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THE SANDMAN:  
HIS BUNNY STORIES

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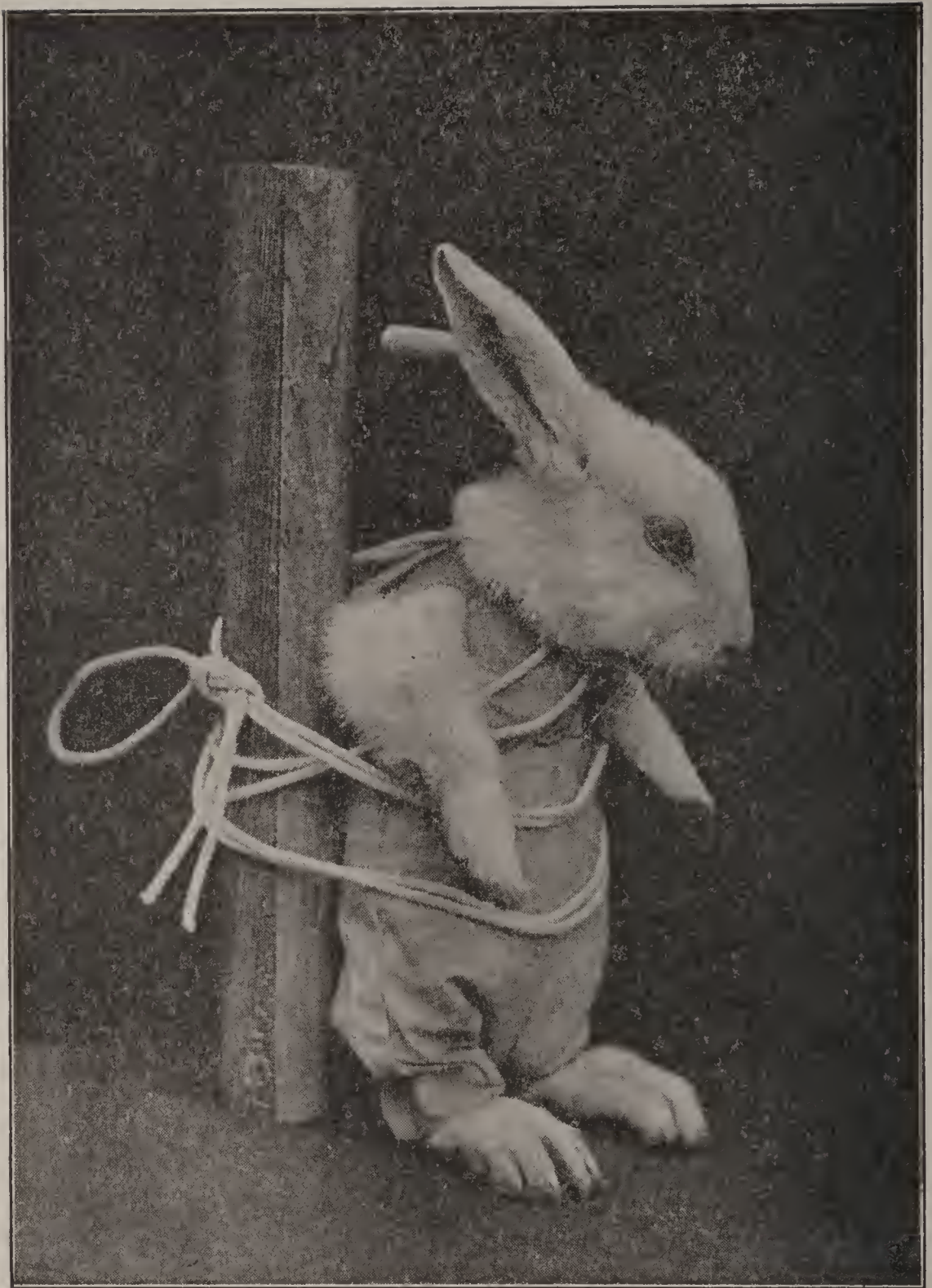
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THE PAGE COMPANY

53 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.





“ SECURELY TIED TO THE POST ”

*(See page 84)*



The Sandman:  
His Bunny  
Stories ❀ ❀

By *author*  
Harry W. Free's

Author of  
"The Sandman: His Animal Stories,"  
"The Sandman: His Kittycat Stories," etc.

With Thirty-Two Illustrations  
From Life Photographs taken by  
the Author



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# THE SANDMAN: HIS BUNNY STORIES

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## I

### THE FLYAWAY KITE STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of

Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

When Bunty Cottontail, the little bunny boy, came home from school he had three little sticks in one paw, and a ball of string and a bottle of paste in the other paw. And Mother Cottontail knew right away what he was going to do with them without having to ask a single question.

“Can I use the table for a little while?” asked Bunty.

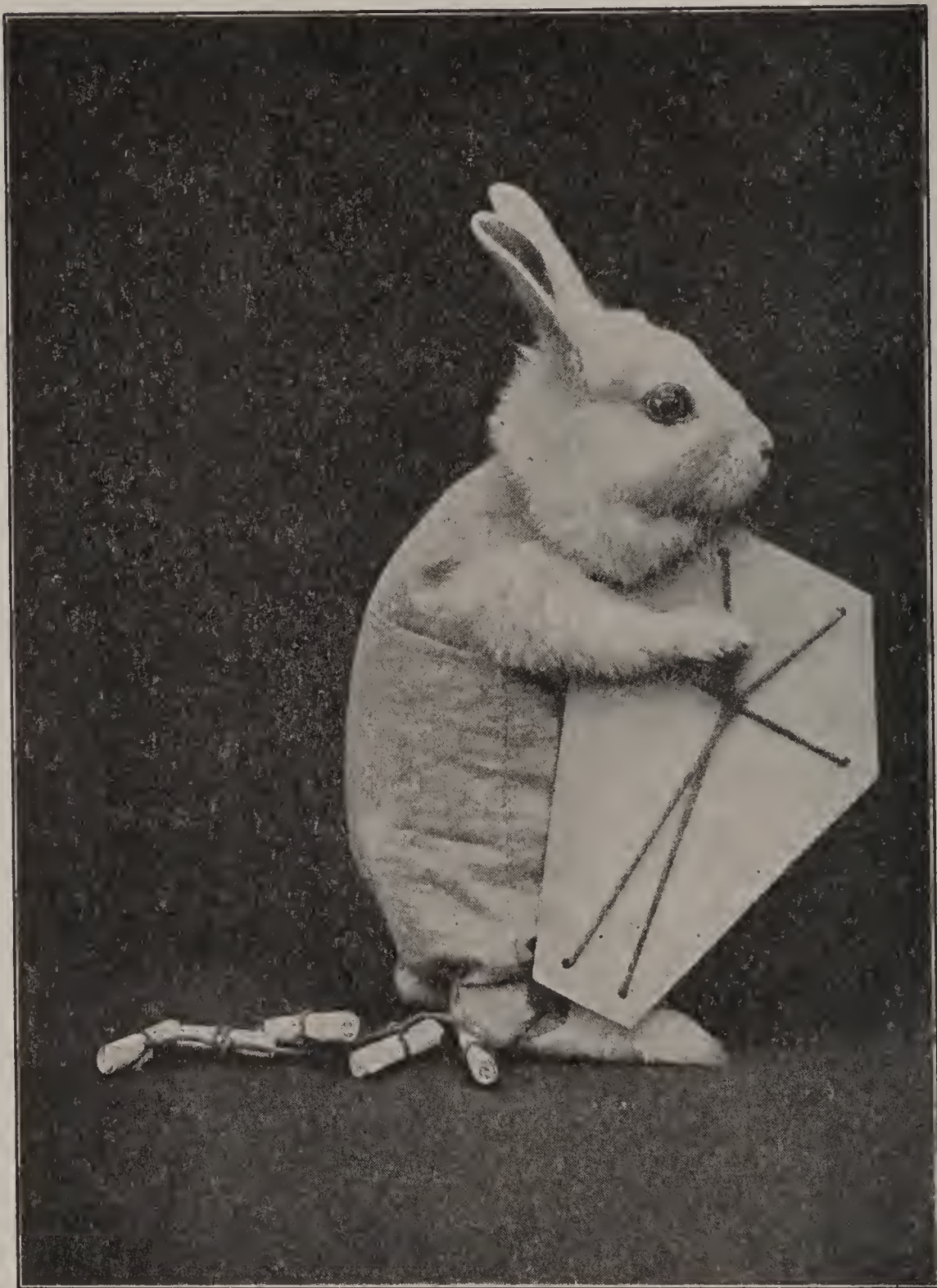
And as soon as Mother Cottontail nodded her head he started to work. First of all, he tied the three little sticks together in the middle and then ran a string around the end of each stick to keep them in position. And after that he covered the whole thing with paper.

“Well, I declare,” said Mother Cottontail, as he held it up for her to see, “if it isn’t a kite!”

“Do you think it looks all right?” asked her little bunny boy.

“It’s just as nice as any little kite I ever saw,” declared Mother Cottontail.

So Bunty carried it carefully upstairs and put it away in the closet so that it would be all ready to fly the next afternoon when



“ BUNTY CARRIED IT CAREFULLY UPSTAIRS ”

school was dismissed. And that night, before he fell asleep, he kept wishing to himself that it would be windy the next day.

When Bunty reached the vacant lot the next afternoon he found that his little bunny chum, Benny Bun, had reached there ahead of him. And Benny's kite was flying high above the tree tops.

"Does it pull?" asked Bunty, eagerly.

"Just you hold it," answered Benny.

"Whee-e-e-e!" whistled Bunty, as soon as he took hold of the string, "well, I guess it does!"

And he was so eager to get his own kite flying that he could hardly wait until he got it ready. But in a few minutes the two little kites were sailing together in the sky side by side.

Now it would be hard to say just what

the trouble was, whether the wind was too strong or the string too weak, but, anyway, all of a sudden Bunty's string snapped and away went his kite tumbling over and over in the sky. And he was just about to give a yell when there came another snap and off went Benny's kite with the same kind of flip-flops and knock-arounds in the air.

"Come on, Bunty," shouted Benny quickly, "let's chase them!"

Away ran the two little bunny boys after the runaway kites, and for a little while it looked as though the kites were not going to stop at all. But they gave a funny roly-poly sort of a dive and landed in the top of Mrs. Richbun's big pear-tree.

"Now, what shall we do?" asked Bunty, as they both stopped.

And it was no wonder they stopped, for



Mrs. Richbun had a cross old rabbit gardener who didn't like the little bunny boys in the neighborhood any better than they liked him. But probably it was all because he was afraid they would sneak some of Mrs. Richbun's pears.

But, all the same, Bunty and Benny finally made up their minds to climb over the high brick wall at the end of the garden and rescue their kites from off the pear-tree. And just as they reached the top of the wall Bunty caught Benny by the paw.

"Oh, look there!" he whispered, excitedly, as he pointed towards a big flock of black-birds who were busily digging up Mrs. Richbun's flower seeds.

"The mean things!" cried Bunty. "Let's chase them away or else Mr. Wobble will have to plant all his seeds over again!" So

they started after those blackbirds, yelling and shooing at the top of their voices, without stopping to think that they might run into the cross old gardener.

“Aha!” growled a gruff voice all of a sudden, and out popped Mr. Wobble from behind a tall bush and grabbed one of those surprised little bunny boys in each paw.

“What do you mean coming in here?” he demanded.

“Please—please, Mr. Wobble,” pleaded Bunty, “we came in to get our kites down off the pear-tree.”

“And we stopped to chase those old blackbirds away from your seeds,” added Benny.

Now, do you know, old Mr. Wobble couldn't have been such a cross old rabbit gardener after all, for what did he do but start to chuckle and tell the two little bunny

boys to climb up the tree and get their kites.

And I shouldn't wonder at all but what his being so nice was all on account of their stopping to scare away the blackbirds. You know one good turn deserves another, even if it is with a cross old rabbit gardener who doesn't like to have little bunny boys around.

And that's all.

## II

### THE LITTLE MISS CHEER STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

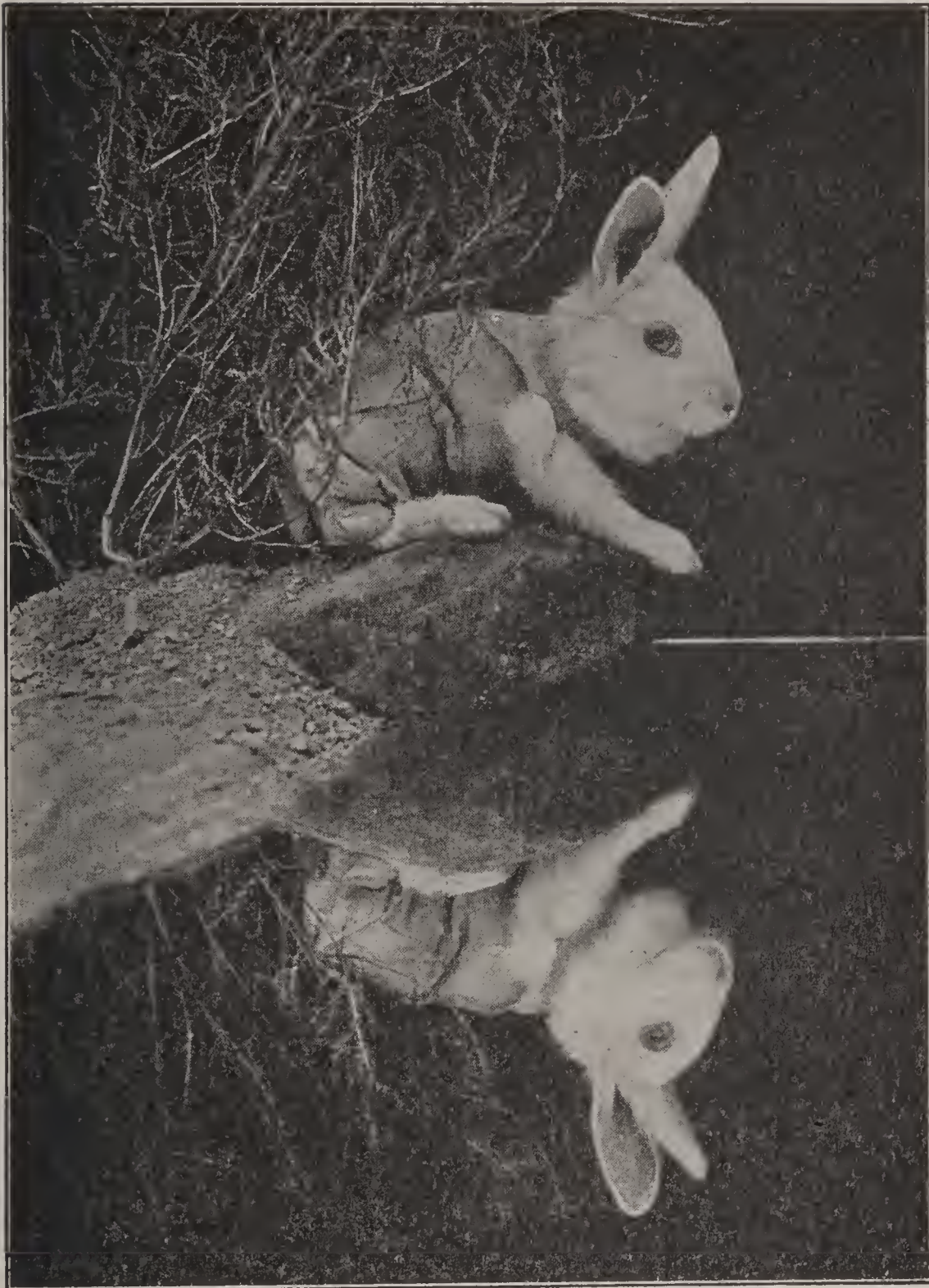
If any of the other bunny folks had met Benny Bun, the little bunny boy, on his way down to the brook that morning, they would have known right away that something was wrong, for instead of looking happy and smiling as he usually did, Benny's little face was all puckered up in a frown.

"I just wish I could run away and never come back again," he grumbled to himself, as he trudged along.

You see, it was entirely Benny's own fault, for if he hadn't teased his little bunny sister, Curly, Mother Bun would have never scolded him. But, of course, the little bunny boy had made up his mind that his mother always took his little sister's part in everything.

When he reached the big rock by the side of the brook where the water made a deep pool Benny leaned over the edge to see if he could discover any minnows swimming about. And just as soon as he leaned over he caught sight of his face reflected in the pool below and it was every bit as clear as though he was looking in the big mirror at home.

But somehow or other the little face looking up at him from out of the water didn't seem a bit like the face he always saw in the



“ CAUGHT SIGHT OF HIS FACE REFLECTED IN THE POOL ”

mirror at home. In fact it was anything but a pleasant little face to look at.

“She’s always scolding me,” he said to himself, frowning harder than ever.

And he had no sooner said it when he heard a funny, squeaky kind of a noise right below him and there close to the rock stood the queerest little man he had ever seen in all his life. But before Benny could even cry “oh!” the funny little man began to dance up and down and chant in his high squeaky voice:

“Grumpity! Grumpity! little boy pout!  
When kiddies are cross you’ll find me about.  
There’s nothing I like quite so much as a frown,  
You see, I’m King Crosspatch of old Grumble  
Town!”

And the way that funny little elf danced, and the way he sang made Benny smile. He just couldn’t help it.



“Don’t you dare smile!” cried old King Crosspatch in an angry tone. “If you do I’ll go right away and never come back.”

“Hee! Hee!” giggled Benny, forgetting all about being cross any more, “you’re such a funny little man!” And that made the little elf angrier than ever.

“I don’t like little bunny boys who smile,” he shouted fiercely, “and, if you don’t stop, I’ll not stay another minute.”

And just as Benny had burst out laughing louder than ever the little old man disappeared like a puff of smoke. And it was hard to say whether he jumped into the pool or hid under the rock.

“Has he gone?” asked another little voice just then from the other side of the rock, and there stood a pretty little fairy among a cluster of big blue violets.

“I—I guess so,” stammered Benny, who was more surprised than ever.

And that quick the wee little fairy maid began to sing a song that went like this:

“Grumpity! Grumpity! little boy pout!  
What in the world are you cross about?  
Just start in to smile and remember I’m here,  
The gayest and jolliest little Miss Cheer.”

“Now then,” asked little Miss Cheer, as soon as she had finished, “which song do you like the best, mine or old King Crosspatch’s?”

“Why, yours is the nicest,” declared Benny, quickly.

“That’s just what I thought,” said little Miss Cheer, “so I came hurrying up as soon as I heard you laughing. You see, it keeps one busy watching old King Crosspatch.”

And before Benny could answer, the little

fairy's face took on a startled look as she jumped out from among the violets.

"Oh dear!" she exclaimed, "I'll have to hurry along or perhaps that old King Crosspatch will be after some little animal boy while I'm not there!"

"Please stay a little longer," pleaded Benny. But the little fairy had already disappeared.

But, anyway, Benny was so delighted at seeing little Miss Cheer that he kept smiling all the way home. And when he told Mother Bun all about his adventure he was quite sure that he liked the cheerful little fairy maid better than disagreeable old King Crosspatch.

And that's all.

### III

## THE BOATING STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John

would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Bunty and Buzzy Cottontail, the two little bunny brothers, went down to the duck pond one day for a frolic, and after they had poked at the polliwogs along shore with their sticks, and made old Mr. Bullfrog jump overboard, they happened to spy an old boat that was tied to a clump of bushes nearby.

“Oh, let's take a boat ride!” cried Bunty, eagerly.

And, of course, that just suited Buzzy, for there was nothing at all pleased these two little bunny boys more than to float around on the water. So they untied the boat and both jumped in to row across the duck pond.

But before they had gone very far they heard someone whistle and there came their little bunny chum, Tommy Toddles, running down the path towards them as fast as he could come. And when he reached the edge of the water he called to them to come back and take him along.

“All right!” sang out Bunty, “just wait till we get turned around.”

When the little boat touched shore Tommy jumped in, and away they floated again for a trip across the pond. But this time they had only gone a few yards when they heard another whistle from shore.



“THEY UNTIED THE BOAT AND BOTH JUMPED IN”

“Ho, fellows!” yelled a little bunny boy on the bank, “take me along, will you?” And there was Laddie Bun, another little playmate of theirs, waiting to take a boat ride, too.

Now that made four little bunny boys in one little boat, but the little boat was strong, and away they started across the pond for the third time.

“I wonder if any one else will come along for a ride?” said Bunty, and just that quick there came another yell from shore. And this time it was two little bunny boys instead of only one.

“It’s Teddy and Billy Fluff!” cried Buzzy, and, sure enough, that is just who it was.

“Come on back and give us a ride,” cried the two little Fluffs as they waved their



paws to their little playmates out in the boat.

“Maybe there’ll be too many and the boat will sink,” spoke up Tommy, a little doubtfully.

“Huh!” scoffed Bunty, “you wouldn’t find a boat like this sink that easy.”

But, all the same, when those other two little bunny boys climbed aboard, the water crept very, very close to the edge of the boat.

“Now be careful and don’t wobble,” cautioned Buzzy.

So, of course, they were all as careful as could be not to shake the boat, and no doubt they would have rowed safely across if it hadn’t been for little Molly Cottontail. The little bunny girl had followed her two little bunny brothers down to the duck pond and as soon as she caught sight of them out

in the boat she called to them. And that quick those six little bunny boy sailors turned around to see who it was. Before they had time to think about it they wobbled the boat so that the water poured over the edge. And down it went!

Now you can well imagine how frightened poor little Molly was when she saw the boat go under and all those little bunny boys struggling in the water. And the first thing she thought about was to run for help. So she started back to Bunnyway Lane as fast as her little legs could take her.

The first one of the bunny folks she met was Mother Toddles, and as soon as the bunny mother had heard what had happened, she ran next door to tell Uncle Fluff. And as soon as the bunny uncle knew about it he started off down the street as fast as he could

go, and only stopped long enough at Daddy Longears' store to tell the doggie storekeeper about the six little bunny boys who had fallen into the duck pond.

"Hurry! Hurry!" urged Daddy, as he went flying down the street at Uncle Fluff's heels. And, goodness me, how those two old bunny gentlemen did run!

But before they got quite to the pond who should they see coming up the path towards them but the six little bunny boys themselves. And such a forlorn looking lot of little animal kiddies you never saw in all your life.

The water was not very deep where the boat sank, so they had no trouble in wading ashore. But every last one of them was as wet as wet could be.

Anyway, Uncle Fluff and Daddy Long-

ears were glad to know that all the little bunny boys were safe, and they made them promise that the next time they went boating they would be a little more careful not to overload the boat.

And that's all.

## IV

### THE SIMPLE SIMON STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

One day when Tommy Toddles, the little bunny boy, stopped at Daddy Longears' store on an errand for Mother Toddles, he spied something sitting on the counter that made him stop to take a second look. It was a little china ornament of a little lady dressed all in green, riding a little brown horse. And the little lady smiled so pleasantly at him that Tommy felt sure she was trying to say "Hello!"

“What do you think of that little green lady?” asked the jolly old bunny storekeeper, as he finished wrapping up the package for Tommy Toddles.

“Oh, isn’t she pretty!” cried Tommy. “I wish she was mine to stand on our sitting-room table at home.”

“I shouldn’t wonder but what that little lady would be a happy little lady, indeed, if she could gallop across your sitting-room table,” declared Daddy.

So, when Tommy reached home, the first thing he told Mother Toddles was about the pretty little lady in green down at Daddy Longears’ store, and asked whether he might buy her. And Mother Toddles said he might if he would take his own pennies.

That same afternoon the little green lady was riding her prancing horse on the table in



“RIDING HER PRANCING HORSE ON THE TABLE”



the Toddles' sitting-room, while Tommy sat in the big arm chair by the window watching her for a long time.

"I wonder where she wants to go," thought the little bunny boy, as he gave a sleepy little yawn. And a few moments later the little green lady was forgotten, for he was sound asleep.

But, all of a sudden, he seemed to be wide awake again and there was the little lady on horseback growing bigger and bigger right before his eyes. And the little brown horse began to dance and prance just like Farmer Frisk's little dapple gray when he wanted to hurry away.

"Jump on behind and we'll be off for an adventure," called the little green lady, and before Tommy had time to think about it they were out of the window and going like

the wind. And before he could blink more than once or twice they stopped in front of a little white cottage sitting all by itself by the side of the road, and the little green lady told him to jump to the ground.

“I’ll be back in just a little while,” she promised, “and while I’m gone you can play with Simple Simon.”

Before she was quite out of sight the door of the little white cottage opened and there stood Simple Simon, looking just like the foolish little lad one sees in the “Mother Goose” book.

“Hello!” cried Simple Simon, “who are you?”

“I’m Tommy Toddles,” replied the little bunny boy. “And you’re Simple Simon, aren’t you?” he asked, eagerly.

“I’m not simple!” exclaimed the little

“Mother Goose” boy, angrily; “I’m just as smart as you are!”

“Please don’t be cross,” begged Tommy; “that’s what you are called in ‘Mother Goose’.”

“It’s all a mistake,” declared Simple Simon; “just you wait till the pieman comes along and I’ll show you.”

So Tommy and Simple Simon sat under the big apple-tree by the side of the little white cottage and waited for the pieman to come along. And as soon as they heard him coming down the road Simple Simon ran to meet him.

“Where’s your penny?” asked the pieman, just as he did in the rhyme.

“Aha!” laughed Simple Simon, “I’ve got two pennies, so, you see, I’m not as simple as you thought.”

And, sure enough, he was able to buy two little pies, and one of them he ate himself and the other he gave to Tommy. And by the time the little bunny boy had eaten his pie the little green lady came galloping up.

“Good-by, little bunny boy!” shouted Simple Simon, as Tommy jumped on the back of the little brown horse.

“Good-by, Simon!” called Tommy as they started away. And it made the little “Mother Goose” boy feel very happy that Tommy had not called him Simple.

And just as he was flying through the air on the back of the wonderful little horse, Tommy heard some one calling, and there was Mother Toddles telling him to waken.

And that’s all.

## V

### THE SPRINGTIME STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John

would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Mother Cottontail and Mother Toddles, the two bunny mothers, were talking together one day about the things that had happened in the neighborhood, and after a little bit Mother Cottontail started to tell Mother Toddles about her little bunny boy, Bunty.

"He surely must be sick," said Mother Cottontail, "or he wouldn't act the way he does."

“Doesn’t he want to do anything for you?” asked Mother Toddles.

“That’s just the trouble,” replied the other bunny mother; “he wants to sit around all the time without helping me one bit.”

“There, just as I thought!” declared Mother Toddles; “it’s the same way with Tommy. I can’t get that little bunny boy to do a thing. But I’m sure he’s not feeling sick,” she added, “for just as soon as one of his little playmates comes around he’s ready for a frolic.”

“Bunny acts just like him,” said Mother Cottontail; “he will run and romp the live-long day without saying a word about being tired, but just as soon as I ask him to do the least little thing he looks quite distressed about it.”

Now that very same afternoon it hap-

pened that Mother Cottontail met Doctor Squeeks, the nice old bunny doctor of Bunnyway Lane, and the first thing she told him was about her little bunny boy, Bunty. And by the time she got through the bunny doctor had a funny little twinkle in his eyes.

“Don’t you worry one bit,” he told Mother Cottontail; “you might call it some kind of a fever that your little bunny has caught, but you’ll find it’s not serious at all. In fact nearly all little bunny boys get it about this time of the year and as soon as the days get a little warmer it disappears like magic.”

“My goodness!” exclaimed Mother Cottontail, looking quite alarmed about it, “you say it’s some kind of fever?”

“That’s what they call it,” chuckled Doctor Squeeks, “and no doubt you’ve often



heard of it. Some folks call it spring fever and you only get it once a year.”

“Well, well!” laughed Mother Cottontail, “maybe that’s just what it is.”

The next day when Bunty Cottontail was on his way home from school, he passed by the high board fence that enclosed the vacant lot where the little bunny boys played ball in the summer time. And all of a sudden he heard someone talking on the other side of the fence.

Now, there happened to be a ladder standing against the fence, and before you could say Jack Robinson Bunty had climbed up to take a peep over the top.

“Oh-h-h!” he went just like that, for there were his two little bunny chums, Laddie and Tommy, playing ball. Laddie would knock the ball up into the air while Tommy



“CLIMBED UP TO TAKE A PEEP OVER THE TOP”

would try to catch it when it came down.

“Hello, Bunty!” cried Tommy, as soon as he caught sight of his little bunny chum looking over the fence, “jump over and play along!”

But, instead of climbing over the fence, Bunty jumped down off the ladder and started down the street as hard as he could go to look for some of the other little bunny boys. And the first one he spied was Dickie Whiteface.

“Come on, Dickie!” he cried to his little bunny chum, “we’re going to have a game of ball!”

“All right!” yelled Dickie, “I’m ready!”

And one by one they gathered together the other little bunny boys in the neighborhood until there was just enough to play sides counting Laddie and Tommy. And

from then until supper time they played ball as hard as they could play, so that when they started for home they were so tired out they could hardly walk.

But, do you know, that cured the spring fever, and from that time on not one of those little bunny boys had even a touch of it. When Mother Cottontail and Mother Toddlers, or any of the other bunny mothers asked their little bunny boys to do something, they ran and did it without a frown or a grumble. And it all came about by those little animal kiddies getting warmed up over their ball game just as though it was a hot summer's day. So, you see, wise old Doctor Squeeks knew what he was talking about.

And that's all.

## VI

# THE LITTLE DAPPLE GRAY STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Bunty and Buzzy Cottontail, the two little bunny boys, were walking down the lane towards Farmer Frisk's big red barn, one day, and like little animals boys do sometimes, they got to boasting to each other how easy it was to drive a horse.

"I just wish that little dapple gray of Farmer Frisk's would try to run away when I was driving him," said Bunty, "I'd show him!"

“So would I!” declared Buzzy; “he wouldn’t run very far, I’ll tell you that!”

And just then a big black crow sitting on the fence by the side of the road flapped his wings and went, caw! caw! caw! just as though he was laughing at those two foolish little bunny boys.

Well, anyway, when Bunty and Buzzy reached Farmer Frisk’s big red barn they found the bunny farmer busy at work in the barn-yard. And as soon as he caught sight of them he waved his paw and called to them to hurry up.

“I wonder what he wants,” whispered Bunty.

“I wonder, too,” replied his little bunny brother, as they both ran through the gate into the barn-yard.

“Hello, boys!” greeted the farmer bunny

with a jolly smile. "Are you looking for something to do?"

Now Farmer Frisk knew as well as anybody that those two little bunny boys were as eager as they could be to help him, for there was nothing pleased the little animal boys half so much as to drive the cows in from the pasture or sit on the seat of the big wagon and say "giddap!" to the little dapple gray horse.

"You see, it's this way," explained the bunny farmer, "I've got a load of hay to take down to Daddy Longears' store and I'm so busy that I hardly have the time to go. So I was just wondering whether—"

"Oh, let us go! Let us go!" sang out both little bunny boys eagerly, before Farmer Frisk had time to finish.

"But maybe you're not quite big enough



to manage that little dapple gray,” said the bunny farmer, with a twinkle in his eyes.

“Huh!” sniffed Bunty, “I can drive him as easy as anything!”

“Just you try us,” added Buzzy.

So Farmer Frisk hitched the little dapple gray to the hay wagon and in a very little while the hay was all loaded on ready to start. Bunty sat in front to do the driving while Buzzy dangled his feet over the rear end so that he could slip off and put on the brake when they came to a steep hill.

“Now be careful,” cautioned Farmer Frisk, as Bunty chirped to the little dapple gray, and away they went.

For quite a while they rumbled along with the little dapple gray pulling as nice as you please. And everything would have gone all right if that little bunny driver hadn't

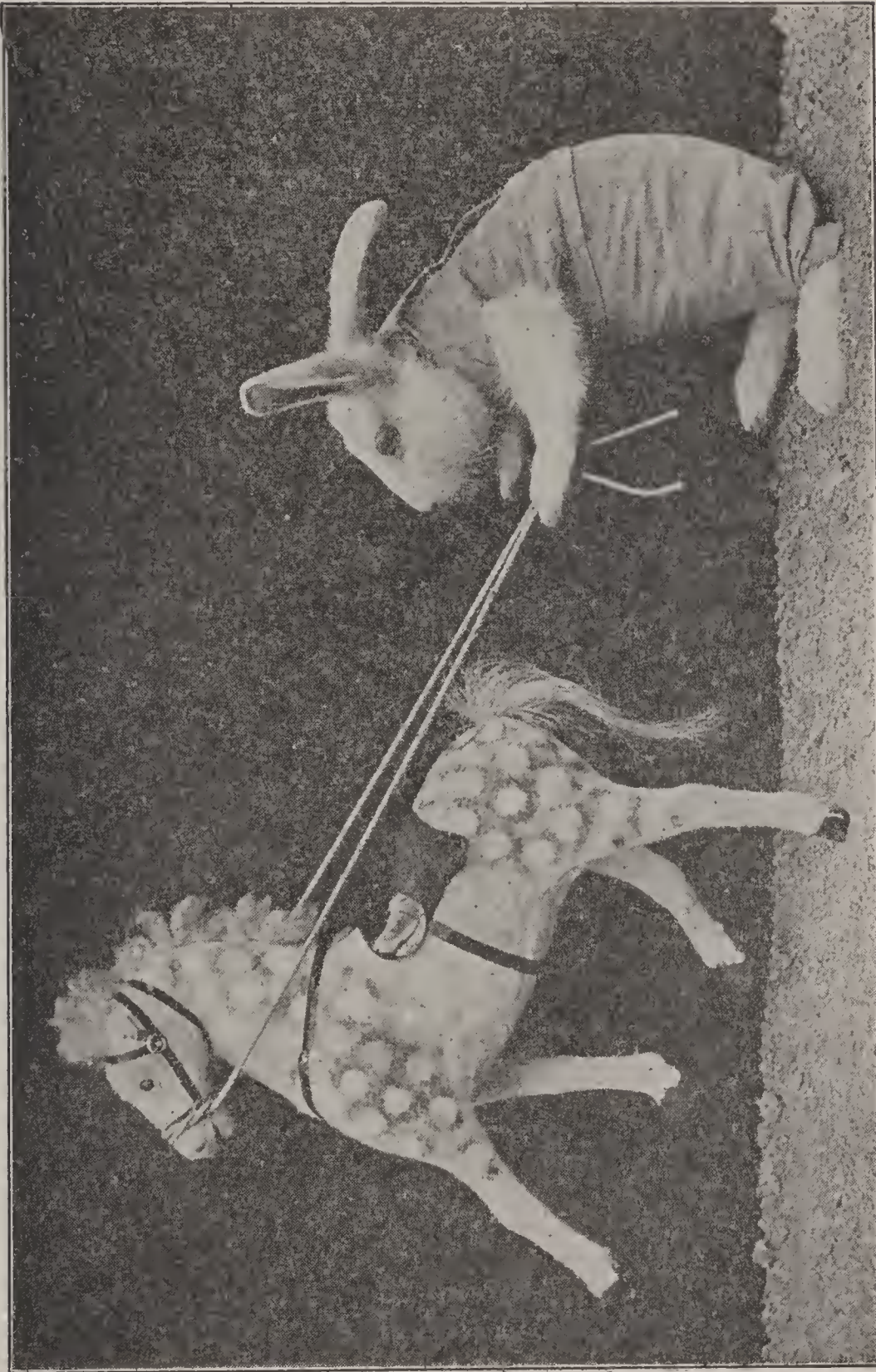
gotten it into his fluffy little head that he wanted to go a little faster.

“Giddap! Giddap!” he sang out, as he brought the little switch in his paw down across the little dapple gray’s back.

Now that little dapple gray had never felt a whip in all his life and it surprised him so that he nearly jumped out of his harness. And away he went down the road like a little white streak.

“Whoa! Whoa!” yelled Bunty at the top of his voice, while Buzzy almost took a tumble off the other end of the load.

But the little horse kept right on going, and with two shakes of his little white tail he tore loose from the wagon and pulled Bunty clean off the top of the load. But the little bunny boy kept a tight hold on the reins and called for Buzzy to come help him.



“ KEPT A TIGHT HOLD ON THE REINS ”

Before his little bunny brother could get to him, however, the little dapple gray had broken away and was on his way home with reins dangling behind him.

And do you know he never stopped running until he reached the big red barn. So, of course, as soon as Farmer Frisk caught sight of him he knew that something had happened.

And before that little dapple gray had time to look around the bunny farmer was on his back and away they went down the road to where Bunty and Buzzy were standing by the side of the hay wagon waiting for some one to come along. And you can imagine how glad they were when they caught sight of Farmer Frisk bringing back the little runaway.

So the little horse had to pull the load of

hay to Daddy Longears' store after all, only this time Farmer Frisk was driver while the two little bunny boys sat close behind him.

Now that little dapple gray of Farmer Frisk's had just as nice a home as any little horse you ever saw, but like some little boys and girls you may have heard about, he wasn't a bit satisfied. He had a nice warm barn to sleep in and plenty of oats and hay to eat three times a day. And many and many a time his nice old bunny master would bring him out a big red apple or a lump of sugar. But even then this little discontented horse felt sure at times that his home was a very dreary place to live and he longed for the big outside world where there were other little horses to talk to.

"Some day some one will forget to put up

the pasture bars," thought this foolish little horse to himself with a saucy stamp of his foot, "and then I'll run away and never, never come back again!"

And it seemed the funniest thing that just a few days after that who should come out to Farmer Frisk's again but Bunty Cotton-tail, the little bunny boy. And he seemed just as eager to help the bunny farmer as he had been that day to drive the little dapple gray in the hay wagon. So the bunny farmer told him to go out and feed the little horse in the pasture field.

When Bunty reached the pasture bars he found the little dapple gray rubbing his soft little nose against a post and waiting for some one to come along with his dinner.

"Hello, Dappy!" he called, as he patted him between the ears. And the little dap-

ple gray said "Hello!" in the way that little horses talk.

A few moments later he was munching contentedly away on a big pawful of hay that Bunty had thrown over the fence to him. And after he had eaten the last stem of it the little bunny boy took down the bars and led him across to the pump for a drink.

But, goodness me, what do you think happened when Bunty brought the little dapple gray back to the pasture field again? Why, that careless little bunny boy walked away without putting up the bars, and that quick the little horse went prancing away through the opening in the fence. But it wasn't very long after that before Farmer Frisk discovered that the little dapple gray had disappeared.

"You'll have to try and catch him," he



“MUNCHING CONTENTEDLY AWAY ON A BIG JAWFUL OF HAY”



said to Bunty, so away went the little bunny boy down through the meadow, and over the brook, and around to the edge of the big woods beyond. But the little dapple gray was nowhere in sight.

And it was no wonder that Bunty couldn't find him, for that venturesome little horse had gone clear to the other side of the big woods. And there he stood in the tall green grass, nipping off the tender clover heads.

But somehow or other the big outside world didn't seem near as nice to that little horse as he thought it would, and before long he was wishing that he was back home in Farmer Frisk's pasture field. So what did he do but turn around and trot for home as fast as he could go.

When Bunty got back to the big red barn there stood the little dapple gray at the bars

waiting to be let into the pasture field. And you ought to have seen that little bunny boy run to tell Farmer Frisk.

“I’ve half a mind not to let you in at all,” declared the bunny farmer, shaking his paw under the little runaway’s nose. “Aren’t you ashamed of yourself for running away like that?”

And the little dapple gray surely must have felt very sorry for the way he had behaved for he hung his head like a naughty little boy. And he appeared to be very much afraid that his master would never let him go back into the pasture field again.

But the bunny farmer must have been fooling all the time, for he took down the bars and left the little dapple gray into the pasture field. And the little horse was so glad to get back that he kept running from

one fence to the other as fast as he could go.

And as for Bunty, he seemed every bit as glad to have the little dapple gray back again, and before he left for home he begged Farmer Frisk to give him a big rosy-cheeked apple to take out to the little horse.

And that's all.

## VII

### THE GETTING CROSS STORY



NCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And

sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

It had started to snow some time during the night and when the little bunny children looked out of the windows of the little brick houses the next morning the big feathery snow flakes were still falling. And the first thing those little animal kiddies thought about was the jolly good time they were going to have playing in the snow.

On their way to school the little bunny boys discovered that the snow was just right to make snowballs, so all the way down Bunnyway Lane they kept pelting each other, until some of them began to look like little snow boys. But, of course, it was all in fun and even though one did get his ear full of snow, or a crack on the nose, he just laughed and went on throwing harder than ever.

Now it happened that Tommy Toddles, the little bunny boy, had an errand to do for Mother Toddles after school let out that afternoon, so he was quite a bit later than the other bunny boys in starting for home. And just as he was passing by the high brick wall in front of Mrs. Richbun's garden, a big pile of snow tumbled down the top of the wall and almost knocked him over.

If there ever was a cross little bunny boy it was Tommy Toddles as he brushed off the snow. And he felt sure as could be that he heard several soft little giggles behind the wall when the snow hit him. And that quick he made up his mind that some of his little playmates had played a trick on him.

“The mean things!” he cried angrily; “they dumped all that snow on me while I wasn’t looking.

“Just wait!” he gritted to himself; “I’ll get even with them!”

When this little bunny boy reached home he was still in a bad humor, and when he came into the sitting-room he found his little bunny brother, Tippie, sitting in the big arm chair by the window. And Tippie had just picked up his little bunny sister’s doll and was looking at it.



"OFF CAME THAT POOR LITTLE DOLLY'S HEAD"



“Here, you put her down!” cried Tommy, the very first thing; “Tiny doesn’t want you to have her.”

“Yes, she does, too,” replied Tippie; “she said she didn’t care when I asked her before.”

But Tommy was just cross enough to be contrary, so he jumped for the dolly and tried to take it away from his little bunny brother. And, goodness me, how they did pull and tug at that little dolly.

“Oh-h-h-h!” gasped both little bunny boys, all of a sudden, for, would you believe it, off came that poor little dolly’s head and one arm!

“Now see what you’ve done!” cried Tommy; “I’m going to tell Mother Tod-dles.”

And, would you believe it, he raced out

into the kitchen to tell Mother Toddles that Tippie had broken Tiny's doll. But Mother Toddles was a very wise old bunny mother.

"Who had the dolly first?" she asked.

"Why—why, Tippie," hesitated Tommy.

"And you tried to take it away from him, didn't you?" said the bunny mother.

"Yes'm," answered her little bunny boy.

"I see," said Mother Toddles, "whose fault it was. You're a naughty, cross little bunny boy, and I'm going to take enough of your pennies to pay for having the dolly fixed."

And that made Tommy crosser than ever!

The next morning he hurried off to school ahead of any of the other little bunny boys and when he came to the high brick wall in

front of Mrs. Richbun's garden, he looked carefully all around to see if the cross old rabbit gardener, Mr. Wobble, was anywhere about; and then crawled back of the wall to hide. And by the time Bunty and Laddie and Jackie came along there was a big pile of snow on top of the wall waiting for them.

And just as they got under it Tommy gave it a push and down it went all over those three little bunny boys! Why, for a few moments they could hardly get their breath, they were so full of the soft, sticky snow.

But the queer part of it was they didn't seem to get a bit cross about it, and as Tommy ran across the yard to the gate on the other side he could hear them laughing and shouting.

"Whee-e-e!" whooped Bunty, "wasn't that a whopper?"

“I wonder who pushed it off?” cried Laddie.

“It didn’t hurt us!” laughed Jackie; “who cares for a little snow!”

“Huh!” sniffed Tommy, in a disappointed tone, as he hurried down the street all by himself, “they didn’t get a bit cross! And what fun is there in trying to pay anyone back when they only laugh about it?”

And that same day when Tommy happened to meet Uncle Fluff in front of Mother Bun’s front gate and heard what the nice old bunny gentleman had to tell him, he felt very sorry, indeed, that he had gotten so cross the day before all on account of a little snow falling on him.

“It was the funniest thing I ever saw!” chuckled Uncle Fluff. “I was walking on the other side of the street and saw you pass

by Mrs. Richbun's high brick wall. And all of a sudden down came a lot of snow all over you!"

"Did you see who pushed it off?" asked Tommy eagerly.

"Why, no one at all," replied Uncle Fluff. "It just happened to start to slide as you came along."

"Then it wasn't Bunty and Laddie and Jackie after all," thought Tommy, "and here I got cross about nothing!"

And he made up his mind that the next time anything like that happened he wasn't going to get cross at all. For he felt sure there was more fun in laughing over it than getting cross.

And that's all.

## VIII

### THE CAPTAIN BUNTY STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

One afternoon there was a dozen or more of the little bunny boys playing on the vacant lot in the rear of the Cottontails' garden, and after they had played almost every kind of a game they could think of, Bunny Cottontail, the little bunny boy, suggested that they play soldier.

"How do you play it?" asked his little bunny chum, Tommy Toddles; "just march up and down?"

“Well, I guess not,” replied Bunty. “We’ll have a make-believe camp and pretend that we’re really truly soldiers.”

“All right!” cried Laddie Bun, another one of the little bunny boys, “I’ll be the captain in command.”

“Huh!” sniffed Dickie Whiteface, “you always want to be the head one.”

“I’ll tell you what you can do,” said Bunty quickly, “one of you can be the captain and the other can be the drummer boy.”

So Dickie decided that he would rather be the drummer boy, and a few minutes later he had found an old tin boiler and two little sticks to beat it with.

“Now,” said Bunty, after they had all gathered together, “you’ll be the company of soldiers and I’ll be one of the enemy.



And then you can capture me and bring me back to camp.”

“And then what?” asked Captain Tommy.

“Then you can tie me to that big post over there and keep me a prisoner,” explained Bunty.

“Let’s start right away!” cried Dickie, starting to beat his make-believe drum at a furious rate.

“Right foot! Left foot! Right foot! Left foot!” sang out the little captain of the bunny company, and off they marched across the lot.

And before they had quite reached the other side who should they meet but Bunty, who, of course, was one of the enemy they wanted to capture.

“Halt!” ordered Captain Tommy, and

three of the little bunny soldiers pounced on Bunty and made him a prisoner.

“Forward, march!” cried the little captain again, and away they went back to camp.

But the trouble was that when they came to tie the prisoner to the big post they found they didn’t have a bit of twine to tie him with, so Bunty had to run into the house and get a piece out of the cupboard.

As soon as the little bunny prisoner was securely tied to the post the whole company started off again across the lot to look for more of the enemy, and when they returned Bunty was to promise not to fight any more and they were to release him.

But, goodness me, something happened before the little company got back to camp again that changed all their plans: for all of a sudden Tiny Toddles, the little bunny girl,

came running up to tell them that Mother Bun's big red rooster had escaped from the chicken yard and was parading up and down Bunnyway Lane as bold as you please.

"Let's catch him!" shouted Captain Tommy, and away they scampered, forgetting all about their little prisoner tied to the post.

"Wait for me!" yelled Bunty, at the top of his voice. But his little playmates were too excited about that big red rooster to think about stopping.

By the time Bunty had managed to untie the knots in the twine that bound him to the post his little companions had all disappeared in pursuit of the runaway rooster. But the funny part of it was that as he dashed away after them he almost ran into the red rooster himself. There he was dodg-

ing from one place to another and trying his best to keep away from that noisy little band of bunny boys.

But he wasn't quite quick enough to escape Bunty, and the next instant the little bunny boy had caught him by the leg. And with all his flapping and squawking he couldn't get away!

When Bunty walked down the street, carrying his prisoner, and met all the other little bunny boys they were so surprised that they just stood still and looked.

"How—how did you catch him?" stammered Tommy.

"It was easy as anything!" declared Bunty, "even if you did run away and leave me all tied up."

And the way he looked at his little playmates you could see right away that he

didn't think they were very good soldiers.

Now the next day it got to be very much colder and it looked as though little Jack Frost had planned to pay his little bunny friends a visit. And, sure enough, that very night it started to snow and kept it up until the next morning, so that when the little bunny boys opened their eyes they were surprised to find a deep snow covering the ground.

As soon as school let out that afternoon Bunty Cottontail and Tommy Toddles and all their little playmates started for the vacant lot to have a snow battle. And you'd be surprised to know how quickly a crowd of little bunny boys can build a dandy big snow fort when the snow is just sticky enough to roll into big balls.

After the fort was all finished Captain

Bunty Cottontail and his brave little Bunnyville Army was to defend it against Captain Tommy Toddles and his band of Rabbit Rebels. So Captain Tommy drew off a little distance with his soldiers and awaited the signal to attack.

There was only one thing that bothered Captain Bunty and that was that their supply of snowballs might give out before they were able to drive off the enemy. So he ordered Dickie Whiteface, one of his little soldiers, to sneak inside one of the back yards nearby and make just as many snowballs as he could make.

“And just as soon as I give a yell for more bullets you bring them to us as fast as you can,” Captain Bunty told Private Dickie. So a minute or two later everything was ready and Captain Tommy threw the first

snowball to warn the Bunnyville Army that they were ready to attack the fort. And such whooping and yelling you never heard in all your life as they came dashing forward.

“Don’t waste your bullets!” cried Captain Bunty, as he threw the one in his paw so straight and true that it hit Captain Tommy right on top of the head. But it took more than that to stop a brave little bunny boy soldier like Captain Tommy.

“Give it to them! Give it to them!” he yelled at the top of his voice, and to show his little band of soldiers how to do it he banged Captain Bunty right on the tip of his little wibbly wobbly nose. But Captain Bunty was every bit as brave as Captain Tommy and went on fighting harder than ever.

Now while these two little bunny boy

armies were struggling together who should come down the street but Uncle Fluff, the nice old bunny gentleman, and Daddy Longears, the jolly old bunny storekeeper.

“Well, I declare!” exclaimed Uncle Fluff as he pointed across the street, “just look at that!”

“Bless my whiskers!” cried Daddy, quickly, “those little kiddies in the fort will lose the battle sure as you’re alive!”

“Not a bit of it they won’t!” yelled Uncle Fluff, and, would you believe it, off he ran to help Captain Bunty defend the fort. Yes, sir, a big rabbit man like him!

“Here! Here!” shouted Daddy, “that’s not fair!” And what did he do but join Captain Tommy’s soldiers and try his best to hit Uncle Fluff with a snowball.

“Oh dear!” gasped Captain Bunty, as he



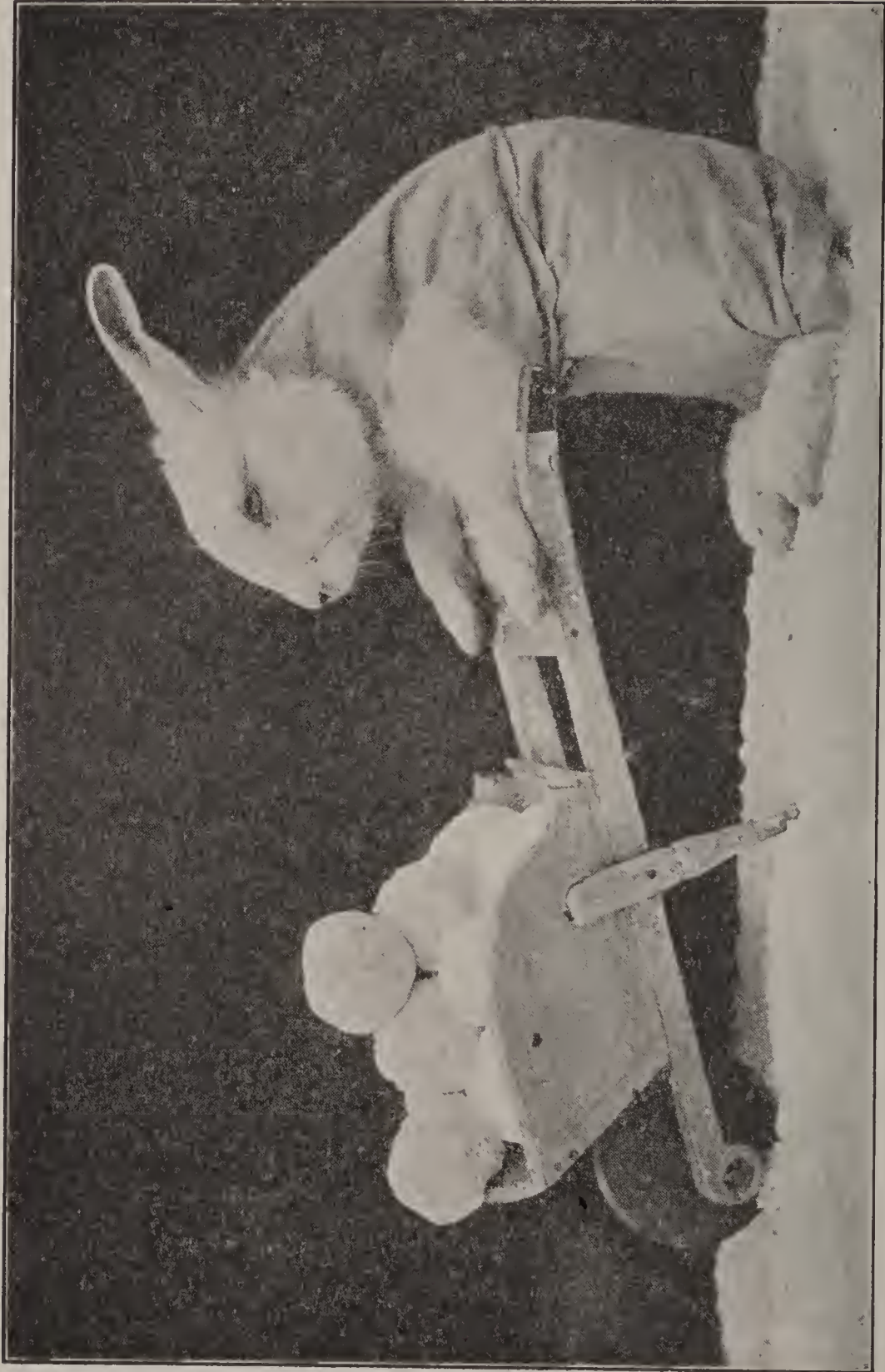
saw that the enemy was getting closer to the fort all the time, "if we only had some more snowballs." And that quick he happened to think of Dickie.

"Come on, Dickie!" he yelled as loud as he could. Then up dashed the little bunny boy with a whole wheelbarrow full of snowballs.

"Now we'll give it to them!" cried the little bunny captain of the Bunnyville Army, and my, oh my, how they did make the snowball bullets fly. Why, it was no wonder at all that Captain Tommy and his brave soldiers had to retreat.

"It was just 'cause Uncle Fluff helped you," cried one of the defeated little soldiers.

"It's no such a thing!" retorted a little bunny boy from inside the fort. "Didn't you have Daddy to help?"



“ WITH A WHOLE WHEELBARROW FULL OF SNOWBALLS ”

But Captain Bunty knew very well that Uncle Fluff had nothing at all to do with the winning of the battle. It was all on account of Private Dickie and his wheelbarrow full of snowball bullets.

And that's all.

## IX

### THE MOUSE HUNTING STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John

would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Munch! Munch! Munch! came a funny little crunchy sound from out of the pantry, and Tommy Toddles, the little bunny boy, stopped at the door to listen.

"I wonder what it is?" he thought to himself.

And then that munchy crunchy noise began all over again just as though some little animal boy was eating peanuts. But, of

course, Tommy knew very well that there couldn't be any one in the pantry eating peanuts.

"Oh, I know what it is," he exclaimed quietly to himself, "it's a mouse!"

And, sure enough, when he flung open the door and shouted "boo!" into the pantry there was a sudden scamper and a startled squeal. And when he went inside to look he found a cracker lying on the floor full of little sharp tooth marks. And not only that, but the cracker bag up on the shelf had a big hole gnawed in it.

"What do you think, Mother Toddles!" cried Tommy, as he raced into the kitchen, "there's a mouse in the pantry eating up all your crackers!"

"Oh, dear!" sighed Mother Toddles, "if I could only get rid of the little scamp."

“I’ll get rid of him for you!” cried her little bunny boy. “Just wait till I get my gun!”

Tommy, you see, had one of those little guns that are just the right size for little bunny boys to handle. It wasn’t a really truly gun like a soldier’s, but it shot little wooden bullets and sometimes they went straight and sometimes they went crooked.

Well, anyway, Tommy was soon hiding in a dark corner of the hall waiting for sly Mr. Mouse to show himself. He had his little gun all ready to shoot and not once did he take his eyes off the pantry door.

And all of a sudden he heard the patter of tiny feet across the floor and there was Mr. Mouse on his way to the sitting-room as bold as you please.

“I’ll fix him,” gritted Tommy, as he crept

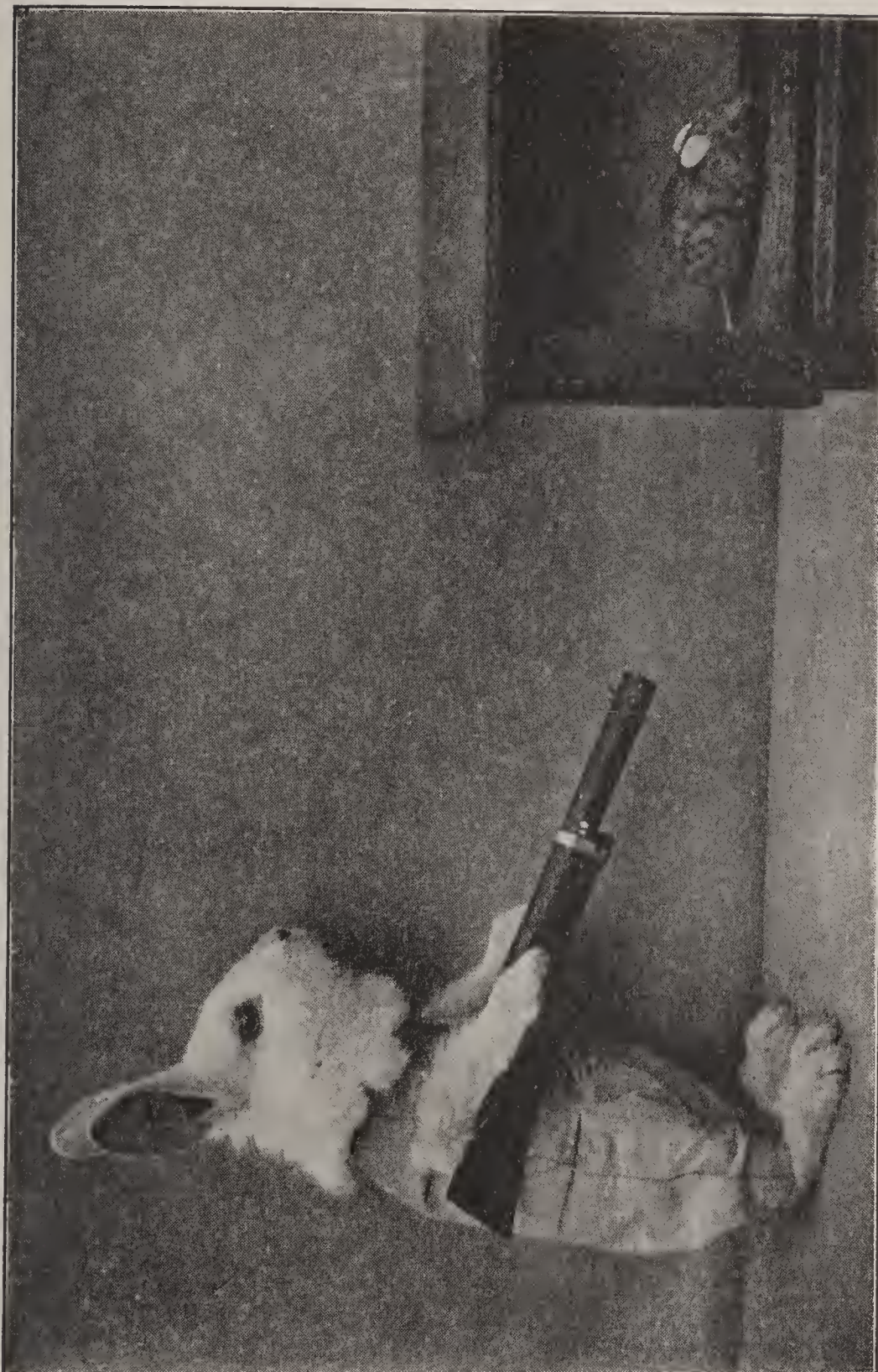
quietly along the hall. And when he peeped through the crack of the door there was Mr. Mouse perched under the table. But, of course, that bold little mouse had no idea that a little bunny boy was watching him.

Up went Tommy's little gun and the next instant it went off with a bang! But, my, oh, my! instead of hitting Mr. Mouse, the little wooden bullet struck a vase and broke it all to pieces.

"Please don't be cross, Mother Toddles," begged Tommy, as he told his mother what had happened. "It was the fault of that old mouse!"

Now Mother Toddles was just as eager to get rid of that mouse as Tommy, himself, so she didn't scold him one bit about breaking the vase. "Try to be a little more careful the next time," was all she said.





“ THERE WAS MR. MOUSE PERCHED UNDER THE TABLE ”

It was just a little while after that when his little bunny sister, Tiny, came rushing downstairs all out of breath, and so excited that she could scarcely speak above a whisper.

“Oh, Tommy!” she gasped, “there’s a big mouse upstairs under the bed! Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I’m so frightened!”

“I’ll bet that’s the same one who lives in the pantry!” cried Tommy. “Just wait till I get my gun!”

And the next moment he was dashing upstairs to his little bunny sister’s room. And, sure enough, under the bed sat bold Mr. Mouse, as saucy as ever.

Bang! popped the little gun again and out of the room slipped the sly little mouse through the crack under the door. But that little wooden bullet flew straight for the mir-

ror on the wall and cracked it. And this time when Tommy told Mother Toddles she appeared to be just a little bit cross about it.

“I guess you’d better stop shooting at that little mouse,” she told him. “I’m afraid you’ll break too many things.”

So Tommy had to stand his little gun in the corner back of the door and all the time he felt sure that if he could have but one more shot at Mr. Mouse he would hit him for sure. But, anyway, that bold little mouse left his home under Mother Toddles’s pantry floor and moved next door. And it was all because he didn’t like those little wooden bullets whizzing past his ears. So, you see, Tommy chased him away with his little wooden gun, even though he didn’t hit him.

And that’s all.

## X

### THE BASEBALL STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John

would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

The two little bunny boys' baseball teams were playing a series of three games and whoever won two of them were to be the champions of Bunnyway Lane. Bunty Cottontail, the one little bunny boy, was captain of the Bunny Stars, while his little bunny chum, Tommy Toddles, was captain of the Bunny Blues.

Well, anyway, they had played two games

of the series and each team had won one game. So, of course, the third game would have to prove the championship.

“I just know the Bunny Stars will win,” said Molly Cottontail, the little bunny girl, to her little playmate, Tiny Toddles. “Bunty told me yesterday that they couldn’t help but win.”

“Indeed they won’t!” declared Tiny. “You ought to have heard what Tommy said about it.”

“H’m!” sniffed Molly, “Tommy doesn’t know.”

“Neither does Bunty,” replied Tiny.

“Yes, he does, too!” flung back Molly in anything but a pleasant tone.

“No, he doesn’t!” snapped Tiny, just as crossly.

“I don’t think you’re a bit nice!” cried

Molly, "and I'm not going to talk to you." And that little bunny girl flung up her chin and walked away.

So there were those two little bunny girls quarreling just because their little bunny brothers were captains of the rival teams. And any other time they were the greatest little playmates you could find.

The third game of ball was to be played that afternoon on the vacant lot back of the Cottontails' home, and long before two o'clock all the little bunny children, as well as some of the older animal folks, were sitting around on the benches waiting for the game to start.

"Hurrah for the Bunny Stars!" yelled some of the little bunny boys as Captain Bunty led his team out on the field.

And a few minutes later when the Bunny

Blues marched out led by Captain Tommy they cheered just as lustily for them.

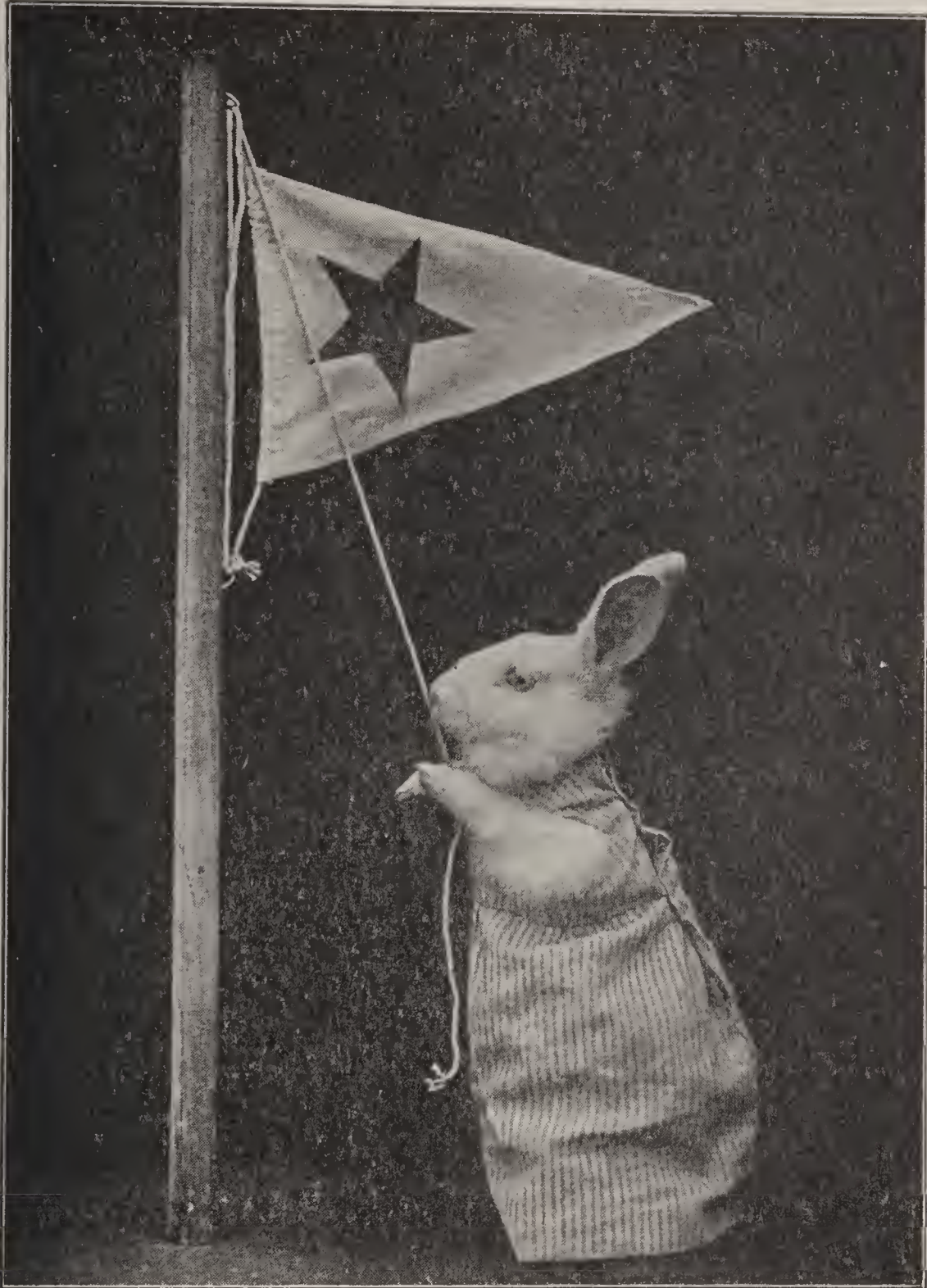
For a number of innings after the game started it was hard to tell who was going to win, for first one side would get a run, and then the other side would tie them up. And every time the Bunny Stars got a run little Molly would stand up and cheer, while little Tiny did the same for the Bunny Blues.

But by the time the game ended the Bunny Stars were two runs away. So, of course, Bunty, and his team had won the championship.

“Let’s run up the flag,” suggested the little bunny captain, who was so delighted that he could hardly keep still a moment.

So the Bunny Stars got out their little white flag with the pink star in the center, and Molly pulled it to the top of the staff.





“ PULLED IT TO THE TOP OF THE STAFF ”

And, would you believe it, while every one was cheering, Molly happened to look over to where Tiny was sitting and caught sight of her little bunny playmate cheering as hard as any of the others. Yes, sir, actually cheering for the Bunny Stars!

“I wish I hadn’t said what I did,” thought Molly, and the next moment she had walked over to Tiny and took hold of her paw.

“Please, Tiny,” she begged, “don’t be cross at what I said. I’ll take it all back!”

And little Tiny smiled and said it didn’t matter at all. In fact she was just as glad to be friends again as Molly herself.

So both little bunny girls discovered how very foolish it was to quarrel over something that was not worth quarreling about.

And that’s all.

## XI

### THE BIG WOODS STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John

would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

"Let's take a walk," suggested Bunty Cottontail, the little bunny boy, to his little bunny brother, Buzzy.

"All right," agreed Buzzy, readily; "let's ask Mother Cottontail to make us each a sandwich and then we won't have to get back in time for dinner."

It was Saturday morning and, of course, there was no school that day for the two little

bunny boys. So they hurried off to find Mother Cottontail and ask her if they could go for a walk.

“And, please, Mother Cottontail,” begged Bunty, “please won’t you make us each a sandwich so we don’t have to hurry to get back.”

And Mother Cottontail must have told them they might go, for a little later they started off, each one with a sandwich tucked away in his jacket pocket. But instead of going down Bunnyway Lane towards the road that led to Farmer Frisk’s, they went out through the back gate and started across the fields.

Now it would be a hard matter to say just how far those two little bunny boys really went. They climbed over fences and jumped ditches and crawled through patches



“CRAWLED THROUGH PATCHES OF HIGH WEEDS”

of high weeds, and trudged on and on until they were a long ways from home.

And, finally, when they came to a fence, and had climbed on the top rail to take a rest, Bunty happened to think of their sandwiches.

“Let’s eat our lunch,” he said to Buzzy.  
“I’m as hungry as a bear!”

And Buzzy must have been as hungry as a bear, too, for their sandwiches disappeared like magic. And after they had hunted up the last crumb they started off again towards a big woods that they could see just ahead of them.

Now neither Bunty nor Buzzy stopped to think how far they were going and it was not until they had walked for quite a while through the woods that Bunty suggested they had better turn around and start for

home. So they turned about and went the other way.

But they had only gone a short distance before they were all mixed up and couldn't tell one path from another. "Oh, Buzzy!" gasped Bunty, suddenly, "maybe we're lost!"

"Why—why—don't you know where we're at?" stammered Buzzy.

"Don't you?" asked Bunty.

"I thought you knew," answered his little bunny brother.

"Let's climb a tree," said Bunty, "and maybe we can see where we're at."

But even after they had climbed the tallest tree they could find and looked about, everything seemed strange to them. So they both started to shout at the top of their voices.





“CLIMBED THE TALLEST TREE THEY COULD FIND”

“Hello-o-o!” they yelled, and that quick back came an answer from two different directions.

“Oh, listen,” cried Buzzy, with delight, “it must be just full of folks around here.”

And after they had shouted a few more times who should come tearing towards them but two other little bunny boys.

“It’s Tommy!” shouted Bunty.

“It’s Laddie!” yelled Buzzy.

And before they had a chance to say another word out of the bushes nearby popped two more little bunny boys. And up dashed Jackie and Dickie. And they knew right away that their four little playmates had become lost the same as they were. But it seemed the funniest thing that they should have all taken a walk out to the big woods at the same time.

But anyway they were very glad to have found each other, and one tried to tell the other which was the right way home. And not one of them was quite sure about it.

“Maybe you go this way,” said Tommy, pointing ahead with his paw.

“No, it’s that way,” declared Dickie, looking in another direction.

“Oh, are you sure?” exclaimed Bunty. “I thought you went the other way.”

So all they could do was to sit down under a big tree and try to be brave little bunny boys until someone came along. But they had to blink pretty hard at times to keep back the tears.

And while they were sitting there wondering what their mothers would say when they didn’t come home to supper, they heard someone coming down the path towards them.

And who should it be but their old friend, Uncle Fluff, who had been out hunting some kind of berries to make tea for his rheumatism.

“Goodness me!” cried the surprised old bunny gentleman, as soon as he spied those six little bunny boys sitting there in the woods, “what’s going on?”

And the next moment those little lost bunny boys were trying to climb all over him and laughing and crying at the same time. But finally they managed to tell him that they were all lost.

“It’s a lucky thing for you kiddies I came along this way,” chuckled the nice old bunny uncle as he led the way towards home.

And that’s all.

## XII

### THE BROKEN CUP STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John

would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Molly Cottontail, the little bunny girl of Mother Cottontail's, was the greatest little animal girl you ever saw to break dishes. Hardly a day passed that she didn't drop something or other while she was washing them.

Of course you know little bunny girls have very small paws and when they are wet and slippery with soapy water it's little won-

der that now and then a dish slips out of their grasp and breaks. But when it happens almost every day you can't blame it on the soapy water—because little bunny girls who do that must be just a teeny weeny bit careless.

One morning Molly was washing the breakfast dishes while Mother Cottontail was busy upstairs. And as the little bunny girl was always cheerful and happy, whether she was working or playing, she sang a little song to herself. And this is what she sang:

“Three little dolls in a little wooden boat  
Went sailing the wide blue sea,  
They sailed far away to the Fairyland Isle  
And then sailed——”

But that's as far as Molly got, for just then a cup slipped out of her paws and down it went ker-smash on the floor.

“Oh, dear,” exclaimed the little bunny girl, “there goes another cup!”

Now, one nice thing about Molly was that she never tried to hide anything from Mother Cottontail. So she went upstairs right away to tell her.

“That’s too bad,” said Mother Cottontail; “you’ll have to be a little more careful.”

And, of course, Molly made up her mind to be as careful as could be. But just as she started to sing another song about those three little dollies down went another cup.

This time Molly was not quite so ready to go upstairs and tell Mother Cottontail, but she went all the same.

“Why, Molly,” said Mother Cottontail, “that’s the second cup in a few minutes! What shall I do with you?”



“But, Mother Cottontail, it slipped!” declared the little bunny girl.

“I’m afraid you’re getting careless,” answered Mother Cottontail, “and if it happens again to-day I’ll have to punish you.”

Well, Molly didn’t break any more cups that morning, but just as she was going upstairs to Mother Cottontail in came Bunty, her little bunny brother, to get a drink. And the first thing he spied was a pitcher of milk on the table.

So he thought he would have a drink of nice milk and went to the shelf to get himself a cup. And while he was reaching up for one he knocked it down and broke it into pieces.

Now I suppose any other time he would have stopped and picked up the pieces, and, no doubt, told Mother Cottontail what he

had done. But this time Laddie Bun, his little bunny playmate, was waiting for him outside so away he flew without giving the broken cup a thought. And when Mother Cottontail came downstairs a little later of course she couldn't help but see it.

"That naughty little bunny girl!" she said to herself, "she has broken another cup!"

And just as she went to the foot of the steps to call Molly down in came Bunty.

"Oh, Mother Cottontail," he cried, as soon as he saw the broken cup lying on the floor, "I forgot to tell you. I broke a cup a little while ago."

"I'm glad to hear it," said Mother Cottontail, without thinking.

"Why—why—" stammered Bunty, in surprise, "I thought you wouldn't like it."



“ SHE COULDN'T HELP BUT SEE IT ”

“I meant to say I’m glad it wasn’t Molly,”  
smiled Mother Cottontail.

And that afternoon she had to go down-  
town and buy some new cups or they  
wouldn’t have had enough for supper.

And that’s all.

## XIII

### THE ROBIN REDBREAST STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

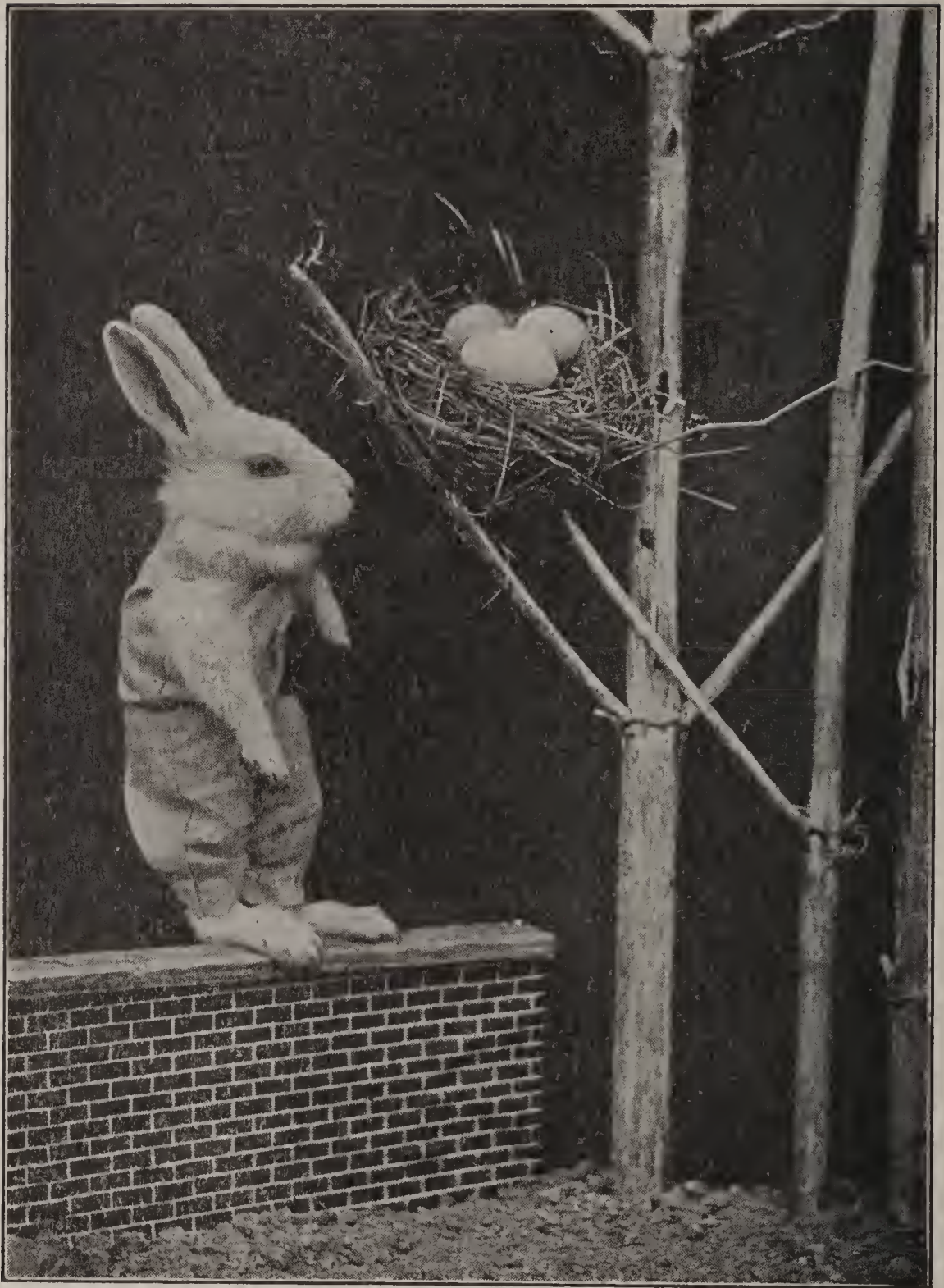
In the rear of Mother Cottontail's garden was a brick wall, and sometimes her little bunny boy, Bunty, would climb to the top of the wall to see if any of his little chums were playing on the other side. You see, on the other side of the wall was the vacant lot where the little animal boys played games.

Well, one day, just as Bunty had climbed to the top of the wall, and before he had a chance to look around, he made a discovery

right in front of his little pink wibbly wobbly nose. For there in the fork of a tall reed that had grown up alongside of the wall was a bird's nest. And, not only that, but the little straw nest had three tiny sky-blue eggs in it!

“Oh, look at the pretty eggs!” he exclaimed, as he stood on his tiptoes to peep over the edge of the nest.

Now those three tiny blue eggs belonged to Mother Redbreast who, just a little while before, had flown off the nest and sailed away over the meadow to stretch her wings, while Daddy Redbreast was busy in Mother Cottontail's garden hunting potato bugs. And if either one of them would have had any idea that a little bunny boy was snooping around their nest they would have come flying home in the biggest kind of a hurry.



“ ‘ OH, LOOK AT THE PRETTY EGGS ! ’ HE EXCLAIMED ”



And, no doubt, they would have been still more alarmed to have seen Bunty take the eggs out of the little nest and tuck them carefully away in his jacket pocket. But, of course, the little bunny boy intended to put them back again as soon as he had shown them to some of his little playmates.

The first one he met, after he had jumped down off the wall and raced up through the garden to the front gate, was Laddie Bun, the little bunny boy who lived next door. And it wasn't hard for Laddie to tell that his little bunny chum had something very surprising to tell him by the way his eyes sparkled.

"You can't guess what I've got?" cried Bunty.

"It's a new top," guessed Laddie.

Bunty shook his head and pulled the three

little blue eggs out of his pocket. And that quick Laddie's bright little eyes began to sparkle too.

"Oh, aren't they pretty!" he cried, the same as Bunty had done.

And do you know before he got through he had shown those three little eggs to nearly every one of his little playmates. And last of all he showed them to Mother Cotton-tail.

"Why, Bunty!" she exclaimed in the disappointed tone of voice that her little bunny boy never liked to hear, "what made you take those eggs out of the nest?"

"Why—why—" stammered Bunty, beginning to feel just a little bit ashamed of himself, "it won't matter, will it, if I put them right back again?"

"Indeed it will," replied Mother Cotton-

tail. "Just suppose some one would come along and carry you away, how would I feel?"

And while Bunty didn't know just what to say he felt sure that Mother Cottontail would feel very badly if some one carried him off and she couldn't find him.

"Well, don't you see," said Mother Cottontail, "poor Mother Redbreast will feel the same way about her eggs."

"I wonder if she will?" asked Bunty, with surprise.

"I'm quite sure of it," answered Mother Cottontail.

"Then I'm going to put them back again quick as I can!" declared the little bunny boy as he raced out through the door.

And, let me tell you, it was just about time he put those eggs back in the nest, for

Mother Redbreast was flying wildly about and calling loudly to Daddy Redbreast that some one had stolen her eggs. And Daddy Redbreast came flying home as fast as he could come.

“I’m glad I put them back,” thought Bunty to himself, as he watched Mother Redbreast settle down on the three little blue eggs with a contented flutter. And even Daddy Redbreast kept up a happy little chirping.

Now, the next morning, Bunty’s little bunny sister, Molly, sat curled up in the big arm chair reading a story book. The window was down from the top and she could hear every little sound from the outside. And all of a sudden she heard two little chirps and a whistle that made her sit up very straight in the chair to listen. “Tweet!

Tweet!" it came again from somewhere near the top of the old apple-tree.

"Oh, Mother Cottontail!" cried Molly, eagerly, as she burst into the kitchen, "there's a robin outside in the garden!"

"I shouldn't wonder but it's one of those Bunty was telling about," said Mother Cottontail. "No doubt, if you listen very closely, you'll hear Mother Redbreast answer."

"But, Mother Cottontail, where do they live?" asked Molly, quickly.

"They've got a little nest down by the garden wall," explained Mother Cottontail.

"Yes, but, Mother Cottontail," asked her little bunny girl, "don't they get all wet when it rains?"

"I don't believe they'd mind one bit," smiled Mother Cottontail.

But Molly wasn't quite so sure of that, for she knew how it was with little bunny girls like herself. Just as soon as it started to rain they wanted to be in the house. And little robin redbreasts might feel the same way about it. "If they only had a little house to live in when it rains they wouldn't get a bit wet," she thought.

So she made up her mind that the very next time she met Uncle Fluff, the nice old bunny uncle, she was going to ask him to make her a bird house for the two little robin redbreasts to live in. And it happened that she met him the very next morning on her way to school.

"Oh, Uncle Fluff!" she exclaimed, "two little robin redbreasts have come to live in our garden!"

"Well! Well!" smiled Uncle Fluff,

“that’s the best news I’ve heard this morning!”

“But, Uncle Fluff,” asked Molly, doubtfully, “what will they do when it rains?”

“I never thought of that,” replied Uncle Fluff, scratching his ear and looking quite puzzled about it.

“Why, they’ll get all soaking wet,” declared the little bunny girl.

“It’s too bad,” sighed the nice old bunny uncle, looking real sad about it.

“Maybe—maybe if they had a house to live in they wouldn’t get a bit wet,” suggested Molly, looking up eagerly into Uncle Fluff’s face.

“Why, so they wouldn’t,” laughed Uncle Fluff. “Suppose an old cross bunny man like me would make you one, what then?” he asked.

“Oh, but you’re not cross!” cried Molly, quickly, “you’re too nice for anything!”

“Then I’ll surely have to make you one,” chuckled the bunny uncle. And he told her to be sure and come around for it the next Saturday morning. So, a few days later, when Molly went around for the little house, it was all finished and ready to take home. It was painted white and had a little yellow steeple on top as well as a front door for Mr. and Mrs. Robin Redbreast to go in and out of.

“Oh, thank you, thank you!” cried the delighted little bunny girl, as she started off home with her precious little house. But for some reason or other neither one of the two little Redbreasts would go near the little house. Mother Redbreast seemed to prefer her little nest, while Daddy Redbreast eyed

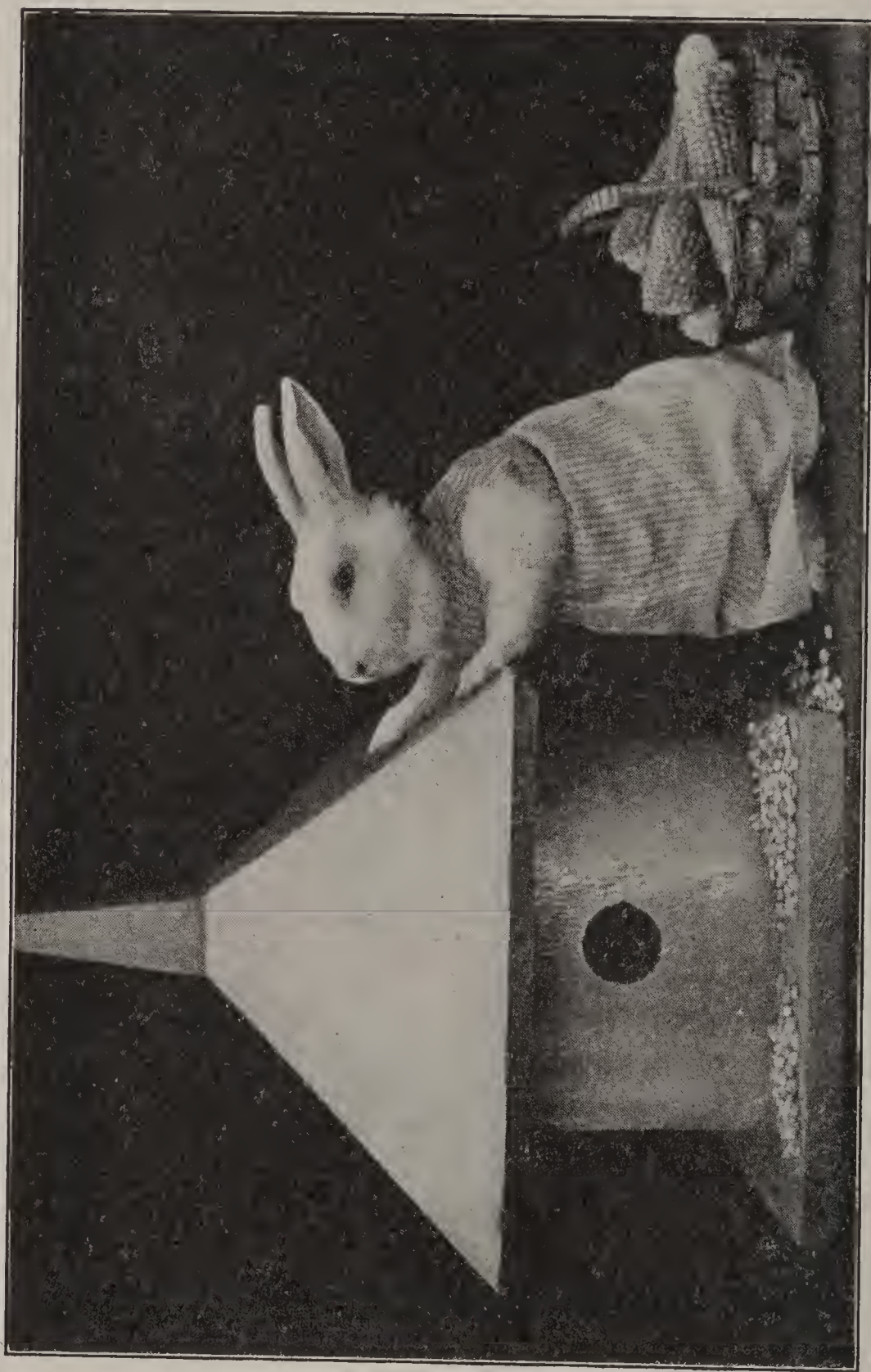


it suspiciously from the topmost branch of the old apple-tree that grew close to the garden wall.

“Maybe I could coax them with something to eat,” thought Molly. So she hurried into the house and brought out a little basket full of popcorn.

But the two little Redbreasts didn't pay any more attention to the popcorn than they had to the little house. All they did was to keep the three little eggs in the nest warm or sing and swing on a branch of the old apple-tree.

The next morning, when Molly got up and looked out of the window, she saw a wonderful sight down in the yard. For there were two little brown birds hopping in and out of the little house as busy as could be. And they seemed so happy about it that



" BROUGHT OUT A LITTLE BASKET FULL OF POPCORN "

every little bit they would stop and sing.

Molly could hardly wait until she got downstairs to tell Mother Cottontail about it. And Mother Cottontail told her right away that they were little wrens who had gone to housekeeping.

So for several weeks after that the two little wrens lived in the little house as happy as could be. But as for Daddy and Mother Redbreast they seemed to be just as happy where they were.

And that's all.

## XIV

### THE BABY BUN STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Mother Bun, the mother of Baby Bun, was a sister rabbit to Mother Cottontail, and, of course, that made Molly Cottontail a first cousin to Baby Bun. Molly, however, was much the older of the two and if you had seen them together you would have surely thought that she was an aunty or an older sister to the littlest Bun instead of a cousin.

Well, anyway, Molly was very, very fond of her little bunny cousin and one day she

asked Mother Cottontail whether she might go down to Aunty Bun's and bring Baby up with her to spend the day. And Mother Cottontail said she didn't care if Aunty Bun wanted to let him come.

So Molly went down the street to ask Aunty Bun; and a little later she came back with Baby Bun holding fast to her paw. The look of delight on the little bunny's face was enough to make you smile.

The little Cottontails had a hammock swing in the back yard under the apple-tree and Baby hadn't been playing around more than a minute or two before he spied it. And, of course, he wanted Molly to give him a ride.

So the little bunny girl got into the swing and told Baby Bun to climb in beside her. But do you know that little bunny



“THAT LITTLE BUNNY CHAP COULDN’T CLIMB IN AT ALL.”

chap couldn't climb in at all. No, sir; he wiggled his ears as hard as he could wiggle them and his little pink nose went wibble wobble so fast that you could scarcely see it move, trying to pull himself up. But it wasn't any use at all. Even when Molly caught hold of his dress and pulled with all her might it just seemed as though he was glued fast to the ground.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Molly, all out of breath, "but you're a heavy little fellow!"

And then she tugged and pulled all over again, but it wasn't any use at all—she just couldn't budge that little fat baby bunny!

"I know what I'll do," she cried, suddenly, as she happened to think of something, "I'll go in and get the stool for you to stand on."

Now while Molly was in the house get-



ting the stool who should thrust his head out of the window in the side of the woodshed but Bunty, her little bunny brother.

“Hello, Baby Bun!” he cried. “Want to play Indian?”

And, of course, Baby Bun was just wild to play Indian, and when Bunty came outside and led him around to the woodshed door the little bunny saw three more Indians sitting inside.

There was White Feather, Tommy Toddlers, and Red Eagle, Laddie Bun, and Smoke-in-the-eye, Dickie Whiteface, while Bunty himself was Crooked Horn.

“Baby chief,” grunted Bunty, as Baby Bun came toddling into the woodshed.

“Baby chief called Little Buffalo,” decided Red Eagle.

In the meantime Molly had come out with

the stool and you can imagine how surprised she was to find that Baby Bun had disappeared.

“Oh, I just wonder where he is!” she fairly gasped. “Maybe the rag rabbit took him along!”

But just then she heard Baby Bun laugh and the sound of it came through the woodshed window, so she fairly flew around to the door.

And when she caught sight of Baby Bun sitting inside with the other four little bunny boys she was so surprised she hardly knew what to say.

“Baby Bun little Buffalo Chief,” said Bunty.

“The idea!” sniffed Molly, “he’s too little to play Indian! We’re going to play in the hammock swing with our dollies.” So

she took hold of Little Buffalo's paw and marched him out of the woodshed.

Now it would be hard to say which Baby Bun would have rather done—play Indian or sit in the hammock swing with Molly and her dollies. But, anyway, he had lots of fun playing with Molly until it was time to go home.

The next day, Mother Bun, the bunny mother of little Baby Bun, had planned to go downtown to do some shopping, so she told her little bunny boy that he would have to stay at home like a good little kiddie until she came back.

“But, Mother Bun, why can't I go along?” asked Baby Bun the very first thing.

“Because I'll have to walk too fast for a little bunny boy like you,” answered Mother Bun, “and it will surely be much nicer for

you to sit by the front window and watch the rabbit folks go by.”

But Baby Bun didn't want to sit at the front window at all, and he was so disappointed that he could not go along that his little pink wibbly wobbly nose almost stopped moving. But he knew it wouldn't do any good to pout, so he climbed up into the big arm chair by the window and waited for Mother Bun to start off.

“Now don't go outside while I am away,” said Mother Bun just before she left the house.

“I wish Bunty would come along,” thought Baby Bun, as he sat at the window looking out. And wasn't it funny that just at that very moment who should he spy coming down the street but Bunty himself!



“ HE SAT AT THE WINDOW LOOKING OUT ”

“Bunty! Bunty!” he yelled at the top of his voice, beating on the window pane with both little fists. “Wait till I open the door!” And quicker than I can tell you he had the door open and was dancing up and down before the little bunny boy on the front step. And he must have been so excited from seeing his little bunny friend that he forgot all about what Mother Bun had told him. For a minute or two later there he was out in the front yard playing tag with Bunty. But all of a sudden he happened to remember.

“Oh, Bunty!” he exclaimed, “I guess I’d better go in! You come along,” he said to the little bunny boy.

So Bunty took hold of his paw and the two of them walked up the path to the front door. But, goodness alive, when they went

to open it the catch had caught on the inside and there they were, locked out.

“Let’s ring the bell,” suggested Bunty, quickly, “and then Mother Bun will let us in.”

“She just went away,” said Baby Bun, with a frightened look in his little pink eyes.

“Is the kitchen window unfastened?” asked Bunty.

“Oh, maybe it is!” cried Baby Bun eagerly. “Let’s run around and see.” So they dashed around the corner of the house, and, sure enough, Mother Bun had forgotten to lock the window. And the next moment Bunty was boosting the little bunny boy up to the window sill. But when Baby Bun dropped down on the other side into the kitchen he landed into a big bowlful of something soft and sticky! And the more

he tried to get loose the tighter it stuck.

“Oh, Bunty!” he fairly shrieked, “please get me loose! I’m all stuck up!”

Now it wasn’t very easy for Bunty to scramble up to the window sill, but he finally managed it after a great deal of pulling and kicking, and the first thing he spied when he looked into the room was Baby Bun standing in a big bowlful of dough. You see he had dropped down fair and square into the bowl of dough that Mother Bun had placed on the chair near the stove to rise.

“Oh, what shall I do?” wailed the little bunny boy, wiping the tears out of his eyes with two little floury paws.

And it would be hard to say what he would have done if it hadn’t been for Bunty, but the little bunny boy managed to get most of the dough off of him by the time



Mother Bun returned. And even then he was a sorry looking little chap.

“You’re a naughty little bunny boy,” Mother Bun told him, looking very cross about it. “Do you know what happens to little bunny boys who don’t listen?” she asked him.

“They—they fall in the dough,” stammered Baby Bun.

And while all little bunny boys don’t fall in a bowl of dough when they forget to listen, they almost always meet with some kind of trouble.

And that’s all.

## XV

### THE FIRE STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Tommy Toddles, the little bunny boy, and his two little bunny playmates, Bunty Cottontail and Dickie Whiteface, were all sitting together, one day, in the Toddles's woodshed.

Now these three little bunny chaps were discussing what they would like to do when they were grown up—just as little boys do sometimes.

“I wish I could run an engine,” said

Bunty. "My! but that would be fun!"

"I'd rather fly an airship," spoke up Dickie; "just see how much faster you'd go."

"What would you like to do?" asked Bunty of Tommy.

"I'd rather be a fire laddie," replied his little bunny chum, "and rescue folks out of burning houses."

And before any of them could say another word they heard something that made them sit up very straight on the little wooden bench to listen.

Ding-dong! Ding-dong! Ding-dong! sounded a bell close by.

"It's the fire bell!" gasped Tommy.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!" yelled Dickie, as the three of them tried to get through the door at the same time.

And just as they got out on the front pave-

ment along came Uncle Fluff puffing like a fire engine himself.

“Where’s the fire, Uncle Fluff?” asked Tommy.

“Down at Mother Bun’s house,” wheezed the bunny uncle, as he went on down the street with a hop-skip-and-jump.

And, sure enough, when the three little bunny boys came to where Mother Bun lived, they found the smoke coming out of the window.

“Goodness alive!” cried Daddy Longears, the bunny storekeeper, dancing first on one foot and then on the other, “what in the world is keeping those fire laddies!”

“Come on, fellows,” yelled Tommy to his two little chums, “let’s carry out the things!”

And you ought to have seen the three little bunny boys hustle the things out of the

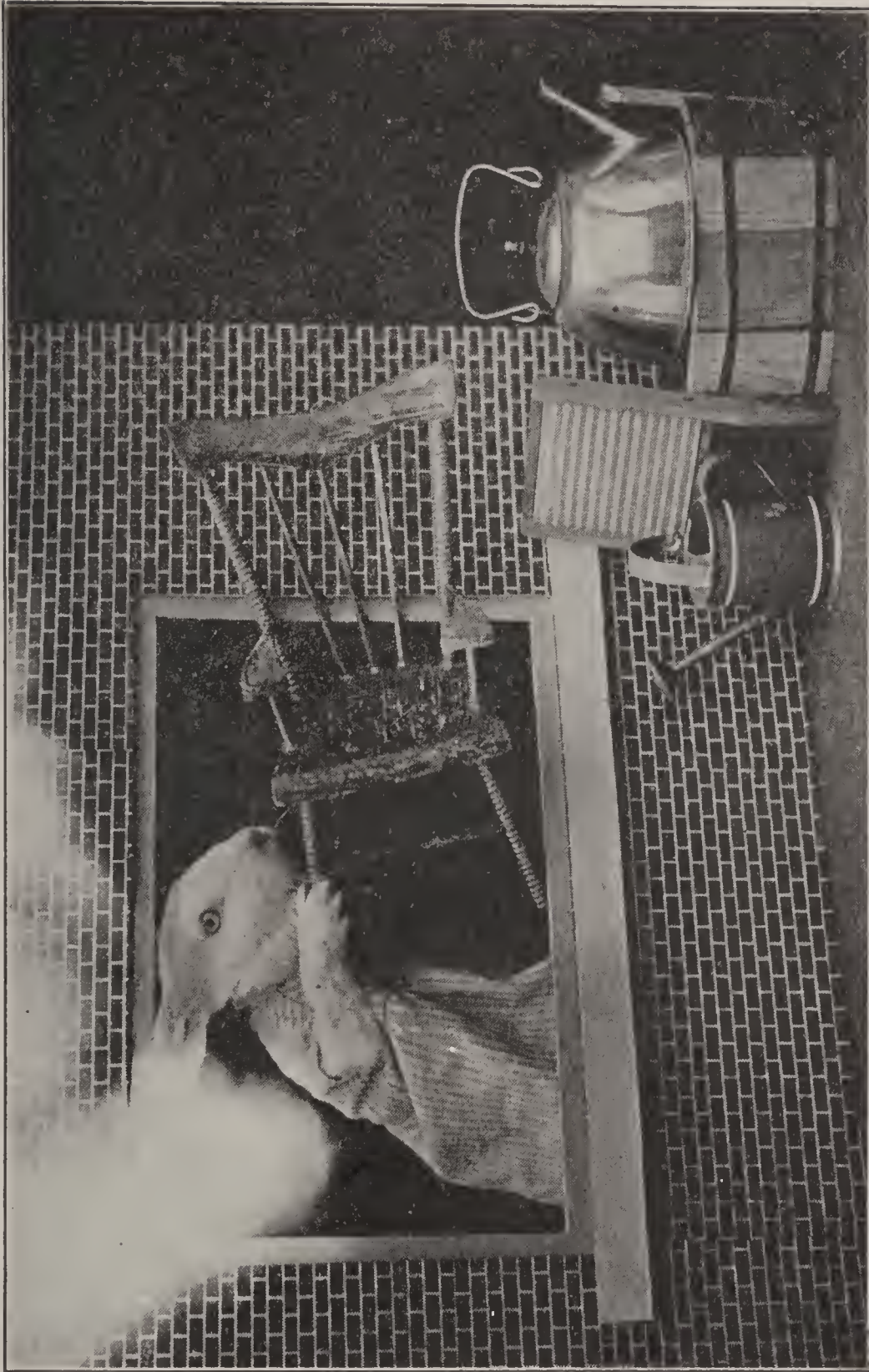
rooms downstairs. Why, Tommy, alone, lifted a number of things out of the window into the back yard.

And just as he had caught up a chair to place outside, Mother Bun came bursting into the room, wringing her paws.

“Oh, where’s Baby Bun?” she wailed. “I can’t find him anywhere. And just as soon as she caught sight of Tommy she begged him to help her find her little baby bunny.

“Maybe he’s upstairs,” thought Tommy to himself, and away he dashed up the stairs. And, would you believe it, in one of the rooms, frightened nearly out of his wits, crouched little Baby Bun in a corner.

“Here he is! Here he is!” shouted Bunty with joy, as he placed the little bunny chap in Mother Bun’s paws.



"CAUGHT UP A CHAIR TO PLACE OUTSIDE"

Now by this time the fire laddies had arrived and in a very few minutes the fire was all put out. And it was not nearly so bad as it seemed, as only one room was scorched a little. The only one who was injured was Uncle Fluff, who had run into a post while on his way to the fire. But as soon as Doctor Squeeks had put some liniment on the pain all went away.

“I don’t care for anything at all,” declared Mother Bun, happily, “except that Baby Bun is safe and sound.”

So it was no wonder that everybody there gave three hearty cheers for Tommy for rescuing little Baby Bun.

And that’s all.



## XVI

### THE EASTER VISIT STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John

would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Just as Bunty Cottontail, the little bunny boy, reached the front gate he caught sight of the rabbit postman coming down the street. Now the rabbit postman was quite a jolly chap, and the nicest thing about him was that he was a great friend of all the little bunny children.

"Hello, Bunty!" he called, pleasantly, "here's a letter for Mother Cottontail."

“Thank you!” replied the little bunny boy, politely, as he took the letter and went on up the garden walk with it.

Before he got quite to the house five other little bunnies ran out of the kitchen door and fairly pounced on him. They were his two little bunny brothers, Buzzy and Wuzzy, and his three little bunny sisters, Molly, Flopsy and Mopsy.

“Oh, what have you got?” asked Buzzy.

“Did you get a letter?” sang out Mopsy.

“It’s a letter! It’s a letter!” cried Molly.

But Bunty marched on into the house with the letter without saying a word. And, of course, the other little Cottontails trotted along after him.

By the time Mother Cottontail had put on her glasses and broken the seal of the letter her six little bunny children were all clus-

tered about her knee with their funny little noses fairly twinkling with eagerness.

And then Mother Cottontail read the letter, and while she was reading it her whiskers began to quiver and all of a sudden she gave a happy little laugh.

“What do you think?” she asked her six little bunnies.

“Oh, Mother Cottontail, tell us quick!” they all begged her.

“Your Uncle Rab and Aunty Rab want me to bring you up to see them for a few days. And they want us to be sure and come before Easter.

“But I guess I’ll have to tell them you don’t want to come,” went on Mother Cottontail, pretending to look quite downhearted about it.

The next instant her six little bunny chil-

dren were climbing all over her, each one trying to tell her how anxious they were to visit Uncle and Aunty Rab.

So it happened that the next day Mother Cottontail dressed her children in their best clothes and started off with them to the station. And when she got there she bought one full fare ticket for herself and six half fare tickets for the six little Cottontails. And on each ticket was printed that it was only good to Bunnyburg Station. But, of course, that was just as far as they wanted to go, as it was there Uncle and Aunty Rab lived.

When they got off the train at Bunnyburg Station there stood a big automobile waiting for them, and in no time at all they were whisked away to their uncle's house.

“Bless my whiskers!” cried hearty old

Uncle Rab, "it does my pink eyes good to see you!" And dear old Aunty Rab hugged and kissed them as all nice aunties do.

Now there was one funny thing about Uncle Rab that the six little Cottontails couldn't understand, and that was that he seemed so busy all the time. Every little bit he would come running into the house, and after saying a word or two would run out again.

And what do you think he was doing all this time? Why, hauling eggs! Yes, sir, there were wagons and automobiles full of eggs coming into the yard all the time, and Uncle Rab was busy unloading them and hauling them by the wheelbarrow full into a large building at the lower end of the garden.

And when Bunty asked Aunty Rab what

they wanted with so many eggs, she promised to tell them a great big secret if they agreed not to tell. And, of course, they all promised not to say a word to anybody.

“Uncle Rab is the Easter Rabbit,” said Aunty Rab, “the very same one who brings the nests of eggs to the little bunny boys and girls on Easter morning.”

“Oh!” went Bunty.

“Oh-h-h!” squeaked Molly.

“Oh-h-h-h-h!” gasped the other four.

And no wonder! Just think of the really truly Easter Rabbit being your really truly uncle!

“Was Uncle Rab at our house last Easter?” asked Bunty.

“Indeed he was,” declared Aunty Rab, “and it wouldn’t surprise me a bit but what he put a few extra eggs in your nests just

because you were his little nieces and nephews.”

“But why didn’t he wake us up,” asked the little bunny boys, “and say howdy-do to us?”

“Oh, dear, no, that wouldn’t do at all,” replied Aunty Rab. “Just think if he had stopped to talk with you and then when morning came he would have found that there was still a number of his little friends to visit and he had to leave for home without giving them a single egg. Now wouldn’t that be dreadful for such a careful old Easter Rabbit as Uncle Rab?”

“I guess it would,” admitted Bunty.

“I know what I’m going to do,” declared little Molly. “I’m going to stay up the night before Easter and wait for Uncle Rab.”

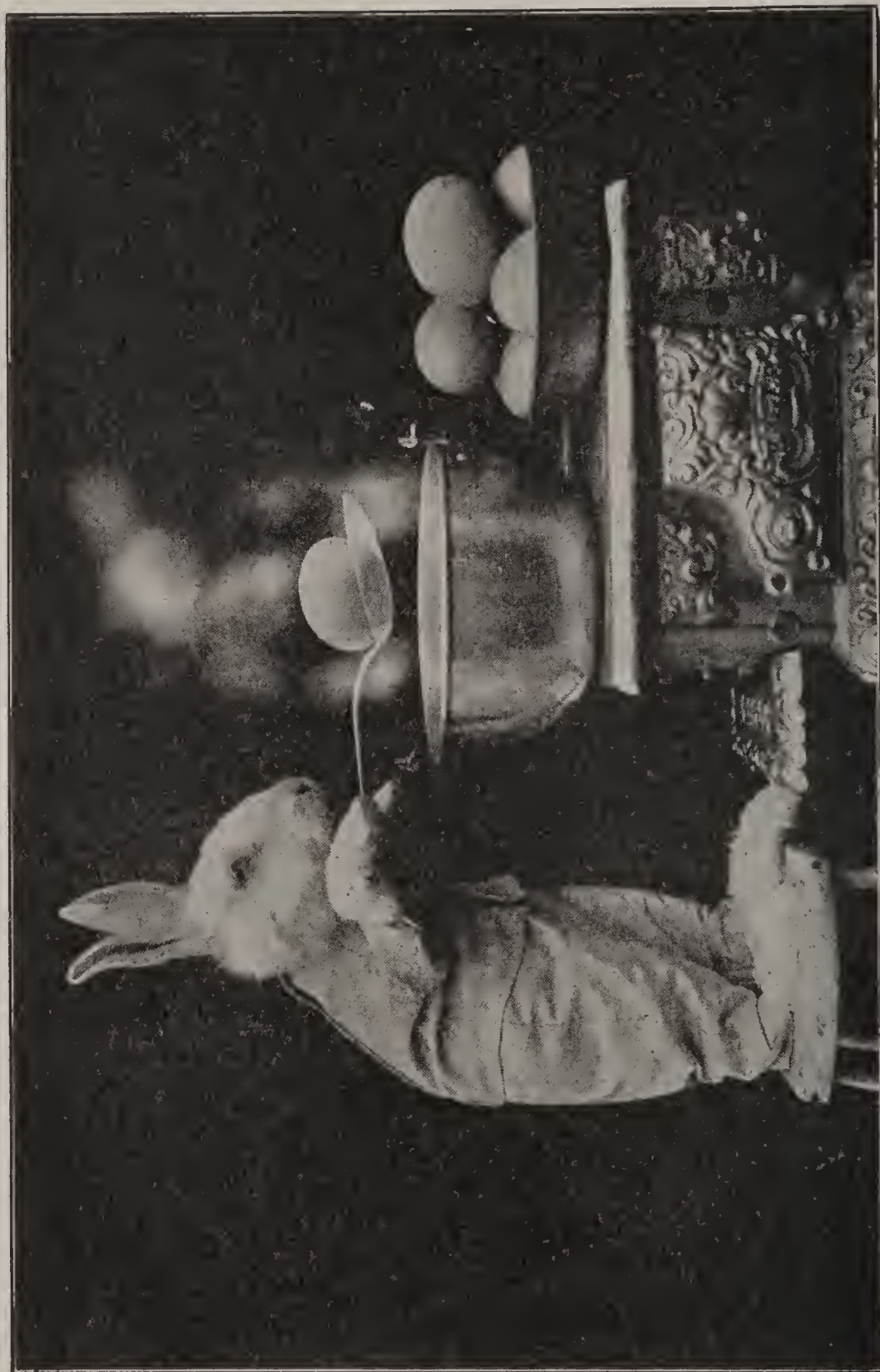


“You’d better not,” spoke up Bunty, “maybe he won’t come if he sees you peeping.”

“Yes, indeed,” said Mother Cottontail, “you’d better be a little bit careful.”

Well, anyway, Uncle Rab, the Easter Rabbit, was so very busy that he hardly knew what to do first. The big brick storehouse in the back part of the yard was nearly half full of eggs, and every one of them had to be hard boiled and dipped into different colored dyes to make them look pretty.

All morning Uncle Rab had been busy at the big kitchen stove boiling eggs. First he would place a number of them into the boiler of hot water and then turn the little egg timer on the wall until the sand had all run out of the upper glass into the lower one. By this time the eggs were done and he



"BUSY AT THE BIG KITCHEN STOVE BOILING EGGS"

would dip them out and put them on a dish to cool.

Just as he was lifting one of the eggs out of the boiler on a big spoon an excited looking rabbit came rushing into the room to tell him that one of the wagons had upset and dumped two whole crates of eggs into the ditch.

“Dear me!” cried Uncle Rab, “if they’re all broken we’ll never have enough to go around. I’ll go see right away!”

Now Uncle Rab didn’t like to stop boiling the eggs, so he looked around to find someone to take his place, and the only one there just then was Bunty Cottontail, his little bunny nephew.

“How would you like to tend to these eggs while I am away, Bunty?” he asked the little bunny boy. And, of course, Bunty

was delighted to think that Uncle Rab should ask him to help.

So Uncle Rab hurried away while Bunty started in to boil the eggs. And wasn't it funny that the very first one the little bunny boy dipped out of the boiling water slipped off the spoon and fell on the floor.

"Why—why—!" gasped Bunty, as he saw the egg roll under the stove. "It didn't even break!"

Sure enough when Bunty picked it up there wasn't a crack in it.

When Uncle Rab got back Bunty told him all about dropping the egg, and the Easter Rabbit seemed to be every bit as much surprised about it as Bunty himself

"That's very queer," he said as he looked over the eggs that Bunty had boiled.

“Aha!” he exclaimed, suddenly, “I know now why it didn’t break!”

For there among the hard boiled eggs was a china egg such as you put in an old hen’s nest to keep her company. And you ought to have heard Bunty and the Easter Rabbit laugh! The idea of trying to boil a china egg any harder than it was!

But, anyway, they got all the eggs boiled that day and piled them up in the warehouse ready to be colored. And there were so many of them that they reached clear up to the roof.

“Goodness me!” exclaimed the Easter Rabbit, as he looked them over, “how in the world shall I ever color all those eggs!”

Aunty Rab was close by when he said it, but the dear old bunny aunty never opened her mouth. But she had the hardest kind

of a time to keep from laughing right out loud. Because, you see, every year about that time Uncle Rab always complained about the work he had to do getting ready for Easter.

“You needn’t smile, Aunty Rab,” said Uncle Rab, as he looked across the room at the bunny aunty. “Just think what would happen if I couldn’t get off in time the night before Easter. Why, lots of the little bunny boys and girls would get up Easter morning and find no nest at all. And then what would they think?” demanded Uncle Rab. “Pray tell me that?”

“I shouldn’t wonder if they’d be very much disappointed,” replied Aunty Rab.

“I should say they would!” declared Uncle Rab, looking so fierce about it that his whiskers trembled. “And not only that,

but every one of the disappointed ones would say there was no Easter Rabbit!"

"Wouldn't that be funny," laughed Aunty Rab, "thinking there was no Easter Rabbit when here you are nearly working your head off trying to get ready."

But Uncle Rab was too busy and excited to find anything to laugh about.

"I'll have to start right in coloring those eggs," he told Aunty Rab.

So he went over to a little closet in a corner of the room to get the bottles of different colored dyes.

"Pink, red, yellow, green," he said to himself, as he took out the four bottles and set them on the table.

"Brown, purple, blue," he went on, "blue—blue—" he repeated, as he stopped and looked carefully at the row of bottles.

“Where in the world is that bottle of blue dye?”

“Can’t you find it?” asked Aunty Rab, as she came over to the closet and pulled her spectacles down over her nose so that she could see better.

“Why, here it is,” she exclaimed, suddenly, as she pointed to one of the bottles, “right in front of your nose!”

“Well! Well!” said Uncle Rab. “I surely must be getting old and foolish!”

A few minutes later he was busy coloring the Easter eggs. First he would mix some of the dye in a bowl and then dip in the hard boiled eggs until they were nicely colored.

Just as he was pouring the blue dye out of the bottle into the mixing bowl Bunty Cottontail came into the room. And the little



bunny boy showed by his face that he was eager to help Uncle Rab dye the eggs.

“Here, Bunty,” called Uncle Rab, “suppose you stir this dye until I go out and get some more eggs.”

So Bunty stirred the blue dye while Uncle Rab went out to the warehouse after more eggs to color. And while he was stirring away as busy as could be he bumped into the row of bottles and knocked several of them over.

And that quick the corks flew out of two of them and the red and green dye splashed over a pile of eggs alongside of the bowl. And it made them look all green and red speckly like.

When Uncle Rab got back Bunty was so afraid that he would scold that he hardly knew what to say.

“Well, I declare!” cried Uncle Rab, delightedly, before Bunty had a chance to say a word, “they’re the prettiest ones I’ve ever seen. How did you ever color them like that?”

“You have to sprinkle them with two kinds of dye,” explained Bunty. And then he told the Easter Rabbit just how it happened.

“Isn’t that fine!” declared Uncle Rab without getting a bit cross; “we’ll have to color a lot more just like them.”

So he started in to help and it was quite surprising how quickly they got through coloring the hard boiled eggs. In fact by the time supper was ready the big pile of eggs out in the warehouse had changed to all the colors of the rainbow, and were all ready for the little bunny boys and girls when the

Easter Rabbit left to make their nests on the night before Easter.

Of course Uncle Rab could never have finished so soon if it hadn't been for Aunty Rab and Mother Cottontail and the six little Cottontails. Those six little bunny nieces and nephews of the Easter Rabbit's had been just as busy as they could be the whole day long.

Now it was the funniest thing that all the time Uncle Rab was at work he seemed to be just a little bit cross about something. It wasn't because the six little Cottontails didn't work hard enough to please him. Oh, dear no! And he wasn't cross at Aunty Rab or Mother Cottontail, either.

No doubt if you had asked Uncle Rab himself what made him cross he wouldn't have been able to tell you. But Aunty Rab

could have told you all about it. Yes, indeed, she could have told you just why the Easter Rabbit was feeling a little bit grumpy and out of sorts.

Bright and early the next morning Aunty Rab asked Uncle Rab what they were going to do that day and you should have seen that funny old Easter Rabbit wave his paws and twitch his ears. Why he was so worked up about it that he nearly jumped up and down. But he didn't mean it—honest and honest he didn't. He was just the best-hearted bunny uncle in the world, because, you see, if he hadn't been he never would have bothered to take all those nests of eggs to the little bunny children.

“Great whiskers!” he cried, as soon as Aunty Rab asked him. “You want to know what there is to do and I'm so busy that my

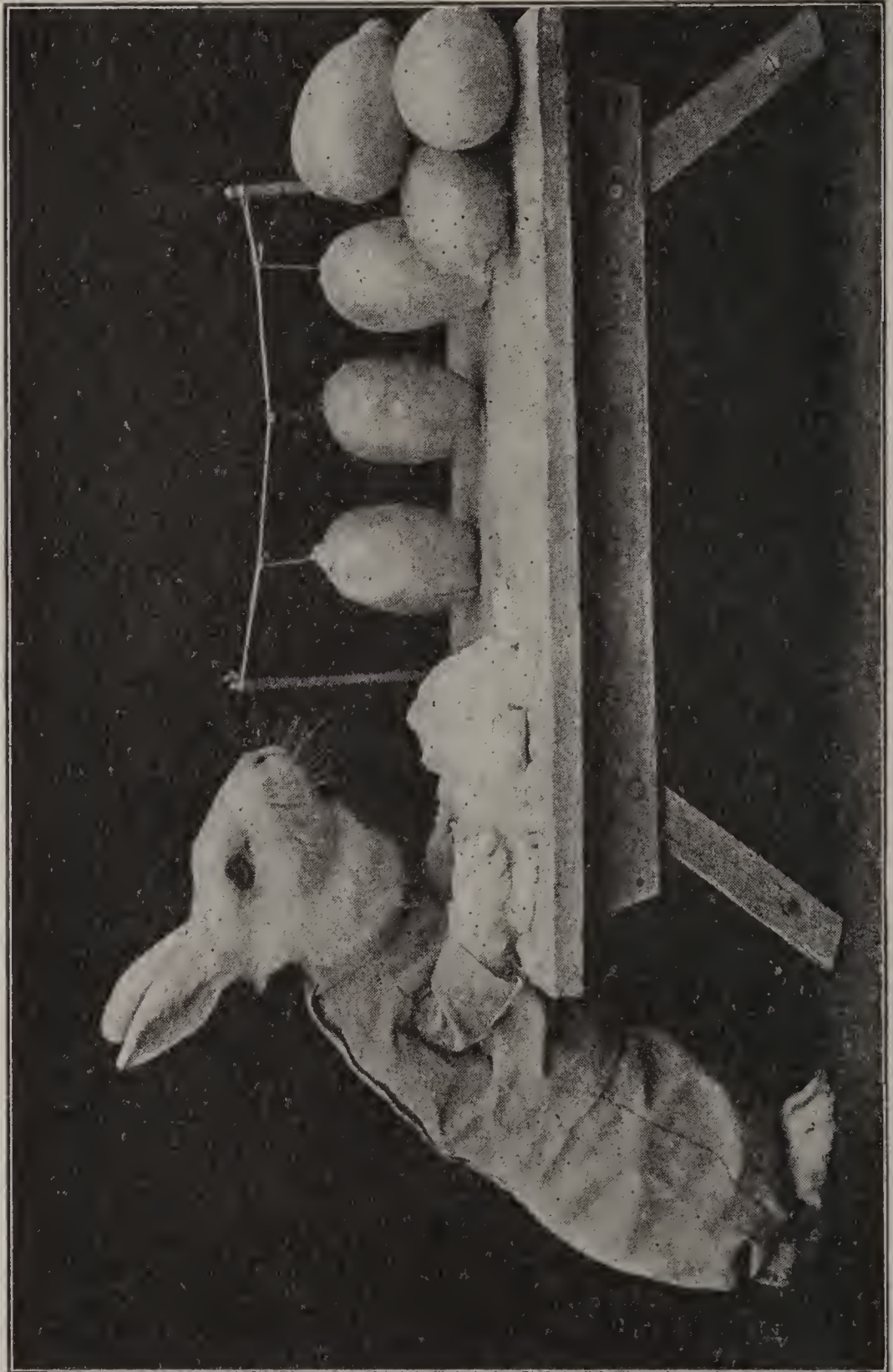
head swims! How about the candy eggs and putting the names on? And there's the little jelly eggs! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" sighed the Easter Rabbit, "if I only get things done in time!"

"But what shall we do first?" asked Aunty Rab.

"First of all we'll make the candy eggs," replied Uncle Rab. "You and Mother Cottontail can mix the candy and I'll make the eggs."

So, a few minutes later, everybody was busy making the candy eggs, and as soon as Uncle Rab would get one ready Bunty would dip it either into a dish of chocolate for a chocolate egg or into a dish of another kind of icing to make a cream egg.

Each little egg, you know, had a string



“EVERYBODY WAS BUSY MAKING THE CANDY EGGS”

through the middle of it, so as soon as it was dipped Bunty would hang it up on a little line that Uncle Rab had fastened across the end of the table. And there it stayed until the icing was hard and dry.

Bunty tried to be very careful not to drop any of the eggs, but every little while one of the strings would slip out of his paws and down it would go! And after it hit the table it looked more like a lollipop than an Easter egg.

Every time he dropped an egg Bunty expected Uncle Rab to say something. But his bunny uncle never said a word. He just went on making those candy eggs harder than ever.

Bunty's little sister, Mopsy, was busy cutting the little strings that Uncle Rab put in the eggs to hang them up by. Just how it

happened it would be hard to say, but, anyway, when Uncle Rab came to use the strings he found that nearly every one of them was cut too short.

“Oh, Uncle Rab!” Mopsy almost sobbed, “please don’t be cross!”

“It doesn’t matter one bit,” declared Uncle Rab, smiling down at the little bunny girl.

And when he saw the two big tears in Mopsy’s pink eyes he stooped down and kissed her little furry cheek.

“There, honey,” he said, “don’t you worry one bit.” So, you see, the Easter Rabbit couldn’t have been such a cross old rabbit man after all.

Uncle Rab, the Easter Rabbit, was up bright and early the next day after they had made the candy eggs, and the very first thing



he did when he came downstairs was to look at the calendar.

“One, two, three, four,” he counted to himself, as he looked at the numbers. “Well, I declare!” he exclaimed, “only four more days to Easter.”

Before he sat down to breakfast Aunty Rab asked him how many cups of carrot tea he wanted. The Easter Rabbit was very fond of carrot tea, and he nearly always drank two cups. So every morning Aunty Rab would ask how much he would drink.

But this morning Uncle Rab was so busy thinking about the number of days to Easter that when Aunty Rab asked him about the tea he said “Four!”

“My goodness!” cried Aunty Rab, “you never drank four cups of tea before in all your life!”

“Tea!” repeated Uncle Rab. “Who said anything about tea? I’m talking about how many days to Easter.”

“Well, well!” laughed Aunty Rab.

As soon as breakfast was finished Uncle Rab got ready to make the name eggs. These are the eggs, you know, with your name written on top with icing. And you ought to have seen the long list of names that Uncle Rab had to put on Easter eggs. It started with several little bunny girls by the name of Anna and ran clear through the alphabet to Zacharias.

So the first egg Uncle Rab started to decorate was for Anna Blue Eyes, a little bunny girl. First of all he placed the egg on a little table in front of him and then started to write Anna with a little paper funnel filled with icing. The little paper funnel,

you know, had a tiny hole at the bottom, and the icing came out just like ink out of a fountain pen.

Uncle Rab was just writing the last letter when Molly Cottontail, the little bunny girl, came into the room.

“Oh, isn’t that pretty!” she cried, as soon as she caught sight of the egg on the table. “Who is it for, Uncle Rab?” she asked.

“For a little bunny girl by the name of Anna Blue Eyes,” replied the Easter Rabbit. “Do you know a little bunny girl by that name?” he asked.

“Indeed I do,” declared Molly; “she’s just the—”

Now Molly was going to say that little Anna was too mean for anything and that she didn’t like her one bit. And it was all because she and little Anna had had a quar-



“UNCLE RAB WAS JUST WRITING THE LAST LETTER”

rel one day in the schoolyard during recess.

But she thought it best not to tell Uncle Rab about it, as he might think it was not altogether Anna's fault.

A little while later Uncle Rab went into another room to get some more eggs, and while he was gone Molly took a knife and cut a piece out of Anna's egg, just like you'd plug a watermelon. And then what do you think she did? Why, she scooped out the whole inside of the egg so that it was nothing but a shell. And the last thing of all she stuffed it full of paper and put the little plug back into place so that no one could have ever told what she had done until they started to eat the egg.

"There!" declared the little bunny girl, "it will just serve her right for being so mean!"

When Uncle Rab came back he told Molly that he had been hunting for a nice pink egg to give to another little bunny girl whose name was Anna, too. But he couldn't find one to suit him.

"She's a poor little crippled bunny girl," explained Uncle Rab, "and can never run about and play like the other bunny children. So I wanted to give her something nice."

Just then he glanced at the egg for the other little Anna, the very one that Molly had scooped the center out of.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "the very thing! I'll give this one to poor little Anna Small, the crippled bunny girl, and give the other Anna another one."

The next moment Molly had flung her little paws around Uncle Rab's neck and was

sobbing as though her little heart would break.

“Oh, Uncle Rab,” she begged, “please don’t give it to poor little Anna who’s all crippled. Please—please don’t!”

“Bless my whiskers!” cried Uncle Rab, who was so surprised that he hardly knew what to say.

And then, of course, Molly told him what she had done. Uncle Rab didn’t scold her one bit, but the little bunny girl could see by his face that he was sorry that she had acted as she did.

“I’ll never do it again,” she promised him, and then and there made up her mind never to be so spiteful to anyone after that.

When Saturday came, which, of course, was the day before Easter, the six little Cottontails got up bright and early, for this was

the day that Mother Cottontail was going to take them home. And all of them felt like crying, they were that sorry.

“Can’t we stay just another day?” begged Bunty.

“Well, I guess not,” replied Mother Cottontail. “Suppose there was no one at home when Uncle Rab came to-night with the nests and that all the windows were locked and he couldn’t get in. How would you feel next morning?”

“We could give him the front door key,” said the little bunny boy, “and then he could get in as easy as anything.”

“Oh, that wouldn’t do at all,” declared Mother Cottontail. “The Easter Rabbit always crawls through a window and always will.”

Well, that afternoon the little Cottontails



said good-by to Uncle Rab and Aunty Rab and took the train at Bunnyburg Station for home. And all the way there they talked about nothing else but Uncle Rab and how wonderful it seemed that he was the really truly Easter Rabbit.

All that afternoon Uncle Rab had been busy loading the eggs on his big automobile. And such a lot of eggs you never saw in all your life.

As soon as he had eaten his supper he kissed Aunty Rab good-by and went out to crank up the automobile. And at the first turn it started to roar and shake as though it was eager to be off. The next moment it was gliding smoothly down the driveway past the house.

“Happy Easter, Uncle Rab!” shouted Aunty Rab from the porch.

“Happy Easter, Aunty Rab!” answered the Easter Rabbit.

Faster and faster went the automobile, while away off in the distance the little bunny boys and girls were telling their mothers to be very very careful to leave one of the window catches open so that the Easter Rabbit would have no trouble in getting inside.

And that’s all.

## XVII

### THE EASTER RABBIT STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Aunty Rab, the dear old bunny aunty of the six little Cottontails, sat all by herself in the sitting-room knitting something out of a ball of yarn after Uncle Rab, the Easter Rabbit, had started away with his load of eggs to visit the little bunny boys and girls. Every little while she would smile to herself and then the two shiny needles in her paws would go faster than ever.

“Won't they be happy when they get

awake to-morrow and find what the Easter Rabbit has brought them," she said, softly, to herself. "I just wish I were to be a little bunny girl myself to-morrow."

Mother Cottontail and the six little Cottontails had arrived home safely from their Uncle Rab's and ever since then they had talked about nothing else but the Easter Rabbit and what he might bring them.

"I hope he brings me a big chocolate egg," said Bunty.

"I'd rather have a candy rabbit," spoke up Mopsy.

"I wouldn't," declared Flopsy; "I wish he'd bring me a pink egg with my name on."

"And lots of jelly eggs with little speckly spots on them," added Molly.

When evening came the Easter Rabbit was speeding on and on in his fleet little

automobile toward the houses of the little bunny folk. The moon was shining brightly overhead, and if Uncle Rab would have had time to look he would have seen that the man in the moon was smiling down at him. But who wouldn't smile at the Easter Rabbit? You and I would, wouldn't-we?

"I don't believe those folks have gone to bed yet," thought Uncle Rab as he saw a light ahead of him shining out of a window. And wasn't it funny that just then the light popped out and everything was dark.

So he stopped the automobile in front of the little house and after filling a basket with eggs he crept softly towards the window from which the light had been shining a moment before.

"Well, I declare!" he said to himself, as he noticed the window raised a tiny crack

from the bottom, "they've all gone to bed and even left the window raised a little for me to get in."

But just then he heard some one whispering, and it came from right inside the window where everything was as dark as the inside of a black hat.

"Gracious me!" thought Uncle Rab, "some one must surely be awake!" So he got right up close to the window to listen.

"I don't believe there is any Easter Rabbit," said a voice.

"Why don't you?" asked another little voice.

"'Cause I never saw him," answered the first little bunny boy.

Now Uncle Rab was in an awful big hurry and he was wishing with all his heart that those two little bunny boys were sound

asleep in bed instead of whispering together in the dark.

So what did he do but raise the window and crawl into the room. Yes, sir, right into the very room where those two little bunny boys were watching for him.

“Oh-h-h-h!” they both went, just like that.

“It’s the Easter Rabbit! It’s the Easter Rabbit!” whispered one of them. “See, there’s his basket of eggs on his paw!”

But Uncle Rab never said a word, as he was too busy to talk. But all the time he was filling the two little nests in the corner he kept smiling to himself to think that one of those bunny boys had said he didn’t believe there was an Easter Rabbit.

As soon as he was finished he started to crawl out through the window again and as he hopped into the automobile he caught



sight of the two little bunny boys standing at the open window watching him.

“Good-by, Easter Rabbit!” shouted one of them, the very same one who said a little while before that he did not believe there was an Easter Rabbit.

“Good-by, little bunny boys!” waved Uncle Rab, as he started away for the next little house.

From one little house to the other hurried the Easter Rabbit with his automobile load of eggs. And, of course, every place he stopped where there were bunny children he left an Easter nest or maybe several of them.

“My, oh, my!” he exclaimed, as he looked at his watch, “it’s almost twelve o’clock and goodness knows how many places I’ve got to visit before morning.”

So he turned a little wheel in the front

of his automobile to make it go faster. Now I shouldn't wonder but what turning that little wheel made the automobile take two swallows of gasolene every time the wheels went around instead of only one. Anyway, the Easter Rabbit fairly flew.

When he came to the next little brick house and hopped out of his automobile to crawl through the window he found it securely fastened inside with a catch. And that quick he knew that some one had been very, very careless. Just to think of having several little bunny children in the house who can hardly wait until the Easter Rabbit comes and then have their mother or aunty or some one like that go around and lock every one of the windows. Of course, maybe they didn't mean to do it, but the windows were all locked just the same, and how



“ HE FOUND IT SECURELY FASTENED INSIDE ”

in the world can you expect the Easter Rabbit to get inside with everything securely fastened?

But Uncle Rab didn't seem to mind a bit. He pulled his knife out of his pocket, and before you could say Jack Robinson he had slipped the blade up between the sash and pushed back the catch.

"Aha!" he chuckled, as he crawled over the sill, "they couldn't keep me out if they wanted to."

Now there were two little bunny boys and their two little bunny sisters lived there, so Uncle Rab made four little nests—one in each corner.

"There," he said to himself, as he climbed out again, "I shouldn't wonder but what they'll be very, very happy."

In a little while the Easter Rabbit came

to another little house, and this time he seemed to know where he was.

“Well, well!” he exclaimed, “here’s the home of the six little Cottontails! Wouldn’t they be surprised to know I’m here!”

And, sure enough, it was where Mother Cottontail and her family of little bunnies lived. And no doubt you remember that Uncle Rab, the Easter Rabbit, was a really truly uncle to the six little Cottontails.

And you can well imagine that all the windows weren’t locked in that house. No, indeed! Before they went to bed those six little bunnies were very careful to see that one of the catches was open so that the Easter Rabbit could get inside.

As Uncle Rab was fixing the nests—one in each corner and two under the table—he

smiled to himself and pulled six little slips of paper out of his pocket. And before he filled each little nest with the kind of Easter eggs that little bunny boys and girls like the best he put a slip of paper in the bottom of each one.

Easter morning bright and early the six little Cottontails rushed downstairs to see what the Easter Rabbit had brought them. And for a little while there was so many "Ah's" and "Oh's" that Mother Cottontail couldn't hear herself talk.

But the biggest surprise of all was when each little bunny found at the bottom of his nest a little slip of paper that read:

"With love from Uncle Rab."

And that's all.

## XVIII

### THE WIGWAM STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

The teacher of the little bunny scholars in the Bunnyville school read them a story one day about a strange people called Indians who dwelt in a faraway land, and how, instead of living in houses like the bunny folks themselves, they lived in little bark tents called wigwams.

Now do you know that for the rest of the afternoon, Laddie Bun, the little bunny boy, could think of nothing else but those strange



people called Indians and how they lived in their little bark tents. And would you believe it before school let out he was wishing to himself that he was a little Indian boy and could live in a wigwam.

On his way home from school he met Uncle Fluff and the first thing he asked the jolly old bunny uncle was whether he would like to be an Indian. Now, of course, Uncle Fluff had read all about Indians, but just for a little joke he pretended not to know a thing about them.

“Indian? Indian?” he repeated, scratching his ear in a puzzled kind of way. “Oh, yes!” he exclaimed suddenly. “I know now! They’re one of those funny kinds of birds you see around here now and then.”

And that made Laddie laugh, and he

laughed and laughed. To think that Uncle Fluff thought an Indian was a bird.

“Well, what are you laughing at?” asked the bunny uncle, looking very much surprised.

“Why, don’t you know,” answered Laddie, “an Indian is someone who lives in a faraway land and has a wigwam for a house?”

“Well, well!” chuckled Uncle Fluff, “it’s no wonder you had to laugh. The idea of me thinking such a foolish thing as that!”

“Could you make a wigwam, Uncle Fluff?” asked the little bunny boy.

“It’s the easiest thing in the world,” declared Uncle Fluff. “Why, I shouldn’t wonder but what a little chap like you could make one yourself.”

“Oh, do you think I could!” exclaimed Laddie eagerly.

“Yes, indeed,” insisted the bunny uncle; “all you need is a bundle of straw and—”

“Yes, but Uncle Fluff,” interrupted Laddie, “the Indians make theirs out of bark.”

“Straw’s just as good as bark for little bunny boys’ wigwams,” declared Uncle Fluff. “You see, it’s quite different with Indians for they have to live in theirs even when it rains, but a little bunny boy, you know, can run into the house.”

“First of all,” he explained, “you get a big bundle of straw and tie the ends together at the top. Then you spread it apart at the bottom and stand it on the ground. And as soon as you make a little opening in front for a door you’ll find there’s a little place inside to sit.”



“A LITTLE OPENING IN FRONT FOR A DOOR”

“Oh, thank you!” cried Laddie with delight. “I’ll make one just as soon as I get home.”

And do you know he ran all the way down the street he was in such a hurry to start making that little wigwam. You see, Mother Bun had plenty of straw in the chicken-house for nests, so there was no trouble in getting that. And it was quite surprising what a fine little wigwam he made.

Shortly after the little straw tent was finished and Laddie had crawled inside he heard Mother Bun calling. And he felt sure that she wanted him to do something.

So he sat there just as quiet as a little mouse, thinking that if she didn’t find out where he was she might ask one of the others to do it instead.

A few minutes later she called again and for the second time Laddie scarcely moved in his little wigwam. And the third time it was the same way.

The next thing he knew he heard some one coming down the walk towards him and he wondered whether it was Mother Bun trying to find him. And, sure enough, it was.

“Laddie!” she called to him outside the door of the little wigwam, “why didn’t you come when I called you?”

“Big Indian brave!” grunted Laddie, “live in wigwam.”

But, goodness me, what a surprised little Indian there was just then, for all of a sudden Mother Bun toppled over the little straw tent and caught Laddie by the collar of his jacket.

“Big Indian brave go get a bucket of water,” said Mother Bun.

And let me tell you, that little make-believe Indian boy started for the pump just as fast as his little legs could take him.

And that’s all.

## XIX

### THE PEDDLER STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and



girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Rap-a-tap! Rap-a-tap! sounded a knock on the back door, and Molly Cottontail, the little bunny girl, ran to look out of the window to see who it was.

She was all alone in the house, as Mother Cottontail had gone away visiting. And you know the little bunny folks are more or less timid.

"Maybe it's an old tramp bunny," thought Molly, "and Mother Cottontail told



“ A POOR OLD BUNNY PEDDLER ”

me not to open the door if one came around.”

But when she looked out of the window she found it wasn't an old tramp bunny at all, but a poor old bunny peddler, who had a heavy pack on his back and walked with a stick.

So she went to the door and opened it and the old bunny peddler had such a nice face and looked so pleasantly at her that she didn't feel a bit afraid.

“Is your mother at home?” he asked politely.

“She's just gone out,” replied Molly.

“I would have liked to show her my things,” said the bunny peddler, “and, besides, I thought I could rest a little while.”

“If you wish,” said the little bunny girl, shyly, “you may come inside and sit in the kitchen.”

“Thank you ever so much,” said the bunny peddler, as he took off his pack and hobbled into the kitchen.

“Maybe he’s hungry,” thought Molly, and would you believe it, she went down into the cellar and brought up a whole lemon tart and a plateful of doughnuts.

And I shouldn’t wonder at all but what the bunny peddler thought them the best things he had eaten for many a day, for when he was through every crumb had disappeared.

“Now I’ll show you my things,” he told her, as he opened his pack and spread them out on the floor. There were pins and needles and rings and little toy watches and combs and brushes and all the other things that peddlers carry around with them to sell.

But nothing pleased Molly more than a

necklace of gold beads. And no doubt the bunny peddler saw how her little pink eyes sparkled as she looked them over.

“I’d just love to buy these,” she told him, “but I haven’t even a penny.”

Well, anyway, the old bunny peddler soon strapped up his pack again and started off and the last thing Molly saw of him he was hobbling down the garden path.

That evening at the supper table Molly told Mother Cottontail all about the peddler and how she had given him something to eat. And wasn’t it funny that just as Molly was telling her, Mother Cottontail should lift up the lid of the sugar bowl and find something inside.

“Well, I declare!” she exclaimed, as she held up something yellow and sparkling, “what’s this?”

“Oh, Mother Cottontail!” cried Molly, “it’s the little gold necklace that the peddler had!”

And, sure enough, so it was, with a little piece of paper fastened to it on which was written:

“To a kind little bunny girl, from an old bunny peddler.”

And as Molly fastened the little necklace around her fluffy little neck, her eyes fairly danced with delight. But Mother Cottontail told Molly that in the future it would be the wise thing not to let a stranger, even though he “smiled pleasantly,” in the house when the little bunny girl was all alone, for the next visitor might not be such a nice old animal man as the bunny peddler was.

And that’s all.

## XX

### THE QUARREL STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and

girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Now it wasn't very often that the little bunny boys of Bunnyway Lane quarreled among themselves, but sometimes one of them would do something that another didn't like, and then for a day or two they wouldn't speak to each other. But it never lasted very long and after it was all over they were just as good playmates as ever.

It was that way with Tommy Toddles and his little bunny chum, Bunty Cottontail.



It seemed that Tommy had dropped his big, blue pencil in the school-yard one day at recess, and when Bunty picked one up that looked just like it, Tommy felt sure that it was the very same one he had lost. But Bunty was just as sure that it belonged to his little bunny sister, for Molly's blue pencil had had a scratch on it and the pencil he had found was marked in the same way.

"It's mine!" declared Tommy.

"It's no such a thing!" flung back Bunty; "it belongs to my sister Molly!"

Well, anyway, Bunty wouldn't give the pencil up and it made Tommy so angry that he wouldn't even talk to his little bunny playmate after that. And when the other little bunny boys started to play games at recess time, neither one would play for fear the other would play too.

When school let out that afternoon Bunty stayed a little later than the others to help the teacher clean off the blackboard. And on his way home, just as he was passing the high brick wall in front of Mrs. Richbun's garden, he caught sight of something written on the wall that made him stop and stare he was so surprised. For there on the wall in big white letters it said: "Bunty is the teacher's pet."

"I'd just like to know who did that!" gritted the little bunny boy fiercely, as he doubled up both little paws into two hard little fists; "I'd show him!" And then, all of a sudden, it popped into his head who had done it.

"It was Tommy, sure as anything," he thought to himself; "he's cross just because I said it was Molly's pencil."



“CAUGHT SIGHT OF SOMETHING WRITTEN ON THE WALL”

Now the next morning when Tommy passed by Mrs. Richbun's on his way to school he was every bit as much surprised to see what was written on the wall as Bunty had been. Only this time it was different, as the first word had been rubbed out and another put in its place. And now it read: "Tommy is the teacher's pet."

"It was that mean Bunty Cottontail," thought Tommy quickly; "he's cross just 'cause I wanted my pencil."

But when Bunty came home from school the names had been changed again and once more he read that he was the teacher's pet. But instead of rubbing it off, he marched past with his head in the air, just as though he didn't care at all.

The next morning at recess while he was standing near a group of his little playmates

he heard them giggle among themselves as they kept looking at him in a funny kind of a way. And, of course, he wondered what they were laughing at.

“Ho, Bunty,” sang out Jackie Whiteface suddenly, “did you see what was written on Mrs. Richbun’s wall?”

“We played a joke on you!” shouted Laddie Bun.

“There were five of us,” explained little Timmy Brighteyes, “and each one of us wrote a word.”

“Was Tommy Toddles there?” asked Bunty quickly.

“He went home another way,” answered Jackie.

Nor was that the worst of it, for that very morning Bunty found another blue pencil in the school-yard. And that, too, had a

scratch on it, so that the first pencil could have belonged to Tommy just as he had said.

As soon as school was dismissed Bunty came running up to Tommy and shoved the blue pencil into his paw. "I'm sorry I kept the first one," he whispered to his little playmate.

And Tommy seemed very glad to have his little chum talk to him again and all the way home they were the same happy little playmates as before. And they both made up their minds that it wasn't any fun at all for two little bunny boys to quarrel.

And as for those five little bunny boys who thought it such a joke to write on Mrs. Richbun's front wall they soon found out that it wasn't quite so funny after all, for Mr. Wobble, the cross old rabbit gardener, had had his eye on them all the time, and

what did he do but make them take a bucket of water and a brush and clean every chalk mark off the wall.

And that's all.

## XXI

### THE CAKE STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farmhouse lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and



girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Molly Cottontail, the little bunny girl, was standing in front of the kitchen table with a big yellow bowl before her and wrinkling up her little nose trying to think just how to mix up a pound cake. And that same little wrinkly crinkly nose had a little dab of white on it where she had touched it with her floury paw.

“Mother Cottontail, how many eggs do you use?” she asked.

“I think eight will be plenty,” replied Mother Cottontail.

“And how much butter?” she wanted to know a little later.

So Mother Cottontail told her how much butter was needed and all the other things that go into a pound cake.

“I just love to bake a cake,” thought Molly, as she beat up the sugar and eggs with a big wooden spoon.

Now perhaps you’ve been wondering by this time why Molly was making the cake instead of Mother Cottontail. Well, you see, it was this way. Molly had invited a number of her little playmates to come around the next day and she thought it would be very nice to give them a slice of cake and a glass of milk before they went home. So she had coaxed her mother to let

her bake a big pound cake all by herself.

“You haven’t got much time,” said Mother Cottontail, as she glanced up at the clock, “so you’ll have to hurry.” For that was the afternoon that Molly had to take her music lesson.

And that’s just what caused all the trouble—the little bunny girl hurried a bit too fast. Every now and then she would take a peep in the oven to see how her cake was baking and as soon as it was brown enough on top she took it out; but goodness me, just as she was about to set it on the table she stumbled and dropped the whole thing on the floor. And, my, oh, my, such a looking cake!

“Oh, Mother Cottontail!” cried poor Molly, looking ready to cry.

And when Mother Cottontail told her that



“ EVERY NOW AND THEN SHE WOULD TAKE A PEEP IN THE OVEN ”

she wouldn't have time to mix up another cake the big tears did roll down her cheeks.

"It's too bad," said Mother Cottontail, as she patted the little fluffy head. "But don't cry," she smiled, "sometimes things turn out better than you think."

So Molly went upstairs to put on another dress, and a little later she was on her way to Professor Piper's house where she took her music lessons. But despite all she could do the tears would come to her eyes.

The first one she met was Miss Prim, the bunny lady, who was just returning home from the store.

"Why, Molly!" she exclaimed, "what makes you cry?"

And, of course, Molly told her all about the cake.

"There! There!" said Miss Prim; "don't

you cry any more. Maybe the fairies will fix things up better than you think.”

And a little further on Molly ran into Uncle Fluff, the nice old bunny gentleman.

“Well, I declare!” cried the jolly old rabbit uncle, “if it isn’t my little friend Molly with tears in her eyes.”

And after the little bunny girl had told him about the cake he told her to cheer up and not to worry one bit.

“Who knows but what the good little elves will fix things up?” he chuckled.

And wasn’t it funny that just a few minutes after that Uncle Fluff went into the baker bunny’s shop just as Miss Prim was coming out. And neither knew that the other had bought the same thing—a big pound cake covered with vanilla frosting.

Now Molly had hardly left the house on her way to Professor Piper's before Mother Cottontail made up her mind to bake her little bunny girl another cake. So she got out the big yellow bowl again and just as she was mixing up the different things the door opened and in walked her little bunny boy, Bunty.

"Oh, Mother Cottontail," he cried, "what are you going to make?"

But Mother Cottontail pretended not to hear him and made the big spoon go so fast that the yellow mixture got all frothy on top just as when you make soap bubbles.

"Is it going to be an angel cake, Mother Cottontail?" persisted Bunty.

"Dear me!" said Mother Cottontail, "what a lot of questions one little bunny boy can ask."

“But, Mother Cottontail,” coaxed Bunty, “please won’t you tell me.”

“Well,” replied Mother Cottontail, with a twinkle, “if little bunny boy snoopy must know, it’s going to be a pound cake.”

“Will it only weigh a pound?” asked this snoopy little bunny boy. “That’s not very much for all us bunnies,” he added.

But Mother Cottontail didn’t tell him that the cake was for his little sister, Molly, and her playmates, so that all the time he stood by the kitchen table watching her he kept thinking to himself how good a piece of that cake would taste for supper.

Well, anyway, the cake baked just beautifully and Mother Cottontail was very proud of it. And after it had cooled she put a thick coating of vanilla frosting on top.



“Um-m-m! but it looks good!” exclaimed Bunty, with a little gurgle of delight.

It wasn't very long after that when Mother Cottontail had to go down the street to buy something at the store, and, of course, that left Bunty at home all by himself. And do you know she had hardly left the house before her little bunny boy began to think of that big pound cake in the pantry. And while he was wondering to himself how big a slice of it Mother Cottontail would let them have for supper there came a knock on the door, and when he went to see who it was there stood an old rabbit peddler.

“Please, little bunny boy,” he wheezed, “can't you give an old rabbit man a bite to eat?”

“Mother Cottontail isn't here,” answered

Bunty, "and I wouldn't know what to give you."

And just then he happened to think of the pound cake.

"Oh, I know what I'll give you," he exclaimed, "I'll give you a piece of cake!"

He brought the cake out of the pantry and cut a big slice out of it for the old rabbit peddler. And I wouldn't wonder at all but what that old hungry rabbit thought it the best cake he had ever eaten.

Now, instead of putting the cake back again after the rabbit peddler had gone, Bunty let it stand on the table. And the more he looked at it the more he wanted a piece.

"I'll just take a little taste," he said to himself.

But you know how little folks are some-

times. The first taste leads to a bigger taste and almost before he knew it the cake was over half gone.

When Mother Cottontail returned she discovered right away that some one had been at the cake by the crumbs lying on the table. And it wasn't hard to guess who it had been.

"Bunty, what made you cut the cake?" she asked her little bunny boy.

"I—I—gave a piece to an old hungry rabbit peddler," he stammered.

"How big a piece?" she asked him.

And, of course, Bunty measured off with his paw just how big a piece he gave to the old rabbit man.

"I see," said Mother Cottontail. "And I suppose another rabbit peddler came along and ate the rest."

"No'm," admitted Bunty, scarcely louder

than a whisper, "I ate a little piece, too."

"Suppose you were a little bunny girl and had invited several of your little playmates to come around to your house to play," said Mother Cottontail, "and you had planned to give them all a piece of cake. And suppose your naughty little bunny brother had given some of it away and ate a big piece of it himself?"

"Oh, Mother Cottontail!" cried Bunty quickly, looking as sorry as any little bunny boy could look, "was it for Molly? Honest, was it for Molly?" There was no one at all Bunty liked better than his kind-hearted little bunny sister.

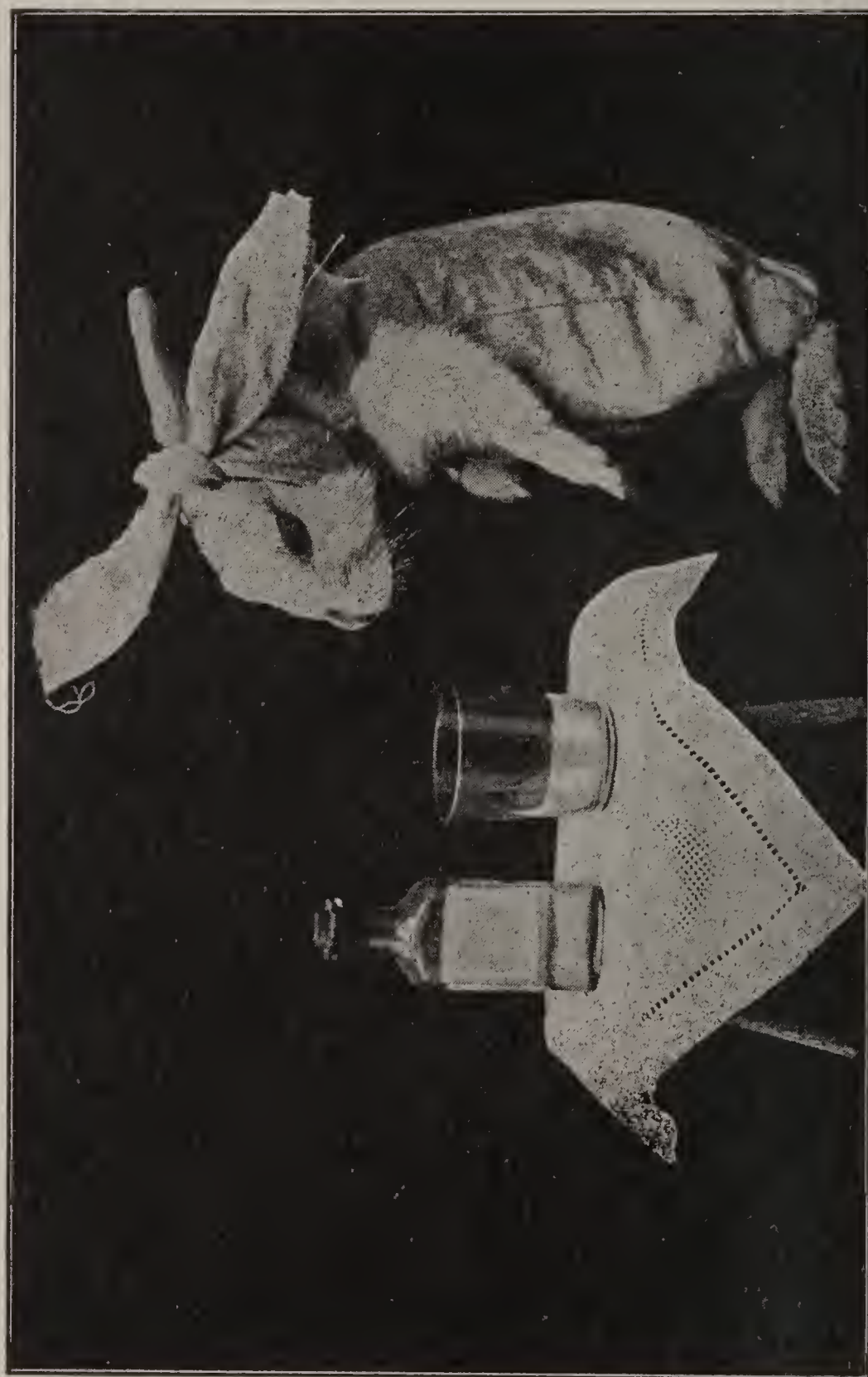
"It was for Molly and her little playmates," answered Mother Cottontail.

Just then the front door bell rang and when Mother Cottontail opened the door the

bunny baker's boy handed in two big packages. And the first one she opened was a big yellow pound cake all covered with vanilla frosting. And right on top of it was a little note that read: "To Molly, from the fairies!"

And, would you believe it, the second package had another big pound cake in it with another little note on the top of it. And that little note read: "To Molly, from the good little elves!"

So, you see, Molly had plenty of cake to offer her little playmates when they came around to play the next day. And as for Bunty, when supper time came he didn't want anything to eat at all. In fact he was a very sick little bunny boy and had such a terrible headache that Mother Cottontail tied a hot water cloth around his ears. And



"TIED A HOT WATER CLOTH AROUND HIS EARS"

not only that but he had to take a spoonful of medicine every hour—the bitterest kind, you know, made especially for little bunny boys who eat too much cake.

And that's all.

## XXII

### THE SNOWMAN STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John would search for the little bunny boys and



girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Several of the little bunny boys were walking down Bunnyway Lane on their way home from school one day, and as little animal boys do sometimes, they were talking about how nice some folks could be and how disagreeable others were. As for the disagreeable folk they all seemed to think that Mr. Wobble, the old rabbit gardener of Mrs. Richbun's, was the crossiest, most disagreeable of them all.

“I wish he were like Uncle Fluff,” said Bunty Cottontail; “you never catch him grumbling every time he looks at you!”

“Well, I guess not!” declared Tommy Toddles; “you could climb all over Uncle Fluff’s fence and he’d never say a word.”

“I’ll bet he’d even let you climb his pear-tree if he had one,” spoke up Dickie Whiteface, the third little bunny boy.

“I’d like to see you try it with old Mr. Wobble,” said Bunty.

“Whee-e-e—wouldn’t he be cross!” whistled Tommy.

“He’d bite your head off,” added Dickie.

Now by this time the three little bunny boys had reached the high brick wall in front of Mrs. Richbun’s garden, and just then Bunty happened to glance up. And that quick he darted ahead as fast as he could go.

“What’s he running for?” asked Tommy.

And just then Dickie looked up and discovered the same thing that Bunty had seen.

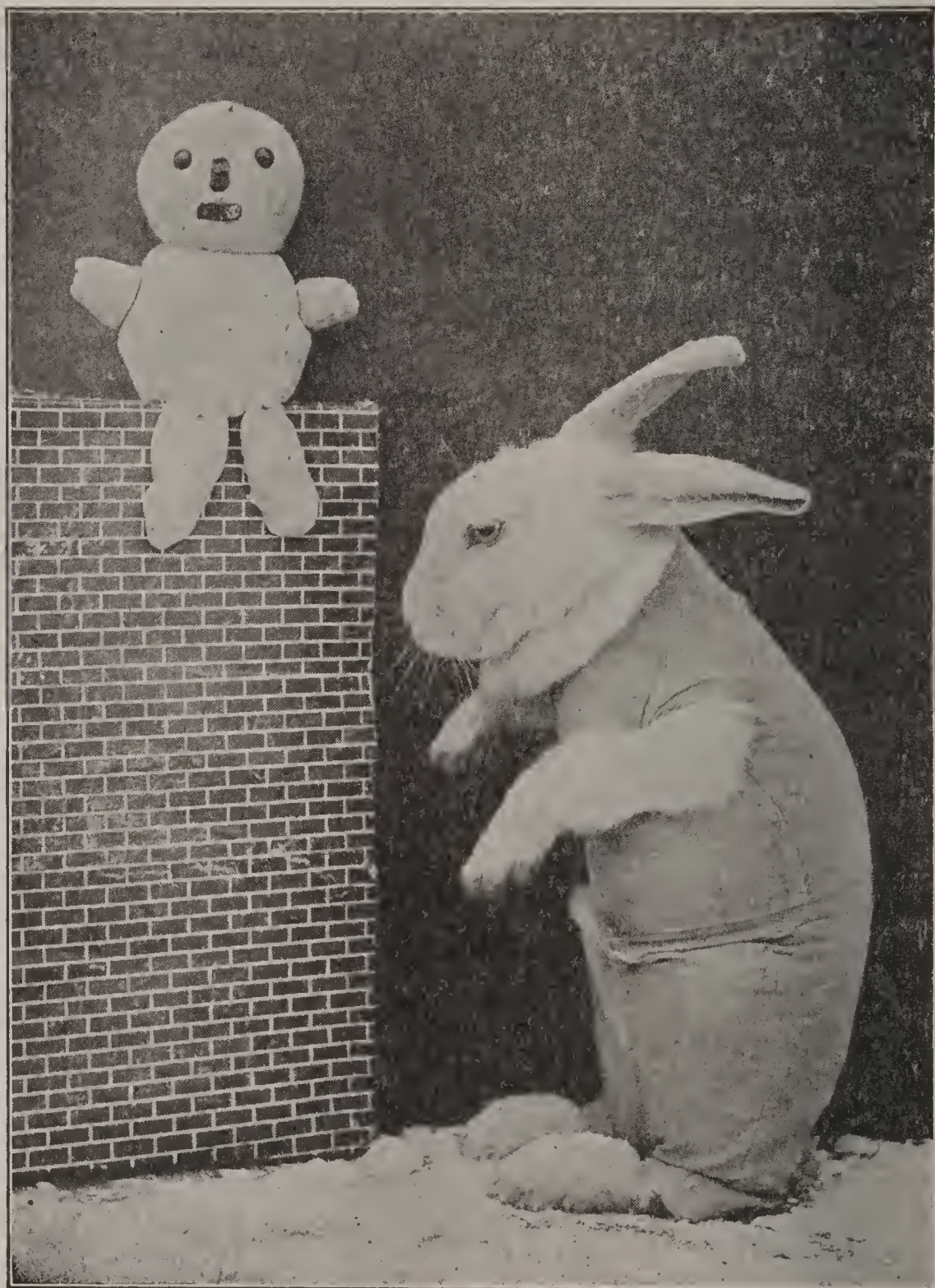
“Oh, look!” he cried to Tommy, “there’s a little snowman on top of Mrs. Richbun’s wall.”

Sure enough, there sat a little snowman, as nice as you please. And who in the world would ever think of seeing a snowman where a cross old rabbit gardener lived?

“Some one must have put it there,” said Bunty.

“Maybe they were trying to play a joke on old Mr. Wobble,” suggested Tommy.

Now it happened that the old rabbit gardener was back of the wall all the time the three little bunny boys were talking and heard every word they said. And before he could stop it he gave a little chuckle,



“ THERE SAT A LITTLE SNOWMAN ”

“What’s that?” asked Bunty quickly.

“Somebody laughed,” ventured Tommy.

“Let’s crawl up on the wall and look,” said Dickie.

So the three of them scrambled up to the top of the wall and peeped over. And, my, oh, my, what do you think they saw?

Why, there was old Mr. Wobble—that cross, grumbly, growly, disagreeable rabbit gardener—rolling a big snowball across Mrs. Richbun’s front lawn. Yes, sir, just as you and I would do if we were going to build a whopping big snowman.

“Hello, boys!” called Mr. Wobble, in a cheery tone. “How would you like to come down and help?”

“Honest, do you mean it?” fairly gasped Bunty, who couldn’t understand why Mr.

Wobble hadn't chased them away as soon as he saw them.

"Just you boys jump down here and see," chuckled the rabbit gardener. And so they did—Bunty and his two playmates jumped down off the wall and helped old Mr. Wobble roll the big balls of snow for a snowman. And after that they made his arms and legs.

"There!" said Mr. Wobble proudly. "Isn't he as fine a snow gentleman as ever you saw?"

"He's a dandy!" cried the three little bunny boys in one breath.

"That's what I think," declared Mr. Wobble, "and I feel sure that when Mrs. Richbun's two little bunny nieces come to visit her to-morrow they'll think so too."

So that explained it all. The rabbit gar-

dener had made the big snowman to surprise the two little bunny girls who were coming the next day to visit Mrs. Richbun. And he had put the little snowman on the wall so that when the little bunny boys passed by on their way home from school they would see it and come in to help him.

The next morning the snow was just right to build another big snowman so Bunty and his little chum, Tommy, started in right after breakfast to build—not one—but three of them. Only this time they rolled the big balls of snow in Tommy's back yard.

The first big snowman they built was very tall and dignified and didn't look a bit pleasant, while the next one they built was fat and roly poly, with a smile that even old Mr. Sun would have had trouble in taking away. And the third one wasn't a snow-

man at all but a snow lady, and she must have been a sister to the snowmen for one side of her face was smiling while the other side looked very cross. You see, Bunty had made one side of her face and turned the corner of her mouth down while Tommy thought she would look much nicer with the corner of her mouth turned up. And there she stood frowning or smiling, according to which way you looked at her.

“I wonder where the snow people go to after they melt?” Bunty asked his little bunny playmate.

“I wonder, too,” answered Tommy; “maybe they just melt into the ground and stay there.”

“Just think, if they would get alive,” suggested the little bunny chap, as he looked a little fearfully at the snowman in front



of him—the one who wouldn't smile. "Wouldn't you be afraid?" he asked.

"Huh!" sniffed Bunty. "An old snowman couldn't hurt you!"

"Yes, but they might if they were alive," insisted Tommy. But Bunty felt quite sure that he wouldn't be afraid of the biggest, crossdest looking old snowman that was ever made.

That afternoon Bunty had nothing to do so he started off for a walk and went down Bunnyway Lane toward the little road that led to the big woods back of Farmer Frisk's place. When he came to the big rocks in the woods he spent quite a long time crawling in and out among them. It had started to snow just as he left home, but, of course, that made it all the more jolly.

All of a sudden Bunty caught sight of a

little opening between two of the rocks that looked just like the door to a little cave, and as he went a little closer to look he heard someone talking.

“This is Mr. Snowman,” came a gruff voice from out of the hole in the rocks.

“This is Mrs. Snowman,” spoke up another voice, almost as gruff.

“This is Little Boy Snowman,” added the third little voice that wasn’t gruff at all.

“What have you to say?” said Mr. Snowman to Mrs. Snowman.

“What have you to say?” answered Mrs. Snowman.

“What have you to say?” they both asked Little Boy Snowman.

“I say let’s pay them back,” declared Mr. Snowman.

“I say let’s catch them in our cold, cold



“ CAUGHT SIGHT OF A LITTLE OPENING BETWEEN TWO OF THE ROCKS ”

arms and squeeze them tight," said Mrs. Snowman.

"I say let's cover them all over with snow," added Little Boy Snowman.

"Ho! Ho!" roared Mr. Snowman, "those little bunny boys will never let us stand in the hot sun to thaw after this."

"Ha! Ha!" laughed Mrs. Snowman, "we'll teach them better manners."

"He! He!" giggled Little Boy Snowman, "they'll all be afraid of us."

"Goodness!" thought Bunty to himself, as his two little ears stood straight up in the air he was so excited, "there are real live snow people in there and they're planning what they're going to do to us bunny boys.

"I—I guess I'd better not stay around," he decided. Of course Bunty was only a little chap and snowmen are awfully big

sometimes. So he started off towards home. Just as he reached the Toddles's front gate he spied Tommy in the back yard looking at the two snowmen and snow lady they had built that morning. And as he went racing down the walk toward his little bunny chum he saw the cross looking snowman give a funny kind of wobble.

"Tommy! Tommy!" he fairly screamed to his little bunny playmate. "Look out! He's going to squeeze you!" And do you know if he hadn't pulled Tommy back just in time the snowman would have fallen right on top of the little bunny boy. As it was, the two outstretched arms of snow lay right at their feet.

"My, but I'm glad he didn't catch you!" cried Bunty. And then he told Tommy what he had heard down in the woods.

And, by the time he got through, Tommy's eyes were as big and shiny as marbles. "Just think if you hadn't pulled me away," he declared with a little shiver. "I bet I'll keep my eye on them after this," he added.

Now there was one thing that Bunty knew nothing about and that was that he had no sooner left the little cave in the rocks when three fuzzy wuzzy heads were stuck out of the hole and out tumbled three little bears. There was Big Brother Bear and Brother Bear and Baby Bear—the three little bears who lived in the big woods with nice Mother Bear.

"Let's hurry home and tell Mother Bear what fun we've been having," said Big Brother Bear.

"We'll tell her all about our playing 'make-believe,'" declared Brother Bear.

“Won’t she be surprised,” laughed Baby Bear, “when she finds out that we’ve been playing Mr. and Mrs. Snowman and their little snow boy?”

And that’s all.

## XXIII

### THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse that was painted white with green blinds, and it stood not far from the road, and in the farm-

house lived Uncle John and Aunt Deborah and their two little boys, little Charles and little John. And often in the long winter evenings when the wind blew, Uncle John would tell the two little boys stories of Bunnyville, where the bunnies, big and little, lived in their little brick houses. And sometimes little Charles and little John



would search for the little bunny boys and girls of Bunnyville, but no matter where they looked they never were able to find them. When they asked Uncle John if the bunny boys and girls were really and truly anywhere, Uncle John would laugh and pat their heads and say, "Now listen to me and the wind and we'll tell you,—” But then he'd only tell this story. . . .

Bunty Cottontail, the little bunny boy, had gone into the front room to look out of the window, just a little while before that, and while he was standing there watching for one of his little animal chums to come along so that he could run out and play, he heard Mother Cottontail come into the sitting-room. And as soon as he heard her he kept as quiet as a mouse for he remembered

very distinctly that only a few days before she had told him to keep out of the front room as it was too cold. In fact there was no heat there at all and two heavy curtains had been stretched across the doorway between the rooms. But at first Bunty didn't seem to mind the cold, and he felt sure that Mother Cottontail would soon go back to the kitchen again and he would have a chance to sneak back into the sitting-room.

Before Mother Cottontail had been in the sitting-room more than a few minutes, however, there came a knock on the kitchen door and who should come walking in but Mother Bun, the bunny mother who lived in the little brick house next door. And, of course, she went right through into the sitting-room where Mother Cottontail was sitting cozy and comfortable by the nice warm stove.

And by this time that little bunny boy on the other side of the curtains was beginning to wish that he, too, was a little closer to the stove, as the tips of his paws were beginning to ache from the cold.

“Oh, Mother Cottontail!” cried the bunny mother the very first thing. “I’ve just run over for a little bit to see you about that birthday present. What do you think would be nice for a little bunny boy like him?”

And, goodness me, Bunty became so excited that he almost gave himself away behind the curtain. And no wonder, for here was Mother Bun talking about a birthday present for a little bunny boy and his own birthday was only two days off!

“I’ve been thinking about getting him something nice, too,” answered Mother Cot-

tontail, "and I've about decided to buy him a pair of skates."

"Won't that be nice," smiled Mother Bun. "I half believe I'll get him a little red sweater so that when he goes skating with his new skates he'll keep nice and warm."

"Oh-h-h-h!" fairly gasped that eager little bunny kiddie behind the curtains, "a pair of skates and a new red sweater—just what I wanted!" and if either Mother Bun or Mother Cottontail had been looking at the curtains just then they might have thought they had started to dance a little jig.

But that was all Bunty could learn about the birthday presents for Mother Cottontail started to tell Mother Bun about the delicious dinner they had had for Christmas, while the bunny mother next door told about

the nice new muffler she was knitting for Uncle Fluff.

In fact they talked so long about this, that, and the other thing that Bunty was shivering from the cold by the time Mother Bun left for home. And as soon as Mother Cottontail went out into the kitchen he stuck his head out through the curtains to see if there was any one else about. But it happened that all his little bunny brothers and sisters were out playing.

The next morning, when Bunty started off to school, he had hardly gotten out of the yard before Laddie Bun, the little bunny boy who lived next door, came running to meet him so out of breath that he could hardly speak.

“Oh, Bunty, what do you think!” he burst out; “to-day’s my birthday and I got

two of the dandiest presents you ever saw!"

"What did you get?" asked Bunty quickly.

"Why, a pair of skates and a new red sweater!" declared Laddie gleefully.

And that quick Bunty knew that Mother Cottontail and Mother Bun had not been talking about his birthday at all. It had been all about the presents for his little chum, Laddie. But, anyway, he tried very hard not to let Laddie see how disappointed he was.

The next day Bunty received a nice woollen cap from Mother Bun for a birthday present while Mother Cottontail gave him a little toy airship that sailed way up in the air every time you wound it up. And just as he was winding up the airship to see how it worked in walked his little bunny



" IN WALKED HIS LITTLE BUNNY BROTHER "

brother, Buzzy, with a big box of ice-cream for his birthday.

But, somehow or other, none of his presents seemed quite as nice as the pair of shiny skates and the little red sweater that Laddie had received for his birthday. And, no doubt, he would not have been near as much disappointed if he had not stopped to listen behind the curtains that day to what Mother Cottontail and Mother Bun were saying.

And that's all of this book.



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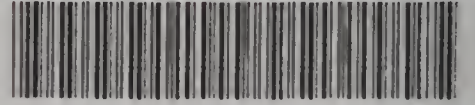








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