

The Kind Deeds Messenger



The Latham Foundation Story Service for the Public Schools

No. 42

THE KIND DEEDS CLUB PLEDGE

In becoming a member of the Kind Deeds Club I will try to be kind to every living creature and to cultivate a spirit of protection towards all who are weaker than myself, and I will try to treat animals as I would wish to be treated if I were in their place.



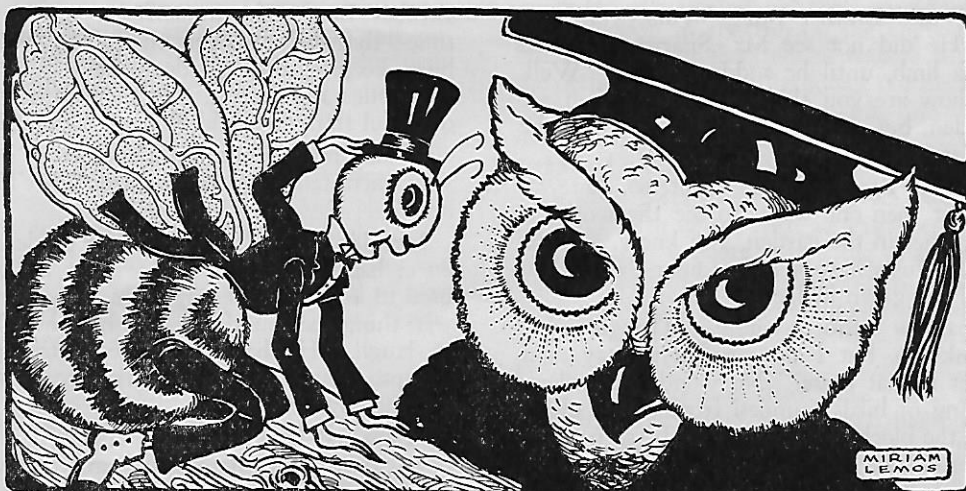
MOTTO

"It is not our erudition or lack of it that lives after us, but our humanity."

DAVID E. MARTIN.

THE ADVENTURES OF "BROTHER BUZZ," THE ELF BUMBLE BEE, IN BIRD-LAND

By DOLORES WILKENS KENT



Those two golden eyes seemed to grow larger and deeper.

Brother Buzz got up very early one morning, all the bees and the Bumble bees were still asleep, but Brother Buzz had been feeling very restless, and turning and twisting about in his little den at the foot of the tree stump, covered with pink geranium flowers, didn't help a bit, so he decided to fly out into the world and see what he could see.

It was just dawn; the first faint, pink glow in the eastern sky was tinting the heavens, and the fragrance of flowers, grass and trees scented the air. He droned his way rather sleepily from flower to flower in the quiet, shady garden where he lived, sipping dew from

the little upturned faces of the flowers that were already awake. For some of them begin the day when the light comes—roses, lilies, zinnias, mignonette, fuschias, and dozens and dozens of others — while poppies, morning-glories, marigolds, gentian, buttercups, and many more than I have space to mention, await the warming touch of the sun.

Brother Buzz finished a delicious breakfast, yawned, and carefully wiped his little mouth with his front legs, brushed off his funny black head; and, stretching his hind legs up over his back, gently stroked his wings until they were nice and clean.

Then, he sat blinking and thinking what would be the next move! It was very lovely here in the big garden. Not a bird was astir yet. The farthest corners under the tall trees were quite scary — filled with dark shadows that might hold almost anything.

Slowly the light grew brighter, a faint peep came from some birdnest in the tall, stately pine tree; another bird answered. Crickets chirped. The light breeze stirred the trees, shrubs and flowers; even the grass swayed in rhythm, like a wave. A song from a linnnet overhead; and then—the whole garden became alive. Bird after bird awoke; soft and sweet, loud and clear, shrill yet harmonious, sounded the calls and singing. A ray of sunshine turned the pine tree's top branches into gold. Bees and Bumble bees came winging their way past Brother Buzz. The insect world hummed and stirred; nature was alive; another day had begun.

Brother Buzz decided that he would leave the garden and go adventuring; out into the world of men! So, over the high green hedge he flew, droning along like a tiny natural airplane.

Down the long street he went, so calm and quiet without the people and motor-cars that in a very short while would begin to pass.

Along buzzed Brother Buzz, but turned aside for a moment to indulge in some exceedingly sweet honey for the locust trees were in full bloom this fine, spring morning; heavy clusters of white and pink blossoms shedding their fragrance from between the lacy green branches of the trees bordering both sides of the street.

"Buzz, buzz," said Brother Buzz. "Yum, yum, but this is good!" He did not see Mr. Sparrow perched beside him on a limb, until he suddenly said—"Well, Brother Buzz, how are you this morning? I often see you in the garden, but, isn't it unusual for you to be out here in the street?"

"Buzz, buzz," said Brother Buzz. "Quite so, quite so, Mr. Sparrow, but then one wants to see the world at times; it's very quiet in the garden, you know, and the flowers of these locusts have a rather finer flavor than the ones behind the green hedge."

The little sparrow nodded wisely. "That is what some birds think too, but I am satisfied to stay near home—oh, what is that noise?" No wonder he asked; a shrill chattering of birds sounded from a tree about half way down the block and they could be seen flying to and fro in confusion.

"Let's go and see," suggested Mr. Sparrow. So he and Brother Buzz flew away, alighting on the tree where all the commotion was taking place.

It was little Mrs. Wren, and she was in a sad, sad way. Someone had washed her nest out of the tree when they were watering the garden where she and her husband lived. They were chattering and scolding in their very harshest tones.

"Buzz, buzz," said Brother Buzz. "I don't blame you, Mrs. Wren, for being angry, but, you didn't have any babies in the nest and you can build another one where the people can't reach it, so it isn't worth crying about."

That was too much for Mrs. Wren, who loves to scold anyway. She just flew at Brother Buzz and told him what she thought of people who buzzed about all

day long, sipping honey! Who didn't have any nests to build, or babies to feed and care for. All the birds joined in—blue-jays, and robins, linnets—every kind of sparrow, blackbirds, titlarks, and even tiny Mrs. Humming-bird lingered for a moment as she darted by. What a noise! What a din!

Poor Brother Buzz was quite overwhelmed by the storm he had raised. "Buzz! Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!" he protested. "Alright, alright, Mrs. Wren, have it your own way; far be it from me to contradict a lady. What do the rest of you have to say?"

He soon found they had plenty to say on the subject. In one garden Mr. and Mrs. Robin's cherry tree that they did so enjoy a few bits of fruit from, now and then, had been covered over with netting, so that they could not get a single bite. Mr. and Mrs. Titlark had been shot at and his left wing slightly lamed. Mr. Blue-jay had lost several members of his family by the cruel hunting of mean boys with BB guns and slingshots. Mrs. Crow said that life wasn't worth living any more for her family. They just had to snatch food where they could find it, and fly away before someone killed them.

"Buzz, buzz," said Brother Buzz. "This is quite a serious matter. I had no idea things were like this in bird life!"

Oh, what a chorus broke forth now! They all chattered, explained, and scolded at once, until poor Brother Buzz was almost deafened. At last Mr. Blue-jay called out above the clatter—"Hush! Hush! Let me answer Brother Buzz. The humans see only one thing at a time—that we are taking their fruit. We have been so busy keeping their gardens, fields and orchards free from bugs and insects, that they do not realize what a dreadful thing it would be if we weren't here."

"Buzz, buzz," said Brother Buzz. "But don't their wise men tell them what birds do? They've studied bees."

Mr. Jay said: "I lived in the garden of a scientist once; had my nest in a tree near his window, and I used to hear him reading to his wife about us. All the wise things he found out—ha! ha!" Mr. Jay had to stop to laugh. "He had us divided into 'species,' family groups. You," said he, turning to Mrs. Wren, "are a 'Troglodytis.'"

"I am not! Don't you dare call me names! Mr. Wren, how can you sit there and hear your wife insulted!" And Mrs. Wren wrung her claws in anguish.

Mr. Wren ruffled his feathers and flew toward Mr. Jay with trouble in each eye, when Mr. Robin interfered—"Here! Here! You fellows be still! Jay meant that that is the name the scientist called your whole family. Isn't that it, old man?"

"Yes," said Mr. Jay, hoarse from laughter. "And you, Robin, are a 'Planesticus, Migratorios Propinquus.'" Then he and Mr. Robin laughed so that they nearly fell off the branch.

A dainty little humming-bird darted up and poised shimmering in the air. Said she, in her tiny thread of a voice, "What are you laughing at?"

"We were just saying, Mrs. Humming-bird, that as you have a black chin, you are an 'Archilochus alex-

andri." And here Mr. Jay actually choked with glee.

Mrs. Humming-bird was furious. "My chin is my own affair," she shrilled. "If you call me that again, I'll have you caged." And highly indignant she flashed away.

Between the laughter and scolding, poor Brother Buzz was quite bewildered. He droned off, back to his own garden, where he could think the whole matter over in peace and comfort. The big pine tree was a wonderfully dark and quiet place to meditate in, so he flew there. But, a slight rustle near by caused him to look up. Why, it was Mr. Owl, whom Brother Buzz had awakened from his day-time sleep by his buzzing.

"Haven't you better manners than to come to a chap's bedroom and buzz in his ear?" snapped Mr. Owl, crossly.

"Buzz, buzz," said Brother Buzz. "Do excuse me, Mr. Owl. I am so upset in my mind that I do not know what I am doing."

"Your mind!" sniffed Mr. Owl. "You flatter yourself." And he stuck his head under his wing again for another nap.

Suddenly a thought struck Brother Buzz. "Buzz, buzz! Oh, wait a minute, Mr. Owl. Don't go to sleep yet. You're supposed to be the smartest bird in the world, aren't you?"

"Supposed to be. Supposed to be!" Mr. Owl fairly danced in his rage. "I am the wisest bird; the scentists all say so."

"Buzz, buzz! Yes, yes, that's what I mean, of course," said Brother Buzz, humbly. "Then, will you tell me what all this trouble between the humans and the birds is about? I've been hearing the birds telling the dreadful things people are doing to them. Is this all true?"

"True! Towhit, tuwhoooo!" Mr. Owl, in his scorn, actually gave his hoot in the day time, and scared a little song sparrow on a nearby limb so that she flew off as fast as her wings could take her.

"I'll tell you, stupid," said Mr. Owl. "Things couldn't be much worse, and if humans don't realize it soon—well, they'll find out—that's all." And Mr. Owl closed his beak with a sharp snap.

"Buzz, buzz. They'll find out what?" asked Brother Buzz, in the greatest curiosity.

Mr. Owl opened his big eyes and looked long and carefully at Brother Buzz.

"I wonder if you could do any good," he mused. "You do buzz 'round and do a lot of talking. I wonder!"

"Buzz, buzz. What, what?" said Brother Buzz, eagerly. "Oh, please, Mr. Owl, I like birds. What can I do, show me?"

Here Mr. Owl's eyes grew bigger. "Alright, I will," he answered. "I'll show you just what would happen if there were no birds on earth. Look at me!" No need of saying that. Brother Buzz could see nothing but those two huge golden eyes that seemed to grow larger and larger, deeper and deeper, until he felt dizzy—dizzy—and then—

Why, where was he? Such a strange place! What a fearful glare!! Brother Buzz shut his eyes, then opened them; blinked, took another look! He had never seen such blazing sunshine. Although bees love the sun, this

was a most unusual kind—that burned and stung, and had no relief! He must get into the shade. He looked about him—he was perched on a tiny twig of what was evidently a tree, but there wasn't a leaf on it. He would fly off and find a shady place.

But, where! As he flew along, he hunted and hunted. There were rows and rows of trees, just trunks and bare branches, not a leaf anywhere. He looked down toward the earth—even some shrub or plant would do, but—there weren't any! Only twigs and stems, not a shred of green to be seen. The sun seemed a huge ball of fire in the heavens.

This must be an orchard, the dismal stripped trees were planted in equal rows. It wasn't winter, thought Brother Buzz, for there would have been grass on the bare ground, and green hedges on the sides. Brother Buzz stopped in the shade of a tree trunk, and looked all around—yes, something was very seriously wrong!

He never felt such heat! It rose in quivering waves from the ground. The slight breeze was hot, dry and dusty. He looked as far as he could see into the distance—the earth lay stark, hard and bare!

"Buzz, buzz," said Brother Buzz, dazedly. "There must be a house around; I'll try to find it."

On and on, no end to the desolation! At last, far away, he spied a white house with a white fence around it. He hurried his tired flight. There would be a garden there with flowers and water. He was so dreadfully thirsty from all this sunshine, heat and dust.

At last, he neared the place; but, what was this—the reflection of the sun on the white building nearly blinded him, for the trees here were just as bare as in the orchard. Not a shrub, flower nor blade of grass! Dry stalks hung, burned almost black, and what must have once been a velvety lawn in front of the house now remained a hard stubble.

Brother Buzz's one thought was water. He flew to the large barn at the rear, at least there would be some in a trough — there was a big one near the door — eagerly he hurried — it was empty, cracked! He circled the house, looking in every likely spot for a drink—not a drop anywhere. He flew slowly to the porch and dropped in exhaustion.

At least here was shade! He rested for awhile, but the heat was terrific! What was that noise? He looked up—a window was open—the shade flapping in the little hot breeze that only seemed to make it more uncomfortable.

Brother Buzz listened; it would be a relief to hear a human sound, for he was beginning to realize that during his whole flight he hadn't heard or seen one living thing! Not a bee, bird, animal, or even an insect!

He buzzed in; not a soul to be seen! Dust lay thick someone would be inside the house; he must get water, if he had to go in for it. People as a rule did not hurt bees. They liked honey, and, anyway, were afraid of getting stung.

He finally got up and flew to the windowsill, surely upon the furniture and floors. Instinct guiding him, he flew to the kitchen—all the doors were open; to the sink—dry, brown, stained!

Suddenly poor little Brother Buzz was frightened!

He couldn't stand the terrible silence another minute. It was deathly, awful. He flew half blindly back the way he came, but as he went out of the window, in his haste he struck the side and fell to the porch floor—

Suddenly he heard a voice say—"Well, stupid, are you satisfied?"

Brother Buzz looked up—why! Where? What? He was back on the same branch in the pine tree, in his beloved garden, and the big golden eyes of Mr. Owl blinked sleepily at him. The dark green pine branches were all about him; a cool little breeze blew softly over him.

"Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz!!! Oh, oh, what a relief! What joy!" gasped Brother Buzz. "Where was I, Mr. Owl?"

"You wanted to know what would happen to a world without birds, didn't you?" said Mr. Owl. "Well, you saw it. No trees! No grass! No grain! No food! The fool humans would die with all the rest of us. Now, you know. Go buzz about and tell people. They don't begrudge the hay and grain they give the cattle and horses, the—why make such a fuss about the little the birds may take as honest wage for their service to mankind. Ugh! They are so stupid! They make me tired. Good night. Don't you dare wake me up again!" And Mr. Owl flew to the darkest branch away up against the trunk of the big tree, and went to sleep.

Poor Brother Buzz, with his own little head fairly buzzing with big thoughts, far too big for a small Bumble bee, and his little heart filled with happiness to have found his beautiful garden again, he droned his way over to the fountain. How cool and clear the water was! He drank and drank; he had never been so thirsty. He was so tired; so thankful that it had only been a dream or vision, that he just had to rest. But, tomorrow, yes, tomorrow, he'd buzz about and tell the story so that people would learn to love and appreciate the birds, for if they didn't—ugh—he wouldn't think of that dreadful place again, or he'd have a nightmare—but—to-morrow—

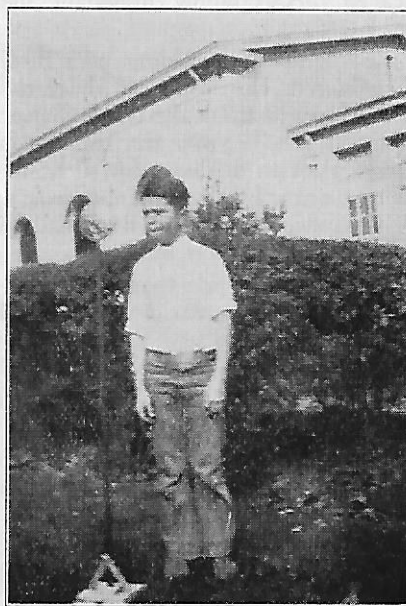
And "To-morrow," he told me, and I tell you—for I want you to care for our little feathered friends, or some day we may have to face just such a fearful possibility.

KIND DEEDS CLUB BUTTONS

The new buttons will soon be ready. The demand has grown so great that the Foundation is obliged, much to its regret, to charge a nominal price — one cent apiece. This charge is below the actual cost.

The new button is in the same design, but the workmanship is far more beautiful, and has a clasp which gives security.

McKINLEY SCHOOL GIVES RADIO TALKS ON KINDNESS



"Goodby everybody. Be Kind and Good."

San Leandro, California.

Dear Kind Deeds Club Members:

When school first started in August the class organized a Kind Deeds Club. In other classes they had written stories, made booklets, posters, etc.

At one of the meetings the members decided to make a picture box. Pupils volunteered to bring materials and tools needed to make the reels. The show box was painted. Each pupil was to draw a picture and then tell the story of kindness.

It was indeed a success, and after this was finished the children wished to do something different.

A radio broadcasting station was a pleasing suggestion. So one of the boys made a microphone.

During our Kind Deeds period the pupils broadcast interesting stories and give good talks. Pupils who had never cared to give oral talks were attracted by the microphone.

The make-believe microphone is in the front of the classroom and is now used in broadcasting other subjects. The pupils can hardly wait for their turn to talk.

The announcer says—

"McK.S., San Leandro, California."

The subject—Kindness. Then calls on the different speakers. At the end of the period the announcer says: "McK.S. signing off. Will be on the air next Friday at the same time. Goodbye, everybody. Be Kind and Good."

MARGUERITE GIRARDI, Class Teacher

Officers of Kind Deeds Club (low fifth): President, Irene Swan; Vice-President, Eldin Bryant; Secretary, Nakashime.