

REAL LIVE BROWNIES

THEY WORK STRANGE DEEDS IN THE NIGHT IN THE SLEEPING WOODS

BY DAN BEARD.

FROM her hole in the old chestnut tree Fanny Flying Squirrel watched the sturdy lads "snaking" logs through the grove, and she saw them roll the logs up skids until the pile took on the form of a house; the little squirrel waited until the house was all finished, and then she passed the word to the wood brownies and they all moved in. The bats took up their quarters between the logs of the second story, the red squirrels between the logs of the first story, the white-footed mice and large black wood rats in all unoccupied nooks.

The Phoebe bird took possession of a projection over the kitchen door, the robin built its nest on the soap shelf by the towel rack, the black-tailed hornets defied the paper trust and built themselves a paper balloon under the apex of the eaves, the woodchuck sat himself with a home under the kitchen floor, the bumble bees occupied an sugar hole in a log of the area way, and Fanny Flying Squirrel found a fine place on top of the frame of the bedroom window. All seemed to think that the log cottage was built especially for them, and at first they resented human intrusion; but after a while, even the hornets would fly about in the most friendly manner watching the flies on the dinner table or even picking them from off one's nose or hands.

None of these wild creatures can be taught the sacrosanctness of property rights. They are all born communists, and believe that all forms of wealth are public property, and this belief often produces dire results to the brownies themselves.

Morning after morning the milk was given to the dog because he was the only one of the legitimate household who had no objection to milk with a drowned wood mouse in it. Once the strained honey was poured out on a flat stone for the benefit of the wild bees because a white-footed mouse had gnawed a hole through the lead covered cork. The mouse had fallen into the honey and perished, but its remains were preserved in the sweet liquid. The wood mice did not eat our fish, but they often took them from the plate in the cellar and hid them where they could not be found until our noses told us the secret of the hiding place. The little brownies once unwound a ball of twine and draped it all around the room, making a half hitch or two on a hunting knife and a pipe, without dislodging these objects from their insecure perch on the narrow ends of a board. They also took all the ticks from a new package and neatly stowed them away in the eggshells kept for setting the coffee.

But it was when the opening of Fanny Flying Squirrel filled the house that the real trouble began. The mother squirrel was content at first with making her nest from the tufts of cotton nibbled from the mattress. This first nest she made over the bedroom window. Determined to evict the little nuisance, I climbed on top of a kitchen chair, which was insecurely balanced on an unsteady washstand, and looked into the little home.

The mother squirrel poked up her pretty head inquiringly from beneath the soft nesting material, and when I gazed into the soft blue eyes of the little mother animal, all the ticks that were in my heart melted away. The chair tilted as I attempted to descend, and I came down with a crash, smashing a mirror, spraining my wrist and lacerating both shins; but I left Fanny Flying Squirrel in undisturbed possession of her claim.

One season in company with a friend, I fished the brooks on the way to Wild Lands. My friend said he would clean the fish if I would be cook. The house had been closed all winter, and after opening the doors and windows I split some wood and built a fire and then ran outside to breathe, for the smoke filled the room. My friend said that the chimney was cold. He said as soon as it got warm the smoke would go up. In the meantime the smoke refused to go up, but it filled the kitchen, and when that was full, it streamed out of the windows and doors. But never a whiff went out of the chimney. My eyes and throat smarted, my lungs were sore, and my cheeks were blue. I was covered with ashes, my face was blackened; in desperation I climbed to the roof and, with a long pole, felt for the obstruction in the chimney—there was none there.

After building a dozen fire and extinguishing them again, I called my friend, and together we took down the stovepipe and found that the space from the elbow of the pipe for three feet was packed with fine carded wool made from raveling gnawed from the dining-room rug. In this warm, smokeproof nest we found Fanny Flying Squirrel, and as usual there was a family of little ones with her. We spared the old mother and nursing babies, dumping them carefully into a cracker box. It was 9 o'clock that night when two hungry men at last sat down to a feast of crackers and trout.

Not long after this adventure, the log house at Wild Lands was filled with a merry company of city people—people with all the city fear of solitude and a firm belief in the existence of terrible blood-sucking bats, long-toothed venomous serpents with a miraculous power of charming their intended victims, and replaceable hoop snakes and poisonous swiffs.

As night approached the fear of these things crept over the guests, and they retired to their cot, trembling. Through the chinks they could see the stars twinkle and they knew that a hypothetically inclined snake would choose just such an opening through which to reach its victims.

Suddenly had the guests closed their eyes for slumber when some live thing fell with a sickening thud on the chest of the most timid guest; it is fortunate her heart was so sound or it would have ceased to beat.

Hardly daring to breathe, much less to scream for help, the frightened guest lay



QUAINT AND CURIOUS STORIES

ODD THINGS TOLD OF FOUR-FOOTED ANIMALS, FISH AND MEN

ON the 23d day of September, in every year, two huge stone lions at Budapest, Hungary, are covered with a merry company of city people—people with all the city fear of solitude and a firm belief in the existence of terrible blood-sucking bats, long-toothed venomous serpents with a miraculous power of charming their intended victims, and replaceable hoop snakes and poisonous swiffs.



FROM MAID TO MADAM AND MADAM TO MAID.

suddenly left the others and ran ahead of the coach, which had halted for a few moments that Mr. Randolph might chat with a friend in the dog house. The dog walked too far away from the coach, and the dog-catcher of the town threw a net over its head. The hound whined and barked, and in a few moments up came the Randolph coach. Mr. Randolph was furious with rage. He rescued his hound, and, turning his wrathful eyes toward the crowd that had gathered, he exclaimed, with the very essence of scotch in his shrill voice: "Juba—oh, Juba! fetch some water and wash the dog where the men had hold of him."

Devotion of a Salmon.

A gentleman who was fishing with a trout fly hooked a salmon. The salmon was a fine specimen of its kind, as the delighted angler could see; but, as luck would have it, the salmon flew off the hook just at the moment when he was about to be landed. A week later, the fisherman was with a friend at the same spot, and in the course of the forenoon the same salmon was hooked. While the men were playing with their game, another salmon came to the net, and he turned toward the captive. Then a strange thing occurred. The small salmon tried to fly the large fish free itself from the hook. At last the captive was hauled into shallow water, and came to the net as if determined to die with his friend. One of the men waded in and scooped up the salmon which had thus strangely surrendered, in which he was pushed around here, and it was taken to a pond in the same locality and released. It lingered near the surface of the pool for a few moments, and then swam off, satisfied apparently that it had forever lost its companion.

A Squirrel Story.

Three red squirrels make their home in the hollow of an elm tree at Stockbridge, Mass. A little girl, who lives near the tree, goes out to it several times a day and knocks on the trunk, and she makes a whirring noise at the same moment. Whether she responds by the knocks or the whirring, the three squirrels come running down the trunk, and, taking whatever food their little friend may offer, they skip back to the crotch of the tree. At the point of a sort of landing, and on the landing the squirrels sit while eating the food, which is mainly in the form of nuts. "Two of them are very tame," said the little girl, recently, "but one is a real terror."

Whipped 49 Pupils in 37 Minutes.

Professor F. A. Lillie, of Waterbury, Conn., is the champion spanker of the world. Recently he chastised 49 pupils in 37 minutes. A minstrel parade appeared just before the time for the school to assemble for the afternoon session. Every one of the pupils, even to the "littler girl," struck and followed the band. During the afternoon the children began to talk, and when the teacher appeared the professor called an executive session in the basement, where he had put away a nice piece of garden hose of convenient length. In five minutes the 49 children had assembled in the cellar they were marched back to their desks and every one of them had had a taste of garden hose.

Terrapin Catching.

Among the singular occupations of those who live along the rivers and creeks of the eastern shore of Maryland is that of the terrapin catcher. "It takes a peculiar kind of skill," said a veteran terrapin hunter at Oxford, in Talbot County, a few weeks ago; "it requires long practice for a man to catch terrapins. Some draft for it, if you don't remember, just look at the man on the road, even if they do not actually land you at your destination. One of these short cuts is the famous old stanzas in six lines.

What He Knew About Cats.

Cats, unlike the other insects, don't have a sting. The bumblebee has one. A cat can't sting a fly, but a fly can sting a cat. Cats don't like bees, especially them that has splinters in their tails, which this had. The thing stung all the way down, and halfway back again; that cat ran about it miles, and then dropped down by the shabby side of a henback finding the blue speak—the art of righting them. It is a kind of woodcraft, and in woodcraft experience is the great teacher.

THE PRESIDENT'S YOUNGEST BOYS.

The President's youngest boys have a collection of tame bats. Washington Correspondence of the Brookings Eagle.

GAMES OF CHASE OR TAG.

Swiss children make believe that the pursuer in the game of chase or "tag" is invested with an imaginary evil spirit whose power is subject to certain charms. For instance, if they touch cold iron, a gate latch, a horseshoe or an iron nail, the power of the demon is broken. Sometimes they make gold or silver their charm. They play "cross-chase," in which the runner who darts across the patch between the pursued and the pursuer becomes the object of the catcher, and the former one goes free. Again if the runner squints he is free, or he may utter three times and after that the charm is lost. The chaser often disguises himself and unless the captive can guess who he is the captive is banished from the game. They also play "turn-cap"—the chaser wearing his cap with the lining outside.

NIGNI, THE DWARF

THE ADVENTURES OF A LITTLE MAN AS WRITTEN BY HIMSELF



"A GREAT MANY NEWSPAPER MEN CALLED TO SEE ME."

I WAS exhibited in London for six months, and then made a tour of all the cities and it was a full year before we crossed to France. The French people did not receive me as enthusiastically as the English had done, but still they were very kind. They seemed to prefer giants to dwarfs, and after six months we went to Germany. Here we did not do well at all. There were two or three other dwarfs on exhibition, although all were larger than I, and the people had much to say about hard times. We made money all the time, but Mr. Yeddo was not satisfied. One night after we had returned from the hall and were sitting

country, and when we landed in the big city, I said to Annak: "Ah, this is good! I like this noise and bustle, and I like to see the people flying about. I am sure that I shall not be sorry I came."

A great many newspaper men called at the hotel to see me and write me up, and the Mayor and some of the Aldermen had dinner with me, and when I gave my first exhibition the streets were blocked with people, who could not get into the hall. There was more excitement than in London, and so many people loitered around the hall in hope to get a glimpse of me that the police had to drive them away.

I was on exhibition in New York for four months before going over to Boston, and my friends were numbered by the thousands. One of them was only a woman, but he did something for me that added very much to the interest of the exhibition. One day, when I had told him about my battle with the grasshopper, he looked very thoughtful, and two days later he came back with an insect made of cardboard. It was made and painted to look like a real grasshopper, and it wound up with a spring, and when he set it down on the floor it jumped about in the most natural manner. "My idea is this," he explained, "You will take the grasshopper on the stage with you and show the people how you fought."

Mr. Yeddo and Annak were delighted with the plan, and it was announced in the papers that Nigni would do no great battle over again in public. When I had finished my song, I stepped back and drew my sword and called out: "If I have an enemy here, let him stand forth and do his best!" Mr. Yeddo then let the toy grasshopper loose on me, and as the thing jumped here and there about the stage, I ran in and cut his head off, and the crowd cheered for five minutes. We had to have two grasshoppers every day, but as they only cost a cent each, there was no fear of our going to the poorhouse.

SCHOOL SHORT CUTS

RHYMES AND JINGLES THAT HELP ONE TO REMEMBER THINGS

THERE is no royal road to learning. At least, every one seems to be agreed that there isn't, so that there is no use in saying that there is. But there are some short cuts in the direction of learning, which take you some distance on the road, even if they do not actually land you at your destination. One of these short cuts is the famous old stanzas in six lines.

Thirty days hath September, April, June and November; All the rest have thirty-one, Excepting February alone; It has four and twenty-four, And every year one day more.

The rhythm of that verse is almost as bad as that of "Humpty Dumpty," with which you will remember, Alice found fault; if you don't remember, just look at "Through the Looking-Glass," chapter six.

Now, if we had put that in a note—"See 'Through the Looking Glass' vi. p. 147"—it would have looked like a real school book, wouldn't it?

The trouble is, people won't believe that what is written in rhyme can really be learning. Of course, you have to learn poems and verses to recite on Friday, but then you don't learn them because they teach you anything—you learn them because you have to. But there really are some rhymes that teach you things. Here, for example, is a grammar in rhyme and a very complete grammar, too, so far as it goes. Learn it thoroughly and you'll find yourself pretty well up in what is called elementary grammar:

- I. Three little words you often see, Are articles "a," "an" and "the."
- II. A noun's the name of anything, As "school" or "garden," "hoop" or "swing."
- III. Adjectives tell the kind of noun, As "great," "small," "pretty," "white" or "brown."
- IV. Instead of nouns the pronouns stand, As "his," "her," "face," "my" arm, "your" hand.
- V. Verbs tell of something to be done—To "read," "count," "laugh," "sing," "jump" or "run."
- VI. How things are done, the adverbs tell, As "slowly," "quickly," "high" or "well."
- VII. Conjunctions join the words together—As man "and" woman, wind "or" weather.

deuts, and, like it, needs to be brought is shorter than this poem of the President in days.

First, William the Norman, then William the first; Henry, Stephen and Henry, then Richard and John; Next came the Third, Edwards one, two and three—Again after Richard, three Henrys we see. Two Edwards, three Richard, five Ricards; Two Henrys, six Edwards, Queens Mary and Bees.

Then Jamie the Scot, and Charles whom they saw; Again followed Cromwell, another Charles, too. Then James, called the Second, ascended the throne. Then William and Mary together came on; Till Ann, Georges four and fourth William all past.

God sent us Victoria, the youngest and last. The most important lesson in rhymes perhaps is that which teaches a person to play whist. It begins:

When you the modern game of whist would know, From these few precepts let your practice flow. But as the modern game of whist has changed so much since that poetical lesson was written it would not be worth while to print it; besides, whist isn't a lesson; it's a game, and we were playing lessons, not games."

RIVALRY OF PING PONG. It is called Badminton and Has Been Taken Up in England. Badminton is coming into vogue again in a way that promises to lay ping pong on the shelf as a society game. English social lights, which look so devotedly to ping pong, have begun to give notice that Badminton is in better taste, and a social organ says of the game: "Badminton can be played out of doors, on a lawn or in a carriage drive, and indoors in a large room. Two, three, four, six or eight may play at once. The best game, however, is six, when there are two women up on each side of the net while a man keeps back behind them. The game, as might be expected, derived its name from the fact that it was first introduced in England by a member of a house party at Badminton in the time of the late Duke of Beaufort."

Sober tennis-players who had scorned ping pong as something immeasurably less than tennis, may incline toward Badminton, though it, too, may be reduced to indoor quarters. For, with the exception of the balls used, Badminton is tennis. Its play is the same, being observed according to the same rules, and only the lack of the rebounding quality in the balls differing from tennis.

The ball used in the shuttlecock that goes with this game is made of a cork ball of cork, weighted with lead, or it may be hard rubber, and in either case it is winged with feathers, which causes the ball to revolve, at the same time flying swiftly, guided by the feathers when it strikes the earth or floor, it must be "volleyed," and each failure to return the ball is counted against the player who misses.

Only in the fact that these hard balls are winged, do not rebound; and have to be "volleyed," does the game differ from tennis. In this volleying, however, is the tension and strained interest of the player and spectator, and as a rival for ping pong it looks as if society needed only to pass the word to effect the change.

The Habits of the Robins. Let us hide behind that clump of black-berry bushes and watch the parent birds as they come to feed their young. There comes the father robin now; you can distinguish him from the mother by his darker plumage. You will notice that he is coming with the food he brings on a particular twig, hops along a particular branch and alights on a particular side of the nest. If you watched him for a week you would probably see him approach the nest in precisely the same way each time. Now here comes the mother—a lighter-colored bird, with gray on the back of her head. You see that she reaches the nest by quite a different route and alights on the other side of it, and she will do this over and over and over again. Like men and women, birds acquire habits which they rigidly adhere to, unless something happens to prevent them.—From Harold Byrnes in the June Woman's Home Companion.



Cross Tag.