JUNIOR THE CALL SECTION

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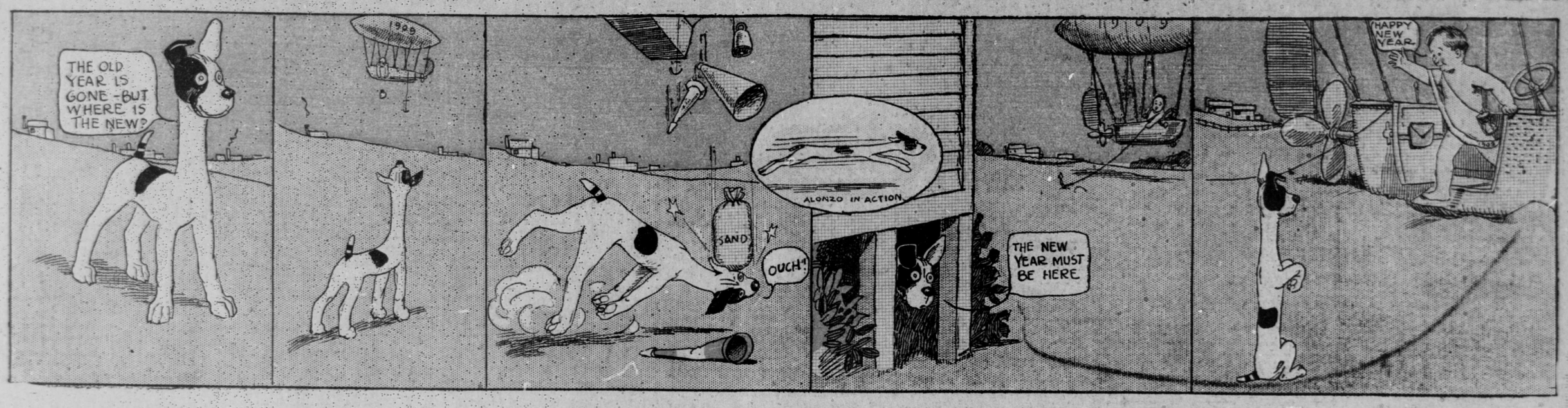
Issued Every Saturday For the Boys and Girls of San Francisco and California

HAVE YOU SEEN ALONZO? THE JUNIOR CALL DOG WELCOMES THE NEW YEAR



A FAMILY CHAT WITH THE JUNIORS

In spite of the fact that it was a holiday season, during which they could legitimately consider themselves absolved from every form of work, the juniors have been exceedingly industrious during the last week, as will be seen by the large number of interesting stories which are published today on the second page. This page proves two things: First, the interest which the juniors take in The Junior Call, and second, that the subject which the Junior Call has selected for its present writers' contest is a very popular one. All boys and girls like dogs, and judging from the tone of the dog stories thus far received regard the dog as the best possible kind of a playfellow, the dearest kind of a friend and a most affectionate guardian, and this spirit so plainly manifested by the children is simply delightful. It is a foregone conclusion that this contest is going to be highly successful.

In the teachers' corner of the same page there is a very interesting article about the way in which children are now being familiarized with insect life, which is further proof of the increased interest society in general is taking in the development of the child. Education in all that it embraces is becoming broader every day, and whatever teaches a child to understand and protect the lower forms of life can not fail to develop the character in the right direction. Knowledge is power, and all power can be trained in the right direction. A man is judged by his character, whether good or bad, strong or weak, and character is in the will. All education, whether high or low or middle, must bend itself toward the character. It is a noteworthy fact that when the National educational association, a representative gathering of all the people engaged in public education in the United States, met at Los Angeles, a committee was formed to investigate and formulate some plan for moral teaching in the public schools.

Teachers in every part of the state are greatly interested in the work of The Junior Call. Miss Lillian Wood, a teacher of Berenda, has sent to The Junior Call two compositions written by her pupils, Alvin Kast and Ida Wood, during the language hour, one being the story of an old hat and the other the story of an umbrella, which show great originality. The stories are published today on the third page of The Junior Call.

There is also on the third page a delightful story by Frances Kent, telling how a simple act of kindness extended to a small boy brought about the reunion of a mother and her two sons in a foreign country.

The girls who are fond of "goodies" should read what Clarice has to say about all the sweet things in the Scotch tea rooms at Glasgow and Edinburgh. Almost all juniors are curious about how things are done on the other side of the world, and the Scotch tea rooms are very interesting.

The younger juniors continue to derive immense amusement from the patchwork picture puzzles, the popularity of which has not yet begun to wane.

The younger juniors are also following with interest the adventures of their chums, the juniors of Juniorville. Today all eyes are fixed on their leader as he inaugurates the New Year carnival, and Alonzo welcomes the New Year in his most polite manner and with his own particular ingenuousness. It is going to be a very active year for Alonzo. Watch him!

HISTORY OF 2 FAMOUS DIAMONDS

The Indian princes have always been famous for their wondrous gems. Two only can be mentioned here, the "Great Mogul" and the "Koh-i-nur." The former of these was first seen by a European in 1665, when Shah Jehan was imprisoned in the palace of Agra. His sons, Murad, Dara, Solineau and Sujah, had been murdered by the usurper, Aurung Zeb, and even his great gem, almost the only consolation he had left, was taken from him. As big as a hen's egg, it weighed 900 carats in the rough and was given to Shah Jehan by Emir Jemla as bribe to make war against the Portuguese and the king of Golconda. Ten years afterward Tavernier saw it at the court of Aurung Zeb, a year before the death of the unhappy Shah Jehan. It had brought him misery and it vanished forthwith from history, for it was probably carried off by Persian invaders.

Even more terrible is the history of the "Koh-i-nur," which is first mentioned in the memoirs of the Sultan Baber, the founder of the Mogul line, of whom Shah Jehan was the fifth descendant. On May 4, 1526, the Sultan Baber writes that this gem had been brought him by his son, who took it after battle from the family of the rajah of Gwalior. This family had acquired it through the Sultan Ala-ed-din (a name with the true flavor of the Arabian Nights) who ruled in Hindustan from 1488 to 1521 and who got it (by means that had better not be examined) from the rajah of Malwa, in whose family it had been an immemorial heirloom, tracing back to remote ancestors common to the Gwalior dynasty. This stone also was in the treasury of Shah Jehan, and though Aurung Zeb had taken the "Great Mogul" he left his dethroned rival the "Koh-i-nur," and with the Moguls it remained till Nadir Shah invaded India, in the reign of Mohammed Shah in 1739. Mohammed kept it in his turban, so when the wily conqueror asked to exchange turbans as a pledge of peace the "Mountain of Light" went with the royal headgear and after Nadir Shah's death passed to his son, Shah Rokh.

Now Rokh loved the stone above all his possessions, and even suffered the tortures of being blinded rather than part with it. When he was finally overthrown, for ill luck followed the stone while it was in India, he took it with him to Meshd, and though Aga Mohammed got the great ruby (once in Aurung Zeb's crown) out of him, no tortures could extract the Koh-i-nur. In 1751, however, Rokh gave it, as a pledge of alliance, to Ahmed Shah, the founder of the Durani Afghan empire, and at once the evil destiny of the gem set to work again. Ahmed's heir, Taimur, moved from Kandahar to Kabul, and died in 1793, leaving the stone to his son, Shah Zaman, who was blinded by his brother, Shah Shuja ul Mulk. The diamond was found hidden beneath the plaster in a wall, and Shuja wore it when Elphinstone came up as British envoy to Peshawur. But Shuja in turn had to submit to destiny. He was blinded by another brother, Shah Mahmud, who fled with the fatal stone to Runjit Singh, "the Lion of the Punjab," who kept both brothers prisoners at Lahore, knowing full well the treasure they had with them. The faithful Begum gave up all their other gems, but refused to reveal the hiding place of the Koh-i-nur. At last, after every fair and unfair means had been tried, the miserable Shuja, who could not longer see the diamond he hoarded, gave it up for 125,000 rupees on June 1, 1813, and Runjit wore it as a bracelet until his death in 1839.

Then the stone lay in the Lahore treasury until the young Rajah Dhulip Singh was recognized by the British government. But the Sikhs rose in revolt, and in 1849 the Punjab was annexed and the East Indian company took the treasure, stipulating that its rarest gem should go to Queen Victoria, so Lord Dalhousie brought it to her in June, 1850, and it became the chief gem in the crown of the Kaiser-i-Hind.

WITH THE SHORT STORY TELLER AND THE POET

A Wonderful Doll

To be a doll in a Spanish family is to occupy a very important place; and very often when one pays a visit in Madrid one finds the doll in the drawing room beautifully dressed according to the season. This is the case with Sara, the delightful doll to which I wish to introduce you. Really the pretty salon of the charming wife of the far famed writer, Senor Don Palacio Valdes, would look quite empty without Sara, the perfectly dressed, flaxen curled doll of the lady standing or sitting in some pretty attitude. Sara has a sweet face, and her continual smile sets off her pretty hats and bonnets. Senora Valdes, the owner of the doll, had a lot of her own hair cut off for her, and a barber made it into beautiful curls and put them on the doll's head.

As Sara is never cross, the servants are very fond of her, and the one who calls herself her nurse takes quite a pride in seeing that her little charge is tidy and ready for visitors when they are shown into the drawing room.

Do It Now

If you have a task worth doing,
Do it now!
In delay there's danger brewing,
Do it now!
Don't you be a "by-and-byer,"
And a sluggish patience trier;
If there's aught you would acquire,
Do it now!

If you'd earn a prize worth owning,
Do it now!
Drop all waiting and postponing,
Do it now!
Say, "I will!" and then stick to it,
Choose your purpose and pursue it.
There's but one right way to do it,
Do it now!

All we have is just this minute,
Do it now!
Find your duty and begin it,
Do it now!
Surely you're not always going
To be "a going to be;" and knowing
You must some time make a showing,
Do it now!

—Nixon Waterman.

A Queer Bird Friendship

I am deeply interested in watching the strange companionship of one of the largest black and white woodpeckers with a red crown I have ever seen and a sparrow. For two weeks they have been about the yard constantly together, and seem to be the very best of friends. In front of the window where I am writing they spend a great deal of their time in a dead horse chestnut tree. Near the top of one of the trunks is a very large hole. While Mr. Woodpecker goes in to find some delicacy, Lady Sparrow flies about the top, chirping merrily. By their actions when Mr. Woodpecker comes out he must drop a "goodie" down Lady Sparrow's throat. I have never seen his mate around or any other sparrow when they are together; just these two, which are so different in every way and still seem to be such good friends. Wherever he goes she follows, always flying about the tree where he is working.

Conrach

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
When the font reappearing,
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.

The autumn winds rushing,
Waft the leaves that are serest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel incumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever.

—Sir Walter Scott.

What Is a Billion?

Or, rather, what conception can we form of such a quantity? We may say that a billion is a million of millions, and can easily represent it thus: 1,000,000,000,000. But a schoolboy's calculation will show how entirely the mind is incapable of conceiving such numbers. If a person were able to count at the rate of 200 in a minute, and to work without intermission 12 hours in the day, he would take to count a billion 6,944,444 days, or 19,325 years 319 days. There are living creatures so minute that a hundred millions of them might be comprehended in the space of a cubic inch. They are supplied with organs and tissues, nourished by circulating fluids, which must consist of parts or atoms, in reckoning the size of which we must speak, not of billions, but perchance of billions of billions. And what is a billion of billions? The number is a quadrillion, and can easily be represented thus: 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, and the same schoolboy's calculation may be employed to show that to count a quadrillion at the rate of 200 in a minute would require all the inhabitants of the globe, supposing them to be a thousand millions, to count incessantly for 19,025,875 years, or more than 3,000 times the period during which the human race has been supposed to be in existence.

Servian Proverbs

Some of the Servian proverbs are interesting. One is, "What is taken by force or unjustly is cursed." Others are as follows: "God does not settle his accounts with men every Saturday, but the day comes on which he settles them." "Where big bells ring, the little bells are not heard"; "Boast to a stranger, complain only to a friend"; and "In evil days the man shows what he is." Another of their sayings is "The fools build the houses, the wise men buy them when they are ready."

A South African Product

The native food of the Malunda county, southern Africa, comprises manioc, and that alone. It is a plant particularly adapted to wet, marshy soil. It takes two years to arrive at maturity, but while growing requires very little attention. The root, when full grown, is about the size and has very much the appearance of a German sausage, although at times is grows much larger. One shrub has many roots, and the extraction of two or three in no way impairs the growth of the remainder. When newly dug it tastes like a chestnut, and the digestion of the proverbial ostrich can alone assimilate it raw, but when soaked in water for a few days, until partly decomposed, dried on the roofs of the huts and stamped, it forms a delightful white, soft meal, far whiter and purer than the best flour. Then it is beaten into a thick paste and eaten with a little flavoring composed of a locust or a caterpillar, which the natives seek in decayed trees. Another way of eating this native luxury is by baking the roots after soaking them and eating it as you would a banana.

A Confession

Dear little boy, with wondering eyes
That for the light of knowledge yearn,
Who have such faith that I am wise
And know the things that you would learn.
Though oft I shake my head and smile
To hear your childish question flow,
I must not meet your faith with guile;
I can not tell; I do not know.

Dear little boy, with eager heart,
Forever on the quest of truth,
Your riddles oft are past my art
To answer to your tender youth.
But some day you will understand
The things that now I can not say,
When life shall take you by the hand
And lead you on its wondrous way.

Dear little boy, with hand in mine,
Together through the world we fare,
Where much that I would fain divine
I have not yet the strength to bear.
Like you, with riddling words I ask;
Like you, I hold another hand,
And haply, when I do my task,
I, too, shall understand.

Procrastination

Shun delays, they breed remorse;
Take thy time while time is lent thee;
Creeping snails have weakest force;
Fly thy fault, lest thou repent thee;
Good is best when soonest wrought;
Lingering labors come to naught.

Hoist up sail while gale doth last;
Tide and wind wait no man's pleasure;
Seek not time when time is past;
Sober speed is wisdom's leisure;
Afterwits are dearly bought,
Let thy forewit guide thy thought.

Time wears all his locks before,
Take thou hold upon his forehead;
When he flies he turns no more,
And behind his scalp is naked:
Works adjourned have many stays,
Long demurs breed new delays.

—Robert Southwell.

Drops

Where do the raindrops go? I know—
Into the bosom of mother earth
To swell seed thoughts into wonderful birth,
'Till the beautiful flowers bud and blow;
That's where the shining raindrops go.

Where do the dewdrops go? I know—
Into the heart of the drooping flowers
Athirst, after all the sunlight hours,
Strengthening and helping them grow.
That's where the gleaming dewdrops go.

Where do the tear drops go? You know—
Each tear which falls from your eyes today
Reaches the heart and softens the way—
Soothing your own and others' woe;
That's where the softening teardrops go.

A Homemade Barometer

The following method of making a cheap barometer is practiced in France. Take eight grams of pulverized camphor, four grams of pulverized nitrate of potassium, two grains of pulverized nitrate of ammonia, and dissolve in 80 grams of alcohol. Put the whole in a long, slender bottle closed at the top with a piece of bladder containing a pinhole to admit the air. When rain is coming, the solid particles will tend gradually to mount, little star crystals forming in the liquid, which otherwise remains clear; if high winds are approaching the liquid will become thick, as if fermenting, while a film of solid particles forms on the surface; during fair weather the liquid will remain clear and the solid particles will rest at the bottom.

The Boy in the Wilderness

Encinctured with a twine of leaves,
That leafy twine his only dress—
A lovely boy was plucking fruits,
By moonlight in the wilderness.
The moon was bright, the air was free,
And fruits and flowers together grew
On many a shrub and many a tree;
And all put on a gentle hue,
Hanging in the shadowy air
Like a picture rich and rare;
It was a climate where, they say,
The night is more beloved than day.
But who that beauteous boy beguiled,
That beauteous boy, to linger here,
Alone by night, a little child,
In place so silent and so wild—
Has he no friend, no loving mother near?

—S. T. Coleridge.

Queries

A man who likes to delve into the English language and point out its incongruities recently came out of his latest trance and asked a friend these questions. Tell me:

Did you ever see a stone step?
Or a sardine box?
Or a sausage roll?
Or an apple turn over?
Or a night fall?
Or a bed spring?
Or a rail fence?
Or see an ink stand?
Or a man pull up a river?

THE BAD BOY OF JUNIORVILLE CARRIES HIS NEW YEAR RESOLUTION WITH HIM