My Playmate.

There is a funny little boy
  Who follows me around.
He sometimes walks upon the fence
  And often on the ground
He never runs about alone,
  But always mimics me.
And sometimes I'm so tired of him,
  As tired as I can be.
Once in a while, in lonesome times,
  He's nice to have around,
For then he's sort of company
  I oftentimes have found.
He always seems to be afraid
  To go outdoors at night.
He hides away and never comes
  Till it is very light.
I sometimes think he's cowardly,
  And try to punish him;
But off he starts and runs away—
  He's such an awful "limb."
I get so vexed I try to put
  My foot right on his head.
He bobs and dodges so I can't.
  Who says shadows are dead?
My brother says it is no boy,
  It hasn't life at all;
But I know better, mine's alive,
  Just see him on the wall.
He shakes his finger, so and so,
  As lively as can be.
I'm fatter, but I cannot run
  A faster race than he.

Washington Star.

The Busy Bee.

When you eat a spoonful of honey you have very little notion as to the amount of work and travel necessary to produce it. To make one pound of clover honey bees must deprive 62,000 clover blossoms of their nectar, and to do this requires 2,750,000 visits to the blossoms by the bees.

In other words, one bee to collect nectar to make one pound of honey must go from hive to flower and back 2,750,000 times. Then when you think how far these bees sometimes fly in search of these clover fields, oftener than not one or two miles from the hive you will begin to get a small idea of the number of miles one of the industrious little creatures must travel in order that you may have the pound of honey that gives them so much trouble.

It may also help you to understand why the bee is unamiable enough to sting you if you get in its way. When one has to work so hard to accomplish so little, it is quite irritating to be interfered with.—Philadelphia Record.

Dog Leads Blind Horse to Water.

Tom, a bull terrier, belonging to Oscar Thomas, near Setauket, is claimed by his owner to be the most intelligent dog in Suffolk County, which contains some of the best kennels in the East.

Tom is not a show animal, but he has sense and a great deal of charity in his heart. On the Thomas farm is a blind horse. The animal was recently turned out to pasture and it was necessary to lead him to water. After he had been led several times it was seen he never would be able to find his way by himself.

Much to the surprise of his owner, the dog, who has always been attached to the horse, was noticed one day walking in front of the horse leading the way to the brook. He kept just in front and out of the way of the hoofs of the old horse and barked frequently.

The dog waited until he had had his fill of water and then led him back to pasture. He does this three or four times a day. When the old horse, which went blind this spring, wants a drink he whinnies, and Tom goes on the jump for the pasture and attends to his duty.—Port Jefferson Dispatch to New York World.

To Imitate a Rooster.

The natural history class had just begun and the teacher was telling the boys about various animals. Although she made her little talk as entertaining as possible, she noticed that some members of the class were not paying very strict attention. Thinking to revive their flagging interest, the teacher said: "Now, boys, I want every one to imitate the noise made by some animal. I will give you two minutes to choose your animals, and then we'll see how well you can do it."

The two minutes being up, the room was filled with sounds seldom heard outside a menagerie. Squealing of pigs, barking dogs, braying of donkeys, roaring of lions, twittering of birds and mewing of cats issued from every corner. The children seemed to enjoy themselves immensely, with one exception. Johnny Small sat in utter silence. Teacher noticed his closed mouth, so when the noise had somewhat subsided she said:

"Johnny, why aren't you imitating some animal? Can't you think of any?"

"I am," responded Johnny, quite soberly. "Sh-sh! I'm keepin' perfectly quiet, 'cause I'm a rooster, and I'm layin' an egg!"—Washington Star.

Does Aura Cast Reflection.

"Here is an experiment that any one can try. Some fine summer morning when there is lots of dew on the grass and when the sun has been up twenty or thirty minutes, and is so that your body will cast a long shadow, stand so that the head of your shadow lies where there is lots of dew on the grass or vegetation. I have often done this, and for a space of about two feet about the head of my shadow there would be a glow, or the dewdrops would be brighter than elsewhere. Was this caused by the sun's rays passing through my aura? Has any one else ever noticed the same?—W. W. F.

You are all familiar with the appearance of heat vibrations as they rise over a hot stove, or from any surface superheated by a summer sun.

There is an "indirect radiator" in the floor near my desk, under a large window. When the radiator is hot I can see these heat vibrations. When the radiator is only warm the vibrations are not visible to the naked eye. But at times when I can't see the heat waves at all, I can, if the sun is just right, see their reflection much magnified on the polished back of Ellen's desk where the sunlight strikes. I have noted this several times.

Query. If the sun shining through the atmosphere will magnify invisible heat waves, causing them to throw a visible shadow, why may not the same wonderful sun and atmosphere make visible the vibrating shadow of an otherwise invisible aura?—Nautilus.

Dr. Martin's Helpers.

"The only way you can help is by keeping very quiet," said Dr. Martin to the little group of boys and girls waiting to hear how Miss Edith was that morning. "She doesn't need bouquets now, and you must not ring the door-bell to ask how she is, but just keep as still as mice. If she is kept quiet a few days, I think she will soon be well."

Then the busy Doctor drove away down the street. There were a great many sick people just then, and he had little time to talk to any one who was well. The children whispered about Miss Edith though they were a whole block away from her house, and were sorry they could not see her. On Sundays it seemed very strange to have a new teacher in the classroom, and, though Miss Mary did her best for the children, they all missed their dear teacher.

"I don't see how she can be quiet with all those old wagons rumbling past," said Nellie, as eight hoofs pounded over the paved street. "I wish the streets were all soft and dusty like they are at grandpa's in the country.

"I wish they all had carpet over them," said John. "I guess it doesn't do much good for us to whisper when they rattle and bang over the stones."

"Hur—!" began Tom, and then he clapped both hands over his mouth. "I've got a plan," he whispered loudly. "Let's get a lot of that grass Mr. Richards wanted taken away from his lawn and spread it on the streets. It won't take us long with our little wagons."

They all wanted to shout "Hurrah!" at that, but they remembered what the Doctor had said, and scurried away like mice for their little wagons and wheelbarrows in the neighborhood. Very soon there was a thick, soft grass carpet in front of Miss Edith's house, and the children were working like beavers up and down the street. The hoofs did not make a great noise after that, and even the heavy wheels moved softly over the grass.

"Here! What are you youngsters doing, scattering straw up and down the street?" said a gruff voice, and there stood a big policeman all shining with brass buttons, and a heavy frown on his face. "You'll have to stop this nonsense at once."

"It's because Miss Edith is sick," said Roy, wiping the big drops off his red face. "Please don't talk quite so loud. The wagons rattle so, and Dr. Martin said she must be quiet. You won't make us take it off, will you?"

"No, indeed!" said the big man, kindly. "Go right ahead, and I'll help."

When the policeman took a big wheelbarrow and carted several loads of grass from the lawn the children said he could wheel as much as a dozen wagons could carry, and the task was soon complete. Dr. Martin came next morning and was much surprised to find the street so quiet, until he saw the grass carpet.

"Miss Edith is much better, children," he said, kindly. "So much better that I have just been telling her about my crowd of little helpers. I wish every patient I have could have such kind helpful neighbors. Your carpet is doing more good than my medicine." And in a very short time Miss Edith was back in her place, well and happy, all because of her Doctor's helpers, she said, with a bright smile.—Hilda Richmond, in Sunday School Times.

What He Had.

"Can you give bond?" asked the judge. "Have you got anything?"

"Jedge," replied the prisoner, "sence you ax me, I'll tell you. I hain't got nuthin' in the worl' 'cept the spring chills, six acres o' no 'count land, a big family, a hope of a hereafter, an' the ol' war rheumatism."—Atlanta Constitution.

Keep Sympathy at Home.

Benevolent Old Man.—I am sorry, Johnny, to see you have a black eye.

Promising Youth.—You go home and be sorry for your own little boy—he's got two!—Illustrated Bits.

HOW THE "CONSCIENCE FUND" LIFTS THE LOAD OF CARE.

What is known as the "Conscience Fund" of the Treasury Department is growing beautifully less, indicating that the world is growing better or that the people are becoming conscienceless.

For the fiscal year closing June 30 the total amount received and credited to this fund amounted to only $5,789.90, being a decided decrease from that of the year 1906, when it was $7,343.49. In 1905 it was $21,336.92, a year in which conscience got in its work in good shape, but which was not the largest received in any one fiscal year, since the account was opened in 1811. The total amount of this fund now goes considerably over $550,000, every cent coming from those who wished to make atonement for sins committed in the way of pilfering from the government.

It may be that the sojourn of some of the sinners at the Moundsville penitentiary and the narrow escape of others from that institution have something to do with the decrease of the fund. The close watch kept on government employes has unquestionably had much to do with the falling off of the fund, for there is not now the opportunities to pilfer from Uncle Sam as in the days a-gone, when laxer methods prevailed throughout the entire government. It is true that once in a great while a large amount is restored. For some time after the war, when all sorts of stealings were rife in all parts of the country, consciences of the criminals seem to have reached a very respectable proportion and penitence found vent in a regular cornucopia of regrets expressed in cash or its equivalent.

"The decline of the fund," said one of the Treasury officials, "is not due to the fact that the world is growing better, but that people have not the conscience they once had. That the world is growing worse there can be no doubt, and that little monitor called conscience is not overtaxed. There is just as much small pilferings in the government as there ever was. We seldom hear of these, but occasionally one of the 'plungers' is caught up with and made to pay the penalty. Not all the 'plungers' are caught, either, by a long jump. In a word, you may say that conscience is simply not doing its work; it is held in check."

The history of the fund is not without interest and entertainment. The account was opened in Septmber, 1811, with a contribution of less than $1, which was forwarded to the Treasury by a conscience-stricken resident of New York, who stated that he had taken the amount from the government and wanted to make restitution. Officials of the department state that it was not known at that time what o do with the money, and a simple memorandum was made and the slip of paper filed in one of the drawers, where it remained undisturbed for many years. It appeared that there would never be another contribution of this character, and, in fact, it was not until 1861, soon after the breaking out of the Civil War, when a bundle was received containing $6,000 in bonds, accompanied by a statement that the restitution which had long been due the government was prompted by conscience. This gave the account its name, "Conscience Fund." It has since remained open, and all amounts returned to the Treasury in consequence of the prickings of the inward monitor (which in too many instances seems to be ironclad) have been credited to it, covered into the general treasury as a miscellaneous receipt, and may be used like other assets of the Treasury for any purpose that Congress may deem proper.

Letters with inclosures intended for the conscience fund are usually addressed to the treasurer, but they go to the public moneys division, which makes note of the amounts and deposits them with the treasurer of the United States. The sums received are almost always in cash, stamps, with now and then a draft. They are never accompanied by the names of the senders, except once in a while in the cases of persons who have made mistakes as to payments of customs duties. The written communications relating to them are very brief as a rule, if otherwise, they contain elaborate apologies and appeals. Occasionally letters are signed by clergymen at the request of penitents. Remittances are received almost weekly—occasionally the receipts are two or three a week.

In forwarding money for the conscience fund the senders frequently request that acknowledgment shall be made by publication in the newspapers, and this is nearly always done, for the local newspaper men are generally in evidence to gather in such items. A great many of the letters accompanying the remittances are preserved, and the lifting of the red tape of the department gives some interesting reading. Many of these letters on file are from jocose correspondents, who have not scrupled to make light of so serious a matter as to address the treasurer pretended concience letters, whose humor is far in excess of the money inclosed. One of these letters reads:

"Inclosed please find 75 cents, coin of the realm, won from a United States paymaster at draw poker, and which I am convinced rightfully belongs to Uncle Samuel. I have carried it for nearly six months, and dare not trust myself with it any longer. My conscience calls for relief—my harassed nature calls for a good night's sleep. I can have neither so long as I carry this terrible witness. Now I can feel a realization of the proverb, 'Be virtuous and you will be happy.' Now I can feel an assurance that in years yet to come it can be said of my children (yet to come), 'they were of poor but honest parents.' Please acknowledge through local press, and request them to put in double-leaded brevier, editorial page."

A conscience-stricken department clerk wrote:

"A clear conscience softens the hardest bed, and as I am a poor government clerk my bed is very hard and needs softening, so I herewith return $1 which was overpaid me last payday, and, besides, I have loafed a good deal lately."

Here's a letter which has the true ring:

"Inclosed is a check for $190. I will briefly explain. I have been in the United States service and a part of the time with rank which entitled me to two servants. I drew pay for two, but actually had but one. It was the common practice of officers to do this, and the paymasters were well aware of it. I entered the army poor and sick—too poor, in fact, to get along well without a clear conscience."

One of the largest contributions ever received was $12,000, and it was accompanied by this letter:

"I am sending you herewith inclosed $12,000 which is to go to the use of the United States government. Years ago I defrauded the government of money, but now I have returned it all and am paying fourfold in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures. The way of the transgressor is hard, and no one but God knows how I have suffered."

There are many such letters as these, but in a large number of instances the contributions are made without any explanations whatever. On several occasions it has happened that people have cut bills in two, sending one-half to the Secretary of the Treasury, and the other half to the treasurer, for the sake of safety. There are persons who do not entertain absolute faith in the integrity of government officials. One man forwarded $10 to the conscience fund, saying: "Pay this money where it belongs and keep your record clear." An envelope postmarker Bealeton, Va., contained six two-cent stamps and a sheet of paper upon which was written, "I misused six stamps and am now returning them." A remittance of $3.40 was received from a man who wrote that he felt sorry for having beaten his passage on a government train during the war.

It is a melancholy thing to be obliged to say that the swindles against the government which bear such fruit of repentance seem to be a sadly small percentage of the multifarious chats that are practiced undetected and apparently unregretted by those who perpetrate them. A fraud on the government of a comparatively innocent sort is often practiced in the army. A quartermaster finds his stores short by 100 tent pins, five anvils, and fourteen sledge hammers. Very likely it is not his fault; such things will happen. Presently a soldier deserts and disappears. Incidentally to the report of desertion sent to Washington, mention is made of 100 tent pins, five anvils and fourteen sledge hammers as having disappeared with the delinquent. The latter is supposed to be walking across the country with these articles thrown termaster, who would otherwise be over his back. This squares the quarobliged to pay for the missing articles.

Voyagers returning from across the seas fetch gems concealed in cakes of soap, in the hollowed heels of boots, beneath porous plasters, in cartridges from which the bullets have been removed and the powder taken out, and in various and sundry other ways. The device of folding diamonds in a slice of meat, feeding it to a dog just before reaching port, and killing the animal a few hours later is a familiar one.—Washington Sta.

Peculiarities.

"You have observed wild animals a great deal."

"Yes," answered the sportsman.

"Have you noted any peculiarities?"

"Decided peculiarities. Some of them absolutely insist on not behaving as the naturalists say they ought."—Washington Star.

PROOF.

"Is he intelligent and well-informed?"

"Is he? Why, he's been summoned as a talesman a dozen times and never got on a jury yet."—Philadelphia Ledger.

SURE PROOF.

The Bride—How do you know that man across the aisle is a pugilist?

The Groom—Why just listen how fluently he talk.—Brooklyn Eagle.