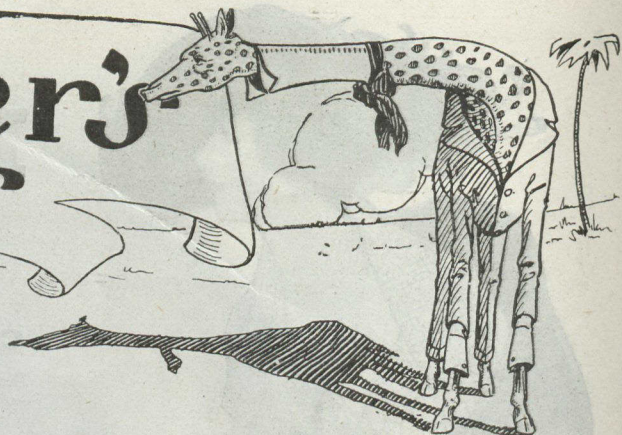




# Uncle Peter's Stories



## Business in the Jungle

"THIS is a lazy life," said the Lion, yawning hugely. "I wish we had something to do," said the Elephant, who was drawing pictures in the sand with his trunk. "I'm even tired of eating," said the Giraffe. "I have to wait such a long time for anything I eat to get down the length of my neck."

"Let's go into business," said the Lion. "But we don't know anything about business," said the Elephant. "That doesn't matter," said the Giraffe. "Lots of people go into business who don't know anything about it."

"I think," said the Lion, "that it would be a good idea to go into the clothing business. Vanity is the great thing which keeps the



Mr. Monkey makes some cards.

clothing business brisk and at any rate we could get some new clothes for ourselves, which would be a very good idea in itself. I notice that your trousers are very much frayed, Mr. Elephant," said the Lion. "They're not a bit worse than your hat," said the Elephant.

"I think I'll make myself a pair of silk trousers," said the Elephant. "They would be just the thing for this warm climate." "Why not try a change?" said the Giraffe. "The ones you are wearing now are sat-in, very much sat-in." "You may think you're funny," said the Elephant, "but believe me, you're not a bit funnier than you look with that absurd little head 'way up in the air." "Well," said the Giraffe, "the trouble about you is that no one knows whether you are coming or going, you're so much alike at both ends, and as for Mr. Lion, although he has such a big head, he hasn't enough brains to get his hair cut."

There is no doubt at all that in a very few minutes they would have all been quarrelling, but just at that moment a voice from above said: "Gentlemen, please get back to business," and looking up they saw Mr. Monkey in the tree above their heads. And Mr. Monkey, dropping off the tree, landed on Mr. Giraffe's head and slid down his neck until he was sitting on his back.

"If you are going into business you will have to advertise," said Mr. Monkey. "But we don't know anything about advertising," said Mr. Lion. "I will be your advertising manager," said Mr. Monkey. "The very first thing you need will be some cards, telling everyone what business you are in. I will make the cards for you."



We are learning something," said the Elephant.

So Mr. Monkey took three big cards and wrote on them in big letters three signs, and this is what he wrote on the first one:

"Lion Hats make themselves Felt. Buy Lion Felt Hats." And on the second he wrote: "Whatever I make my trousers of, they are all satin when they're finished. Wear my trousers. Mr. L. E. Fant."

And on the third card he wrote: "Giraffe Collars. The highest point ever reached in collar making. The best and the longest in existence."

"Now," said Mr. Monkey, "all you have to do is to start business, and as soon as you have enough things made, put these cards out where everyone will see them. You will soon have so many customers you won't know what to do with them all."

SO THE very next day they started in to work, and day after day Mr. Lion made hats, Mr. Elephant made trousers and Mr. Giraffe made collars, until they had quite a stock of them. And one day Mr. Lion said: "The time has come for us to put out our cards." So they all put out their cards and waited for customers to come along and buy the things they had made.

They did not have long to wait. First of all came Mr. Goat. "I would like to buy some collars," said Mr. Goat. "Here you are, sir," said Mr. Giraffe. "Very fine collars you will find them. I sell them by the yard." "They're much too long for me," said Mr. Goat. "That's because your neck is too short," said Mr. Giraffe. "My neck is entirely my own business," said Mr. Goat. "And my collars are my business," said Mr. Giraffe. "They're much too long," said Mr. Goat, "and you're likely to have them a lot longer before you sell any of them," said he.

Next Mr. Goat went to see Mr. Elephant. "I want a pair of trousers," said Mr. Goat. "I have some very fine trousers here," said Mr. Elephant, bringing out a pair big enough to make a tent out of. "But they are much too big for me," said Mr. Goat. "That's because you are too small," said Mr. Elephant. "My size is my own business," said Mr. Goat. "And making trousers is my business," said Mr. Elephant. Mr. Goat went away quite disgusted, and no wonder.

Next Mr. Goat called on Mr. Lion. "I want to buy a hat," said Mr. Goat. Mr. Lion brought out a hat as big as a house, or so it seemed to Mr. Goat. "It is much too big for me," said Mr. Goat. "That's because your head is the wrong shape," said Mr. Lion. "The shape of my head is my own business," said Mr. Goat. "And making hats is my business," said Mr. Lion. "What business are you in?" he asked. "I'm in the butter business," said Mr. Goat, and putting down his head he butted Mr. Lion so hard that he fell right over into a pile of his new hats. "You're better at your business than I am at mine," said Mr. Lion. "I should hope so," said Mr. Goat.

Bad days followed. It was just the same with all the other animals as it had been with Mr. Goat. When Mr. Stork wanted a pair of trousers and saw the great big pair that Mr. Elephant wanted to sell him, he got quite vexed about it. As for the hat that Mr. Lion offered him, it made matters worse. "I could use it very well as a nest for Mrs. Stork," said he.

Business got worse and worse. Customers came and went away without buying anything, because there was nothing that would fit them, and after a time Mr. Elephant said: "We had better go out of business again the same way we came in," and all the others agreed with him.

Now, just about the time that they had decided to go out of business, another Monkey happened to come along that way. He found Mr. Elephant and Mr. Lion and Mr. Giraffe all feeling very sad indeed. "What is the matter with you all?"

asked Mr. Monkey Number Two. So they told him all about their business and their advertising.

When they had finished, Mr. Monkey said: "I will give you some lessons in business." So he told them to sit down in the shade of a tree, and he took a big board and a brush and some white paint. "Now," said Mr. Monkey number Two, "this is my first lesson." And he wrote on the board,

"Make your goods to suit your customers." "Now, we are really learning something," said Mr. Elephant. "We ought to have known that before," said Mr. Lion. "Yes," said Mr. Monkey, "you ought to have known it, but there are many others in business who do not know it



They're much too long for me," said the Goat.

much better than you did. It is the most specially important thing you have to remember when you get into business," said he.

NOW after Mr. Monkey Number Two had gone away, Mr. Lion and Mr. Elephant and Mr. Giraffe sat down and talked things over. "We can't do it," said Mr. Lion. "There are quite forty-eleven sizes of heads in the jungle, and I couldn't possibly make a hat to fit each of them."

"As for trousers," said Mr. Elephant, "I should need to make Umpty-nine different sizes. I couldn't make enough in a thousand years," said he.

"Well," said Mr. Giraffe, "you two can go out of business if you like, but I am intending to stay in. I shall make my collars ten feet long, and cut them up in lengths to suit my customers."

"How will you manage about sizes," said Mr. Elephant, who sometimes had an idea of his own. "A collar that would fit me," said Mr. Elephant, "would be quite umpteen sizes too big for Mr. Stork," said he.

"I guess I'll have to stay out of business after all," said Mr. Giraffe. And he did.

And the end of it all was that Mr. Lion had enough hats to last him for the rest of his life, Mr. Elephant was able to wear a different pair of trousers every day in the week and two on Sunday, and as for Mr. Giraffe, he was never known after that to be without a clean collar. And they often looked at the card which Mr. Monkey Number Two had made for them, and which said: "Make your goods to suit your customers."

"We are our own customers."

