

LITTLE FOLKS

The Homesickness of Tokyo.

It was only an ordinary mud turtle. Fred discovered it making its way along the bed of the brooklet that crossed the corner of Uncle Jerry Fisher's meadow. As Fred was a city boy, a turtle was quite a novelty; he found it so interesting that he began to wonder whether Elsie would care to have it.

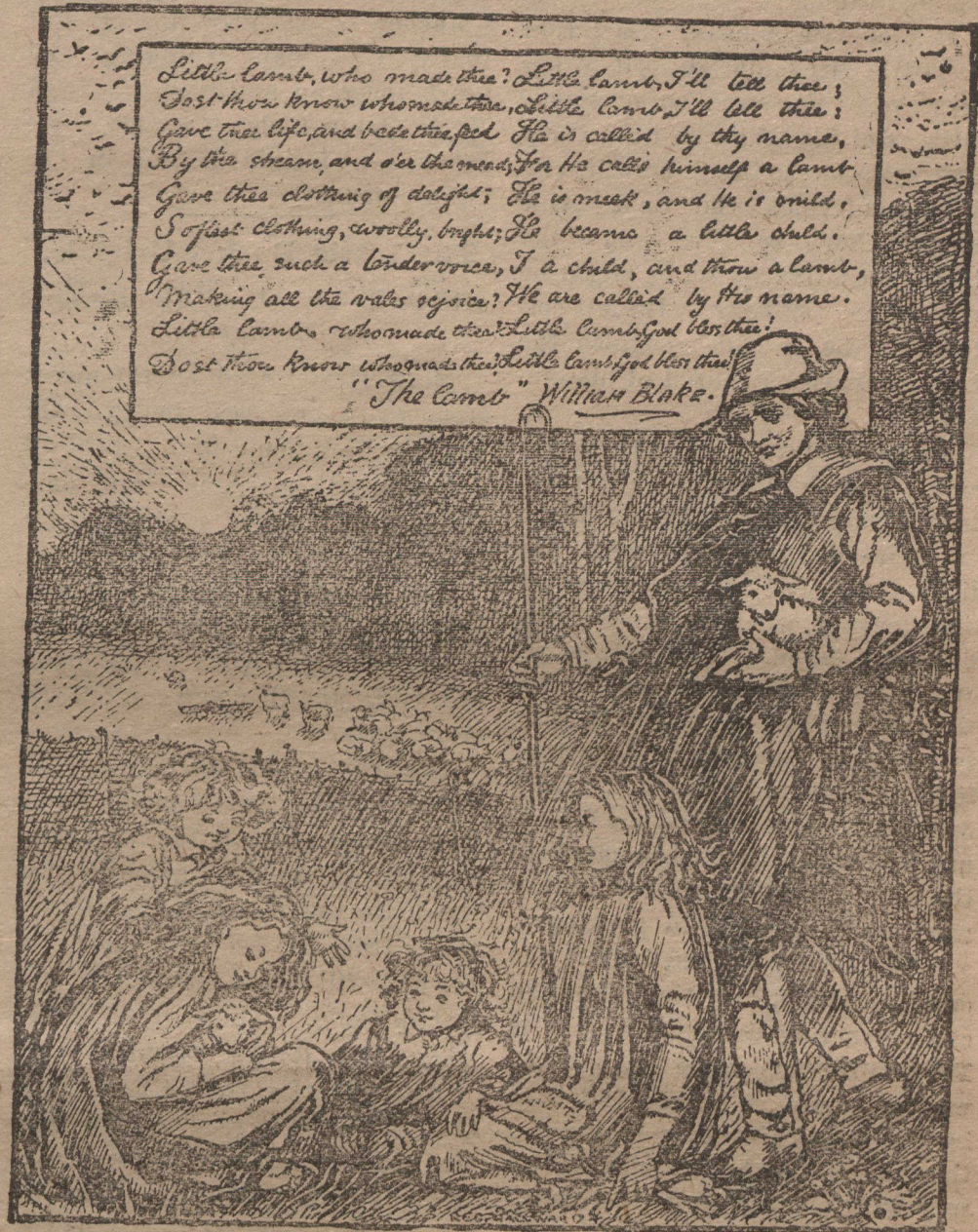
Elsie was ill and Fred longed to 'do something for her,' as he expressed it. Gifts of fruit and bonbons were out of the question, for old Dr. Brown would not allow her to taste either. And, as her eyes were in a weak condition, she was debarred from reading books and looking at pictures. A mud turtle was a strange offering, but Fred reflected that Elsie dearly loved animals and numbered among her pets chickens, rabbits, a puppy, two kittens, a lamb and a parrot. Once she had tried to tame a grasshopper. Fred thought a turtle not so very much worse than a grasshopper. So he put it in his pocket and hurried 'cross lots' to the Graysons' cottage.

Elsie received his gift with unmistakable pleasure. She praised the prettily marked shell and laughed at the queer little tail. 'He looks like something Japanese,' she said thoughtfully, as she turned the turtle upon his back. 'I think I shall give him a Japanese name.'

After considerable discussion she decided to name him Tokyo. 'Because,' she explained to her mother, 'we can call him Toky or Toke if Tokyo sounds too long.'

Mrs. Grayson remembered that there was under the attic eaves an old aquarium. Fred pulled this treasure from its hiding-place and, after a great deal of washing and polishing, triumphantly brought it downstairs and placed it in the bay window of the library. 'Toky's house,' he said, 'was now ready to be furnished.'

For a carpet the children sprinkled on the floor of the aquarium a thick layer of fine white sand. For furniture, shells and bright-colored stones were scattered over the sand. The decorations consisted of aquatic plants, branches of white



coral and a small umbrella palm which was planted in a large shell. Fred filled the aquarium with water from Uncle Jerry's brook and then Toky was installed in his new abode.

Toky proved a never-failing source of delight to the little girl. He always knew when feeding-time arrived and would accept tidbits from her fingers without a sign of fear. She studied his habits with surprise and amusement. He would eat almost anything offered him with apparent relish. 'Like Timmy Murphy's goat,' Fred said. His favorite resting place was in the topmost branches of the umbrella palm, where he would perch like a queer four-legged bird hour after hour. But what most astonished Elsie was the rapidity with which he moved about. Placed upon the library-floor, he would traverse the room at a pace that caused Fred to enthusiastically dub him a 'regular sprinter.' Elsie mentally decided that the man who wrote

the fable of the tortoise and the hare had little knowledge of turtles. 'For Toky never goes real slowly,' she explained to her mother.

All through the summer Tokyo lived a life of peace and happiness and waxed fat upon bits of clam and other delicacies. But with the advent of early autumn the Graysons were ready to return to their winter home. Uncle Jerry Fisher was to care for the chickens and rabbits and pussies and the lamb during the cold season and the parrot and the puppy would accompany the family to the city. But Mrs. Grayson declared that Toky must be returned to his old quarters in the meadow-brook.

Suddenly Tokyo lost his appetite. Elsie's father said that the turtle realized that winter was coming and was ready to bury himself in the mud for the long nap from which only the warmth of spring would awaken him. Secretly, Elsie believed that her pet was