

The Tea Kettle Song

Do you hear the song the tea-kettle sings
 Above the fire-light glow
 While the white steam floats like a leech
 And the fancies tall and slow
 Do you know the song the tea-kettle sings
 O boy with the wondering eyes
 Long ago it was read by a boy like you
 As he watched the steam clouds rise
 And he learned that song and his song
 Over every land and sea today
 In the crowded town and the forest wild
 And the hill-top high and free
 And the music that floats from the rush
 And the roll of the rumbling wheel
 Is the strain that was learned from the
 Tea-kettle's song
 And written on bars of steel

A LITTLE ANTWERP MONKEY.

I have always liked monkeys, so I was delighted to go into the great monkey-house in the Antwerp Zoo, by some persons regarded as the finest in Europe, and find it, with its marble floors and glass-fronted cages, clean and sweet smelling as the most fastidious could desire.

We stopped some time in front of the large airy room which had been set aside for bed-room and parlor for Monsieur and Madame Chimpanzee, a low partition separating the two rooms. The happy pair had just been presented with a new set of furniture, and monsieur was very much out of temper because so many people had come to see how they liked it. Madame, his wife, was very busy shaking out the rugs, dusting the chairs, putting on the table-cloth, tidying up generally, and the children clustered in front of the cage were laughing with delight, but her husband sat in an ill-tempered bunch, until at last, his feelings being too much for him, he swooped upon his wife, picked her up in his arms, carried her into the bed-room, put her into the little French bedstead, shook her well when she struggled and objected, and slapped her severely, I grieve to say, covered her up, neck and nose, with a sheet, tucking her in so that not even her tail could be seen, and then sat down with his back to the audience in a most suggestive way.

Then we passed on to the large central, many-sided cage, where hosts of little monkeys were disporting themselves.

They were sociable little people. Not content with chattering to their friends in the same enclosure, they nodded and grinned through the glasses to their neighbors on both sides.

But one small monkey, a bright-eyed little fellow, sat on his haunches, chin in hand, quite apart from the other, searching the crowd anxiously with his tiny black eyes.

While I watched him, an attendant came up and asked in fair though labored English, "If madame saw that little monkey," and when I replied in the affirmative, he continued, "If madame would

watch but a moment more, she would be able to amuse herself much.

"It is now the time," he went on, looking up at the clock, "for the friend, that he come—ah, he now approaches."

As he spoke, the monkey suddenly sprang up, curled his tail and one little black hand round a bar where the glass had been lowered, and began to wave the other small morsel of a hand in the air, throwing kisses with it, bobbing his head, and acting as if mad with joy.

Through the crowd came a little curly-headed Flemish boy, cap in hand, school-books under arm, showing all his pretty white teeth as he laughed and nodded quite as happily as the monkey.

Up he came to the cage, and between the bars went out two little brown arms, drawing him close enough for his tiny furry friend to clasp him about the neck, pat his cheeks, smooth his hair, arrange his collar and necktie, and kiss him again and again.

At last when the first transport of joy was over, the boy put his books down on the floor, and submitted himself to an examination conducted with wonderful rapidity and exactness. Each pocket in turn was rifled, its contents noted, first the boy's nose, then the monkey's, wiped with a small cotton handkerchief which the monkey then carefully folded and returned to its owner's pocket.

A piece of lead-pencil next occasioned much rejoicing, and was stowed away in a capacious cheek while the search went on uninterrupted. At last a small cracker was drawn from one pocket, a nut from the other, and called forth wild demonstrations of delight and gratitude.

The books were now in turn submitted for his inspection, and the monkey examined each one, turning the leaves with marvellous rapidity and yet not seeming to miss one page, handing each one back, held upright that it might slip safely between the bars as soon as the last leaf had been turned.

The last one the boy handed in was a small blank-book, which he went through carefully, turning the leaves back and

forth till he had selected a special one, which he then tore out, so carefully that the rest of the book was uninjured. Seating himself on a crossbar, he spread the sheet out on the cover of the book, took the pencil from his mouth and began to scribble industriously, looking up now and again, for the smile and nod of approval which never failed to greet him.

At last, when the sheet was quite covered with pencil-marks, he polished the pencil on his little furry arm, restored it to its owner's pocket, handed back the book, rolled his piece of paper into a hard, round ball, patted and pressed it with both hands, slipped down from his perch and hurried off to conceal it in the hiding-place which had received his other treasures. This time he came back with a dejected air, which I understood when I saw the boy gather up his possessions,—the hour of parting was evidently drawing near.

Again the little arms clasped the beloved friend, the small wrinkled cheek was pressed against his, the skinny, little black hands caressed him with passionate, pathetic tenderness. In all but words, the little dumb creature pleaded for longer happiness, and the boy, I was delighted to see, seemed quite as loath as the monkey to say good-by. Finally, after stroking the small head and shaking the little hands again and again the boy turned away, only to be recalled by a queer cry for one more embrace.

Then the monkey seemed to accept the inevitable, and as the boy left him, scrambled rapidly to a high cross-bar where he could look over the heads of the crowd after his retreating figure, and throw kisses which the boy constantly turned and acknowledged. At last, when he could no longer be seen, the monkey squatted dejectedly on the perch, chin in hand, the back of the other in requisition to wipe real tears from his eyes.

"What a dear little monkey, and what a very pretty sight. Does this happen often?" I asked of the attendant, who had invited my attention to this scene.

"Each day, madame. If madame were to come at all times of the year at this hour, she would see always the same thing, the very same thing."

"How did the monkey learn all these little ways?"

"From his intimate, madame. Until two years he was but like all other of the monkeys. It was then this boy did begin to be friends with him, to teach him gentleness, to rebuke him of all rudeness, to treat him as if he had been another boy,—not with the persecution that many do show to the caged and helpless. Many have since that time tried to be more kind and good with these prisoned things, and the temper of all the monkeys in this cage has grown more amiable in result."

"Did you see him teach the monkeys these pretty tricks?"

"No, madame, we did first perceive it when we found this monkey would no more eat on Sundays. Paul is a boy of a school near by, and goes always through the gardens at this hour. On Saturdays, after he knew that he had won the love of this little beast, he did come also, but Sundays it was not permitted, and then would the lonely one cry and cry like one little child.

"Then a kind man who heard the story was so pleased that he got for the boy a pass that he could come also on Sunday. At one time Paul fell ill, and when he came not, the monkey also fell so ill that we were forced to take him to the house of the boy that his life might be saved. He was then so weak that he could no longer swallow, but when he had looked upon the boy, his spirit came to him once more that he could both eat and drink.

"We permitted, with the leave of our chiefs, that he remained at the home of the boy till both were well again. The father of the child would give much money that his son might own the monkey, but their love one for the other makes so much of pleasure for the many people that do come here, that no money would be great enough for us to part ourselves from him."

I turned to take a farewell look at the affectionate little caricature of humanity. He sat cross-legged on the floor of the cage, his pencil-marked sheet of paper before him, studying it gravely while he smoothed out each crease and wrinkle with his tiny brown hands.—*Youth's Companion.*

