

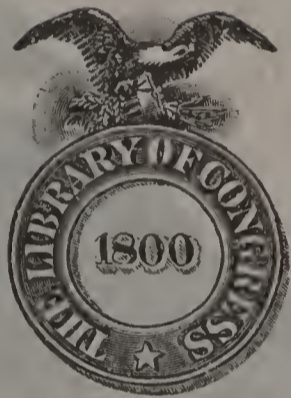
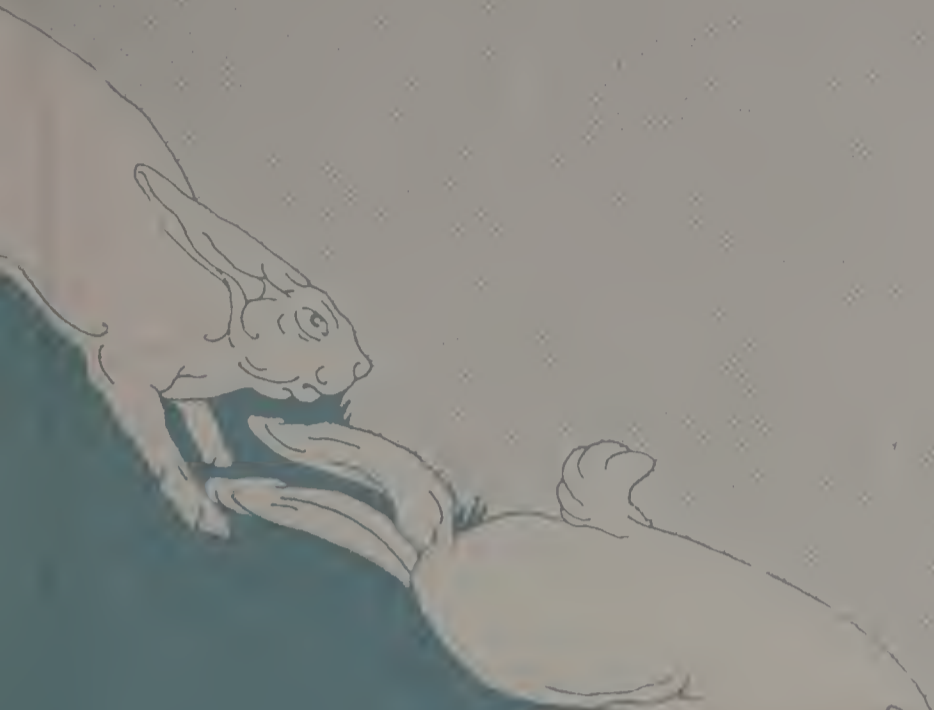
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THE PEACOCK AND THE WISHING-FAIRY

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By
CORINNE INGRAHAM

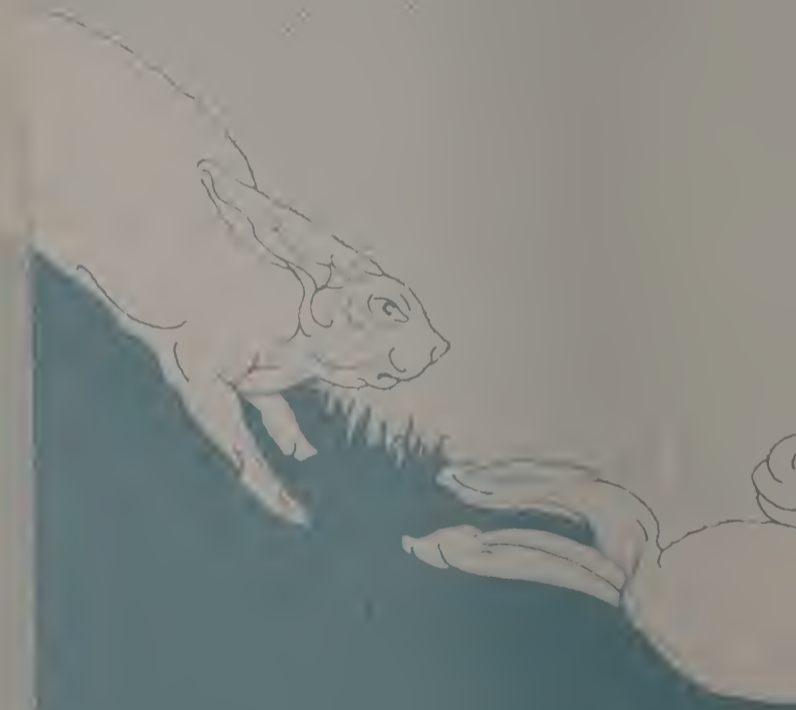


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THE PEACOCK AND THE WISHING-FAIRY



"I am going to punish you for never being satisfied:
for always asking for more"

THE PEACOCK
AND THE
WISHING-FAIRY
AND OTHER STORIES

BY
CORINNE INGRAHAM
["CORINNE"]

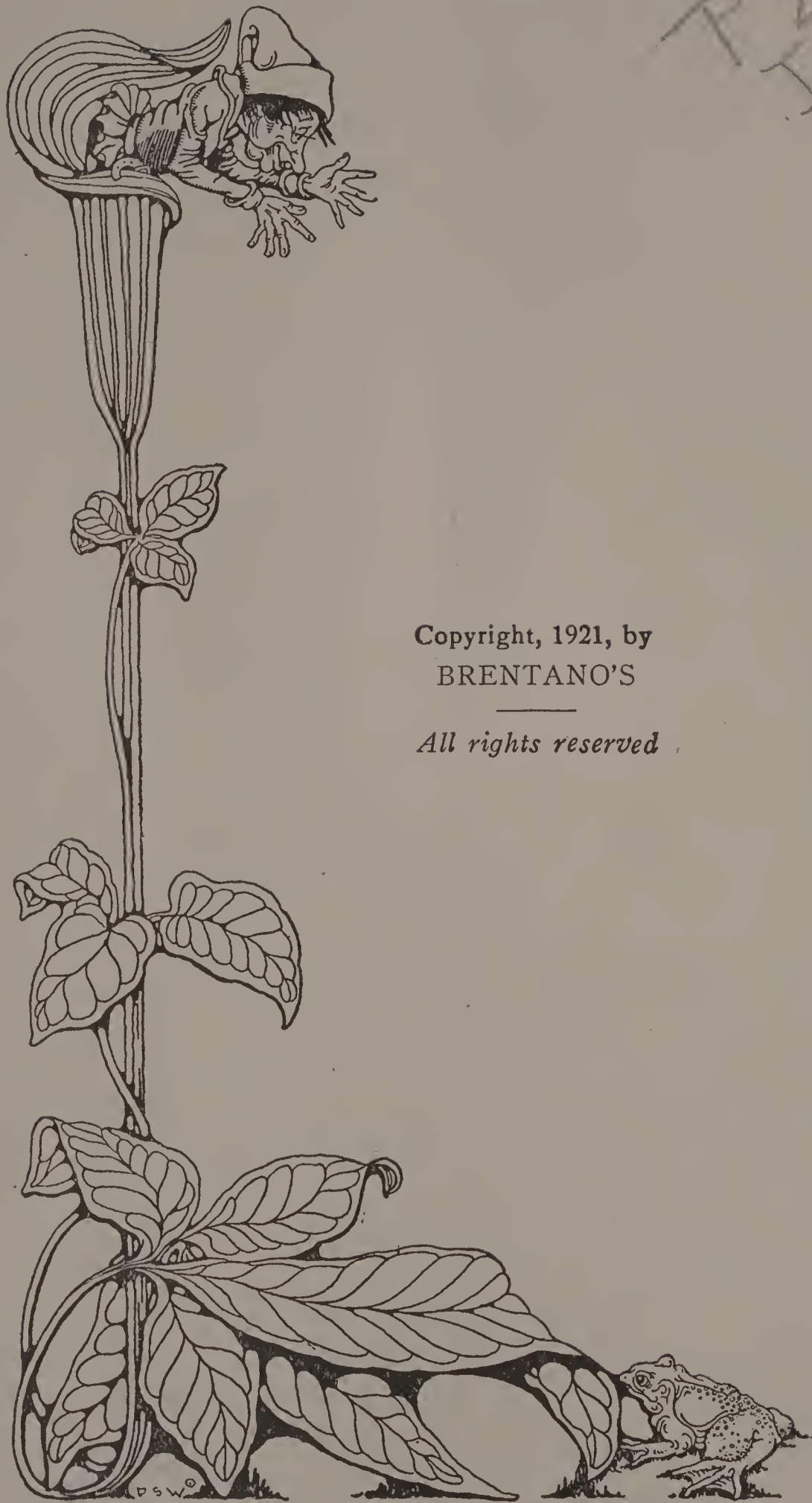
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
DUGALD STEWART WALKER



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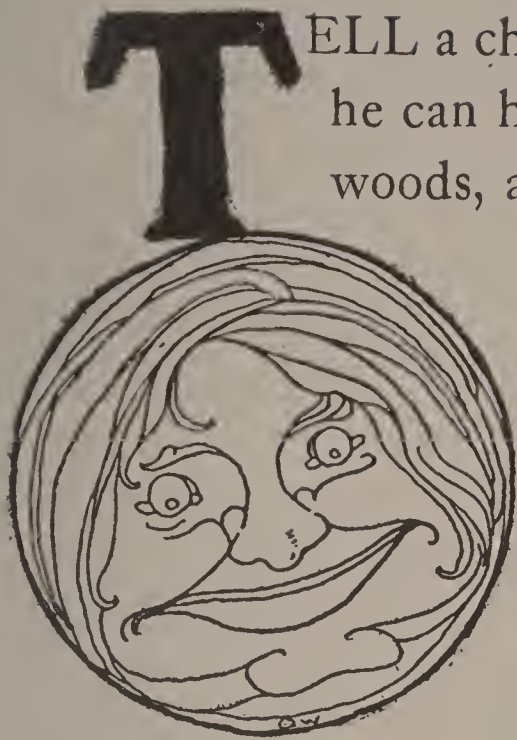
OCT 28 '21

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To
MY CHILDREN
CORINNE AND PHOENIX
TO WHOM THESE LITTLE
STORIES WERE FIRST TOLD



FOREWORD



TELL a child stories of legends and of fairies, so that he can hear the music of the little creatures of the woods, and can sense the throbbing of the flowers' hearts; and you will have given him something that will tint his whole life with beauty—a beauty which sordid details of the world can not smother.

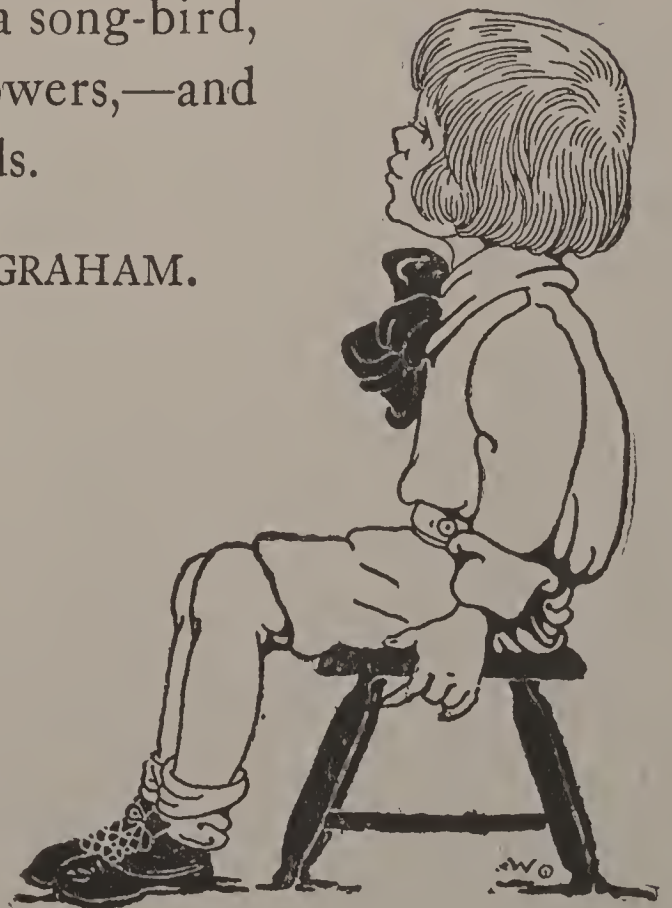
The young mind should early be impregnated with the poetry of nature; for without doubt the impressions of babyhood remain the most poignant of life.

It is my conviction that only by constant repetition in the simple and direct wording familiar to a child can big underlying truths be accentuated in his forming mind.

With this in view I have tried in the following sketches to establish a certain animal fellowship, including a moral significance which the little one will unconsciously accept.

I should like to see in every nursery a song-bird, a bowl of fish and a pot of growing flowers,—and without, the wide, wild fields and woods.

CORRINNE INGRAHAM.



THE PEACOCK AND THE WISHING-FAIRY



IX

THE PEACOCK WHO WANTED TOO MUCH



ONCE upon a time, very long ago, the Peacock was walking around in the grass looking for something to eat, when suddenly he saw the Squirrel.

The Peacock and the Squirrel were great friends, so he walked over to the Squirrel, and the first thing he said was:

“Won’t you please tell me how you happen to have that beautiful bushy tail? You used to have a tail like your cousin the Rat’s.”

“Of course I’ll tell you,” answer the Squirrel. “It happened this way. I had heard from Cottontail, and from several other friends of mine, that far off at the End-of-the-earth there lives a Wishing-Fairy whose name is Stella,

THE PEACOCK WHO WANTED TOO MUCH

and that if any one goes to her and tells her what he wants, she makes his wish come true. You know how often I had been unhappy because my back was always cold. So I went to see Stella and told her that I wished there was some way to keep my back nice and warm, and she gave me this bushy tail, so that *now* I am very comfortable."

"What is Stella like?" asked the Peacock.

"She is perfectly beautiful," the Squirrel answered. "She is the prettiest thing I have ever seen."

"It must be wonderful to be so lovely," the Peacock said; "I wish I were."

"Well," laughed the Squirrel, "that is easy; all you have to do is to go to her

and tell her that you wish it, and she will make you beautiful."

"Do you really think she will?" asked the Peacock.

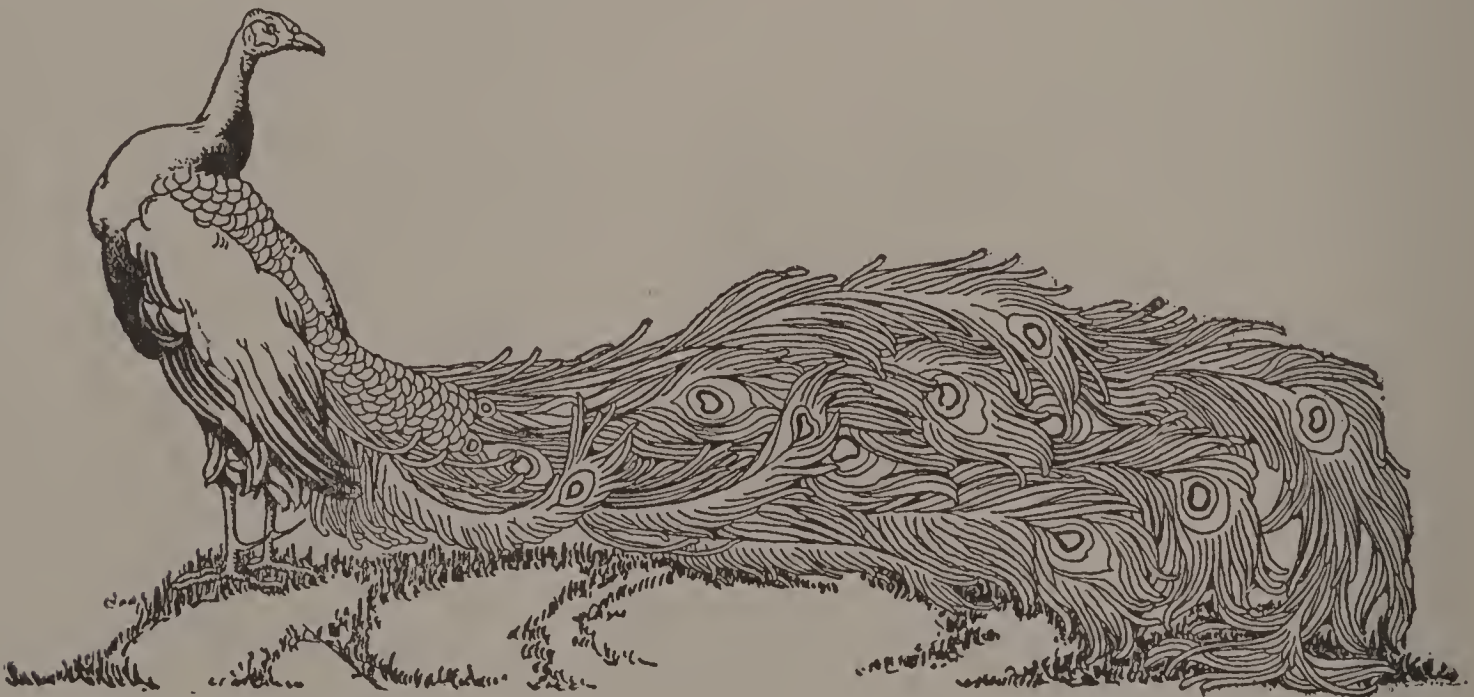
"I know she will," answered the Squirrel. "Why don't you start now? You go over that way" (and the Squirrel pointed with one of his paws) "and don't stop until you come to the End-of-the-earth. It is a long way and you are very lazy; but you will find her if you keep straight on and don't stop or turn back."

The Peacock thought a minute. "Yes, I'll go. I'll start now." And he did.



THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

It took him a long while to reach Stella and her lovely lily-house, and he was very tired and thirsty; so that he was glad to drink out of the Get-little-pool, when one of the Brownies asked him to do so. He told Stella that he wanted to be beautiful. So Stella waved her wand with the tiny star on it around him, and suddenly he found that he had the most wonderful tail of eighteen long feathers, that trailed on the ground when he wanted it to, and that he could spread it out like a big fan back of him, when he wished to show it to any one. The Peacock was delighted, and he thanked Stella and went home.



All his friends thought that the Peacock's long feathers were lovely, and he was very proud and happy. He spent all his time spreading the feathers, so that he could show them to everybody.

THE PEACOCK WHO WANTED TOO MUCH

After he had been home a little while, he thought he would go back to see Stella again.

Stella was very surprised to see him, and she was even more surprised when he whispered in her ear that he had come back to her with the wish to be *still* more beautiful.

“Very well,” said Stella, “I will put all kinds of wonderful colors on your feathers.”

So she waved her wand three times around the Peacock, and all of a sudden his feathers became the most beautiful he had ever seen, and he was so happy and excited that he forgot to drink out of the Get-big-pool after he had thanked Stella and told her good-by.

When he had gone and was already quite a ways home, he suddenly remembered the Get-big-pool, and he went all the way back to it to drink out of it, so as to become as large as he had been before he had drunk out of the Get-little-pool.

The Peacock was very happy for some time, because every one would tell him how lovely he was; but after a while back he went *again* to see Stella. Again he begged her to make him even more beautiful.

Stella thought a minute, then she called the Brownies and asked them what they thought she could do for the Peacock.

They all sat around and thought and thought for several minutes, but they could not think how the Peacock could possibly be prettier. At last, one of them said to Stella:

“I have an idea. You have already put all the loveliest

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS



colors in his feathers. I don't see that there is anything more you can do but give him a little crown."

"That is a splendid idea," said Stella, smiling. "I shall do it." So she waved her wand three times around the Peacock's head. He had a very queer feeling in his head.

"What is on my head?" asked the Peacock. "I cannot see it! Oh! I wish I could see it! Have I a crown?"

"Yes," answered Stella, "and it is a lovely crown. I will tell you how you can see it. When you drink out of the Get-big-pool, bend as far as you can over it and look down. In the water you will be able to see the crown that I have given you. I hope that you will like it. Good-by."

THE PEACOCK WHO WANTED TOO MUCH

“Good-by, Stella; you have been very good to me. I thank you ever so much. I am very happy now.” And the Peacock hurried away to the Get-big-pool. He leaned away over the water, just as Stella had told him to, and he found that he could see himself just as well as you can see yourself in a mirror. He stayed there a long time looking at his crown and admiring himself.



He was very, *very* happy. At last he started home; but he did not stay there long, he went back AGAIN to see Stella.

She was very astonished to see him, because he had already come three times to the End-of-the-earth.

“What DO you want now?” Stella asked him.

The Peacock seemed a bit ashamed to answer, but at last he whispered, “I wish to be made still more beautiful.”

“What!” cried Stella, “do you mean to tell me that you are not yet satisfied? You have had three wishes—each time you

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

asked the same thing—to be made more beautiful. No wonder you are hanging your head. You *ought* to be ashamed of yourself. I am very angry, and what is more, I am going to punish you.” And she called all her Brownies to come quickly to her.

By this time the Peacock was very frightened. He begged Stella to forgive him, but she was awfully angry. The Peacock tried to run away, but Stella made the Brownies hold him, and then she told one of them to get her the “punishment powder.”

The Peacock was crying and crying and trying as hard as he could to get away from the Brownies who were holding him. He could not move.

“Please forgive me, Stella,” he cried; “please, please, please.”

“No,” she answered, “I am going to punish you for never being satisfied and for always asking for more.”

“What are you going to do to me?” sobbed the Peacock, as a Brownie handed Stella a nasty, old, brown toad-stool which was full of a dark powder that smelled awfully. “Oh! what are you going to do?”

“I am going to make you have such a hard loud voice that whenever you call or scream every one will want you to be quiet; and they will see that even though you are the most beautiful bird in the world, you have the ugliest voice. They will then know that *no* one can possibly have *everything*.”

THE PEACOCK WHO WANTED TOO MUCH

The Peacock was crying and crying while Stella threw the nasty punishment powder three times in his face.

“One,” she said and threw a little of the powder.

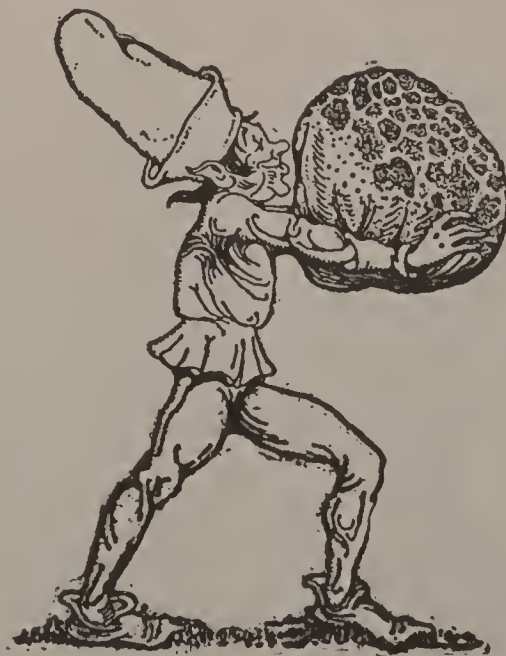
“Two,” she said and threw the powder the second time. The Peacock’s voice became so loud that all the Brownies jumped.

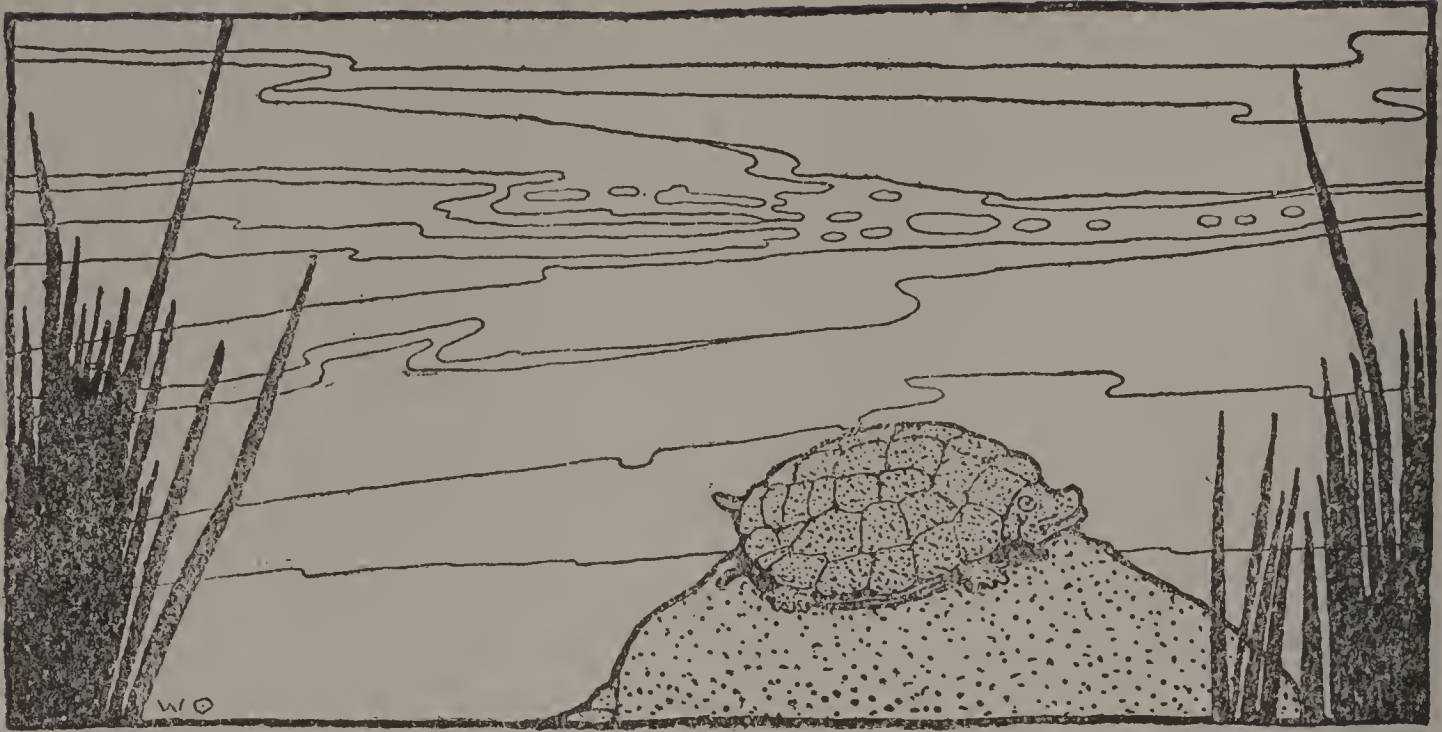
“*Three,*” cried Stella, as she threw the rest of the powder in the Peacock’s face.

When she did this, his voice suddenly became so awful that the Brownies ran away as fast as they could go, because they did not want to hear the Peacock. His voice was simply *terrible*.

“Now,” said Stella in a very angry tone, “go drink out of the Get-big-pool and go home and don’t ever let me see you again.”

So now you know why the beautiful Peacock has such an ugly voice. It is because he was never satisfied. He wanted too much, so Stella punished him. And now he knows that no one can have *everything* he wants.





X

THE TURTLE'S WISH



I SUPPOSE you think that the Turtle is very ugly and stupid.

Some are not as pretty as others. Some have very beautiful colors on their shells. Neither are they stupid, because they are very patient, and any one who is patient is *never* stupid.

They are patient in this way:

A turtle will stay perfectly quiet for long hours trying to catch flies and insects in his mouth; they are what turtles like to eat. The insects, of course, are careful not to come too near him, so that sometimes it is quite hard for Mr. Turtle to find enough for his dinner, and he is often hungry. He is also patient when he travels, for try as

THE TURTLE'S WISH

hard as he will, he just cannot go fast,—so he has to be patient.

The Turtle was sitting in the sun one day on a big stone near the water. He was nice and warm and also half asleep, when suddenly he heard Mr. Peacock and Mrs. Pelican talking together.

At first he thought he was dreaming; but he was so surprised at what they were saying that suddenly he found that he was quite wide awake, so he turned his head way around, and sure enough there they were behind a bush near the water and near enough for him to hear everything they were talking about. So he listened. The Peacock was telling about how he had gone three times to see Stella, the Wishing Fairy, to be made always more beautiful, and how he had then gone to her a fourth time and that this time Stella had punished him with the punishment powder and how terrible it had been.

“Well,” said Mrs. Pelican, “Stella was lovely to me. Mr. Pelican and I were given longer legs by her and then when we went again she gave us our beak-pockets, so that we can carry all the fish we catch in it, home to our babies. She was very nice to *us*.”

The Peacock thought a moment.

“She told me why she punished me,” he said. “It was because I was selfish. I suppose I was. I’m sorry now. With you it was different. You were asking for something that would help you feed your family.”

“Did it take you long to reach the End-of-the-earth?” asked Mrs. Pelican, to change the subject.

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

"Not very," answered Mr. Peacock. "How long did it take you?"

"Well, I fly very fast. I didn't mind the traveling at all. I don't know exactly how long I was gone."

"Which way did you go?" asked Mr. Peacock.

"That way," Mrs. Pelican answered, and pointed with her beak. "Straight that way. I never turned to either side.

Stella is a wonderful fairy. Think of it: she can make *any* wish come true."

Just then the Turtle heard a little splash in the water near the stone on

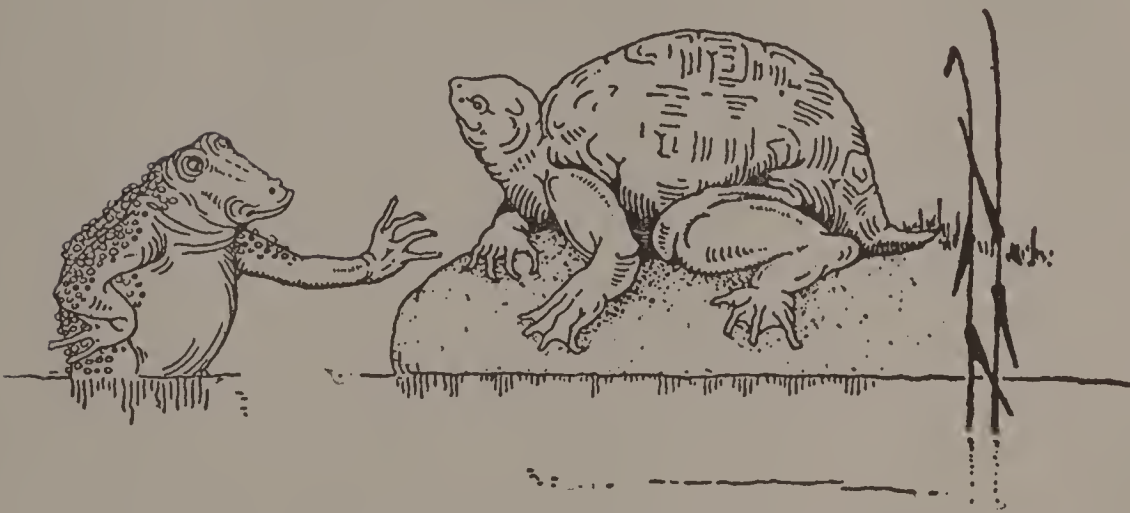
which he was sitting, and Mr. Frog swam up to him. His eyes were wide open and he was very excited.

"Did you hear that too?" asked the Turtle.

"I should think I did," Mr. Frog answered, "and I never was so glad to hear anything in my life. I am going home to Mrs. Frog, and I shall tell her all about what Mr. Peacock and Mrs. Pelican said, and it will not be very long before Mrs. Frog and I will start for the End-of-the-earth. Don't you want to go with us?"

"Yes," the Turtle said, "but it takes me such a long while to get anywhere. I am so slow."

"Oh! that's nothing," Mr. Frog said. "If we three go to-



THE TURTLE'S WISH

gether we won't mind how much time we will have to travel. We can also have lots of fun on the way together."

"Very well, then," said the Turtle. "I should love to. It's very nice of you to want me to go with you."

"That's splendid,"

Mr. Frog said.

"You start on ahead because you are slow, and I'll go home now



and get my wife, and we will soon be with you; because we can hop very quickly. Good-by! We will see you shortly." And away he hopped.

The Turtle was going along slowly, but he never stopped or turned his head to right or left. He just—kept—straight—on—and on—and *on*. After awhile, Mr. and Mrs. Frog, who had caught up with him, were hopping along, one on each side.

Presently, Mrs. Frog said she was tired, and what do you suppose the Turtle said to her? He told her to get on his back and rest, because he was sure he was strong enough to carry her.

So up she jumped, and for a long time that is how they traveled, Mr. Frog hopping on ahead and stopping and waiting for the Turtle who was slow, and the Turtle going patiently along with Mrs. Frog riding on his back!

That must have looked funny!

Don't you think so?

Every now and then they would stop and rest in the sun.

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS



They were all very thirsty when at last they reached the End-of-the-earth. Oh! how glad they were to see the Get-little-pool! They drank and they drank and they drank. When they had had enough water they raised their heads, and as they saw one another they all burst out laughing, for each one had grown very tiny. Oh! how they laughed!

They were all three sitting and looking at each other and laughing as hard as they could, when several Brownies came running up to see what the noise was about.

“What *are* you laughing at?” they asked.

“Because we have all grown so small—we look *so* funny.”

“You must have been drinking out of the Get-little-pool,” one of the Brownies said, as he looked at them.

“Do you want to see Stella?” another one asked.

“I should think so,” Mr. Frog answered. “That is why we came.”



"The Turtle going patiently along with Mrs. Frog riding on his back"

THE TURTLE'S WISH

"May we see her soon?" asked Mrs. Frog.

"Yes, indeed," a third Brownie said. "I'll go now and tell her that you are here. Just wait a moment; I won't be very long." And he hurried off to the lily-house.

But Stella wasn't there. It was a warm day; she was sitting on a clover flower in a shady place, and she was fanning herself with a dragon-fly wing.

That was her fan!

As soon as she heard of the Frogs' and the Turtle's visit she jumped down from the flower, and, taking up her wand, which was lying on the ground where she had thrown it, she went to the Get-little-pool. The Frogs and the Turtle were still laughing at one another. They were laughing so hard that Stella began to laugh too, and then one by one all the Brownies joined in.

You never heard so much laughter!

At last, when they had all stopped laughing, Stella dried her eyes on some dandelion fluff that she always kept as a handkerchief in her pocket.

"Well," she began, "what a wonderful laugh that was! I am quite tired."

Every one else was also tired. So they all sat around for some time and rested, and while they were resting the Turtle told Stella of how he had overheard Mr. Peacock and Mrs. Pelican talking, and how he had in that way learned of the End-of-the-earth fairy.

"Do you always make wishes come true, Stella?" he asked.

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

"Always—if they are good wishes," she answered. "Tell me what is *your* wish?"

"My wish is to be able in some way to get away from anything that wants to gobble me up, for I am always frightened, and I am tired of being frightened. It is very unpleasant. For instance, when I see the Pelicans I always have to hide."

"So do we," cried Mr. and Mrs. Frog.

Stella turned around and looked at them.

"But it is very easy for you to get away," she said to the Frogs. "You can hop so far and so quickly. I feel sorry though for Mr. Turtle. I shall have to think of some way to help him."

"Please get me my thinking cap?" she asked one of her Brownies. "I must think up an idea."

"Certainly," answered the Brownie. "But before I go I want to ask you a question. What is better than an idea?"

"I don't know," answered Stella. "What *is* better than an idea?"

"A *you* dear," laughed the Brownie, and he took her hand and kissed it.

"That is very nice of you," Stella said, and her little cheeks became as pink as her dress; but the Brownie had already gone. When he brought her the thinking cap, she put it on. It was a big cap and she could even put it over her little crown.

All of a sudden she cried out, "I know—"

"Know what!" every one asked.

THE TURTLE'S WISH

"Come here," cried Stella to the Turtle. "I have a splendid thought"; and with that she began waving her wand very quickly around and around him.

He had the queerest feeling all over his skin.

"What can be the matter with me?" he cried. "I almost feel sick. Oh, Stella! what is happening to me?"

"You are all right," the Fairy said. "Don't be so frightened. You don't suppose for one moment that I would hurt you?"

"No," answered the Turtle, "but I have a very strange feeling all over me. I don't understand it."

"I know what it is," and Stella smiled. "Now—" (She was waving her wand around him for the third time.) "Look at yourself!"

What do you suppose had happened to the Turtle?

His soft, brown skin had by this time changed into a hard shell!

You can imagine how astonished every one was. All the Brownies and also Mr. and Mrs. Frog crowded around him to see it.



"Work it," said Stella to the Turtle (she was smiling more and more), "and see what happens."

With that Mr. Turtle tried to move his head and feet, and the next thing he knew he was all covered up by his shell.

He was just like a hard round box with himself on the inside.

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

Did you ever!

From away in his shell they could hear him saying:

"But I am lost! I cannot find myself inside here in the dark. I don't think I like this."

"Oh! yes, you will like it," laughed Stella, "for now nothing can hurt you. If any one wants to gobble you up, all you have to do is to close your shell around yourself, then you can listen, and when they have gone away you can open your shell and walk again."

"Can I?" asked Mr. Turtle. "I didn't know *that*."

As he spoke he found he could open his shell. "Why, hello, everybody!" he shouted, as his head and legs came out from his shell. "Here I am again! This is the most wonderful thing I ever saw. That *was* a splendid thought that came to you when you put on your thinking cap, Stella."

"Do you like it?" she asked.

"*Like it!* I should think I do. I am *so* happy now that I just *cannot* thank you enough. It is a fine idea, and you are, just as the Brownie said, a—*you* dear."

"I am very glad you are so happy,"—and Stella turned to the Frogs. "Have you a wish?" she asked them.

"No, thank you," they both answered. "We only came," added Mrs. Frog, "because we were *so* curious to see you and the Brownies and the End-of-the-earth."

"Well," Stella said, "if you ever should have a wish, come back to me and I will make it come true. Now, you had

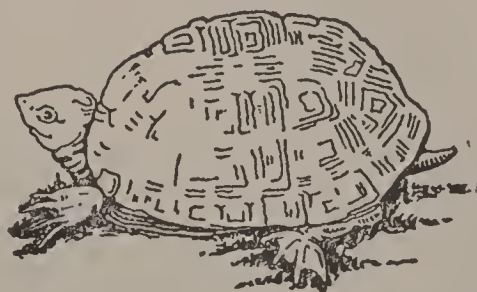
THE TURTLE'S WISH

better drink out of the Get-big-pool, so as to again be your own size.”

All the way home the Turtle kept working his new shell. Mr. and Mrs. Frog would hop near and watch him as he closed himself up in it and then came out again. Every time he did it, they would all three laugh and laugh together.

It was great fun.

Now, you know how the Turtle got his shell, and you also know why. So that he can get inside where nothing can hurt him, and where he is perfectly safe from his enemies.





XI

HOW THE LIZARD BECAME A CHAMELEON



If you were green, even to your hair, eyes and lips, and if you wore a green suit, and if you were sitting on the green grass, it would not be very easy to see you because you, being all green, would look like the green grass—everything would be the same color.

That is why during the summer in the different colored bushes, the Ermine is gray and brown, while in the winter as soon as the snow comes he turns white. He then looks almost the same as the white snow. It protects him from larger animals, that might hurt him.

Where there is no snow, rabbits are always a grayish brown, but in countries where the snow is on the ground all through

HOW THE LIZARD BECAME A CHAMELEON

the summer as well as throughout the winter you will never find colored rabbits. In those countries they are never anything but pure white.

That is also why zebras and tigers are striped. They live in jungle grass, the blades of which are like long razor-shaped stripes.

Snakes generally look like the ground on which they live. Sand-Snakes are sand colored. Snakes that live where the earth is black are black themselves; while in countries where the clay is red—the snakes are also red.

It is very interesting. Don't you find it so?

If you will stop and think you will be able to remember any amount of animals, birds and fish that are colored like the place which is their home.

The snake is a cousin of the lizard. Their heads look exactly the same. The lizard's is smaller and he has four feet, while the snake, who is very long, has none. There is another difference: the snake is often very dangerous; some are not, but almost all of them are. They have a very poisonous bite, while the lizard hasn't.



THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

Lizards are terribly lazy. They like to do nothing but lie all day in the sun and snap at flies and insects which they eat.

One day a lizard was stretched in the sun on a wall. He was half asleep, but every now and then he would open one eye, to be sure that he wasn't missing anything. All of a sudden a long green snake glided up to him.

"Hello!" the Snake called to him. "What are you doing?"

"Nothing," the Lizard answered. "Nothing but being comfortable. I *like* to be comfortable."

"That's nothing," the Snake went on. "Every one likes to be that. I do myself," he added, as he curled himself around and around with only his head sticking up. "Come down and talk to me."

"I don't want to move," the Lizard said, who was too lazy even to be polite.

"You are not very nice," the Snake hissed back; "you know perfectly well that I, having no legs, can't go up that wall to you, while you, having four absolutely good ones, can easily run down to me. Please come down. I won't hurt you."

"Very well," the Lizard said at last. He was blinking his half-closed eyes.

On his way down a big bird happened to fly past him. This frightened him so that instantly a bright crimson thing like a tiny balloon came from his throat and stuck out of his mouth.

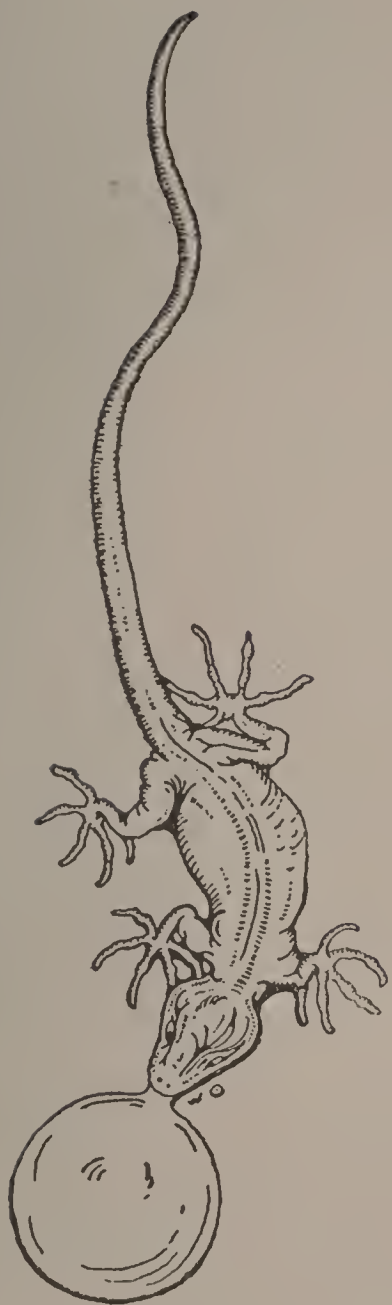
"What in the world is that?" the astonished snake asked, as the bird disappeared in the tree-tops.

HOW THE LIZARD BECAME A CHAMELEON

“What is *what?*” asked the Lizard.

“That little red balloon sticking out of your mouth.”

“Oh that!” exclaimed the Lizard carelessly. “I always throw that out when I am nervous. I think I do it to frighten whatever has frightened *me.*” By this time he had already swallowed it again. “You know,” he continued, as he came closer to the Snake, “you are exactly the same green as the grass. It is almost hard to see you. I wish I were like that, for I would not be bothered or frightened so often if I couldn’t be seen.” He thought a moment, then he went on, “You are green, and you are always in the grass, but sometimes I am among the green leaves and other times I am on the brown trunk of a tree; then again I run across a white wall or I may be stretched along a red flower—I suppose I couldn’t *possibly* be *every* color at *once.*”



“I should think you would go to see Stella,” the Snake said, and his bright little eyes were sparkling.

“What has that to do with it?” asked the Lizard in a very cross manner.

“It has a great deal to do with it,” answered the Snake. “Do you mean to say that you have never heard of *Stella?*”

“No, I haven’t. It sounds like a star.”

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

“You are quite right! ‘Stella’ means ‘star,’ but Stella is the name of the fairy who can make any wish come true. I think *your* wish is to be every color at once—you seem to want a great deal! Still,” and he stopped to think a moment—“you might tell Stella what you wish and you may find that perhaps she can do something for you.”

“Where does she live?” the Lizard asked in a very excited way. “Tell me, where does she live?”

“At the End-of-the-earth,” answered the Snake.

“Where is that?”



“Over there,” and the snake pointed what direction it was with his head.

“Is it very far away?”

“*Very.*”

“I don’t care.” The Lizard was almost screaming by this time. “I don’t care a *bit*, I am going—and I am going *now*. Now show me exactly, how do I start?”

“Turn halfway around,” the Snake told him, “and keep straight on until you reach the End-of-the-earth. You will get there sometime.”

It took the lazy Lizard quite a while to reach Stella; but at last he found her. It seemed to him that he had been traveling forever.

When he told her what it was that he wished, Stella had to

HOW THE LIZARD BECAME A CHAMELEON

put on her thinking-cap; and what is more, she had to keep it on for an awfully long time. It was very hard to think of some way to make the Lizard every color at once; but in a few minutes the right thought came to her. She sent for her wand.

“I can’t possibly make you every color at *once*,” she said, beginning to wave her wand around the Lizard, “but I *can* make you change color so as to be the same color of whatever you are walking on.”

Then she called to her Brownies.

“I want you to bring me several things,” she told them. “Please get me a gray stone, a piece of green moss, a red flower, a yellow flower, and also a brown flower.”

After they had brought her these things, she placed them all on the ground between her and the Lizard and began waving her wand over him.

“Now,” she began, “I want you to walk very slowly to me. First walk straight over the red flower.”

As the Lizard did this he turned red!

“Now, crawl along the moss,” Stella next said.

Suddenly he changed to a bright green!

“Now, walk over the stone,” she continued, “and go very slowly.”

As the Lizard walked over the stone he became just as gray as was the stone!

“Step on the yellow flower next.”

As he obeyed her, the Lizard found he was suddenly quite yellow!

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"Try the brown flower," Stella went on.

He was brown! He was also the most astonished and delighted Lizard in the world!

"I am so pleased," he said, "that somehow I can't even remember my name."



"Well,"—and Stella burst out laughing—"that is because *even* your name is changed."

"What is it now?" and the Lizard also began to laugh.

"You are now a 'chameleon,'" was the fairy's answer.

"You ought to be happy because after this you will be quite safe in your own color. You will always be the same shade as whatever you stand on."

All the way home the little Chameleon walked across different colored things so as to have the pleasure of seeing himself change. It was lots of fun and he was very happy.

He was lying on the brown stem of a vine the next time he saw the green snake, and until the Chameleon called to him the Snake never even noticed him, because he was the same brown as the stem! Then the Chameleon told the Snake all about his trip to the End-of-the-earth, and the Snake was so surprised that *he* told every one he met about the Chameleon, and every one he told the story to was terribly curious and went immediately to make a visit on the Chameleon, so that for days he was kept busy walking around and changing color.

HOW THE LIZARD BECAME A CHAMELEON

He was too busy to even be lazy, which was a good thing, for no one ought ever be lazy.





XIII

MR. AND MRS. FROG GO BACK TO STELLA



IT was a very hot day.

Around the lake where the frogs lived there were ever so many of them playing in the cool water.

All of a sudden there was a terrible noise at one end of the lake, and every one who heard it rushed over to see what was the trouble.

What do you think it was?

Two big bull-frogs were having a fight! I don't know what it was about though.

Have you ever seen frogs fighting?

One jumped at the other full on the nose, then he backed away and jumped once more, and this time he bit the other frog on the side, and then, after backing away again, he

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rushed and grabbed him by one of his legs. Holding it tight in his mouth, he swam off as quickly as he could, dragging the other frog behind him. They were both screaming "Ptooo,—ptooo,—ptooo," as loud as they could, but there was no one to hear them except the frogs who had gathered around the edge of the lake to watch the fight. Each and every one of them was calling "Ptooo,—ptooo,—ptooo," and as there were very many of them, you never heard such a noise in your life!



At last, when the two frogs were tired of fighting, the big one who had hold of the other one's leg, let him go. He had almost bitten the poor foot off. Then the big one went back to the edge of the lake, where all the other frogs were waiting to ask him what the fight had been about.

He first saw Mrs. Frog, and hopped straight over to the stone on which she was sitting.

"What happened?" she asked him, as soon as he had jumped up beside her. "Why were you so angry, and why did you hurt that poor other frog so? Are *you* hurt?"

"Of course, I'm not hurt," he answered proudly. "The whole thing began when that other frog caught a fat white fly that got away from me. I only missed the fly because I

THE WISHING-FAIRY'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

couldn't quite make my mouth reach far enough. It made me angry so I thought I would punish the other frog. Before I knew it we were having an awful fight. I wish that my mouth were bigger. I am going to see Stella."

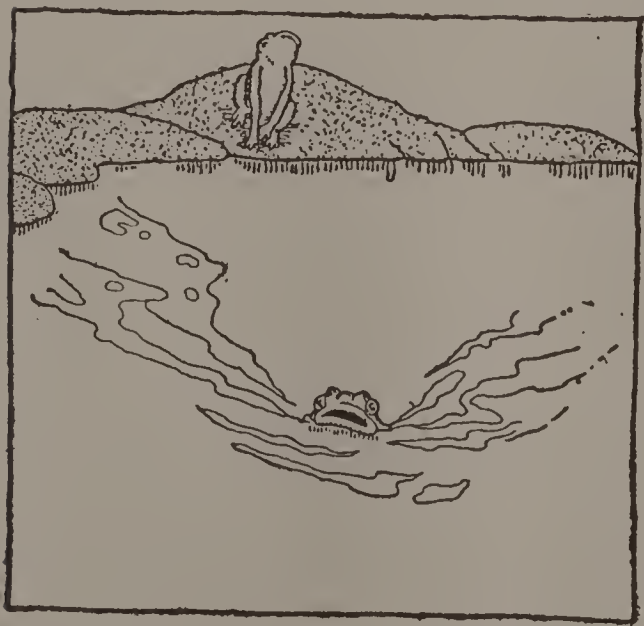
"Who is Stella, and what has she to do with your having a larger mouth?"—and Mrs. Frog laughed.

"Don't you remember the time you and I went with Mr. Turtle to the End-of-the-earth to see the Wishing-Fairy? Don't you remember getting tired and riding the rest of the way on the Turtle's back? Don't tell me you have forgotten!"

"No, indeed," answered Mrs. Frog. "I remember now; but I also remember that when we saw Stella and she asked you if you had a wish, you said that you hadn't. Now, you—"

"Now, yes, I have a wish," Mr. Frog interrupted, "a big wish; so I'm going back and tell her about it."

"Well, what is it?" asked Mrs. Frog, who was very curious. She was always asking questions; some of them he could an-



swer, but a great many he could not; and when he could not, he would swim away and leave her alone until she had forgotten the question. That would make Mrs. Frog awfully angry.

"Very well, if you *must* know, I will tell you," began Mr. Frog, after thinking a moment.

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“When that nice fat white fly got away from me and that other frog caught him, it annoyed me *very* much. The only reason he got away is that my mouth isn’t big enough. I want a wide, large, stretchy mouth—an enormous one. What do you think about it?”

“I think it is a wonderful idea,” she answered. “In fact, I would like to have one too. Flies are hard to catch, and I find that often when I snap at them, I cannot quite make my mouth reach either. Yes, it’s a good idea.”

“Do you want to come with me and also ask Stella for a large mouth?” Mr. Frog asked.

“Yes, indeed!” Mrs. Frog answered.

“Well, come along then. I want to go now,”—and as Mr. Frog said this he started in the direction of the End-of-the-earth.

Poor Mrs. Frog couldn’t travel quite as fast as he could, so in a few minutes she called out,

“Don’t hop so quickly. I can’t possibly keep up with you.”

Then they traveled much slower, but after a long while they finally reached the home of Stella.

“Hello!” said Stella. “It’s a long time since we have seen each other—since the day you came with the Turtle.”

“What a good memory you have!” Mrs. Frog said in an astonished way.

“I never forget anything,” Stella continued. “I also remember how much we all laughed—and I remember that you said you had no wish, and I was surprised at that; because

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every one I see always has a wish. It seems to me as though every one and everything in the world has some kind of a wish."

"Do you remember telling me if I should ever wish for something I must come to you?" Mr. Frog asked her. "Well, here I am."

Mrs. Frog suddenly joined in: "We came," she whispered to the Fairy, "because we both wish that we could have our mouths made large and stretchy."

"Could you do that for us?" asked Mr. Frog, anxiously, as he hopped closer to Stella.

It wasn't very long before the frogs had what they wanted, and they were delighted.

They hopped up close to one another and stood face to face, and Mr. Frog stretched his mouth as wide as he could make it stretch, so as to be quite sure that Mrs. Frog's mouth was no larger than his.

Stella burst out laughing at him.

"Don't worry," she said to him. "Mrs. Frog's mouth is no larger than yours. If you measure them, you will find they are both just the same, and now you can catch as many flies as you wish—and big ones too."

After she had told him this, they seemed satisfied.

They thanked her very much, and started for home.

You should have seen the pond where the frogs lived after they reached it.

All the frogs in the place came up to them and made them

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open wide their mouths and looked at their lips and even their throats, so that they would know all about them.

Mr. and Mrs. Frog felt very important, and when an enormous moth flew by and Mr. Frog snapped at it, and his mouth was large enough to gobble it up, he was just about as proud as a frog could be.

So was Mrs. Frog.

Every frog in that pond then suddenly had a wish—they all had the *same* wish—and the wish was to have a mouth big enough to swallow a tremendous moth, such as they had just seen Mr. Frog gobble up.

All of a sudden they started for the End-of-the-earth. There were hundreds and hundreds of frogs, all hopping along as fast as they could, and each one croaking as loud as he could about his wish. They were awfully excited, and later on, after they had seen Stella, they were very happy; for she made their wish come true—so now you know how the Frog got his big mouth and why. Don't you?





·THE·END·





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