

The Toys of Peace, and other papers

H H Munro Saki

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"The Toys of Peace" Preferring not to give her young sons toy soldiers or guns, and having taken away their toy depicting the Siege of Adrianople, Eleanor instructs her brother Harvey to give them innovative "peace toys" as an Easter present. When the packages are opened young Bertie shouts "It's a fort!" and is disappointed when his uncle replies "It's a municipal dustbin." The boys are initially baffled as to how to obtain any enjoyment from models of a school of art and a public library, or from little figures of John Stuart Mill, Felicia Hemans and Sir John Herschel. Youthful inventiveness finds a way, however, as the boys combine their history lessons on Louis XIV with a lurid and violent play-story about the invasion of Britain and the storming of the Young Women's Christian Association. The end of the story has Harvey reporting failure to Eleanor, explaining "We have begun too late."



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