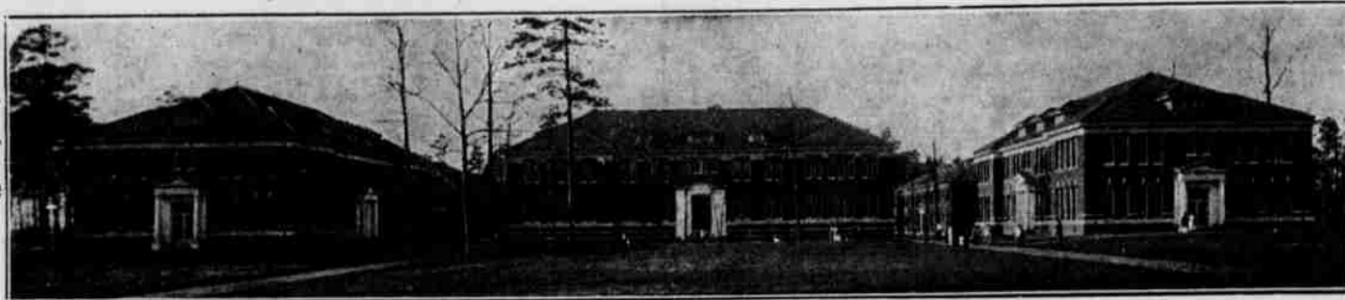


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MOWGLI'S PLAYMATE

Sears Roebuck Makes Himself at Home in the Village

Eats With the Hounds, has Afternoon Tea, Attends the Christmas Tree and Brings Good Luck



LITTLE DEERIE is a frequent and welcome visitor at the printing establishment, fearless of the heavy machines turning out the *Outlook*, and when he has had his graham gems he saunters down the road to greet the children. Believing that such a thing as the familiar spirits of the forest appearing thus in the village in this ominous hour of a world's cataclysm bore some great portent for good or evil, we repaired in haste to Frank Butler, the sage of the wildwood, who understands the language and customs of all the inhabitants of the thickets and fens. We asked him what it could mean, this appearance of a stately buck in the haunts of men, acting more like a book agent or a government inspector than a hunted beast.

"Oh him," said Butler, in the easy and familiar way one might mention the

ice-man or his own brother-in-law, "why that is Sears Roebuck. Whether woodsprite or fairy I cannot tell. But he has made himself at home among the children of men in a manner not written of any of the wild pack since the days of Mowgli. And he brings with him the manners and



the gentle instincts of the forest people. All day he plays with the children, who understand his stories. He fears neither man nor devil, nor dog. Come," he continued "let me show you how he gets his luncheon. He toils not neither does

he spin. The lion and the lamb and the keeper at the kennels are all one to him."

We went, and there came upon a strange sight. Sears and the dogs were busily engaged supping out of the same cup, and passing the most amenable

comments upon the general cussedness of the situation. Seeing us approach he very courteously left the table, and came out to greet us, apparently interested in the sugar situation. He gently reproved Butler for coming empty handed, but

seemed to understand the explanation that lumps were no longer available.

Sears has a peculiarly frank and friendly disposition. He plays no favorites. His afternoon calling list is the most cosmopolitan in the town. He arrives with ceremony and makes himself thoroughly at home in every cottage in the village. He has tea every afternoon with Mrs. Ormsbee and takes a neighborly interest in the sox-machine. He attended the Christmas tree for the Denham children and selected his own present from the topmost bough. The Hitchcocks are his particular favorites. And he shows more facility in his method of departure than many an old hand at the calling game. The other afternoon, after paying his respects and playing with the children in the neighborhood, he looked about up stairs a few minutes, and then left without waste of time or tedious farewell, by blithely springing from the second story to the ground.

He has a distinct literary turn of mind, and is a frequent caller upon Miss Luey Priest in the Library.

He runs with the fox and he hunts with the hounds; he delights no less the grandfathers than the children in the perambulators; he enjoys the landscape which he adorns, and has made for himself many mansions, and lived upon the fat of the land. Truly he is wise beyond his years, and brings with him a talisman to keep us all from harm.

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