

WANDERFOLK IN WONDERLAND

BY EDITH GUERRIER
WITH PICTURES
BY EDITH BROWN

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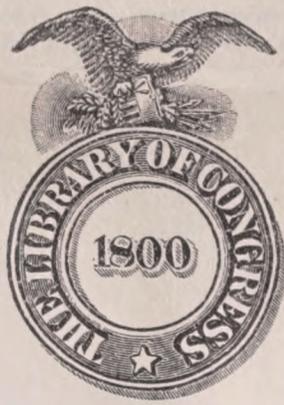
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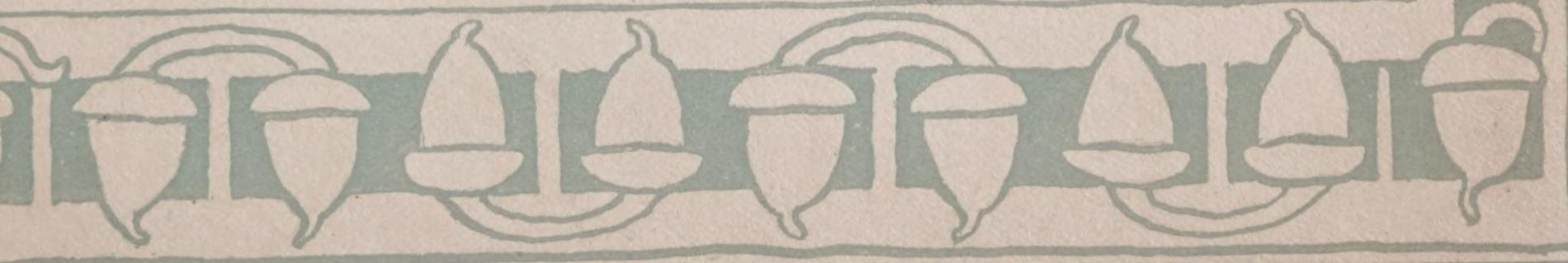
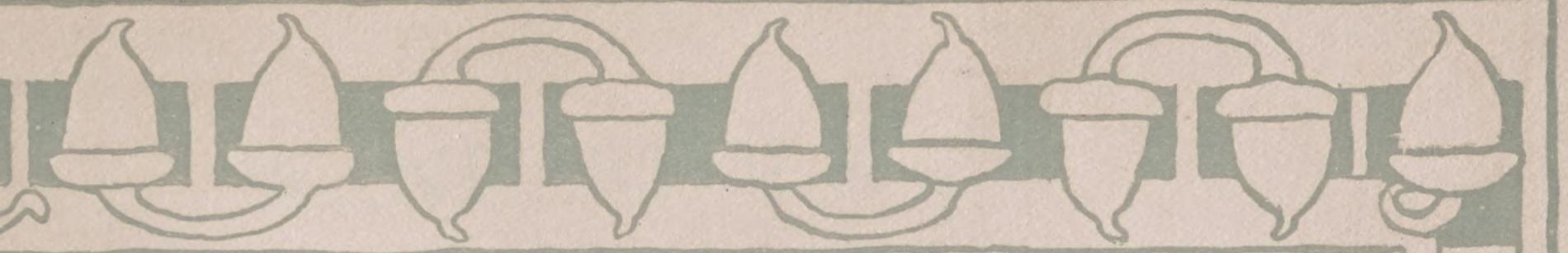
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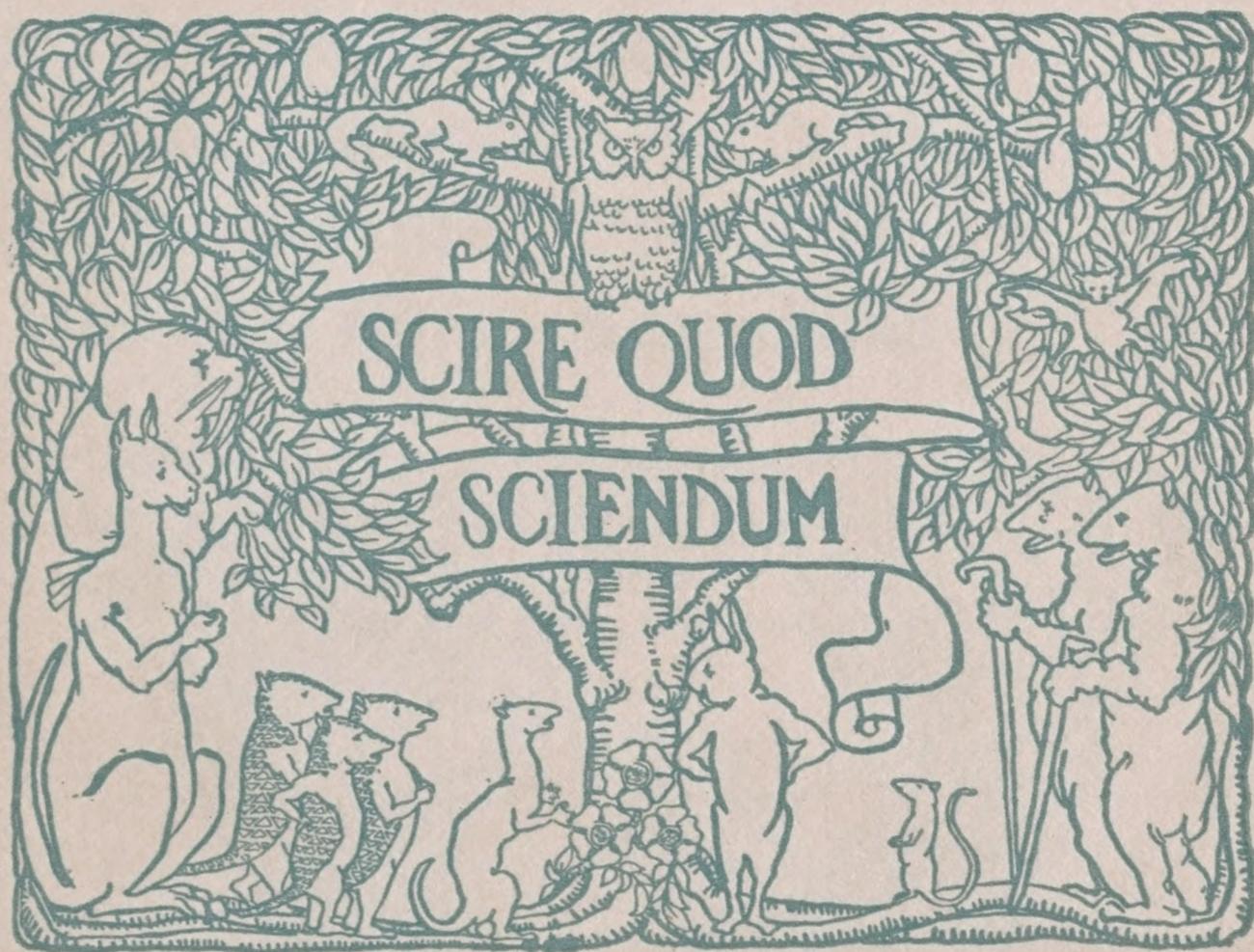


WANDERFOLK IN
WONDERLAND



“Ha! Ha! Now we are making light of our troubles!”

WANDERFOLK
IN WONDERLAND
A Book of Animal Fable Stories
Written by Edith Guerrier and
Illustrated with Forty-two
Drawings by Edith Brown



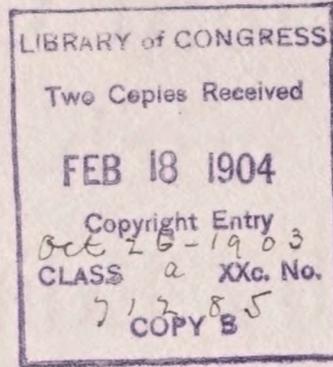
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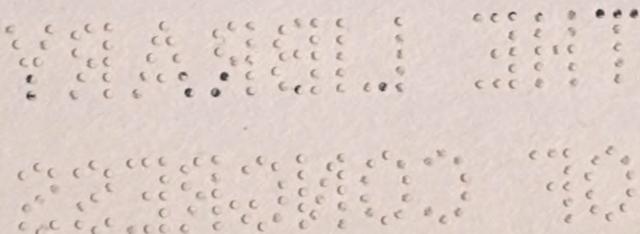
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THE PATIENT WALRUS AND
THE HELPFUL MINK



THE PATIENT WALRUS AND THE HELPFUL MINK

“Quiet persistence accomplishes more than bluster”



THE White Bears of Farthest Northland were certainly ill-tempered. In fact they were so ill-tempered that no one but a Walrus (in the days when Walruses were gentle as Doves) would have said a good word for them. All the Walrus said was, —

“To have rheumatism in one’s paws is surely enough to make one a trifle ill-tempered.”

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“‘A Trifle!’ snapped the Mink”

“A trifle!” snapped the Mink, who was calling upon him. “A trifle! the great fish-pawing things!”

“Why fish-pawing?” asked Walrus mildly.

THE PATIENT WALRUS

“ Oh, don't bother me ! ” said Mink, and seating herself on the edge of a crevasse, she gazed over the great, huddled masses of snow-covered ice that stretched away and melted into the gray twilight of the sky at every point but one ; there, beneath the North Star, a band of black appeared to encircle a flat-topped mound of emerald-colored ice.

Walrus scraped the crusted snow from a smooth ice block, and leaning against it, flapped his clumsy, black side with his left flipper, as he waited for Mink to speak. She was always putting on airs and he knew she would answer his question in time, so he contentedly flapped himself, till Mink said, “ You make me think of the time my uncle spanked sister and me for laughing at the Polars.”

Walrus continued to flap his flipper.

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

“If you don’t stop flapping that flipper I shall not speak another word,” said Mink decidedly.

Walrus flattened his flipper against his side, and Mink said, “Piii-ttmaprimbrtmhit.”

“Pardon me,” said Walrus politely, for he never forgot his manners, however surprised he might be.

“That’s the text!” snapped Mink, “the thing I am going to speak about.”

Walrus was quick witted, though he did not look it. “Ah, yes;” he said, “it’s something about ill-temper and rheumatism.”

“Certainly,” replied Mink, “but suppose I were to address an audience, how would it sound, if before I began my speech I should say, ‘Provided it is n’t ill-temper that makes a person rheumatic, it must be rheumatism that makes him

THE PATIENT WALRUS

ill-tempered?’ People would be so confused they would be all the time thinking about the text itself instead of listening to the speech.”

“Perhaps,” said Walrus.

“There is n’t any ‘perhaps’ about it! As I was on the point of telling you, the Polars were having breakfast with us one morning, when we read the very funniest story in our *South Wind Herald*. It was about a Rabbit that hung its tail in the water for bait to catch fish, on a day so cold that the water froze. When the Rabbit jumped up, its tail remained in the ice.

“We all laughed over the story, and old Chunk Polar said, ‘Orter have used his feet in water that does n’t freeze.’ ‘Use your wits, man,’ replied uncle, ‘fish are not going to bite at tails or feet for bait.’ ‘Don’t tell me! don’t tell me!’ screamed

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Chunk Polar, and he and Chunketta his wife went off in a rage.

“Next morning, while uncle, sister, and I were walking along shore by the Black Water that circles the Pole Ground Plain, whom should we see but the Polars sitting on the icy bank, their paws dangling in the Black Water.

“ ‘They’ve been sitting there all night,’ whispered uncle, behind his paw. They did look so funny that sister and I screamed with laughter. At that the Polars arose from the bank, and made toward us. ‘They’ve spoiled our fishing,’ growled Chunk, furiously, clawing at us. ‘They did n’t know any better,’ explained uncle, holding us by the hand-paws and backing off. ‘I’ll hammer ’em!’ threatened Chunk Polar. ‘Don’t trouble yourself, sir,’ replied uncle, ‘I’ll do the hammering.’



“ ‘ Don't trouble yourself, sir, I'll do the bammering.’ ”

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“So Chunk Polar and his wife went home, for they knew, and so did we, that uncle always kept his word,” said Mink, slowly rising.

“That happened two years ago,” she added, “and our bruises are healed, but the Polars have been lame ever since.”

“Very good,” commented Walrus. “It is proved that they were ill-tempered from the first.”

“From the first,” repeated Mink; “and now I must be going. I came to tell you that I have taken it upon myself to call a Council Meeting on the Sacred Pole Ground Plain, of every animal of Farthest Northland.”

“All right, I’ll come,” said Walrus.

“I’m going to address the meeting on the necessity of being good-tempered. When I have the sympathies of my audience I shall fearlessly tell the Polars

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that if they do not agree to be good-tempered in the future, we will banish them.”

“They will not,” declared Walrus.

“Will not what?” asked Mink.

“Will not be good-tempered and will not be banished,” explained Walrus.

“They are bigger than all you small animals put together; they will batter you without mercy if you don’t deal gently with them.”

“I do not agree with you,” said Mink.

Walrus said nothing.

“I do not agree with you,” said Mink a second time.

Walrus said nothing.

“I do not agree with you,” said Mink a third time.

“Well,” remarked the patient Walrus.

“Why could n’t you say so before?” said Mink.

THE PATIENT WALRUS

At that moment a growling was heard behind the block against which Walrus was leaning; and soon, white, shaggy-haired, fierce-eyed Chunk Polar appeared, limping painfully and growling at every step. Walrus looked at Mink, Mink looked into the crevasse. The patient Walrus respected Mink's good intentions, and decided to help her.

“A fine snowless day,” said he to Chunk Polar, indicating by sweeping motions of both flippers the gray, mysterious twilight, that, excepting when snow falls, is ever the same for one hundred miles around and about the Pole Ground.

Chunk Polar growled in reply, “Pretty fair.”

Seeing him in such a good humor, the Mink took courage and ventured, “We hope to see you at the Sacred Pole Ground Plain this afternoon.”

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“Chunk Polar growled in reply, ‘Pretty fair.’”

She fairly screamed the word “afternoon,” for at that moment the great, patient Walrus made a sudden and unex-

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pected motion with his flipper, which sent Mink sprawling on the ice.

“ Pardon ! pardon ! ” cried Walrus, setting her on her feet ; “ I was astonished by your question. The Honorable Polars could never walk so far.”

Chunk Polar tried to swallow his rage but it choked him. Seeing him speechless, Mink said, —

“ Of course he could. One like the Honorable Chunk Polar knows how to make light of his troubles.”

Again the great, patient Walrus waved his flipper, and again small Mink fell prone upon the ice.

“ Pardon ! pardon ! ” cried Walrus, as he raised her a second time. “ I was astonished at the idea of a Polar making light of his troubles.”

Chunk Polar was so angry because he could n't be sufficiently angry, that he

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hobbled away, merely mumbling, "I'll show 'em! I'll teach 'em!"

Mink gazed ruefully after him, then glared at Walrus.

"Come," said the latter, "it's time to go to the meeting."

"A fine meeting we'll have," grumbled Mink. "The Polars will never come, and all on account of you — you — you — Walrus!"

Walrus said nothing, because he was patient; Mink said nothing, because she was not; and so in due time they arrived at the narrow band of Black Water that forms a complete circle about the Sacred Pole Ground Plain.

From the steep inner bank of the Black Water to the flat-topped mound of emerald-colored ice the plain extends, a floor of frozen dreams, smoother and harder than anything else in the world. Walrus and

THE PATIENT WALRUS

Mink hastened toward the southern part of the plain, where were gathered as many as one hundred animals, seated on square cakes of common ice.

Mink being speaker mounted a high, broad block, facing all the animals. Walrus took a back cake.

“I’m sorry to see the Polars are not present,” began Mink.

“They’re coming,” screamed a Penguin.

Sure enough they were. Soon they came, puffing and panting, to a double cake behind the patient Walrus. They chose that cake because they wished to taunt the Walrus, and because it was the only one left.

“Tell us we cannot get here!” thus Chunk.

“Tell us we cannot make light of our troubles!” thus Chunketta; and both sayings proved that Walrus knew what he was talking about.

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“Better keep still, Polars, and not shuffle your feet,” said Walrus so loudly that every one turned and stared at the Polars.

The Polars stared back, and to show how little they cared for public opinion, they arose and began to dance on their poor lame feet. The more they danced the warmer their feet became, and the less they felt their rheumatism.

“Don’t go too near the Sacred Pole Ground!” shouted Walrus. Whereupon, to show what they thought of him, the Polars joined forepaws, gave a mighty leap and danced UPON the emerald surface of the Sacred Pole Ground; of course, because all the Pole Ground is a magnet, they couldn’t leave it. Every time they tried to get down, the Pole Ground drew them back, klumperty blump; while from the emerald ice flew crackling

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flames, red, blue, and yellow, leaping so high, that far down in Greenland and afar off in Iceland, people heard the snapping sparks, and saw the many-colored streamers dance above the horizon, and named them "Northern Lights."

The Council was terror stricken. "Come down!" it cried to the Polars.

"Come down!" mocked the Polars. "Indeed we shall not."

Indeed they should not, for they could not, but they did not intend the other animals to know that.

"Ha! ha!" they roared proudly, as they pounded the wonderful lights from the Pole Ground. "Now we are making light of our troubles!"

"Don't you want to come down?" asked Walrus who was a bit of a magician.

"Don't you want to come up?" said the ill-bred Polars. "No, thank you,

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“sir, we don’t want to come down. We should like nothing better than to dance here forever.”

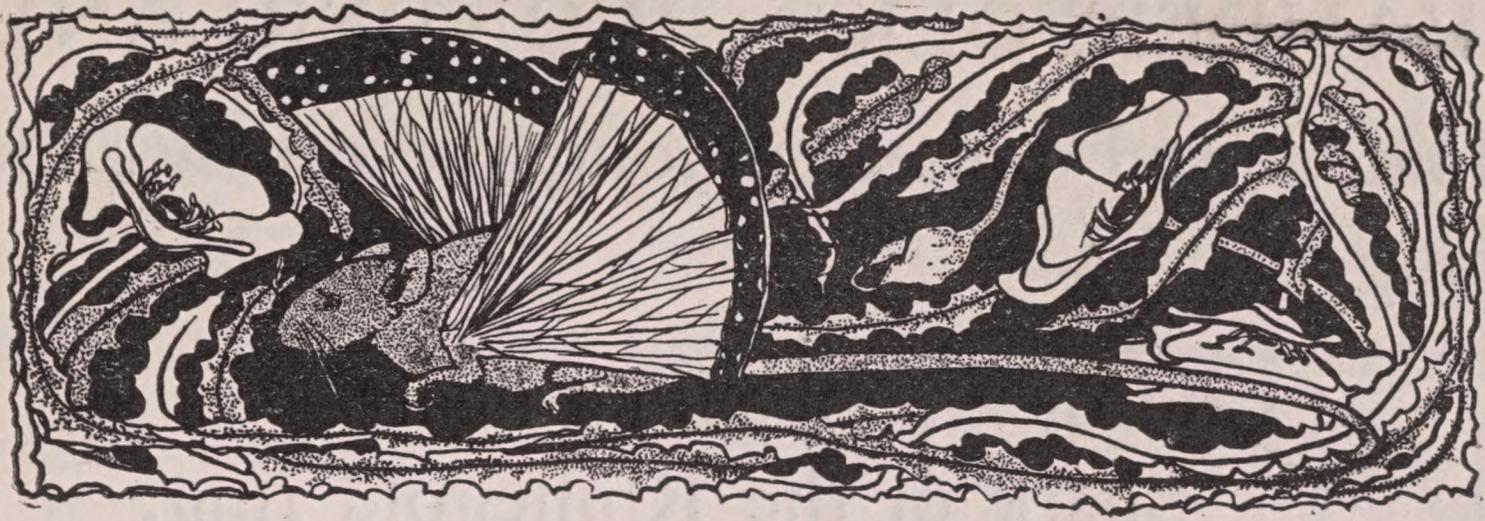
Walrus with one claw traced an original polygram about the Pole Ground, then flapped his flipper three times.

“Granted,” he said.

At that the whole assembly hurrahed, but Mink called it to order, and pointing out that they were now delivered from the ill-tempered Polars, she ended her speech in fine style.



THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY



THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY

*“Do not complain of your place in life, but make
the best of it”*



WEE Harvest Mouse was swinging in his grass cradle. His mother was in a corn-field not far distant, nibbling juicy shoots, and thinking about her child's prospects.

Wee Mouse was also thinking about his prospects. While he thought, a Butterfly, with sun-bright colors in her wings, danced over the swinging nest. As the Butterfly

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

floated and poised among the grasses she sang :

“ Life of a sunbeam’s heart,
Spark of the Rhinegold ring,
Spell of a summer dream,
Gleam in my shining wing,”

and the Wee Mouse’s mother, hearing as she returned from the cornfield, asked the Wee One what he thought of it.



“ Mother,” he said, “ a Butterfly is the most beautiful thing in the world. I am going to be one ! ”

Mother Mouse almost fell from the nest, so great were her astonishment and horror.

THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY

“Alas, child!” said she, “what an idea is this! Only yesterday the Meadow-Mole taught you that ‘one cannot make a safe nest out of a soft fern’!”

“I do not see what that has to do with this,” said Wee Mouse, “excepting that ferns are soft, beautiful things, moving like Butterflies in the wind and sunshine.”

“That’s what they are meant to do,” replied Mother Mouse. “If you tried to make a nest out of them, they would become draggled and broken, and the nest would be of no use.”



“Sweet sprites, tell me how your wings grow.”

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

Wee Mouse thought a moment, then cried, "I've said I'm going to be one; therefore, be one I will," so he tumbled out of the nest and off he went.

As for his mother, she mumbled a few words about experience, and returned to the cornfield.

Wee Mouse ran till he came to a milkweed, and then stopped because the milkweed was covered with Butterflies.

"Sweet sprites, I beg of you, tell me how your wings grow?" he prayed.

The Butterflies were busy gathering honey, besides they knew not how their wings were formed, so they answered simply, "We cannot tell."

Wee Mouse continued repeating his prayer, for he thought they meant that they would not tell. After a time he became angry, and making his tail quite rigid said proudly, "I can find out without your aid."

THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY

Then he backed under a plantain leaf to think, keeping his face, with an ugly scowl upon it, toward the Butterflies, till a sad groaning was heard in the darkness beneath the leaf.

Thus he was forced to turn, and found that with his tail he had nearly put out the eye of an extremely plain-looking black Spider.

Said the Spider, "Perhaps such a pretty little thing as you, can afford to lose something, but as for me, I must keep all the looks I have."

"I beg your pardon," said Wee Mouse, withdrawing hastily.

"So long as you are sorry, it's all right," said the Spider. "Come in," and she politely made room for him.

Wee Mouse wanted to know if the Spider really thought him pretty, so he said, "As you were saying—"

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“I finished what I had to say,” replied the Spider. “Sympathy always makes one feel better; therefore, I said, ‘If you are sorry, it is all right.’”

“Perhaps it was before that,” he said.

“No,” replied Spider, “I said all I had to say before that about your looks and my looks.”

So, after all, Wee Mouse was obliged to say plainly what he meant.

“Do you like my looks?”

“I do,” answered the Spider.

“I don’t,” declared Wee Mouse. “I’ve determined to be a Butterfly.”

The Spider was quite taken aback and blurted out, “You will make the finest kind of a Mouse, but a sad Butterfly you’ll be.”

Wee Mouse scrambled from beneath the leaf. “Thank you for your hospitality,” said he, “but in order to think, I must be alone.”

THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY

Then he ran and ran till he came to a lonesome place in a forest, on the high bank of a broad river.

“Here no one will disturb me,” he began, thinking aloud.

“Who is this that dares come before my Becomers?” interrupted a small but determined voice.

Wee Mouse looked about, but seeing no one remained silent.

“Who are you, I say?” repeated the voice. “Fold fore-paws behind you and tell the truth.”

Again Wee Mouse looked but could see no one.

“You’ll have to do all I say before you see me,” continued the voice. “Now fold fore-paws behind you, tell the truth, and toe the mark.”

Wee Mouse seeing the mark in front of him, placed toes upon it, folded fore-

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paws behind his back, and truthfully said, "I am Wee Mouse."

"Look behind you," said the voice, "but don't turn your head."

"Who ever heard of a person's looking behind him without turning his head?" thought Wee Mouse, and he remained motionless.

"Do you give up?" said the voice.

"No," cried Wee Mouse. Thereupon, bending his head without turning it, he looked between his legs and saw a great flabby Toad in the same ridiculous position looking at him.

"Now," said the great flabby Toad, "having seen yourself as others see you, the conceit must be out of you, so we can talk sense. Stand up, and I'll take you to see the Becomers."

Wee Mouse quickly obeyed, and the Toad having led him five steps north,

THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY

five steps east, five steps south, and five steps west, cried, "We're there; come forward, Becomers!"

From behind the tree trunks came a Rabbit, who was becoming a jerky jumper; a Woodchuck, who was becoming a handy holer; a Snake who was becoming a twining twister.

"There were many more," explained the Toad, "but they've all become what they should be; it's now late in the season."

Wee Mouse hugged his tail for joy. "I have run to the very place where I shall learn to fly," he said.

The Toad looked at him curiously, saying, "The sun seems to have affected your head. You wish to become a gnawer, I think."

"No, indeed," replied Wee Mouse. "I wish to become a Butterfly."

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“ Wee Mouse hugged his tail for joy ”

“ I was never contradicted before,”
said the Toad. “ Therefore to cut the
matter short, and to punish you as you
deserve, you *shall* become a Butter-
fly. Not being a Caterpillar to begin
with — ”

THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY

“Ugh, nasty things!” shuddered Wee Mouse.

“You cannot be a Caterpillar Butterfly,” went on the Toad, “but will have to be a Mouse-Butterfly.”

Wee Mouse remembered what the Spider had said about his good looks, and thought himself about to become a most lovely creature.

“If,” said he, “such an odious worm as a Caterpillar makes a fine Butterfly, what a wonderful Butterfly shall I be!”

“All Becomers follow directions precisely,” said the Toad.

“I will,” promised Wee Mouse.

The Toad then instructed him how to begin, and at the end of five days all was over.

The first day he ate India rubber, which made his skin elastic.

The second day he ate feathers, which made him light.

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The third day he ate sand which gave him courage for the fourth day, when all the other Becomers stretched and pulled, and pulled and stretched his sides till the skin of them stood out like great sails.

But with all the rubber, feathers, sand, and wings, he could not fly.

The fifth day the animals with great labor dragged him to the very edge of the river bank, which was forty feet high.

Here they hung him head down, directly over the water.

Said the Toad, "When he looks into the water and sees himself, I can assure you he will let go his hold; then he must fly or drown, and he will fly."

All happened as predicted. The unfortunate Wee Mouse on looking into the water and seeing himself, let go his hold. When he found himself falling, falling, he spread his skinny wings and away he

THE MOUSE-BUTTERFLY

went, across the wide river, then back again to the Toad, crying in disgust, "Do you call this becoming a Butterfly?"

"A Mouse-Butterfly," corrected the Toad. "Did not the Spider tell you, you would make a fine Mouse but a poor Butterfly?"

The Toad, as you may have heard, has a wonderful jewel in his head, which reflects the things that have happened and are going to happen to any one whose head-shadow falls on it, and Wee Mouse's head-shadow fell on this Toad's jewel, when he looked behind him without turning his head.

"I know, I know what it means now," wailed Mouse-Butterfly.

The look on the Toad's face was stern and relentless, and the Mouse-Butterfly, knowing that what he had become he

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

would have to remain, beat himself against trees and everything that came in his way, making such a bat of himself, that the animals voted "Bat" should be his name.

Then he hung himself head down for shame, from the limb of a tree, crying, "Thus will I hang by day; by night only will I fly."

And thus he did.



THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT



THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

“Learn what you can at home before travelling in search of new things”



IN the hollow of a live oak tree dwelt Mother Squirrel and her one son, Wanderfoot. “Great things this son of mine will do!” the mother was wont to say, as she watched the young one playing with the shining leaves of his Home Tree. “Great things indeed! my soft, gray-coated darling, with eyes bright as the Glow Worm’s light!”

Sometimes she sighed, because little Wanderfoot was all for travelling to see

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

the world, but she would console herself by saying, "Some day I will take him to Its Reverence. It will not approve of travel, and no one dares scorn *Its* advice."

Then she would call Wanderfoot to her and see his lessons, for since she was not bothered by a lot of young ones, as was the case with poor scraggy-tailed Mehitable Woodchuck, at the foot of the tree, she gave nearly all her time to her son's education.

When she saw that he knew how to hunch himself, how to bite off the top of a nut, how to balance, and how to sail in the air when he lost his balance, she said, "Now we will comb our tails for a visit to Its Reverence."

Wanderfoot, in spite of all his mother's training, was spoiled. Instead of at once combing his tail he let it hang quite limp,

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

in a most unbecoming fashion, and said, "Who is Its Reverence?"

At this question, his mother gave frightened glances to North, South, East, and West, to the sky and to the earth, for Its Reverence had the power of being invisible and of being visible whenever It wished to be, and at any moment one might see It at one's elbow, or It might be there and one might not see It.

"Far be it from me to say who It is, or to speak of the time and place It may be seen," whispered Squirrel Mother in such an odd manner that Squirrel Son combed his tail and perked his ears in haste, and was ready as soon as his mother.

Then they set off in the late afternoon, skipping from bough to bough, — now high, where cool green shadows hid them, now low, through the yellow light of the setting sun.

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

Squirrel Son was enjoying the journey so greatly that he had forgotten whither they were bound, when suddenly they came to an opening in the forest, where long grass grew about a still clear pool.

On the far margin of the pool stood one giant ash tree. Through the long grass to the foot of the ash tree ran Squirrel Mother, and Squirrel Son ran after her, reaching the tree just as a hedgehog raced round the pool crying:

“Sunlight pale,
Ere thou fail,
For one minute
Be It in it.
Then let night
Have Its sight.”

As the charm began, Squirrel Mother fell to earth and pulled Squirrel Son down beside her, mumbling, “My Son,

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

Reverence, Reverence, my Son, my Son, Reverence. Reverence, my Son," thus she might have gone on for the whole of the minute, if Its Reverence had cared to hear her, which It did not, so It said:

"Time to rise."

Then they arose and stood face to face with a Shape, having plumage the color of poke berries, a bright purple beak, and for eyes, nothing but white mist.

"What's wanted?" asked It, and Its voice sounded as if It inside the Shape was all mist, as It truly was.

"My Son is to do great things," stammered trembling Squirrel Mother, "and I hoped you would teach him the way to begin — because —"

"Because," broke in Squirrel Son, "I ought to travel and see things, but I don't know where to travel and you are to tell me."

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

“That’s not—” began the Mother, but It raised one claw ever so little, and she was silent, while It said:

“In the day I am in Shape or out of Shape, as I please; and whether I’m in Shape or out of Shape, you see me, or you don’t see me, as I please. Therefore I see many things.”

“Fifteen seconds,” called the Hedgehog.

“I must be brief,” said It hurriedly, Its voice growing more misty every second. “Did you ever hear of the animals who travelled East and West?”

“No,” said both Squirrels.

“The beginning is, ‘It’s good to travel East and West—’”

“Time,” called the Hedgehog.

Again Squirrel Mother fell to earth and pulled Squirrel Son down beside her, for none live to look again who look once on the going out of It.



“ So It said: ‘ Time to rise ’ ”

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

“One, two,” the Hedgehog began, and he counted and counted to one hundred. Then the Squirrels arose. Not a creature was visible. The pool was shrouded in mist.

Though she had seen It many times, in Shape and out of Shape, Squirrel Mother shook with fear. Though he had seen It in Shape but once, Squirrel Son was undaunted.

“I’d like to know what else It was going to say,” said he, “but as I can’t know before to-morrow night, and since I know in what directions I’m to travel, I may as well set out.”

His mother looked at him sadly, but he said to himself: “She will not miss me after to-morrow morning and perhaps she will not miss me then if I sing the morning song,” so he sang,

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

“Run, merry woodfolk, up and run,
Animals’ day has just begun,
Do what your clan ne’er did before,
Search the whole world for woodfolks’
lore —”

“That is not correct,” cried distracted Squirrel Mother, and she sang:

“Wake, merry woodfolk, mind the word,
Given each morn by wakening Bird.
Do what your clan has always done,
Learn of Home Woods, every Wood-
land son.”

“My song was certainly more sensible,” said Wanderfoot. Then he kissed his mother and ran off eastward through the dark, creepy woods, saying with self-importance, “It will not take me long at this rate to reach the place where the sun rises.”

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT



“Wanderfoot ran against a tree trunk”

“That it will not,” creaked a voice in the sky, with such an awful creak that Wanderfoot, filled with terror, ran against

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

a tree trunk. Then a sharp something seized him by the top of the head and the next instant he found himself inside a hollow tree, with a pile of nuts in one corner, while his cousin, Chipmunk, was scolding like rattling pebbles at two stars before the door of his cell.

“They are Owl’s eyes,” explained Chip to Wanderfoot. “His head is too big to go through the door.”

Soon the stars disappeared, and as they sat comfortably over the pile of nuts, Wanderfoot told Chip all that had happened that day. Then they both fell asleep and slept till awakened by the Call-Bird.

After eating some nuts, Wanderfoot kissed Chip and ran off toward the East, crying joyously, “Ah, how like the wind I run! I will keep up this pace till mid-day; by that time I may be where I can see something worth seeing.”

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

Long before midday his wits had become so jumbled by the rate at which he travelled that he could n't recall his own name. This frightened him to such an extent that he stopped to think. "For if I don't know my own name, nobody else will know it," he said.

When he was rested, the name came back to him, and as he was crying "Wanderfoot!" many times, so that he should not again forget, he saw beneath him a cosey nest of yawning young robins, whose mother was softly singing to them, and her song was something like this:

"Some beasties journey evermore;

Strange nests or holes they seek each
day;

But, would you know true woodland lore,
Your Home-Wood laws you must
obey."

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

“Little you know about the thing to do,” said Wanderfoot quite rudely to the Robin.

“True, O great Tail-bearer!” replied the Robin, with head on one side. “And hast thou cracked the nut that holds that knowledge?”

“I am on my way to do it,” said Wanderfoot, loftily, and off he went, springing from oak to chestnut, from chestnut to hickory, from hickory to beech, naming the trees as he flew from one to another, and naming himself also.

At midday he dropped into a clearing where there was a wheat-field, with little grains still very small and green and out of reach, but with stems right sweet and tender.

“Very fair for a luncheon,” said Wanderfoot, seizing a juicy shoot and happily munching and thinking of the great things he was soon to do.

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

Suddenly he started, for directly over his head a voice began to sing:

“When the known laws you have learned,
Woodland favor you have earned.
Then the unknown seek to find,
Give some new truth to your kind.”

“The Mouse who invented swinging nests made that, but first, O my pink-nosed Mouselings! he knew how to make the beautifullest ground nests ever seen,” said the voice.

By this time Wanderfoot had discovered a swinging nest in the waving stems above him. Seeing no one he addressed the nest:

“It’s a new law I am on my way to find. I know all the laws of my own woods.”

The smooth head of a Harvest Mouse appeared over the top of the nest.

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

“Do you indeed?” she said. “You don’t look as though you did, if you will pardon me for saying so.”

“I will see first whether you speak the truth,” said Wanderfoot. “Pray direct me to the nearest water.”

The Mouse did so, and off scampered Wanderfoot.

When he looked into the water he saw a sad sight. His bright eyes were dull with weariness, his whiskers limp from lack of nuts, his tail shockingly untidy, and his claws blunted to such a degree that he nearly lost hold of the bank.

“There is no need for me to return to the Mouse,” said he. “She knows that she spoke the truth, and therefore she knows she is pardoned; but I will not listen to what folk say henceforth.”

Being a beast of his word, he did not, but went on and on, day after day, trav-

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

elling East till he should see something worth seeing. Then he intended traveling West.

Sometimes he passed through big towns of the Human Folk, but oftener he journeyed alone through the beautiful woodland.

One cloudy morning, at that time of year when leaves are painted red and yellow, Wanderfoot said to himself while half asleep on the branch of a tall, dark hemlock tree, "I am so chilled and cramped I'll take a few eastward jumps before seeking breakfast."

"Hush! hush! hush!" commanded a great, soft, awful voice; and it kept on saying "Hush!" so threateningly that poor Wanderfoot shut his eyes and dared move neither hand nor foot from the branch of his hemlock tree, awaiting he knew not what. The long moments dragged on, while the awful voice ceased

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not to cry "Hush!" but nothing happened. At last Wanderfoot even ceased to fear so intensely, and opening his eyes cried, "I must jump or die!"

Then he looked eastward for his next foothold. But foothold there was none. The tall, dark hemlock tree stood on the very rim of the ocean, and the voice was the voice of the waves speaking to the pebbly shore.

"Oh! oh! oh!" cried the fearful little mite of a Squirrel, looking over the great, gray, tumbling water. "I'm at the end of the world, and there's no place to jump upon." Then, as a long wave ran toward his tree, he screamed, "The great water is eating the end of the world, but it shall not eat me!" and westward, westward he ran for his life.

When quite out of sound of the fearsome, unceasing voice, he crouched in

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

a deserted crow's nest, his scrawny tail pressed against his aching back, while a misty wind made the painted leaves dance about him till he grew giddy, and remembered that he had eaten no breakfast.

Down to the ground he wearily went, and after a tiresome search found a few checkerberries. As he was eating, forth from the wet bushes marched a very old Partridge, followed by ten half-grown birds.

The Old Partridge took her stand upon a stone directly in front of Wanderfoot, but, as she stood with her back toward him, she did not see him. The ten Young Birds formed a circle about her, but they did not notice Wanderfoot, as all eyes were upon the Old Partridge.

Said the Old Bird, "We will sing the 'Home Song of Wander Birds,' by Myself."

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

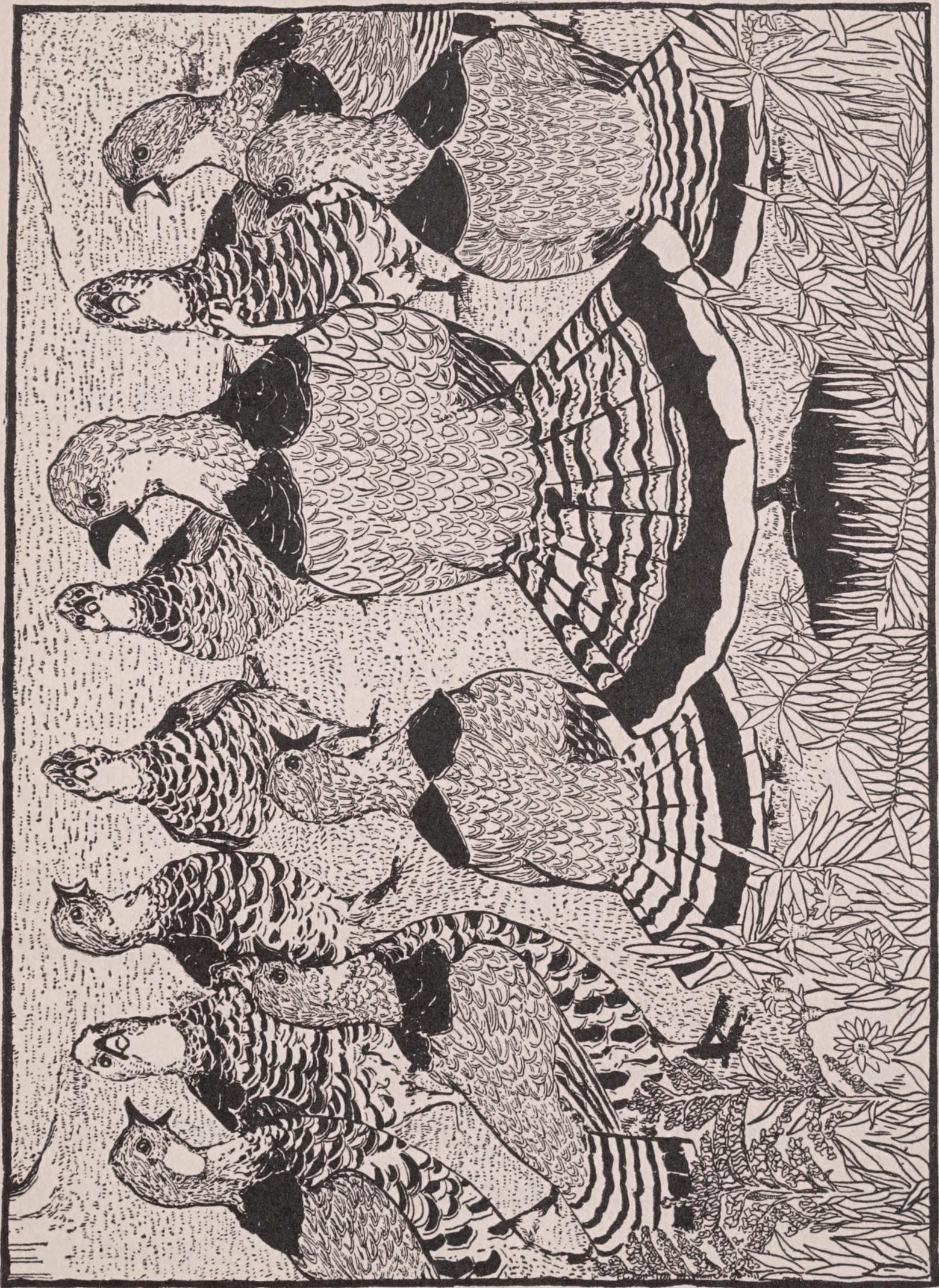
Wanderfoot wished to carry away a supply of the beautiful fragrant berries, and any voice was good after that of the lead-colored water, so though he had said he would listen to no more songs, he remained where he was, and as he busily packed his cheeks, looked at the singer and listened with all his ears.

First the Old Partridge raised her right claw and the ten Young Birds sang :

“In silly youth,
She journeyed far,
To find more things
Than things there are.”

The Old Partridge lowered her claw and sang alone in an old, cracked voice :

“But in my quest,
I had no rest,
My sight ’gan fail,
I lost my tail,



“The Old Partridge raised her right claw and the Young Birds sang”

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

My legs fell weak,
I dulled my beak,
Yet every mile
Was worth its while."

Up went the claw and the ten Young
Birds sang:|

"For well she learned
That every good
Is found for youth
In Native Wood."

As Wanderfoot listened to this song his hair stood on end for happiness, and with well-filled cheeks he backed into the bushes, saying softly to himself, "Some young things understand Home Songs from the beginning; but others, like the cracked-voiced Partridge and me, have to go to the end of the world to know what they mean."

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Then stretching his stiff, tired legs, he continued his journey. Westward, ever westward now he travelled; westward, ever westward, while the red and yellow leaves danced themselves thin and brown, and all animals were silent.

One day the half-frozen little beastie had only wintergreen leaves for food and he could get no water. The water of all brooks seemed turned to land, "That is, I suppose it's land," sighed Wanderfoot, "though it has the same feeling I have," for he was icy cold, and so stiff that he mournfully cried, "Perhaps I shall turn to such land," then off he went as fast as his stiff legs would allow.

In the afternoon the air was filled with a cold, white cloud dust, and as he stumbled along the black branches of the damp, leafless trees, he talked to himself, not knowing what he was saying,

THE TRAVELS *of* WANDERFOOT

nor why he cried, "The end of the world is turning me to land, then it will eat me too! too! too!"

The last "too" was faint as the echo of a sigh. With its utterance he tumbled into a hole where all was furry and warm, and he heard his own Mother say:

"'Tis time we beasts should sleep,
Your wisdom you must keep."

Then the weary Wanderfoot cuddled against his Mother's soft coat, deep in the still hollow of the old oak.

Outside, North Wind whistled down the night. On the marge of the pool stood the Shape, and It went forth a frosty cloud, hiding the pool, creeping through the wind-swept forest.

A waft of It trailed into the heart of the oak, and into the dreamland of

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Wanderfoot's sleep floated the council of It—the whole of the council.

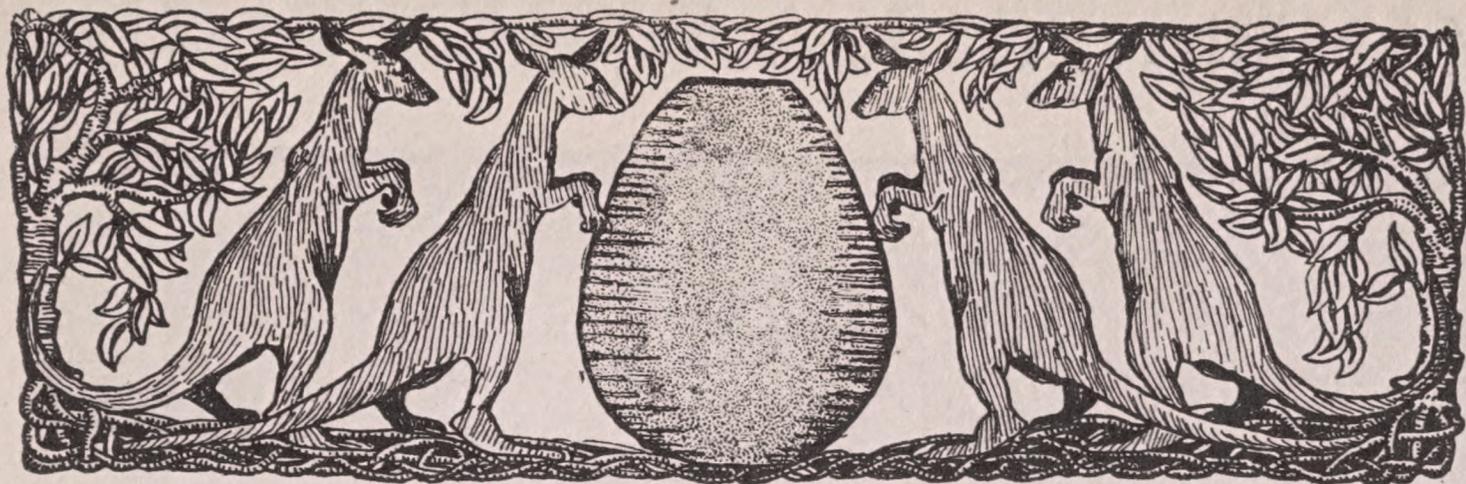
“It's good to travel East and West,
But after all a home is best ;

best till you know the best of it, and are trained for what's beyond.”

Then all was still, the mist trailed out, and happily slept the Squirrel in the sheltering oak.



WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE



WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE

*“ You cannot get another to do the work intended
for yourself ”*



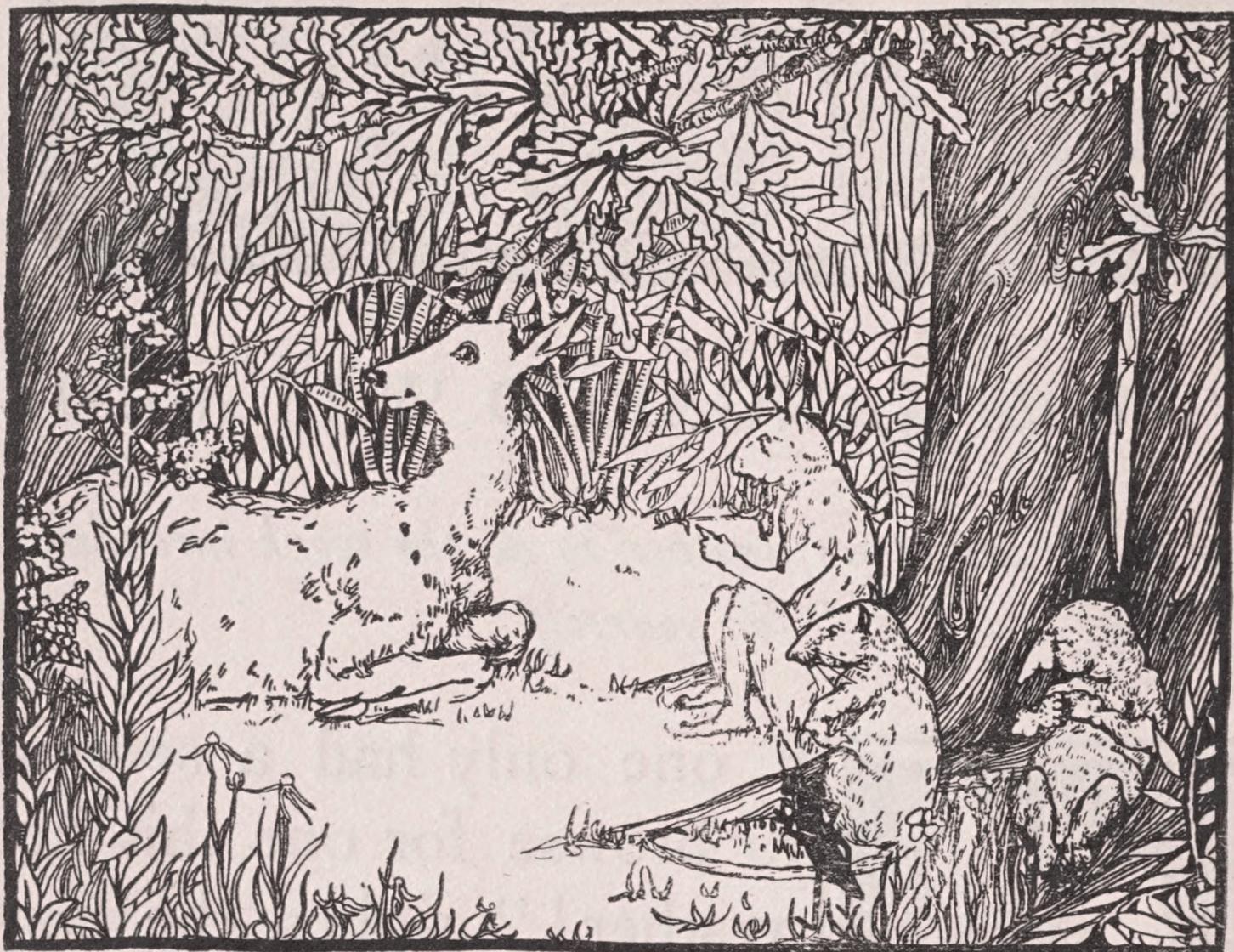
F one only had a servant to browse for one this hot weather ! ” sighed the lazy Fawn.

“ To scratch and gnaw for one ! ” growled the discontented Rat.

“ To wear one’s hot fur and to burrow for one ! ” drawled the sleepy Rabbit.

“ To hop for one ! ” shrilled the imitative Grasshopper, who could think of nothing else to say.

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“To wear one’s hot fur and to burrow for one!””

The Blind Mole, satisfied with his condition in life, whispered, “I prefer to mole for myself;” but he whispered so low that no one heard him, and directly he fell asleep.

The others also slept, even till the sun had burned itself out for the day.

WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE

Fawn being first to wake, touched Rabbit and said, "It's time some one was made."

"Yes, yes," answered Rabbit, one-fourth awake; and scratching the Rat, he repeated, "It's time some one was made."

Rat, one-half awake, poked Grasshopper and said the same thing.

Grasshopper, three-fourths awake, hopped upon the Mole's back and gave the sentence to him.

Though the Mole was wide awake, there was no one to whom he could speak. Probably if there had been some one he would have said nothing; he was such a slow-witted fellow.

Fawn waited till all were wide awake, then remarked: "To put a question to you: If we animals had not been made, we could not be, — could we?"

"Don't try to answer," she said, after a moment or two. "It's too deep for

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you. Therefore, to put another question: There's reason to suppose that if we animals were made, others can be made."

"That's not a question," said Rat; "it's a statement, but it sounds sensible."

"Suppose we find out if it is sensible," suggested Fawn. "I thought it out while you were asleep."

Here Rat, who was no respecter of persons, coughed.

"While you were asleep," repeated Fawn. "I didn't say I wasn't asleep also; one sometimes has wonderful thoughts while one is sleeping."

Judging by what was not said that the others agreed with her, Fawn declared, "We will prove the thing! Follow me!"

Then the others fell into line, Grasshopper leading Blind Mole, and followed to the River of the Magic Mud.

WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE



“The others followed to the River of the Magic Mud”

From the river bank Fawn dug a large piece of clay, and cleverly moulded it into a jar about five feet in height. In shape, it was as much like a sweet potato as anything.

She regarded the work with satisfaction, saying, “It is quite hollow.”

“Quite!” echoed the ready Rabbit.

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“One might think I had been in the business all my life,” commented Fawn, “yet this is my first attempt.”

Sly Rat thrust his tongue into his cheek and winked at Grasshopper, but said nothing.

“Now, old Mole,” ordered Fawn, “take some clay and make a head like mine for that shape.”

“I cannot see,” murmured Blind Mole.

Fawn, who had received a fair education, wept over the ignorant state of Blind Mole, and said, when her tears allowed, “Nowadays the artists do not make things as they see things, but as they feel things.”

Fawn then commanded Rat to place a lump of clay before Blind Mole, and straightway posed for the head.

When the head was formed Rat posed for the fore legs, and Grasshopper for the

WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE

hind legs. Next, Rabbit gave some hairs from his coat to be planted upon the Thing. As for a tail, Mole invented one, and then stepped modestly aside.

Now these six pieces lay upon the ground — one head, one tail, two fore legs, two hind legs.

First, Fawn raised the head and fitted it neatly to the top of the jar. After that, she made five holes in proper places, for the legs and tail, which she inserted with admirable skill.

In the meanwhile, Rabbit, Rat, and Grasshopper were looking on, well-nigh breathless from astonishment and expectation.

When the Thing was completed to her satisfaction, Fawn backed a few steps, stood as erect as possible, raised her eyes to the moon, and said:

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

“Night past,
Lie fast;
Beam bright,
Life light;
Eyes show;
Hair grow;
Mouth eat;
Day greet.”

At that moment the last moonbeam ran into daylight. The Thing gave a sigh, its eyes opened, its hair began to grow, its forefeet began to scratch, its hind feet began to hop, and its mouth began to eat.

Fawn laughed for pure joy at the success of the undertaking, but the other animals, that is, the three who could see, fell face down upon the earth and “Kang!” cried the fear-stricken Rat.

“Gar!” shrieked the trembling Rabbit.

WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE



“The Thing completed, Fawn backed a few steps”

“Roo!” shrilled the quivering Grasshopper.

“Oo!” echoed the unseeing but feeling Mole.

“Good!” commented Fawn, “you have named the Thing, Kangaroo.”

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Hearing Fawn's cheerful voice the three arose, and Rat, who was the first to recover self-possession, said, "We thought that would be a good name."

"I could not have chosen a better one myself," said Fawn. "Now let us to the wood ere the sun's fire burn us, and follow! you, Kangaroo!" she added, in the tone of voice such creatures use toward inferiors.

The Kangaroo did not seem to resent the tone.

"Why should he?" said Grasshopper to Mole, who mildly objected to Fawn's manner.

"Be what may," was Blind Mole's answer, "I shall mole for myself."

"Mole ahead, Old Stupid!" said Fawn, as she entered the wood and lay down in the shade. "Now browse, Kangaroo!"

WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE

Thereupon the Kangaroo browsed and browsed beyond the wildest expectations.

Tons of hay seemed required to fill its hollow inside.

“Gnaw and scratch!” ordered Rat.

And the Kangaroo gnawed the very toughest stems, such as blueberry bush and sassafras, and then scratched up the roots.

“Hop!” ordered Grasshopper, and hippity hop went the great, awkward, amiable Kangaroo in search of more grass, blueberry bushes, and sassafras.

Rabbit thought he had the finest service, for Kangaroo wore his hot fur, whether anything was said or not.

All this time Mole was moling.

As the sun rose higher, Mole ceased moling and composed himself to sleep.

Grasshopper looked at him enviously. “It seems that to have the benefit of hopping, one must hop for oneself,” he

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

said, sadly regarding his legs, which were twitching from having remained still so long.

“It’s the same with gnawing and scratching,” sighed Rat, “my claws are limp and my jaws ache.”

Here Rabbit stretched himself and said to Rat and Grasshopper, “My fur coat weighs on me now, as it did formerly; and the Thing — the Kangaroo — is beginning to wear a look of intelligence, while we look fairly senseless sitting here with open mouths, twitching legs, aching jaws, and unaired coats.”

It was now Fawn’s turn to speak, but she looked weakly about her, and said nothing.

Mole peacefully slept; so peacefully, that Grasshopper tickled his ear with a straw. “What’s the matter?” mumbled the sleepy Mole.

“I want to hop! I want to gnaw!



“ They sent him sailing down the rolling stream ”

WHY *the* KANGAROO WAS MADE

I want to stop seeing some one else wear my coat for nothing," said Grasshopper, Rat, and Rabbit in concert.

"Hop, gnaw, and stop, then," advised Blind Mole, turning over.

"But," objected Rat, "this Kangaroo was made to do these things for us."

"Offer it for sale," proposed Mole and straightway he fell asleep.

Rabbit feebly moved to the spot where Kangaroo was browsing, and rapped him with a hind paw. "He is still sufficiently hollow to float," he announced. "Doubtless he could sail."

"Hurrah!" breathed Rat and Grasshopper with all the voice left them.

Fawn remained silent, but the other three were equal to the occasion. For, leading Kangaroo to the river bank from which he was made, they sent him sailing down the rolling stream, and for all the

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animals knew of him after that, he may have sailed to Australia.

Rabbit, Rat, and Grasshopper returned to Fawn and told her the whole affair.

Thereupon she fell to browsing in the hottest part of the day, and Rat gnawed, and Rabbit burrowed, while Grasshopper hopped as he had never hopped before; and these things they did till they fell asleep from weariness.

As for Blind Mole, he had slept long enough, so he awoke and fell to moling.



The DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE
DOG *and the* BRAVE BEETLE



The DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE
DOG *and the* BRAVE BEETLE

*“Do not search the world for the best people, but see
the best in the people about you”*



REAMEYE, the Prairie Dog, sat beneath a sagebrush staring at nothing.

It was the last day of school for him. He knew how to burrow, to flip brush, quiver and bark, to disappear presto in hole, and to keep out of the way of Owls and Rattlesnakes.

Now, while every other young Dog looked as spirited as a prairie-poppy when the wind blows, and while every other

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND



“Dreameye sat beneath a sage-brush”

young Dog was playing with every other young Dog, Dreameye sat quite alone.

After a time he stopped dreaming and staring at nothing, and began to watch the rest of the Dogs play.

“Silly things,” said he aloud. No one made any comment. Indeed there

DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE DOG

was no one near enough to hear him but Sageone the Beetle, who was saying to himself in a dull, singsong voice :

“If you cannot find what you want, you must become what you want to find ; then some one else will find what you want, which is the next best thing to finding it yourself.”

Dreameye gave no heed to the Beetle. “I should really like to find a suitable companion,” he said.

“Here I am ! I’ll be a companion !” said the Beetle, dropping squarely on the top of Dreameye’s head.

Dreameye regarded him no more than if he had not been.

“I’ve tried every single Dog in the whole town,” he said.

“I should think you might have,” murmured the Beetle.

“They’re not worth a mouldy nut,”

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went on Dreameye. “There’s something queer or horrid about every one of them.”

The Beetle gasped — he was a good-tempered Beetle —

“Wha —” he began, then shut his mouth with a snap and held on with all his might, for Dreameye jumped high in the air, came plump to the ground, and broke into a dead run, crying, “I’ll try some other folk.”

Over sage-brush and cacti, over lizards and centipedes they went, till they arrived at Deepwallow Place, where grew the greenest grass for fifty miles around, and where there was a circular Buffalo wallow filled with cool water.

At the edge of this place Dreameye stopped. The fact was he had to stop or go back, because hundreds and hundreds of Buffaloes were everywhere but behind him.

DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE DOG

The body of Sageone was dull with weariness. "But when once I've taken hold of a thing I stick to it," he said, in a voice between a shriek and a squeal.

Dreameye looked at the Buffaloes. Then he hopped over to the biggest Buffalo of all. "I am searching for a suitable companion," said he.

"Better choose some one your own size," laughed the Buffalo.

"It's the inside I'm thinking about; one can't judge of that by the outside," said Dreameye.

The Buffalo raised his head; Dreameye thought him about to reply — instead of that he gave a great snort of steam and fire, uttering the cry, "Wolves! O ye defenders of the weak, Wolves!"

At that, every other big, strong Buffalo raised his head, snorted steam and fire, and then pushed all the old Buffaloes,

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weak Buffaloes, young Buffaloes, small Buffaloes, lost-horned Buffaloes, and coward Buffaloes into a space about the size of a troll's ring.

Somehow or other Dreameye was in it, and to avoid being trampled to death, he jumped upon an old Buffalo's head and sat between his horns.

As for Sageone the Beetle, being brave by nature, he was now in a position where fear was impossible. Said he, "So long as I can see what's to be afraid of I know there's nothing to be afraid of; but if I can't see what's to be afraid of I'm apt to be afraid, because I don't know what the thing I'm afraid of is."

At that moment six hundred Wolves galloped up.

The Buffaloes were ready for them; the old ones, the weak ones, the young



“The buffalo raised his head”

DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE DOG

ones, the small ones, the lost-horned ones, the coward ones, Dreameye and Sageone, were quite surrounded by the great, strong, fearless Buffaloes; their sharp horns made a hedge against the wicked Wolves; their fiery eyes challenged them to come on; and from their nostrils, steam and fire went forth at such a rate that the coats of the Wolves were singed and their skins parboiled.

Dreameye saw it all, so did the Beetle.

“These Buffalo people are the kind of folk I like to know,” said Dreameye.

Sageone the Beetle cried, “Hurrah!” but no one seemed to hear him, his voice was so weak.

“Hurrah!” he cried again, and one coward Buffalo did hear him and take a little courage.

“More shall hear,” said the brave Beetle. “I, too, will help the protectors.

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

I will speak truth. I am not afraid. Hurrah! I will not white-lie, I am not afraid! Hurrah! I will not retreat an inch, and I will be heard! I am not afraid! Hurrah!”

Such an effort did he make that he was heard. The old ones, the weak ones, young ones, small ones, lost-horned ones, coward ones, and Dreameye, in spite of themselves, cried, “Hurrah! We are not afraid!”

At that signal, the defenders lowered their horns, charged the six hundred Wolves, and drove them off with their tails between their legs.

Before the cloud of dust caused by the battle had settled, the whole herd was grazing away on the greenest grass for fifty miles around.

Dreameye was preparing to descend to earth when the leader, that biggest

DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE DOG

and strongest of Buffaloes, stepped on one end of a hoop-weed, — straightway the other end sprang up and struck him.

Without waiting to see what had made the stroke, he gave a jump that pushed over several of his companions, and shook his great head and ran so fiercely that all the others shook their heads and ran after him.

Dreameye and Sageone, who had not left the back of the old Buffalo, were likewise in the stampede.

When the biggest and strongest of Buffaloes finally halted, and so gave the herd a chance to halt, they were in such a sandy country that Dreameye searched for twenty minutes after leaving the old Buffalo's back before he could find a spear of grass. Not a drop of water was to be seen.

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

“Here we are miles and miles from the greenest grass, for what reason nobody knows. It’s plain these Buffalo people are stupid — therefore, I’m off,” said Dreameye, beginning to run.

The Buffaloes were soon dots on the horizon to the fleeing pair; and they were but five minutes from the Rocky Mountains, when such a frightful whizzing was heard that Dreameye gave an unusual leap to the top of a high mound to avoid running into a big Rattlesnake.

The big Rattlesnake, at once perceiving Dreameye and even little Sageone, began to form with its body the letters R. S. V. P.

“Woe! Woe!” cried the Beetle. “Dreameye will not heed, and the Snake will write but three times.”

Feeling by chance very good natured, the Snake wrote slowly.

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As he was commencing the third time, Dreameye said, "What are you writing there?"

"Ahai, ahai me!" groaned the Beetle; "who ever addressed a great one so before?" and he cried with a voice which by practice was growing louder and louder:

"Sir Lordship, your Snakeship, deign to inform us lowly ones, what in thy wisdom thou writest?"

"Rattle Snake Very Poisonous," said the good-natured reptile. "I always do it before I speak poison — and when I'm good natured I do it three times," and that time he wrote the whole sentence with great flourishes, dotting the i and crossing both t's with the tip of his tail.

Dreameye had learned how to get out of the way of Rattlesnakes, and had it not been for his curiosity, he would have

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

done so before, but this was the first good-natured Snake he had seen.

Said he, "If he feels for me sufficiently to warn me, perchance I may persuade him to let me alone."

"Nothing can prevent my speaking," said the Snake, beginning to write the word "poisonous."

Dreameye then gathered himself into a ball and waited. The great Snake having carefully ended his last sentence with a neat period, made his whole body into a coil and threw himself at the place where Dreameye had been, for, as the Snake went up, Dreameye leaped over his head and beyond him plump to the ground, and ran for the Rocky Mountains.

Sageone managed to turn his head and this is the strange sight he saw :

The Snake in casting himself upwards was so surprised by the unexpected dis-

DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE DOG

appearance of Dreameye that he wobbled sidewise and stuck in the crotch of a dead tree. There he was still sticking when last seen by the good and brave Beetle, who said, "I hope it isn't a sin to wish that he may stick there forever."

Dreameye thought to himself that the Snake would have made a poorer companion than the Buffaloes. "It was bound to be a short acquaintance whatever I did," he said aloud.

"Those who associate with Snakes have to be Snakes or else wear armor," commented the Beetle. "That's how Turtles came to be, and the question is, is it worth while to be a Turtle or a Snake for such privileges?"

At that moment Dreameye ran bang into the Rocky Mountains. Straightway he began to climb one of them, and he climbed and climbed amid old gray crags

WANDERFOLK *in* WONDERLAND

and over dry beds of moss, where his little feet made a great rustling in the breathless silence of the mighty peak.

Half-way up the mountain they came upon two kids, who stood one on either side of a vine.

With a joyful bleat the kids saluted Dreameye and Sageone the Beetle, and pointing to the vine said, "We both saw it at the same time. Therefore, by Goat-Law, we can't eat unless it is divided exactly. Again, by Goat-Law, we can't give up till the matter is settled fairly, and we don't agree as to measurements."

"Give it to the Dog," said Sageone.

The Goats danced for joy. "We are free! It is settled!" they cried, placing the vine before Dreameye.

"I like you," said Dreameye. "If you can't play fairly, you won't play. Will you be my companions?"

DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE DOG

“That depends,” replied the Kids.
“Are your ancestors in the Zodiac?”

“No,” said Dreameye. “I think,” he added, with some hesitation, “most of them are in Snakes and Owls, and perhaps there are a few in Wolves and Foxes.”

“None of those,” replied the Kids, “are in our circle, and so companionship with us is impossible;” and they walked away.

The vine was tough, and Dreameye, when he had finished it, lay down to rest.

As he rested, recalling the day's adventures, he thought about the chivalrous but too stupid Buffaloes, the honorable but too cruel Snake, the generous but too proud Goats.

Sageone guessed what he was thinking about, therefore he said:

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“If you cannot find what you want, you must become what you want to find; then some one else will find what you want, which is the next thing to finding it yourself.”

Dreameye leaped up and for the first time addressed the Beetle: “O Beetle, learned and true,” said he, “the meaning of what you say is clear. Have I not found three things to copy to-day? Shall I not find three thousand such things in the Home Dogs? and with the things not worth copying I must not concern myself.”

The good Beetle was so rejoiced that he dropped to the ground and merrily performed a greel, the only dance Beetles can learn.

When the greel was ended, the Beetle again took his seat on the head of his friend, crying, “If you run as you

DISCONTENTED PRAIRIE DOG

never ran before, we may get home before sunset.”

Thereupon Dreameye ran as he had never run before, and they did get home before sunset, and were friends ever after.



AI *and the* THREE ARMADILLOS



AI and the THREE ARMADILLOS

“Do not force another to do things you want him to do, till you find out what he himself wants to do”



BENEATH a rubber tree quite stripped of leaves, a Three-toed Sloth lay on his back kicking feebly. Near him stood three sleepy young Armadillos trying to rub open their eyes.

“It isn’t time to wake,” said One Eye, so called because he had but one eye.

“It must be, or we should n’t have been called upon,” said One Ear, so called because he had but one ear.

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“Who called upon us?” said No Tail, so called because he had no tail.

“Ai! ai! ai!” moaned the struggling Three-toed Sloth.

“Who’s that?” fearfully questioned the three Armadillos.

“Ai! ai! ai!” repeated Sloth.

By this time the Armadillos were wide enough awake to see him.

“Did you dare to call upon us before sunset?” asked No Tail walking over to him.

“Ai! ai! ai!” cried Sloth.

“Yes, you, you, you,” replied No Tail; “now stop crying and answer sensibly.”

“I never called upon any one; the leaves were gone, so I had to drop.”

“Drop what?” asked One Ear.

“Myself,” answered Sloth.

AI and the THREE ARMADILLOS

“Can you not set me on my feet and lead me to a tree that has leaves?”

“Do you mean to say that you live in trees as monkeys do?” asked No Tail scornfully.

“Yes,” said Sloth. “I pray you turn me over, for my back is being cruelly scratched.”

“That’s because you live in trees,” said No Tail, ignoring Sloth’s request. “Now what’s your name?”

“Turn me over,” groaned Sloth.

“Turnmeover! a most disagreeable name!” commented No Tail. “No music in it. How old are you?”

“Oh, oh, oh,” sighed Sloth, “this is too bad!”

“Two bad years old,” said No Tail. “What have you studied?”

“Ai! ai! ai!” lamented poor Sloth.

“Disgusting!” snapped No Tail,

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“he ’s studied himself only! the uninteresting beast!”

Here Sloth succeeded in turning over, and began to hook himself clumsily along on his three-toed feet.

The three Armadillos looked at one another.

“Shall we take him?” asked One Eye.

“He won’t pay,” objected One Ear.

“We might make him an example of what we can do. Then we shall get pay pupils,” suggested No Tail.

“That’s so,” agreed One Ear and One Eye. “We’ll take him.”

Poor Sloth with painful labor, which caused him sadly to cry, had reached the foot of a leafy tree and was preparing to climb when No Tail laid a paw on his shoulder.

“We’ll take you,” said he.

AI and the THREE ARMADILLOS



“So they carried him”

“Too late;” replied Sloth, “I’ve taken myself.”

“You don’t know how to take yourself,” said No Tail. “We’ve had the luck to overtake you just in time, and, I trust, it’s just in time we undertake you, but first we must take you under.”

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Thereupon No Tail seized Sloth's hind legs, One Eye his forelegs, while One Ear supported his head. So they carried him till they came to a sign-board with the hand pointing down.

On the sign-board were these words :

PRIVATE SCHOOL

Open Evenings

CLASSES IN ROOTING, BURROWING, AND BALLING

The hand pointed to a small opening in the ground, toward which the three Armadillos made with their burden.

“Put his head in first,” commanded No Tail.

One Ear crammed Sloth's round, furry head into the opening.

“Now, in with his shoulders!” said No Tail to One Eye; so One Ear and One Eye pushed, and shoved, and

AI and the THREE ARMADILLOS

grunted, but Sloth's shoulders would not go through. Finally they had to pull him quite out, for they dared not leave him, to fetch help, since, with the hand pointing at him, he was a disgrace to the school.

“You sit on his chest,” said No Tail to One Eye, “while I talk reason into him. We'll have to begin his lessons in the open air.”

So One Eye sat upon Sloth's chest, while No Tail thrust his left paw into the breastplates of his armor and began:

“Do you agree to be taught? Say yes, or you'll have to be sat on hard.”

“Yes,” gasped poor Sloth.

“Sit easy then,” said No Tail to One Eye, so One Eye sat easy.

“We pity your condition in life,” went on No Tail. “By the way, what is your condition?”

“My what?” said Sloth.

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“Your condition. Why you ’re so badly off.”

“Because I came to the last tree on my line, and ’t was no use to go back, since I’d eaten all the leaves of those trees, and there were no others near, so I dropped; and I’d just hooked myself to a tree with both leaves and flowers, and in one moment I’d have been all right, if—”

“Sit hard!” cried No Tail.

So One Eye sat the breath out of Sloth and stopped his explanation.

“If—” said No Tail scornfully. “Yes, if you learn what we teach you, you’ll be all right. You’ll be what an animal ought to be. You’ll be something worth while. In short, you’ll be like us.”

“The sun has set,” cried One Ear. “Now for object lessons! You take him first, One Eye.”



"So One Eye sat the breath out of Slotb and stopped his explanation"

AI and the THREE ARMADILLOS

So One Eye arose from Sloth's chest and said, "You promised to be taught."

"Yes," agreed Sloth.

"We will begin with rooting," said One Eye. "I suppose you're hungry."

"I should think so!" cried Sloth, turning over with a great effort.

"Then do as I do," commanded One Eye, scratching up a root three yards long in the twinkling of his one eye.

"I cannot see what you do, it's so dark," objected Sloth, who had day eyes.

The night-eyed Armadillos thought, or pretended to think, it was because he didn't trouble himself to look.

"I never knew what it really meant to see till I lost my left eye," said One Eye. "Perhaps if we give you the right kind of a chance you'll learn," and he seized the root and wound it round and round poor Sloth's head, over his left eye;

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but it made no difference, he could n't root.

One Eye said he would n't, and challenged One Ear to teach him.



““I suppose you'd like to have a home," said One Ear”

“I suppose you'd like to have a home," said One Ear.

Sloth wept joyfully at the word.

“Such a home as this," added One Ear pointing to the school burrow.

AI and the THREE ARMADILLOS

“Alas, no!” murmured Sloth.

“You said you’d be taught,” said One Ear.

“Yes,” agreed truthful Sloth.

“Then do as I do,” said One Ear, making the earth fly up till the newly risen moon was hidden, and when One Ear spoke again his voice seemed to come from the centre of the earth.

Soon he came forth from his burrow and said, “You heard where my voice came from; now burrow yourself in as deep as that.”

Burrow! Sloth could as easily have jumped out of his skin.

“He does n’t listen to instructions,” cried One Ear in a rage, on seeing that Sloth made no attempt to burrow.

“You never knew the value of hearing till you lost your left ear,” suggested One Eye.

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“That’s true,” said One Ear, and he made a neat grass ball and stuffed it into Sloth’s left ear.

Still Sloth could n’t burrow. One Ear said he would n’t, and challenged No Tail to teach him to ball.

“He has no tail, so I shall have no trouble; for it’s easy as easy can be to ball when you’ve no tail,” and No Tail balled himself till he looked like a Christmas pudding.

Then he unballed himself and told Sloth to do the same thing.

But Sloth’s efforts were so ridiculous that No Tail, thinking he was purposely mocking, was actually rude enough to stick a claw into him, at which poor Sloth uttered so loud and piteous a cry that the Tapir, who was Superintendent of Schools, came galloping down to the Evening School and said, “What’s here?”

AI and the THREE ARMADILLOS

“A disgrace,” replied the Armadillos, all speaking together.

“Pupil’s disgrace or teacher’s disgrace?”

“Pupil’s disgrace!” hissed the three.

“Let’s hear about it,” said the Tapir.

“He won’t be taught,” replied the three.

“Who is he?” asked the Tapir.

“Turnmeover.”

“What did he do before he came to this School?”

“Hn?” said the Armadillos.

The Tapir repeated his question, surprised from his snout to the tip of his tail to hear teachers say, “Hn.”

“He did tell us something about his condition,” said No Tail, “but we don’t remember what it was. It is n’t necessary to think of what he has been.”

“That is a worse saying than ‘hn,’” said the Tapir, who was the biggest Tapir in

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the woods, and Superintendent of every School in them.

Then he examined Sloth himself.

“You wretched teachers,” he said when he had finished, “why do you try to teach rooting, burrowing, and balling to an animal whose special business in life is to run upside down along the branches of trees? To eat leaves, and so to let light into the forests? What use are rooting, burrowing, and balling to a tree beast? Idiots!”

The Armadillos hung their heads.

“I suppose you’d be very well satisfied to have the whole forest peopled with rooting, burrowing, balling, one-eyed, one-eared, no-tailed Armadillos?” continued the Tapir.

The moon was now shining as bright as day. By its light the Tapir tore the bandage from Sloth’s eye, pulled the grass

AI and the **THREE ARMADILLOS**
from his ear, smoothed his fur, and lifted
him into the nearest leafy tree.

Then he turned once more to the
Armadillos, but they were gone. They
had had enough teaching for one night.



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