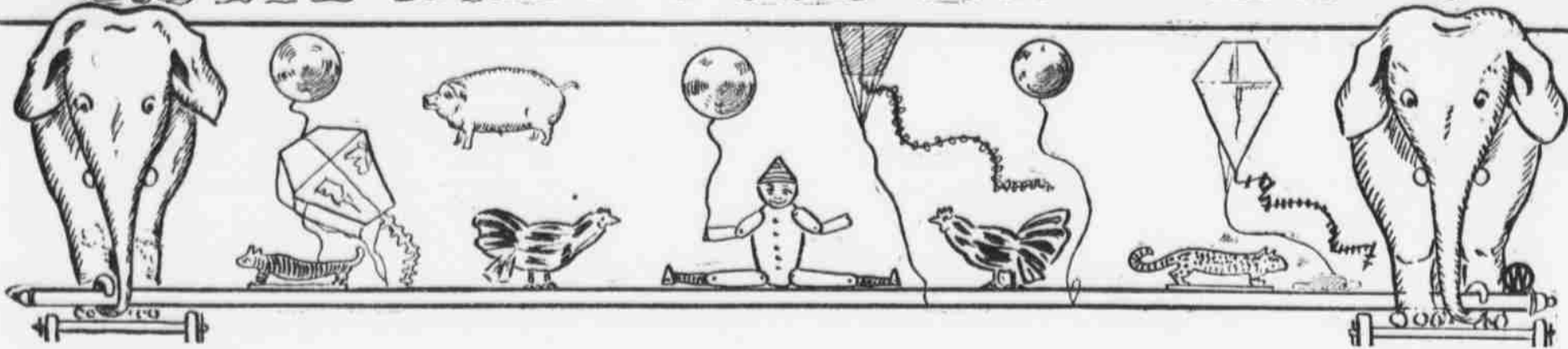


LITTLE TALES FOR LITTLE PEOPLE



Talk of the Toys.

THE Japanese doll got up very early one morning and harnessed his wooden cow to the cart that he might go to town. He traveled and traveled along the mantel shelf a great way. The wooden cow did not go very fast, so the Japanese doll saw all the sights along the way.

Suddenly he heard someone calling, "Jappy, Jappy, Jappy, stop!" And the Japanese doll said, "Bo Bossy! so Bossy!" to the cow, and the cow stopped.

Then the doll saw who it was that had called to him; it was a paper nun. She was standing now in front of the wooden cow, with a great earthen jar in her arms as big as a tub.

"Your cow looked so hot and thirsty," said the paper nun, "that I thought I would bring her something to drink."

"You are very kind," said the doll, as the nun set the jar down in the roadway.

The cow sniffed it and then drank it all up, for it was full of milk instead of water.

A little Maltese kitten had followed the nun, and while the cow was busy drinking the milk the kitten crept from behind the nun's skirts to lap up some spatters of milk around the bottom of the jar.

Just then a loud and very peculiar noise from away down the road—I mean the mantel shelf—made the kitten scamper off for safety.

The nun and the Japanese doll looked down the road in the direction from which the sound came. Even the wooden cow turned her head and the kitten peeped around from the shelter of the nun's black skirt.

What they saw was a yellow china chicken coming with a hand organ. When it came up to them the chicken stopped, and it played such a merry tune that the kitten came out in the road where it could hear better.

The nun clapped her hands, for she was good natured and liked a bit of music now and then; while the Japanese doll leaned over the rail of his cart and said to the chicken, "That is a very pretty tune, sir."

The doll had just finished speaking when the sun rose. Its bright rays shone in at the window and clear across the room. That made the mantel shelf folk all stop just where they were; they never move about by daylight. And when little girl Margaret came down stairs there she saw the Japanese doll and the wooden cow and the paper nun and the kitten and the chicken with the hand organ.—St. Nicholas.

Ways of Mr. Owl.

In the Nineteenth Century and After, R. Bosworth Smith defends the owl from the slanders to which his solemn face often gives rise. He gives a number of anecdotes from his personal experience with this interesting creature.

"Owls," he says, "always pair for life, and their affection for one another is as marked as that for their young. Some years ago I was tapping an elm tree with my climbing stick, hoping to see a jackdaw scuttle out of its hiding place. Instead of that, a brown owl slowly poked its solemn looking head out of the hole, and remained there, looking down upon me with its big, mournful, dreamy eyes.

"I climbed the tree. The owl did not stir an inch. I lifted it gently out. Owls, as I have said, are always thin, not much else than feathers; but this one, from its weight, seemed to be feathers, and nothing else at all. Its eyes slowly glazed; it

turned over on its side, and died in my hand. I blew its fluffy feathers apart to see if I could unravel the mystery of its death. There was one tiny shothole in its skull, and on inquiry I found that some few weeks before a boy, anxious, like others of his kind, to 'kill something,' had fired at a big brown owl which had come lumbering out of an ivy tree, its winter resting place. The bird had quivered as he struck it, but had not fallen to the ground, and, escaping for the time, had evidently been dying by inches ever since in the hollow in which I had found it; while her mate, faithful unto death, had kept her supplied with mice and rats, several of which, quite recently killed, I found in the nest or stored in the hedge below.

"While the female brown owl is sitting the male bird usually keeps watch on an adjoining tree, ready to do battle for her and hers against all comers. Many years ago, in the parish of Stafford, I was swarming up an elm tree toward a large hole which seemed likely to contain some treasure. When I was a few feet up I felt a heavy blow in the middle of my back, as if my companion had thrown a clod of hard earth at me. Turning round I saw a brown owl fly back to his post in an adjoining tree, whence he had made his descent upon me. I continued my climb, and the same attack was delivered with even greater force a second and a third time. In the hollow, which at last I reached, I found the wife sitting in undisturbed repose above her young, and the husband, having, I suppose, sufficiently delivered his soul by his three charges, and thinking that there was nothing further to be done, and that no harm was meant, now looked on as calmly as his wife."

What Kermit Thought of the Snake.

President Roosevelt's son, Kermit, has a face of the gravest solemnity, which, when he was a little chap, gave a humorous turn to everything he said. One day the children came running into Mr. Roosevelt's den in the greatest excitement over a snake they had seen.

Teddy, jr., was so worked up over the glitter of the reptile's eyes, as it swayed its head, hissed and darted out its fiery tongue, that all he could get breath to say was:

"Oh, papa, it had a head—such a head—I wish you could have seen the thing's head."

"Well," said Mr. Roosevelt, "and didn't it have a tail?"

Kermit, standing wide-eyed beside his brother, looked into his father's face and said, solemnly:

"It was all tail."

An "Awful" Story.

There was once an awful little girl who had an awful way of saying "awful" to everything. She lived in an awful house, in an awful street, in an awful village, which was an awful distance from every other awful place. She went to an awful school where she had an awful teacher, who gave her lessons out of an awful book. Every day she was so awful hungry that does not get over saying "awful" about she looked awful healthy. Her hat was awful small and her feet were awful large. She went to an awful church, and her minister was an awful preacher. When she took an awful walk she climbed awful hills and when she got awful tired she sat down under an awful tree to rest herself. In summer she found the weather awful hot, and in winter awful cold. When it didn't rain there was an awful drouth, and when an awful drouth was over there was

an awful rain. So that this awful girl was all the time in an awful state, and if she she ate an awful amount of food, so that everything she will, by and by, come to an awful end. And this awful little girl lives in this awful city.

Grandma's Advice.

Help yourself, help yourself, little boy, do; Don't wait for others to wait upon you; Grandma was holding her afternoon chat, Knitting and rocking away as she sat.

"Look at the birds, how they build their own nests. Watch the brown bees, always toiling their best. Put your own hands to the plow if you'd thrive; Don't waste your moments in wishing, but strive."

Up in her face looked a mischievous elf. "Don't forget, darling," said she, "help yourself."

Afternoon shadows grew drowsy and deep; Grandma was tranquilly folded in sleep; Nothing was heard but the old farmhouse clock, Plopping along with its warning tick, tick.

Out from the pantry there came a loud crash; Pussy jumped up from the hearth like a flash;

Back to her chair strode this practical boy; Steeped to the ears in jam, custard and joy.

Grimacing, he cried, "Please, I've upset the shelf; Grandma, I minded; I did help myself."

—George Cooper.

Whistled for the Other Boy.

The small boy was coming home at a much later hour than he was wont to be out alone. It was growing quite dark, and as he came through the grove he could be heard whistling vigorously, if not very tunelessly, long before he reached the house. The elders exchanged amused glances.

"What made you whistle so loudly, Willie?" asked one of them as the little fellow entered.

"Well, you see," answered Willie, soberly, "it was pretty dark out there, and I thought if some boy—some little boy—should be coming along he might be afraid, and it would be less lonesome for him if he heard me whistle."

Whistling to keep up the courage of some other boy, says Forward, had brought the young traveler bravely home. No one knows how much the cheery note in the darkness may help someone else, and always it makes one's own step firmer.

Crows Mark Line.

George Wreake, of Sibley township, near Le Sueur, Minn., has a pet crow, Bob, which has been with him four years and which he claims is the most intelligent and useful bird living.

There is in the Wreake home an old bedroom, a beautiful cuckoo clock, brought from Switzerland, in pioneer days; one of the kind that have a little door at the top in front, out of which springs a little bird every sixty minutes and calls the hours with a "cuckoo" for every unit of the hour.

After the crow had been in the family about two years he began to mock the clock cuckoo and this finally grew to be a passion with him, so that he hardly ever failed to give a melodious "caw" when the clock cuckoo was calling the hour. Some six months ago, by reason of an accident to the shelf on which it was standing, the clock fell and the striking or cuckoo part was completely broken, so the door never opens and the bird never comes out. This appeared to be a great puzzle to Bob, for he watched the clock for several days and seemed to be study-

ing deeply. At last, however, he came to a conclusion and greatly startled the family by taking up the duty the cuckoo had previously performed, and counting out the hours perfectly, at the exact moment, with a clear call of "caw" for every hour the clock ought to have struck, one for 1 o'clock, five for 5 o'clock and so on around the circle. He has kept his work up to the present time and calls every hour when he can see the face of the clock as regularly and perfectly as an ordinary timepiece with its hammer and bell.

If a lamp be set at night where the light falls on the face of the clock, the crow, though he will doze between times on his perch, will waken and call every hour all night long. More than this, if a lamp be kept lighted and a pin be thrust into the wooden face of the clock so that the minute hand will pass over it, but the hour hand will catch on it and stop the clock at any hour of the morning between 4 and 7 o'clock, Bob will notice it as soon as the clock stops, and raise a shrill cawing that is as good as an alarm clock, and keep it up till some one gets up and comes and removes the pin.

Only Natural.

"Speaking of animals, in my opinion the elephant is the cleverest of them all," said the old circus man. "I remember once, many years ago, when Jacko, who was then in my charge, showed me one day that he could read."

"Oh, come now!" said a listener.

"I'll prove it to you in about two minutes. Well, as I was saying, the old fellow got into a scrape with the royal Bengal tiger, and before we could get them separated he had his trunk pretty badly damaged. After the scrimmage was over, Jacko broke loose and started down the street fast. 'He's goin' wild,' somebody shouted. 'Don't you believe it,' said I. Now, where do you suppose that elephant went to?"

"Went to the surgeon's, I suppose. Can't you get a better yarn?"

"No; he didn't go to the surgeon's, if he. He went straight to a little shop where a sign read: 'Trunks repaired while you wait.' Of course, he had made a mistake, but what do you expect of a poor dumb brute?"

Too Busy to Make a Noise.

A Kansas City teacher of a kindergarten was incapacitated from work one day last week by the following incident. The subject of the lecture and object lesson was animals, birds and then more animals.

"Now, children," said the teacher, "I want each of you to think of some animal or bird and try for a moment to be like the particular one you are thinking about, and make the same kind of noises they are in the habit of making."

Here was the command. Here the finale: Instantly the schoolroom became a menagerie. Lions roaring, dogs barking, birds singing and twittering, cows lowing, calves bleating, cats meowing, etc., all in an uproar and excitement—all, with one single exception.

Off in a remote corner a little fellow was sitting perfectly still, apparently indifferent and unmindful of all the rest. The teacher, observing him, approached and said:

"Waldo, why are you not taking part with the other children?"

Waving her off with a deprecating hand and wide, rebuking eyes, he fervently whispered:

"Sh—sh—sh, teacher—sh! I'm a 'ooster, a. I'm a-lay'n' a aig!"—Kansas City Star.

