

BILLY WHISKERS

By FRANCES MONTGOMERY

The French goat had just invited Billy to go with her to the city of Paris.

"If you keep under the cart with me perhaps you can get through the city gates," she said.

"What do you mean by city gates? You surely do not mean to tell me that there are regular gates in the city? That seems perfectly ridiculous to me. In America, no matter how large the city, there are no gates, and anyone is free to enter at any time."

"You see you come from America, the land of the free, but you must remember that this is an old country, and in olden times no city was without its guarded wall and gates."

"Sure enough, I had forgotten that," said Billy.

"Those old crumbling walls used to keep out people when armies used lances and arrows and had small cannon, but now our cannon would blow their walls to smithereens with one shot."

Sees Big Tower

"What is that high, queer looking tower I see over to our right?" asked Billy.

"Oh, that is the Eiffel tower, a most wonderful tower made of iron. It has an elevator that runs to within a few feet of the top. Visitors to Paris used to be allowed to go up in it to get a good view of the city, the winding Seine and the parks, but now no one is permitted to enter it but the military men. Ever since the war began it has been used as a lookout and signal and wireless station."

"It certainly would be good to use for those purposes, as it is so high. My, how I should like to go to the top of it! I have always had a mania for going up all the high places I could find. Say, do you know what I am going to do? I am going to try to get in that tower, even if it is used only for military purposes."

"Oh, you are crazy even to dream of such a thing! You could not get inside one of the elevators, even if you tried for a million years."

"Just watch me! I am going to get in, and what is more, I am going to the top. See if I don't! I seldom miss doing what I want to when I wish to do it as badly as I do this."

Calls Him Crazy

"You are the craziest goat I ever talked to," she replied.

"Well, crazy or not, I am going to try it. So goodbye until we meet again, and thank you for answering all my questions," and Billy slipped from under the cart and ran down a street that led straight to the tower.

A beautiful view burst upon Billy when he reached the end of the street that led to the tower. Before him ran the River Seine, with freight boats and pleasure boats of all kinds, each gayly decorated with flags and banners. Across its wide bosom stretched beautiful arched bridges decorated with statuary and countless electric lights. In front, across the river, behind and on each side of him, were the fine residences, while down the river a short distance stood the majestic cathedral of Notre Dame.

"This certainly is a fine city, as the old Nannie said, but I won't say yet that it is the most beautiful. Perhaps I will when I have seen their parks and boulevards. So this fragile tower in front of me is the world-renowned Eiffel tower! And now I am here, it is up to me to get to the top. I will walk a little closer and see how things look for me to sneak inside."

When Billy drew closer to the tower he saw a small door open and, as there was no one in sight, he slipped inside. Directly opposite this door was another that led into an empty room which had seats facing a glass window. In fact, the walls of this room were all glass.

"Why anyone wants to sit facing windows that look out on a blank wall I don't know. I hear some one coming, so guess I'll go in the vacant room and hide until they pass."

It Moves Up

So he stepped inside and stood in the semi-darkness. The footsteps came straight to the door and without a halt a young man in uniform stepped inside, slammed the door, pulled a lever and, to Billy's astonishment, the room began to move swiftly and silently upward.

Billy never moved, neither did the man, and as yet he had not discovered Billy. Presently it dawned on Billy that this must be the elevator the old Nannie had told him ran to the top of the Eiffel tower, for now the car had passed the blank walls and was gliding up higher and higher above the tree and housetops—yes, and above the church spires, too.

Billy was so busy watching the view that he gave a little grunt of satisfaction. And the next moment he was thrown on his head by the car shooting upward at a great speed and then suddenly dropping twenty or thirty feet and then again shooting up. The cause of all this was that when Billy gave the grunt it attracted the man's attention to him, and when he turned and saw a big Billy goat in the car he was so astonished that for a minute he lost control of the car, and this caused it first to fly upward and then drop so suddenly.

"Look out what you are doing!" bawled Billy. "I won't hurt you if you will take me to the top."

Now the man thought Billy was bawling from fright, so he said: "Just keep still, old fellow, and I'll let you out."

They reached the first landing, and when the man opened the door Billy, thinking they were at the top, shot past the man before he could stop him, for he was afraid he would take him down before he got a good view. So he was dreadfully disappointed when he found he was only on a landing and that there were still many more landings above. The people on the landing tried to drive Billy back into the car so the man could take him down. But Billy refused to go, and kept running round and round the enclosed landing, which was all glassed in so people would not fall or jump off. When they came too near Billy he threatened to hook them, so they let him alone for fear of being butted through the glass.

A Fine View

After they stopped chasing him he amused himself by looking out of the window on the wide panorama stretched out before him. He was standing where, if he turned his head he could see the door of the elevator in which he had come up. Hearing the latch click, he turned his head just in time to see the door open and a couple of soldiers get out with bayonets.

"They have come for me," he thought. "But I'll fool them."

They had not seen Billy when they stepped out of the elevator, but had turned in the opposite direction to go around the tower to find him. Now was his chance. The door of the elevator was still open. It took him but a moment to run to it and enter the car. It had a sliding door and Billy quick as a wink stuck his head against the door, gave a push, and the door slid shut. He had done this same thing many times before with the old barn door at home.

The soldiers heard the door shut and ran around the tower to try to get to it before the elevator moved, but they were too late.

After shutting the door Billy had quickly taken the handle of the lever in his mouth, given it a pull, and the car shot upward. Now, not knowing just how much to pull it, Billy had pulled it to the limit, which made the car go at its fastest speed, and the first thing Billy knew the top of the car hit the top of the shaft and he found himself opposite the uppermost landing.

Paris Below

There was no need for him to get out on this landing to see the surrounding country, for he could stand in the elevator and see all he wished. And what a scene lay below him and off to the low hills on the horizon! As he looked, he saw a whole flock of aeroplanes come sailing up over the hill from the military aviation grounds. These bird-like machines fascinated him more than anything else he had ever seen in his life, for they soared, dipped, dropped and shot straight ahead at great speed. He never would have tired looking at them, he thought, but just then he heard voices and footsteps coming up the stairs that circled the elevator shaft. He knew it was the soldiers after him.

[But the soldiers will have to go some to catch Billy, now that he has learned to run an elevator.]

PAT'S SYSTEM

An old Irishman was told by his wife to paint the washhouse mangle while she was out shopping. On returning she could not find her husband in the washhouse, so she called him, to be answered faintly from upstairs:

"What are you doing up there, Pat?" she asked.

"Painting the mangle," was the reply.

"Why did you take the mangle up there?"

"Sure, Biddy, because the paint was up here."

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SELF-SATISFIED

In the smoking room of a theatre, between the acts, an amiable young man addressed an elderly gentleman who was seated beside him:

"The show is very good, don't you think?"

The old gentleman nodded approvingly, as he replied:

"Me, I always take the surface cars. Them elevated an' subway stairs ketches my breath."

"I said the show was a good one," exclaimed the young man, raising his voice.

Again the elderly person nodded agreeably.

"They jump about a good deal," was his comment, "but they're on the ground, which the others ain't."

Now the young man shouted:

"You're a little deaf, ain't you?"

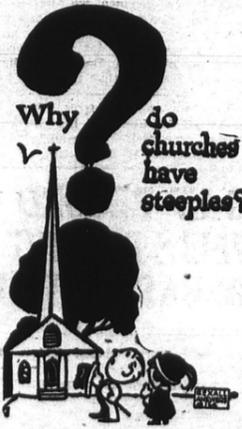
At last the other understood.

"Yes, sir!" he announced proudly. "I'm as deaf as a post." He chuckled contentedly. "Some folks thinks as that's a terrible affliction, but I don't. I kin always hear what I'm saying myself, an' that's interestin' enough for me."

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