

Volume 5 — Number 3

THE NEW MAGIC LANTERN JOURNAL

April 1988

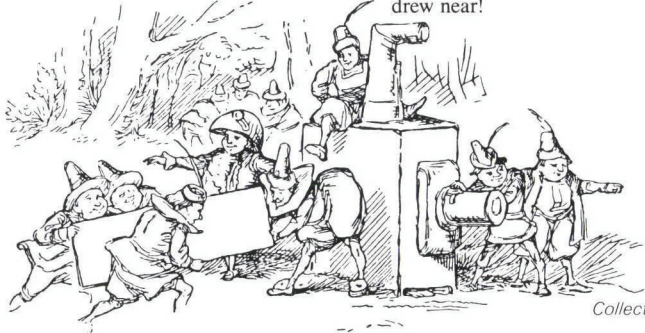
THE STORY OF PRINCE HILDEBRAND AND THE PRINCESS IDA

BY
Major T. S. SECCOMBE ca. 1880
An extract from Chapter Nine

Crusty Gruff knew his subjects would give him no peace,
If they thought that he tried to compel his fair Niece
To agree to a match that she didn't approve;
But he thought if the Prince could fair Ida remove
To his father's dominions, away from their aid,
His power and riches at length would persuade
The wilful young lady to alter her views,
And so wealthy a Prince for her husband to choose.
So with treachery deep, he arranged that same night

Here the Queen and her elves soon arranged a large sheet,
At a place where the Prince must advance or retreat;
Then lighting the lantern, in silence profound,
Stood quite ready the Prince and his men to astound.
The night was pitch dark, not a star overhead,
And all honest folks were by this time in bed:
When a throng of armed men, with the Prince in their rear,
To the spot where Queen Mab was in waiting drew near!

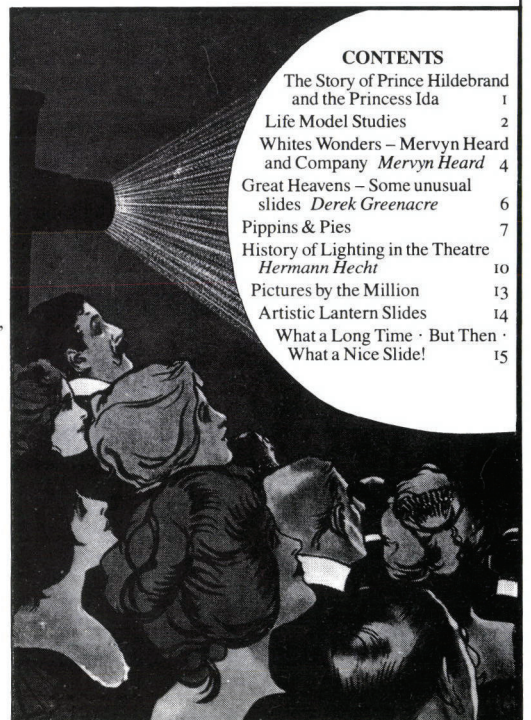
Of terrible giants, which seemed in their might
Just about to rush on them and crush them outright!
There are no greater cowards than those who do wrong —
And I need scarcely say, that they didn't stop long,
But yelling with fright, they just turned right-about,
And scampered away in a regular rout;
And never stopped running as hard as they could
Till they found themselves many a mile from the wood...



Collection: Lester Smith

To withdraw all the guards of his Niece out of sight,
That the Prince unopposed might the castle attack,
Seize the Princess, and then to his kingdom go back!
But the couple who hatched this nice plot little knew
That there sat 'neath the table a little mouse, who
Wrote the news for the *Fairyland Daily Review*,
And wired their treacherous plan to the Queen,
Who determined the plot to defeat, as we've seen;
So she set out at once, and her subjects behind,
With the best magic lantern and slides they could find;
And soon reached the heath where the old castle stood,
The road to which passed through a very dense wood;

They carried no lights, as they might be observed,
And hurt themselves well, as they richly deserved,
As they struggled through brambles and ran against trees,
And got nasty knocks on their shins and their knees;
Looking over their shoulders and whispering 'Hark!'
As they thought they saw bogies all round in the dark!
On they came: Till there suddenly burst through the gloom
A bright flash of light; and, behold! in the room
Of the black solemn trees that had stood in their way,
They beheld right before them a dreadful array



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