

GOOD STORIES FOR CHILDREN--By Walt McDougall

Willie Jonesmith Finds a Land Full of the Weirdest Beasts That Ever Drew a Breath



WILLIE LANDS IN PREHISTORIC ZOOLOGIA

WILLIE TERWILGGER JONESMITH was the son of the celebrated animal tamer, Jonesmith, of whom you may have read.

Willie never learned anything larger than a white mouse and he did not know that he had inherited any of his father's ability to subdue animals, but really he possessed something which his parent never had and that was the hypnotic eye, which will control by its steady glare the most voracious beasts.

Even snakes can not resist the hypnotic eye, but just give right up and let themselves be handled like so much rope by one who possesses it. His eyes were very large and so prominent that all the other boys called him "Pop-eyed Willie," for they didn't know that they were hypnotic.

He did not know the reason why his white mice and dogs and cats always seemed so ready to obey him, but as he was always whistling or playing upon a harmonica, he thought that it was the music that affected these animals, while it was really his wonderful eye that did it.

He was mightily ashamed of his "pop-eyes." I assure you, just as some red-headed boys are of their hair, and therefore he didn't go around much with other boys, but roamed alone in the woods with his dog.

He had one very bad habit, and one which many other boys have in this country. This was the awful and pernicious habit of robbing birds' nests. I know of nothing which I consider more fatal to a boy's proper bringing up than this, for it makes him cruel and heartless, as well as muddles his clothes up most dreadfully when he happens to break a lot of eggs in the front of his shirt waist, for you know, it is put there when you climb down, you know.

A boy who begins life by robbing nests will end by robbing a bank or a building and loan association, and Willie's father often talked to him very earnestly in regard to this evil habit, but he never forgot his admonition. He couldn't see a bird's nest without instantly climbing up to it and robbing it, and soon his father began to be very sad and melancholy, for he saw what his son was coming to if he persisted.

He had ingrowing melancholia. Dr. McGowan was called in when Mr. Jonesmith began to be so melancholy that he couldn't eat his meals, and he looked at the old man's tongue, felt his pulse and took his temperature, after which he said:

"Mr. Jonesmith, you have as bad a case of ingrowing melancholia as I ever saw in my practice. You must get back to animal-training to relieve your mind, cheer up, or there will be trouble. You need diversion of some kind, and that is the best for you, as you are used to animals and take pleasure in them. Willie was a trifle glad of it after it was over, for it gave him a chance to sail in a balloon, and very few boys ever have that in all their lives. By and by, because of Willie's extra weight, the balloon began to sink, as the gas escaped a good deal, and soon they were quite near the ground. Mr. Aeronaut said that the boy would have to get out, because he had a long journey to make, and it would be impossible to do it with two in the car.

"I can't get out here in this strange country," said Willie. "I don't know the way home, and I have no money to pay my fare, either."

"Can't help it," said Mr. Aeronaut. "I didn't want to take you, but I hated to leave you in that tree. It's absolutely necessary for you to get out, no matter if you don't know the country. The land we are now passing over is Prehistoric Zoologia, and it's a poor place to dump you out, but if I don't we will both have to get out, and probably be devoured by the wild animals that inhabit it. Now, you will admit that it would be far better that you be eaten instead of two, especially as you are only a boy and a robber of birds' nests as well. I can't afford to take any chances here."

Of course, Willie realized that there was no use in both getting out in such a desolate and fierce-looking land, but still he didn't want to be the one to go. Willie he was trying to make some excuse to get out, but the balloonist just heaved him over, and he fell about ten feet on a soft spot. Up went the balloon in an instant, and soon was a mere speck in the blue above. Willie sat there, gazing mournfully after it until it disappeared among the white clouds. He began to cry, for he saw that he was in a land where no man had ever been, and where there were no trolley cars to come along and take him swiftly home.

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A Land of Ancient Beasts

Now this was the one country, this Prehistoric Zoologia, in which all the animals that ever existed still survived the awful floods, earthquakes, fires and other disasters that had destroyed all such enormous and strangely-shaped creatures everywhere else in the world. Ages and ages ago, millions and millions of years ago, the whole earth was just alive with such monsters, both in the air, the water and on land, things that wouldn't worry at all over tackling a rhinoceros or devouring the biggest elephant you ever heard of, animals with the most tremendous teeth, with scales as hard as stone, or skin as thick as boards, tails fifty feet long, horns ten feet long, eyes as big as dinner-plates and with names longer, bigger and harder than anything else. The Ornithomachus would be nowhere alongside of some of these creatures, for their names alone were tremendous. There was the Titanotherium Giganteum, the Calathomys litis, the Homogoneoscolus, the Triopodops and Protoplasmixosakum, and hundreds besides, each as well provided with teeth, claws and horns as other, and each having to see another on the earth, so you may easily see how they finally got rid of each other. I suppose that they were so busy fighting that they all finally starved to death; at any rate, they disappeared at last, and now we find their bones deep in the earth, and set them up in museums with labels on them that nobody can understand.

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Hypnotizes and Brings Them All Home, Saving the Life of His Father by Giving Him Something to Do

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THE PTERODACTYL POUNCED DOWN AT HIM

Now, to those who think that a bicycle can only be made of steel and rubber it will be a surprise to hear that Willie made one of bamboo, but this is exactly what the ingenious boy did. When he had completed it he looked about for something to use as tires, for he had no rubber, and if he had it he didn't know how to make a tire.

He finally selected two Hoopnoses, and after he had hypnotized them he made them take their tails in their mouths, and he fixed them to the wheels. It was a splendid substitute for rubber and chain, and all the animals accompanied him, and so well-made was his bicycle he reached the seashore in three days without the least accident, for you

anybody to cross their water, but of course they couldn't refuse. After they had consulted together while they decided that the best thing to do would be to form a body of the greater animals together so as to float a lot of the last row of animals across.

So they all crowded up close to one another and made an immense raft upon which Willie sent the others, and then the raft moved off. Some of the last animals were very much frightened and squaled horribly, others soon got sick, but after a few days they all got used to the motion that they ran up and down, and caused much trouble to the live raft, as of course it was not very pleasant to have a lot of horny-hoofed creatures galloping up and down their hard scales.

When they came within sight of Sandy Hook they encountered a fishing boat and almost frightened the fishermen to death by their noise, for the animals thought it was some new water-bug, and they wanted to greet it. One of these fishermen told me it was a terrible sight to see Willie Jonesmith standing at the bow of his bamboo raft, with rows upon rows of awful heads sticking up out of the water in front of him, and all of the heads uttering dreadful howls of grief.

The captain fainted and the mate almost choked with grief when they surrounded the boat, but they did no harm, and soon passed on until they came to shore. Here they formed into a procession and marched away into the country, leaving the marine animals to return to Zoologia at their leisure.

The commotion created by Willie's procession will long be remembered in New Jersey and the other States through which it passed, for the people who saw it never forgot the sight. It was a dozen miles long, and took all day to pass a given spot, while the noise made by the hoofs, horns and hooves of the animals galloping below across the fields in the wildest alarm as it wound calmly along the turnpike, until at last Willie's home came in sight.

Mr. Jonesmith's Life is Saved. He went on ahead so as not to alarm his mother, and entered the house. Of course, they had all given him up, and supposed he had been killed by falling out of some tall tree while stealing birds' nests, and when he came in his mother just uttered one yell and fainted. She soon recovered, however, and then she told Willie that his father was very sick and not expected to live a day longer. Willie went upstairs and spoke to his father softly.

Mr. Jonesmith opened his eyes. It didn't seem to surprise him to see his son, for he thought he was dreaming. "Father," said Willie, "I've brought you a few new and unknown animals to tame, and you must get up and go at it at once."

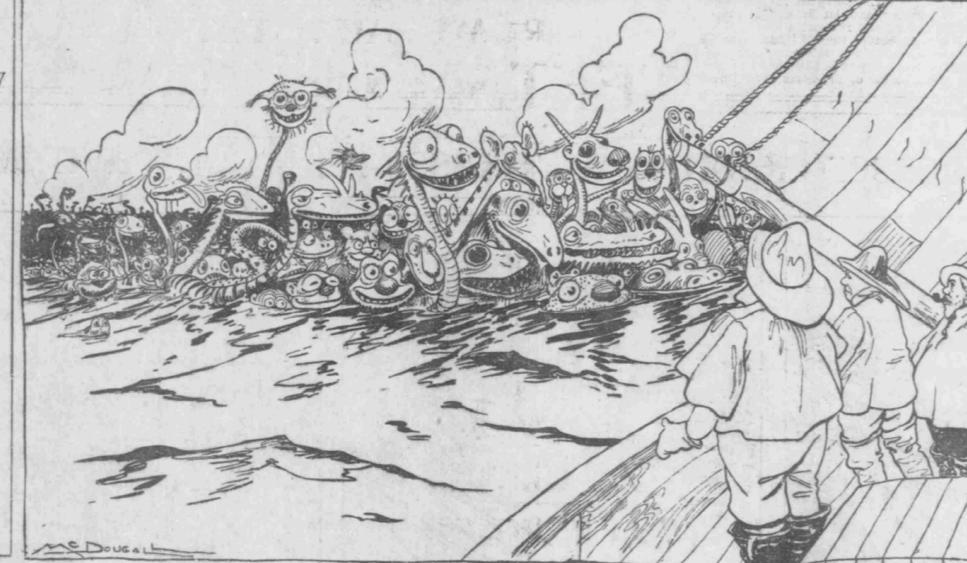
"The time has long since gone by," said Mr. Jonesmith, "when any one could spring a new or unknown animal on Jonas E. Jonesmith."

"Look out of the window," said Willie. His father lifted himself languidly upon his elbow and looked out. Then his eyes opened wide, and he sat up, staring at the long line of wonderful and enormous beasts that stretched, away out of sight, along the winding road, in numbers far greater than he could count, like a never-dreamed-of such a thing, for he never nothing at all about the prehistoric animals, you see. Then he said: "Go, Willie! Am I dreaming?"

"No," said his son proudly, "you are wide awake, and you'll have to be to train all the things I've brought home. I'll bet you can't make a lion a half the stunt that my baby Pterodactyl can do. He's the smartest baby you ever saw. Up jumped Mr. Jonesmith, forgetting his sprang. Then he went out, and his eyes popped out in wonder as he looked over the menagerie his son had brought home. Well, he went to work at once, but as he had no hypnotic eye the big animals were about to eat him at once, so Willie had to jump up and save him. So he took his son into partnership with him, and they built a museum, and if you would like to see the animals, write me a letter, and I'll send you a ticket that will admit you when they are feeding them, and maybe Willie will allow you to play with his baby Pterodactyl; but be mighty careful not to get your hand near its mouth, or you'll lose it, unless you, too, have the hypnotic eye.

WALT McDUGALL

When They Saw the Fishing Smack, Willie's Strange Animals All Gave Howls of Glee



The Rows Upon Rows of Awful Heads Sticking Out of the Water Made a Terrible Sight

and then he hung down until he almost had a rush of blood to his head. Of course, he would soon have died there, and, after all, some people tell me that it would have served him just right, but it happened that a balloonist was sailing that way, and he came so close to the tree that he managed to catch Willie and lift him as he swept past. Willie was almost unconscious, but revived in the cold air above the clouds, where the balloon soon arrived.

The balloonist gave him a good talking to about such an evil practice as bird's nest robbing, and Willie assured him that he would do it no more. He had a good scare, I can tell you, but, boy-like, he was a trifle glad of it after it was over, for it gave him a chance to sail in a balloon, and very few boys ever have that in all their lives. By and by, because of Willie's extra weight, the balloon began to sink, as the gas escaped a good deal, and soon they were quite near the ground. Mr. Aeronaut said that the boy would have to get out, because he had a long journey to make, and it would be impossible to do it with two in the car.

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