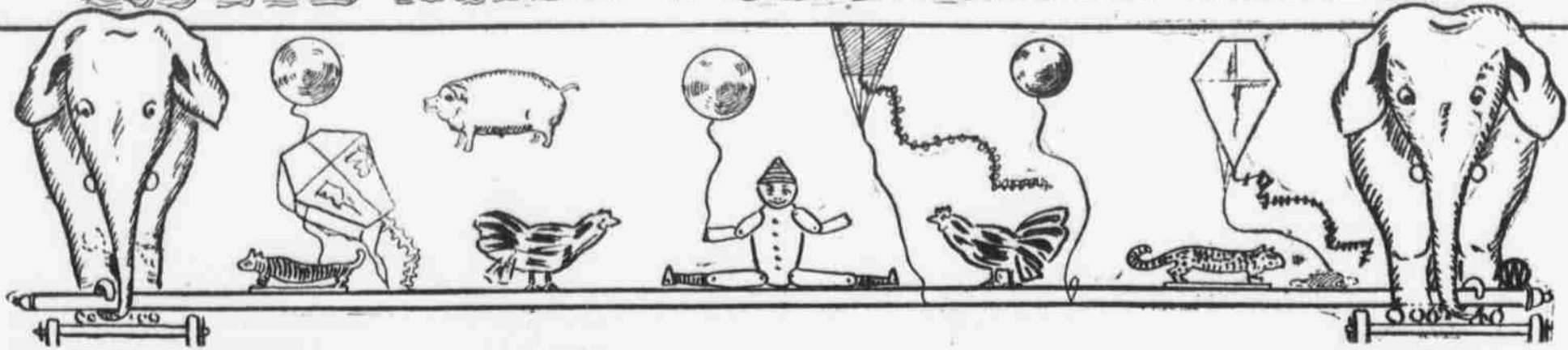


LITTLE TALES FOR LITTLE PEOPLE



How Rodney Imitated Papa.

PAPA, I'm 5 years old; how soon shall I be a big man and able to smoke the way you do?" asked Rodney.

Papa laughed, and said not until Rodney learned to go to bed when he was told, and pointed to the clock.

Rodney said no more about it, but all the same he thought a great deal.

One day when mamma was ill and Jane was cross, poor little Rodney felt very lonely and forlorn. He went down to the kitchen to see cook, but cook did not want to be bothered. He went upstairs again to the nursery. How dull and quiet it seemed! Even Dick, his beautiful new rocking horse, had no attraction for him. What should he do next? As he looked around the room his eye suddenly fell upon an object lying upon the edge of the mantel. Was it, could it be a cigar? It was. Rodney remembered how papa had placed it there during a skirmish they had had the evening before.

Now, Rodney wanted to be a good boy and do what was right, but he took his first wrong step by dragging a chair to the fireplace and reaching the cigar, which he carefully handled. "Ugh! it don't smell very good," said Rodney. "I wonder if it tastes as bad as it smells?" The temptation was strong to place it between his lips.

"It tastes pretty nasty; perhaps it is gooder when it's lighted?" thought Rodney.

Ah, Rodney! Rodney! It is always the first step that counts. Matches were within reach, and the little boy next lighted a match—another piece of disobedience.

He lighted the match and held it to the cigar, as he had watched papa do so many times. He puffed bravely away for some time, as he thought he had heard papa say that people did not like to smoke at first. Pretty soon a very queer feeling came over him, and it occurred to him that papa always leaned back in his big chair when he smoked, and that he would like to lie back in a big chair, too.

So he got down from the chair; but, strange to say, all the furniture in the room began to run away from him and dance around the room. He wanted to run, too, but he could not find the door. "I want my mamma! Oh, where is my mamma? Where is Jane? Where is everybody?"

No one came, and Rodney staggered into a corner and lay there, feeling very ill and very much frightened.

When Jane came to take him for a walk she found a little white-faced, weebegone boy on the floor, and beside him the dead cigar which told the sad tale.

Rodney has changed his mind now about smoking, and although he still wants to be a man, he says he will never, never, never smoke again!

The Original Uncle Sam.

Although the nickname "Uncle Sam" is almost universally applied to our country, many, perhaps, have not heard the story of its origin. The following account is quoted from "Watson's Annals of Pennsylvania," published in the early half of the last century:

"The name grew out of the letters 'E. A.—U. S.' marked upon the army provisions barreled up at Troy for the contractor, Elbert Anderson, and implied the initials of his name, and 'U. S.' for the United States. It happened that these provisions were inspected by Samuel Wilson, usually called by his men 'Uncle Sam.' One of his workmen, upon being asked the meaning of the letters 'E. A.' and 'U. S.,' replied, archly,

that it meant Elbert Anderson and Uncle Sam (Wilson). The joke went round merrily among the men, some of whom, afterwards, going to the frontier, and there partaking of the very provisions which they had assisted to pack and mark, still adhered to calling it Uncle Sam, and as everything else of the many appointments bore also the letters 'U. S.,' Uncle Sam became a ready name, first for all that appertained to the United States, and finally for the United States itself—a cognomen which is likely to be perpetuated, as that of John Bull for old England."

The Wise Gnome.

Within a deep and darksome wood there lived a learned gnome, and in an ancient saucepan he made his cozy home. His name was so impressive it filled everyone with awe—'Twas Diomed Diogenes Demosthenes de Graw. His fame for wisdom was so great that even passing birds would stop and listen eagerly to Diomed's wise words.

One day two little jub-jub birds were walking that way. They paused and said: "Oh, Diomed, do teach us something, pray!" "Ay, ay," the ancient gnome replied; "now listen well, you two; A bit of information I will gladly give to you. Yon lustrous luminary—empyrean queen of night—Our libratory, vibratory, lunar satellite, That rotary orb revolving 'round our sphere terrene Is but coagulated curds, tinged chromium beryliline!"

Although a bit bewildered, the jub-jub birds said, "Oh—Oh, thank you, dear Diogenes; that's what we wished to know."
—Carolyn Wells in April St. Nicholas.

An Interesting Experiment.

It is an acknowledged fact that a body which will scratch another body is generally harder than the first body; thus diamond is harder than glass, glass is harder than marble, and so on. A steel point will scratch a piece of iron, and is therefore harder than copper, and this brings us to the conclusion that it should be possible to drive a needle (which, of course, is of steel) through a penny, the latter being an alloy of chiefly copper and other metals. But it will be useless to try to drive the needle into the penny as you would a nail into a piece of wood, for the needle, being made of steel and therefore brittle, will snap at the first blow. But here is a remedy: Drive the needle through the center of a cork and then place it well on the middle of a penny, which in its turn has been placed upon a bolt or piece of iron with a hole in the center. Take a heavy hammer and strike the cork several times violently in the center, when you will find the needle will have been driven through the penny. This experiment can be done, but it is not easy, so when it is successfully accomplished it is quite a feat.

A Cat Plays Ping-Pong.

In Bedford, Mass., there is an 8-month-old kitten who plays ping-pong by himself and does many tricks which are often performed by dogs, but seldom by cats. He will sit in imitation of a rabbit while he begs for a bit of meat, and will do a regular dance on his hind legs in return for a second helping.

Tiger is as inquisitive as a monkey. If a box comes to the house he is the first to want the cover removed. He gets into bureau drawers, inspects the contents of visitors' suit cases if the lids are left unfastened, and last Christmastime, when a tree, hung with presents, was placed in one of the rooms, Tiger, after looking it carefully over and perhaps wondering why he hadn't noticed it before, climbed up to an easy perch among the branches and pro-

ceeded to eat the festoons of popped corn.

When there is no one disposed to play ball with Tiger he calls the game himself, and at once becomes the whole team. He throws the ball into the air, bats it about with his paws, runs to the top of the stairs for a throw-down, and after winning a hot, hard game, curls himself up in a punch bowl for a snooze.

When callers come he usually takes a conspicuous station from which to look them over. Some he will select as friends and show them that in his estimation they are all right by looking them wide-eyed in the face, arching his pretty back and smoothing his sides on their clothing. Those who do not impress him favorably he lets alone.—New York Times.

The Modern Baby.

They say that I must not be rocked, Because my brain might addle; If I could speak, they would be shocked; I'd call that fiddle-diddle. And yet, of course, they ought to know— Still, I can't help but wonder If some one rocked them years ago When folks were apt to blunder.

They stand around me, looking wise, And say they must not pet me; A gentle pat to soothe my cries They claim would further fret me. My raising must conform to law Down to each jot and little— Did people hold them off with awe When they were bald and little?

They say that bouncing me is sure To make me very nervous, That children's frames cannot endure Such sadly thoughtless service. Yet these phlegmatic scientists, Ere they began to toddle Were bounced until their chubby fists Played tattoos on the noddle.

When I stretch out my willing arms Inviting them to frolic, They rise in wondering alarms And talk of croup and colic— It's hard to be a baby now; They will not pet or jump us, And when I sleep, my peaceful brow Must lie straight with the compass.

When I grow up, of course I'll be A triumph scientific; But really it seems to me My hard luck is terrific. If I could only speak my mind— But then they would not thank me, One unbanned custom they would find— They still think they may spank me! —Chicago Tribune.

Dolly Varden's First Party.

Her mother called her "Doll;" her grandpa called her "Dolly Varden," and she was a little girl 4 years old. One day her father brought her a letter from the postoffice. It was small and pink, and looked good enough to eat. Dolly Varden could not read, so her father read it for her. It said:

"Miss Jenny Barry requests the pleasure of Miss Dolly Varden's company next Wednesday afternoon from 3 till 5 o'clock."

Jenny Barry was another little girl, a very dear friend of Dolly Varden's who lived just a little way around the corner.

When Dolly Varden heard what was in the letter she was so pleased that she danced around the house all day, singing:

"I'm going to a party—a really, truly party party—to Jennie Barry's party—yes, I am."

Wednesday came at last, and as soon as dinner was over Dolly Varden begged to be dressed at once, for fear she would be late at the party.

So mamma brushed the nice long curls over her fingers, put on the little red shoes and a white dress with a little red sash, and said: "You may go now, if you do not like to wait." But Dolly Varden went into the parlor and sat down in a big armchair near the window. She did not want to be the first one there, and so she waited, thinking some other little girls would come along soon, and she could go with them.

But no little girls came that way, and so she watched and waited and grew very tired, for you see she had to sit very still so as not to muss the white dress.

After a long time mamma came into the parlor. "Why, Doll," she said, "what are you waiting for? You must hurry, now; it is half-past 3."

"There haven't any little girls gone yet, mamma, and I don't want to get there the first one."

Pretty soon mamma came in again, and said: "Come, Doll, if you are going at all you must start now. It is 4 o'clock."

But Doll said, "Oh, I'm afraid if I go now I'll be the last one there, and I'd hate to be."

So Dolly Varden still sat in the big armchair and watched; and no little girls went by, because they had all gone around another corner long before, and she grew very unhappy indeed.

She wanted to go to the party, but she was afraid to, and the more she thought of it the worse she felt. And there was the party just around the corner!

Pretty soon the big tears began to roll down over the pink cheeks, and after a little the nice long curls were all in a little heap on the arm of the big chair.

Then, all of a sudden, the front door opened, and a little girl came in. She looked round and saw Dolly Varden all dressed up, crying in the big armchair. The little girl ran over to her and put her arms around her, and said, "Why, Dolly Varden! Why couldn't you come to my party?"

Then Dolly Varden sobbed while she said: "I—I could. But I didn't want to be the first one there, and then I—I was afraid I'd be the—the last one, and—and so I didn't come at all! Oh-h-h!"

Then Jenny took her arms away from around Dolly Varden and folded them and stood up straight and said: "Well, you are a baby, and I'll never invite you to another party as long as I live!" and she went home.

She kept her word, for she never had another party. But Dolly Varden was invited to many others, and she always went early, for she had decided that it was better to be the first one than the last one, and better to be the last one than not to go at all.—Youth's Companion.

The Land of Someday.

There's a wonderful land far away, away, The blissful land of Someday. We watch for it always, and wonder why. It keeps slipping off to the sweet by and by.

'Tis a very strong land, this land of Someday, Which we're sure we will find just over the way; When we think it quite near, it will fly Without ever stopping to tell us good-bye.

Oh, a very queer land is the land of Someday! And we're sure 'tis crammed full of all that is gay; And when we find it our work will be wonderful fun, And we'll never, no never, leave one thing undone.

I wish, oh, I wish, I could reach in some way The beautiful, beautiful land of Someday. For there, I am such, we never would find The work we should do so far, far behind.

In this wonderful land, the land of Someday, The children who live there, I've heard people say, Have the loveliest time, I've even been told, Their papas and mammas don't know how to scold.

And the boys and the girls in the sweet Someday land, Just hurry right off at the word of command. And do all they're told, and are never heard to say, "I'll not do it now, I'll do it some day."

—Cleveland Leader.

