

sure you never saw anything like him before.

"Is it an alligator," asked Frank, "or a big snake?"

"It's neither; you couldn't guess. He's the worst looking animal you ever saw," and Uncle Peter smiled but wouldn't give another hint.

When they reached the park gates this is what they saw.

"A buffalo!" cried Tom, who had seen pictures of buffaloes.

"Oh, isn't he a sight!" exclaimed Frank. "Uncle Peter," asked Tom, "What are these spots on him?"

"Why, he is shedding his hair," exclaimed Uncle Peter. "Those spots are what is left of his last year's coat of fur. It covered him all through the cold winter, and now that it is summer he is losing it. Sometimes he goes to a tree and rubs himself against it. That helps to rub the fur off."

"Do you think it hurts him?" asked Tom. Uncle Peter laughed. "Oh, no! It is too warm for him and he is glad to get rid of it, for he has a nice new coat growing all over him. But come, boys, let's go and feed the bear."

#### The Homing Instinct of Bees

In the Fortnightly Review, Henri Fabre, the naturalist, tells a characteristic story about Darwin and himself. Darwin wished to explain the homing instinct of bees, and he induced Fabre to begin a series of experiments with that purpose in view. A regular plan of campaign was drawn up. Marked bees were placed in a dark box, and were carried away from the hive in an opposite direction from that in which they were finally liberated. The box was repeatedly turned about, so that the inmates should lose all sense of direction. Every possible means was taken to render useless any known or conceivable method of obtaining their bearings. The bees were even placed within an induction coil in the effort to confuse them.

The long and elaborate series of tests was without value, so far as getting any explanation of the homing power was concerned. In every case, from thirty to forty per cent of the bees found their way home without apparent trouble, no matter how confusing the trip away from home had been made.

#### The Fairy of the Fountain

By Antoinette DeC. Patterson

The Fairy of the Fountain and the Little Boy of the Fountain are not the same. The Little Boy of the Fountain is a small image who sits by the waters, day in and day out, with uplifted finger, beckoning the birds to drink or bathe in the basin that he holds in his lap.

And how many, many birds come at his mute call! Freda could tell you, for she is always watching for such things. But how the fairy got there, or where she really came from, Freda never knew.

According to the little girl herself, it all happened in this way: As she was sitting one morning by the fountain, feeding the goldfish, she fell to wondering what it was that made the water bubble up in the basin in such a queer way. Of course grandmother could explain it all; but then that would stop the wondering, which in itself was such fun! Suddenly a wild canary flew toward her, and perched on the finger of the Little Boy of the Fountain; but the strangest thing was that, instead of singing Freda a song, it began to speak to her!

"Little girl," it said, "shut your eyes for just a moment."

Freda did so, and when she opened them again, behold, standing right on the edge of the basin, was the tiniest and the loveliest little figure that you can imagine!

"I am the Fairy of the Fountain," the little creature said at once. "You were wondering what made the water bubble up in such a funny way. It is I who make it do that, with my little golden churn. If you don't believe me, just notice how still the water is now, while I am talking to you!" And sure enough, the rippling sound had quite ceased.

At first Freda felt very shy in the presence of so strange a visitor, but at last she found her voice and asked the fairy a question.

"Will you let me play some day with your little golden churn?"

"I wish I could," said the fairy good-naturedly, "but you would never be able to get down through such a tiny little hole. Still, you may try it if you wish."

But Freda could only succeed in getting the end of one finger down the water pipe.

"Can't you bring your churn up here?" she asked, as she shook the water from her finger.

The fairy shook her head. "I should be afraid of losing it, and then all my fun would be spoiled forever and ever and ever."

"I'm sure that if you did lose it my grandmother would let me get you another one," argued Freda.

But the fairy remained firm. "There isn't another one like it to be found outside of fairyland," she said, "and they are scarce enough there."

"How big is it?" asked Freda. "And is it all bright and shining?"

"It's bigger than a thimble," said the fairy, "and brighter than any star."

"Oh, how I wish I could see it!" exclaimed Freda, clasping her hands.

"Well," said the fairy, relenting, "I'll bring it just for a moment to the top of the basin if, as soon as you have seen it,

you will shut your eyes again while you count ten."

Freda promised, and before she could have believed it possible, the fairy drew to the top of the water pipe the most wonderful little churn—just a little bigger than a thimble and brighter than any star.

"Now close your eyes," she said to Freda.

Freda did as she had promised; and when she opened her eyes once more there was no fairy anywhere to be seen—only a wee yellow bird perched on the finger of the Little Boy of the Fountain. The bird trilled forth a sweet note or two and then disappeared. And almost immediately the water began to ripple again in the basin where the goldfish were at play.

So Freda will tell you that now she knows just how it happens that the water comes bubbling up: that it is a little fairy churning away at a golden churn. If anyone tells Freda that she must have been asleep and dreaming, she answers that if she had been asleep she would surely have fallen into the fountain and got most dreadfully wet.

#### Gloom and Gleam

The re's gloom enough to keep you glum,  
And sorrows will ever crowding come;  
If signals for storms you always fly  
There'll be matter enough to make you cry.

There's gleam enough to keep you glad,  
Though the skies are heavy and times are bad,  
And blessings will follow on apace  
The one who gives with a smiling face.

So banish the gloom that keeps you glum  
To the farthest corner of Christendom,  
And cherish the gleam that keeps you glad  
As the best little comrade you ever had.

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