple silk dress for his grandmother.

“Jerry,” Julie asked, “do you remember the day we looked down the tracks and wondered what it was like in the world beyond?”

Jerry nodded seriously. “We decided there was only one way to know. That was to see for ourselves.”

“And we were afraid,” Julie said, “that we would never be able to go!”

“And now we’ve gone,” Jerry said, “and seen and learned a great deal. We can never again feel as we felt that day, because we will always have so much to remember.”



"It's the loveliest dress I ever saw!"

Far up the railroad track they saw the lights of their grandmother's house. They had seen the lights of so many other people's houses, and now these were the lights of their own home again!

Through the window they saw their grandmother sitting in her rocking chair. She was drinking a cup of tea and rocking gently. She looked so all alone and so little and old that Julie felt a hard lump in her throat.

"Let's surprise her," Jerry said. And he and Julie sprang through the door.

Grandmother jumped out of her chair.

She cried, "Julie!" and "Jerry!" First she hugged Julie. Then she hugged Jerry. Then she hugged them both together, and they both hugged her. "Now let me get a good look at you both," she said. She stepped back to see them. "My! my! You look better than ever. Now tell me all about where you've been and what you've seen."

"Here's your purple silk dress, Grandmother," Jerry said. "We didn't forget it."

Their grandmother opened the box and lifted the dress out of soft white paper and held it up to look at it. "It's the loveliest dress I ever saw!" she said. "The very loveliest dress that I ever saw." She sat down in her rocking chair and cried a bit. "Don't mind your

silly old grandmother, dear children," she said, rocking faster and faster in her chair. "I'm so happy I just can't hold back the tears."

Sassafras came in and jumped all over Jerry. It was good to be home again, Jerry and Julie both thought.

Then their grandmother stopped rocking. "I've been waiting and waiting," she said, "for you to get back. And the pig has been getting fatter and fatter. We'll roast the pig tonight. That's what we'll do. Run and get Melissa and George!"

But Melissa and George were at the door knocking. At first they were shy, watching Julie and Jerry and listening to all their wonderful stories of the places they had seen and all they had done. Then Jerry gave Melissa the electric toaster and explained how it worked. He told her that he was going to stay home now and learn more about electricity, so that everyone there could use it just as the city folk did.

Julie gave George the book.

"Do you suppose it will tell me how to make tomatoes grow better?" George wondered.

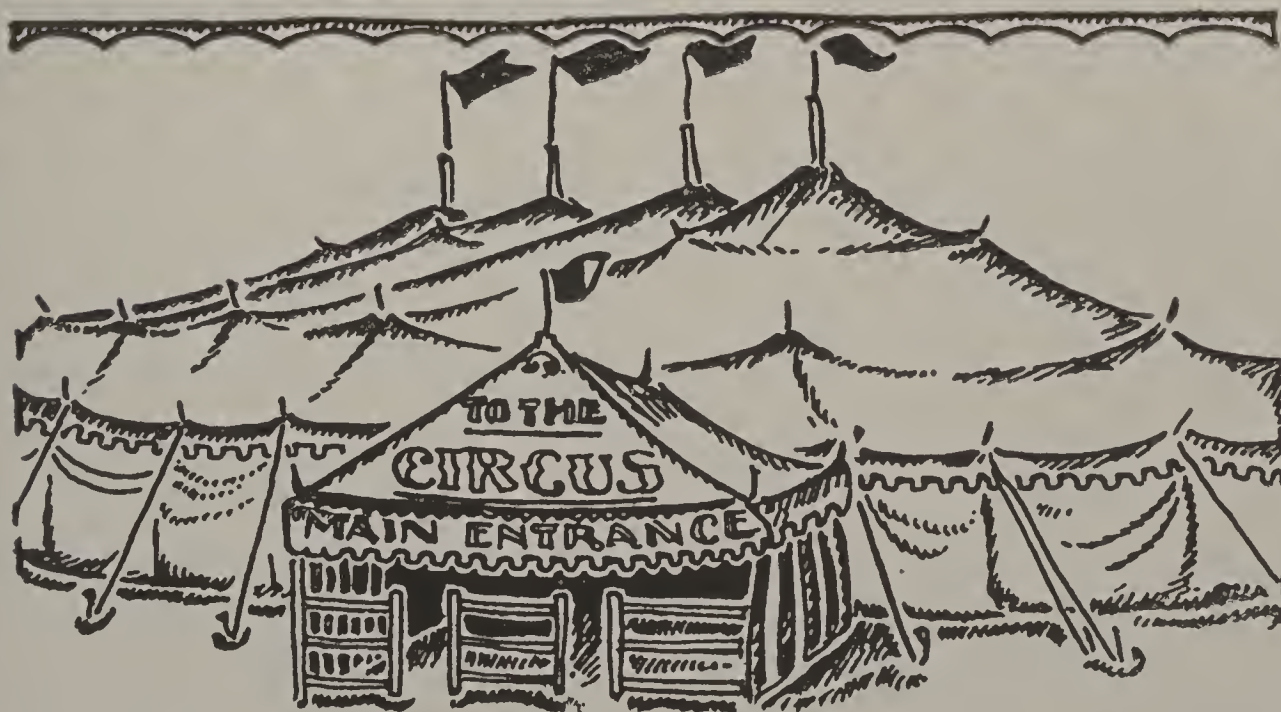
Julie looked in the book. "Why, there's a whole chapter just on tomatoes!" she cried.

Then Jerry and Julie both remembered the stones their grandmother had given them. They had seen

them both safely through all their travels. They had even kept them together, when Jerry had tried to run away from the circus, just as their grandmother had told them they would. They brought out their stones.

“Here are the stones you gave us, Grandmother,” they said. “The good-luck stone and the joker stone.”

But their grandmother was very old and very wise, and she rocked in her chair and said, “Dear children, you will have just as great a need of the stones here at home as you had when you traveled. Living right here can be just as full of excitement as you found it far from here. Some of us have to travel a great distance to learn that. But you have both learned it, I see. So keep your stones, both of you.”





CHICAGO



STEEL



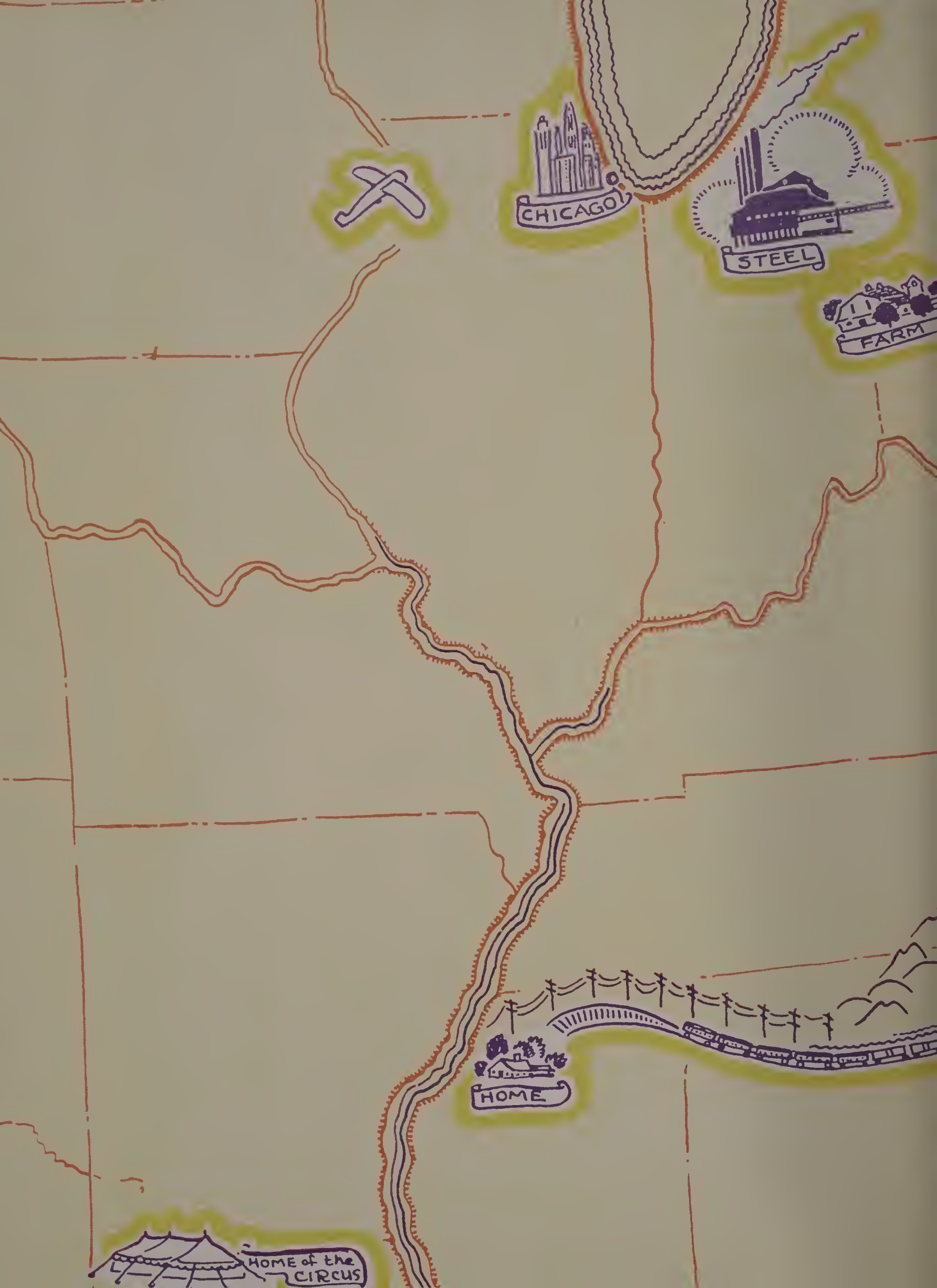
FARM



HOME



HOME of the CIRCUS





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