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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

STORIES AND GAMES FOR THE LITTLE PEOPLE.

How Bricks Were Made When the World Was Young—The Game of Soldiers—The Doll's Wooing—The Small Boy's First Errand.

A Chapter on Bricks.

The first authentic account of brick-making is in the bible. It is some time after the deluge. We are told that "the descendants of Noah found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone and slime for mortar."

That was at the beginning of the building of the Tower of Babel, about 4,000 years ago. Excavations have been made there in recent years. The ruins of the tower are 2,386 feet in circumference, a solid mass of earth and brick, rising to a height of 300 feet. The slime used for mortar was of such a durable character that today one brick can hardly be separated from another.

The brick-making of the Israelites, in Egypt, of which we also read in the bible, was different from that in the plain of Shinar. The Egyptians used straw to mix with their clay, probably for the purpose of making the bricks lighter. The Egyptian brick were adobes, or sun-baked.

The Assyrians, the most powerful nation in old bible times, used brick, mostly, as building material for their cities. Nineveh was built largely of brick, and on each brick one or more letters were stamped. The city of Babylon was also built of brick. The Babylonian bricks, too, have letters stamped upon them, but the letters are put on in a different style from those at Nineveh. On the Assyrian brick the letters were put on one at a time, while on the Babylonian they were put on together in a line, and these letters are history. They tell us that the city was built by Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar.

The ancients made bricks in all shapes, to fit different parts of their buildings. Some were square, some were oblong and some were wedge-shaped. In color, too, they were all shades, from the color of the earth in the sun-baked bricks to the black, green, red, blue, white and yellow in the kiln-burned, as shown by recent excavations.

We are told by Homer, I think, that Poseidon and Apollo built a wall around the city of Troy. This wall was made partly of rock and partly of brick. The city itself was built mostly of brick of the sun-baked kind, except the royal palaces and a few other buildings, in which the material used was stone. Dr. Schliemann, the excavator of Troy, found in the ruins of that city every evidence of it having been destroyed by fire. The stones that had been exposed to the flames, when laid bare so that the air could strike them, would crumble to pieces, while the brick had been burned so hard that the atmosphere had no effect upon them, and they were almost as good as new.—Philadelphia Times.

The Game of Soldiers.

Two peanuts, some wooden toothpicks or sharpened matches and a bit of cork will make a fine soldier. Stick one peanut on the other by inserting a piece of toothpick in them both. The upper one is placed with the smaller end down, the end that has a little curving point on one side. This is made into a chin by drawing whiskers over it with a pen. Above the whiskers put a mustached mouth, a nose and eyes, and blacken the rest with ink or paint for a tall hat.

Put ink buttons down the lower peanut, also a belt; then fasten arms on the sides, one holding a gun whittled from a piece of match. Legs of wood are stuck in this body, holes being made first with a pen-knife point, and the ends, well sharpened, are run into a slice of cork cut from a cork about an inch or more in diameter. The soldier must be balanced, so that he will stand up, though being very light he will fall down easily and add to the fun of the game. Another kind of soldier can be cut out of business cards, which any boy or girl can get for the asking. Cut out with flaps on the bottom of the feet, fold the flaps of the feet in opposite directions, and glue to a small piece of card, after marking the cap, face and uniform with ink or pencil.

When you have made a whole regiment of either kind, get your cannons ready. The cannons are made of spoons, whose flaring ends have been cut off, or of pieces of bamboo, which will give a chance for larger muzzles. Fasten a piece of elastic on the spool, laying each end of the elastic on one side of the spool, and winding it securely with sewing silk. Lay the spool on the block that has been slightly hollowed out for it, and wind it with stout slender cord. Make a plunger to fit the hole in the spool, the round part being just the same length. Leave a square block at the end to stop the plunger when shooting. Fit the elastic around this square end, and the cannon is ready. Use dried peas for ammunition.

Now all is ready for the game, which is played by two. Divide the soldiers, and have a cannon for each side. Stand the soldiers up, and let each side take turns shooting. After a certain number of rounds have been shot off, the one having the most men standing is victorious.

How to Make Lemon Drops.

For these and all kinds of sugar candy some coloring is needed. Put one pound of sifted sugar into a basin; stir into this enough lemon

juice to make a thick paste, and add a little yellow coloring, put the mixture into a pan, heat it over a clear fire without letting it boil; drop it in small balls on tin plates. When cold remove them with a knife without breaking them, and dry them in a cool oven on sheets of paper.

His First Errand.

He was a small boy, but he slipped the two cents carefully into his trousers pocket and paid strict attention while told to mail a letter with it; then go to the store and get some sugar and tea, and tell the merchant that papa would settle for them.

So, basket in hand, the little fellow set out for town, certain that he would not forget. In due time he returned, highly elated with his success. "The man asked me if I had a stamp for my letter," he explained. "I told him I hadn't, but when he found out whose boy I was he said he'd send it anyway."

"Then I went to the store and asked the man there how much sugar a cent would buy. He said 'about what a little boy could eat.' I knew that wasn't enough, so I told him I'd buy two cents' worth of sugar, and 'please, can ma borrow a drawin' of tea?' That's what Susie Brown said one day when she came to our house."

"So he put up a big lot and I brought it home in my basket—and ain't I a good boy?"

He finished with so much assurance that his parents reserved explanations for the postmaster and the grocer, and with an appreciative smile dismissed their errand-boy till he should grow older and wiser.

The Doll's Wooing.

The little French doll was a dear little doll Tricked out in the sweetest of dresses. Her eyes were of hue A most delicate blue And as dark as night were her tresses: Her dear little mouth was fluted and red. And this little French doll was so very well bred That whenever accosted her little mouth said: "Mamma! Mamma!"

The stockinet doll with one arm and one leg, Had once been a handsome young fellow, But now he appeared Rather frowzy and bleared

In his torn remnants of yellow. Yet his heart gave a curious thump as he lay In the little toy cart near the window one day And heard the sweet voice of that French doll say: "Mamma! Mamma!"

He listened so long and he listened so hard That anon he grew ever so tender. For it's everywhere known That the feminine tone Gets away with all masculine gender. He up and he wooed her with soldierly zest, But all she'd reply to the love he professed Were these plaintive words (which perhaps you have guessed): "Mamma! Mamma!"

Her mother—a sweet little lady of five— Vouchsafed her parental protection, And although stockinet Wasn't his blessed yet, She really could make no objection. So soldier and dolly were wedded one day, And a moment ago, as I journeyed that way, I'm sure that I heard a wee baby voice say: "Mamma! Mamma!"

—Eugene Field in the Chicago Herald

Helen and the Horse.

Helen's papa was leading (or trying to lead) a fractious young horse into the barn, and Helen was watching the proceeding from the dining-room window with great interest. "Did your papa get Tip in the barn?" asked her grandmother. "He got some of him in, grandma." The horse really had his forefeet across the threshold and refused to go any farther.

On another occasion this same little girl wanted to go riding behind this same horse, but her grandmother objected, as he had a habit of kicking. "Oh, but, grandma, the 'kickness' is all out of him now."—Inter Ocean.

A Little Girl's Hymn.

It was in a little country place where the good old hymns are still in vogue. One hymn has two lines running this way: Then the Lord will light the scene With the angels' starry shoon, Which one little girl rendered thus: Then the Lord will light the scene With the angels' "star machine." As they welcome us to Zion's hill The same little girl sang with great fervor: Leave that poor old "stand erect," And pull for the shore. The expression "stand erect," was much more familiar to her than "stranded wreck."

At the Head of the Class.

"Well, Elizabeth, you are at the head of your class to-day. How did you manage it?" "Why, the teacher asked Mary Small how many are five and seven, and she said thirteen. He said that was too many; then he asked Josephine Little and she said eleven and that wasn't enough, so I thought I'd try twelve and I guessed it right."

Surely Not.

"Bless me, my boy," said the country uncle, "there's no end of fun down at our place! You must come and see us in time for the husking bees." "Death me!" said the city nephew, nervously, "I shouldn't care evah to husk a bee, unless some one would first remove the sting!"

Not Hungry.

William—Mother, may I have a biscuit with butter on it? Mother—No, my son; if you are hungry, you will enjoy your bread without butter. Little Sister—Mother, I am not hungry; may I have a biscuit with butter on it?

Barley Sugar.

Boil one pint of syrup to a caramel, add twenty drops of essence of lemon, and pour it out in rows on a marble slab; when nearly cold lift up the end with the tip of a knife, and twist the sugar as you detach each end with the knife.

A Useless Member.

"Mamma, have I an eye-tooth?" "Yes, Johnny. Why?" "Why, because if I have I can't see anything with it."—Puck.

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