

Special Page for The Bee's Busy Little Honey-Makers



Strange Animals of the World

The otter seems to be near-kin to the seal, although the dentition is of a peculiar form. The otter is distinguished by the breadth and flatness of the head and the rounded outline of the muzzle, the lips being large and fleshy and furnished with whiskers, which are communicators of feeling; the ears very small and set close to the head, and the eyes, of moderate size, are provided with a nictitating membrane as a defense to their surface.

The otter's tail is an important instrument, as it uses it in swimming as a rudder, enabling the animal to turn abruptly or to make many swift maneuvers in chase of its finny prey. The beaver is like the otter in this detail.

On land the otter is hampered in its movements, as its limbs are short and stout and the body long and flattened; the toes on its feet are webbed instead of spreading open, consequently the animal is more at home in the water. The fur is close and woolly and glossy, making it most desirable for garments of various styles.

The otter is not confined to any one section of the globe, but may be found in various countries. It dwells in caverns or hollows near the water, and seeks its prey mainly at night. It is sly and a recluse among animals and lurks by day in deep burrows or in crevices of rocks.

Eight or 10 moderate-sized fish constitute a meal for the otter, but it is a well-known fact that it kills a much larger number of fish than it can eat; therefore one can form an idea of the slaughter the animal performs. It is said that when fish are scarce the otter will dare to steal from farms. It is known that suckling pigs, young lambs and poultry have been killed and carried away by the nocturnal robbers.

It is mainly during the summer months, when the otter has a brood of young to feed, that she kills many more fish than she can use. The track they leave in the soft mud, as they trail their prey, is witness to the extent of their fishing activities.

The otter is very intelligent, and when caught young will become readily tamed and companionable to humans. It is taught to drive fish into nets, to catch salmon and assist fishermen in many ways. In using the otter to drive the shoals of fish into nets the animal is tethered by a long rope to bamboo poles driven in the mud near the water's edge.

Fish are afraid of the otter, and will not spawn anywhere where the slightest signs of an otter are to be found. Thus an otter is a menace to fisheries, and one should be watchful that no such animal hovers within the ken of the fish.

A No-Account Dog

Louella C. Poole
I think we'd better send away. This dog of ours," said Farmer Gray.
"He's really of no earthly use; He brings in dirt and scatters loots. Hairs on our clothes and furniture— (Down, Zippo, down! Down sir! Down, sir!)—
He really isn't worth his keep; He's certain sure no good for sheep! No watchdog he, for not a bark. He gives at footsteps in the dark. He ain't no earthly good now, though. Though kind and gentle, I'll allow. But wise old grandma shook her head.
"He's very good to love," she said.
But Farmer Gray was obdurate; The cost of living was so great. It was decreed the dog should go. And little did the farmer know That he was planning thus to send Forth from his home the truest friend.
"Oh, where is Willie? Where is he?" Cried everyone distractedly, And searched in vain, below, upstairs, Then out the house they rushed to where—
O horrors!—their sweet three-year-old His garments clutched in Zippo's hold, Hung o'er the well curb in such way The curb bent with his body's sway. And had not watchful Zippo been On guard, he would have plunged within.
Oh, oh, the praise the good dog had, From everyone, all were so glad That Baby Willie had been found Without a bruise, but safe and sound!
"Well, Zippo," then said Farmer Gray, "I calculate you'll have to stay," Giving the dog a kind caress, Whose eyes were raised in gratefulness. And grandma stroked his rough, brown head: "I'm sure you're worth our love," she said.

The Wild Deer

Edith F. Moulton.
Over mountains I roam, Through the forests I slip, At the rivers I drink to my fill. Whether sunlight, or moonlight, I wander full free.
— Mine are moorland, and valley, and hill.
A sudden, strange echo— A sharp, stinging pain— Ah! Who is there to hear my wild I am stambling, I'm falling—my strength's ebbing fast. There is nothing left now but to die.

THE "STOLEN KISS"



Photo by Rinehart-Steffens.

HARRIET AND CHARLES BEATON.

We might call this picture "The Stolen Kiss," don't you think? The two little people are Harriet and Charles Beaton, and little Harriet stole a kiss while brother wasn't looking. Some day this dear little boy and girl will be writing stories for our page. Just now they love to look at the pictures and have their mother read the stories to them.

A VILLAGE THAT FLOATS

In the shadow of the huge Manhattan bridge which connects New York proper with Brooklyn, nestles a veritable fishing village consisting of nine two-story houseboats moored side by side so as to form a solid row and sheltering the fishermen and their families, on whom New York City is dependent for a good part of its fish supply, says Popular Science.

But unless you are familiar with the vagaries of fish and the localities in which they school in certain seasons you need not go in search of this village. Often it disappears from a locality overnight, without any farewells, reappearing as quietly a few months later.

NO ROOM FOR BLUES.

Open your mind to cheerful thoughts
Till they fill each corner and nook,
And no room is left for those that bring
The sigh and doleful look.
The mind is the brush that paints the hour
And bright will the colors grow
If in the chalice held by time
Content its line doth flow;
But dark and drear the scene will appear
If gloom fills up the cup;
Then fill your mind with buoyant hope
And dry each teardrop up.

Santa Claus in Toyland

(Copyright 1915, by Reilly & Britton Co.)

CHAPTER II. Taffyote Runs Away.

Santa had told Taffyote he could visit his old mother and father as soon as he had made enough sugar plums to last till he came back. The morning the trouble began he was making an extra large batch. He had a big kettle sizzling over the fire and was stirring away with a spoon as large as himself. Dinah as usual commenced scolding: "Go 'long now, you'll frog-legged bag o' nuisance an' leave me to mah own kitchen. Ah don't see why Massa Santa don't make you el'ar outen yere. 'Clare to goodness, you sho' am a heap sight mo' hinderance dan hep."
Taffyote was feeling unusually good, as his Christmas work was so nearly finished and his vacation so close at hand. He pretended not to hear her and threw back his head and sang a song of his own making: "Oh, he-ho for the sweet sugar plum!"
They all laugh with glee when they see me come.
I make them so, with a twist of my thumb,
To fill with delight your tummy-tum-tum!"

As you may guess Dinah was really very jealous of Taffyote because he could make such good sugar plums. She had tried her hand at making them a number of times, but they were too soft or she burned them. So now Taffyote's song and his mischievous actions made her very angry and she could keep her temper no longer. Just as he was taking the kettle off the fire, bubbling and sputtering, she started for him with the broom. With the kettle in his hands, Taffyote could do nothing to defend himself; he stood helplessly looking around for some means of protection.

In Despair.

Dinah had almost reached him when his eyes fell upon his three-legged stirring stool. In despair he gave it a kick. In another instant Dinah was upset; but as she fell, her foot struck the kettle, knocked it from Taffyote's hands and sent it flying into the air. Up flew the kettle, down went Dinah, and away ran Taffyote. As he reached the door he gave one frightened glance behind him. What he saw made him sure that he had killed Dinah. The kettle, in falling, had turned over and had landed squarely over Dinah's kinky head. Already the thick, boiling syrup was running down all over her. The last seen

of him Taffyote was dashing toward his room, a wild light in his eyes and his face a chalky white.

On hearing the disturbance Santa rushed to the kitchen. There sat Dinah in the middle of the floor, the kettle still on her head, the sticky brown candy streaming down all around her. Santa was too frightened to laugh, but she really was a comical sight. Santa pulled and grunted. The kettle stuck. Then, with a suddenness that almost upset Santa, it came off, and a very meek Dinah came to light.

Santa sent Dinah to her room to scrape off the now-hardened candy as best she could. Then he looked around for Taffyote. But he was gone. All the Gnomes joined in the search, but not a sign of the sugar plum maker could be found.

Santa Thinks.

Now you can see why Santa sat in his office in such deep thought. With Taffyote gone, the sugar plums would soon be gone too. And Santa well knew that without sugar plums the Gnomes would soon refuse to work. The outlook seemed so hopeless that even merry Santa Claus was near to feeling blue this morning. Poor Mrs. Santa had begged more piteously than usual for an extra sugar plum. The Gnomes had been greedier than ever for plums at breakfast. Everywhere he turned he seemed to hear nothing but sugar plums, sugar plums.

Already, Grumpy, his best carpenter, and president of their union, the Allied Trades and Helpers of S. Claus, had called at the office to see what effect Taffyote's leaving would have on their getting their regular supply of sugar plums. He had insisted that the entire stock meant for good little children all over the earth, should be turned over to the Gnomes, to be used in case Taffyote didn't come back or until someone else could be found to take his place. Otherwise they would strike. Santa didn't want to make trouble, so he asked Grumpy to give him a day in which to think it over. Grumpy finally agreed to this, but as he left the office, to show his importance he puffed out his chest and said: "Understand, sir, no foolishness. I am here to see that their rights, and I intend to do my duty."

Do you wonder now that Santa sat buried in his chair deeply worried? He just couldn't make up his mind to give up the sugar plums meant for the good little girls and boys whom he loved so; but he

SWEET CONTENT STORY

By EDITH HIXON.

Sweet Content, our rosebud fairy, waved her magic wand, saying: "Wand, made of moonbeam ray, Let me have this wish, I pray: May I have wings gauzy and bright To carry me through the sky to-night."

Instantly beautiful gauzy wings shot out from her shoulders. She laughed happily and waved them gently. Her feet fluttered from the ground and she rose up like a gorgeous butterfly, for the wings shaded from bright rose color to palest lavender.

"Now I can have some fun," she thought, as she sailed over Flowerland village into the deep dark woods. There the sunbeams were playing hide and seek among the trees and bushes, while the birds chorused to each other with joyful voices.

Light-as-a-Feather, a dainty fairy dressed in canary-colored spiderweb gown, was dancing merrily on the mossy bank which follows the Singing Brook, when she saw our fairy.

"Come on and dance with me," said Light-as-a-Feather, who knew the many pitfalls for new fairies. But Sweet Content was so delighted with her new wings that she flew off swiftly, leaving Light-as-a-Feather. She dashed in among the trees and bushes until she was almost at Sally Sly's doorway. Then something dreadful happened. She was flying straight as an arrow for the house and had shut her eyes; she was so delighted with the new feeling, so of course she didn't see the cruel trap which Spiderspun had set for a nice fly dinner, and flew right into it. Of course, her wondrous wings caught, and as she struggled the cruel wires wound round and round until she was helpless. My, how she did scream! All Flowerland was dancing in the fields below, and the fiddler crab was playing so loudly that they never heard her, while the animal folk in the wood were off in the hunting grounds, so no one was about. Spiderspun was sunning himself close by the blue, smiling ocean and was not a bit hungry (he had just dined on a big bluebottle-fly), so there was no chance he would visit his traps again that day. Sweet Content was in despair.

Meanwhile, Light-as-a-Feather was already at Sally Sly's house. Sally had promised to make the wings, in fact she was working on them. Light-as-a-Feather was worried about our fairy. She was hurrying Sally Sly, promising her two golden earrings which would make her the envy of Spiderland if she would finish them before she counted seven. My goodness! but, won-

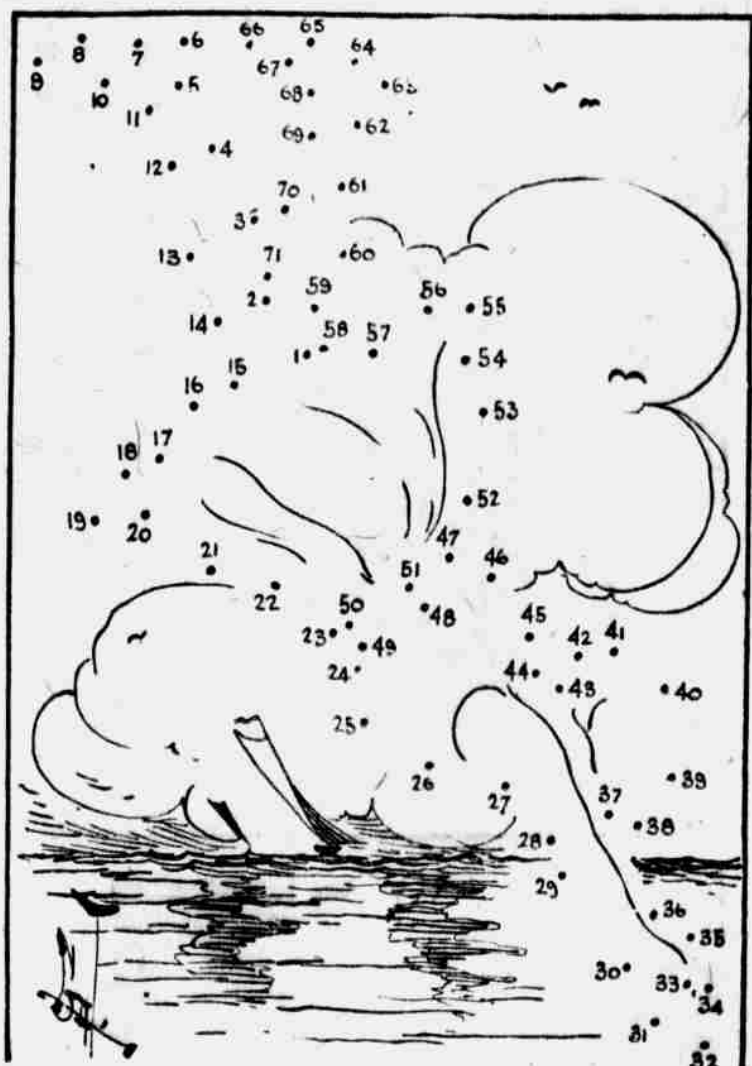
der of wonders, Sally managed it, and Light-as-a-Feather gave her two shining gold earrings, which she wears to this day.

Sweet Content couldn't get her hand onto her wand, or she could have escaped easily. Light-as-a-Feather tried to get it, but only succeeded in cutting her finger.

The two fairies were just about to give up, when along came Milly Mouse, who lives in a grass hut in the middle of the smooth rolling meadow. It wasn't a jiffy before she had our fairy out of the fearful trap. Sweet Content and Light-as-a-Feather hugged her with thanks, while Milly insisted that she hadn't done anything at all. When the fairies wanted to know what they could do to help her, she said that the only thing that they could do was to let her know when kittens were about. Sweet Content and Light-as-a-Feather fixed an alarm gong on Milly's house, which rings whenever a cat comes into a meadow. All the cats wonder why it is that they never can catch Milly sleeping, but the fairies only laugh and never tell.

Sweet Content and Light-as-a-Feather, as soon as they fixed Milly's alarm, flew to Cloudland and spent the rest of the day sailing through the heavens with Downywhite in her sapphire castle. But when night came they were so tired that Downywhite ordered Shooting Star to take them home. They folded up their wings and put them away, deciding that, while it is fun to fly, it is much nicer to dance on their two feet and run no danger of being tangled in wicked traps set by Spiderspun.

OUR PICTURE DOT PUZZLE



Can you finish this picture?

Complete the picture by drawing a line through the dots, beginning at No. 1 and taking them numerically.

Little Stories by Little Folks

(Prize Letter.)

Winnie's Sacrifice.
By Ethel Cunningham, Aged 11, 122 South Fifty-first street, Omaha, Neb.

Winnie was a little girl 12 years old. Her mother had died five years ago. Her father had just gone away on business and would not be back for three months. Jean and her husband, Jack, were staying with Winnie at the time my story opens. "Oh, that would be fun!" cried Winnie.

"What, Winnie dear?" questioned Jean.
"Going out camping in the mountains. Don't you think it would be great, Jack?" asked Winnie.
"I most certainly do!" exclaimed Jack. "We could go out to Colorado."

"Papa, before he went away, left

me \$200 for my vacation. Do you think that will be enough?"

"Why, yes, I think so." And he went on talking to Jean. Winnie's face took on an unusual thoughtful look. Then suddenly she burst out with "Jack, I'm not going to the mountains this year!"

"Why not, Winnie?" Jean and Jack asked together.
"I've been a selfish little girl! I've gone on vacations every summer and had ice cream and candy whenever I wanted it! In France our boys are dying just because I'm failing to do my part! I'm going to the drug store now and get some thirt stamps."

After she had gone, Jack and Jean nodded their heads knowingly. When Winnie's father returned he said it was fine. He had wished she would do it. Winnie is now saving every penny. She is also urging her friends to do the same. You cannot give your life, but you can give your money.

(Honorable Mention.)

The Hike.

By Berdean Henderson, Aged 11, Box 340, Norfolk, Neb.

Dear Busy Bees: This is my first letter. I am going to tell you about our Sunday school class' hike. The first Friday before school started we had a hike. We started about 7 o'clock in the

morning and went a long ways to a river. In the morning we did not do much because it was too cold. In the afternoon about 4 o'clock we went in the water. We were having a good time. Three boys came over to the place where we were. We had some of our things in the bath house. A rain coat, a sweater and a bicycle was outside. One boy took the bicycle down over the bank and hid it. They picked up a sweater and a rain coat and put it in a sack they had. They ran and hid the sweater and coat by some tracks. About 9 o'clock that night they returned the things. We were all tired out and did not have a very good time. I have read the stories every Sunday and wish to join the blue side. I hope Mr. Wastebasket has gone hunting.

A Nice Letter.

By Georgia D. Nardgren, Aged 8, Phillips, Neb.

My Dear Busy Bees: This will be my second letter to you, Busy Bees.

Now I will tell you what I have done to help win the war. I have bought war saving stamps for \$30 and baby stamps for \$2. I have two uncles in the army and I have three cousins also. My uncles' names are John and Dick. My letter is getting long so goodbye, Dear Busy Bees.

making a very heated speech. He tiptoed up behind the boxes and listened. As he had supposed, it was Grumpy, and he was evidently just finishing, for as Santa got within hearing distance he heard: "And in closing, let me say this, friends and fellow workers: Must we stand idly by and let this heartless despot walk all over us, and take from us the one thing that makes our lives here worth while? Just so he can keep up this bluff of his and make little children think that he alone is interested in their happiness? Who makes their toys and candy anyhow? Must we put up with this injustice, I say, or demand our lawful rights? I move we take this thing into our own hands and demand an answer at once."
Union Business.

He seemed to have many listeners, for there was loud clapping of hands and many such remarks as, "We're with you Grumpy!" "What's this union business for anyway if it won't protect our rights?"
Santa's anger was aroused and he waited to hear no more but stepped out where all could see him. Every thing quieted down at once and many turned to go but Santa held up his hand and told them to wait.
"You demand an immediate answer," he thundered. "You shall have it now. I should tell you to all clear out and give your union a fair test but I'm going to be more considerate of you than that. In a week you would all be back begging me to take you in again. I'm trying to be fair with you and I have no intention of asking you to do without your sugar plums," and he scowled at Grumpy, who looked very shamefaced. "You will find your sugar plums waiting for you at supper tonight and from then on as long as you behave yourselves. Now, then, the next time you start grumbling, be sure you have a good reason." He walked away, as if he were very much ashamed of their actions.

The Gnomes waited until he was out of sight and then without looking at one another went stinking back to their work.
(Continued Next Sunday)

—By—
CHESTER H. LAWRENCE

mustn't let the Gnomes go on strike either. All the most important work was yet to be done—such as putting the toys together, dressing the dolls, packing them all up and loading them in the sleigh.

Santa Laughs.

As he pondered there, all curled up, his chin buried in his hand and one foot tucked under him, he didn't look much like the jolly old Saint Nick that every girl and boy loves. But suddenly he seemed to change. His face began to wrinkle up, his eyes to twinkle—he commenced shaking all over and then throwing back his head, laughed long and heartily. Such a funny laugh as it was, too. From long experience Santa had learned to laugh without making a sound for fear of waking up someone while on his rounds filling stockings, and now he just sat there and shook and wheezed and held his sides, until the tears rained down his rosy old cheeks.

At last he sobered down, and from the businesslike manner in which he started in to work he must have found some way out of his trouble. He took off his coat, went down into the cellar and soon returned carrying a large sack. Af-

ter he had almost filled his office with these sacks, he took three of them that he had kept to themselves, into his private workroom. This was the room in which he made all his experiments and planned out all the toys that were needed to keep him up with the times and prevent people from saying that he had become old-fashioned.

In one corner of the room was a funny-looking machine, new and shiny, as if it had never been used. All around it, on the floor, were tools; Santa had been working on it before that morning. Santa picked up his tools and began tinkering with the bolts and rods and screws. It was his pet, and he almost forgot he had something else to do. He certainly took great pride in this machine, for even after he finally managed to leave it, he couldn't keep from turning around to admire it from a distance. "Now, my beauty," he chuckled, "I am going to give you a chance to show what you really can do. I'm trusting to you, so don't you dare disappoint me."

Three Sacks.

He picked up the three sacks he had brought from the cellar and

