



WALT DISNEY'S SNOW WHITE.

... Is less fair than the princess of the child's imagination.

**A** GOLDEN harp that springs to life and plays a melody... the sound of the joyful clucking of a hen that has laid a golden egg... the tramp of a giant's seven-league boots. It came as no shock to me to hear these things over the air.

Radio itself is a fairy-tale.

In the short space of its fantastic existence radio itself has made giant strides with its seven-league boots. It has made the golden music of the harps and fiddles of geniuses spring magically out of the air when they have been playing 12,000 miles away. And for a good number of people—when you consider all its commercial and money-making achievements—radio has also been the hen that has laid the golden egg.

That's why the "Once Upon a Time" series that I heard in a preview at the NCBS last week seemed perfectly natural over the air. The fairy tales of "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Cinderella" and "Snow White and Rose-Red" and others are perfectly matched to the marvel of radio.

It is only strange that the possibilities of radio for fairy-tales have not been fully exploited before. It is a far better medium for fairy-tales than the stage, where human fairies are singularly lumpish and unconvincing. To my mind it is even a better medium for fairy-tales than the films, with due respect to Walt Disney's genius.

## Children See

**T**HE point is that in radio there is nothing at all to come between the child and the illusion. The voices and the music and the appropriate "stage noises off" are all that is heard. The rest is brought to life by the imagination. Anyone who has had the slightest knowledge of the amazing extent of the child's imagination will have some idea of what rich mental pictures these radio voices will bring to diminutive listeners. Nor is it necessary to say only diminutive listeners. Adult listeners might begin to hear them; as I did, somewhat condescendingly, but I suspect they will have the same peculiar sensation that attacked me.

# Radio Belongs to Fairy-Tales

Written for the "Record"

by

WILTON BAIRD

I was no longer visiting a business office of the NCBS, doing a job to earn a living. I had escaped from a world of hard economic facts and the wranglings of nations into a pleasant world—dimly remembered a long time ago—where the voices of the giant and the King of the Squirrels and Wise Old Owl were quite familiar and perfectly real. It was pleasant to escape...

When Jack climbed the magic beanstalk it was quite in order that he should find a broad road that led him to the giant's castle. It was no surprise to find the Queen of the Fairies waiting to lead him to the giant's den. And, once safely inside, crouching in the corner while the giant ate his dinner—and I must say he swallowed beautifully over the radio!—it was quite a natural sequence of events that the hen should cluck with pride when it laid its golden egg, and that the magic harp should begin to play a charming tune when it was asked to do so.

Naturalness! That is the important thing to achieve in all art, which, after all, aims at imitating life.

This quality of naturalness was evident in the second new NCBS feature, "Songs of Yesteryear," that I heard last week. The old days when every announcer said, "You are to hear the song 'So-and-So,'" are fast vanishing. Some day in the future, probably, the radio stations will put on a feature called "Announcing of Yesteryear." To the listeners of that future day it will be an amusing item, just as the silent films of an earlier time are sometimes shown for amusement to-day in the theatres. For, each day now, radio technique is advancing.

**A**LMOST with the strides of the Giant's seven-league boots, radio to-day is rapidly advancing. How the new technique is being cultivated is evident in two new national features of the NCBS, the fairy-tale series "Once Upon A Time" and the song series "Songs of Yesteryear," previewed in this article. An unobtrusive naturalness, says the writer, is replacing the stiffness and formality of the radio technique of the past.

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## Painting a Story

**T**HE new technique of announcing can be studied in any of the later NCBS national features. It is evident in "The Country Church of Hollywood" and the "Hymns of All Nations," and it is particularly evident in "Songs of Yesteryear."

How is it done?

By the method, old as life itself, of painting a story. Radio paints a story for listeners in "Songs of Yesteryear" of the old-fashioned parlour of Mother and Father Jones. Listeners see them sitting in the cosy room before the fire. The old harmonium organ stands in the corner. Visitors come, their married daughter (Continued on page 41.)