

Cobb's Toys

Lyman Cobb

Genesee Valley Historical Reprint Series



State University of New York at Geneseo

Genesee Valley Historical Reprint Series: Cobb's Toys

Lyman *Cobb's Toys* is a collection of tiny books for tiny people. Priced at three cents and consisting of only sixteen pages, these children's works are slight enough to fit in even the smallest of pockets. In the third volume of the third series, Cobb describes animals both common and exotic to an audience he lovingly refers to as his "young friends," taking great care not to use words with more than three syllables. But what the booklet lacks in size (and syllables), it makes up for in personality. Cobb's descriptions of animals like the bear, zebra, and anteater are fun and meandering if not occasionally poetic, and the accompanying engravings are not without their charm either. After a few short pages, it becomes readily apparent why Cobb's works were so popular in the 1800s.

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COBB'S TOYS,

THIRD SERIES,

No. 3.

STORIES

ABOUT THE

**BEAR, ZEBRA, LYNX, WILD BOAR, WALRUS,
SLOTH, AND ANTEATER.**

IN WORDS OF

ONE, TWO, AND THREE SYLLABLES.



**DANSVILLE, (N. Y.)
A. STEVENS & SON.**

PRICE THREE CENTS.

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PREFACE

TO THE THIRD SERIES.

This Series of Toys contains a more extensive and minute description of Animals, Birds, Fishes, Articles of Manufacture, &c. than was given in the First and Second Series.

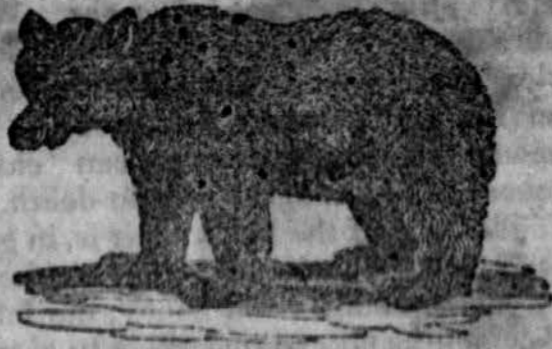
This Series is intended for a larger class of my young friends than the preceding ones; and, it is hoped they will be both benefited and amused by their perusal.

In this as well as in all the other Series nothing has been permitted to find a place which is false, unnatural, or unphilosophical, or any details of conversations among animals which never *did*, and which never *can* take place.

It is believed that in the large field of Nature and Art, there are sufficient materials for descriptions and stories without launching into the field of Fiction and Falsehood, to find subjects which will be interesting to children.

To remove difficulties in the reading of these Stories as far as possible, and thereby render them more interesting, the language used in the descriptions is limited to words of ONE, TWO, and THREE SYLLABLES.

New York, June 29, 1835.



THE BEAR.

There are three species of the Bear ; the black, whose figure is shown by the cut above, the white, and the brown Bear. The black Bear is extremely common in the forests of this country, and in the northern regions of Europe. His form is rude and misshaped ; and, his body is covered with a coarse and shaggy hide. His legs are thick and muscular ; and, the long and flat soles of his paws, though they enable him to tread with firmness, render his pace at the same time very awkward and heavy. His feet are armed with sharp claws, and capable of grasping, so as to enable

him to climb the most lofty trees. With his fore paws, he can strike a dreadful blow. He can rear himself at pleasure on his hinder paws, and, seizing his enemy in his embrace, can easily squeeze the strongest man to death.

The food of the black Bear is, in general, roots, fruits, and herbs, but he is very fond of milk and honey, the latter of which he takes great pains to obtain, and seeks it with great cunning.

About the end of autumn he retires to his den which he chooses in the precipice of a lonely mountain, or in the deep recess of some gloomy forest, or in a hollow tree. Here he passes the greater part of the winter, without food or ever stirring abroad; and, being very fat, he seems to live by his fatness.

In the spring, when he first crawls abroad, he is extremely lean and feeble, and his feet are so tender that he finds it difficult to move about.

The flesh of the young Bear is very delicious; and, the paws of the old one are esteemed a most exquisite morsel.

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The fat is white and sweet, and the oil is of great use as medicine in many cases.

Great numbers are killed every year for the sake of their skins, which form an article of quite extensive commerce.

The young Bear, which is called a cub, is very slow in growth, and follows the dam for at least a year, during all which time she displays uncommon tenderness for her offspring, and will encounter any danger in its defence.



THE LYNX.

The Lynx differs greatly from other animals of the Cat kind. Its ears are long and erect, tufted at the end with long black hairs. The hair on the body is long and soft, of a red ash colour, marked with dusky spots, which differ according to the age of the creature; sometimes they are scarcely visible: its legs and feet are very thick and strong; its tail short, and black at the extreme point; its eyes are of a pale yellow colour; and, its aspect softer and less ferocious than that of the Panther or the Ounce. The skin of the male is more spotted than that of the female.

The Lynx is said to be very long

lived, is a very destructive animal, lives by hunting, and pursues its prey to the tops of the highest trees. It feeds on weasels, ermines, squirrels, &c., which are unable to escape it. It watches the approach of the fallow-deer, hare, and other animals, and darts upon them from the branches of trees, where it lies concealed; seizes them by the throat, and drinks their blood; after which, it abandons them, and goes in quest of fresh game. Its sight is very quick, and it sees its prey at a great distance.

The Lynx is found in the most northern parts of this continent, and of Europe and Asia.

The fur of this animal is of great value on account of its softness and warmth, and is imported from thence in large quantities. The farther north they are taken, the whiter they are, and the spots more distinct.



THE WILD BOAR.

The Wild Boar is neither so stupid nor so filthy an animal as the tame hog. He is also much smaller than the tame one, and does not vary in his colour as those of the domestick kind do, but is uniformly of an iron gray, rather inclining to a black. His snout is much longer than that of the tame hog; and, his ears are shorter, round, and black, and the feet and tail are of the same colour. The tusks of this animal are also much larger in each jaw than in the tame hog, being nearly a foot long. These serve him for the double purpose of annoying his enemy, or procuring his food, which is chiefly roots and herbs.

The tusks in the upper jaw bend upwards in a circular form, and are very sharp at the points; those of the under jaw are always most to be dreaded, for with them he defends himself, and frequently gives mortal wounds.



THE WALRUS.

The Walrus is a large, unwieldy, and clumsy animal, living with equal ease in the water as on the land; and, we may very properly consider it as one of the last steps in the scale of nature, by which we are conducted from one great division of the animal world to the other. The Walrus is sometimes found

eighteen feet in length, and twelve around it in the thickest part. It has also two large tusks in the upper jaw, which sometimes exceed two feet in length, and weigh from three to twenty pounds each. Its skin is thick and wrinkled, and has a thin covering of short brownish hair; its legs are short; it has five toes on each foot, connected by membranes, and on each toe a small nail; the hind feet are very broad, and extended nearly on a line with the body. The Walrus is quick and easy in the water, but slow and clumsy on the land.

In climbing upon the ice, the Walrus makes use of its teeth as hooks to secure its hold, and draws its great unwieldy body after it. It feeds on sea-weeds and shellfish, which it is said to disengage from the rocks to which they adhere, with its tusks.

It is hunted for its teeth, which are as durable and white as those of the Elephant. A common Walrus is said to yield half a tun of oil, equal in goodness to that of the Whale.

The Walrus is found chiefly in the northern seas. Great herds of them are sometimes seen together on the seashore, or sleeping on an island of ice. When alarmed, they instantly throw themselves into the water with very rash haste. If wounded, they become bold and furious, and unite in the defence of each other. They will attack a boat, and endeavour to sink it by striking their great teeth into its sides, at the same time bellowing in the most hideous manner.



THE SLOTH.

The Sloth, of all animals, is the most sluggish and inactive; and, judging from its outward appearance, it seems to be the most helpless and wretched. All its motions seem to be the effect of

the most painful exertion, which hunger alone is capable of exciting. Its greatest speed seldom exceeds three yards in an hour. It lives chiefly in trees; and, having ascended one, with infinite labour, it remains there till it has entirely stripped it of all its verdure, sparing neither fruit, blossom, nor leaf; after which it is said to devour even the bark, when nothing else is left on the tree for its subsistence, and thus destroys the very source of its support. Thus destitute of food, it crawls slowly from branch to branch, in hopes of finding something still left, but is at last obliged to descend; and, as it is not able to descend as other animals do, it drops from the branches to the ground; and, as it is not capable of exerting itself to break the violence of its descent, it drops like a shapeless, heavy mass; but the thickness of its skin and length of its hair protect it from injury. There, after remaining some time torpid, it prepares for a journey to some neighbouring tree

Though slow, awkward, and very difficult of motion, the Sloth is strong, and is capable of subsisting without food for several days. The strength of its legs and feet is so great, that, when it has seized any thing, it is quite difficult to oblige it to quit its hold. We are told of one that having fastened itself by its feet to a pole, remained in that manner forty days without the least sustenance. Its flesh is eaten.

The Sloth is found on the southern parts of this continent, and also in the island of Ceylon.



THE ANTEATER

This animal is a native of Brazil and Guiana, runs slowly, frequently swims

over rivers, and lives wholly on ants. His tongue is long, and covered with a kind of glutinous moisture. When he comes to an ant-hill, he scratches it up with his long claws, and then puts out his slender tongue which much resembles a very long worm. The ants crawl upon it in great numbers, being invited, perhaps, by the clammy matter, or saliva. He then draws his tongue into his mouth suddenly and swallows the whole of them in an instant. When he swims he throws his tail over his back; and, during showers of rain, or when he sleeps, he uses his tail as the squirrel does his, for a kind of umbrella, or coverlet.

The legs of the Anteater are so strong, that few animals can extricate themselves from his gripe. It is said that he sometimes fixes himself upon a panther in such a manner, that both of them fall and perish together; for he is so obstinate that he will not extricate himself from his enemy even after he is dead.