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Box 09, Folder 01 - "The King Who Was Still a Boy" (E.M.S.)

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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Standing, Edwin Mortimer, "Box 09, Folder 01 - "The King Who Was Still a Boy" (E.M.S.)" (2022).
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The Canadian Red Cross Junior

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Toronto

We regret that the enclosed manuscript does not meet with the present needs of The Canadian Red Cross Junior. In returning it we wish to express appreciation of your interest in our magazine.

The Editor.

THE KING WHO WAS STILL A BOY

by

MORTIMER STANDING

[Author of Maria Montessori - Her Life & Work
The Montessori Revolution in Education -
etc etc

THE KING WHO WAS STILL A BOY

The King of Calicut sat on his throne
Of beaten gold and cinnamon wood!
To right and to left of him there stood
A Nubian slave with a pea-cock fan,
Still as a statue carved in stone
He sat therein state, and he sat alone,
While thronging courtiers came and went
With flattering tongues of compliment.

In the midst of the fuss and the ceremonies,
The kissing of hands and the bending of knees,
The King of Calicut turned to his page -
To Peter his page, ^{eight} ~~six~~ years of age -
" Peter ", he said, " Let's make it a day!
What would you say, if once in a way,
You and I went off on the spree ?
I'm sick of sitting upon this throne,
Early and late in solemn state ;
I have't a moment to call my own "
" Do let's ", said Peter, a smile on his face,
" Like you, Oh King, I'm sick of this place;
If you gave permission I'd go like a shot;
The day is [^] fine and it's going to be hot ".
" A-greed ! " [^] said the King, " the bargain is made !
I make a decree that we're both of us free !

So with bucket and spade, and lemonade,
We'll make for the open sea".

Then he whipped off his Crown and bumped it down
On a Nubian slave with a pea-cock fan:

"Take that my brave Ethiopian!". "

And, swinging his staff with a hearty laugh,

He poked his Vizier in the ribs:

" You deal with these courtiers and their fibs".

Then calling the boy, with a whoop of joy,

Took a sudden run; and, before everyone,

Went sliding adown the polished floor

To bounce through the farther entrance door..

"At last", cried the King, " I can do what I wish!"

And he kicked his sandals off with a swish..

One whizzed quite close to a sentinel's nose,

And the other went crash through a window pane.

An angry voice was heard to complain

"What's that?" "What's that?", but it called in vain.

"Haw-haw!" said the King with a loud guffaw,

"Haw-haw!.haw-haw! That's my mother-in-law!."

So the King and Peter went hand in hand,

Till at length they came to the open strand..

"Gee whizz!" said the King, "but isn't it grand!.

And he wriggled his toes in the soft warm sand..

They ran and they jumped till they reached the sea

In all its radiant mystery..

The waves came rolling towards the shore,
Rising to fall with a thunderous roar.
Each wave spread out like a luminous sheet
To wrap itself round their stockingless feet;
Then, dragging the pebbles and sand about,
It tickled their toes as it drew itself out.
" Oh, gosh! " said Peter, " My pants are ~~are~~ wet,
I'll get into trouble for that I bet " .
" Well, " said the King " My point of view
Is - 'don't trouble trouble till it troubles you' " ! " ! "
So they left it at that, and spent a long while
Heaping the sand in a mountainous pile.
Then played " The King of the Castle " game,
And Peter was King when his turn came
So they pushed and pulled each other about
Till Peter cried " Pax ! . I am tired out " .

They ate their lunch by an upturned boat,
And the King made a carpet out of his coat :
The sand got rather mixed up with their food,
But still it tasted wonderfully good .

When lunch was over (its papers burned))
They suddenly saw that the tide had turned .
So they walked on the rocks where the limpets cling

And hurt their feet like anything! -
Till at last they came to a rocky pool
Where the water was clear and deep and cool.
They ^{saw} ~~found~~ big crabs that hid themselves
Upon the gleaming rock-built shelves,
Behind rich curtains of sea-weed green,
Where they could see - and not be seen.
Whilst they were watching, the King made a jab,
Plunged in his hand and pulled out a crab.
It waved its arms and legs in the air
And fixed the King with an ugly stare.
Then all of a sudden it nipped his hand!
So he flung it down with a yell on the sand,
Where it scurried off with a side-ways dash;
Slipped into the pool and was gone in a flash.

They fished and they played till the setting sun
Made a golden lane across the sea,
Leading it seemed from earth to heaven.
Suddenly the King said " ^{Gosh} ~~Golly~~ !. it's seven!
Peter, my boy, we must pack and go,
And quickly, whether we like it or no ".
So Peter sat down on the nubbly rocks
And put on his tie, and his shoes, and his socks;

The King picked his turban up off the ground
And wound it round, and round, and round,
As they do in the East (I can't think why).
"Hurrah", said Peter, " my pants are ~~dry~~"
" Good " , said the King, " then you won't get
spanked ;
For this ~~and~~ all mercies let God be thanked ;
For He it was Who made the sea,
And all things in it, - and you and me " .

Then off they went at a right good rate
Till they came at last to the palace gate.
Where the King looked down and said to his friend,
" All good things must come to an end " .
" Thank you " , said Peter " for a wonderful day " —
Then shaking hands each went on his way :
Peter set off for his house on his own,
And the King walked back to his empty throne.

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E. Mortimer Standing

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