GIFT OF
A. F. Morrison

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The lives and habits of plants and animals, however fancifully treated in this book, are in strict accordance with the known facts of their existence.
Tommy-Anne stood in the doorway tying a knot in the elastic of her hat. — p. 2.
THE HEART OF NATURE

BY

MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT

AUTHOR OF "STORIES OF EARTH AND SKY," "STORIES OF BIRDS AND BEASTS," ETC., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALBERT D. BLASHFIELD

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GIFT OF

A.F. MORRISON

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PREFACE

TOMMY-ANNE and Waddles went out of doors to find Reason Why, and I have tried to tell you how they found him.

The winds whispered to Tommy-Anne, and the birds sang to her; she knew that they bore messages, but she could not understand them until Heart of Nature came to help her.

Reason Why is always roving about the fields and woods, often creeping indoors, or sunning himself in winter in a warm garden corner. Go out and question him for yourselves, you healthy, happy children. If the weather is very cold, coax him in by the fireside. You will find that the Three Hearts are always ready to interpret for you, for the thing that they love best is the pure child-heart, whether its owner is seven or seventy.

M. O. W.
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INDIAN WORDS

(CHIEFLY ALGONKIAN)

Adjidau'mo .... The Red Squirrel.
A'moe ........ The Honey Bee.
Bukada'win .. Famine.
Chetowaik .. The Plover.
Dahin'da ... The Bull Frog.
Ghee'zis ... The Sun.
Gitche-ah-mo The Bumblebee.
Gushkewau' The Darkness.
Kabibonok'ka The North Wind.
Little Oo-oo The Screech Owl.
Mahng ...... The Loon.
Miskodeed .. The Spring Beauty.
Moon of Leaves May.
Moon of Strawberries June.
Moon of Falling Leaves September.
Moon of Snow-Shoes November.
Ondaig .... The Crow.
Ope'chee .... The Robin.
Owais'sa .... The Bluebird.
Pau'guk .... Death.
Pe'boan .... Winter.
Segwun  .  .  .  .  .  Spring.
Shawonda'see  .  .  .  .  .  The South Wind.
Shaw'shaw  .  .  .  .  .  The Swallow.
Shi'sheeb  .  .  .  .  .  The Duck.
Subbeka'she  .  .  .  .  .  The Spider.
Tchin-dees  .  .  .  .  .  The Jay.
Wabas'so  .  .  .  .  .  The Rabbit. The Spirit of the North.
Wabe'no  .  .  .  .  .  The Magician.
Wa'wa  .  .  .  .  .  The Wild Goose.
Waw'be'ko'ko  .  .  .  .  The Snow Owl.
Wawonais'sa  .  .  .  .  The Whip-poor-will.
Weeng  .  .  .  .  .  The Spirit of Sleep.
I

THE MAGIC SPECTACLES

It was so bright out of doors that particular May morning that the house seemed very dark and lonely by comparison. But then, to be sure, Tommy-Anne never liked to stay indoors, and everything was beckoning and calling; so many strange birds winging over the garden, so many strange shapes slipping through the grass. The wind blowing from the hill called: "Come out, if you wish to see things grow!" whispering to the woods as it hurried through: "Make haste, old Oaks, unfurl your flags; summer will soon be here."

Tommy-Anne was not, as might be supposed, a pair of twins, but a little girl with no brothers or sisters. Her real name was Diana, which had
been shortened to Anne. Then, as she could climb trees, preferred boys' games to dolls, and asked a great many questions about how things are made, her father called her Tommy-Anne in fun, and the name suited her so well that people very soon forgot that she had any other.

Playing alone in the woods and garden, and doing her lessons seated on the big dictionary close by her father, as he worked in his study, Tommy-Anne had time to think of a great many whys and whats and because that very few people understood, and that no one seemed to have time to answer. Her Aunt Prue, who considered Tommy-Anne as odd as her name, and was the only one of the family at home that day, told the child to "go out and try to be like other people," simply because she had asked a few particularly difficult whys.

Tommy-Anne stood in the doorway, tying a knot in the elastic of her hat, and wondering why her hat would not stick on without being fastened, as the butcher-boy's did.

Two odours perplexed her inquisitive nose,—cake in process of baking and a breath of the first apple blossoms. Without hesitating, she started in the direction of the orchard; but her little rabbit-hound, Waddles, was more interested
in the cake. He raised his pointed muzzle in the air, sniffed, then gave a short bay and looked at his mistress appealingly.

"No, it’s not a bit of use, Waddles, wishing for things out of time, when Aunt Prue is at home alone. Aunt Prue says things must be as they are ordered. Now, that’s all very well for things that one can’t help, but why do people make unnecessary rules and say they must be kept just because they’ve been made? Cake is for supper and pudding for dinner, Waddles! Never cake before dinner, and it’s only after breakfast now. Did you ever have cake before dinner?"

Whereupon Waddles looked very knowing, and gave a few short barks to signify that he believed that he had.

"I suspect that you are a glutton, Mr. Waddles," Tommy-Anne continued. "Come, let’s run up-hill, for you certainly are too fat and need exercise. Doesn’t the air make you want to curl up your feet and make wings of your ears, and fly? What a lovely bat you would make, Waddlekins! Twenty times as big as Dusky Wings, that comes out of the attic window every night." And Tommy-Anne spread her arms and rushed up the slope, the hound following her in full cry.
She dropped at the foot of the first tree that she reached, which happened to be an old white oak, and, after she stopped panting, pulled a handful of willow whistles, that the butcher-boy had made, from her pocket, and began sorting them into her lap. She blew each one in turn, but was dissatisfied with them all. "If I only understood the birds' language, then they would answer me," she said.

"Bob-white! Bob-white!" called a quail from the brush lot.

"Ah! that is plain enough; he is telling me his name. I can talk to him."

"Bob-white!" she blew clearly on her longest whistle. For several minutes Tommy-Anne and the quail exchanged greetings, and then he changed his note to—"Poor Bob-white."

"Poor Bob-white"—she answered readily. "He must be trying to tell me about his unfortunate relations who were killed by the gunners last fall. No, that can't be it either; I'm all boggled up. He is talking my language, but I'm not learning his a bit," and she stretched herself on the moss, her chin on her hands.

"I wish I knew why," sighed Tommy-Anne, looking up through the branches.
“Why what?” said a Voice close beside her.

“Why everything,” she replied, looking about, expecting to see the owner of the voice.

The house stood quite below her, the garden and orchard coming between. In the other direction trees, in sociable groups of twos and threes, straggled along until they crowded together to make the wood at the top of the hill. It was very still for a moment; she could hear the river bubbling over the stones beyond the highway, the horse stamping as he shifted his footing in the stable.

“This is very queer,” said Tommy-Anne, addressing Waddles, who was lying at her feet. “Didn’t you hear some one speak? Why don’t you bark, sir?”

She walked around the oak and toward the wood, but finding no one, returned to her seat, and leaning her back against the tree, said more earnestly than before, “I do wish I knew why.”

“WHY WHAT?” said the Voice, very much louder than before.

Tommy-Anne jumped to her feet and looked at the great Oak, for the Voice came from that direction. All that could be seen was the furrowed trunk, whose bark was split and scarred by
weather and decay. She put her ear to a little crack and listened.

"Yes, I am here," said the Voice; "I was here before. Why is it that when you House People look for a clue, you search the corners of the earth for what is close at home? We Wood Folk know that as a trail ends in cover it cannot begin in the open."

"Really, really I don’t know," said Tommy-Anne, in confusion. "I never heard a tree talk before, and I was looking for a person, you see."

"I am not a tree," said the Voice, "though I seem to be living in one now."

"Oh, I am so glad," she cried. "Because if you are clever enough to get into a tree, perhaps you can tell me some whys.

"I should be very glad to help you to get out. Please, how shall I begin? Shall I scoop a hole in the tree with my knife? It’s a rather slow knife, though."

The Voice did not answer for several minutes, and then it sounded directly in her ear.

"What are the things you want to know, Tommy-Anne?" it said.

"All the whys and whats and becauses, the reasons for things," she answered eagerly. "But how did you know my name when I don’t know yours?"
She put her ear to a little crack and listened.—p. 6.
"That is easily told," said the Voice; "I have often heard your father calling you."

"Of course! how stupid of me! I might have known that, for if it had been Aunt Prue that you heard, she would have said Di-a-n-a, and you would never have guessed that my usual name is Tommy-Anne.

"I want to know so many things," she continued. "Everything about the garden and the woods, the water and the sky. If the flowers are sorry that they can't move about, and what they think of; where the birds spend the winter, and why they sing before they go to sleep. I want to know what all the noises are, that I hear in the woods when it is dark; why the rain does not put the fireflies' lights out, and where the butterflies come from. Then there is the river, too; it always says the same thing when it tumbles over the dead willow below the bridge; it seems as if I must understand it."

"If you wish to know so many things, Tommy-Anne," said the Voice, "you must go to Whyland and see for yourself, for there everything tells its own story, and each one sees and hears what he most desires."

"Whyland, thy land,
Away in the cannibal island!"
she repeated. "The Butcher-boy knows a song that goes something like that, only I am not very sure of the words. Is it near Wonderland, where Alice met the mad March Hare and the Cheshire Cat? Or by Fairyland, where Riquet with the Tuft and the Sleeping Beauty lived? Perhaps it is the North Country, where the Storks build their nests on the chimney stones, and the poor little Tin Soldier floated down the gutter, and the Street Lamp was so sad?"

"No, Tommy-Anne; the people in Whyland are real people, though their speech is so strange to the House People that they think it fairy talk. Whyland covers the whole earth; and though I am a ruler in it, yet there are different interpreters to teach its languages, for no one may learn them all.

"You are a thoughtful child (the heedless can never learn even one of these languages), so you may learn the speech of the nearest corner and the ways of its people, and see them through the Magic Spectacles, that give both sight and hearing to those who wear them."

"Magic Spectacles?"

"Yes, surely; for no one can more than peep into Whyland without them, and then it seems a dreary place—all facts and figures like the multiplication table."
"In Whyland the talk I would teach you is of the NEARBY! The speech of the small river; of the Fox that drinks of it; of the Water Snake that spreads its dark folds on the overhanging grape-vine; of the Red Squirrel in the corn-crib; of the Mole tunnelling the garden path; of the Woodchuck slinking through the field; of the Coon in his tree hollow; and the Wild Cat that creeps to the wood edge at the first snowfall.

"The talk of the feathered brothers as they follow the year around, from the first Bluebird to the great Snowy Owl that comes when the Christmas trees are trimmed.

"You shall learn the language of the flowers that you tie for a bouquet, of the ferns that live in the deep woods, and are so shy that they speak only to the mosses; you shall hear the tales that the old trees tell, as they rock to and fro crooning. The brotherhood that I may teach you of, is of the Beehive and The Little Beasts Near Home."

"What must I take with me to Whyland, dear Tree Man?" asked Tommy-Anne.

"You need not carry anything but your mind; for without that you cannot see even through the Magic Spectacles."
“Oh! I know one what already,” she cried, clapping her hands after a little habit of her own, because very often when she was glad she had no one to tell it to; “I know what absent-minded means, now. It is not to see what is straight under your nose, because your thinker is somewhere else! Dear Mr. Tree Man, please, please, tell me your real name and what the Magic Spectacles are made of, and how long I may wear them. I thought that magic things were not really-trulies.”

“The House People have a habit of calling many things that they cannot understand with their every-day eyes, magical or untrue, but I cannot tell you how the Magic Spectacles are made until you have worn them. While you have them on you will understand the speech of beasts and birds, while they will not fear you; and you shall wear these spectacles until Christmas eve.

“Remember! the pass-word in this new world is BROTHERHOOD!”

A breeze blew Tommy-Anne’s hair about her face, and as she shook it back and tucked the curly ends under the ribbon, everything appeared to be more distinct, and she heard a babel of soft voices.
"The Magic Spectacles! I have the Magic Spectacles, though I can't feel them," she cried, putting her hands to her eyes. Looking up, she saw an old man standing where the Oak tree had been. At least, she thought at the first glance that he was old, because everything about him seemed gray; when she looked again, she saw that it was not the gray of age, but rather the colour of the pearly mist that follows the spring rains and makes the earth bud forth. His face was kindly, though many varying expressions passed over it, some tender, some very stern. Tommy-Anne was puzzled; it was unlike any face that she had ever seen before.

"Are you very old, Tree Man?" she asked timidly.

"I have lived a great many years, if that is what you mean by being old. But if you understand age as nearing the end of life as you know it, then I am young."

"Your name; please tell me your real name before you go," begged Tommy-Anne, as she saw that the form of the Tree Man was melting away in the branches of the Oak.

Pausing a moment, he said: "Listen child; there are Three Hearts that together rule everything, the seen and the unseen: each has a law
and language of its own, which you will learn in time. I am one of these rulers, though not the greatest, and my name is—Heart of Nature."

Then the great Oak stood alone, and through all the treetops there ran a mysterious whisper: "Heart o' Nature! Heart o' Nature!"

"We are in great luck, aren't we, Waddles?" said Tommy-Anne, after a long silence. "I do not think I understand exactly what the Tree Man means about the Three Hearts, but I suppose he will tell me before next Christmas. Oh, Waddles dear! when we can ask as many questions as we please and have them answered, don't you think it will be very hard to have to go into the house at night?"

"The Tree Man did not say that you must not ask questions in the house."

"No; I don't remember that he did; but I hardly think it would be polite in us to trouble the beasts and things to come so far from home; and suppose Aunt Prue was to see them! Of course we can talk to the mice, and there are sometimes nice big ants in the sugar-jar, but we had better save those for rainy days."

"I do not mind staying out all night, if it's moonlight, but I do hope you will not forget
dinner time; you often do now,” said the hound, with a sigh.

“Why! how plainly you can answer me,” cried Tommy-Anne, in delight; “I never understood more than half that you used to say.”

“No, mistress, you did not,” said Waddles, complacently. “You never would understand, though I kept saying the same thing over and over again. I always had to push and jump, make faces or wag my tail, before you would attend to me. That is the reason why I sometimes helped myself, to save you trouble; but your aunt always mistakes my motives and cuffs my ears.

“By the way, now that we understand each other, would you mind telling your aunt never to cuff my ears? You cannot tell how it upsets my brain and makes it roar until tears come in my eyes, and all day long I can hardly tell a rat from a rabbit, and then you scold me and call me dumpish. An ache in ears like mine is ten times as big as it is in little ones like yours. Yet, when you have an earache you go to bed and have a nice, soft, hot-water bag to comfort it, while most likely I end the day in the wood-house.”

And Waddles looked up at Tommy-Anne with a very sad expression in his great brown eyes.
"Oh, doggie!" she cried, standing him up on his hind legs and squeezing his cold nose against her cheek, while she drew his silky ears gently through her hand. "I've pulled you about by these often, but I'll never do it again; I'm so sorry." Whereupon Waddles gave her a forgiving little kiss, which, according to the best dog etiquette, was a dainty lick on the end of her nose.

As Tommy-Anne stooped over him, she heard a faint sound coming from the ground. Pressing her ear to the sod, she laid her finger on her lips, whispering, "Hush, Waddles! Down close! I can hear the grass grow!"
II

HOW THE GRASS GREW

"Push, thrust! Push, thrust! Now all together!" whispered the small voices.

"Jump up, Waddles, quick!" cried Tommy-Anne. "See what you've been sitting on." Waddles raised himself slowly from force of habit, for his mistress seldom stayed long in one place, and gave a sly smile as if he knew perfectly well that he was sitting on grass, if she did not.

"Pray do not disturb yourselves; I am quite used to being crushed; I rather like it," said a little voice, which Tommy-Anne found proceeded from a blade of grass. "I have some visitors here, however, from the Oak, Beech, and Fir families that feel quite differently."
Stories of Plants and Animals

Looking at what seemed to be merely a stretch of rather dead sod, to which the colour of spring was coming very slowly, Tommy-Anne saw innumerable little spikes like green bayonets, pricking through the brown mat, and as they came up, they called encouragingly to each other. Here and there, between this young grass, appeared the sprouts of stronger plants, some bearing a pair of long, saw-edged leaves pressed together, like hands, palm to palm; others shooting out a half-dozen green spokes at the top of the stem, like a wheel that lacked the tire.

Made bold by the humble manner of the grass, Tommy-Anne asked, "Why are you so late in coming up? The grass in the garden and pasture was green long ago, and down by the river it has been bright all winter."

"For two reasons," said the nearest Grass-blade, shivering a little as it straightened its bayonet. "We are all new here, fresh from the seed, and we are late because the sun forgot to call us."

"Why did the old grass die? It was thick and strong last summer and grew all in little bunches. Waddles and I used often to sit upon it. Do you think that it was discouraged?"

"No, not that; but in this place last Moon of Snow-Shoes, Kabibonokka and Shawondasee
fought their great battle, and where they fight the grass is blasted, the bushes shrivel, and even the great oaks themselves bud forth but grudgingly.”

“Who are Kabibonokka and Shawondasee, and what is the Moon of Snow-Shoes?” asked Tommy-Anne, with deep interest.

“Pardon me,” said the Grass-blade, politely; “I forgot that in our language we still have some names and words that the House People do not use. We learned them from the Red Brothers, the first men who lived with us here, and they understood our secrets, speaking our speech until our language mixed itself with theirs and theirs with ours, and we remember a word from this tribe, another from that. Moon of Snow-Shoes means November, and was in those days the beginning of the season you call winter. Then the deep snows coming early cover everything, so that none could go abroad unless on snow shoes, whose wide, flat, latticed soles slid safely on the crust, and in this way the Red Brothers followed the Fox and Rabbit trails in—”

Here Waddles raised his head, uttered a string of bays that could be heard for miles, and about the great Oak, head down, as if he was mighty mad, then threw himself on the grass, rolling and whining petulantly.
"I was very thoughtless," sighed the Grass-blade, contritely, "to mention snow and Rabbits before a Rabbit hound; no wonder it was too much for his feelings. But where were we?"

"You were explaining about the things that fought and killed the grass."

"Oh yes! Kabibonokka is the North Wind, and Shawondasee, his rival, the South Wind. The South Wind always has Gheezis, the Sun, for his companion, while the North Wind keeps with him Gushkewau, the short dark days, Wabasso, the Snow Rabbit, the spirit of the North; while following them, trampling down the Wood Folk, often stalk—Bukadawin, Famine, and Pauguk, Death.

"All plants have blood in them the same as the House People and other animals, only plant blood is very seldom red, but pale and greenish, and you call it sap. In the Moon of Falling Leaves, which is the first month of your autumn, Kabi-
bonokka begins to murmur afar off, and the tree blood, hearing the sound, creeps from the branches to the trunk, and from the trunk down to the roots beneath the ground, to stay there lest it should freeze while Kabibonokka reigns.

“Then the leaves, having no blood to fill their veins and nourish them, drop off and dry away. So Kabibonokka, coming, cries out, ‘See how Shawondasee fears me. All the leaves that sang to him have fallen before me, trembling; all the flowers that he wreathed about him are pale and dead with fear. Even his mate, the sun god Gheezis, hastens away and leaves short days to harbour Bukadawin and Pauguk.

“‘Come back, soft Summer Wind, with tender muscles. Come back, thou, pink-lipped with strawberry-eating. I, even I, the North Wind, will wrestle with you for your strengthening!’

“Now the plant blood should stay beneath the ground, until Heart of Nature calls the South Wind back, and bids the Sun shine through the earth and say, ‘Up! up! flow up, green sap, and swell the buds to make the Moon of Leaves,’—your spring.

“But sometimes Shawondasee is lingering too near, and hears Kabibonokka’s challenge, and breaking the law, comes back to fight, and then
this evil happens, for evil always follows the breach of Nature's laws.

"List n! The North Wind whistles, the sap runs down; the South Wind calls, the sap starts to flow upward, thinking its sleep is over. Then upward, downward, while the battle lasts, it goes, until finally, Kabibonokka, satisfied, takes the Snow Owl on his shoulder, and leads Peboan, the Winter, to the northland.

"Then Shawondasee calls again, this time in earnest; but the poor sap, weak and tired (and in the small plants spent and lifeless), answers him slowly, even in the sturdy trees crawling but feebly, not having force to reach the topmost branches, finding in its course many buds, both dead and dying. Then the House People say, "Look at that treetop; it is winter-killed!" And when this happens, all the hope of life for tender things is in the seed.

"When Heart of Nature is obeyed, then all goes rightly. Kabibonokka and Peboan come together bringing the White Owls with them, and the snow falls thick and covers everything so deeply that the South Wind flies before it, and the tree blood, hearing no disputing, waits in peace."

"Dear Mr. Grass," said Tommy-Anne, "how
could a tiny seed such as you come from, live through this great fight? I helped my father sow some of you last fall, down in the new meadow, and you were like specks of dust."

"Yes; we are only dust-motes borne by the breeze. We were of the seed you scattered, and the wind swept us here under this Oak."

"But," persisted she, "why didn't you grow then like the other seeds? why did you wait so long?"

"Because, little House Child, the first lesson we bits of plant life have to learn is — when and how to wait.

"We cannot move from place to place and shift our homes like the animals, according to the seasons and the weather; so from first to last, waiting is our portion.

"The little seed, lying on the ground, waits for the rain and sun to touch it before it may swell and grow; the plant waits for the roots to suck nourishment from the earth and air before it can form the flower; the flower, spreading glowing colours to the sun, or wafting perfume through the night, waits for the Bee, the Butterfly, the Hummingbird, the Moth, to bring it food to fill the little seed germs that it holds within its heart. And, last of all, the bursting pod waits
for the wind, the birds, the hand of man, to scatter the seeds afar, lest, falling too close about the parent plant, they choke for lack of soil.

"Back in the Moon of Falling Leaves, when we were blown here to this barren spot, if we had sprouted like our brothers in the warm sheltered meadow, the first rain, gullyng down the slope, would have washed us out before we had firm footing. The Voice said wait until the sun looks backward toward the west at evening and shines full on you from between the birches. For many weeks the clouds hung low, but yesterday the sun remembered us at last, and to-day you see that we are here."

"Who do you mean by the Voice? Was it the Tree Man who gave me the Magic Spectacles?"

"Yes, the very same,—Heart of Nature."

"What do you think of this, Waddles dear, or did you know all about it before?" said Tommy-Anne.

"No, Mistress, I never bothered the grass with such questions; we always talk upon a different subject. I put my nose down close and whisper, 'What beast tracked through here last, and which way did he run?' The grass always an-
answers me truly—'this way or that.' If I do not tree the cat or find the rabbit burrow, it is sure to be because you call me back.

"The Tree Man told you that in Whyland each one heard what he wished to hear the most, so you hear the grass say a great many whys, but I hear Cats and Rabbits."

"Get up, you lazy Waddles, and see if we can find the little trees that do not like to be trodden on. Yes, here is one, I am sure; only you have broken it almost off. I wonder what it would have grown to be."

"An Oak tree," said a vigorous little voice; "a white Oak like the big one overhead."

Tommy-Anne, looking intently, saw many tender, pinkish green sprouts coming from the ground, each with a few long, wave-edged leaves along its stems. One of them was stretching his leaves and talking.

"Tell me," she asked, "how did you grow so much quicker than the grass? You look very strong and juicy."

"With pleasure, Tommy-Anne," it replied. "Pull up the broken sprout, and I will endeavour to explain."

She drew herself together quite unconsciously, and pulling up the broken tree, held it in her
hand. The Oak's voice was pleasant, but it spoke with authority, not humbly like the grass. For an Oak, no matter how small, never forgets its dignity, never whispers like a Birch, or titters and flutters like an Aspen.

"What have you in your hand?" it continued.

"An acorn, with a crack in it, and a sprout growing up with leaves on it, and a sprout growing down with little hairs on it," she replied; for she had been taught by her father to see and answer accurately; "but please don't ask me why and because, for I don't know anything,—no, not one thing."

"People who ask so many why and what must answer sometimes to show that they understand; and if you understand me you will know how all trees grow," said the Oak, proudly.

"I was a little speck of oak life, shut up in an acorn like the one you have in your hand. In it I fell to the ground last season, before the leaves. About me in the acorn was packed nice sweet food, to nourish me in growing until my roots could feed me from the earth.

"A while ago the Voice called, and at the
sound my heart swelled so with gladness that I burst the shell. The sun called one way, and the moist earth the other; so I reached upward with a hand and groped downward with a foot, though still anchored by the acorn. The sun warmed me, but as yet I could not feed myself, and lived upon the food wrapped up for me, until to-day. Look! now I have a rooting in the soil, and leaves to catch the dew, and I have eaten every bit of my food—the acorn-shell is empty! So is it with all seeds. Of all the plants that creep or climb or float upon the water, great or small, tree or bush, the seed birth is the same.”

Tommy-Anne sat still for a long time, her face between her hands; in fact, she was so still that Waddles became nervous and poked his nose into her face anxiously, saying: “Why don’t you speak to something else, mistress? This Oak is very gloomy and not over-polite. I should think, after saying so much about food, the least thing it could do would be to offer us something to eat.”

“Be still, Waddles; what if it should hear you? Don’t you know that Aunt Prue says it is awful to ask for anything to eat if you are visiting, even if you are shrivelling with hunger. The most you may hint at even is a glass of water.”
“Who is visiting, mistress—we or the Oak?” persisted Waddles, sturdily. “It is our ground, you know.”

“Then the Oaks must be our guests, and we must be very nice to them.”

“I don’t see why; we did not invite them to come.”

“For shame, Waddles! Aren’t you enough of a gentleman to know that you must be extra polite to the people you didn’t invite, so that they will feel comfortable, and not know that there is not quite enough for dinner until they get to the table?”

“I don’t see what all that has to do with the—”

“Tommy-Anne,” interrupted the Oak, “if that small dog of yours thinks he is hungry again, there is Adjidaumo, the Red Squirrel, that lives in the big Oak, whom he might try to catch for amusement; and if he is really hungry, why doesn’t he dig up the ham bone he buried in the orchard this morning? It was a fine bone, with good meat upon it. The Blacksmith’s cat, Tiger, is smelling around the spot now.”

Up jumped Waddles, his tail standing out like a pump handle, and casting a reproachful look at the tell-tale tree, and a shamefaced one at his mistress, he shot down the hill.
“Then Waddles really did steal that ham, as Aunt Prue said,” mused Tommy-Anne to herself. “Never mind; it will take him some time to chase the cat, and I can talk a little longer with the Oak. I don’t think it was offended.” So she said, “Will you please tell me where the flowers get the food that they pack in the seeds’ lunch baskets?”

“That is not for me to explain, child. That story belongs to the messengers of Flowerland, the Hummingbird and the Moon Moth. They will tell it to you when they guide you through the Flower Market and to the Land of Nod.”

“The Flower Market and the Land of Nod! Oh, where are they? Are they places in Whyland?”

“Yes; they are in Whyland; the Flower Market is where the Flowers live, from spring to leaf-fall. The Land of Nod is where the Flowers close their eyes and go to sleep.

“If you wish to go to the Flower Market, wait
early in the morning by the tulips in the garden, and when a Hummingbird comes by, wearing a patch of sparkling rubies on his throat, gather a bunch of single tulips and offer them to him, saying, 'Will you breakfast on my flowers, and take me with you to the Flower Market?'

"If he feeds upon the tulips, then you may follow him.

"But if you wish to visit the Land of Nod, then stand at sunset on the garden's border, and presently a great green Moth with moon-light-coloured wings will flutter past. Hold out your hand and whisper softly: 'Moon Moth, may I go with you to the Land of Nod?' If he lights upon your hand, then you may follow him."

Tommy-Anne clasped her hands and looked up at the sky, with a little smile of deep content. This smile meant also gratitude, for she was very grateful.

"A few more questions; may I ask a very few more?" she said shyly, as if afraid that even an Oak might grow tired of whys.

"With pleasure," it answered, "if they are about trees. The fact is I am very young and have not had time to learn much, but of course I know all the history of our best tree families."
"Well, Mr. Rattle, what have you to say?" — p. 33.
"Thank you, dear patient little Oak! I will put some sticks around you, so that no one shall crush you until you grow big enough to stand by yourself. You fell from the great Oak above; but how did the other trees, that I see in the grass, come here? I am sure that there are no others with leaves like theirs, nearby."

"Pr-r-r-r-ink! Pr-r-r-ink. Pr-u-p! Pr-u-p! Pr-r-r-ink," chattered a voice from a branch of the great Oak that reached over Tommy-Anne's head. She knew before looking up that it was Adjidaumo, the Red Squirrel, who was talking and scolding.

There he sat, his tail curved up over his back, his round ears twitching, his poppy eyes gazing several ways at once, while he munched at a bunch of apple blossoms that he held between his front paws.

"Pr-r-r-ink! Pr-r-r-r-r!" he called again, turning suddenly about, so that he faced her.

"Well, Mr. Rattle, what have you to say? Do you know how the seeds of the other trees came here," she asked, shaking her finger at him, for they were old friends.

"Certainly I do; that is, of a part of them at least. I live in a hole under this tree, and my nest is up in the cedar yonder; and often
when I've been to market over in the hickories above the river, or in the chestnuts behind the mill, and carry a great load home, I drop some of the nuts, and they grow.

"I don't think you know how hard I have to work sometimes, mistress, to get in our winter store of food. I carried four quarts of chestnuts, two nuts at a time, from over the river, and that wicked little dog of yours chased me every time I crossed your garden wall."

"He isn't a wicked dog; father says it is his nature to chase little beasts for food."

"Yes, for food. We all may take what we need to eat. Heart of Nature allows that. But Waddles is never really hungry; he has learned bad habits of the House People, and chases for sport, to see us run, as they do. We understand what hunger is and know all its excuses, but our law is like the Red Brother's,—'take what ye need to eat.'

"Many a weary run I've had across the open, half choking, with my cheeks stuffed out with nuts, the dog behind, and not a tree to save me. One thing comforts me; I've dropped so many chestnuts on the way that a forest will surely grow there to shelter my great-grandchildren. Pr-r-r-r-ut! Pr-r-ink!" laughed Rattle.
“You brought me further than from the mill woods,” said a thin, piping voice. “I sprouted two years ago, and I was so lonely, but I’m very thin and small, hardly bigger than my brothers of this spring.”

“Who are you?” said Tommy-Anne. “Are you a tree? You and your brothers look like little whisps of moss.”

“A tree? of course I am, and a very important tree too; — a Christmas tree, — or at least my mother was.” And the little Spruce paused proudly, as if nothing more could be said in its praise.

“Then you must have come from Wild Cat Mountain; Christmas trees do not grow any nearer,” she replied, looking down with great respect at the few dark green bristles that represented the tree.

“Yes, our family has lived there for centuries; I was a seed in a cone that Rattle brought home; he stripped it and ate all the other seeds, then dropped the cone, thinking it finished; that is why there is only one of me. Last year cones were in plenty. Rattle was careless, and scattered so many about here that now I have many companions.”

“They do not grow as the Oak did; they have six little green fingers instead of leaves.”
“Certainly, our family follows its own customs. Every respectable plant family has its own habits, shape, and colours. In some the leaves are broad, in some narrow; in some the veins run up and down, and in others across, like spider webbing (you will learn our laws in the Flower Market). In one thing we are all alike;—We all have roots, and we come from the spark of life that our mothers pack into the seed lunch baskets.”

“Oh, oh! I see,” said Tommy-Anne; “the food that Rattle finds in the nuts and cones was packed away to feed the plant life while it grew.

“But if I were you, little Spruce, I would rather stay out in the wood and grow tall, so that I could see over the hills to salt water, than be cut down for a Christmas tree when I was quite young.”

“Tommy-Anne, have you never seen a Christmas tree, that you should talk so? The Snow Owl has seen one! He told my grandmother about it, and our family have never since complained when House People come and cut our brethren down after the first snow. He saw it in the great house in the village, the one where people go on Sundays, wearing their best clothes. The house that points up to the sky with one
long, white finger. The Owl was roosting in a Yew tree outside a window, when a bright light shone out into the dark, and he was about to fly away, fearing some trap or magic, when he saw inside this house one of our family all blooming with such flowers as the Snow Owl never saw before. He said the tree bore gold and silver fruit instead of dingy cones, and that a great star, bigger than Sirius, the winter watchman, hung on the top, and that lights more brilliant than the fires of the north spangled the branches. Then he said that House People and their children came and sang songs to the tree and did it homage. He promised to come back and tell us more, if ever he could go inside the house and see it closer.”

“You dear little Spruce! I have a Christmas tree every year; and now that I understand the speech of Whyland, I will invite the Snow Owl and all his friends to come and see it lighted.”

Rattle grew jealous of the attention the tree was receiving and began to chatter again. Just
then a fine blue bird, with a pointed cap and black collar, flew near, crying in a harsh voice, “Jay, Jay!” as if anxious to tell his name, and dropped on the branch close to Rattle, who was beginning to eat a fresh bunch of apple blossoms.

“Egg sucker!” screamed the Jay.

“Nut thief!” chattered the Squirrel, humping his back with rage.

“Where are my four fine fresh eggs?” shrieked the bird.

“Where are my first quality beech nuts?” squeaked the Squirrel. And without more ado they began to fight desperately.

“Stop, you horrid things!” called Tommy-Anne, resolutely. “You are both wrong. Father says people mostly are when they fight, and that they do it because they can’t make excuses even to themselves.

“Stop this minute, or I will tell the butcher-boy where you live, and he will hunt you away. He can find anything, even a Hummingbird’s nest.”

This dreadful threat ended the quarrel, and the fighters began very meekly to explain; but another voice coming from the grass said, “The Jay did not steal the nuts; he gathered them himself from the top of the great Beech tree on the
lawn. I ought to know, because I am one of them that he dropped."

"Yes, we are some that he dropped," said all the little Beech trees in chorus.

"Then," said Rattle, bowing politely to the Jay, with one hand on his heart, "I will say that I did not suck your eggs. It was Kaw-Ondaig, the lame-winged Crow, who did it. I saw him this morning when I was leaping through the treetops for exercise. But you need not make such a fuss about it, Tchin, for you know those eggs would never have hatched, because you and your wife let them grow cold yesterday, while you were worrying that Warbler who wished to build on the ground under your tree. Poor Kaw is old and feeble and cannot go out with the flock down to the cornfields, or over to the shore for mussels. Think twice before you try to make a fight over bad eggs, friend Tchin!"

Tommy-Anne asked the Jay, after he had grown quiet, if he could introduce her to any birds of his acquaintance and tell her where they nested. He, however, seemed to be very
uncomfortable, and after hesitating a long time said:—

"Mistress Tommy-Anne, the fact is I am not very popular with my tribe; they suspect me of sometimes meddling with their nests, and so keep their secrets from me. One thing I do know, however: to-morrow is an anniversary day in Birdland. Be early in the meadow between the river and wood, and you will see and hear enough, I promise you. Be early, mind!" And Tchin (which was the Red Brother's name for him) flew away silently enough, as he can when he wishes.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself now?" said Tommy-Anne to Rattle.

"Not a bit, not a bit! Somebody stole my nuts," he blustered.

"You were both wrong," she continued; "for you could not prove what you said; and by the way, pray why are you eating those apple blossoms?"

"I need variety, missy, the same as the House People. Nuts are my meat, but sometimes I like a fresh egg or a flower salad." And he continued munching the fleshy base of the blossoms that would some day have grown into apples.

"For shame! Rattle, I shall make you move away if you act so. Father will not let any one
rob nests or hurt *anything* on his land; do you hear, sir?"

"Look at Waddles! look at Waddles!" cried Rattle, half in surprise and half to divert attention from himself.

Indeed, Waddles seemed to be very sad and quite spent. He was coming up the slope painfully and completely out of breath, his tongue hanging out, his head down. Great bunches of burdock seeds fringed his tail, making it look like a bit of frayed rope, while his usually smooth white coat was rough and muddy, and his black and tan ears gray with dust.

Tommy-Anne ran to meet him, half sorry and half inclined to scold. "Was the ham bone good?" she asked. "Eating it seems to have been very hard work. Or perhaps you have been burying it in a safer place out of the cat's reach. You know Tiger can dig very deep, and her claws are *very* sharp."

"I didn't eat the ham," gasped Waddles, between his pantings. "Tiger has it; she is a terrible cat, almost as big as a cow, and her claws are as long as pitchforks." Here he lifted
his lovely little face to show deep scratches on his nose.

"You poor dear!" moaned Tommy-Anne, hugging him. "I'm sorry for your nose; but the next time you won't steal ham and have to hide it in an out-of-the-way place for Tiger's benefit, will you?

"Think," said she; "I have heard part of a secret since you have been away, and I can't know the whole of it until to-morrow. Tchin, the Jay, said, 'Be in the meadow between the river and the woods very early.'

"Remember, Waddles! very early! Oh, what if it should rain!"

Boom! boom! sounded the dinner gong down at the house. Waddles brightened up and cocked his ears so suddenly that Tommy-Anne laughed outright, and said mockingly: "So you wish some dinner; I thought that perhaps you would rather stay here and wait for Tiger to bring the ham bone back.

"No, you would rather come with me? Then wash your face and make yourself a bit tidy."

The dog began obediently to lick his paw and make a sponge of it to clean his smutty nose.

Boom! bang! but this time the sound was followed by a clear, melodious whistle.
"Hurry, Waddles; don’t prink any more; don’t you hear the whistle? Father and mother have come home early; now there may be pudding and cake for dinner.” She answered the call with a shrill yoh-yoh-yoh cry, that was a combination of Screech Owl and Indian war-whoop,—a sound that had been very useful to her more than once when she was lost in the far-away woods,—and then hurried to the house, turning Tchin’s words “Tomorrow early” into a merry song.
III

THE LEGEND OF OPECHEE

The Robin's nest was in the apple tree, so that he was near at hand when his name was called. He had rather an awkward manner, and his speaking voice was harsh in comparison to his singing, and he seemed embarrassed also at having to talk to so large a company, and at a loss where to begin.

Tommy-Anne quickly put him at his ease by exclaiming: "You dear fat thing! I'm always so glad to see you, for you are one of my cheerful birds, you know."

"Am I really," said the Robin, looking pleased; "but what are your cheerful birds?" And all the others seemed anxious to know.
Tommy-Anne, feeling rather shy at having to explain herself in company, hesitated a little and then said: "You see last winter was the first snow season that I had been here, and I was rather lonely, because I had not made all the friends that I have now. I saw strange birds in the trees and strange footprints in the snow, but before I could learn the birds' names they were gone, and the tracks in the snow were drifted over before I could follow them.

"But I knew you, Mr. Robin, and the Chickadee, the Song-Sparrow and the Bluebird, and after a little, I guessed the Goldfinch (though he had shed his yellow feathers), because he always flies the same way, with a little dip as if he meant to drop, and then jerks up again as if he had changed his mind at the last minute. So whenever I saw any one of you five darlings, I used to say: 'Brace up, Waddles; if those little birds can be cheerful outside there, without any fire, I think we can be cheerful too.'"

"I wasn't gloomy," protested Waddles; "there are lots of things to chase in winter, and the trails don't mix up as they do now, and you very seldom bothered me by following."

"Be quiet and don't interrupt, sir. So when father saw any of you in the evergreens, or pick-
ing up the seed we scattered for you at the door, he always called, 'Come and look, little daughter; here are some of your cheerful birds.'"

At this Mr. Robin grew very friendly and spoke quite at his ease. "I'm a popular bird," he said, "though I could never understand exactly why."

"Neither could I," said the Thrasher, jealously. "I'm much better looking and I have a stronger voice and lots more style. Some things go by contraries, and popularity is one of them."

"Order! order! I am surprised at you," said the Song-Sparrow.

"I think in the beginning," continued the Robin, placidly, "the reason the House People liked me was because I was somehow confused with my English relative Robin Redbreast, who is famous in history for having so kindly furnished a leaf quilt to the poor Babes in the Wood; and who, later on, was the victim of the tragedy whose anniversary we are celebrating. Now my cousin Robin Redbreast had the advantage of me in personal beauty, as his children have to this day, being smaller, sleeker, brighter in colour, in shape more like Owaissa, the Bluebird.

"I have tried to look up the early history of
our family, but like many such things the records may be read in several ways, and I am indebted to Wawa, whose ancestors were present in great numbers at the time, for the following information.

"The Red Brothers were fond of us, holding us birds of love and good omen, and they protected us, giving us the name of Opechee. When the first House People came to these parts after their hardships on the rocky shore and barren beaches, they found us here in vast flocks, and seeing that we were confiding and that our breast colour was somewhat like, they called us Robin, after the Robin Redbreast of their home gardens.

"Another reason for my popularity is, that while I am not very clever, or quick to see things, I am good-tempered, and never, even under the greatest temptation, suck eggs, or show resentment if other birds build near my nest. And as I appear a trifle stupid, very little is expected of me, and so when I sing my best, every one marvels.

"Finally, I am not particular about my food. Of course I prefer nice juicy worms and bugs, with a fruit dessert, but I can live on almost anything, keeping up a brave heart in winter, on a frugal dish of frozen honeysuckle berries. Thus some members of my family are with you
at all seasons, when most of the Song Birds have been forced away by hunger; so it is true that we are one of those that the House Child calls 'the cheerful birds,' one of the few who, nesting nearby, linger to give some scraps of summer melody to cheerless days.

"My grandparents were an old-fashioned, stay-at-home couple. They lived down in the village, in the Parson's garden. This garden has always been thought a very comfortable home for our family, and especially so when the old man and his daughter lived there.

"When his neighbours said, 'Why not set traps or spread nets to catch the birds that eat your fruit,' he answered, 'These birds work with me in the garden, keeping away the slug and worm, while their sweet music gladdens my heart; why should they not have wages? Let them take their tithes.'"

"Were you with the flock that sat all huddled together in the pines, the day in March, when the last snow fell and the sun melted it away in an hour?" asked Tommy-Anne.

"Yes, that was our flock; we were all strong, newly moulted males, some old, some the young of last year. For several months we had been living many miles west of here, in the great ever-
green swamps, with the flocks of crested Cedar birds and Blue Jays.

"Shawondasee came creeping into our retreat, saying: 'Gheezis turns in his course to-day and faces summerward. I go northward to prepare a garden; will you not keep me company?'

"So we followed him; but when we reached this orchard after our long flight, our hearts grew heavy, for Peboan was still here, and his breath hung heavily on everything, so we huddled in the pines for shelter, chiding Shawondasee for deceiving us. But he answered only one word—Wait!"

"While we waited, you came out, and that House Fourfoot, Waddles, ran before you, showing you where we were hidden. This made us sadder yet, for we said, 'If Fourfoot can see us so easily in the pines, how can we hope to hide ourselves in nesting-time?'

"Then Gheezis pushed through the clouds, putting Kabibonokka to flight, loosened Peboan's grasp, and we began calling to each other, while Owaissa, the Bluebird, peeped into his house box under the eaves to see if all was in order for the few straws he calls his nest. After that our anxious season came quickly. We are often very unfortunate with our nests. They are made of
sticks and grass plastered and lined with clay, you know, the commonest kind that you see. For some strange reason we have partly forgotten the law that Heart of Nature gave us for the hiding of our nests, or the exact spot where it is best to place them. So you will find them everywhere, in bushes near the ground, and in tall treetops.

"This year I have had very poor luck," sighed the Robin. "My mate is a young bird, and it was her first experience in housekeeping. Her family lived in the Miller's grape arbour, so to please her we located our first nest there. We were rather hurried in building, owing to some heavy rainstorms, and we did not realize, until the nest was done and one green-blue egg laid, that we had chosen an open place where no vine leaves would grow to shelter our young.

"That same afternoon, as I was returning home, I chanced to look ahead. There, stalking through the grass toward the nest, was Tiger, the Miller's cat! To me-she seemed as big and savage as Rufus Lynx, the mountain wild cat."

("I quite agree with you," growled Waddles, under his breath.)

"He lashed his tail and lifted his paws so carefully that the grass did not even suspect his com-
ing, then crouched to spring. For a wonder I called, 'Quick! quick!' at the right moment, and my mate immediately flew to me without looking behind her. At the same time Tiger made a leap, dragging the nest to the ground and breaking the egg.

"We next tried your garden, for Johnny Wren told us that the House People who lived there did not keep cats, but only a bandy-legged Fourfoot, who was so short and fat that he could not reach up far, even to look into a nest."

"Who? What?" barked Waddles, jumping up, "Did Johnny Wren say that? We won't let him perch on our clothes poles to sing, any more, will we, mistress?"

"I didn't mention names," the Robin hastened to say, "though if ever you look at yourself in the pond, you must see that you are both bandy and very fat!" And then the Robin could not understand why he had only made matters worse by the explanation.

"We built the second nest on the end of a well-protected pine branch. That night a soaking rain drenched it through and through, making it into a mud pie. The branch was too slender, and the wet nest weighed it down, and then dropped to the ground. Now we have a firm
lodging in this tree, and to-morrow our four eggs will be birds, we hope. My wife has been very anxious all day on account of the noise of the anniversary, but I said, 'Stay still, my dear, and keep your temper, and I will attend to everything.' You can see the tip of her beak and the end of her tail from here, if you look up."

"How lovely!" said Tommy-Anne. "May I come to-morrow and see your children hop out of the eggs?"

"You could come, of course, but I would much prefer that you should wait a bit. Our children do not hop out of the eggs; they are quite top-heavy and helpless,—all eyes and mouth. It makes us very nervous, clearing away the shells and all that, without having any one to watch us. I'm afraid if you came you might make us upset ourselves again."

"What do your children look like when they are young? Are they all soft and downy like my little chickens and ducklings?"
"Oh no, Tommy-Anne; our young are naked, and their great round eyes are tightly closed, and it is several weeks before they are fully feathered and fit to fly."

"How very funny! I saw some little Sea Gulls last summer, when we were at the shore, and father took me sailing to the great island; and they could walk down to the water's edge and find food as soon as they were hatched. In fact, the eggs lay on the sand without hardly any nest for the poor things to stay in if they wished."

"Heart of Nature has arranged it so that the
birds whose parents build poor nests, or none at all, gain the feathers in the egg, but those of us who belong to the Brotherhood of Builders are able to give our young warm lodgings, so they are hatched naked and helpless, and gain their strength and feathers in the nest."

"What is the Brotherhood of Builders?" asked Tommy-Anne.

"The history of it is the Oriole's story, and I have not finished my own yet. To-morrow when those eggs are hatched I shall be able to go to my club, and in a few days all the members will have gathered again."

"Your club? Do birds have clubs?"

"Certainly they do. Our club house is in the belt of old cedar trees between your house and the road."

"Why do you go there when the little birds are hatched? I should think you would have to stay at home and help feed them."

"I do stay at home all day, but mother Robins always insist upon putting their babies to sleep themselves; they say we men are in the way. Then we meet together, the males of each community, or flock, by themselves, and choosing some thick trees for shelter, we make a musical club, gathering at dusk to sing our evensong, and
breaking up after matins, each one returning to his family.

"By and by when the first brood leave the nest, we take them to roost with us at the club, leaving their mothers free to tend the second brood, and when the nesting is over, we all rove together in great flocks, keeping away until the summer moult is over, but coming to your lawn again before the Moon of Falling Leaves."

"Please, what family do you belong to?"

"We are of the Silver-tongued,—the family of Thrushes."

"Thrushes? You do not look like the other Thrushes that I know," said Tommy-Anne. "The Wood Thrush that sings every afternoon, beyond the garden, has a brown back and a speckled breast, and the Echo Thrush, in the river woods, is tawny on the back and is marked with little arrow spots under his chin. Your back is dark, and your breast is the same colour as flower pots, and then you sing differently too. Every Robin has a song of his own, but the Thrushes have each one tune that they all keep repeating."

"It is true that our colour is different from our brothers, but so is that of Owaissa, who is also of our family. We sing strange songs, truly, each one telling his story in his own words, and no one
of the House People understanding it, or you would know why our breasts are ruddy and have lost their spots. The reason of this lies in the farback, and even the legend of it is so old that the wisest of the White-headed Eagles, who told it to me, did not know when it first was shaped to words."

"Please tell us the legend," urged Tommy-Anne, glancing appealingly toward the Song-Sparrow, who, seeing that Gheezis was looking at the earth slantwise, said: "There really is not time—unless perhaps the Kingbird would be willing to wait and tell his story when the birds of the air meet for their flying practice."

"I would much rather wait," replied the Kingbird, "for then I shall have more to tell. Beside, I'm belated now, my nest is not finished, and it must be done to-night, as I have promised several friends to chase Crows for them to-morrow morning."

"Chase Crows? What have the Crows been doing?"

"The same as usual, the cowards! Sneaking into Robins' nests and sucking the eggs, stealing a young bird here, another there. But it was not for nothing that the Red Brothers called me the Sachem. Ondaig flies in terror, covering his
eyes as best he may, when two or three of us are abroad. You too, friend Tchin, you are not above bird-nesting.” And he made a rapid pass at the Blue Jay, who screamed with surprise.

“Now you will have plenty of time for your story,” said Tommy-Anne to the Robin, dropping from her branch to the ground.

“Once upon a time—” began the Robin.

Tommy-Anne chuckled contentedly, pulling Waddles over, until his head rested upon her lap. “All nice comfortable stories begin ‘Once upon a time,’” she said.

“Once upon a time,” continued the Robin, not heeding the interruption, “before the old trees had been cut in the forests, and the wild animals roamed among them; when the Panther, the Wolf, and the Moose were in plenty, and the great Black Bears picked the wild-grape clusters, and robbed A-moe, the Honey Bee, of the packages of sweets that he had hidden in tree hollows; before the House People came over the salt water to teach the Red Brothers to break faith with Heart of Nature, and kill the Wild Wood Brethren for other purposes than food and covering; on the top of Wild Cat Mountain, in his skin-covered wigwam, lived Kaniwa, the Chief of his tribe, and his only child Wenonah.
"Wenonah had grown up in this place alone with her father; for her mother had disappeared one spring night when Wenonah was a babe. Stolen by wild beasts some thought, but others shook their heads, saying that she was the daughter of Weeng, the Spirit of Sleep, who had come before day-dawn and carried her away; but from that day Kaniwa's wigwam was lonely.

"Wenonah left the wigwam reluctantly and returned eagerly. She loved Heart of Nature and the things he ruled, more than those things belonging to the third ruler, Heart of Man."

("Heart of Man! that means people; now I know another why," whispered Tommy-Anne to herself.)

"The beasts all loved Wenonah. The Wild Cat smoothed his snarl into a smile, and carried his furry cubs in his mouth to her that she might caress them. The shiest Moose would kneel before her to have his head rubbed. Chetowaik, the Plover, every season brought for her eating some of his most treasured eggs; Subbe-ka-she, the Spider, wove rare lace for her; and Shi-sheeb, the painted Wood Duck, moulted his gayest feathers for her decking. The timorous Gray Rabbits come forth in the moonlight, circling about her and doing their dances and jumping
The timorous Gray Rabbits came forth in the moonlight. — p. 58.
tricks to please her; while even the Bad One crept silent and abashed from her path. So the old women wagged their heads again and said, 'She is like her mother and not of us, some night she will vanish, before she is grown a woman.'

"Of all living things, she loved the birds the best, and among them we came first, and next to us the Bluebirds. In the Moon of Leaves we both flocked near her, as she pulled the blossoms from the wild plum trees, or sought the pink and white Miskodeed (the flower you call spring beauty) in the meadow.

"In Moon of Strawberries we followed her through all the woods as she made flower-garlands and, giving them messages to her vanished mother, threw them in the swift river.

"In Moon of Falling Leaves, when the women ground samp, pounding it in a rock-bowl hollowed on the cliff, we would surround her, lest unawares she moved too near the edge.

"Early one summer, trouble entered Kaniwa's heart. At noon, when he used to go abroad, the old warrior sat at home, counting the notches of his time-stick, an anxious look upon his face."

"Please, what is a 'time-stick?'" asked Tommy-Anne.
“The Red Brothers counted the time by notches on a stick, one cut for each snow season. When twenty were cut, they laid the stick away and began another, as in Birdland we count by the nesting seasons.

“Wenonah saw that her father was sad, but she kept on singing to A-moe and his work-people, who were buzzing about the fragrant wild-grape flowers. When she raised her voice, the bees flew away in alarm, but when she dropped it to a murmuring like to their own speech, they crowded about her, and the words that she sang were these:

“The poor little bee
That lives in the tree,
The poor little bee
That lives in the tree,
Has but one arrow in his quiver!"

"Fifteen snows have gone," muttered the warrior; "what if the old wives say truly, and my child should leave me?"

"Wenonah heard the words and started, a wild look coming into her eyes, but she quickly grew calm and laughed merrily to comfort him.

"Why do you laugh, my daughter?"

1 Kaniga nursery rhyme.
"'I laugh with my brother, Shawondasee, the South Wind,' said Wenonah, letting her long black hair float out on his breath as he hurried past.

"But when the Moon of Snow-Shoes came again, and Kaniwa cut a new notch on his stick, the sixteenth since her birth, he grew anxious, and once more she laughed wildly, stroking her tent companion, a Gray Squirrel, and answering her father gaily, 'I laugh at Mahng, the Loon; do you not hear him wailing down by the watercourse?'

"Still, again, her father was satisfied; but when Segwun, the Spring, gladdened the land, Wenonah gathered us the closer, stroked our feathers, whispering, 'Do not fail me, dear brothers! Little brothers, you will not fail me?' And though not knowing what she meant, we promised.

"One night when we were roosting in the trees, a shadow came among us. It was Wenonah, and she called, 'Brothers! Brothers! The time has come! I need you. Wait by the wigwam when the darkness thins, at the hour when night and morning wrestle for the owning of the heavens; and be silent!'

"So we gathered noiselessly, as the night went on. Wawonaissa, the Whip-poor-will, cried, and then ceased, and long the Marsh Frogs peeped,
before a glow spread upward from the earth's edge to where the Morning Star blazed.

"Out from the tent curtains stepped Wenonah, her filmy garments hanging about her like the petals of the wind-flower, but her face shone like the Star she gazed at. We were frightened, but she spoke lightly to us: 'I go to my mother beyond the Morning Star; come thou part way with me, that my flight may be unseen.'

"Stooping, she took some earth and rubbed a little on the breast of each one of us, saying: 'This is in token that you shall return again in safety to earth.' With that, she stepped from the cliff, Shawondasee bearing her aloft, as our wings bear us, and surrounding her we flew eastward.

"Always it grew lighter, and we felt the breath of Gheezis hot upon our breasts, and the moist earth upon them burned red in colour like brick-clay. Seeing this, Wenonah, turning, said, 'You must leave me now, returning earthward.'

"'No, we will follow you,' we cried, all the warm-hearted Bluebirds beginning to weep sadly.

"'You may not follow where I go, for the speech of that country is unknown to you. Return, my brothers!'

"'A token! give us a token!' we cried.
“Still looking at us, she saw the reddening of our breasts, and said, ‘Forget your stripes and spots, my Robins, and wear forever on your faithful breasts the earth-colour, reddened in my service by the touch of morning!’

‘And you, my Bluebirds, sweethearts, carry on your shoulders the blue sky of my new home to be the spring sign of your Earth Mother.’ And she gently rubbed the rusty edges from their feathers until they were bright blue.

“Once more she said, ‘Return, my brothers,’ and then we no longer saw her, and we obeyed.

“When we reached the mountain, it was full morning, and there was a sound of weeping about the wigwam, and within lay a shape they called Wenonah, and they said, ‘She is dead!’

“But we knew better.

“To this day we have kept our ruddy breasts, and Owaissa his blue back and sad note; and if our young show, at first, some of the old-time stripes, they quickly moult away.”

When the Robin ended, all the birds remained silent and seemed deeply impressed. But the story of his ancestors did not trouble Mr. Robin or make him sad, and after giving his listeners a little bobbing bow, he was soon on the ground, trying to jerk out an earthworm, that was twice
his own length, and held itself down as firmly as if possessed of six feet and a dozen pairs of hands.
IV

ASPETUCK

The Moon of Strawberries, the month that House People call June, began on the selfsame Saturday that Tommy-Anne and Obi went to find the Wood Duck's nest. Waddles was better, and though rather weak in the legs, he was very much disappointed when his mistress flatly refused to take him on the long walk.

"We are going a great way up the river; there will be rocks and bushes in the way; and you would be sure to get your feet sopping wet, Waddlekins dear," said Tommy-Anne; "so you see that you are better off at home."
"I see very plainly, mistress, that you are going hunting, and it is for something that you don't wish me to see." And Waddles put on his saddest expression. But it was of no use; the door of the woodhouse closed, and his feelings were doubly injured by hearing the key turned. Then Tommy-Anne's feet went patter, patter down the road as she ran to join Obi, who had been waiting for her by the turnpike bridge for some time.

"Do not run so fast, little daughter," called her father, from the study window; "you have plenty of time. Obi has earned a whole holiday, and your mother has given him a basket of luncheon for you both."

Tommy-Anne instantly rushed to the window, and threw handfuls of kisses, calling, "You dear, dear father-mother!"

She had often used this term, when she spoke of her father and mother at the same time, ever since one day, when she was a very small child, some foolish person had asked her which she loved best, her father or her mother; when she answered indignantly, "Which? they aren't a which; father-mother is the same person!"

"See the tadpoles," said Obi, who was kneeling by the pool above the bridge, and watching some
little dusky shapes that darted through the water. "Their legs have sprouted, but their tails haven't gone yet."

"What are tadpoles?" asked Tommy-Anne, also kneeling, and looking at the queer things with oblong bodies, and narrow finny tails, while two arms seemed to be budding out in front, and two legs behind.

"Tads are young frogs; it is the way they look a little while after they are hatched. The frogs' eggs are hung on the leaves of water-plants, and when the eggs are first hatched they seem like leaves themselves; then they begin to float about in the water, growing all the time and changing. Tails sprout, and then legs; and as the legs grow bigger, the tail grows smaller, until it all turns into legs, and the tad is a frog, ready to hop."

"Oh yes! and then they hop over to the swamp, and cry, 'Bree-r! Bree-r!' all night long."

"Not this kind; those are tree-frogs, but these are children of the big bull-frogs that live in ponds."

"Dahinda's children. He is ugly and fat, but these children are positively silly," said Tommy-Anne, as one came to the surface and took a long breath, which she mistook for a yawn. "Do
tadpoles ever swallow themselves?" she asked, wondering at the size of its mouth.

"Now, Tommy-Anne, suppose you think a minute; how could they! If they swallowed themselves, where would they be swallowed into?"

Of course she could not tell, and Obi continued to laugh at her as they wandered up the river, peering in the rocky crevices and poking into holes with their sticks.

"See that bit of wood, underneath this stump in the deep pool," said Tommy-Anne. "It keeps close to the bottom; why doesn't it float?"

Obi looked a minute, and then lay down flat on his stomach, motioning for her to keep very still. "It isn't a stick, it's a big pickerel," he whispered; "but it wants the little perch to think that it is a stick, and come near enough to be eaten. Watch out now!"

Two of these careless fish were swimming lazily down stream, gaping and gazing idly from side to side. A flash and a snap! The surface of the water eddied, and one of the little fishes was in the mysterious inside of Mr. Pickerel, who steadied himself by two or three motions of his tail, and pointed his nose to the bank, silently as before.
“What a biter that pickerel is!” exclaimed Tommy-Anne.

“Biter? I should say he was. Look a-here!” Obi showed some round white scars that made a line across the ends of his left hand fingers. “One of those fellows did that to me, way back in the spring. I hooked him for keeps, and he thought the smartest thing he could do would be to swallow me, so he began with those fingers.”

“It is lovely, here by the water,” said Tommy-Anne, after a few minutes, drawing a long breath of contentment; “everything is so new and green; and there are simply acres of ferns in there. Do look yonder; they climb up hill as far as we can see!”

“Yes, the ferns are bully!” said Obi, approvingly; “but we are after the Duck’s nest, and when you come to the woods, if you don’t find what you started after first, the other things will make you forget all about it. I’ll tell you what we can do. Suppose I take the lunch basket and find the easiest way to the Duck’s tree and come back for you. I generally go round the other way by the foot of the mountain, but that is a rough place, and I am not pop sure where we strike it from this side.”
"That will be very nice," said Tommy-Anne, "for there are plenty of things for me to look at here." She was very glad to be left alone, for there were several questions that she wished to ask the river, but did not care to have Obi see that she could, or have him know about the Magic Spectacles, for they were a secret between Heart of Nature and herself.

"Who are you?" she asked, trailing her fingers lightly through the water, which answered her touch like a live thing.

"I am your Water Brother; without me you could not live," it answered softly, humming a little tune as it tumbled over the pebbles, then growing silent as it neared the Pickerel's pool.

"Next to Light, which is the twin brother of Heat, I am the oldest thing in the world. Heart of God fashioned us three from his own being and then making the Plan, gave it to Heart of Nature to work out, saying: —

"Here are the beginnings that I have created; follow now my plan through the long timeless days that I give you for its development. Go upward, little by little; from shapelessness to form, from the grass to the tree, from the creeping reptile to the great beasts; but pause thou there, for to complete my share I will create
anew and stamp the animal who is to be the ruler of this globe of mine with my own coin-
age. He shall be called Heart of Man, and, though the youngest thing of all, he shall be the bond betwixt thee and me, for two natures shall be in him,—mine and thine.

"'Born shall he be according to thy laws, O Heart of Nature, my servant, and die, seemingly, after thy way; but he wears my image as a spark within him, and when he dies, only your part returns to you,—my part, my coinage, returns to me, its Home. And thus my seal-mark separates him from all other animals, for this seal-mark is the Soul!'

"Then we three forces began to work, with Heart of Nature as interpreter of the Plan, and finally, when Heart of Man came, time came with him, and he set his measurements and said, 'I will divide off spaces for convenience' sake; so much time shall be a day, a month, a year.' But before man all was the Eternity of Heart of God. Simple as all this is, House People will make things hard to understand, because they ignore the Plan, and measure everything from their own end and test by their own plan, instead of Heart of God's.
"Still through it all I am your Water Brother; I am here, there, everywhere,—in the rain clouds, in the rainbow that follows them; I am the sea itself, holding the earth in my embrace; I am in the tree blood and in your own blood, flowing, always flowing, and I am the emblem of the life that shall be."

There was not a sound for a moment; the river and Tommy-Anne each waited for the other to speak, then the river broke the stillness.

"I cannot keep quiet long when I come in this shape," he laughed; "for here, I am only a babbling bit of a Water Brother, and though I never forget my origin and history, my work now is with small things. Here, I am a very tattler and a tell-tale. I am a bearer of trivial news, carrying messages from my birthplace, all the way down to the last water gate, where the salt enters my veins.

"So I wander along, giving drink to the Fox and Coon, a bath to the Hawk and Hummingbird alike; turning the wheel for the Miller, making pools for the big fish and sweeping the little ones into my shallows where their enemies may not follow. Everything brings me news, which I repeat to the Wind if there is no one else near to
listen. Tell-tale, tell-tale, the pebbles make me call; the pebbles that are the rock fragments I have polished for my bed.

"Listen! as I pass the stony places you can hear me singing tell-tale, tell-tale, for days together; but though I am a gossip, I am wise enough never to tell all that I know, for some things belong to Silence!"

"Yes," answered Tommy-Anne; "I can understand what you are singing now, but all the spring you have been roaring and scolding so, that I could not make out a single word."

"I am not answerable for what I do in the spring," said the river, shrugging his shoulders until they were covered with foam; "in the spring I am really not quite myself. A lot of strange snow water comes racing down the hills into my course, and I grow quite mixed up and I know that I misbehave; I always do. Only last month, there was such a crowd of water tramps, all from different places, trying to go to the sea by my roadway, that we lifted the old turnpike bridge on our shoulders and set it down again, above the pond in the Miller's meadow.

"Then, when we heard that the road-menders were coming to try and take it back again, we rushed down that night and gave the old thing a
shaking that scattered its ribs along the banks and sent its backbone into the sluice-way, nearly choking the mill to death. It was such fun!"

"What made you do that? I should call it mischief, not fun."

"No, it was fun, and like fun usually, it had wisdom at the bottom of it. The turnpike needed a new bridge, for I could see the sun through the great holes in it. Last summer Gheezis said to me, 'I will do all I can to dry this bridge; do you tell the rains to hurry and rust the nails so that they will fall out, and then you can wash it away, for it is no longer safe.'"

"That is true," said Tommy-Anne; "our horse put his foot through one of the holes and father spoke to the Selectmen about it, but they only put on a worn old board for a patch. I think you are a very clever little river. Please have you any name?"

"Aspetuck is my name here; the Red Brothers gave it to me, and it means that I come from a height. In fact, for the first three miles of my life I do nothing but run down hill, stopping every now and then in some little corner to get my breath."

"How did you begin? Were you a brook or a pond, or did you rain down suddenly and run along?"
"My beginnings were smaller than either of these. I was only a moist spot, on the top of a hill, a bit of grass touched by the Water Spirit. Around me were other moist places which, like myself, could not move, and when the sun shone on us, we grew less and less. I heard the trees rustle and the notes of the birds, but I did not understand them, and they could not see me. The grass that grew about me was a little greener because of my presence, and the small ferns sucked my moisture greedily, but that was all.

"One day the earth, by heating and cooling, added a few more drops to me, then rain fell and gave me new vigour, when the sun burst out again I leaped to meet it, and, without knowing how, I escaped down the hillside.

"Life, motion, how delicious they were! Presently a Song-Sparrow who had been singing in the open field came and bathed in me, spattering my drops far and wide. It was an anxious moment; for, thought I, if he uses up too much of me, there will not be enough to go onward.

"This danger passed, I ran along until I reached some trees, and I wondered how I could ever climb over their high roots. ‘Avoid them,’ said Heart of Nature; ‘go between, and remem-
ber, little brook, your happiness will depend greatly upon knowing *what* to avoid.'

"Then the Birth Spirits thronged about me, offering their gifts. The meadows promised me free passage through the fields and lowlands, with beds of moss, bordered with Iris, and a gay escort of flowers all through the season. For lancers, it would give the stately spiked Arums, with boughs of White Thorn and Shad Bush for flags of truce, and early Marsh-marl-golds for heralds. Tree Frogs should be the fifers, and Dahinda, the great mottled Bull Frog, the drummer, and the fluting Meadowlark and madcap Bobolink the minstrels.

"Heart of Nature said, 'These are beautiful things, and they have their places; but remember also to bear with you, as you flow, all the uncleanness that would make my garden foul, for to wash away and purify is one of the duties of water.'

"The Spirit of the Woods was the Birth Spirit
that I loved the best. It wore the shape of sweeping Hemlocks, who guided me between the jutting rocks and swayed as they bent above, crooning my cradle song. Many stories they told me, and legends that they only speak between themselves, when they twist and threaten, defying all the winds, even Kabibonokka himself. When I slipped from their arms, they moaned and cried, 'Do not forget us when you are a river! Do not forget those who rocked your cradle!' I promised, but when I saw them next, alas! I was filled with sorrow.

"But then I was full of pride. Humph, I thought, 'when you are a river!' What am I now, pray, but a river? And I fretted at the tall grasses that would not move for me, until I was all afoam and thought that an oak leaf that fell on me was one of the ships that the Hemlocks talked about. In hurrying around the corner of a rock, I met half a dozen other streams like myself, who said they were travelling together until they should become a river; and as I could not turn back, I joined them, but feeling quite discouraged to find how small I really was.

"Heart of Nature whispered, 'Do not be discouraged; no one thing in the Plan is anything of itself but depends always upon some other thing.'
And I knew that he was right. What was one drop of water? Yet the river and the ocean are only a great many such drops.

"'Brotherhood,' said Heart of Nature, 'that is the password.'

"After that I understood everything that I heard and saw. At the shallow places the birds bathed and chattered, and I heard a Flycatcher complain that the snakes shed their skins in such thorny places that he could not pull them out for nest-building."

"Why do snakes shed their skins? and are they not very naked without them?"

"They shed them when they are shabby and old, just as the birds moult their feathers, only under the old skin is a bright new one, and all they have to do is to crawl out of the old one through the mouth hole, and there they are in a fresh dress, leaving the old rag in the bushes behind them.

"When I came along between shady banks, I heard a great many complaints from growing things, who wished me to ask justice for them. The Ferns complained because they had no pretty, easy names, such as flowers bear, to keep them in the remembrance of House People."

"Ferns are only ferns," said Tommy-Anne.
“Why do they need names? Some are large, and some small; but they are very much alike, except the Maidenhair, and that has a name already.”

“There it is again; you are like all the rest,” sighed a tall, handsome Brake, bending over Tommy-Anne’s shoulder. “We are as unlike each other as any two flowers in your garden; and though we have no showy blossoms, we hold the little seed lunch baskets on the backs of our leaves, or on stalks by themselves. We carpet the forest, and, with our cousins, the mosses, cover the rocks; but even the Red Brothers neglected to name us, and we have lost hope.”

“I will tell Obi about you,—that may do some good,” said Tommy-Anne; “for he is going to be a wise man and learn everything about wild things, and perhaps some day he will think of some easy names for you. I wonder if he has found the Duck’s nest yet,” said Tommy-Anne, turning to Aspetuck.

“Yes, he has found it; but it is two miles above here, and it is on the other side of the river. He has crossed the stepping-stones, and is half-way back already.”

“Do you know about everything that happens along your banks?”
“Everything. At this moment, above the third bridge, some cows are wading across; at the mill farm they are washing cans; they should not wash milk cans in me—I carry off too much wastage to be fit for that. By the second bridge, in the deep hole, some little boys are swimming. They will soon have bad cramps, for the chill of the snow has not yet wholly left me. A pair of water-snakes have fallen from a grape-vine quite near where you are sitting, and swim down stream. No! do not start, for they are harmless, even if they are quarrelsome and wear ugly grizzled coats.

“Hark! one thing more is happening!” said Aspetuck. “They are sawing wood at the upper mill. How well I remember the day that I learned for the first time what this mill was, and found that I must turn the wheel that rent my old friends, the Hemlocks, into boards. There they lay, barkless, on the bank. This was my first grief! Good-bye, Tommy-Anne; I must hurry down to the grist mill, to grind some corn that is wanted for your cows, and after that I have to sow seed along my banks.

“Do I sow seed? Yes, that I do; the winds, the birds, and I sow more than any other husbandmen in Nature’s garden. We may not plant
our crops in even drills and great fields, like House People, but we are the makers of both the Northern Forest and the Southern Jungle. You have geranium beds on your lawn, and I the beds of lilies in my ponds,—that is all the difference."

"How is it, dear Aspetuck, that you go away and yet you are still here?"

"Ah! you must ask that question of Wabeno, the Magician. I am a mystery,—all the time passing by, yet the whole of me is never anywhere, because part of me is everywhere," said the river, laughing merrily at her wonderment.

Tommy-Anne listened for the sound of Obi's footsteps, and, as she could not hear them, she walked back a little way from the river, and seated herself upon a stump. As she did so, a tall, coarse weed beside her cried, "Don't touch me! I sting! I am a Nettle!"

"Ugh!" said Tommy-Anne, drawing back. "I am much obliged to you for telling me; the only nettles I know about are very much smaller than you."

"I am the Wood-Nettle, and my cousin the great Fence-Nettle is twice as big as I am, almost as tall as a House Man. His prickles are not as
sharp as mine, but he will make you smart if you are heedless enough to fall from some tumble-down fence into his clutches. But if you ever do, remember to put some fresh earth on the spot, and it will take the pain away."

Dry twigs crackled, and in another minute Obi appeared, in a state of elation, for he had found the Duck's nest, and the Ducks were hatched, and would soon leave to go down to water. He was carrying a thick snake that he had killed, holding it carefully by the tip of its tail.

"Please drop that horrid thing, Obi," screamed Tommy-Anne. "I'm sure it is one of those wicked rattlesnakes."

"Oh no, it isn't. I killed it on purpose to show you the difference, so that you need not be afraid of them; for there are plenty of this kind hereabouts. Don't shiver and shake so; it's stone
dead, even if it was a rattler. Come and look at him."

Tommy-Anne, thus persuaded, drew nearer. The first thing that she noticed was that the snake's nose was blunt and horny; then she saw that the head was flat and thick, while its wide, mottled brown body ended in a stumpy tail.

"What sort of a snake is it?" she asked.

"A Hog-nose. Round here we mostly call them blowing adders, 'cause when they are mad they blow up their necks and hiss. They are lazy things, they can't go very fast, and often play dead to make people go away and let them alone, rather than take the trouble to move."

"Obi, are you perfectly sure it is a Hog-nose?" asked Tommy-Anne, anxiously. She had pried open its mouth with a stick, and found that it had some large teeth that looked like fangs.

"You see that it has no pit-mark below its eyes, as our poison snakes have. I'm going to keep this snake and make a skelly of it, so that you can see how its bones work, and its fangs and all that."

"Then you had better hang it up in a tree, or the Sexton Beetles may come and bury it for you."

"That is so," said Obi; "I guess I'll take it with me, for some Owl might come by and grab
it out of the tree.” And they hurried off, Obi telling about the Ducks, who had chosen a new nesting-place across the river, as a Cat Owl had appropriated the old tree.

Such a pretty place as the Wood Ducks had chosen for their home,—close by a pond, where the river had been widened to feed a mill. The old building, with its great wooden water-wheel, was standing yet, on a mossy, stone foundation. Everything about was mossy; every crack held a fern, and all the banks were covered with laurels and blooming wild azaleas.

“See, I left the lunch basket here on this flat rock; it will make a jolly table,” said Obi. “We mustn’t talk any more now, but only whisper. The Duck’s tree is round on the other side, and if we go into the mill, we can look almost into the nest from the window. Here, creep along this beam,—so—the floor is very rotten, but I’ve fixed a place by the window where we can stand.”

Yes, there were some bits of board, secured so that the children could stand comfortably and look through the twisted sash, and yet be perfectly hidden. The nest tree was a chestnut that had lost many branches, and in the stump of one
of them, nearly twenty feet from the ground, there was a hollow, from which was sticking some ends of grass and feathers.

"The nest is in there," said Obi, rather by signs than words.

"No," signalled Tommy-Anne, "the place is too small for a duck to live."

"She lives there, all the same," nodded Obi.

"How will she ever get the ducklings down? They will break their necks."

This time Obi only answered by putting his finger to his lips, for then something happened. A beautiful plump Duck (with a gray head and neck, a small shining green crest, brown back, and mottled gray breast) flew along, giving a cry that sounded like peek-peek oe-eeek! and disappeared in the hollow branch.

"Is that the father duck?"

"No," whispered Obi; "the father is twenty times handsomer,—all red and purple and green, with a long cockatoo on his head; but he is a selfish pig, and goes off as soon as the eggs are laid; he doesn't like babies."

While they were whispering, half of a smooth clay-coloured egg-shell rolled out of the hole, and the mother appeared holding a downy duckling in her beak. She climbed with her sharp
claws to the top of the branch, spread her wings and dropped to the ground, left her burden at the foot of the tree, and returned to the hole.

Nine times she flew down, bringing a duckling, which she placed with its brothers and sisters. On the tenth trip, as she left the hole, a second nestling climbed on her back; but she reached the ground successfully with her double load, and once there, walked off to the pond, her brood following her through the bushes and into the water, as if they had done the same thing every day for a month. In a moment some little noise startled the family, and they dived and disappeared, probably going beyond the turn in the pond.

"Is not that won-d-e-r-ful!" said Tommy-Anne, lost in admiration.

"I'm going to look in the nest to see if there are any eggs that didn't hatch," said Obi, "and then we can have our dinner."

"Tale-to-tell, tale-to-tell!" called Aspetuck from below; "look at Waddles, on the rock!"

Tommy-Anne jumped up so quickly that she almost fell through a hole in the floor, and hurried out to where they had left the luncheon. There sat Waddles by the basket, tired, muddy, and very forlorn.
"How did you get out, you bad dog?" said his mistress, stamping her foot.

"Dug a hole under the door," whined the culprit; "the earth told me the way as far as the other side of the river, and then I saw the basket." And he sniffed and looked unspeakable things with his big brown eyes, now really heavy and sad. "It was very hard digging, mistress."

"Don't you know that you have been sick, and that it cost the whole of one of father's dollars to pay the Blacksmith for coming to see you, and you will never be able to earn a dollar?"

Waddles seemed crushed, and did not answer except by wagging his tail.

Then Tommy-Anne simply had to laugh, he looked so pitiful, and said, "Never mind for this time, because I can't whip a sick dog, even if he is bad. You shall have the top lid of my sandwiches for your dinner, and perhaps Obi will be kind enough to carry you home."

And Waddles was so meek, that he seemed pleased with bread and butter, which he usually scorned.

After dinner followed a great hunt for wild-flowers, turtles, and tree-toads, and then the question was how to get home. Obi had found
three eggs in the Duck's nest that would never hatch; then there was the snake, the lunch basket, a snake skin, a small snapping turtle that Tommy-Anne had found, and Waddles, who was really used up by his trip, his front and back legs going in different directions when he tried to walk.

"Put the eggs in the basket with the snake skin, tie a string to the tail of the Hog-nose, and I will carry him too. Then you can put my turtle in your pocket and carry Waddles; he will be a big enough load for you."

"But I'm not as fat as I was," sighed Waddles, as the procession started, looking over Obi's shoulder and thinking it a great disgrace to be carried. They marched home in single file, and Tommy-Anne wondered why her parents laughed so heartily when she stopped under the study window to call, "We've come home, father-mother, and we've had a spl-e-n-did time!"

But when she went up stairs to make herself neat for tea, she saw the reason. "Umph!" she said, "I look—just like a moulting chicken." Which was a fact; for the heel was off one shoe, half of her hat brim hung down in a loop, her hair was full of twigs, and her blouse was torn across the back.

"Never mind," she said, struggling with her
brush; “my hair will-just-have-to-let-itself-be-unsnarled, and to-day was worth my very best gown, and this was only a very weakly blouse, anyway.” And as she toiled and struggled with her tangled mane, she could hear her Water Brother across the road singing to the pebbles.
V

THE FLOWER MARKET

In these June days Tommy-Anne visited the rose-bed every morning the first thing after breakfast, and she watched the buds so closely that Obi said if she was not careful she would look holes through them. One morning, however, a great straggling bush, with small dark green leaves, was completely covered with pale yellow flowers, that opened rather flatly, showing the golden fringe at the heart. Tommy-Anne ran to the bush in delight, and buried her face in the nearest cluster, but drew back even more quickly, her dear little pug nose turning up with an injured expression as if it had been cruelly cheated, as she said, "You will never
do for Ruby-throat's breakfast; you smell a-wfully, and your thorns sting like nettles. Wouf!"

And she shuddered and wiped the afflicted member with a large red cotton handkerchief.

She preferred these handkerchiefs above any other sort. In the first place, they did not lose themselves easily, a matter of great importance; then she could carry almost anything in them that she could lift,—from eggs, fruit, and such like, to mossy stones and clumps of ferns. They also made admirable towels, when she had been fishing with her hands for tadpoles or frogs, or wading in the river, and lastly they made very effective signal flags.

Next morning brought better luck. Jacqueminot buds began to peep out from their cool dark green leaves, and one great pink cabbage rose had slipped its roundness from the five green claws that held it in bud. Here was quite enough for a bouquet.

Selfish Tommy-Anne! Her father, who was also watching the roses, came through the garden, cut the pink beauty and its long stem with one flash of his knife, and carried it indoors to her mother. Of course the red roses would do, but Ruby-throat might have felt more complimented by the larger flower; or he might have a choice
in roses, and prefer pink to crimson. Well, it could not be helped.

Obi was coming through the fields towards the garden; he had something in his hand. "Was it? Could it be?" thought Tommy-Anne. Yes, he was carrying a bunch of early wild roses, and in a second they came flying over the fence toward her, and Obi turned into the cart track that led to the barnyard.

"Thank you, thank you e-v-e-r so much!" called Tommy-Anne, waving her handkerchief as a joy signal. "Where d-i-d you get them?"

Obi did not seem to hear the question. A great change had come over him since he had been allowed to study at Happy House (for this was the name Tommy-Anne had given her home). She noticed that he was very deaf in working hours, but recovered his hearing entirely on holidays.

"Now I have enough for a bouquet," she said, unfastening the wild roses, which were tied with more than a yard of stout string into a turnip-like lump, and doing them up prettily with a red bud stuck in here and there; "I wonder why Obi made such a cabbagey bouquet."

"He made it to throw well," said a thin voice close to her ear. "If you tried to throw yours,
it would go as many ways as there are flowers in it."

A whirring noise followed the voice; a sound such as the wheels of an alarm clock make before it strikes. Then there was a flutter, a gleam of emerald and gold, and Tommy-Anne saw that Ruby-throat himself was breakfasting on her roses, without even waiting for an invitation.

"I heard that you wished to visit the Flower Market with me," he said, dipping his needle-like tongue into the heart of each rose, while he never for a second stopped the hum-m-m-m, that his wings made; "and I thought it would be polite, as you are a female, for me to call."

"Yes, thank you, I do wish to go there very much, for there are so many *whys* that I want to ask you. But, please who told you about *me*?"

"Hum-m-m-m um, who? The message came to me quite direct; if I remember rightly, the little Oak up back on the hill, with whom you were talking one day, told an Ant who lived near, the Ant told a yellow Spider who spreads his nets every night on Miou's lilac bush in the garden,
the Spider chattered about it to his wife, and the Wind heard him in going by, and told it to a bit of dandelion down he was carrying; I caught the down and took it home to line my nest, and it told me!"

"Do you call that coming direct?" laughed Tommy-Anne. "I should think that a very 'round Robin Hood's barn' sort of way."

"Oh no; it is quite direct for us. When Heart of Nature's messengers fetch and carry, even if the message passes through a hundred beaks and tongues, it never grows either larger or smaller than when it started; his servants add nothing, take nothing; simply repeat.

"Thanks, very nice breakfast, delicious roses; now that I have done, what can I do for you?" said Ruby-throat.

"Take me to the Flower Market first, if you please, and then tell me all the why's," she said, drawing her wide hat forward so that it shaded her eyes, and preparing to start.

"We are in the Flower Market now."

"In the flower garden, yes; but it is the market that I wish to see. The place where the flowers sell honey and buy the life-dust to fill the lunch baskets for the little seeds," she explained slowly, and very politely, thinking that Ruby-throat had misunderstood.
"We are in the Flower Market now," insisted Ruby-throat, perching in the shade of the honeysuckle. "Wherever there is a tree, or bush, or plant, or a blade of grass in bloom, there is the Flower Market. All day long and all through the nights, from the time Peboan leaves until he brings snow again, the buying and selling goes on; yes, and even then messages are carried over snowy fields to the brave Witch Hazel."

"I thought," said Tommy-Anne, much crest-fallen, "that you knew of some one place where all the different kinds of flowers were collected, something like a flower show, where they are all in one big room."

"Are there any butterflies in a flower show, or moths or bees to carry messages?"

"Oh no! the flowers are only there for people to admire."

"Tommy-Anne, when flowers are at their work filling the lunch baskets, as Heart of Nature bids them, they cannot possibly all live in one place, because they are made to draw their food from different soils, and to suit different conditions; and as they come into bloom at different seasons, different messengers must serve them. How do you think that an April Violet, who loves the shade, the Ox-eyed Daisy of June, and the Rose
Mallow, that takes its walk through the marshes in August, could meet in the same Flower Market?

“No; the Flower Market begins in late February or early March, when the monk of the swamps, the Skunk Cabbage, pushes his pointed hood through the gaps in the snow, and it lasts until Witch Hazel receives its messenger, who comes so late that it cannot cast the seed abroad until another spring.

“One week, the Violets call, ‘We are ready,’ to the little white Anemones—that are so shy that they hang their heads if Gheezis does not smile at them, and they hold the Market; then the trees of forest and river-banks take their turn. Next come the orchards; then the festival moves down among the meadow grasses; next the marsh ferns claim it.”

“Trees! grasses! ferns!” said Tommy-Anne, in astonishment; “I never thought that they belonged in the Flower Market.”

“And why not? Do you know what a flower is, little House Child?”

“Of course I do,” she answered, rather indignantly. “It is a lovely thing that grows on a plant, and it is made of coloured leaves, and some flowers smell very sweet, and some sour, and
some have no smell at all. These pinks and roses are sweet, but the yellow ones over there are very sour; why is that, dear Ruby-throat?"

But instead of answering her last question, Ruby-throat said, "You have forgotten the chief thing: the flower is the bearer of the seed baskets, and that is its reason for being. Lay one of those wild roses on your hand and look at it carefully, beginning with the stem.

"You see that the stem swells to a green cup-shape, ending in the five little pointed leaves that wrapped the bud."

"Yes; and inside that are five pink leaves fastened on at the bottom; they are called petals. I know that, anyway."

"And again, inside of the petals?"

"A lot of little threads in a circle, each with a puff of yellow powder for a head, and inside the circle, a bunch of green knobs that come from the stem-cup."

"That is right. Now of all those parts in what is called the flower, only two are absolutely necessary to the growing of the seed: the lunch basket, holding the seed-germs, waiting for their food, of which the knob is the handle, and the balls of golden powder, which is the life-dust, — the food to nourish the speck of life first until it
becomes a seed, and then a plant. These powder-puffs are of as many shapes and fashions as the flower itself. The coloured petals of the flowers may be different in shape, of one piece or many, large or small, or lacking altogether; but if the basket of seed-germs and the life-dust is there, then it is a flower.

"The oak bears acorns, though its flowers are but dingy feathers; the birch's brown tassels from which the golden dust blows are as much its flowers as the sweet rosy clusters on the apple tree."

"But, dear Ruby-throat, if every flower grows its own life-dust, why do they have messengers to carry it to and fro? Why must they buy and sell?"

"This is the reason, Tommy-Anne. Even if a flower grows the life-dust, it may not grow it for itself alone, and some plants have blossoms where the seed basket is in one flower and the dust in another; then how could the dust and the basket meet without a special messenger?"

"I can understand that; but this rose has both dust and basket in the same blossom."

"The rose and many others can supply themselves, and usually do so, but oftentimes the dust on a flower may not be ripe when the seed-germ
is the hungriest, so Heart of Nature has told the messengers to fetch and carry, that all may be doubly sure.”

“Who are the messengers, and how do they work?”

“They are many, and as varied as the flowers they serve,—bees, butterflies, moths, and then always the wind, and for some things the Water Brother, though he is greater as a seed-sower.

“Heart of Nature sends one of these winged transports to the flower whose heart it can best reach, saying, ‘Feed from the honey; take your fill of the golden store.’ As he eats, the life-dust clings to his tongue or hairy legs or feelers, and he bears it with him to be left on the next flower he visits. So two are fed at once, the insect messenger and the seed. And each blossom has its sign by which its rightful messenger knows it, —colour or perfume,—and not one of them would so far forget himself as to mix the message of buttercups and clover.”

“But,” persisted Tommy-Anne, “why didn’t the first Heart arrange the Plan so as to have the life-dust always tip over into the baskets, without messengers?”

“Because,” answered a voice that she knew belonged to her Tree Man, even though she could
not see him, "nothing is made for itself alone. The bee is for the flower, the flower for the bee. Dependence is the strength of my garden. Do you remember the password, Tommy-Anne?"

"Yes," she whispered; "it is Brotherhood."

"Tell me about the flower families, please, Ruby-throat, and who is the Queen of the Flower Market?" said Tommy-Anne, who had been silent for so long a time that the fidgety Hummingbird was on the point of flying away. "The Bumble-bee said that the Rose Family is very important."

"Here comes Mr. Bumble now; he can tell you himself, for I have an important engagement quite a piece away, but you will usually find me in the garden from sunrise to sunset," said the Hummingbird.

"I have seen you here in the honeysuckle later than that, when it was quite dark."

"Seen me after dark? Never, I assure you; you must mean one of those clumsy prowling Hawk Moths. They always come out, taking the best of everything, when respectable Hummingbirds are in bed. Pray do not mix me up with butterflies and moths; they are only flying worms, while we come out of nice clean eggs. A little
time, a little food, and presto! we are beautiful birds. While those others, do as many tricks and changes as Wabeno who was juggler to the Red Brothers. You should see the horrible thing that the Hawk Moth grows from, and you would never think of mistaking us again.”

“Oh, do tell me about all the tricks, and more about the Hawk Moth.”

Ruby-throat said something about “asking the Hawk himself,” and was gone with a whirr and a flash.

“How do you do, Tommy-Anne?” said Gitche-ah-mo, the Bumble-bee, his legs dragging heavily with the weight of the gold dust upon them. “When I saw you last, everything smelled of lilacs, and now the perfume has changed to grape flowers and roses; but whatever it is, it means work for some of us bees. So you wish to know which is the greatest family in the Flower Market? The answer depends greatly upon whom you ask. A cow or a sheep would probably say the Grass, but I think that the birds and the House People would agree upon the Rose Family.”

“Do birds care for roses?”
"Not much for roses, perhaps, but they are devoted to cherries and strawberries."

"What have they to do with roses?"

"A great deal, Tommy-Anne; for they belong to the Rose Family."

"I don't understand about this one single bit; why do they belong to the Rose Family? what makes a plant family?"

"There are great divisions that come first,—the plants with flowers, and the plants with only rusty seed spots on their leaves, like the ferns. Then those whose sap veins run up and down the leaves, and those where the veins run across like spider webbing. Then plants who thrust up a single finger when they leave the seed, like the grass and corn, and those that reach out two, like the bean, for by these signs and many others the plant world is divided into races, and after that the families are made from the plants whose habits follow some one of the many designs."

"Then if a plant is not like any other, it has to be a family by itself?"

"Yes, Tommy-Anne, and the House People have given these orders and families long Latin names; they are not easy to remember at first, yet they all have a meaning, and you must learn them before you can know how plants that look
wholly unlike at the first glance may be first cousins."

Meanwhile Mr. Ah-mo had disappeared in a great white foxglove bell, but he soon backed out again, smothered in gold dust.

"Please tell me the names of other flowers that belong to the Rose Family, and which one of them is the ruler."

"The Rose herself is the Queen," said Gitche-ah-mo, in his rich bass voice, "and her brothers, the Plum and the Pear, help her. There is a great deal to be done in this household, and some members of it are busy in the Flower Market from Cherry time until the Moon of Falling Leaves. The best garden fruits belong to this family,—the cherry, and his wild mates, the apple, quince, pear, plum, strawberry, raspberry, blackberry,—and beside these fruits, the thorns and other flowering shrubs."

"I think it ought to be called the jam family," cried Tommy-Anne, clapping her hands at the idea. "I don't wonder that you roses hold your heads so high," said she, to the big bush nearest to her. "I'm very much obliged to you, I'm sure, Madam Rose, for having so many lovely children, and cousins, and brothers, and nephews, and nieces; why, we could have a whole garden
and orchard without going out of your family but that would be what people call 'very exclusive,' which father says is a greedy, bad habit.” And she made a courtesy to the bush and gave each open rose a light kiss in its heart, throwing a handful more to the other bushes.

“Pooh!” said a great scarlet Poppy, tossing its fiery head; “you might take some notice of me, for one of my family grows a juice that will put you to sleep in a minute.”

“I don’t care one bit for that,” answered Tommy-Anne. “Going to sleep is easy enough; if the juice would wake me up in the morning as quickly, it would be of much more use to me.”

“You lovely Butterfly!” she exclaimed, as a yellow beauty, barred and edged with black, its lower wings ending in long points, fluttered by, passing spray after spray of blossoms in search for something that he did not find. “Will you have some roses for breakfast? Ruby-throat said they were delicious.”

“No, I thank you,” he replied; “I am not a messenger for that family. I serve much humbler plants,—many of those that House People call weeds; but if you have any parsley in the garden, I will breakfast with you.”

“We have plenty of parsley, but it never grows
old enough to have flowers, because, you see, we are always nipping it off to flavour things."

"I smell some carraway flowers, over there in the herb bed," said the Butterfly; "they are cousins to the parsley, so I will visit them."

"Have you any name?" asked Tommy-Anne.

"Because of my stripes and long wings, I am called Tiger Swallow-tail, and I have many brothers shaped like me, but of different colours," said he, poising on one of the umbrella-shaped clusters of the carraway flowers and raising his wings until they met above his back, while he sipped a little aromatic honey.

"Why did Ruby-throat say that butterflies and moths are only trick worms with wings, not coming straight from a nice clean egg, as he does?"

"It is true that as butterflies we do not come directly from the egg, and at best the longest life among us is but a short year, yet the changes we go through from our birth to our maturity are
mysterious and strange. I don't wonder that the Hummingbird thought them Wabeno's tricks, but does he not know that as a magician Wabeno is a bungler compared to Heart of Nature?

"This is our life history briefly told: the females of our family lay their eggs one by one on a leaf. After some days a caterpillar is hatched. It is deep green and wears a sable band and turquoise buttons in black settings. This caterpillar, after feeding greedily upon young willow leaves or sprigs of ash and poplar, lies down to rest in the groove of a leaf, weaving a little silken shawl about itself."

"Oh yes!" cried Tommy-Anne, in delight; "that is a cocoon. I gathered a great many of those things last summer, but they wizzled away, and nothing ever came out of them."

"No; this little veiled caterpillar is not the cocoon; that is why no butterflies came out of yours. After the caterpillar has rested, he moult the shawl, and goes to another leaf and eats again and rests, and he does this until he has rested and moulted four times, all the while growing larger. At last he spins a web and draws a leaf together until it closes around him like a hammock, and in this he makes the bed in which he lies during the two or three weeks that it takes,
in summer, for his wings to grow, and finally he
gnaws the web away and crawls out a full-feathered
butterfly."

"Full-feathered? Do butterflies really have
feathers, or is that only a way of speaking?"

"They have feathers. This colour upon my
wings is made of feathers as perfect as those the
birds wear, but from their fineness you think them
only dust."

"Where do you live in winter, Mr. Swallow-
tail? I have never seen any of your brothers
hereabout, and you look so frail that I should
think the frost would wither you, as it does the
flowers."

"In our family, two broods are raised every
season, and we full-grown butterflies die in the
autumn. The worms that have spun the late
cocoons live hidden away in them all winter
because of the cold, not coming out as butterflies
until the spring. But every family, whether of
butterflies or moths, has its own habits. Some of
us sleep the long winter sleep as butterflies, and
die in early summer after laying the eggs, while
others fly away in autumn to warmer countries,
migrating with the birds."

"Fly away like birds? Which ones are able to
do that?"
"There are some of that family over yonder in
the field. Come with me, and they shall tell their
own story."

At that moment Waddles raced up. He had
been trying to help Obi, who was busy cooping two
broods of newly hatched chickens; but his com-
pany had proved very unwelcome, and he barked
and bayed at his mistress, vainly trying to make
her see that his intentions toward the chicks were
of the kindest, and that he felt very much grieved
at the suspicion that Obi cast upon him. So to
keep him quiet, Tommy-Anne allowed him to
join her, and Swallow-tail led the way to the
field.

The grass was tall and uneven, the most con-
spicuous flowers being pale yellow thistles and
quantities of common milkweed. Butterflies
were almost as thick as the flowers,—brick-red
butterflies, edged and ribbed with black. They
were strong of wing, too, taking straight aim and
flying direct, not fluttering about in the undecided
manner of their kind.

Swallow-tail whispered something, and a bevy
left their work and came gracefully toward
Tommy-Anne.

"So Ruby-throat has been mocking us," said
the foremost, "calling us 'flying worms'? He
had better not boast, I can tell him, for there is not a beak in all Birdland that dare even so much as bite one of us!” And his companions waved their wings in approval.

Tommy-Anne did not speak, but she looked as if she thought this statement rather a whoppergrass, and the butterfly continued:

“Frail as I look, I am named the Monarch, and I can fly hundreds of miles without resting, passing over seas from island to island, like the fleetest-winged bird.¹ Last September, when my black, white, and yellow caterpillar had completed his changes, and I came from the cocoon, I joined my brothers in the great waste fields over the hills by the salt water, where are acres of the milkweeds for which we are the messengers.

“Shaw-shaw, the Swallow, was gathering his flocks at the same time. We circled together over the sands, and travelled southward, casting shadows on the water-ripples as we passed over. Some of us tarried in Florida with the Thrushes,

¹ See Guide to Butterflies, H. S. Scudder.
but others passed onward to the islands in the wake of the Swallows. All winter long we toiled for our bread in the Flower Market, but among such flowers that the very sight of them would make our home-staying brothers turn into beetles with envy.

"Then, stopping to give greetings in all the Flower Markets by the way, I returned; and now when the first eggs of the year are laid, my life work will be done."

"Why didn't the birds eat you?" asked Tommy-Anne, incredulously. "You must have met a great many hungry ones in travelling so far."

"Heart of Nature protects us. He has wrapped our bodies in a magic perfume that is hateful to birds." And the Monarch fluttered close to her face for a second.

"Oh, oh!" cried Tommy-Anne, pinching her poor little nose tightly together. "I don't call that a perfume; it is a smell, and a very bad one, too. Thank you, that is quite enough; I understand perfectly why the birds do not eat you."

"So do I, mistress," said Waddles. "I once caught one of these Monarchs, and, between ourselves, I think it ought to be called the Skunk Butterfly!"

But the Monarch overheard, and, taking offence
at Waddles' remark, called his companions, and prepared for a long flight, saying angrily, "If this is the way you treat us when I am kind enough to tell *why*, we will go away and live on some one else's milkweed flowers!"

"Oh, please don't," cried Tommy-Anne. "You should not be vexed at Waddles; for your perfume, though it does not seem nice to *us*, must be a very *useful* smell to you, just as the Skunk's is to him; and I dare say that there are some things that might think both of these smells delightful!"

"You are right, Tommy-Anne," said the Monarch, in a tone of apology; "a smell may be very useful and not ornamental, so to speak.

"It is the same with the marsh plant that the House People call the skunk cabbage. Its rank odour calls the bee messengers to him, across some half-thawed swamp as quickly as if it was as the heliotrope itself." Then the whole flock of Monarchs began to flutter and rise for their flight.

"Monarch, Mr. Milkweed Monarch!" she called as they scattered, "won't you please tell me what sort of a worm the Hawk Moth comes from? Ruby-throat says that it is a horrible thing; but then he seems to dislike this moth."
"I would rather not say anything about it," answered the Monarch. "Ask the Hawk himself; he will be sure to visit the honeysuckles to-night, or else the petunias or lilies, for he carries messages for many deep-throated blossoms."

"I suppose we must wait," said Tommy-Anne to Waddles. "Heart of Nature's things do not seem to like to tell tales about each other. What shall we do now?"

"We might go and see how Obi is managing with the chickens," answered Waddles.

"We might, but we won't," said his mistress. "I will attend to Obi and the chickens, and you may go and rest on the piazza. Mind, sir!"

The bees held high carnival in the garden all the afternoon,—bees of all kinds and descriptions, hive bees, wild bees, carpenters, and bumble bees, all bustling and repeating the flower messages in such loud voices, that if there were any secrets among them, they were pretty well spread abroad. As the sun lowered, one by one disappeared, zigzagging home in different directions.

Waddles had come to grief soon after dinner, by poking his nose into a hornet's nest, and was now in a shady part of the garden, with his
bumpy, swollen face buried in the fresh earth, trying to imagine that he had not been foolish.

The birds were having a grand concert, for there were young ones in almost every nest, and hosts of members were trooping to the Robin Club in the cedars. After supper, Tommy-Anne walked up and down by the honeysuckle trellis, waiting for whatever might turn up; for since she had worn the Magic Spectacles something interesting was all the time happening. The new moon was slipping down the sky in the northwest, and the sight of it reminded her of what the little Oak had said about the Moon Moth and the Land of Nod, where the flowers slept. Then she felt something fly lightly by and touch her hand. She looked again, and there was an exquisite moth, actually resting on her sleeve, its gauzy wings spread flatly, and not fluttering like some of its butterfly kin.

“You wished to go to the Land of Nod, so I have come,” said a silvery voice.

“What are you?” whispered Tommy-Anne; “a moonbeam?”

“Not that, but the next thing to it. I am the Moon Moth,” he said, spreading his long-tailed transparent wings, that were of the same shimmering green as a young poppy leaf when the dew
lies on it, and touched here and there with bark-
brown edges and brilliant eye-spots like the mark-
ings on a flower petal. Except for his stout, furry body, he was more graceful than any of the day butterflies.

“How could Ruby-throat ever call a beautiful thing like this, a ‘flying worm’?” thought Tommy-Anne; but she only said: “You are very good to come for me, and I shall be delighted to go; but please, is the Land of Nod a long way off? Because in the evening I may only go about the garden and a little way up the hill yonder, and then, only when it is moonlight, and this moon is so young that I think it will soon have to go to bed.”

“Tommy-Anne,” replied the Moon Moth, “the Land of Nod is both far and near, for it is wherever the Flower Market is held.”

“Do the poor flowers never sleep, then?”

“Surely they do. Those who have done their work by day close their lids and fold their hands, sleeping as peacefully as you yourself; but there are other blossoms who only begin their labours as Gheezis disappears, and we are their messengers, we moths, the heavy-bodied flyers of the shady hours and of the night, for it takes the moths’ long tongues to reach the honeyed hearts of the deeply
tubed night blossoms. See, the white ipomea, that is called the Moon Flower from its blooming time, is already waiting on your arbour for its guests, and the honeysuckle buds are breathing their first best perfume."

"Honeysuckles are open all day long," said Tommy-Anne.

"They stay open in the day, it is true, but their first freshness and sweetness has passed by. That gleams and wafts through the darkness to lead their messengers, the Hawk Moths, to them. Hark! I hear them coming now."

There was a whirring, even louder than the winging of the Hummingbird, and several dusky shapes hovered above the vine, dark and mysterious as bats.

"Please keep still one minute, so that I can see you," pleaded Tommy-Anne. "I have heard so much about you from Ruby-throat."

"And nothing good, I'll warrant," said the Hawk Moth, poising for a second on the back of her hand, so that she saw that he was broader than her palm, with wings striped and spotted with gray and black, while a row of orange spots dotted the sides of his hairy body like tiny lamps. In fact, near by he looked fierce and hawk-like enough to deserve his name.
"Ruby-throat does not half like me," he continued, returning to the honeysuckle; "you see, we are honey rivals, visiting many of the same flowers, and as I come out at night when they are opening, I have first choice, and he has to take what is left the next day. But he should not grumble, for he may eat nice green lice, while the law of my family forbids eating meat. I suppose he called me a 'flying worm' or something of that sort?"

"I—I believe he did," said Tommy-Anne, reluctantly; "but he didn't tell what sort of a worm you come from; he said I must ask you."

"He did, did he? Well; my dear, I must confess that in my first state I am not attractive, or in any way agreeable to the House People. In fact, I come from that extremely disagreeable fat green caterpillar, with white lines on its sides and sting horns on its tail, who raises such a rumpus among the tomato and potato vines."

"That dreadful great beast, as long and thick as one of Obi's fingers, who burns you so if you touch it when you are picking the vegetables, and makes such a nasty mess when you tread on him?"

"The very same. You see I am not so conceited but what I know all my bad points; but as
a moth I work with a will and do my best in the Flower Market to make up for my unlovely past."

"Please let me see your beak; it is very curly and seems longer than Ruby-throat's."

"I have no beak, Tommy-Anne. What you call a beak is my hollow tongue; that I can curve and bend and thrust into the heart of the slenderest flower tube, leaving the life-dust as I steal the honey."

Then the Hawk darted to the other side of the trellis.

"How do you moths know the way to the flowers when it is quite dark?" asked Tommy-Anne of the Moon Moth, who still rested on her sleeve.

"Heart of Nature has given light, shining colours to these flowers and pungent perfumes to be their signals, according to their needs. Even now, the evening primrose, has unbound its shining yellow wheels, and their fragrance floats afar."

As the moon grew paler, the fireflies began to gleam, and dance about, at first keeping low, and then gradually rising, until they seemed to Tommy-Anne to become confused with the stars. "What are those little bits of light down in the grass? Are they lame-winged fireflies that cannot rise?" she asked.
"They are the wingless wives of the others, and because they always keep on the ground, House People often call them glow-worms. See! one is crawling under a low-spread spider-web that the dew has covered with its diamonds."

"Dear Moon Moth," said Tommy-Anne, "you said a little while ago that some flowers go to sleep the same as I do; are there any such nearby that you could show me?"

"Yes, all about the garden and meadows the blossoms are nodding and drowsing, each one taking the sleeping position that it prefers. Look behind you at the poppies; their heavy heads are drooping, and their petals closed flatly, and the blue lupins, their neighbours, droop their leaves like half-closed umbrellas."

"And," said Tommy-Anne, in an awestruck tone, "the sweet peas are all drawn together, and the single roses, that were so wide open this morning, are curled up as if they had dreadful cramps. Oh, oh! all these little things in the long border are hanging their heads and gaping as if they were simply falling over with sleep, and couldn't stand up another minute; and only see the dew on this dandelion fluff-ball! there is a drop on every single feather!"

"Come up the hill a step or two," said the
Moon Moth, floating on in advance, "and see the red clover and the daisies. The clover leaves are folded and bend over to cover the flowers, and the daisies stack their rays or hang their heads."

"How many lovely smells there are about, and what hundreds of strange sounds!" said Tommy-Anne, sniffing the air in delight. "I am sure I smell peppermint."

"Yes, you are walking through a bed of it now; every time the night wind blows it sends abroad the breath of some wild herb."

"What was that?" cried Tommy-Anne, half alarmed as something overhead moved from branch to branch, half flying and half leaping; "it can't be a Bat."

"It is a Flying Squirrel. He seldom comes out in the daytime, for he likes night silence; this year he lives in the hollow chestnut on the hilltop."

"What made this trail along the grass where the dew is brushed away?"

"That is a rabbit track," answered Waddles, putting his nose to the ground and looking at his mistress slyly; "would you like to know where it goes? I should be happy to find out for you."

"Waddles!" said his mistress, warningly. Then she sighed, and said to the Moon Moth,
"How I do wish I could see the little wood beasts and the night frogs and things all at once! Do you think I ever can?"

"I am not sure," said the Moon Moth, hesitating; "there is only one way that a House Child may see all these creatures of the night woods, and then only if Weeng, the sleep spirit, and Wabeno, the juggler, are willing."

"Do tell me the way, and how I can ask Weeng and Wabeno," asked Tommy-Anne, clasping her hands.

"At the full of the June moon, all the beasts, and frogs, and night birds gather at the moss circle on top of the hill, and hold what we call the Forest Circus, and if you are allowed, you will see things there that never happen anywhere else, or at any other time, for distinguished guests are invited from other places, some great beasts coming even from the far-off Adirondack wilderness."

"But where can I find the two spirits, to ask their leave, dear Moon Moth?"

"On the night of the full moon, go, before it is dark, to the moss circle where you often play with Waddles; wait there until little Oo-oo comes, and he will tell you what to do. The primroses are growing restless, and the moon is asleep, so good-night, Tommy-Anne."
"Mistress," said Waddles, as they reached the house, "if you can do without me for a little while, I think I should enjoy taking a walk by myself in the Land of Nod, to see if I can 'catch a Weasel asleep.' I have heard that it is a very great thing to do."

"Come home, you silly dog," said Tommy-Anne, holding him by the collar; "isn't being stung nearly blind enough of an adventure for one day? Suppose you should meet a Scent Cat! You would have to be buried up to your neck in the earth for a whole day to make you un-scented; for Obi says that is the only cure for any one that meets a Scent Cat suddenly!"
VI

THE SNOW OWL'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

TOMMY-ANNE thought the "Moon of Snow-Shoes" a very deceitful name for November, as there was no snow, not even so much as a flurry: but instead, the winds played a hundred pranks and sang snatches of all their tunes, and the weather danced to the music and brought March gusts, May softness, that swelled the buds dangerously, and bits of coppery August haze, as if the Old Year had shaken its scrap-bag over the earth, before beginning housekeeping anew.

Finally December and Peboan arrived together,
as Kabibonokka had promised, and the week before Christmas the snow followed, light and powdery at first, then growing heavier and heavier, until as far abroad and upward as Tommy-Anne could see, there was nothing but a maze of flakes, falling, falling, falling, until her eyes blinked and closed in confusion. But where was the Snow Owl? Where was Waw-be-ko-ko, who was to follow Peboan? Surely winter was there, for the little ponds were ice-locked, and frost ferns grew nightly on the window-panes.

Would the snow be too deep for Obi to go to the mountain for the Christmas tree? So many whys flew through Tommy-Anne's brain, and she kept opening the windows so often to see if she could find the answers to them, that, of course, the damp snow clung to her hair and shoulders, and she had a dreadful chill.

"How did you manage to catch such a bad cold?" said Aunt Prue, as she bustled in with some of the well-known bottles of medicine.

"I? Indeed, I didn’t do any such thing," protested Tommy-Anne; "I only opened the window, and it reached in and caught me!"

Now, to Tommy-Anne a cold usually meant being tucked into bed beside a cosy wood fire, having something particularly soothing to eat,
and mother near to read a delightful story aloud; but now the entire household seemed to be upset in some way. Her mother was not well, and her father had taken his writing up to her room, and Aunt Prue, forgetting to tell her how careless she had been, pushed Tommy-Anne's little white iron bed into the study, leaving her to sit up or lie down as she pleased. Even Waddles grew suddenly independent, and trotted off through the snow in spite of his mistress' remonstrances. Surely the world must be coming to an end, thought Tommy-Anne.

After two or three days the young lady felt much better, though she had to stay in the study for fear of draughts. This she did not mind, however, for she could see Obi coming down the hill dragging the precious Christmas tree through the snow, and whistling like mad, and of course he had to come in and help place it in the corner of the study and then put the candles and other fixings on the highest branches, as her father was very busy; so Tommy-Anne soon felt quite cheerful again.

"You ought to hurry up and get well and come out," said Obi, in one of the pauses, sitting on the step-ladder while Tommy-Anne untangled the strings of pop-corn that would curl themselves
provokingly. "There's a lot of strange birds come since yesterday, all the kinds from up north; storm blew them down, I guess, and this morning I saw a mighty big white Owl catching mice down in the meadow."

"The Snow Owl! Has he really come? Oh, how I wish I could see him and ask him to come up here!"

"Ask him up here? He'd be so likely to come," laughed Obi, thinking that her cold must have affected Tommy-Anne's head. "Now that
all the high things are up and you can reach the other branches, I think I’ll go and see if I can’t shoot that Owl for you; he’d be a beauty stuffed.”

“Oh don’t, Obi, don’t kill him! Think how sorry his wife might be, that is—at least not until after Christmas. It must be horrid to be killed so near to it, you know.” And then Tommy-Anne stopped, knowing that she was twisting herself up and talking what must seem nonsense to Obi.

“Mistress,” said Waddles, “I think you are carrying things too far. Don’t you remember that Obi, who doesn’t wear the Magic Spectacles, can’t possibly know that you expect that Owl to come to your Christmas tree?”

“Of course he doesn’t, Waddlekins dear, and I can’t ever explain the reasons either. Never mind; we must coax Aunt Prue to bring all my berries and corn and grasses down from the attic, and we will put them around the room for decorations, and then the birds can help themselves when they come to the tree.”

“Obi,” called Tommy-Anne, as he was going out the door, “could you possibly catch me half-a-dozen fat mice some time to-morrow?”

“Yes, to be sure I can; we catch a trapful every night in the barn. I suppose you are going to boil them down for tallow, the same as aunt does.
She always makes mouse tallow every winter; it's just boss for chapped hands."

Tommy-Anne smiled. Was she going to make mouse tallow? She thought not; but what she intended doing with the mice was a profound secret.

That same afternoon, a little before dusk, as she stood by the window looking at the light from the lantern that shone through the cow-shed window, where the milking was going on, a white shape flapped up to the window, and perched on the sill, quite startling her.

"Open the window," it said; "I want to speak to you."

"I mustn't," she replied; "I have a snuffle cold."

"Then I must do it myself," said Waw-be-ko-ko, for it was he, as he came through the sash.

"You dear Snow Owl!" said Tommy-Anne, holding out her arms as if she would like to hug him. "I was so afraid that I should not see you; and way back in the spring I promised the little Spruce, you know, that I would ask you to my Christmas tree."

"No, I didn't know anything about the tree, and I came very near not hearing about the invitation at all," said Waw-be-ko-ko. "You see the little Spruce was snowed under when I came, and it
could not find any one to take the message to me until this afternoon. Then a Rabbit came nibbling by, and the tree told him. I saw the Rabbit in the meadow, but he was so afraid that I should eat him that he would not come near enough for me to hear distinctly what he said. All I could make out was something about 'Tommy-Anne' so I came up to see what you wanted."

"Why did the Rabbit think that you might eat him? Do you eat such things?"

"I have done so, but not often, for Rabbits are a great deal of trouble to carve. I prefer mice, nice juicy mice; they are so much easier to eat. But when are you going to have the grand Christmas tree? I see a tree over in the corner, but it is not hung with twinkling stars, like the one I saw down in the white house in the village."

"Mine will have stars on it, too, when it is lit to-morrow night. What time can you come? And don't forget to bring some of your friends with you, so that we can have a real party; not one of Aunt Prue's 'two is enough' affairs."

"I will come at this same time to-morrow night. I am a day Owl, and my friends would not care to be out late in this cold season; they might not be able to find their way back to their roosts. Excuse me," said he, lurching down to
the hearth and snapping up a luckless mouse, who had ventured too far from his hole. "It is always well to have an eye to business! Comfortable room this, nice fire! Bless me! if I stayed here long, I should fall asleep. Good-bye until to-morrow, Tommy-Anne, and don't forget to have some comfortable seats for my friends." And he disappeared through the window.

"Seats for birds! I wonder what will be best. Now I have it," thought Tommy-Anne; "the clothes-rack in my room is the very thing, — the one with the wooden pegs!" And immediately she began bumping it along until it reached the corner opposite the Christmas tree, where it stood, looking rather like a leafless tree itself.

The day before Christmas, Tommy-Anne could hardly keep still. She saw Obi and the Miller's children coasting down the long hill back of the barn, while Waddles raced beside them, barking frantically; there were troops of strange birds, with bent beaks, picking the seed from the spruce cones in the trees near the house, and there was a great deal of running to and fro about the house, knocks on the side door, and many whisperings.

"They must be bringing in presents," she said vaguely. Then a strange sound came from up
stairs, not exactly a mew and not a bark; something more like a whine, the cry of a young animal. Could it be? Was she to have a new dog for Christmas?

She would have liked to have half-a-dozen dogs, but she felt very sure that she would never love any as well as she did Waddles, and then too he might be jealous. No; on second thoughts, she did not care for another dog.

Soon her father came into the study and asked her if she would like to go up stairs and see a very particular present that had arrived very early in the morning. Of course she would.

"Is it for me, or for you, or mother?" she asked; "and am I to guess three guesses before I see it?"

"It is for all of us," her father answered; "and you would never guess what it is, if I gave you a dozen chances."

"Is it an it or a we? Is it any kind of an animal?" persisted Tommy-Anne.

"Yes, little daughter; it is a 'we,' and it is a little animal with a soul!"

Soon before dusk Tommy-Anne hurried back to the study and begged her Aunt Prue, who was passing the door, to light the tree candles for her.
Aunt Prue thought it was taking a double risk of fire to light them twice, as Obi and the Miller's children were not coming for their gifts until eight o'clock, but she finally consented, after setting a pail of water nearby, in case of accident.

Tommy-Anne waited anxiously until her aunt had left the room, and then hastened to the window. There was a serious expression on her face, and she seemed to have grown taller since morning.

A sigh came from the chimney, and a voice that seemed to come from the logs said, "What is the matter, Tommy-Anne? You are thinking about something. Are you not pleased with your Christmas gifts?"

"My dear Tree Man, are you here? I was wishing and wishing to see you."

"That is why I came, Tommy-Anne."

"But, dear Heart of Nature," she said, almost sobbing, "I'm not Tommy-Anne any longer. I've
broken in half, and Tommy is up stairs, and I'm down here! You see I have a little brother, who came before light, and as I didn't expect him, I had no Christmas present ready for him, so father said that I might give him half of my name, the Tommy-half, and I did. Then I gave him half of Waddles too,—the tail half, because I thought it would wag and amuse him. And so I'm not Tommy-Anne any longer, but Di-ana.

"I always thought Di-ana was a horrid name, called after that stuffy old idol that belonged to the Ephesians; but father says that there were several Dianas long ago, and that one was a very jolly person, who kept a great many dogs and went hunting in the woods whenever she pleased, and never tore her clothes! So now I'm more reconciled to my name, and I'll adopt this hunting-lady to be my fairy godmother."

Then a tap came at the window, and she flew to open it, and in fluttered nearly a dozen birds led by Waw-be-ko-ko, and though they were a little dazed by the light, they did not forget their manners, and bowed to Tommy-Anne with great politeness, as she pointed to the clothes-rack, upon which they immediately perched.

"Very kind and thoughtful of you, I'm sure," said Waw-be-ko-ko; "most charming perch. If
you please, I think I will warm my claws a bit by the fire; they will hardly bend." And he walked solemnly over to the hearth; but when he saw the glassy eyes of the bear’s head on the rug, he gave a squawk and chasséd in the opposite direction.

Tommy-Anne laughed heartily, and Waddles rolled out of the scrap basket, seeming much surprised to find so many birds about.

"Will you tell me the names of your friends, and where they come from?" asked she; "I have never seen any of them about in the summer."

"They are all my wing companions from the north," answered Waw-be-ko-ko, "and their nesting haunts are where the snow, even in summer, lingers on the side of things that Gheezis does not see. They come to you with the snow, and leave again before it has melted from under the fences. Brother Shrike, allow me to present you to my friend the House Child!"

The Shrike was rather embarrassed, for, thinking himself unobserved, he in company with the Tree Sparrow, was taking a dip in Aunt Prue’s water pail, and was in a dripping condition wholly out of keeping with an evening party. But he flew to the perch, vainly endeavouring to appear at ease.
“Oh! oh! how funny you look,” said Tommy-Anne; “won’t you sit on the fender until you are dry? Please tell me why you have such a hook on the end of your beak. You look something like a Hawk.”

“Thanks, I will go by the fire,” said the Shrike, in a shamefaced way.

“That hook is to help me catch my food. I suppose that you would call me a cannibal bird, for the House People have named me ‘Butcher Bird,’ because when I catch more game than I need, I hang some of it up on bushes and thorns, as a butcher hangs his meats. To be sure, I do sometimes eat my smaller brothers, but like all the others, the Crows, the Hawks, and Owls, the mice and beetles and harmful insects I destroy, when compared to the birds I eat, are as a mountain to a mole hill.”

“Do winter birds sing? Do you ever sing, Mr. Shrike?”

“Indeed he does,” said Waw-be-ko-ko, “though not in the winter. In his nesting haunts he warbles like a Thrush, and so do these two also, the brown and white brother, the Snow Bunting, and this mottled Shore Lark, who soars and sings above his Labrador nest like his cousin the English Skylark.
You would never know them in their summer coats, Tommy-Anne, from seeing them now. Brother Bunting is clear black and white, and the Lark wears two black feathers that make him look like a clerk with a pen over each ear, and he has also a beautiful lilac waistcoat."

"Why, what are you doing here, Chipping Sparrow?" said Tommy-Anne. "I thought you had gone away long ago; and you too, Johnny Wren!"

"No, no! it is a case of mistaken identity," they said together. "I," said the smaller of the two, "am the Winter Wren, the smallest bird hereabouts, excepting the Kinglet and Rubythroat, and I'm spending the winter in your wood pile." "And I," said the other, "am the Winter Chippy, or Tree Sparrow."

"You three reddish birds on the top of the perch, what are you called?"

"I'm the Pine Grosbeak," said the largest, with a heavy gray body, washed above with crimson, and a stout bill. "I am so named because I build my nest in the low pines of the cold lands, and when winter freezes me out, I come down here to warm myself, again seek shelter in the evergreens, and feed upon their cones."

"I," said the twisted-billed, brick-red bird,
"am the Crossbill, and come from the same regions, and I also seek my food between the cone-scales. See, Heart of Nature has arranged my bill like a pair of pincers, to wrench the cones apart."

"So, then, you are one of the birds that I saw this morning in the spruces. I thought that your jaw was out of joint, and it quite worried me."

"I," said the last of the three, with a crimson cap and a beak sharp as a needle, "am the Jolly Redpoll. I can weather anything in the way of cold. I follow man as far north as he may go, and build my nest but a little above his footsteps, and now I am gleaning my food from the seeds in your waste fields, even though the snow flies about me like diamond dust. May I have some of those seeds from the grasses on the mantel shelf?"

"Certainly," said Tommy-Anne. "Please all help yourselves to anything you wish. See, here are some fat mice for you, Waw-be-ko-ko."

And she pointed to a lower branch of the Christmas tree, where some field-mice hung by the tails.

"What would Obi say," thought Tommy-Anne, "if he knew that he had been catching mice for an Owl!"

The Snow Owl was delighted with his feast, and a peck came just then at the window, which proved to be the Junco, the gray snow-bird with
the white vest, who lives all winter in the honeysuckles. He had forgotten about the party and gone to roost, and waking up had remembered in time to join his friends at supper.

For a while all the beaks were nipping, pecking, and snapping together. "I should think that it would disagree with you to swallow furry, bony mice without chewing them," said Tommy-Anne to the Owl.

"So it would if the bones and fur stayed swallowed, but I soon make them into little balls and spit them up again!"

"Is that a really truly?" asked Tommy-Anne, in astonishment.

"Certainly. Ask Ko-ko-ko-ho; or, if you look on the ground near our home tree, you will find these balls of fur, gristle, heads and tails, everywhere about. Different birds, different habits; that is all!"

"This pop-corn is excellent," said the Grosbeak.

"I like these little apples," said the Crossbill, dipping his beak into the red-cheeked lady apples, with a relish.

"I should like to stay here and build my nest in the Christmas tree," continued the Grosbeak sociably.

"I wish you would," said Waddles, who had
been very quiet, but was rapidly growing tired of the attention that the birds were receiving. "I like squabs."

"I could make a fine nest in that scrap basket," said the Winter Wren.

"No, you could not," snapped Waddles; "that is my nest!"

Suddenly the Snow Owl began to cough and hop about the room, flapping his wings as if in great agony, and did not answer when everybody asked what was the matter.

"He has half swallowed a nice red candle, and he's choking," said Waddles, in glee. "It was a blown out candle; suppose we light it again!"

"No, no!" gasped Waw-be-ko-ko; "let me out quick."

"Never mind; it can't hurt you," said Tommy-Anne; "for you can make it into little balls and spit them out whenever you please!" And all the birds laughed and thought it was a good joke on the Owl. As she opened the window to let him out, the other birds followed. "What, must you all go? Yes, I see that it is really dark. Good-night, brother birds, and a merry Christmas!"

Presently Obi and the Miller's children came, and candles blazed again and the Spruce tree
dropped its wonderful fruit into their hands, and at last the candles burnt out one by one.

Tommy-Anne looked out at the sky, where Sirius, the Dog-Star, winked gravely at her. She wondered if Heart of Nature was near, and if he would soon come to take away the Magic Spectacles that he had lent her to wear until Christmas Eve. The fire flickered cheerfully, and the winds whispered outside.

“I am here,” said the Voice, but this time it came from the Christmas tree.

“Have you come for the spectacles, dear Tree Man?” asked Tommy-Anne, anxiously. “It is so dark that I can’t see you, and this is the time,—Christmas Eve. Do you know about Christmas Eve, dear Heart of Nature?”

“Do I know? Yes, little House Child; this is the anniversary of the night when the Three Hearts met and understood one another, Heart of God, Heart of Nature, and Heart of Man;
the Christ Child, the cattle, the shepherds, in the manger at Bethlehem, and at that meeting the password *Brotherhood* was born!"

Again the winds called and wrung strange music from the leafless branches. The dry snow scurried and settled on the window ledges, where Jack Frost was perching, clad in an invisible cloak, while he traced upon the panes outlines of the forest ferns and greenery that his touch had withered.

The fire crackled and blazed, and Tommy-Anne sat in silence; at last she whispered softly, "Yes, I understand," and then added with a sigh, "But the Magic Spectacles — I shall not wear them tomorrow. Please tell me of what they are made?"

"You have used them well, Diana, and so you may keep them as my Christmas gift, and by and by you will share them with the brother, when instead of calling you Tommy-Anne, people will say Tommy and Anne. As to these spectacles, the glasses are made of Truth, but the settings are fashioned of a strange and precious metal that House People, for lack of a better word, call Imagination!"

"Mistress," said Waddles, "before I go to bed, I'm going up stairs to see the other fellow who owns my back legs. I think we shall be chums!"
"The Winds of Night! the Winds of Night! Who has work for us?" called the voices outside the window; but as the fire flashed again, Sirius gazed into an empty room, and Tommy-Anne kept the anniversary of the Three Hearts by a little cradle.

THE END
STORIES OF EARTH AND SKY
THE HEART OF NATURE

BY

MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT

AUTHOR OF "STORIES OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS," "STORIES OF BIRDS AND BEASTS," ETC., ETC.

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It was the first week of March. Time for the grass to be greening along the edges of springy meadows, for the Pussy-willows to stretch out their silver-furred paws, time for the cheerful little Marsh Frogs to tune up toward sunset. But instead of these spring signs and sounds, snow was falling around Happy Hall, as it had done for two whole days, until the paths were quite buried. Great drifts swept over the violet frames, and clung to the woodshed roof. The pines and spruces at the north of the house
shivered and bent their heads to the fierce wind; and a flock of newly arrived Robins huddled in the hemlock hedge, wondering what had become of their friend the Sun, who had given the signal for their journey, half suspecting him of having played them a shabby trick.

Tommy-Anne was sitting on a foxskin rug before the fire in her bedroom, with no other light besides what the logs yielded. She was allowed a "go-to-bed" fire every chilly night, and the fireplace was a frame in which she saw wonderful pictures.

A great many things had happened since the Christmas Eve four years before, when Waw-be-ko-ko, the Snow Owl, came to the Christmas party, and Tommy-Anne halved her name with the little brother. People often called her Tommy-Anne still, in spite of the fact that Tommy was a sturdy little chap, strutting about proudly in his first knickerbockers, and puckering his lips to make his very first whistle.

In fact, this double name caused great confusion in the house until the day when Tommy-Anne took matters into her own hands, saying, "I can climb better than ever, because my arms are longer; I ask as many questions, and I'm only just beginning to understand a few of the
whys. I like outdoors much better than indoors, and dogs better than cats and dolls; but, as I'm a girl, I want to be called by a girl's name, so please, father-mother, call me Anne. Then, perhaps, by and by when I grow up and have to wear long skirts and turn up my hair and tread on every step of the stairs and always go through gates, I may like to be called my whole name, Diana, after the hunting lady with the young moon on her head."

Meanwhile Waddles had been growing into quite a sober, middle-aged dog, with many affairs of his own and even troubles to attend to—troubles that he considered far worse than Aunt Prue's broom or his old enemy, the Miller's cat, for Aunt Prue did not live at the house now that Anne's mother was quite well and strong again, and the Miller's cat had one lame front paw, and seldom dared dogs to fight with her.

Waddles' first grievance was that he could not take his usual naps in the study scrap-basket, as Tommy kept his blocks in the comfortable old one, while the new one was high and tipped over easily, in addition to being made of rough, prickly straw. This was a slight grievance, however, beside other things; and as Waddles walked slowly up stairs, and along the hall to Anne's
door, that snowy March evening, his heart was very heavy indeed. "As like as not she has gone to bed," he whimpered to himself, "and I shall have to wait another day to tell her."

As she heard the patter of his feet outside, Anne started, put a fresh log on the fire, saying, "How can I ever tell him?" Waddles nosed the door open, but only enough to squeeze his plump body through, and then pulled it as nearly shut as he could with his paw, for what he had to say to his mistress was for her ear alone. To be sure Tommy was supposed to be in bed, but then he was always turning up unexpectedly. Waddles snuggled up to his mistress, who began smoothing out his velvety ears after her old habit. He was tempted to curl up and go to sleep; but no, he must not. So he sighed, turned his head on one side, and gazed first at the fire and then at Anne, with a most pathetic expression in his soft brown eyes.

Anne clasped her hands around her knees and returned the look, thinking in perplexity, "How can I break the news to him?"

"Mistress," said Waddles after a while, as Anne was beginning to be interested in an angry dispute in the chimney between the wind that wished to come down and the smoke that was struggling to go up, "I'm very unhappy and it is partly
your fault, too, though I'm sure you never meant it. Do you remember the night when Tommy came and you were so pleased that you turned reckless and began giving him things? First, you gave him half your name, then you gave him half of me—the back leg half, so that I could 'wag my tail to amuse him,' you said.

"At first it worked very well; he didn't say much of anything, and I could go up and sleep in your mother's nice warm room where his crib was, whenever I pleased. When the warm weather came I followed his coach to all the cool shady places. Then, after a while, he took an interest in my tail and used to shout and give me crusts of bread to make me wag it. Of course I only took the crusts out of politeness, for you know I never eat them.

"Pretty soon after this, when he could run about, he began to pull my tail and sometimes
trample on my ears, when I lay stretched out asleep. Still I did not whimper or complain because he wore girls' clothes and had such puppy ways, but since he has worn those pantikins I can bear no more. He wants to wag my tail. The other day he tied a string to it. He wishes me to run races with him directly after my dinner, and go to sleep under his chair at breakfast when the Earth has so much news to tell me, and perhaps there are tracks of a Weasel or Scent Cat all around the barn. Then twice he has shut me in the woodhouse just as you whistled.

"My patience ended yesterday. You know the duck leg your father gave me after dinner? To be sure it was a trifle tough, but otherwise good eating, so I thought that I would bury it awhile to ripen. I had barely laid it down, to look for a place where I could scratch a hole, when I saw Tiger slinking down the orchard wall looking narrow and sly as ever. I growled—he stopped. Then Tommy ran up and called, 'Tum here, thin cat, here's a dood bone fatty Waddles tant eat,' and he threw my duck leg to Tiger.

"For a minute I meant to run away, down to the Horse Farm, for they say that a woman lives there who is very good to dogs, but we've been friends so long, and you wear the Magic Spectacles
and know my language, that I couldn’t go without telling you, so please, mistress, take back my hind legs and let me all belong to you again,” and Waddles raised his head and bayed dismally to hide the fact that he was nearly crying.

“You dear old Waddlekins!” cried Anne, standing him up before her until their noses met.

“Of course I’ll take you back, for I’ve often missed you dreadfully when I’ve been for long walks and had to leave you behind because Tommy wanted you. Yet when Obi offered to get me one of the pretty spaniels from the Horse Farm, I could not bear to let another dog take your place. But we must be patient with little brother, because you know the Three Hearts have given him to us to take care of until he can see through the Magic
Spectacles himself. Father says, he is a responsibility — the first real one I've ever had. Do you know what that means? Well, it is this way.

"Before Tommy came, if I was careless about anything like getting my feet sopping wet, tearing my frocks and forgetting about meal times, I had wet feet, or scratched arms, or felt hungry, but that was all. Now, if I do these things and Tommy sees me and does them too, I'm responsible for him, do you see? So responsibility is a thing that makes you mind what you do and isn't altogether comfortable. Waddles love, I might as well tell you first as last, — you are going to have a responsibility too. A new dog is coming to live here to-morrow, or next day, or whenever the snow stops. You will have to help train him and teach him to be neat and eat his food off his plate and sit on his own mat, and not get up on the sofas, or lie down or dig in mother's flower beds, besides all the other things you've learned."

"A new dog here!" yelped Waddles, bristling and springing up as quickly as if some one had cried, "cat" or "rat." "Missy, only a minute ago you said that you didn't take one of those polite little spaniels that Obi offered you because you loved me so; and now — to think of it — a strange dog coming! I'll go out in the snow and
have one more fight with Tiger to get even about the duck leg, and then I don't care — what — becomes — of — me!” and Waddles crept toward the door with drooping head and tail, all his fierceness having vanished.

“Come back, you poor dear,” called Anne, “you haven't heard but half!” Then, as he did not move very quickly, she half lifted, half dragged, him back to the foxskin.

“Now look me straight in the face, Waddles, for you've got two of the very worst of the Puk-Wudjies living in your head, — Sus-Picion and Jea-Lousy. Father says, 'Did-not-Think' and 'Did-not-Mean-To' don't begin to make as much trouble as they do.

“In the first place, the new dog is not for me, it is for Tommy. It is only a bit of a four-months-old puppy dog that will like to run and play. Father wants him to grow up with Tommy, so that they will love each other as we do. Then you see, you and I can stay together all the time as we used to. This dog's mother lives at the Horse Farm, and is one of Miss Jule's very best big St. Bernards — the big strong kind that, in the cold country where they come from, can dig out people that are buried in the snow. As for being strange, why, you know that all Miss Jule's
animals are as friendly as they can be. So now,
give me a nice little kiss on the ear, and as a great
treat you shall sleep on my bed in a nest made of
the afghan. Come, jump up, I hear mother on the
stairs and she won't kiss us good-night, you know,
unless we are quite in bed."

"The Winds of Night, the Winds of Night;
let us in for we are cold," wailed the voices out-
side the window, where the sleety snow coated the
panes.

"Is that you, Kabibonokka?" whispered Anne,
as she drew the eider-down quilt up to her chin.
"What business has the north wind here when it
ought to be spring? Mother has bought all her
flower seeds and Obi would have made the hot-bed
for them yesterday if you hadn't brought this snow
back to bury everything. How do things get so
mixed? What made you come back? Last week
I saw a bee in the violet frame. I wonder if he
expected to find the Flower Market open, and what
became of the message he was carrying? Perhaps
it froze! Do you think a message could freeze,
Kabibonokka? And I wonder what has become
of Heart of Nature now that all his garden is dead
and buried. Perhaps he has gone, to sleep the
winter sleep, like the Woodchuck."
“Heart of Nature never sleeps, and work in his garden never ceases,” answered a Voice from beside the hearthstone. “I have been abroad all day working to protect my own and soon I go out again. The Plan directs the seasons and marks their courses, but rebellious forces strive and wrestle for the mastery and make delay and havoc.

“A vagrant voice called Kabibonokka from the north. Quickly I bade the snows descend and shield the earth from his rude breath. To-morrow, if he leaves, Shawondasee will come and help me gather up the snow again. Meanwhile I whisper to the Coon, ‘Keep close in your tree hole.’ To Crow and Jay, ‘Stay well within the cedars lest your eyeballs freeze.’ To Quail and Grouse, surrounded in the stubble, ‘Dive in the snow blanket, lest you perish.’ To the Eel beneath the ice, ‘Begin your journey down the river to your spring sea chambers before the ice gates lift.’ As to the grass and plants and trees, snow dulls their ears, they hear nothing, and their sap lies cold and still and safe.”

“I’m so glad you’ve come back!” cried Anne, sitting up in bed and clasping her hands. “You don’t come to see me often, now that Tommy is about so much and I have to stay indoors and do
my lessons. How is that, dear Heart of Nature, for there are so many whys that need answers that I'm sure I've forgotten half of them?"

"Anne, do you remember the password in the land of the Three Hearts?"

"Brotherhood!" said Anne, promptly.

"Yes, brotherhood — an equal sharing. You must listen to each of the Three Hearts if you would understand the Plan. I have but given Heart of Man his turn."

"Of course, lessons and books and people mean Heart of Man, but, dear Tree Man, please tell me why do things ever mix up and Winter and Spring interfere, and some animals eat others, and all that? Why does the Plan allow it, and where are all the things that you are never sure whether you have seen or only dreamed?"

"The Plan fixes its laws of birth, growth, and death, the beginning and the end; between these heat and cold, wind, water, tempest and calm, all contend for mastery, and when House People speak of haphazard and mysterious cross-purposes, you know they mean —"

"Wabeno, the Magician!" cried a shrill voice in the chimney. "Wabeno, the Magician!" echoed a calmer voice at the keyhole. Anne rubbed her eyes and looked about very much
puzzled. She had not quite caught Heart of Nature's meaning, perhaps because she was sleepy, but those voices, surely they belonged to Kabibonokka and Mudjekeewis. What could the North and West Winds be doing there at the same time?

She slipped out upon the foxskin rug to listen, pulling the down quilt after her.

"Who is Wabeno, the Magician, and where does he live?" she whispered. "Does he belong to the Brotherhood of Beasts, or what? Creep into the chimney, Winds of Night; for though I may not let you in the window, you can come quite near, for the fire is low."

"Do you speak, Kabibonokka, while I get my breath," said Mudjekeewis, panting. "Ah! the distance I have come to-day from heat and sand and summer to this snow, simply because Wabeno gave his signal."

Anne was going to speak impatiently, and then stopped herself, for Kabibonokka said: "Before man walked the earth, nothing asked why about anything. What came, came; what went, went all unquestioned. When the Red Brothers arrived (the first men we ever met in these lands), 'why' was the very first word they said. For many things they could find no reasons, because they did not understand the Three Hearts and
their language; so every strange thing that befell, they laid to Wabeno, the Magician.

"He was born in Wabun Annung, the Morning Star, or so they said, and of the race of Wenona, whom the Robins and Bluebirds loved so well. A warrior was he, young and strong and beautiful, yet no one had clearly seen his face, for a leafy mask half hid it. He had no wigwam, any tree trunk was his home. He carried no bow or spear, and Kaw-kaw, the far-seeing Raven, perched on his brow for a head-dress, its eyes shooting lightning bolts. Thunder boomed from his magic drum if he struck it fiercely, but at a gentle touch it yielded a note like the feathered drumming of the Ruffed Grouse, and he sang a call that all must answer.

"'Hear my drum, hear my drum, you who dwell across the earth! Hear my drum! I am Wabeno! This is my work!'

"Then following, sometimes in leash and sometimes free, came his faithful Wagoose, the Dream Fox, with his shadowy pack and his book of wondrous fading pictures.

"When the Red Brothers heard Wabeno and his train, they closed their eyes tightly, for only the mind's eye may see him unblinded; while to sleep-closed eyes alone will the Dream Fox show his
picture-book, and lead the sleepers long journeys through strange countries all in a minute.

"Two days ago I, Kabibonokka, was travelling northward with Wabasso, the White Rabbit, and between us we led Winter, who walked with lingering tread. Suddenly I heard a signal to return, and I came, calling among the trees to the Winds of Night to learn who had work for us; but there was no work, and so we wrought mischief, and troubled Heart of Nature, who dropped the snow to keep me from his garden. Who, then, could have called us but Wabeno?"

"And I," cried Mudjekeewis, "I was lingering in the southwest country, where the cactus walls the sand-heaps, and the century plant already shows the buds of its April flowers. I heard a signal and I came, only to find it Winter. Who called me but Wabeno?"

"Winds of Night, idle Winds of Night, I have work for you, though you came at another's bidding," called Heart of Nature. "Go up and tear the veils from the stars and polish them bright, and help the young moon to find her pathway down the western sky; pluck the dead branches from the tree tops, scatter the last clinging seeds; then cease, for I have much to plan and set in order before morning."
"Mistress," called Waddles, waking up with a whimper and finding the bed empty, "mistress, do come to sleep. I'm fairly shivering, and the wind is coming in at every crack until my hair stands on end. Don't you see the fire is nearly out? You will have a snuffle cold, and then we shall have to stay in the house for days and days!"

"What did you say, Waddlekins? Ah, yes, the fire is low and there is no more wood in the basket," said Anne, stumbling back to bed. "Why, the stars and moon are out, it must have stopped snowing! How the winds whistle and scold; if I could only understand all the things they say. Ah! how I wish the Dream Fox would show me his picture-book.

"Why, there he comes! The rug fox must have been a Dream Fox when he was alive! The picture-book — too! The poor old blind Crow up in the woods — and the Bob-whites — all — asleep — under — the — snow. I'll get Obi to take them — some — food — to-morrow, and we — will help — Heart of Nature — dig — out — his — g-a-r-d-e-n, and — begin — his —"

Footsteps crossed the hall below and came rapidly up the stairs.

"It is nothing, dear," said Anne's father to her
mother, looking in at the door. "I thought the child was at her old trick of playing Owl and looking out the window in the dark but she was only talking in her sleep."
II

The Signal

HE March moon was at the full before the Pussy-willows and Alder catkins could make up their minds to believe that winter had really gone, and trust their plumes to Keewaydin's rough handling. For the clear cold Northwest Wind reigned among the gray branches, played touch-about with Mudje-keewis whenever he passed by, and blustered and scolded at such a rate that gentle Shawondasee did not even venture to whisper for days together.
A night came, however, when an hour before sunset the winds' voices had altogether ceased, a mellow glow spread over the slowly greening lowlands and bare hillsides, Red-winged Blackbirds gave their juicy call from afar, Bluebirds were about the barn, many Song-Sparrows sang cheerfully from garden and roadside, while a very plump bright-breasted Robin actually spied the first delicious earthworm of the season.

"Listen, how the frogs are peeping!" said Anne to Tommy, as they walked up from the barn after a visit to some very new fluffy chickens. "Don't you want to come down in the meadows and see if we can find some of the tiny little frogs? The Doctor says they are as cute as can be."

"No, I don't care for frogs," replied Tommy, with a quiver in his voice; "I care for dogs and they—don't—like—me. Father said—he said Lumberlegs was to be my very own, to play with me and everything; but he isn't mine one bit—not even his name. You and Obi named him before he came, and it's a dreadful, horrid name, and he is a horrid dog, and he won't stay with me, and he's too big. To-day he walked on my new soldiers and bent all their legs, and I wish father would send him away."

By this time the tears began to peep out of the corners of a pair of very big brown eyes.

Anne knelt down by Tommy and drew him close to her, for she did not know exactly what else to do. What he said was perfectly true, for though both Waddles and Lumberlegs treated Tommy with great politeness, they would have nothing to do with him.

"Come with me and look for frogs, and tonight I'll ask father to take you where they sell little dogs and let you choose one for yourself. But I don't think we will send Lumberlegs back to Miss Jule, because he was a present, and it isn't polite to return presents; besides, Waddles has adopted him for his child and is taking great pains to train him.

"Won't that be nice to have a little dog, just as little as you please?"

"Y-e-s," hesitated Tommy, blinking back his tears; "but not such a very little dog either—'bout big enough to kill rats.

"There is Baldy going down the road to the mill to bring up the feed. Please help me call him, Anne; mother said I might ride down with him and buy six banty eggs of the Miller to set under the big brown hen, and I've got the money sewed into my pocket."
“Baldy! B-a-l-d-y!” The horses stopped and Tommy was pulled up over the tailboard and went bumping happily down the road in the springless box wagon, while the question of dogs was forgotten for a time.

“Baldy won’t be back for at least an hour, so I might as well go and look for the frogs by myself,” thought Anne, whistling to Waddles, who was taking a sun-bath under the glass of one of the violet frames, and came out looking very guilty.

“Now, Waddles, aren’t you ashamed of yourself,” said his mistress, severely, “after all I’ve said to you about being a good example to Lumberlegs? What if he should go and take a nap in among the violets or new lettuce, and then when he was scolded say, ‘Why not, I saw Waddles do it?’

“Where is Lumberlegs? You don’t know? Very well, I’ll excuse you this time, and you may come down to the old spring meadow with me, but remember no sniffing about and baying at Rabbits. I’m looking for peeping frogs, and by the way they sound I should think there must be thousands of them.”

Waddles trotted solemnly after Anne, looking over his shoulder rather nervously from time to
time, until they were well out of sight of the house.

"Sphee-phee-phee-sphee!" chanted the chorus of frogs, directly ahead of Anne, where bushes of all kinds marked the bed of a sluggish water-course that was entirely hidden here and there by mats of last year's cat-tail flags.

Anne picked her way carefully, stepping on sedge tussocks and partly decayed logs, stopping now and then to pick an especially pretty wand of Pussy-willows. She slipped once, and trod upon something that crushed with a crisp noise, which was followed by a most disagreeable odor.

"Dearie me," said Anne aloud, "I wonder if I've trodden on a bad egg; but how did it come here? No, it isn't an eggy smell either; it's more like a Scent Cat."

"You have smashed one of my brothers," said a voice choking with anger. As Anne hopped to another tussock and looked down she saw a curious looking plant peering up from the wet leaf mould. A thick purple and green mottled, pointed hood partly hid, not a queer little goblin face, as Anne half expected, but instead enfolded a thick fleshy spike, powdered here and there with yellow pollen. Not a leaf was in sight, though
some tiny green rolls were piercing the ground, close to the hood, which might be leaves later on.

"I suppose you must be a plant, though I'm sure I've never seen you before," said Anne, apologetically; "but I've never been down here quite so early." Then after stopping to think a moment, she brightened up and asked: "Have you anything to do with those tufts of big green leaves that I've often found here in May, and later they have bunches of hard berries? Those plants do really look something like cabbages."

"I am the flower; those green tufts are the leaves, and the berries are the seeds. A very handsome flower I am, too, don't you think, even if you do not appreciate my perfume?"

"You—are so far down in the ground that—that—I can't see you—so very well," stammered Anne, wishing to be truthful, and at the same time polite.

"May I pick one of your family? I see that there are a great many of them about besides the one that I hurt."

"No, you may not; we are not to be handled and made into bouquets like common flowers; we lose our attraction when we leave home. We belong to a very exclusive and aristocratic family; it counts among its members the hothouse Calla
Lily and the giant-leaved Caladiums that House People are proud to plant in beds upon their lawns. Besides these there are other brothers of the home swamps,—the pale wild Calla, the Golden Club, and the Sweet Flag. Why, that pert young fellow, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, is my very first cousin."

"How interesting," said Anne, trying to remember all the names; "Jack-in-the-Pulpit is a great friend of mine. We have some lovely Callas in the study window, too, and I can see that your flowers are shaped something like theirs. But the Calla leaves grow first and then the flowers, while your flower comes up first. Why is that?"

"Listen, House Child. To us belongs a very great honour. We open the Flower Market; we are the very first blossoms in it; we give the Bees messages to carry and something to pack in the seed-lunch baskets even before Pussy-willow has offered her grains of precious life dust.

"To be first in the Flower Market we must not waste time in growing leaves. We prepare for our blooming far back in the old year. In autumn, even, our flower buds are fashioned and hidden down beneath the ground. This purple hood is not the flower; the flowers are huddled on the fleshy spike within, close to the seed-lunch
baskets. Heart of Nature made the hood to keep all warm, lest Shawondasee calls out of season, and we peep out only to be rebuked by Kabibonokka.

"Heart of Nature was wise; we often peep out, lured by a warm winter day, and Peboan tramples us down. Sometimes I have been rash, and boldly pushed up my head in February, but it was useless—one flower cannot make a market, and no Butterflies came for messages."

"About your perfume," asked Anne, hesitatingly. "Why is that so queer—I mean so different from—from other flowers, and have you any name?"

"Our perfume truly is very rare and strong. It is made so, to direct the early Bees and insects to us without loss of time. The Red Brothers give us a lovely name, Chi-kaug Flower, and in the wild countries the big bears consider us a most delicious spring salad."

"Why, then, your plain name must be Skunk Cabbage, and you are the flower that the Milkweed Monarch told me about years ago, for Chi-kaug was the Red Brothers' name for Skunk. The Monarch said that you are always the very first flower to bloom." As the Cabbage did not reply, she continued rather indiscreetly:
“Some very early flowers have beautiful leaves and a lovely perfume, too. The Trailing Arbutus up on Wild Cat Mountain, for instance, and the dear little blue Hepaticas in my woods above the orchard.”

“Humph, House Child, it does not need Magic Spectacles to see that those are last year’s leaves that you are speaking of; the new leaves follow the bloom with both those flowers. The great trees like Maples, Elms, Birches, and Willows all flower before their leaves come out.”

“I don’t think I’ve noticed any real flowers on those trees—only sort of queer looking little tassels and things.”

“No matter how a thing looks, House Child,” said the Chi-kaug Flower, fiercely, “everything is really a flower that has a seed-lunch basket and precious dust to fill it with. That is the important part. Heart of Nature gave flowers pretty coloured petals and perfume, to remind the Bees and Butterflies to do their work in the Flower Market. I wish you would go away; I’m sure I hear a Bee buzzing, though those horrid little frogs make such a noise that I’m nearly deaf, and if you are here the Bee will surely overlook me.”

Anne skipped over the tussocks almost as quickly as a frog might, and then called Waddles,
who was standing on three legs with his tail straight out, "pointing" in the most approved fashion.

"I can hear the frogs everywhere, but the question is, where are they? Can you see them, Waddleskins?"

"I smell them everywhere, mistress; but as they hop instead of walk, their trails are mixed and crooked."

"Why not look straight in front of your nose?" piped a tiny voice, as an alder bush brushed Anne's face. There, to be sure, almost on the end, perched a wee yellowish-brown frog not more than an inch long, with bulging eyes and a quivering throat.

"Yes, here I am, though most of my brothers are down there in the water with only enough of their noses out to
keep their voices from drowning," said the frog, swelling his throat like a balloon.

"Sphee-phee-phee-sphee," chirped a hundred little voices.

"I'm delighted to see you," said Anne, cordially; "are you one of Dahinda's very young children? Do you know I haven't seen or heard of that great frog since last summer; where did he spend the winter?"

"Dahinda, the Bull Frog? Oh, he stays down in the mud all winter as we do. We do not belong to his family, however; he is a common Water Frog,—a lonely sort of a fellow,—while we are Tree Frogs,—sociable little chaps, and much more graceful. We have suckers on the ends of our fingers and toes to help us to climb, so we can walk up window-panes even, without slipping. In summer we may leave the marshes and go travelling about the trees and gardens, wherever we please. Look!" and the frog held out one of his hands so that Anne could see the "suckers" that looked like hollow blisters upon the ends of his webbed fingers.

"What do you think, one member of our family that lives in a far-off hot country has such big feet that he uses them for wings, and flies."

"Really truly?" gasped Anne.
"Yes, really truly; you see, as I told you, we are very superior frogs," — and the pygmy cleared his throat and joined the chorus for a moment, merely to prove that he could.

"All the marsh things seem to be very proud of themselves," thought Anne, but she only said: —

"What is your name? I suppose you must have one."

"Yes, certainly; my name is Hyla Pickering. Hyla is the family name, but when Flowers, Beasts, and Birds are given high sounding names, the last is always put first. I have a cousin who doesn't begin to sing so early in the spring, and though he isn't nearly as handsome as I am, what do you suppose he can do?"

"Jump a hundred feet at once," guessed Anne.

"No, he can turn any colour he pleases. If he sits on a gray mossy stone, he can look gray and mossy; if he goes on a fresh green plant, he turns green; and if he wishes to go to sleep on a branch with a mottled bark, he can grow mottled. So his name is Hyla Change-colour."

"How wonderful!" exclaimed Anne, forgetting where she was, and nearly stepping into the water.

"Heart of Nature lets him do this so that his enemies may not see him, also that he may catch his own food unseen."
"What do frogs eat?"

"All kinds of meat and game; we like animal food."

"Meat? Game?"

"Yes, flies, insects, and such things; and the big water frogs, like Dahinda, eat little ducks and lizards, snakes, mice—all almost everything. In fact, Dahinda and his tribe are sometimes cannibal frogs.

"We are more dainty, and when we come up to your garden in summer, or you hear us calling for rain in the trees on the lawn, you needn't be afraid of us and throw stones into the trees, for we only do good."

"I thought the things in the trees were Tree Toads. Do you belong to the Toad Family?"

"No, indeed; they are clumsy, ugly things, with short hind legs; they cannot leap as we do, and their hands and feet are not made webbed for swimming. Their skins are thick and warty and full of sour juice; some of them are fine singers though, and they are great bug catchers."

"Please, Mr. Hyla Pickering, won't you tell me how a tree frog can change colour?"

"Ask Wabeno, the Magician," whispered a voice from the thin mist that was rising from the ground.
There was no wind, and for a moment Anne was puzzled.

"Ask Wabeno. Heart of Nature may not tell House People all the secrets of his garden, lest they grow too wise. Go up out of the lowlands, Anne; the evening mists are only good for Frogs, Will-o'-the-Wisp, and Jack-o'-Lantern."

"Oh please, stop a minute, dear Heart of Nature, and tell me if Wabeno is a really truly."

"Why not ask Wabeno himself?" said the silvery voice, rippling off to start the spring planting in the garden of wood and wayside, and give the Meadow-lark the key for the first notes of his spring song.

Waddles had walked uphill toward the light woods by the old barn, stopping every few minutes to point. Anne followed him, looking carefully, as there seemed to be something of a commotion going on in among the trees. Chipmunks and Gray and Red Squirrels were chattering, Rabbits hopped and scurried everywhere. A great Crow perched on a dead hickory branch, talking in a quavering voice to some Purple Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds, and a beautiful Ruffed Grouse stood erect upon a stump, his feet braced firmly and his wing raised.

"What can be going on?" said Anne, half
aloud. "It will be full moon to-night, I heard father say, and I wonder if there is to be a spring Forest Circus. If there is, I can't see it, because little Oo-oo, the Screech Owl, said a House Person can never go to this Circus but once."

"Mistress," whispered Waddles, "don't you see those lovely Rabbits? I haven't had a good run since before the great snow,—mayn't I take one now?" and Waddles gave a little bay of suppressed emotion.

"Hush! yes, run anywhere you like, away from here. There goes a big Rabbit downhill," said Anne, well knowing that Bunnie would have a perfectly safe start of the hound.

"What is all this about; is there to be a party here?" asked Anne of Adjidaumo, the Red Squirrel, who kept dropping hickory-nut shells on her head.

"It's the first event of the year for the Bird, Beast, and Flower Brothers," explained Adjidaumo, stopping to turn a nut in his paws as his teeth sought the best spot for gnawing.

"Yes," said Anne, eagerly; "what is it called, and what happens?"

"It's called the Gathering of the Clans, and the Ruffed Grouse gives the Spring Signal," whispered the Squirrel.
"This is the first night since the Brush Beacons burned that the Brotherhood of Beasts have all been awake and keen for hunting; and though there are few birds as yet, there are enough to make the meeting legal."

"Legal! what do you mean?"

"House Child," said Heart of Nature's voice, "do you know what day this is?"

"It's the twenty-first of March," said Anne, promptly, "and the slip on mother's Wordsworth calendar said,—

"'Like an army defeated
   The snow hath retreated,'

and it has."

"Yes, the twenty-first of March, the Vernal Equinox. According to the Plan, on this day my earth garden locks the back door on winter and opens the front door to welcome spring. Alas, in some parts of my garden she gets but a cold greeting. Still the Wild Clans remember, and at least a Beast, a Bird, a Flower, always answer my call."

Just then there was a great fluttering among the birds. There were any number of Robins and Bluebirds, Meadow-larks and Grackles, constantly arriving, and chattering to those who had stayed about all winter. A fine pair of
Hawks held themselves rather aloof, while Little Oo-oo blinked solemnly from his home tree-hole. Bob-white ran out from the leaves, but without whistling, and Anne could see the forms of many of the Brush Beacon Beasts crouching behind rocks and trees. Small Woodpeckers tapped, Chickadees whistled, and the big Flicker laughed so loud that the Rabbits turned somersaults downhill in fright. Evidently they were all waiting for some one.

"Phee-bee,-phee-bee-a," called a faint voice. Instantly every animal was alert. "Phee-bee,-phee-bee-a," sounded again clearly overhead, and in dashed a little brown Phæbe Bird, out of breath, but otherwise quite well.

"Now by this sign the Clans declare the gardens, the woods, and the fields are ready to greet Spring. Listen to the Signal!" called the Ruffed Grouse, making a rapid, continuous drumming noise in some mysterious manner with his wings.

"How did he do that? I was looking right at him and I can't tell," said Anne, turning to Little Oo-oo, who, from not having much to say, was thought to be very wise.

"How? Ask Wabeno, the Magician, for he has lent Ruffle the very sound of his own drum."
"Why do they think so much of the Phœbe, Oo-oo? It isn't a rare bird."

"It is an insect eater, the first fly-catcher to leave the Winter Birdland," said Heart of Nature. "When it comes, we know that insect wings are humming. The Phœbe, the Chipmunk, and the Pussy-willow are my pledges to my people; not until the Clans see these will they believe that winter is over."

Anne edged herself along nearer to the Ruffle, the Grouse, who, to her great surprise, seemed to know her and began to chat pleasantly.

"I don't remember having met you before," Anne said.

"Oh yes, you have, but you probably did not recognize me, because that day I was in distress; my coat was all awry and I was lame and nearly frozen."

"Are you the poor bird that Obi found frozen to the snow, and that we took down to Miss Jule? I often wondered if you felt quite right again, and where you went."

"The very same, and if you'll come up beyond the old barn sometime in May I will show you my mate and family."

"Where is your mate now?"

"Oh, somewhere about, waiting to be called,
when I am ready for housekeeping. It is the rule in our family that females never speak until they are spoken to."

"How can you call her? I didn't know a Grouse could sing."

"I drum for her, as you heard me drum just now to proclaim it spring. We game birds love martial music better than vocal; so I play the drum, while Bob-white prefers the fife, and friend Woodcock, who I see has just arrived and is probing for worms over there near the spring, has a little instrument of his own, half fife and half flute, to which he dances."

"What became of Ko-ko-ko-ho after the storm? Did he find his wife, and did his wing grow strong again?"

"His wing was soon cured, but he is banished, and I am to announce it to the Clan to-night before the trial.

"After Crotalus, the Bad One, died, the Beast and Bird Brotherhood lived quite happily here-about for several years. Then complaints began to pour in about Mr. and Mrs. Ko-ko-ko-ho. They took two of my children last spring, and five of Bob-white's covey. Mother Rabbit lost more children, she said, than she could count; but as she always has more than she can take
care of, and tries to board them free in her neighbours' gardens, we did not care much about her complaint.

“Some time ago the Ko-ko-ko-hos grew bold, as you know, and took the Miller's pigeons; but when they finally went down and robbed Miss Jule, our friend, we said they must be banished. Then those of us who live here about all winter held a private council and gave Reddy Fox charge of getting the pair away.

“When Ko-ko-ko-ho was hurt, the Fox imitated his note as best he could and led Mrs. Ko-ko-ko-ho a dance, off beyond Wild Cat Mountain, for she was the ugliest one to deal with. Then, after Ko-ko-ko-ho recovered, Reddy told him where his wife had gone, and he went too. So now they live in Rufus Lynx's own woods, and if they do not earn an honest living there, Rufus Lynx has promised to execute them. And he never breaks his word!"

“Who is going to be tried, and what are all those Crows making such a time about down in the old cornfield?"

“The Crows are to have a hearing. Last year, at the anniversary of Cock Robin's funeral, there were many complaints lodged against them as nest robbers, and the smaller birds that build
in gardens and orchard trees wish all Crows to be banished to the wild fields beyond the mountain."

"Why don't they come up to be heard then?" asked Anne.

"They are too cowardly; that is one reason why the Rulers of Birdland despise them so. They are almost the only birds who will leave their young in times of danger. Then, too, they sneak about and lie so. Only think, today they have sent a poor old Crow, who had one eye frozen in the storm, to plead for them, instead of coming up in a body themselves."

"Hush! the hearing is to begin," called little Oo-oo, circling about, as the old crow hopped feebly to a stump and cleared his throat.

"I am Kaw Ondaig, the lame-winged Crow from the Cedar Swamp. I have been lame-winged for many years, but now I'm one-eyed also. In the great storm, I was too slow to fly into the warm shelter of the old barn like the other birds, and besides, I feared it was a trap, so one of my eyeballs froze, and in thawing, burst, and I am half blind.

"You say my tribe are cowards. It is too true, but those who are always chased always run, so it comes by inheritance. Look at the
THE CROW'S COMPLAINT
Rabbit Family. It is the same with them."
(At the word "Rabbit," all the bunnies dodged into their holes.)

"You say we are cannibals. We are sometimes, but only in the nesting season, when we crave fresh meat for our young. You say that we are ugly, croaking things, dismal to look at. So we are, but it is not easy to be cheerful and pretty when a black dress is all that is allowed us the year through.

"As for singing, we have voices and sing among ourselves, yet others do not understand our songs. When we think we are singing like Thrushes, it is called croaking."

"I wonder how that can be?" queried Anne, aloud.

"Ask Wabeno, the Magician," answered Ondaig; "Kaw-kaw, the Raven, rides upon his shoulder and whispers in his ear. Kaw-kaw is jealous of us, so ask Wabeno.

"May I sing you one song in behalf of my poor tribe before they are condemned?" continued Ondaig.

The Clan had decided what they meant to do, but they gave Ondaig leave to sing, out of pity to his misfortunes.

When he finished his quavering song, some of
the birds seemed quite affected, and after a little consultation the Grouse drummed once more for order, and announced: —

"This is our decision. As Crows are cannibals and nuisances in the nesting and planting seasons, though rather harmless the rest of the year, we decree that those who wish to build nests must go to the other side of Wild Cat Mountain and stay until their cannibal season is over, while any others may remain here, if they will never even roost in a tree where there is a bird's nest! Moreover, the penalty for remaining here after to-day is to be chased by House People, Hawks, and Kingbirds!"

Ondaig flew off to carry the decree to his tribe, who were so angry that they all flew to beating him as if he were to blame. In fact, the poor Crow would probably have lost his remaining eye if it had not been for Zoah, the Red-tailed Hawk, who swooped down and dispersed the crowd, which clattered off, leaving Kaw Ondaig and another cripple behind, as the only two who did not wish to build nests.

"Go down to Miss Jule's and she will let you live about the barns," called Anne; so the two old bachelor Crows flopped off, and any day you may see them walking contentedly in and out of the granary at the Horse Farm.
The sun was almost setting when Anne remembered Waddles. He was returning from his chase with something fluffy in his mouth, which, a moment after, he laid at Anne's feet.

"That is all of the Rabbit I could bring you, missy; I didn't eat a scrap,—it ran so fast," he panted.

Anne picked up the bit of fur; it was poor Bunnie's white-lined tail.

"Oh, Waddles, for shame! how could you?" scolded Anne, stamping her foot. "It isn't fair hunting manners to bite tails off."

"I didn't bite it, missy; I only tried to persuade the
Rabbit backward out of his hole by it, and the tail moulted right off, the way the rooster's tail did, when you caught him last summer."

"Oh, Waddlekins," laughed Anne, shaking her finger at him, "you are growing young and sly again, and I don't half think you are a proper person to have adopted Lumberlegs."

As they left the wood with the setting sun behind them and turned toward Happy Hall, the great silvery moon was rolling its disk above the opposite end of the road.

"There is the moon before sunset and as large as life," said Anne; "yet it doesn't look like anything while the sun is about. I wonder—if there ever was a man-in-the-moon and if there are any people there now?"

"Hush, don't speak to me now," said a faint voice slipping down the moonbeams. "Day is not my time for answering questions. I'm not allowed to speak while the sun is up, but if you will leave your blind up, I'm due round by your window by eight o'clock, and then I may stop a bit and chat. The night is my day, so the Red Brothers called me Dibik Gheezis, the night sun."
NNE found some difficulty in keeping her appointment with the moon that evening. In the first place Tommy begged that she would put him to bed and "make him a story." It took a long time to tell about the frogs and the rabbit tail, and Tommy grew so excited about the latter that he tried to make Anne promise to find the poor hurt Bunnie next day and fasten its tail on again, with some of the rubber sticking-plaster the Doctor had given her.

Then when Anne finally reached her room her mother came up for a bedtime talk, and so it was half-past eight before the lamp was put out and she pulled up the shade to let in the moonlight.
By this time the Moon had passed the farther window and was peeping in at the one nearest her bed.

"You had better go into bed and be quite comfortable," said the voice that came down the moonbeams; "my story is rather a long one and you will be cold sitting there on the floor, for my rays cannot give you warmth as the sun's do."

The voice was perfectly distinct, and yet it sounded very far off and cool, like wind that had blown over an icy mountain.

"It's very strange," thought Anne, "that I can understand what the Moon says. It isn't a near-by thing, it doesn't belong to the Flower Market or the Brotherhood of Beasts or Birds, and it certainly doesn't do any work for Heart of Nature. I wonder to what family it belongs?"

"The Winds of Night, the Winds of Night, who has work for us," whispered the familiar voices in the chimney, and, as if at their call, a flock of gray silver-edged clouds trooped past the moon, casting shadows on the floor.

"Mudjekeewis, is that you? You who go everywhere and fly far above the earth when you drive your cloud horses, have you ever been to the Moon? Perhaps you keep your chariots there."
“I never go so far from this earth garden, House Child; round and round we winds go, over oceans and plains, over mountain tops that are almost buried in the sky; but the Plan directs that we never leave the earth altogether, lest we lose ourselves in the great unknown, that House People call space.”

“What are you and the other winds made of, Mudjekeewis? I can feel your touch and see the work you have done, and yet I have never really seen you yourselves.”

“We winds are merely the air in a hurry,—the air that is the breath of the warm-hearted earth and clings about her so that in their turn the Brotherhods of Flower, Bird, and Beast may breathe it, and so live. When this breath of life is quiet, it is called air. House People say, ‘Open the window and let in the air;’ but when the air is restless, in a hurry, and rushes along, they say, ‘The wind is blowing.’ Look up at those clouds that graze like sheep far off in the sky pasture. See, ice crystals hang to their fleece; it is the North Wind that drives them along.”

“House Child,” interrupted the Moon, “do not give ear to the idle words of the winds, for they have no beginning and no end; when one brother sleeps the other wakens. The day of Dibik
Gheezis, the Night Sun, is brief, and Weeng, the Sleep Spirit, is ever wrestling with him for possession of it. Ask what you wish to know quickly, lest Weeng touches your eyelids with his fingers."

"I'd like very much to know exactly what you are, and — and — and all the whys — everything about you — and if there are any people living on you?"

"If you wish to know who I am, it is easily told — more easily than what I was, for that is a mystery. I am a thing of the past, a back number. A desolate, worn-out, cold-hearted sort of an earth, destitute of everything. I am out of heat, water, air, and people.

"I'm not even the Moon, as people on your Earth call me, but only a moon dancing attendance on my little earth as many other moons escort their earths here in Skyland, in the endless race around the Sun. I have always been accustomed to playing second fiddle to the Earth, so of course I'm used to it; but I do think I deserve to have a better fate than to have wash day named after me."

"Wash day! How?"

"Moonday, or Monday, as you House People will spell it, taking advantage of my helpless con-
dition not only to name a sloppy day for me, but then to leave a letter out."

"Do you belong to a Brotherhood or Guild, or are you all alone by yourself?"

"Nothing is by or for itself, and there is no loneliness in the Plan when it is undisturbed by cross-purposes," whispered Heart of Nature. In Skyland, where the earths and moons live, there are many families, each obeying the rules of a particular household.

"This earth where I have my garden and that moon that seems so far off, as well as many other earths and moons, belong to the household of the Sun. He rules them all according to the Plan, gives them light and heat, sets them a path in which to walk about the sky. The Sun is king over them, under the Plan, and watches always, keeping his compelling eye on every member of his family, holding each to its own pathway."

Anne crept slowly toward her bed, after raising the window shade as high as it would go, and pushing back the curtains as far as possible, she fixed herself comfortably where she could look the Moon full in the face.

"Now please, Mooney dear, tell me everything you can," she said, clasping her hands above her head. "But I wish you wouldn’t move so fast; I’m
afraid you will go past the window before we are half through talking. Can’t you ever be still?”

“That would be breaking Rule No. 1 in Skyland, which is ‘keep moving.’”

“What if you don’t?”

“Then you fall up out of sight.”

“Fall up! I never heard of falling up.”

“It all depends upon where you are standing; up from one place is down from another.”

“But,” said Anne, not feeling able to argue with the Moon, “when one of you fall, where do you fall to?”

“Ask Wabeno, the Magician, for no one who has fallen through space has ever come back to give me an account of his journey,” said the Moon, blinking solemnly as a procession of cloud Elephants, Camels, and Buffaloes, chased by a great Dragon, passed before its face.

“What is the next rule in Skyland?” asked Anne.

“‘Follow your leader,’” replied the Moon, promptly. “That is why I am always running round and round the Earth and the Earth is all the time trampling round the Sun.”

“Why don’t you go round the Sun by yourself and let the Earth alone?”
"Moons are only second-class sort of things, you see, and they have to serve two rulers and turn three ways at once. On their own axles, round their leaders, and along with them at the same time, while the Earth only turns on its own axle and rolls along its path around the Sun."

"Axle! why, that is the bar a wagon wheel turns on! I didn't know earths and moons had axles."

"House People use another word, axis, and explain about its being an imaginary line."

"I suppose they call it imaginary because they can't see it; most people say that of things they can't see," said Anne, "for you know, Mooney dear, if it was a real axle there would have to be ends to it sticking out somewhere."

"And so there are ends, to be sure, though House People will say it is all stuff and nonsense! What else are the North and South Poles?"

"Of course, I never thought of that; but why doesn't some one find them, I wonder?"

"Some one is always trying to, but suppose somebody did find them, meddled or tried to dig them up and take them to a museum or sell them for relics? Suppose some one bent them and sent the earth switching off the track right into the Sun, or maybe against me, to crack my crown?"

"A pretty mess there would be, to be sure!"
No, when any one gets rather near to where the north end of that axle is buried, Wabeno beats his drum, Wabasso, the White Rabbit, leaps from his snowy form and wakes Peboan, and quickly they bury every bit of food. Then Kabibonokka rushes by, and together they go to rivet icy fetters around all the passages to that axle’s end. So he who really finds it must have outwitted Winter, the Ice King, the North Wind in his own fortress, Famine, and Wabeno, the Magician.”

“They aren’t outwitted yet, that’s very certain,” said Anne, with a sigh of relief that there was no immediate danger of the earth’s running off the track from a bent axle. “Now please tell me how you came to be a second-class affair, and if all the stars go about as you do.”

“The Sun is the only star in the particular family of Skyland to which my earth and I belong. The other Suns, that House People call stars, are so far away in other sky countries that they seem very small, though they may really be bigger than our own Sun, I’ve heard it said, and you must know one hears a great many tales going to and fro in Skyland during a life as long as mine.”

“Do all those far-away Suns have families to rule the same as our Sun?”
“I don’t know,” said the Moon, hesitating a moment; “I’ve never inquired and I’ve never looked; we may not gape and stare, for the third rule in Skyland is ‘eyes front,’ for if one of us fell out of step the whole procession might be boggled up and we would all go flying about hither and thither like those homeless gas bags of comets with the fiery tails, that make us stay-at-home bodies so nervous when they come prowling about.”

“Won’t you please go back to the beginning?” prompted Anne.

“To the beginning? To the time when this earth and the other planets were like fiery eggs given off by their Sun parent?”

“That will do, if you don’t remember any further; but I’d rather you would begin with only the Sun.”

“Well then, there was that great ball of light and heat that you call the Sun, and the First Heart made the Plan to have a colony of planets about it.

“Now the Sun is not all pure liquid fire, as it seems to be. In the very inside there is a solid dark core surrounded by the blazing, burning atmosphere, that even I can’t face without winking; but that you House People may not even peep at unless through smoked glasses.”
"How do you know that the Sun isn't fire all through?"

"That is easily learned, even by House People; they see, through their telescopes, dark spots on the Sun's brightness. What are these spots but where rifts in the blazing atmosphere show the solid core.

"In the beginning of this Sun Family, to which I belong, bits of this fiery vapour whirled away from the Sun and flew into space. Some bits flew a great way and some not so far. As soon as these whiffs of hot breath left the Sun they were told the first rule, 'keep moving,' and as the hot vapour of which they were made began to spin, it took a round shape, so at first all the pieces looked like so many separate Suns.

"The Plan had a use for all of these new globes, and they were set moving and developing, each to go in its own path until it reaches the goal marked out for it. What this goal is no House Person may know, though they are always watching and spying up into the sky to find out. No one knows the Plan but the First Heart—not even Heart of Nature.

"While these new Suns were young they were very hot and gave light like their parent; but as they gradually cooled they shrank and grew more
and more solid and their heat became less and their light dim, until at this day almost all of the Sun's family shine merely by the light that they catch from his own face.

"Now Moons are not children of the Sun, but grandchildren, for they are made of the hot breath of the particular earth or planet they follow. I was of the breath of that planet which is called the Earth; as I cooled, I naturally followed her, around. So it is with other Moons that follow other planets.

"It took many years for the Plan to make the Earth ready for Heart of Man to occupy. House People may not count the time from the moment when the vapours cleared away, light dawned upon a solid earth crust, and the waters rolled back, until the day when the earth was ready to yield food suitable for Heart of Man. House People have not numbers enough to reckon it, yet to us of Skyland it seems only a few short days."

"But Mooney, what was happening to you while your leader, the Earth, was being grown?"

"I grew also, but my development was swifter. You know that when potatoes are taken from hot ashes a little one will cool much quicker than a big one."

"Yes, but how do you know about potatoes?"
“I may not tell the secrets of my past. I know, that is enough. You must not hurry me. I was a very small planet, so I cooled quickly, and all the changes that the Earth went through until it became the garden for Heart of Man, I, too, experienced. Mountains rose on my sides, rivers ran and oceans ebbed and flowed, and people of a sort lived on me. But I went on quickly cooling until my very heart was chilled. Then I gave off no moist breath to make air and water, for I was an experiment made to test the workings of the Plan.

“Listen, House Child. As Heart of God saw that the earth garden was complete and ready to receive the new animal who was worthy to wear his image and be called Heart of Man, the last life left my cold body. As a garden the Plan needed me no longer, and I then became merely Dibik Gheezeis, the Night Sun, who was thereafter to help and be a servant of the chosen Earth of all.”

“Poor Mooney, I never thought that you had ever had such an interesting life, and died of such an awful chill! I don’t quite see how you are very much help to the Earth, though of course it isn’t your fault. And what became of the last animals that lived on you?”
“Not much use!” cried the Moonbeams, quivering so with emotion that Anne feared for a moment that a heavy cloud was going to hide them. “Not much use! I did not believe that you could be so ignorant. How could there be an Almanac without me? How did the Indian Brothers divide their large pieces of time?”

“I think they cut notches on a time stick, one for every winter,” ventured Anne, feeling rather cornered.

“Yes, they did; but each of those notches marked a year. How did they measure the next smaller divisions?”

“They—called them—why, of course, they called them Moons. The Moon of Strawberries was June, and the Planting Moon May, and July the Midsummer Moon. So I suppose our word ‘month’ comes from your name too.”

“Yes, it does. Listen; this is the way time from days to years is measured. The twenty-four hours it takes the Earth to turn round on its axle is a day; half of that time or thereabouts, according to season, Gheezis, the Sun, reigns, and the other half belongs to me, Dibik Gheezis, the Night Sun, the light borrower. Always one of us is shining on some part of the earth.

“The division of the months is my work. The
scant twenty-eight days that it takes me to walk around the Earth gives name to the Moonth, tricked of a letter to Month.

"The time it takes the Earth to follow its path about the Sun is called a year, and while it does this once, I have made my monthly circuit thirteen times. But House People think the number thirteen is crooked and unlucky, so they divide up the thirteenth month and give a few days of it to each of the other twelve, and say that twelve months make a year. The Red Brothers give their year thirteen, while Wabeno makes his Kalendar with twelve and one long month of Moons to bind them.

"You can well see that one who gives name to time and dates, and has its picture in the Alma-
nacs, is very important in the affairs of Mother Earth."

"Of course, I didn't think of that sort of work. I mean that you did not help Heart of Nature's garden to grow by making heat or rain or anything of that sort."

"No—not exactly; but I make a cool and pleasant light at night for my namesake, the Moon Moth, and his kin to see their pathways to the Flower Market. I watch the Brotherhood of Beasts upon their hunting trips, and I paint magic pictures in cloud and earth and water to give delight to Heart of Man. One thing I do besides all this,—a very important thing,—I help make the tides both rise and fall.

"The Earth tips as she turns daily on her axle—I mean axis—and I, though cold and lifeless, have still the power of drawing water toward me, and twice a day it rushes and rolls up and twice spreads back again."

"Is it very important that the tides should go up and down?" asked Anne, incautiously.

"Important! If it was never high tide how could the big ships that go dancing to and fro across the water ever reach dry land? They would all stick fast in the mud. I wish you
would ask more sensible questions. And if the tide was never low, how could House People dig clams?"

"I beg your pardon," said Anne, humbly. "Will you please tell me what became of some of the other bits of the Sun's breath that turned into planets? Were there many of them, and did any others but the Earth have moon children? Though perhaps they are so far away that you aren't acquainted with them."

"I've never spoken to them, or been really introduced, but runaway comets and shooting stars from other families have given me news about them. There are eight large planets, or children of the Sun, who have separate pathways in our race track. Besides these there is a bunch of little ones that I have never heard much about.

"These eight are all of different sizes, and as no two take the same path, they are all at different distances from the Sun, and of course some are quite warm and some quite cold."

"And do they all have years and months the same as we do, and can they all go round the Sun in the same time?"

"Please think a moment, House Child," said the Moon, rather tartly. "Suppose there were eight men riding bicycles around a tree in the
middle of a field, and some were close to the tree and some were on the outside edge, which would get around the tree first?"

"The one the nearest to the tree, of course."

"Very well; it is the same way with the planets. The one nearest the Sun has only eighty-eight of the Earth's days in his year, and the farthest takes one hundred and sixty-five of the Earth's years to round the course once."

"Oh dear, how very complicated!" sighed Anne to herself; "the whys and hows of Skyland are much more like arithmetic lessons than the reasons why of the Bird and Beast Brotherhood. I'm very sure I like the Earth garden best.

"Please tell me how the planets stand in the race track. I suppose, of course, this Earth is the biggest."

"It is not; the Earth is among the smallest; it only seems big because you are plump on it. I look larger to you than Jupiter,—the largest of all planets,—but that is because I am close. I'm only about two hundred and forty thousand miles away."

"Do you call that close? I think it is as far away as forever. How far away is the Sun then?"

"Oh, a little matter of ninety millions or so of miles."
“Please, Mooney, how large are you yourself?”

“Nearly fifty times less than the Earth, my mother.”

“Oh dear, it gets worse and worse. Don’t tell me any more figures, but only the names of the planets and which have moons.”

“Very well — listen! Mercury is the name of the smallest; he runs nearest to the Sun; he has no moon children; neither has Venus, who comes next; she is really the beauty of Skyland. We all admire her greatly, and she seems to know it. You yourself may often see her in the west of an evening after sunset, smiling both to the setting Sun and to me. I do not smile my brightest at you until after the Sun is well out of sight, for no moon may shine brightly upon its earth until after the Sun has set.”

“What makes sunset, please?” interrupted Anne.

“As the Earth turns on its axle, the part you are standing on turns its back on the Sun.”

“Then the Sun is there all the time?”

“Certainly; a part of the Earth turns away, goes into the shadow of itself, — that is all.”

“What planet runs beyond Venus?”

“The Earth, with me for her only moon child. Beyond her comes Mars, fiery and warlike, though
small of size; he has twin moons. Then the bunch of planets called Asteroids crowd along close together. Again, beyond, comes Jupiter, the giant, proud, haughty, followed by four fine moons, all as large, and one much larger than I.

"Now I speak of almost the outside boundary of our Sun’s domain, and news from those points is vague and uncertain; still I have been told that Saturn, the next planet, is the strangest of all the Sun’s children. Eight moons has he, and besides, he is girt about with shifting rings and belts of light that whirl and vary, casting shadows on his face so that none may surely say how they are formed, and making him look every inch a juggler.

"The last two planets in the race lurk so far away that they seem smaller than the stars of other Sky families. Uranus has four small moons, and Neptune, the outsider, the farthest off of all, has one solitary companion. Though Neptune seems small as a pin’s point, a shooting star once told me that it was more than fifty times as large as my own Earth. News travels slowly from the outside to the Sun’s family; sight slower yet, so much so that what I have heard is only hearsay knowledge."

"What makes those spots all over you, dear
Mooney, that some people think look like eyes and a nose and a mouth, and so they say there is a man in the moon?"

"It makes me weary," replied the Moon, yawning behind a convenient little black cloud, "to think of the senseless gossip that House People will believe and the stories they make out of nothing. I suppose that is why they started that tale about my being made of cheese, and that the man ate me up once a month and then I grew again, and the Red Brothers saying that I grow sick and die each month. Not but what it is the same in Skyland. Mars is always getting in a temper and making remarks when Mercury and Venus get out of sight between the Earth and Sun. And I've seen a few sparks of shooting stars fairly set the entire sky afire with gossip. Those spots and pits on my face are the peaks of mountains, the craters of worn-out volcanoes, and the beds of empty oceans,—that is all; but people had rather believe tricks and fables than easy true things."

"How is it that you grow large and small, and yet sometimes when you are very little I can see the faint shape of the whole of you?"

"Think a moment, Anne. You know that I travel round the earth."
"Yes, surely."

"When I am behind the Earth the Sun's light is shut off by it, and the House People cannot see me. But as I move about, a tiny crescent emerges from the Earth's round shadow and catches the sunbeams. Then I am called the New Moon. Gradually I creep around until I am in full light; then I am called the Full Moon.

"I continue through the light until I enter the shadow on the other side, and gradually, as I go behind the Earth again, I am called the Waning Moon, until I wholly disappear. Sometimes, when I am only the slim new crescent, if the air is clear enough, sunlight is reflected from the Earth upon my shady side to show my full face, for it is always there, though in shadow; then House People say, 'The old Moon is in the new Moon's arms.'"

"So the Earth reflects sunshine on the Moon just as the Moon does on the Earth—how wonderful!" sighed Anne, unclasping her hands from behind her head and dropping them on the counterpane.

The Moon had crossed the window and was disappearing behind the frame at the left side.

"Why, that is the same way the Earth shuts
the Sun’s light off,” murmured Anne, “because the Full Moon is really all outside there now.”

“Good-night, Anne,” whispered the Moon-beams, tiptoeing softly backward toward the window; “it is Weeng’s turn now.”

“Only one more question, dear Moon-eye,” she begged, sitting up suddenly. “Please, who were the very last persons or animals that lived on you, and what became of them?”

“Wabeno, the Magician, and Wagoose, the Dream Fox,” whispered Weeng close in Anne’s ear as she dropped back softly among the pillows.
IV

What the Coal said to the Kindling Wood

The Goose-egg Moon held many cold, dreary days, in spite of the fact that the Ruffed Grouse had given the Spring Signal and Hyla Pickering and his orchestra tuned up persistently every evening.

"We can't go out to find any why this afternoon," said Anne to Waddles, as they stood looking disconsolately out of the study window down toward the barns. The rain was falling in sheets, beating the fuzzy catkins off the trees and bury-
ing them in the muddy walk, while every few minutes a gust of wind brought it against the window with a swish.

"There isn't a bird or a butterfly or a flower or anything to talk to. I wish Tommy hadn't gone to town with father and mother yesterday. I 'most think I should enjoy playing 'den and bear' with him under the dinner table," continued Anne, with a sigh, "for I've done all the lessons that were marked."

"It is dull, to be sure," replied Waddles, yawning and adroitly snapping up a big fly that buzzed against the lower panes. "I wouldn't mind playing 'snatch bone' with Lumberlegs if you will whistle him up from the barns and give us a bone."

"Waddles, I'm surprised at you, when you know that it is a mustn't be for Lumberlegs to come into the house in wet weather. Do you remember the first time you brought him in, when Aunt Prue was visiting here,—how he shook water all over her new cape? But what sort of a game is 'snatch bone'? I don't think I've ever heard of it. Did you teach it to Lumberlegs?"

"No, missy, he taught me. You see, as I lived so many years alone with you I knew very little
about dog society and the only game I knew was 'lone bone.' In that game you take a bone and growl at it, then knock it away, or up in the air with your paw, jump after it and try to catch it as it drops, shake it, bite it, and growl again. It is very good exercise, but it's awfully dull to have to do your own growling. 'Snatch bone' is much more exciting. You need a good strong beef or mutton bone for this game; little bones wear out too quick. We dogs go out in a place where there is plenty of room. Lumberlegs takes the bone, lies down, and puts his paw upon it and gives a growl as a signal to begin. Then I wag my tail hard.

"Lumberlegs throws the bone up in the air; we both jump to catch it; the one who gets it runs around with it in his mouth as fast as he can go, and the other one tries to snatch the bone away from him. Sometimes we both get a good hold with our teeth at the same time, and then we wrestle and tumble and grab with our paws, and the one who holds on the longest takes the bone back to his side, growls, and then we begin again. When time's up the dog that has the bone may eat it."

"It sounds as if it might be fun," mused Anne; "but don't you ever grow angry and bite?"
"That is against the rules. You may sit on the other dog if you can, but never bite. So it's really better to play when you aren't very hungry and the bone doesn't count for so much. Then it's sport; but if you are hungry and keep getting only a taste, it's provoking, and then it's only a common fight and no real sport.

"It's nice and warm in here, missy, and I think, if you don't mind, I'll curl up and take a nap, and by and by, if you have any of those cookies that I smell baking, you might wake me up;" so saying, Waddles stretched himself in front of the fire, his nose nicely fitted between his front paws.

A fire of cannel coal in a basket grate rested on the fire-dogs, instead of the usual logs; for it had been such a long cold season that the big log pile had burned away too fast, and the woodhouse was nearly empty. Anne kneeled on the rug, opened a long box that served as a window seat, and looked in. There was not much to see,—some great lumps of coal at one end, while the rest of the box was filled with pine kindling wood, split in various lengths and sizes.

"Miss Jule said she would give me a big knife like hers, with three blades, a hoof pick, and a punch in it to make holes in leather, just as soon
as I could whittle a good-looking clothespin with my old knife. I think I might as well begin now,” said Anne, taking a small but stout jackknife from her pocket.

“It would be better to have a clothespin to copy, though. I think I smell cookies too,—the crispy, gingery ones.”

In a moment Anne returned with the clothespin and nearly a dozen thin, scallopy cookies on a plate, which she set carefully on the floor beside her. Next she selected a bit of wood from the open box, propped herself against it, and began to whittle very slowly and carefully.

“Cri-cri-crick!” cried the Cricket under the hearth.

“Buz-bumbl-buz,” answered O-o-chug, the House Fly, beating his head recklessly against the window.

“Humph! the Voiceless Brotherhood is waking up,” said the near andiron, as a tiny gray Moth, with silver-powdered wings, crept out from the edge of the hearth rug and fluttered to Anne’s skirt.

“What is the Voiceless Brotherhood?” asked Anne. “I never heard of that before.”

“All the insects and animals that have no voices in their throats, but speak with some other
parts of their bodies, or by signals," said the Cricket, coming out of his crack and crossing the hearth with a single jump.

"But surely you have a voice; you make almost as much noise as Hyla Pickering."

"I have a call,—for Heart of Nature gives to every animal who needs a mate some way of calling her,—but no voice. My call is like the cry a fiddle gives,—watch and listen! Look at my upper wings, see the rough spot on their undersides; I draw one of these wings to and fro across the other and the call is given; but it does not come from my throat, for I have none, and no lungs. Listen again, 'Cri-cri—cri-cri-crack!'"

"How strange that is!" cried Anne. "But you must be different from birds and frogs; they sing and call to their mates mostly in spring, but you cry all summer long. That is, I think you do, if you are one of the Crickets that live under the grass."

"Yes, I'm a brown Field Cricket. I have a summer home outdoors, but when winter comes I creep inside, and if the house is warm it makes me think it is spring, and I chirp up. The reason why I chirp all summer is a great family secret; but I don't mind telling you, because you are such a friend of Heart of Nature."
“In our family the females not only have no voices, but no way of making any sound at all, and so we are allowed to sing to them all the season to keep their spirits up.

“We are a very revengeful family, and if any House Person kills one of our kin, Wabeno shows us the offender, and, biding our time, we work our way into his house and, with our sharp scissor jaws, cut his best clothes to strips. We are very strict, too, among ourselves, and if one of our children or our mates disobey, we immediately eat up the offender, and there is an end of the matter without discussion. Yet, if people are good to us, we not only do them no harm, but soothe them with our songs and coax them to sit and rest by the fire and see the Dream Fox’s picture-book.

“I have a big cousin living in foreign countries who loves House People so well that he always lives in houses, and some people like his song and keep these Crickets in cages like song birds,—cri-cri-cri!”

“What are you, and where are you trying to go?” asked Anne of a little Moth that was striving to crawl under one of the plaits of her tartan-plaid skirt. “You are very small and not a bit pretty. Are you any relation of the Moon Moth
or the Milkweed Monarch or Tiger Swallow Tail? I can hardly see how you look. Do you work in the Flower Market? If you do, I should think you would only be able to carry messages for tiny wide open flowers like Mignonette or Candytuft."

"I'm only a very distant relation of those big Butterflies and Moths. No, I do not work in the Flower Market; in fact, I have a very dull time. I dislike bright sunlight and prefer to stay indoors. I belong to the Wool Exchange, and am particularly interested in the carpet business. Please let me get out of the light and hide in your skirt."

"Don't you let it!" buzzed the House Fly; "if you do, that sly little thing will lay eggs in some corner of your gown, and then when they hatch into worms they will eat the cloth and spin up into cocoons, and more Moths will come out. These evil young Moths make holes in everything woollen, and mow the fur from muffins and capes as if they were cutting grass.

"What is worse, too, these wicked little Moths, working slyly in the dark, lay two broods a year,—one in spring, one in late summer,—so woe betide those who give even a single Moth a hiding place. Kill that one, Anne, with a swift pinch;
for if he holds the Wool Exchange all summer in your pretty gown, it will be fit for nothing but Rag Fair in the autumn.

"How do I know this? Despised as he is, persecuted by men and spiders, beaten out of houses and caught by the wings on sweet sticky paper, O-o-chung, the House Fly, sees a thing or two as he walks head downward on the ceiling, and I see two other Voiceless Ones in this room that ought to be put out."

"Oh, what are they?" cried Anne, starting up and looking into the shadowy corners; "I can't see a thing. There, I've pinched that Moth, and he has all turned to gray dust."

"I know you don't see anything; that is why the things are very dangerous. Take up the corner of the rug behind the sofa—what do you find?"

"Some mites of beetles, kind of mottled, with a wavy red line on their backs; they look something like Lady Bugs. Oh! and when I touch them they draw up their legs and play dead."

"They are not Lady Bugs, but father and mother Carpet Beetles. They fly about, in and out, in the summer season and feed upon plants; but when they lay their eggs they creep into floor cracks and dark crannies. In a few days, if it
is warm enough, their eggs hatch into larvae covered with a woolly skin that looks like a shred of dark brown worsted. This is called the Buffalo Moth. How it eats and eats, moults its skin and eats even that, doing this half a dozen times and working great damage, until it is fully grown! Then it splits this skin for good, and you can see the legs and wings of what soon will be a full-grown Carpet Beetle.

"If your fine rug is riddled with holes from underneath, blame the Buffalo Moth. If a new blanket looks like a target full of small shot, blame the Buffalo Moth. Cloth, cotton, paper, fur, lace,—all are grist for its mill."

"Then I'll kill these Beetles too," said Anne,
promptly executing them with her knife. "Now, where is the other bad Voiceless One?"

"The third is the Book Louse, a partner of the Book Worm," said O-o-chug, "and even now they are eating the paste that holds the binding on those old, leather-covered books, on the high shelf, that your father says you must never touch. Tell him from me that he had better give those books a sun-bath for their health, else their backs will soon grow weakly and mayhap break."

"Missy," said Waddles, suddenly waking up, "was I right about the cookies?"

"Yes, sir, you were; but I was so busy with these voiceless things that I forgot all about them. No, don't help yourself; wait until I break your share into pieces and put it on a paper."

Waddles stretched his legs, bowed his back, and licked his lips, saying in a half-grieved voice: "You always used to let me eat out of your hand and never bothered about catching crumbs in paper. Besides, I never spill crumbs."

"I know it, Waddlekins, but it's one of your responsibilities; Lumberlegs slobbers and spills such lots of crumbs, that mother said, 'If you feed the dogs in the house, they must eat from a paper.' I guess rules are always made for the crumby people."
"Then why don't you eat off the paper too, missy? You are making crumbs," and Waddles began to pick them up daintily with the tip of his tongue.

Anne laughed and hugged him so suddenly that she tipped against the wood box, at which a lump of coal lost its balance and rolled into the kindling wood.

"Keep your distance, Smutty Nose!"

"Smutty Nose, indeed! How dare you call me that?"

"Well," said the Kindling Wood to the Coal, "who are you?"

"House People call me Coal, and sometimes when the weather is very cold, King Coal."

"They spell the real King Cole's name a different way," interrupted Anne.

"They couldn't very well do that," replied the black lump, "because I am the real King Coal; the other man was the usurper, so he didn't dare spell his name correctly for fear of being arrested for forgery."

"How is it that an old hard dead thing like you can burn as well as I, who was last summer one of the tallest pines on Wild Cat Mountain?"

"I don't think that is half so strange," said King Coal, brushing the dust from his face, "as
the reason why either of us burn at all. Do you know why we do?"

"I only know what the Winds of Night whisper to us on the mountain from the time we reach our six green finger-tips above the soil, until the axe stroke tells us that our tree life is ended.

"The Winds say: 'Reach out, O Pines; with both foot and hand draw food from the earth and stretch begging palms to the sky; grasp the sunlight, hold it fast. Grow, swell your limbs, and prepare greater storehouses for the hoard of sunbeams. Warm shall they feel as you grasp them, yet they soon grow cool in the storehouse. But when Wabeno speaks or touches you with fire, back to the air shall these stored sunbeams return, and all that will remain of you will be the ashes of the storehouse walls.'

"All this is true. For twenty years I stretched out my hands and begged for sunbeams, grasping and hoarding them. To-day they throw my ribs into the grate and touch fire to them. Wabeno calls! I blaze, and all the store of sunlight disappears into the air and leaves a pinch of ashes."

"And you pass on the magic touch? Do not I blaze, too, when your heat touches me?" asked King Coal. "And though I blaze longer and fiercer, is not my end the same — a heap of ashes?"
“Certainly,” said Anne, “and both sorts of ashes are grimy things, only wood ashes are good for plants and coal ashes aren’t. I don’t think if I were you, Kindling Wood, I should call King Coal ‘Smutty Nose,’ for though you are certainly cleaner in the beginning, it seems to me as if you might be relations.”

“We are,” said the Coal, “though it isn’t to be wondered at that this newly cut pine wood should not understand the relationship, for it has taken the cleverest House People years and years to find it out. The story of it seems stranger than the wildest picture in Wagoose’s book, and more wonderful than all the tricks of Wabeno, the Magician.

“There are many magic gases floating about the Earth that are not needed for the Brotherhood of Man or Beasts to breathe,—in fact, some of these vapours are very hurtful to animals. The Plan says that the Plant Brotherhood shall suck these gases from the air, digest them, and return part of them to the air again purified, while the plant keeps the hurtful part for its own food.”

“Humph!” said the Kindling Wood, “I didn’t know exactly how it was done; but I knew I was always sucking in and breathing out, and that the Winds of Night were always bringing and taking
vapours from my leaves. But how, pray, did you know all this? Did the rock of which you are made come from a forest?—for of course you are a rock."

"Everything in Nature's garden belongs to one of three great Brotherhoods,—the Animal, the Vegetable, and the Mineral," said King Coal, "and I have belonged to two of these,—the Vegetable and the Mineral. I once was a plant, a tree of a forest thicker and greener than any that have ever been seen by Heart of Man. I am now a piece of coal, a mineral claiming kin with rocks, dug deep from the earth. Between the beginning and the end of my life are many steps and as many years as the leaves in all the forests of the world.

"There is in air, be it ever so pure, a vapour, that plants need for their daily breath. Now listen to how this gas was caught from the air in bygone ages and turned into coal.

"The Moon, I suppose, has told you often how she and her master, the Earth, were once fiery balls formed of the Earth's breath?"

"Yes," said the Kindling Wood, "the Moon talks about little else but the past; but we trees on the mountain never believed what she said."

"You should believe the Moon. She tells the

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1 Carbonic acid gas.
truth, for she has seen whereof she tells," said King Coal. "We have known each other ever since I also stood in a mighty forest jungle."

"Did House People cut you down, did the Winds play pranks and uproot you, or did Wawa-sa-mo, the Lightning, rend you?" asked the Kindling Wood.

"House People cut me down? There was none such in my day; never did I see the face of Heart of Man until, by a deep thunderous noise, I was shaken from my earth bed. When I was of the jungle, Man and the animals nearest to him were not yet made.

"It would have seemed a strange world to a Pinc tree. Gigantic Lizards and huge Frogs swam in the waters, but no birds sang among the tall rank trees, or left their tracks in the mud; none of the Beast Brothers of the woods had come."
"The plants bore no gay flowers; they were of the Flowerless Tribe, such as your ferns, mosses, and horsetails, that carry but seed-dust spores and wave no gay petal flags in the Flower Market to lure the insect messengers.

"Nature's garden was not ready for them; the solid earth crust that rose here and there above the waters was yet thin; heat and steam made the plant growth thick; the air was still heavy with the gases that plants may suck, but that may not be breathed by man.

"Heart of Nature said: 'Grow exceedingly, ye Flowerless Plants; increase and multiply beyond belief. Suck the poison from the air and purify it; the Plan says it must be so.'

"We grew and sucked and dropped our seed and leaves, and grew again, until blackening leaf and wood mould lay in deep layers, black with the carbon the living plant had sucked and stored away."

"I don't see how air could turn into smutti-

ness," said Anne.

"Go to the woods to-day and you will see that it is so. Rub your hand on a smooth old tree trunk, are not your fingers smutty? Look at some dead ferns that lie sodden and beaten into the mud, are they not blackening also?"
"When all the growth of many years lay in a mass decaying, and the earth's crust sank a little, no more trees grew, and water began to spread layers of mud over where our jungle was, as water covers the leaf mould on a pond's bottom. Then the mass took the first step of its long journey from wood to coal land, changing at each stopping place, and in some cases lagging behind and never reaching the end of the great transformation.

"At the first stop the blackening mass was what House People call peat, a mossy, spongy sort of stuff that may be cut in blocks, and smoulders slowly as it burns. You may find this change going on in many places even to-day.

"One day the earth crust heaved, rose, and overlapped the jungle, as scum folds over on a boiling pot; so heat and weight were added to the mass, from which some gases escaped and others boiled down to make new substances. After a long wait, compressed and molten, we grew browner and more solid and became what is called lignite, or brown coal. This has such a sulphurous breath that it chokes House People when they burn it. After this, harder and blacker we grew, and straightway stepped from
plant to rock land, or from the Vegetable to the Mineral world.

"Look at me! I am the first of the true line. House People call me Cannel Coal. Am I not glossy like jet, that is also a kinsman? When I feel the touch of your magic torch, see how quickly I give back my stored sunshine in an oily tongue of flame!

"But though I have stored much carbon there are others of my family, all older than I, who hold more. Two brothers I have,—Soft Coal that House People burn in locomotives, and Hard Coal that makes the steady kitchen fires. Two cousins also I have, the first named Black Lead, that House People know quite intimately,—using it in their pencils and making it speak their thoughts."

"To be sure," cried Anne, "I never thought of it; but lead is very like coal. What is the other cousin? I think it must be ink."

"No, the other, the rarest, the one that has made all the changes and is the farthest away from wood, is the Diamond."

"The Diamond! That beautiful jewel in mother's ring? How can that be, King Coal, when all the rest of the family are sooty and can be burned, and the diamond is so clear and white
and hard that mother wrote my name and Tommy's on the study window with hers?"

"Ask Wabeno how it came to be so clear and pure; but this I know, that it will burn away even as I myself, if fierce magic heat is blown upon it, and nothing be left but a pinch of ashes!

"Besides all these, many other things were boiled from us as we lay buried, for the astral oil you burn is only coal juice and our mass unearthed by Heart of Man yields priceless dyes and drugs and medicines, that were all drawn from the air through the breathing of the trees of that ancient jungle.

"So you see, friend Kindling Wood, that we are kin, though parted in age by countless years."

"Does all the coal we burn come from your jungle, and what shall we do when it is all dug out?"

"There were jungles dotted almost everywhere that the earth's crust rose above the waters. As one sank and began its trip to Coal Land, the Plan planted another on top of it again and again, until the earth's crust was filled with coal veins."

"Just like layers in a jelly cake!" cried Anne clapping her hands.
"Jelly cake, where?" said Waddles, starting up suddenly and then looking foolish when he realized his mistake.

"This time was called the Carbon Time," continued King Coal, "because during it the carbonic acid gas from the air was sucked up by the jungles and stored away. The air then became pure, and higher animals appeared, according to the Plan,—Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, like your cows and horses, and finally came Heart of Man.

"Listen, House Child; when this last Heart came he dug in the earth's bosom and found King Coal and gave him the magic touch that let loose the sunshine stored away in days when man was not,—he alone had a use for King Coal, who had cleared the air and made it fit to be breathed by man.

"Now put me on the grate, House Child, push under the kindlings to give the magic touch, and hear me sing the song of those old days that is pent up within me."

Anne carefully laid a few sticks on the red ashes and placed King Coal on top. The wood blazed and the lump settled, but still remained cold and black. She gave it a sharp blow with

1 Carbonic era.
the poker, and instantly King Coal quivered and little rivulets of flame ran down his sides whispering strange words. Anne listened to catch their meaning, but they spoke swifter than the Winds' Voices, and murmured more confusedly than the leaves to the raindrops. While in the smoke that went up the chimney she saw strange scenes and shapes that vanished, until a puff of smoke driven back by the damp chimney made her choke.

"Dearie me! ouf-ker-chew! If the gas that coal breathed in to make itself was as bad as what it breathes out in unmaking, I don't wonder it took Heart of Nature a long time to pack it all away to bake in the ground and give the sky a good cleaning.

"Oh, there is the sun! How much nicer the old dear is than the grandest hearth fire! Waddles, Waddles, wake up! It has cleared off and Lumberlegs is whining outside. Come out and play 'snatch bone.' I'll get you a fine rib from yesterday's beef if you'll let me play too, and I'll only growl and run without snatching."

So Anne shut the cover of the wood box, pocketed her half-whittled clothespin, and shook the shavings into the fire, leaving the Kindling
Wood wondering how long it would have taken for it to turn into coal if it had not been split up for kindlings—a question which neither the Hearth Cricket nor O-o-chug could answer.
"It was long ago that I first saw light — far back before the days when Wenona left her father to go to her mother in the Morning Star. I was a bit of flint rock that for ages had been in the Earth’s smelting furnace and afterward imprisoned in a granite cliff, the same cliff from which Wenona took her flight.

"In those days the Red Brothers of the north roved wild, both east and west, from ocean to ocean, with the Deer and Buffalo. They had neither gun nor sword, knife nor iron, horse nor cow. Their garden was the wild Flower Market, their drink pure water. These were the days of true hunting, before the Stone Giants came, and in the very last of these good days was I made."
“If they had no knives nor guns, how could they kill anything when they went hunting; and if they had no horses, how could they go, and who were the Stone Giants?” interrupted Anne, taking up a glistening white arrow-head, the most shapely of all, from among those in her lap, for it was upon this one the voice rested.

“Slowly, go slowly, House Child, and listen patiently if you would hear my story. We of the past who have grown slowly with the Earth’s growth must take our own way and time of telling.

“As I was saying, I was of a layer of white flint rock embedded in the granite of Wenona’s cliff. For ages after I had hardened from a molten mass I lay there, cold and silent. You may perhaps find such stuff as I making white lines in some broken rock hereabouts.”

“Ah, yes,” said Anne, “I know a place between here and Wild Cat Mountain that we call the Dark Woods. A place where I may never go alone because the rocks are high like a wall, and Aspetuck runs so quickly between them that father says it has cut a pathway for itself. In those high rocks there are stripes of shiny, sharp flint, just like you—not exactly straight stripes like those on a flag, but wiggley ones, like a crumpled-
up jelly cake. You look almost as if you were made of that very same rock."

The Arrow-head seemed to quiver as Anne pressed it against the palm of her hand, and asked in an eager, choking voice: —

"Does the rock wall face the rising sun? Are there old trees fringing the top? Tall trees in a long waving line, like warriors hemmed back in a last battle; then beyond these trees an open place from which the stones have all been gathered?"

"I think the cliff does face sunrise," said Anne, after hesitating a moment, "because I remember the sun lies full on it in the morning; but I'll go and ask Obi and Baldy—they'll know because they've been up there this winter after Foxes, and I haven't been there since Crotalus, the Bad One, died," she said, starting up.

"No, do not go, House Child," begged the Arrow-head; "let us be alone together for a time, you and I, for you tell me strange news, and I may tell you stranger yet. About the tree fringe and the cleared ground, are they there?"

"There were trees there until last year, but lumbermen have cut them down. Father says there must have been a very old wood there once, of great white oaks,—a pri-me-val forest, he
called it,—because there are some e-normous wrecks of stumps, with trees that are pretty big and old now, growing between them. I don’t remember any open field behind the cliff; it was all woods quite across to the Mountain.”

“Of course, of course, it would be after all these years,” said the Arrow-head. “Was there a wide, open piece of water above, before the cliffs made the way narrow?”

“Yes, of course—the long pond. It used to be lovely, full of Lilies and Wild Ducks, but the lumbermen have messed it all up to make the water turn their saw-mill.”

“House Child,” cried the Arrow-head, “that was the cliff from which Wenona took her flight with Robin Thrush and Owaissa. From its glistening rocks was I made!”

“How wonderful!” sighed Anne, fingering the Arrow-head tenderly. “Then there were Red Brothers here where we live! Do tell me everything you remember, and I won’t interrupt you any more, that is,—only one question,—did you ever meet Wagoose, the Dream Fox? Did he ever live here?”

“You say there are Foxes here now?”

“Yes, plenty of them; too many for our chickens to be happy.”
“Wherever Foxes have lived, or man lives today, there may Wagoose be found.”

“But have you ever seen him yourself?”

“Never; only to those of the Brotherhood of Beasts, of which Man is the King, will Wabeno vouchsafe sight of him. Now for my life history.”

“I had lain a long time in darkness, in my rocky bed, when one day I heard a tapping around and above me. I wondered about it a good deal, slight as it was, because I had heard nothing like it before. This sound went on at times for many years, and every little while a shiver would run through the rock to which I belonged.

“One day this shiver became more violent, a splitting noise followed, and then a crash. When my bones stopped aching, I saw that it was no longer dark; blue sky was above my head. At one side stood the cliff from which I had fallen, at the other dashed the swift running river—between these two I lay.

“As soon as I learned what had happened to me, I began to look about.”

“But what had happened? Who hammered you off the other rock?” asked Annie, forgetting that she had promised not to speak.
"The place where I slept was near the cliff's edge. A tiny crack lay between my bed and the great rocky mass that was scarred through and through by just such other cracks. Into this seam the rain had crept, drop by drop, year upon year, feeling its way in summer, turning to ice in winter, and pushing against the rock when it thawed out in spring. Little by little the crack widened to a seam; as more rain could enter there was more ice to push, until one spring the crisis came and my bit could no longer grasp the cliff, and so I fell."

"I know that must be true, because now there is a monstrous great lump of rock, bigger than the tool house, right in the middle of the river, that came from the top edge of the cliff. For even though the water has worn the corners off, it couldn't move it, and you can almost see the place it fell from, the stripes in it match so well. Besides, that is the way the ice cracked my water pitcher. Please excuse me for interrupting, dear little Arrow, but if you only knew how glad I am when I quite understand something, you wouldn't think me rude. It's a way all young animals have, I think, for Waddles always used to interrupt, and Tommy does, and Lumberlegs, too, so I'm pretty sure that Heart of Nature means us to ask
real questions so we can learn things. Of course talky, talky questions are different.”

“Then,” continued the Arrow, “I learned in a few hours more than I had known in all the ages of my growth and sleeping. The life of Heart of Man is short, only a breath’s length compared with the youngest bit of earth stuff, so he must feel, see, learn, and
act quickly to do his part in the Plan, and that day I met the Red Brothers.

"As I lay there by the river, looking up at the bare trees, so gray that I thought them made of rock like myself, and at the ice that still lodged in dark cliff crevices, I heard a sound that I soon learned was the voice of man. A dark object shot by me down the river, but swiftly as it went I saw the strange shapes in it and that they noticed me.

"The Red Brothers had been fishing for Trout and Pickerel at the head-waters far above and, as the canoe was guided into still water, the women came out from their lodges behind the wood fringe, pulled the craft ashore, and loading the fishes upon flat trays of braided rushes, carried them toward the village of wigwams. All this I did not then understand, but learned after; yet it saves time to tell it as it was, not as it seemed to me but newly escaped from a granite prison."

"Why didn't the Red Brothers carry their own fishes home? I don't think they were polite."

"It was their custom, even as the male and female bird both help in the nest building, or as the She-wolf, Fox, or Wild Cat toils most to feed her ravenous young.

"Two words held the rule of the Red Brothers'
household. One word belonged to man to carry out, the other to the woman, and these two words were Provide and Prepare.

"The Red Brothers did the hunting and fishing, provided the meat, the skins for tent covers and robes, and caught the fish; the Squaws prepared the food, carried it home, prepared the skins, dried the fish. The Brothers made war; the Squaws made ready for it. It was their law; there was no impoliteness in it because they saw none.

"Presently three Red Brothers came along the bank where I was lying, pointing to me and many other fragments like me, some larger and some smaller. They seemed glad that we were there, and presently others came and began to gather us up in heaps, striking the larger pieces skilfully with greater stones until they fell in fragments fit to carry.

"Next day I found myself in a half-dark wigwam, covered with bark. Light came in the doorway and also through a hole left at the top that smoke, the breath of heat, might escape through it. In the doorway sat a man; before him was a large smooth flat stone; in his right hand he held another stone with which he chipped grains from a still smaller fragment his left hand grasped. I watched him closely, for, as he chipped, the flint
THE ARROW MAKER
fragment took a shape like that of many others lying on the ground.

"In a little time he rose, stepped into the afternoon sunlight, listened, whistled to Kaw-kaw, the Raven, who was stealing through the bare trees looking for acorns, then seated himself cross-legged again, filled a hollow at the end of a long stick with dry leaves, lighted them with fire that smouldered inside the wigwam, and straightway fire breath curled from the stick and his own nostrils, yet he himself did not burn away. Presently, when all the leaves had turned to smoke, there being no more food for the fire, it died out; he laid this stick — they call it a pipe — away, and coming into the lodge chose me from out the heap of flints and began shaping me with stinging blows.

"I was confused, as you may well believe; first, I grew long, then was narrowed to a point, sloped sidewise to sharp edges, and finished in a grooved blunt butt. Then I was rubbed and polished by various other kinds of stones until the old man was content with my appearance, and saying mystic words, he laid me on a pile with many others like me: 'Go forth, Bek-wuk, arrow-head, thou art beautiful of thy kind,' he whispered, scarcely moving his lips; 'touch the heart of all you desire, — of the deer in the hunting, of the
foe on the war-path. May Wabeno's keenness be on your tip, his cunning in your shaft, and the swiftness of Wagoose in your flight.'

"Thus was I born and made a Magic Arrow in the tent of Kanida, the arrow maker, brother to the warrior Kaniwa, Wenona's father."

"For many days and nights I lay in the tent, watching what went on about me. Other instruments of killing and household vessels were my tent mates. Spear heads, chipped from flint like myself, but ten times greater in length, stone axes that would beat more readily than cut, fish hooks wrought from bone, clay pots, wooden bowls, and water vessels made from gourd rinds, bundles of reeds, and feathers of the wild goose.

"Kanida would select a dozen arrow-heads from off the pile, scan each one closely, narrowing his eyes as he held it between them and the light; then make ready a dozen reeds to mate them, fastening head to shaft with horn glue and the stout thongs of hide that the Beast Brotherhood furnished. Next was the shaft nicely winged with goose quills to make an even balance. So were the arrows ready to go forth to live their lives, while in and out of the lodge came and went silent figures who bartered venison, birds, and other
food for the arrows, sometimes stopping to smoke a pipe with Kanida, sometimes leaving quickly.

"In the lodge were arrow-heads that had seen service and returned to be reshafted, and they told me strange tales of war and hunting. How they were often rubbed with poison from the fangs of Crotalus, the Bad One, if meant for war arrows; and how they had travelled mighty distances in the flesh of some slightly wounded stag to be made prisoners by a strange tribe, and finally found their way back to Kanida's lodge by the same chance, for the Red Brothers prized Bek-wuk, the Arrow, above price, and never abandoned him carelessly.

"One day a girl came to the lodge—a child almost, but tall and slim and very beautiful. She
sat upon the ground and toyed and played with
the glistening arrow-heads, plucking out those
that pleased her best,—a bit of light green jade
from distant parts, a coal black point, and—me!
A thrill went through me as I felt the soft touch
of her fingers, and solemn Kanida even smiled as
he gazed upon her, for it was Wenona—she whom
all the tribe held in part to be one of them; and
yet something far beyond. Wenona, daughter of
Kaniwa, the Chief, whose mother had vanished to
the Morning Star. Wenona,—whose very name
signified a quivering ray of light,—the maid, who
saw in dreams things that should happen afar off.

"This day Wenona was playful and sad by
turns, and Kanida often glanced at her anxiously;
finally he laid his flints aside, and filling his pipe
began to smoke silently, as if inviting her con-
fidence. As the day lengthened, pulling the shad-
ows after it, she, crouching at the arrow maker's
feet, began to speak, at first in short sentences, as
if she read a story dimly through the smoke.

"'They are coming, they will soon be here!
The Stone Giants, people from a far-off tribe, with
faces of a strange, dead colour. First will—our
people send out good brave arrows against them,
but stone to stone the Giants shall hurl them back
with broken shafts, while they shall be uninjured."
Again, and many times again, shall our people try to overthrow these stone men by all trick and sublety of war, but vainly; for in their hands the Giants carry in leash Ishkodah, the Comet with the fiery tail, with which to blind and kill the Red Brothers from without, while in a seeming friendly cup they hold out burning water to kill them with unquenched thirst. The Stone Giants come! I hear their earth tread even now!' she whispered, shivering.

"How and whence know you this, my daughter?" questioned Kanida, with a troubled look.

"Wenona looked up, laughing gayly, her mood changing suddenly.

"Whence know I it? Everything whispers it as gossip. Apuk-wa, the Bulrush, told it to me, and when I doubted, Annemeekke, the Thunder, said that it was so. Kayoshk', the Sea Gull, told me that he had himself seen the Stone Giants crossing a mighty river in great canoes that sank not in spite of the vast weight, and when I doubted, Wabun, the East Wind, told me it was so, for he and Kabibonokka had followed these canoes, striving to upset them, but could not.

"More than this—draw close, Kanida, for I may but whisper—Wabeno, the Magician, told
me, only the last night gone, that the Stone Giants, against whom your swiftest arrows should fall as harmless as leaves on sand, were nearing us, and presently Wagoose showed me all the pictures of their deeds to come in his magic book. Then—listen and pity, Kanida—I, forgetting, did the forbidden thing, unveiled my eyes and looked Wabeno full in the face, exchanging glance for glance. This thing my mother did before me, and thus, knowing too much, she disappeared, and after one more snow I too must join her in Wabun-Annung, the Morning Star.'

"Stillness fell on the wigwam; Wenona stole away. Kaw-kaw, the Raven, called thrice to Mang, the Loon, and we knew that Wabeno and the Dream Fox were hovering near. Kanida sat musing until his pipe went out, and his lodge fire also died; on arousing he had to kindle it anew by rubbing two dry bits of wood together until their heat broke out into flames."

"Why didn't he borrow some matches if he hadn't any?" asked Anne, without thinking; then, answering herself, "Of course he couldn't. If there were no guns or knives or powder or horses or anything, there weren't any matches, and anyway I remember that it says in my history that not so dreadfully long ago even House People
used to have to make fire by striking iron and flint together."

"In spite of Wenona's words," continued Bek-wuk, "the morning came and no Stone Giants appeared, for we Arrows had thought they were to come at once.

"It soon was the Planting Moon, and all the women of the tribe were busy in the clearing, planting Mondamin, Maize, and the flat seeds of Askuta-squash, the Gourd, whose body yielded food and whose rind made household vessels. Everywhere there was feasting, dancing, singing, and magic walking around the field at night to bless the crops. Mai-mai, the Woodcock, left his writing in the muddy places, and Wazhusk, the Muskrat, forsook his winter lodge in the shallow pond. The leaves hung out on every tree, and Bemah-gut, the Grapevine, perfumed the air with her flowers.

"Wenona laughed and sang all that summer through, and I, Bek-wuk, took many a journey from the bow of Sacoit, a young warrior who had bought me. But I always returned in safety to him, for he shot true and lost no arrows.

"Oh, the joy of flying when the bowstring twangs! Did Swallow dart, I darted more
swiftly! Did a Wild Duck speed by, I overtook it! Did a Deer bound through the woodland, lightly as a cloud shadow, I bounded after him and yet was there to meet him!

"With the harvest came yet more feasting and singing. Wenona joined the other women in stripping the ears of Maize from out the husks, and I, peeping from Sacoit's quiver, was watching her.

"As she parted the husks a blood red ear of Maize was left between her fingers. This rare red ear is a love token with the Red Brothers, and swift as I fly I could not outspeed the glance that sped between Sacoit and Wenona. The warriors nodded approvingly, and the women laughed and jostled; but from that moment she, who had looked Wabeno in the face unflinchingly, grew
pale and paler, for well she knew she must not love a mortal; she must go unwed to her mother in the Morning Star, and in her heart she yearned to stay near Sacoit.

"With early spring strange messengers came to the village, bringing news from far-off tribes, and the words 'Stone Giants' were often heard. One day a messenger came in quite spent with running, and rested in Sacoit's lodge, and as he told his story drew it also in picture writing on the skin top of a drum,—a picture of Red Brothers shooting at strange men whose bodies were concealed all but the face, and as the arrows touched them they flew backward.

"The Sachems held long counsels, and the women made the warriors ready to go forth.

"Soon there was great confusion,—warriors came and went, returning no more. I learned that, as Wenona had said, strange people, some with stone bodies, had come and seized the Red Man's land, people against whom we Arrows wrecked ourselves vainly, people of fair words who yet carried Ishkodah, the Comet, for a weapon. I longed to see them, but I seemed forgotten.

"One day Sacoit dashed to his lodge, seized me, and carried me to the council rock where many
chiefs assembled. On the way we passed Wenona, and Sacoit signed to her that she should touch my point; thus, for the second time, I felt the magic of her fingers. There on the rock lay an empty skin of a gigantic Bad One; in it were crammed some arrows, and I was placed with them. Soon Sacoit left for a long journey, carrying the snake skin full of arrows with him.

“Many days we travelled, resting but never sleeping, until we were close upon a clearing such as I had never seen among Red Brothers. There were no wigwams like theirs, but strange, square lodges built of the trunks of trees laid crosswise, with traplike openings in them, and strange beasts were walled in pits and pens.

“As I gazed from out the skin of Crotalus, my eyes saw a Stone Giant walking toward one of these lodges. The picture writing said truly, his body was covered all but the face, and as he walked slowly and heavily the covering that he wore glistened in the light, and I knew it could not be stone.”

“It must have been armour — steel armour,” interrupted Anne. “You know, Bek-wuk, when the Pilgrim Fathers first came over to settle in this country it was so long ago that some of them wore kind of steel coats and hats to protect them
in war, and if the Red Brothers had never seen any before I don't wonder they thought them made of stone. But please go on—what did Sacoit do with the arrows?"

"When it grew dark he slipped between the trees and going to the lodge entered the largest trap-hole. I thought he would surely be caught, but he was fearless. In the lodge were many Stone Giants sitting about a long flat board raised from the ground, but they did not sit upon skins spread on the earth like warriors, but were raised high above it."

"Of course, soldiers would sit on chairs and benches," said Anne.

"They had no spears or bows and arrows with them, but beside each rested a strange stick in which, I soon learned, they held Ishkodah, the fire-tailed Comet.

"When Sacoit entered he threw the skin of Crotalus before the one that seemed the chief of these Stone Giants; then he began to talk in sign language, and wrath shone from his face and from the faces of the others. Only Sacoit, the Messenger, was silent and immovable.

"All night long they argued, and at dawn they gave the messenger food which he did not touch, and the chief Giant, emptying the arrows from the
snake skin, put in it hard round balls and hurled it at Sacoit, with loud words of defiance.

"I had dropped far from the other arrows, and in passing out Sacoit seized and concealed me, whom Wenona had touched, so I went back with him to bear a bitter message to his tribe. When we returned, we found Wenona had gone."

"Then war began; our warriors poured down and harried the Stone Giants, and many that were with them were not of stone, and we arrows could pierce them, and flames from our dry sticks devoured their lodges.

"What it was all about I knew not; but I saw balls, such as Sacoit bore home, fly from the sticks the Stone Giants carried and kill our young men more quickly than I could kill a wild fowl. Food was scarce, for there was scant time for hunting, and maids, women, and children stayed close within the village upon the cliff top.

"One evening Kaw-kaw came flapping noiseless to the village,—an ominous sight indeed,—and Ko-ko-ko-ho exchanged greetings with him and flew into the forest, followed by all the colony of birds of field and tree.

"Apuk-wa, the Bulrush, whispered, 'They come, the Stone Giants come,—Wabun tells it!
Listen! Annemeekee, the Thunder, proclaims it! Creep to the east under the dark's mantle; attack, Red Brothers; it is your only hope!"

"So the warriors crossed the river and crept downward many miles, and there, when Wawasamo, the Lightning, played its pranks, they attacked the camp of the half-sleepy foe. Up and down, in and out of the trees they fought, but the bullets overmatched poor Bek-wuk's tribe, and all the earth was strewn with crippled arrows. The Red Brothers kindled a line of fire, thinking to surround the Stone Giants by it, but were themselves cut off. Kaniwa was slain, and Kanida, and then Sacoit, after shooting me, his very last arrow.

"Of the women and children, some were made prisoners and some escaped to other tribes, but from that day to this no Red Brothers have had their lodges on the cliff. And I have lain buried all these years, unhandled by maiden fingers from the time Wenona touched me until to-day, when you, of the Stone Giants' line, have picked me up."

"You poor darling Bek-wuk, I'm going to keep you always and have a gold loop put in you and hang you around my neck. To think that all this happened in our field! But why did the soldiers and Red Brothers fight? Which was really
wrong? I can never quite seem to find out exactly, except that both wanted the land, and the strongest got it."

"How should I know? I am but an Arrowhead. I have only seen a glimpse here and there, and those Red Brothers cannot tell, for they have all gone after Wenona, while the children of the Stone Giants flourish. Who was right and who was wrong? Ask Wabeno, the Magician."
OX was brought in from pasture a week before Anne returned from the shore, so that the dear old horse was the first thing she saw on driving through the home gateway. His eyes were bright, his coat looked as glossy as good brushing could make it, his hoofs were in fine shape and nicely polished, his mane, though rather short, was nicely combed, and he wore a tan-coloured bridle with blue ear knots, and the prettiest imaginable saddle with
a blue cloth. As for his tail, it was such an admirable match for his mane, and so well fastened by the crupper, that no one would have imagined that it was not the original home-grown article.

Of course his legs were not as straight or his waist as slim as if he had not been through so many hardships, but what of that? If everything had gone well with him, he would not have come drifting back to the Horse Farm, Miss Jule would not have had the joy of curing him, or Anne of riding him.

Anne scrambled from the depot wagon almost before it stopped, and threw her arms first around Fox's neck and then hugged Miss Jule, who had been hiding in the shadow of the house, the better to see the meeting. Then Lumberlegs came bounding up bow-bowing with joy. He had grown so much that when he put his paws on Anne's shoulders to lick her nose, he looked quite over her head.

At this Waddles set up his most vigorous baying, Fox neighed, and for a moment nobody could hear themselves even think.

As for Lily, she was too happy to make a sound, but throwing herself at her little master's feet she licked his dusty shoes.
After having been away for nearly two months, of course there was a great deal for the children to see on their return, and they made fresh discoveries every day.

Their gardens had overgrown all bounds. Anne's still looked very pretty, thanks to Obi's care in weeding it and keeping the sweet peas from going to seed; but Tommy's was a wreck. The onions at the corners had sent up long flower stalks, which had gone to seed and tumbled over, and the peas and beans were yellow and full of dry pods. The squash vines, however, were magnificent and covered the fence, while the yellow crooknecks peeped from between the big rough leaves.

"It will soon be time to take up my geraniums to keep in my window," said Anne, as they were looking at their gardens one September morning.

"You haven't anything to pick or take up, Tommy; wouldn't you like one of my Fuchsias and a Heliotrope?"

"Yes, I've lots to pick,—beans and peas and everything! Course they're rather dry to cook for us, but I tan feed them to the hungry quail birds next winter; and oh, Anne, do help me tount my stwashes! Obi says there is 'leven or fifteen; I've dot 'nough to make a whole flock of lovely
ornaments for Miss Jule, and, Anne, what do you fink? If you'll help me put their feathers on, I'll div you one for yourself."

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One afternoon Anne strolled down to the potato field where she had found Bek-wuk, the Arrowhead. The potatoes had been dug, the ground ploughed, and Baldy was preparing to sow it with wheat from the bag that stood by the stone fence. The other home fields and those that belonged to the Horse Farm were empty, the wheat, rye, and oats that had grown in them having long ago been reaped, and the buzz of the threshing-machine sounded from the great barn. Even the corn in the valley fields was being gathered into stacks like wigwams.

A Crow flew awkwardly overhead, perched on the fence, and reaching over pecked inquisitively at the bag of wheat, giving a squawk and jump when he discovered Anne. It was the one-eyed Crow with the lame wing.

"Oh, ho! is that you, Kaw Ondaig? What have you been doing all summer, and how dared the other Crows come back from the mountain where the Bird Brotherhood sent them? There are Crows in every field as far as I can see, besides
those that are talking way over in the Miller's wood."

"How have I been? Very well and comfortable, plenty to eat and no harrying. I was so honest down at the Farm that, until the corn ripened, I almost forgot that I was a Crow. As for the rest of the tribe, do you not remember that they were only banished during the song birds' nesting season, and that is over long since? They have come back to the cornfields for their tithe of the harvest."

"Yes, of course, to steal corn when there are no more nests to rob. I would not be so kind as the Bird Brotherhood; if I had my way, the Crows should go away for good."

"House People cannot drive us away," screamed the old Crow, flapping his wings boldly; "they shoot and harry us, tempt us with poisoned food, and still we are here at the corn harvest—it is our right; Wabeno gave it to us through our ancestor, Kaw-kaw, the northern Raven. Yes, ask Wabeno, the Magician, and he will tell you that it is so."

Anne felt a little abashed at Kaw Ondaig's fierceness, and, climbing over the fence to the first cornfield, she threw herself down in the shade of one of the stacks, nestling backward
among the long leaves until she seemed to be sitting in the doorway of a wigwam.

The Crows came flapping and calling about her, and Mudjekeewis, the West Wind, whispered and gossiped about the field, while from a far corner a Quail family were making their way to glean their supper among the oat stubble.

"I don't believe that Wabeno ever told the Crows that they could take corn every year," said Anne aloud.

"Yes, he did," said Mudjekeewis; "I was there and heard him say so myself. To be sure, it was very long ago, on the very day when Wabeno gave the gift of corn to the Red Brothers."

"Ah, so you are back again! Don't be in a hurry, Mudjekeewis, but come and rest in this nice tent, and tell me about the Red Brothers and Wabeno. Was corn a very great gift to them?"

"Yes, Mondamin, Maize, or, as you say, corn, meant bread to them; bread when the buffalo were gone, bread when all wild game failed. House Child, do you know that in all the corners of the world where I have been bread is the greatest gift of earth to man?"

"Of course, bread is a 'must be,' but we do not make ours of corn meal."
“Different grains for different lands,” said the Wind; “grains for heat and grains for cold, and of all the grains—”

“I am the King,” whispered the Wheat that Baldy was sowing, to the Wind that helped scatter it. “No man knows from whence I came or what country gave me birth; before man could be I was, and if I should disappear man would follow. The world waits each harvest to know how I have thriven, that it may measure its strength. I am hearty myself; I need deep, sharp soil to eat and from which to rear my proud head on a straight, stiff stalk.”

“I am more humble,” called the scattered Rye in the thresher; “the bread I yield is dark and coarse, truly, but the ploughman loves it. I can grow anywhere, and on my straws the well-fed cattle sleep sound o’ winter nights, while I give them dreams of summer pasturing.”

“I am Monomin, the magic grain,” said the Oats that the Quail were gleaning. “I whisper to the tired, hungry horse, ‘Up and away!’ and fire returns to his eye and strength to his limbs as he feels me stirring within him. Then in bleak, northern lands I give the people vital heat and life in bread and porridge.”

“There are two other grains that I know well,”
said Mudjekeewis, "Rice, the bread of the most far-away East, and Barley that lives and thrives from north to south and is swallowed both as bread and as beer. The Wheat spoke truly, in the strength of the Corn Brotherhood lies the strength of the world."

"I want to hear where our corn came from and how Wabeno gave it to the Red Brothers," said Anne. "Come back, please, and tell me the story."

"How and whence Mondamin, or Indian corn, came?" said Mudjekeewis, sinking to the ground and breathing lightly. "How came it? That I can answer. Whence? That is my friend's, Wabeno's, secret. Even of the manner of its coming there are many legends. I tell you only what I know, and if any doubt my tale, as you repeat it, only say, 'Mudjekeewis told me this, let it suffice,'" and the Wind's voice sank to a whisper.

"In a pleasant country lived an Indian with his squaw and family; but it was a hungry land, so
what signified beautiful valleys if no buffaloes grazed in them, or deep silent woods if no deer and wild fowl were sheltered there?

"It was early spring. The Indian had no grown sons to go on the far-away hunting trail; his children were young and wailed with hunger as the dried fish and meat began to fail, and it was not yet time for the spring shad running.

"The oldest child was a youth upon whose time-stick were cut the notches of fourteen winters, and in his heart he longed to help his parents, but knew not how.

"When an Indian boy has lived fourteen winters, he is no longer called a child; his play days are put away from him, divided from his manhood by a fasting time of seven days. During these days the boy lives alone on the wood edge in a hut his mother builds. Alone with Heart of Nature and the Great Spirit, which is the name the Red Brothers give Heart of God; alone, with time to think. If the boy was held worthy in this fasting Wabeno would send Wagoose, the Dream Fox, to him with a dream which, being read aright, would bring good to all the people of his tribe.

"This boy, called Penaisee — little bird — by the tribe, because he could make almost every bird note with his flute of hollow reeds, longed for
the fasting time to come in the hope that he might see in a dream how to bring plenty again to his people.

"When the Willows began to grow green at the tips, flowers whitened the meadows, and he saw his mother steal to the wood edge and weave together a rude wigwam, he knew the fasting time had come, and he hastened to keep it gladly. The silence only elated him at first. He went about peeping here and there, gathering armfuls of blossoms and heaping them on the ground for a bed, where he spent the first night looking at the stars and watching for Wabeno and the Dream Fox. For five days he wandered thus,
watching each night, nothing but water passing his lips, until his body grew spent and his eyes hollow with hunger, and, picking with his last strength a branch of Dogwood blossoms, he staggered to his wigwam in despair, saying: 'Wabeno will not give a dream. I shall starve and my people also.'

"This was at twilight on the sixth day. Then we Winds took pity on Penaisee and whispered to him counsel: 'Lie down, Penaisee, little bird, and close the outward eyes, for by them never may Wabeno be seen; it is the inward eye, open only in sleep, that may see the Dream Fox's picture book. Sleep, Penaisee, sleep and wait!'

"Penaisee obeyed, and as the light of the full Planting Moon crept round and looked him in the face, he saw coming between the trees the mystic figure of Wabeno, clad in strange green leaves, while Kaw-kaw, the Raven, flew near him, Wagoose following.

"Raising one hand, Wabeno struck the magic drum, which gave a strange rattling noise, while with the other he made passes in the air. On he walked, straight into the wigwam, which grew higher that it might receive him. Then he stooped by Penaisee, touched him upon the ears and lips to signify that he was to listen, but not speak.
“Next Wabeno unfastened the skin that covered his magic drum and, lo! the bowl was filled with round pale yellow kernels like small rough pebbles. Laying these on the ground he carefully covered his drum again and spoke, while at his words the Whippoorwill hushed its calling and the Night-hawk paused in mid air, with spread wings, in sheer amazement.

‘Penaisee,’ he said, ‘I know your wish and your need. Because your wish is not for yourself alone, I listen. For my gift I give these magic seeds from out my magic drum. Sleep yet another night, then arise and with a crooked stick make holes a stride apart in yonder open ground. In each hole put three kernels, one for me, one for thee, and one for Wagoose, the Dream Fox. Cover them and watch the growth. For two moons draw the earth upward about what grows, and keep wasting weeds away. At midsummer full moon, when your fasting lodge is empty, will I come and touch the flowers that grow upon the stalks to make them fruitful.’

Then Wabeno stooped, and picking up a spray of Dogwood blossoms, laid them on the boy’s eyes, saying: ‘This shall be a sign to you. Yearly when these flowers bloom it is the time to sow the seed of Mondamin, Wabeno’s gift.’
WABENO IN THE MAIZE FIELD
“Then Kaw-kaw, the Raven, croaked sadly, ‘Wabeno, master, I starve. Why do you give away the magic seeds?’ And Wabeno, smiling, said, ‘Penaisee, forget not my comrade Kaw-kaw; but in the harvest time that as yet you know not of, let him also share my gift with you.’

“Then Wagoose walked down the moonbeams and unrolled a birch bark scroll, and on it, as Penaisee gazed, was painted the picture of a field of corn, with Wabeno walking in the moonlight touching the filling ears.

“Penaisee remained asleep, and on the seventh dawn when he awoke he found the magic kernels where Wabeno placed them. Then feeling fresh strength within him, he made the holes a stride apart and covered the kernels well with earth; then, turning, gave morning greeting to the Sun, and by its first rays he saw his father standing by the lodge bearing a dish of food. Neither spoke, but each one understood.

“Every moon did Penaisee draw the earth around the stout green stalks, and as he toiled he grew in stature like the corn stalks, taller than any of his race. When the moon before the Moon of Falling Leaves arrived, he sent a message to the tribe to come and gather in the ears and to receive Wabeno’s gift of bread. On
that day Wabeno whispered, 'Let the boy no
longer be called Penaisee, a little bird, but Wen-
digo, the giant.' And ever after that moon was
called by all the tribe, Mondamin, or the Maize
Moon.'

Anne looked across the fields. The wind arose
from the corn stack beside her and followed her
thoughts afar.

"I'm so happy and it's all so beautiful, the fields
and the sky and the animals and father-mother
and Tommy and — everything — Oh, how I wish
Heart of Nature would give me the magic crystals,
so that I could see the other Heart too!"

"Be content, House Child," said the familiar
voice close to her heart, "you see more than you
may yet understand. You have the precious crys-
tals in your keeping; for it is only by looking
through the eyes of Heart of Nature and Heart of
Man that on this earth you may see Heart of God!"
GLOSSARY

Annemee'kee. Thunder.
Apuk'wa. The Bulrush.
Askuta-squash. The Squash or Gourd.
Bek'wuk. The Arrow.
Chi-kaug. The Skunk.
Coon Moon. February.
Corn Moon. August.
Dahin'da. The Bullfrog.
Deer Moon. October.
Dibik'gezis. The Night Sun, the Moon.
Ghee'zis. The Sun.
Goose Moon. April.
Iskodah. A Comet.
Kabibonok'ka. The North Wind.
Kayoshk'. The Sea Gull.
Keeway'din. Northwest or Home Wind.
Ko'ko'ko'ho. The Great Horned Owl.
Little Oo-oo. The Screech Owl.
Mai-mai. The Woodcock.
Midsummer Moon. July.

Mon'da'min. Maize, Indian Corn.
Mon'oo'min. Oats.
Moon of Falling Leaves. September.
Moon of Snow Blindness. March.
Moon of Snow Shoes. December.
O-o-chug. The House Fly.
Onaig. The Crow.
Owais'sa. The Bluebird.
Peboan. Winter.
Penai-see. Little Bird, Hummingbird.
Planting Moon. May.
Puk-Wudj'ies. Little Vanishing People.

Shawonda'see. The South Wind.
Wabasso. The White Rabbit, the North.
Wabeno. The Magician.
Wabun-An'nung. The Morning Star.
Wabun. The East Wind
Wa'goose. The Dream Fox.
Wawa-sa-mo. Lightning.
Waz'husk. The Muskrat.
Weeng. The Spirit of Sleep.
Wendigo. A Giant.
STORIES OF BIRDS AND BEASTS
LONG-EARED OWL.

(See page 48.)
THE HEART OF NATURE

BY

MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT

AUTHOR OF "STORIES OF EARTH AND SKY," "STORIES OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS," ETC., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES AND ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

THIRD BOOK

STORIES OF BIRDS AND BEASTS

New York
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1906

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SCENE:
The Orchard Farm.

CHARACTERS:

Dr. Roy Hunter, a naturalist.
Olive, the Doctor's daughter.
NAT and DODO, the Doctor's nephew and niece.
Mr. and Mrs. Blake, the parents of Nat and Dodo.
RAP, a lame country boy.
Mammy Bun, an old colored nurse and cook.
Rod, the farmer.
Olaf, a sailor and fisherman.
Nez Long, a charcoal burner and woodsman.
Toinette, Nez' wife.
Quick, a fox terrier.
Mr. Wolf, a St. Bernard dog.
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xi
STORIES OF BIRDS AND BEASTS

I

OVERTURE BY THE BIRDS

"We would have you to wit, that on eggs though we sit,
And are spiked on the spit, and are baked in a pan;
Birds are older by far than your ancestors are,
And made love and made war, ere the making of man!"

(Andrew Lang.)

A party of Swallows perched on the telegraph wires beside the highway where it passed Orchard Farm. They were resting after a breakfast of insects, which they had caught on the wing, after the custom of their family. As it was only the first of May they had plenty of time before nest-building, and so were having a little neighborly chat.

If you had glanced at these birds carelessly, you might have thought they were all of one kind; but they were not. The smallest was the Bank Swallow, a sober-hued little fellow, with a short, sharp-pointed tail, his back feathers looking like a dusty brown cloak, fastened in front by a neck-band between his light throat and breast.

Next to him perched the Barn Swallow, a bit larger, with a tail like an open pair of glistening scissors and
his face and throat a beautiful ruddy buff. There were so many glints of color on his steel-blue back and wings, as he spread them in the sun, that it seemed as if in some of his flights he must have collided with a great soap-bubble, which left its shifting hues upon him as it burst.

This Barn Swallow was very much worried about something, and talked so fast to his friend the Tree Swallow, that his words sounded like twitters and giggles; but you would know they were words, if you could only understand them.

The Tree Swallow wore a greenish-black cloak and a spotless white vest. He was trying to be polite and listen to the Barn Swallow as well as to the Purple Martin (the biggest Swallow of all), who was a little further along on the wire; but as they both spoke at once, he found it a difficult matter.

"We shall all be turned out, I know," complained the Barn Swallow, "and after we have as good as owned Orchard Farm these three years, it is too bad. Those meddlesome House People have put two new pieces of glass in the hayloft window, and how shall I ever get in to build my nest?"

"They may leave the window open," said the Bank Swallow soothingly, for he had a cheerful disposition; "I have noticed that hayloft windows are usually left open in warm weather."

"Yes, they may leave it open, and then shut it some day after I have gone in," snapped Barney, darting off the perch to catch a fly, and grasping the wire so violently on his return, that the other birds fluttered and almost lost their footing.
“What is all this trouble about?” asked the Martin in his soft rich voice. “I live ten miles further up country, and only pass here twice a year, so that I do not know the latest news. Why must you leave the farm? It seems to be a charming place for Bird People. I see a little box under the barn eaves that would make me a fine house.”

“It is a delightful place for us,” replied the Barn Swallow; “but now the House People who own the farm are coming back to live here themselves, and everything is turned topsy-turvy. They should have asked us if we were willing for them to come. Bird People are of a much older race than House People anyway; it says so in their books, for I heard Rap, the lame boy down by the mill, reading about it one day when he was sitting by the river.”

All the other birds laughed merrily at this, and the Martin said, “Don’t be greedy, Brother Barney; those people are quite welcome to their barns and houses, if they will only let us build in their trees. Bird People own the whole sky and some of our race dive in the sea and swim in the rivers where no House People can follow us.”

“You may say what you please,” chattered poor unhappy Barney, “everything is awry. The Wrens always built behind the window-blinds, and now these blinds are flung wide open. The Song Sparrow nested in the long grass under the lilac bushes, but now it is all cut short; and they have trimmed away the nice mossy branches in the orchard where hundreds of the brothers built. Besides this, the Bluebird made his nest in a hole in the top of the old gate post, and what
have those people done but put up a new post with no hole in it!"

"Dear! dear! Think of it, think of it!" sang the Bluebird softly, taking his place on the wire with the others.

"What if these people should bring children with them," continued Barney, who had not finished airing his grievances—"little boys and cats! Children who might climb up to our nests and steal our eggs, boys with guns perhaps, and striped cats which no one can see, with feet that make no sound, and such claws and teeth—it makes me shiver to think of it." And all the birds shook so that the wire quivered and the Bank Swallow fell off, or would have fallen, if he had not spread his wings and saved himself.

The Martin had nothing to say to this, but the little Bank Swallow, though somewhat shaken up, whispered, "There may be children who do not rob nests, and other boys like Rap, who would never shoot us. Cats are always sad things for birds, but these House People may not keep any!" And then he moved down a wire or two, frightened at having given his opinion.

At that moment a Chimney Swift joined the group. This Swift, who nests in chimneys, is the sooty-colored bird that flies and feeds on the wing like a Swallow, and when he is in the air looks like a big spruce cone with wings. He was followed by a Catbird, who had been in a honeysuckle, by one of the farmhouse windows, and peeped inside out of curiosity. Both were excited and evidently bubbling over with news, which half the birds of the orchard were following them to hear.
“I know all about it,” cried the Swift, bracketting himself against the telegraph pole for a long talk.

“I’ve seen the House People!” screamed the Catbird.

“They wish well to the Bird People, and we shall be happier than before!” squeaked the Swift, breathless and eager. “Listen!” — and the birds all huddled together. “This morning when I flew down the chimney, wondering if I should dare build my nest there again, I heard a noise on the outside, so I dropped as far as I could and listened.

“A voice said, ‘Mammy Bun, we will leave this chimney for the birds; do not make a fire here until after they have nested!’ I was so surprised that I nearly fell into the grate.”

“And I,” interrupted the Catbird, “was looking in the window and saw the man who spoke, and Mammy Bun too. She is a very big person, wide like a woodchuck, and has a dark face like the House People down in the warm country where I spend the winter.”

“There are children at the farm, I’ve seen them too,” cried the Phœbe, who usually lived under the eaves of the cow-shed; “three of them — one big girl, one little girl, and a BOY!”

“I told you so!” lisped the Barn Swallow; and a chorus of ohs and ahs arose that sounded like a strange message buzzing along the wires.

“The BOY has a pocket full of pebbles and a shooter,” gasped the Phœbe, pausing as if nothing more shocking could be said.

“Yes, but the big girl coaxed the shooter away from him,” said the Chimney Swift, who was quite provoked because his story had been interrupted; “she said,
‘Cousin Nat, father won’t let you shoot birds here or do anything to frighten them away, for he loves them and has spent half his life watching them and learning their ways, and they have grown so fearless hereabouts that they are like friends.’

“But Nat said, ‘Do let me shoot some, Cousin Olive. I don’t see why Uncle Roy likes them. What good are birds anyway? They only sit in the street and say “chuck, chuck, chuck” all day long.’

‘You say that because you have always lived in the city and the only birds you have watched are the English Sparrows, who are really as disagreeable as birds can possibly be,’ said the big girl; ‘but here you will see all the beautiful wild birds.’

‘Then the little girl said, ‘Why, brother, you always loved our Canary!’

‘Yes, but he is different; he is nice and yellow, and he knows something and sings too like everything; he isn’t like these common tree birds.’”

“Common tree birds indeed!” shrieked the Catbird.

“That is what the boy called us,” said the Chimney Swift, who then went on with his story about what he had heard the children say.

‘‘Why you silly dear!’ cried the big girl, laughing a sweet little laugh like the Bobolink’s song, ‘that only proves how little you know about wild birds. Plenty of them are more brightly colored than your Canary, and some of those that wear the plainest feathers sing more beautifully than all the Canaries and cage birds in the world. This summer, when you have made friends with these wild birds, and they have let you see their homes and learn their secrets, you will make up your
mind that there are no common birds; for every one of
them has something very uncommon about it.'

"Then our brother B. Oriole began to sing in the
sugar maple over the shed. The sun was shining on
his gay coat; the little girl pointed to him and whis-
pered, 'Hush, Nat! you see Olive is right; please
empty the stones out of your pocket.'"

The Chimney Swift had hardly finished his story
when there was another excitement.

"News, more news!" called the Bank Swallow joy-
fully. He had been taking a skim over the meadows
and orchard. "These House People do not keep cats!"

"They may not have any now, but that doesn't
prove they never will," said a Robin crossly. He had
just flown against a window, not understanding about
the glass, and had a headache in consequence.

"They never will keep cats," insisted the little Swal-
low boldly.

"How do you know?" asked the birds in one breath.

"Because they keep dogs!" said Bankey, twittering
with glee; "two nice dogs. One big and buff and bushy,
with a much finer tail than the proudest fox you ever
saw; and the other small and white with some dark
spots, and as quick as a squirrel. This one has a short
tail that sticks up like a Wren's and a nose like a
weasel; one ear stands up and the other hangs down;
and he has a terrible wink in one eye. Even a poor
little Bank Swallow knows that where one of these
dogs lives the Bird People need not fear either cats
or rats!"

"I love dogs," said the black-and-white Downy
Woodpecker, running up a telegraph pole in search of
grubs; "dogs have bones to eat and I like to pick bones, especially in winter."

"Me too," chimed in the Nuthatch, who walks chiefly head down and wears a fashionable white vest and black necktie with a gray coat; "and sometimes they leave bits of fat about. Yes, dogs are very friendly things indeed."

Then a joyful murmur ran all along the wires, and Farmer Griggs, who was driving past, said to himself, "Powerful lot of 'lectricity on to-day; should think them Swallers would get shock't and kil't." But it was only the birds whispering together; agreeing to return to their old haunts at Orchard Farm and give the House Children a chance to learn that there are no such things as "common" birds.
II

THE BUILDING OF A BIRD

It rained on Wednesday—a warm spring rain, swelling the rivers and ponds, and watering the newly planted garden; but discouraging the birds in their nest-building, and disappointing Nat and Dodo, who wished to have their lesson in the orchard.

"Come in here, children," said the Doctor. "The wonder room, as Dodo calls it, is a good place for a talk about feathers and bones, and the rest of the things birds are built of. I have sent for Rap, too, so that the trio may be complete."

"Feathers and bones for building birds?" said Nat. "What a queer idea for a bird story."

"Not a bird story exactly," answered the Doctor. "But some things are true of all birds, and you must know them if you wish to understand the reason why of any bird in particular."

In a few minutes the three children were seated or the wide settle, with a cheery log fire, to make them forget the outside dampness. Quick, the fidgety little fox-terrier, sat by the hearth, watching a possible mouse hole; and Mr. Wolf, the tawny St. Bernard, chose the rug as a comfortable place for finishing his morning toilet.

Olive presently joined the group. The Doctor took
the dead White-throated Sparrow from the table, and began to walk about the room, stopping now in front of the fire and then by the window.

"Here is a Sparrow, different from every other kind of Sparrow, different indeed from any other sort of bird in the world — else it would not be the particular sort of a Sparrow called the White-throated. But there are a good many things that it has in common with all other birds. Can you tell me some of them?"

"I know!" said Dodo; "it has a good many feathers on it, and I guess all kinds of birds wear feathers, except some when they are very little in the nest."

"Quite right, little girl," said the Doctor. "Every bird has feathers, and no other animal has feathers. So we say, 'A bird is known by its feathers.' But what do you suppose its feathers are for?"

"To make it look nice and pretty," said Dodo promptly.

"To make it lighter, so's it can fly," added Nat.

"To keep it warm, too, I guess," was Rap's answer.

"Well, you are all three partly, but not quite, right. Certainly the beauty of a bird depends most on its feathers, being not even skin-deep, as you may well believe, if you ever noticed a chicken Mammy Bun had plucked. But, Nat, how can feathers make a bird lighter, when every one of them weighs something, and a bird has to carry them all? They make a bird a little heavier than it would be without them. Yet it is quite true that no bird could fly if you clipped its wings. So some of its feathers enable it to fly — the large ones, that grow on the wings. Then, too, the large ones that make the tail help the bird to fly, by
acting like a rudder to steer with. Perhaps the small ones too, all over the body, are of some help in flight, because they make a bird smooth, so that it can cut through the air more easily—you know they all lie one way, pointing backward from their roots to their tips. Then when Rap said feathers keep a bird warm, he guessed right. Birds wear plumage as you do clothes, and for the same purpose—to look nice and keep warm."

"But what is 'plumage,' Uncle Roy?" asked Dodo; "I thought you were talking about feathers."

"So I was, missy. Feathers are the plumage, when you take them all together. But see here," added the Doctor, as he spread the Sparrow's wings out, and held them where the children could look closely; "are the wings all plumage, or is there something else?"

"Of course there's something else to wings," said Dodo; "meat and bones, because I've eaten chickens' wings."

"Why didn't you say, Dodo, because there has to be something for the feathers to stick into?" said Nat decidedly.

"You both have very good reasons," said the Doctor. "The plumage of the wings grows out from the skin, just as feathers grow from any other part of the body, only the large ones are fastened to the bones, so that they stay tight in their proper places. If they were loose, they would fly up when the bird beats the air with its wings, and get out of order. See how smoothly they lie one over another! When the bird closes its wings, they come together snugly along its sides. But when the wing is spread, they slide apart
—yet not too far to form a broad, flat surface, quite stiff, but light and elastic. By beating the air with the wings birds fly along. It is something like rowing a boat. This surface pushes against the air as the flat blade of an oar pushes against the water. That is why these large stiff feathers are called the rowers. When the Wise Men talk Latin among themselves, they say remiges, for 'remiges' means rowers."

"But, Doctor," said Rap, who was looking sharply at the Sparrow's wing, "all the feathers are not like that. Here are a lot of little ones, in rows on top of the wing in front, and more like them underneath, covering over the roots of the rowing feathers. Have they any name?"

"Oh, yes! Everything you can see about a bird has its own name. Those small feathers are called coverts, because they cover over the roots of the rowers. Those on top are the upper coverts; those underneath are the under coverts, or lining of the wings. Now notice those two pretty bands of color across the Sparrow's wing. You see one band is formed by the tips of the longest coverts, and the other band by the tips of the next longest coverts. Those two rows of feathers are the greater and middle coverts, and all the smallest feathers, next to the front edge of the wing, are called lesser coverts. Now look at the tail, Rap, and tell me what you can find."

"Why, there is a bunch of long stiff feathers like rowers, that slide over each other when you spread the tail, and a lot of short feathers that hide the roots of the long ones. Are they rowers and coverts too?"
"A bird does not row with his tail—he steers with it, as if it were a rudder; and the long feathers are therefore called rudder-feathers—or rectrices, which is Latin for rudders. But the short ones are called coverts, like those of the wings—upper tail-coverts, and under tail-coverts."

"How funny!" said Dodo, "for a bird to have to row himself and steer himself all at once. I know I should get mixed up if I tried it with a boat. How do feathers grow, Uncle Roy?"

"Just like your hair, little girl," said the Doctor, patting her on the head, "or your nails. Didn't you ever notice the dots all over the skin of a chicken? Each dot is a little hole in the skin where a feather sprouts. It grows in a sheath that pushes out of the hole, like a plant coming up out of the ground from its root. For a while this sheath is full of blood to nourish the growing feather; that is why new feathers look dark and feel soft—pin-feathers they are called. The blood dries up when the feather has unfolded to its full size, leaving it light and dry, with a horny part at the root that sticks in the hole where it grew, and a spray-like part that makes up most of the feather. The horny part becomes hollow or contains only a little dry pith; when it is large enough, as in the case of a rowing feather from a Goose's wing, it makes a quill pen to write with. But the very tiniest feather on this Sparrow is built up in the same way.

"See! here is one," continued the Doctor, as he twitched out a feather from the Sparrow's back. "You see the quill part runs in the middle from one end to the other; this is called the shaft. On each side of it
all along, except just at the root, the spray-like parts grow. They are called the webs or vanes. Now look through this magnifying glass at the web.”

The children looked in turn, and each exclaimed in wonder at the sight.

“Yes, it is very wonderful. The web, that looks so smooth to the naked eye, is made up of a great many small shafts, called barbs, that grow out of the main shaft in rows. Every one of these small side-shafts has its own rows of still smaller shafts; and these again have little fringes along their edges, quite curly or like tiny hooks, that catch hold of the next row and hold fast. So the whole feather keeps its shape, though it seems so frail and delicate.”

“Are all feathers like this one?” asked Rap.

“All are equally wonderful, and equally beautiful in construction; but there is a good deal of difference in the way the webs hold together. Almost all feathers that come to the surface are smooth and firm, and there is not much difference except in size, or shape, or color. For example, the largest wing-feather or tail-feather of this Sparrow is quite like the one I pulled out of its back in texture, only the back-feather is smaller and not so stiff. But near the roots of these feathers you notice a fluffy part, where the webs do not hold together firmly. Some feathers are as fluffy as that in their whole length. Such are called down-feathers, because they are so downy. Birds that run about as soon as they are hatched are always clothed in down, like little chickens, before their other feathers sprout; and some birds, like Ducks, wear a warm underclothing of down their whole lives. Then again some feathers
do not have any webs at all—only a slender shaft, as fine as a hair.”

“Do feathers keep on growing all the time, like my hair?” asked Dodo.

“No, my dear. They stop growing as soon as they are of the right size; and you will find your hair will do the same, when it is long enough—though that won’t be for a good many years yet, little girl. When the blood that has fed the growing feather is all dried up, the feather ceases to grow. Then after a while longer, when it has become ragged and worn, it gets loose in the skin and drops out—as I am sorry to say some of my hair is doing already. That is what we call moulting.”

“I know about that,” interrupted Nat. “It’s when hens shed their feathers. But I didn’t know that it was moulting when people grow bald.”

“It is very much the same thing,” said the Doctor, “only we don’t call it moulting when people lose their hair. But there is this difference. Birds wear out their feathers much faster than we do our hair, and need a new suit at least once a year, sometimes oftener. All young birds get their first new clothes when the down is worn out. Old birds generally moult as soon as they have reared their broods, which in this country is late in summer or early in the fall. Many also moult again the following spring, when they put on their wedding dress; and one of the curious things about this change of plumage is, that the new feathers often come out quite unlike those that were cast off. So a bird may differ much in appearance at different seasons and ages—in fact, most birds do. The male also differs
in many cases from the female, being more handsomely dressed than his mate."

"I don't think that's fair," said Dodo. "I shouldn't like Nat to have nicer clothes than I wear."

"But it is best for Bird People," replied the Doctor, "that the mother bird, who has to keep house and tend to the little ones, should not be too conspicuous. She is best protected from enemies when her colors are plain, and especially when they match the foliage in which she sits on her nest. If her mate has only himself to look out for, it does not so much matter how bright his plumage may be. The colors of some birds are so exactly like their surroundings, that you might look long before you could find the sober, quiet female, whose mate is flashing his gay plumage and singing his finest song, perhaps for the very purpose of attracting your attention away from his home. 'Protective coloration,' is what the Wise Men call it."

"What makes all the different colors of birds, Doctor?" asked Rap.

"That is a hard question to answer. It is natural for birds to have particular colors, just as some people have black eyes and hair, while others have blue eyes and yellow hair. But I can tell you one thing about that. Look at this Sparrow. All the colors it shows are in the feathers, whose various markings are due to certain substances called 'pigments,' which filter into the feathers, and there set in various patterns. The feathers are painted inside by Nature, and the colors show through. You see none of these colors are shiny like polished metal. But I could show you some birds whose plumage glitters with all the hues of the rain-
bow. That glittering is called 'iridescence.' It does not depend upon any pigment in the substance of the feathers, but upon the way the light strikes them. It is the same with the beautiful tints we see on a soap-bubble. The film of water itself is colorless, but it becomes iridescent. You might divide all the colors of birds into two classes — those that depend upon pigments in the feathers, and those that depend upon the play of light on the feathers."

"That's pretty hard to remember," said Nat; "but I know how a soap-bubble looks, though I never saw any birds look that way. Please show us one."

"I will show you two," answered the Doctor, who then went to his glass case, and took out a Wild Pigeon and a Hummingbird. "Look at the shining tints on the neck of this Pigeon, and see how the throat of this Hummingbird glitters when I turn it to the light."

"That's the prettiest color I ever saw," said Nat, "and I can remember about it now. But," he added, thinking of the way he had seen hens mope when they were moulting, "does it hurt birds to lose their feathers, uncle?"

"It is probably not as comfortable as being nicely dressed, and sometimes they seem quite miserable, especially if they shed old feathers faster than new ones can grow to replace the lost ones. Some birds, like Ducks, lose their wing-feathers all at once, and cannot fly for quite a while. But Heart of Nature is kind to his children, as a rule. Most birds shed their rowing feathers one at a time in each wing, so that they never lose their power of flight. Now this will do for wings, tails, and feathers. Come! what is the next thing
you notice about this Sparrow? Is it entirely covered with feathers?"

"Of course it isn't," said Dodo; "it hasn't any feathers on its beak or on its feet, else how could it eat and hop about?"

"That is right. These parts of a Sparrow are bare; they never have any feathers; and the skin on them is hard and horny, as different from soft thin skin as finger-nails. Now look at the beak, and think how many things a Sparrow has to do with it. He has no hands or paws, and so he must pick up everything he eats with his beak. He has no teeth, and so he must bite his food with his beak. He feeds on seeds like a Canary bird; so his beak comes to a sharp point, because seeds are small things to pick up; and it is very strong and horny, because seeds are hard to crack, to get at the kernel. Notice, too, children, that his beak is in two halves, an upper half and a lower half; when these halves are held apart his mouth is open, so that you can see the tongue inside; and when the two halves are closed together the mouth is shut. These halves are called the upper mandible and the lower mandible."

"Why, it's just like people's mouths," said Nat, "only people have lips and teeth."

"Certainly it is like our mouths. Birds are built like ourselves in a great many things, and live as we do in a great many ways. Bird People and House People are animals, and all animals must eat to live. A bird's beak is its mouth, and the under mandible moves up and down, like our chins when we eat or talk. Birds can talk as well as sing with their beaks. This
Sparrow can say 'Peabody,' and some kinds of Parrots can repeat whole sentences so as to be understood. That is another thing in which birds' beaks are like our mouths. Now look again — can you see anything else about the Sparrow's beak?"

"I see a pair of little holes at the root of the upper mandible," said Rap.

"Well, those are the nostrils!" said the Doctor.

"Birds must breathe, like ourselves, and when the beak is shut they breathe through the nostrils."

"So do I," said Dodo; and then she pursed up her pretty red lips tightly, breathing quite hard through her nose.

"I do think," she said, when she had finished this performance, "birds have faces, with all the things in them that we have — there are the eyes, too, on each side, like people's eyes, only they look sideways and not in front. But I don't see their ears. Have birds any ears, Uncle Roy?"

"I can show you this Sparrow's ears. See here," said the Doctor, who had run the point of his penknife under a little package of feathers on one side of the back of the Sparrow's head, and lifted them up; "what does that look like?"

"It's a hole in the skin that runs into the head," said Nat. "Can birds hear through that?"

"Of course they can. Ears of all animals are made to hear with. This Sparrow can hear quite as well as you can, Nat. Now think, children, how many things we have found about this Sparrow's head that are quite like our own, — ears, eyes, nose, mouth, and tongue, — only there are no lips or teeth, because the horny beak, with its hard edges and sharp point, answers both for
lips and teeth. I want you to learn from this how many things are really alike in Bird People and House People, though they look so different at first sight. When we come to the bird stories, you will find that birds differ very much among themselves in all these things. I will show you all sorts of beaks, of different sizes and shapes. Here are pictures of several kinds of beaks—see how much they differ in shape! But they are all beaks, and all beaks are mouths. They all answer the same purposes in birds’ lives, and the purposes are the same as those of our mouths. But now, what do you notice about this Sparrow’s feet?"

"They are not a bit like my feet," said Dodo; "they are so long and slim and hard, and the toes stick out so all around. I think mine are nicer."

"But they would not be so useful as this Sparrow’s if you had to live in a bush and hop about on the twigs," said the Doctor. "The bird’s feet are fixed as nicely for that, as yours are for walking on the ground. I can show you, too, little girl, that a Sparrow’s feet are a great deal more like yours than you think. Come, Rap! Tell me what you see about this bird’s feet."

"Why, they are the ends of its legs, and there is a long slim part beyond the feathers, hard and horny like the beak, and at the end of this are four toes, three in front and one behind, and they’ve all sharp claws on their ends."

"Very well said, my boy! Now I will show you that such feet as the Sparrow has are as much like Dodo’s as a Sparrow’s beak is like her mouth. Begin with the claws—"
“I know!” exclaimed Dodo, “toe-nails! Only I think they need cutting!”

“Of course they are toe-nails,” said the Doctor. “Don’t nails grow on the ends of toes? All kinds of claws, on the ends of birds’ and other animals’ toes, are the same as nails. Some are long, sharp, and curved, like a cat’s or a Sparrow’s, and some are flat and blunt, like ours. I could show you some birds with claws that look just like our finger-nails. Toes, too, are pretty much the same; only this Sparrow, like most other birds, has but four, with three of them in a line in front, and the other one pointing backward. That is what makes its foot as good as a hand to hold on with when it perches on slender twigs. Almost all birds have their toes fixed that way. Some, that do not perch, have no hind toe; and birds that swim have broad webs stretched between their front toes, like Ducks. All the different kinds of feet birds have are fitted for the ways they move about on the ground, or water, or among the branches of trees and bushes, just as all their shapes of beaks are fitted for the kind of food they eat and the way they pick it up. Here are two pictures that will show you several different kinds of feet. Now you must answer the next question, Nat; what do toes grow on?”

“Feet!” said Nat promptly, then adding: “But this Sparrow hasn’t any feet except its toes; they grow on its legs, because the rest of the horny part stands up—I’ve noticed that in Canaries.”

“But all this horny part is the foot, not the leg,” answered the Doctor, “though it does stand up, as you say. How could toes grow from legs without any feet
1. Ordinary foot of perching birds; 2. Foot of Nighthawk, with a comb on claw of middle toe; 3. Climbing foot of Woodpecker, with two hind toes; 4. Grasping foot of Osprey, for holding prey.
5. Scratching foot of Ruffed Grouse; 6. Wading foot of Golden Plover, with only three toes; 7. Wading foot of Snipe, with short hind toe; 8. Wading foot of Green Heron, with long hind toe; 9. Swimming foot of Coot, with lobed toes; 10. Swimming foot of Canada Goose, with three toes webbed; 11. Swimming foot of Cormorant, with all four toes webbed.
between? They never do! There has to be a foot in every animal between the toes and the legs. Now what do you call the end of your foot which is opposite the end on which the toes grow?"

"It's the heel in people, but I should think the hind toe of a bird was its heel," said Nat doubtfully, and beginning to think he did not understand.

"You might think so," said the Doctor; "but you would be wrong. All this horny part that a bird stands up on is its foot. And the top of it, nearest to the feathers, is the heel. Don't you see, when I bend the foot so," continued the Doctor, as he bent the Sparrow's foot forward, "that the top of the horny part makes a joint that stands out backward, in the same position your heel always has? All this slender horny part of the foot, above the roots of the toes, corresponds to the instep of your foot, and of course the heel comes next. You must remember the name of it — the Wise Men call it the tarsus."

"Then hasn't a bird got any legs, Uncle Roy, only just feet?" asked Dodo.

"Oh! yes; legs too, with a knee-joint and a hip-joint, like ours. But all these parts are up closer to the body, and hidden by the feathers, so that you cannot see them."

As the Doctor said this there was a great commotion. Quick, who had been watching the mouse hole all the while, gave a sharp bark and pounced on something. There was a feeble squeak, and it was all over with a mouse which had ventured too far from its hole.

"Poor little mousey!" said the Doctor, as he took
the limp body from the terrier's mouth. "It is quite
dead. I am sorry, but it might have nibbled some of
my birds. Besides, this is exactly what I wanted to
teach you something about. Who can tell me the
difference between a mouse and a Sparrow?"

"I can!" said Dodo; "it's all difference; a mouse
hasn't any feathers, or any wings, and it has four feet,
and a long tail and whiskers and teeth—"

"That will do, little girl, for differences; do you
see anything alike between a Sparrow and a mouse,
Rap?"

"I think the fur is something like feathers, Doctor,"
answered Rap; "and you told us how a beak was like
a mouth without any teeth or lips; then a mouse has
four feet and legs; but a bird has only two feet,
and two wings instead of four legs and feet like a
mouse."

"That is just what I want you all to think about,"
said the Doctor. "Now listen. If a Sparrow has
a pair of feet that correspond to a mouse's hind feet,
what do you think a Sparrow's wings correspond to in
a mouse?"

"I should think they would be something like a
mouse's fore feet," answered Rap, after thinking a
moment.

"That is exactly right. Birds and beasts are alike
in many respects. They have heads, necks, and bodies;
they have tails; and they have limbs. Beasts have two
pairs of limbs. We call them fore legs and hind legs.
People have two pairs also. We call them arms and
legs. So you see our arms correspond to the fore
legs of beasts, though we never use them for moving
about, except when we go on our hands and knees, or climb trees, or swim in the water. And as for birds—why, their fore limbs are turned into wings, to fly with, so that they walk or hop on their hind limbs only, just as we do. Animals that go on all fours are called *quadrupeds*. Animals that go on their two hind limbs only, like Bird People and House People, are called *bipeds*. A Sparrow’s wings are just as much like a mouse’s fore legs, as a Sparrow’s feathers are like a mouse’s fur.”

“How funny!” said Dodo. “But how are a bird’s wings like fore legs, when they haven’t got any paws or toes—or fingers—or claws—only just long feathers?”

“They have fingers, and some birds’ wings have claws; only you cannot see them, because they are all wrapped up in the skin and covered over with the feathers. Some day—not to-day, because you have had a long lesson already—I will show you a bird’s wing with only its bones. Then you will see that it has finger-bones at the end, then hand-bones next, then bones that run from the wrist to the elbow, and then one bone that runs from the elbow to the shoulder—almost the same bones that people have in their fingers, hands, wrists, and arms. So you see wings are the same to a bird that fore legs are to a mouse or arms are to us.

“I could go through all the inside parts of birds, and show you something like the same parts in people,—stomach and bowels, to take care of the food they eat and turn it into blood to nourish them; lungs to breathe with, and keep the blood pure; heart to beat
and thus pump the warm blood into all parts of the body; brain and nerves, which are what birds think and feel with, just as we do with ours; and all their bones, which together make what we call the skeleton, or framework of the body, to keep the flesh in shape and support the other organs."

"Dear me!" sighed Dodo; "there must be ever so many more things inside of birds that we can't see, than there are outside."

"Of course there are!" said the Doctor. "It won't be very hard for you to remember the outside parts, and learn the names of them all. I have told you most of them that you need to remember, to understand the stories I am going to tell you about birds. See here! What do you think of this?"
"I wonder why some birds build their nests so very early, when it is cold, and there are no leaves on the trees, while others wait until it is almost summer," said Rap, as they walked down a narrow lane toward the river. There were bushes lining the path on each side, and from the singing you would think that every bush had a bird on each twig. In fact, there were so many birds in sight that Nat did not know which to ask about first, and so kept looking instead of talking.

"The birds who are Citizens are usually the first to build," answered the Doctor. "They merely roved about during the winter months, and had no long journey to make before they reached the home trees again, and then the hardy seed-eating birds can return from the South much earlier than their frailer kin."

"Last year," said Rap, "when the men were chopping trees in the great wood beyond the lake, the miller went up one day to hunt coons and took me with him. It was the beginning of March and terribly cold; there were long icicles hanging on the trees, and we were glad enough to go in by the fire in the lumbermen's camp. But what do you think?—if there wasn't an Owl's nest, up in a pine tree, with two eggs in it! It was in a very lonely place, and the
miller said the Owl had borrowed an old Crow's nest and fixed it up a little."

"I should think the eggs would have frozen hard and been spoiled," said Nat.

"No, the old Owl sat on them ever so tight and would hardly budge to let the miller see them. We didn't stay long, for the Owl was a savage big thing, nearly two feet high, with yellow eyes and long feathers sticking up on its head like horns."

"A Great Horned Owl," said the Doctor. "I only wonder that it let the miller go near it at all; they are generally very wild and fierce."

"This one was sort of friends with the lumbermen," continued Rap, "for they used to hang lumps of raw meat on the bushes for it, and they said it kept the rats and mice away from the camp and was good company for them. It frightened me when I heard it first; it gave an awful scream, like a hurt person. After a while another one began to bark like a dog with a cold, just like this — 'who-o-o-o — hoo — hoo — hoo.' And, Doctor, one of the lumbermen told me that with Owls and Hawks the female is mostly bigger than the male. Do you think that is so? Because with singing birds the male is the largest."

"Among cannibal birds the female is usually the largest," answered the Doctor, who was pleased to see that Rap so often had a "because" for his questions. "These birds do a great deal of fighting, both in catching their living prey and holding their own against enemies; and as the female stays most at home, being the chief protector of the nest, she needs more strength."

"Some singing birds are real plucky too," said Rap.
"That same year I found a Robin's nest in April, when the water-pail by the well froze every night, and a Woodcock's nest in the brushwood. It's hard to see a Woodcock on the nest, they look so like dead leaves. It snowed a little that afternoon, and the poor bird's back was all white, but there she sat. It made me feel so sorry, and I was so afraid she might freeze, that I made a little roof over her of hemlock branches. And she liked that and didn't move at all; so then I wiped the snow off her back, and she seemed real comfortable. I used to go back every day after that to see her; we grew to be quite friends before the four eggs hatched, and I've seen them do queer little tricks; but I never told anybody where she lived, though, because lots of people don't seem to understand anything about birds but shooting or teasing them."

"Some day you shall tell us about what the Woodcock did, my lad. You must tell us a great many stories, for you know what you have seen yourself. That is the best knowledge of all, and it will encourage Nat to hear you," and Dr. Hunter put his arm affectionately around the shoulders of each boy.

"Hush! Wait a moment and listen to that Thrasher," said the Doctor, stopping behind some thick bushes; "he is wooing his mate!"

"What is wooing?" whispered Nat.

"Asking her to marry him and come and build a cosy home in one of these nice bushes. Listen! See! There he is, up on the very top of that young birch, with his head thrown back, singing as if his throat would split." As the children looked up they saw a fine bird with a curved beak, rusty-brown back, and
light breast streaked with black, who was clinging to a slender spray, jerking his long tail while he sang.

"It seems as if I could almost hear the words he says," said Rap.

"Birds sing in many different tones," said the Doctor. "The Thrasher's song is like some one talking cheerfully; the Meadowlark's is flute-like; the Oriole's is more like clarion notes; the Bobolink bubbles over like a babbling brook; while the dear little brown striped Song Sparrow, who is with us in hedge and garden all the year, sings pleasant home-like ballads."

"There are some birds that Olive told me can't sing a bit," said Nat, "but only call and squeak. How do they ask their mates to marry them?"

"All birds have alarm cries, and a call-note that serves the same purpose as a song, although it may not seem at all musical to us. We are naturally more interested in that order of birds whose voices are the most perfectly developed. These not only sing when they are courting, but all the time their mates are sitting upon the eggs, and until the young are ready to fly."

"Why do birds always build nests in spring?" asked Nat.

"I think because there is more for them to feed the little ones with, than when it gets to be hot and dry," said Rap, "and it gives them time to grow big and strong before winter comes, when they must go away."

"Quite right, Rap, and it also gives the parents a chance to shed the old feathers that have been worn by rubbing on the nest, grow a new, thick, warm coat for winter, and rest themselves before they set out on their
autumn journey. Do you remember what I told you that rainy day in my study about this moulting or changing of feathers?"

"Yes, I do," said Rap and Nat together. "Most birds have two coats a year, and the male's is the brighter," continued Nat eagerly, proud to show that he remembered. "The one that comes out in the spring is the gayest, so that his mate shall admire him and when this coat comes he sings his very best and —"

"Stop and take breath, my boy," laughed the Doctor; "there is plenty of time. Why do we think that the male has the gayest feathers — do you remember that also?"

"No, I've forgotten," said Nat.

"I remember," cried Rap; "it is to please the female and because she sits so much on the nest that if her feathers were as bright as the male's her enemies would see her quicker, and when the little birds hatch out they are mostly in plain colors too, like their mother."

"Oh, I remember that now," said Nat. "And after the young are hatched and the old birds need new coats, they keep rather still while they shed their feathers, because they feel weak and can't fly well."

"Then when the new feathers come they are sometimes quite different from the old ones, and seldom quite so bright — why is this, Nat?" asked the Doctor. But Nat could not think, and Rap answered: "Because in the autumn when they make the long journeys the leaves are falling from the trees, and if they were very bright the cannibal birds would see them too quickly."
"Have I told you about the Bluebird, and how, though he only sheds his feathers once a year, yet his winter coat is rusty and not bright clear blue as it is in spring?"

"I think not," answered Nat.

"Well, the outside edges of its feathers are blue, but a little deeper in the feather is brownish. So when they have worn the same feathers many months, and rubbed in and out of their little houses and bathed a great deal and cleaned their feathers off every day in the dust, as birds always do, the blue ends wear off and the rusty parts show. It is quite worth while to tell little people things when they have the patience to listen and the interest to remember."

"Yes, uncle, but it's the way you tell us about birds that makes us remember. You talk as if they were real people."

"Oh, oh, Nat!" laughed the Doctor, "if you flatter me so I shall have to hide my head in a bush like an Ostrich. Birds are people, though of another race from ours, and I am happy if I can make you think so. Ah! we must be near a Redwing's nest — what a commotion the colony is making!"

"Colony? I thought a colony was a lot of people who went off into a strange wild land and made a new home," said Nat.

"That is one meaning of the word, but another one is when a number of people of the same race or trade live close to each other. A bird colony is a collection of the homes of many birds of the same family. After the nesting season almost all birds live in flocks of different sizes, each particular kind flocking by itself;
but during the migrations great flocks are often made up of smaller flocks of various kinds of birds. During the nesting season it is quite different; the majority of birds prefer a quiet home life, each pair being independent of any others. Certain flocks, however, keep together, and all build their nests in a particular swamp or wood, and sometimes, it is said, male birds build nests to sleep in while the females are sitting. The Redwings nest in colonies; so do the Herons, who eat frogs and nest near water, and the little brown-cloaked Bank Swallows, who live in holes that they dig for themselves in high banks."

There were some twenty pairs of birds in this Redwing colony, who seemed to be much frightened by the approach of visitors.

"Here is a nest in this alder bush," said the Doctor; "step carefully on the grass hummocks, and look at it for a moment, Nat. See how neatly it is made of the dried leaves of flags and grasses, woven in and out between three upright stalks."

"Isn't it pretty?" said Nat; "so even and deep like a cup, and not at all ragged and mussy like a Robin's nest. There are a great many different kinds of nests, aren't there, uncle?"

"Yes, the nests of birds are almost as different as their songs and other habits, and the higher the order the brood belongs to the better built is the nest. The lower orders often only make a hollow in the ground or grass, but do not collect material and build in the true sense. None such can be called architects."

"What is an architect?" asked Nat, who thought it was a pretty big name for any sort of a bird.
"An architect, my boy," said the Doctor, "is anybody who knows how to build anything as it ought to be built, to look the best and be the most useful, whether it is a house or a nest."

"I wonder why nests are so different," said Rap, looking down the lane toward the river where the sun was streaming in and so many little birds were flying to and fro that they seemed like last year's leaves being blown about.

"Because, as the habits of the birds cause them to live in different places, and feed in various ways, so their homes must be suitable to their surroundings, and be built in the best way to protect the young birds from harm—to keep them safe from House People, cannibal birds, and bad weather.

"The trim Thrushes and Sparrows, who are all brownish birds, and find their insect or seed food on or near the ground, build open nests low down in trees and bushes, or on the earth itself; but the gorgeous Baltimore Oriole, with his flaming feathers, makes a long pocket-shaped nest of string and strong plant fibres, which he swings high up in an elm tree, where it cannot be reached from below, and the leaves hide this cradle while the winds rock it. He knows that it would never do to trust his brilliant feathers down by the ground.

"The frail Hummingbird has no real strength to fight enemies bigger than its tiny self, but it has been given for protection the power of flying as quick as a whizzing bullet, and courage enough to attack even a Kingbird in defence of its nest, which is a tiny circle of down, covered with lichens, and is so fastened across
a branch that it looks like a knot of the limb itself. The Woodcock you saw that snowy day, Rap, knows the protection of color and draws together for a nest a few leaves of the hue of her own feathers. This nest and the bird upon it are so blended together that few eyes could separate them."

"Some birds do not make any nests, but live in holes like squirrels and coons," said Rap. "Woodpeckers and all those."

"There again the home is suited to the occupation of the bird," said the Doctor; "for Woodpeckers are Tree Trappers, who find their food by creeping about trees and picking insects and grubs from the bark. What more natural than that they should have a house close at hand in some tree whose wood is soft enough to be hollowed out? You see they have a bill like a chisel for gouging out insects, and with this same tool they make their homes."

"Bluebirds and Wrens and Martins like to live in holes and boxes, though they can't make holes for themselves," said Rap.

"Yes, the habits of many birds have changed since the country has become civilized and House People are to be found in all parts of it. Many birds, who have always been favorites with man, and have been protected by him, have gradually grown less wild, or almost tame, and now prefer living near houses and barns to building in wilder places. The Bluebird, Martin, and Wren are three very popular birds. They appreciate cozy homes and are grateful for the boxes built for them, though we know that before they had such things they must have nested in tree holes."
"I wonder where the Chimney Swifts lived before there were any chimneys," said Rap, looking across the fields to where an old stone chimney stood— the only thing left standing of an old farmhouse. Above this chimney, Swifts were circling in shifting curves, now diving inside it, now disappearing afar in the air.

"We think they must have lived in hollow trees as the Tree Swallows do now," said the Doctor; "but when House People began to clear the land they naturally cut down the dead trees first, and so the birds moved to the chimneys."

"I used to call those birds Chimney 'Swallows,' but Olive says they are made more like Hummingbirds and Nighthawks than real Swallows," continued Rap.

"Nighthawks?" said Nat. "I thought Olive said Hawks were cannibal birds. How are they relations of Swallows?"

"That is a mistake a great many people make," said the Doctor; "for the Nighthawk is not a real Hawk, but a shy bird, who has a rapid hawk-like flight, though it eats nothing but beetles, moths, and other insects. Hark! Do you hear that cry high in the air?"

"As if something was saying 'shirk-shirk'?" said Nat.

"Yes; that is a Nighthawk on its way home. Look! he is over us now, and you can see two large white spots like holes in his wings. By these you can tell it from any of the real Hawks."

"Does he build high up in a tree?" asked Rap. "I have never found his nest."

"There is a good reason for that," said the Doctor.
“There is no nest. Two eggs are laid on the bare ground, that is about the same color as the bird itself; and the eggs look too much like streaky pebbles to be easily seen. When the young are hatched they keep still until they are able to fly, and are colored so exactly like the place upon which they rest that it is almost impossible to see them, even if you know where they are.”

“How much there is to learn!” sighed Nat. “I’m afraid you will have to make us a big book instead of a little one, Uncle Roy, to teach us all these things. Olive and Rap have such a start of us. Dodo and I don’t know much of anything, and even what I thought I knew about birds isn’t very true.”
Dodo’s birthday and a disappointment came together on the eighth, and the disappointment took the shape of a rainy day. Not an early morning shower, with promise of warmth and clear weather; for it was one of the cold, northeasterly storms that are very trying at any time of the year, but doubly so when they come in July, and seem, for the time, to turn summer into autumn.

Dodo, Nat, Rap, and Olive stood under the shelter of the porch, the children vainly hoping that it might clear up before nine o’clock—the hour the train left—and Olive racking her brain for something that would soothe their feelings. “We might ask mammy to let us go into the kitchen and make candy,” she said. “The weather is too damp and sticky for molasses candy, but butter-scotch will harden if we put it in the dairy.” Even this did not seem to be very tempting to little people who had expected to go to the real Owl woods, and Quick barked and yelped as if he, too, felt cheated out of an expected excursion.

Presently the Doctor came out and saw the forlorn group, which, being quite heedless of the sharp slant of the rain, was rather wet and limp.

“Poor little bird-hunters!” he said—rather too
cheerfully, they thought — “you look as unhappy as the party of astronomers who went all the way to Africa to photograph an eclipse of the sun, and when the time came were so excited that they forgot to open the camera, and so took no pictures. Come into the hall and I will tell you about a plan I have. Catching cold isn’t a nice game for a birthday party.

“You expected to hear something about the cannibal birds to-day, and see the woods where a great many of them live and make their nests, didn’t you?”

“Yes,” said Dodo; “we wanted to know why they are cannibals, and see where the wicked things live that eat little Chickens and song birds.”

“Very well. Now do you know that though all Hawks and Owls sometimes eat other birds and help themselves to poultry from the barnyards, yet at the same time most of them are the farmer’s best friends?”

“No,” said Rap; “I thought they were all bad, evil birds, and that the Government often gave money to people for killing them; besides, I am sure that a Hawk took eleven of our little Chickens this very spring!”

“The Wise Men have been looking up the records of these cannibals — or Birds of Prey, as they are usually called — and find that very few of them — only two or three kinds, perhaps — should be condemned to death. The others belong to the secret guild of the Wise Watchers who, sitting silently in the shadows of the woods, or perching in the trees around the edges of fields, wait for rats, mice, moles, rabbits, gophers, beetles, cutworms, and many other creatures which destroy vegetable life. The Wise
Watchers kill these hurtful creatures, and so become the guardians of the fields.”

“Oh, do tell us which ones do this and which took Rap’s Chickens,” said Dodo, forgetting her disappointment for the time.

“I am going to make a play for you. Some of the Owls and Hawks shall speak for themselves, and tell you about their own habits and customs. In fact, the most familiar of these cannibals shall have a hearing this morning in the wonder room. The American Eagle is to be the judge, and I think that, as you cannot go to the woods, you will like to come into my room to hear what they have to say.”

“Birds talking about themselves in the wonder room!” said Dodo in a puzzled way.

“What is a hearing?” asked Nat.

“I know what a hearing is,” said Rap. “It is where people are accused of doing something wrong and they go down to the courthouse, and the judge hears what they have to say about it; and, if he thinks they have done the things, he binds them over for trial. They often have hearings down in the town hall in the East Village.”

“You are quite right, my boy; and at this hearing of ours, as the birds are stuffed and cannot speak, I shall speak for them. Even if they could talk, we could not understand them, unless we borrowed Tommy-Anne’s magic spectacles. Now, if you will come into the study, you will find them all ready.”

The children did not wait to be asked twice; Nat and Dodo rushed along the hall, followed by Rap.

In the study two tables were put together, making
a sort of platform at the end of the room. On this platform a dozen stuffed birds sat in solemn silence. The Owls were on one side, with a row of Hawks facing them on the other. A big Golden Eagle was at the foot, and a White-headed American Eagle held the place of honor at the head, on a pile of books. Each bird was mounted on a wooden perch; and, as they were all set up in very natural positions, the effect was quite startling to the children.

"Where did all these big birds come from?" asked Nat. "They were not in the glass cases."

"No, they were in the attic. You must excuse them if their feathers look a little shabby, for it is a
long time since they flew about in the woods, and took a bath or plumed themselves."

"The judge ought to wear spectacles! May I cut him a pair out of paper?" asked Dodo. "See how wise he looks," she said, as she put the make-believe glasses on the Eagle's nose.

"Order!" called the Doctor, rapping on the table with his knuckles. "The American Eagle makes the first speech, which I will translate to you."

The Eagle looked very fierce as he sat there. His head, neck, and tail were white, but the rest of his body was dark brown. The upper part of his great yellow beak was hooked; his yellow feet were bare and scaly; and his four sharp claws, or talons as they are often called, were black. He was nearly three feet tall, and if he had spread his powerful wings he would have measured seven feet from tip to tip.

The Golden Eagle, who sat at the foot of the table, was about the same size and an equally handsome bird. He held his golden-brown head proudly erect, and his black wings folded tightly. He too had some white feathers in the tail, though none on the head; his hooked beak was black, and he wore dark leggings almost down to his powerful claws.

These two Eagles, though not exactly friends, are not enemies; for the Bald-headed one ranges over all of North America, especially in open places near the water, while his Golden brother keeps more to the western parts, and loves the loneliness of cold northern mountains.

"We Birds of Prey," said the Eagle, "who bow to no one and even sleep sitting erect—we, whose females are larger than the males for the better protection of
our nests, are accused of eating not only our smaller brethren, but also four-footed animals which are of service to man. I deny that we do this as a tribe, except when we are pressed for food, and Heart of Nature says to us all, 'Take what ye need to eat!'

"Now, you are all in honor bound to speak the truth at this hearing, and you shall be heard first, Brothers of the Darkness—you, with strange voices and feathered eye-circles—you, who have three eyelids and whose eggs are whiter even than moonlight.

"Brother Screech Owl, whose day is my night, tell us about yourself—how and where you live."

There were two Screech Owls perched side by side on one stump. They were not ten inches long, and had feathery ear-tufts standing up like horns an inch long. One Owl was mottled gray and black; the other was rusty-red; and the toes of both peeped out of holes in their thin stockings. The gray one gave a little quavering wail and said:

"I am everywhere a well-known Owl; though I say it myself, I am a good, hard-working Citizen, and in this the Wise Men agree."
"All day I stay by my nest hole in some old tree; but when others go to sleep I awake, and steal noiselessly on my rounds through barn, field, and garden. What for? For mice, moles, bats, and beetles. Sometimes I go a-fishing; sometimes I snatch a frog with my sharp claws—the hunting weapons of my family. Do I catch birds? Sometimes, but they are few compared to the mice I kill. When I think of mice, I become a feathered cat! Do mice run fast? I fly faster! Winter or summer I always hear when a mouse squeaks or a chipmunk chatters. When I swallow bones, fur, and feathers, they never give me any pain—no, never! I understand the science of digestion. Instead of making my poor little stomach grind up all the things I swallow, I just roll what I do not care to digest into little pellets, and spit them up. If you look on the ground under my home tree, you will find these little balls, and by them judge of what I eat.

"My family are also distinguished by two other odd habits. Having two sets of eyelids, an inner and an outer, we can close one or both at will. The inner one is a thin skin that we blink with, and draw across our eyes in the day-time when the light annoys us, just as House People pull down a curtain to shut out the sun. The outer lids we close only in sleep, when we put up the shutters after a night's work, and at last in death—for birds alone among all animals are able to close their own eyes when they die. The other habit is the trick of turning our heads entirely round from front to back, without wrenching our necks or choking to death. This we do to enable us to see in every direction, as we cannot roll our eyes about as freely as most birds do."
“Come to think of it, I am very fond of eating one bird that, so the Wise Men say, is as bad as a mouse for mischief. I eat English Sparrows!

“One thing I wish the Wise Men would tell me. Why am I, without season or reason, sometimes rusty-red and sometimes mottled gray? It confuses my brain so that I hardly know my own face in the pond.”

“Acquitted!” said Judge Eagle. “Long-eared Owl, what have you to say?”

The Long-eared Owl was about fifteen inches high. He had, as his name implied, long ear-tufts that stood up very straight over his yellow eyes, and thick tawny stockings on his feet and legs. He was finely mottled above with brown, black, and dark orange, had long brown streaks on his buff breast, and dark-brown bands on his wings and tail. He gave a hoot and spoke very quickly.

“I’m a good Citizen, too. I do not eat many birds, and those I do eat are not the useful ones who kill insects; moles, mice, rats, and beetles are my daily food. But House People do not know this, and hunt me until I am almost discouraged; for though I am a Night Owl I do not live in such wild places as some of my brethren, and so I am more easily caught. I live and nest anywhere I like, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I rear my young equally well in an old Crow’s nest in a high tree, or one I build for myself in a bush. I mean well and am a Wise Watcher. I know my voice frightens House People, but let them pity me and point their guns at something else.”

“Short and to the point! Acquitted!” said the Eagle. “Snowy Owl, it is your turn.”
This beautiful white Owl, marked here and there with black bars and spots, had a smooth round head like a snowball, great yellow eyes, and thickly feathered feet; his bill and claws were black, but you could hardly see them for the thickness of the feathers in which they were muffled up. He winked with each eye, clicked his bill once or twice, and thus began:

"I'm a very good-looking bird, as you see — fatally beautiful, in fact; for House People shoot me, not on account of my sins, but because I can be stuffed and sold for an ornament. I do not stay long enough in the parts of the country where they live, to do much harm, even were I a wicked Owl. My home is in Arctic regions, where my feather-lined nest rests on the ground,
and even in winter I come into the United States only when driven by snowstorms from the North.

"At home I live chiefly on lemmings, which are a sort of clumsy, short-tailed field-mice, not good for anything but to be eaten. When I go visiting I may take a little feathered game, but oftener I live on my favorite mice, or go a-fishing in creeks that are not frozen; for I am a day Owl, and can see quite well in the sunlight. You never see me except in winter, for I am a thing of cold and snow, whose acquaintance you can seldom cultivate; but if you knew me well you would find me gentle, kind, and willing to be friends with you—if you do not believe me, ask the Wise Men."

"Acquitted! You see we are proving our innocence," said the Eagle proudly. But he hesitated a moment before calling upon the Great Horned Owl, as if he himself doubted the honesty of this savage bird.

He was large, nearly two feet high, with very long ear-tufts and great staring yellow eyes in the middle of his large flat face. He was mottled on the back and wings with buff and black, had on a white cravat, and his vest was barred with black, white, and buff; his sharp black talons were almost hidden by feathers, but not so much so as the Snowy Owl's.

"None of you like me because you are afraid of me, and so you would rather condemn me than not," began the Horned Owl fiercely. "But I am not afraid of anything or anybody. I am a liberal parent and heap my nest up with food, like all the Owl and Hawk Brotherhood. If I wish a Hen or a Goose or a Turkey I take it, though I may only care to eat the head; for
I am very dainty, and any one is welcome to what I leave. I also like wild game—Ruffed Grouse particularly; but I eat rabbits and rats enough too, I warrant you. I could give you a long list of the evil-minded rodents I kill in every one of the States where I live; but I won't, for you might think I wished to prove myself no cannibal. I don't care what you think of
me; for I am able to take care of myself, and quite independent.  

"I do not even have to build my own nest. In February, when I need a home, there is always an old Crow's or Hawk's nest ready for me; and as for my young, they are hardy and need no pampering! Whoooo-ooo-hoo—ooo! Hands off, Bird and House People! The Great Horned Owl knows how to use both beak and claws!"

"Bound over for trial," said the Eagle, "and you are lucky not to be committed for contempt of court."

"He is a very cross bird to talk so, even if he does some good," whispered Dodo to Rap; for the Doctor had given the Owl's hoot so cleverly it all seemed real to the children. Then Judge Eagle spoke again:

"Now for my brothers whose keen eyes can look at the sun himself—you who strike with the claws and rend with the beak in open daylight—it is your turn to speak. Marsh Hawk, where and how do you live?"

The Marsh Hawk was nineteen inches in length, with a long tail, pointed wings, and Owl-like face. At first glance he seemed to be a bluish-gray bird, but on close inspection one could see that his under parts were white, mottled with brown, and there was also a large white patch on his rump. He spoke very clearly and said:

"I roam all over North America, wherever there is open country and free flying, and make my nest on the ground wherever I find tufted grass or reeds to hide it. Marsh lands please me best, and so I am called the Marsh Hawk. The voices of the Hawk Brotherhood are like the voices of the winds, far-reaching, but not to be put in words. Mine is one of the softest of the cries
of the Wise Watchers. Some brothers take their pastime in the skies, but I keep near the ground, in search of the things I harry — mice and other small gnawing animals, insects, lizards, and frogs. Sometimes I take a stray Chicken or some other bird, but very few compared to the countless rodents I destroy. House People do not realize that these gnawers are the greatest enemies that the Wise Watchers keep in check. Day and night these vermin gnaw at the grain, the roots of things, the fruits, the tree bark, even the eggs and young of useful birds. I am their chief Harrier; by chance only, not choice, am I a cannibal."

"A very honest statement," said the Eagle. "Acquitted! Sharp-shinned Hawk, it is your turn."

This little Hawk, only a foot long, was bluish-gray above and had a black tail barred with ashy; his white breast was banded with reddish-brown, and he had a keen, fierce eye.

"I have very little to say for myself," he began. "Everywhere in North America I am a cannibal. I know I am small, but I can kill a bird bigger than myself, and I have a big brother who is a regular
Chicken and Hen Hawk. I hide my nest in the lengths of thick evergreens, or on a rocky ledge, and all the year round I take my own wherever I find it. I prefer to prey on birds—Dove or Sparrow, Robin or Thrush, song bird or Croaker—all are alike to me. I consider myself a true sportsman, and I do not like such tame game as mice or frogs. I pounce or dart according to my pleasure; I can fly faster than any one of you, and few small birds escape my clutches. Sometimes in winter I make my home near a colony of English Sparrows and eat them all for a change, just to see how it feels to be of some use to House People; but in spite of this I am a bold, bad bird, and as every one knows it I may as well say that I take pride in my reputation, and do not intend to reform!"

"Guilty!" said the Eagle solemnly. "Red-shouldered Hawk next."

The Red-shouldered Hawk held up his head proudly and returned the Eagle’s gaze without flinching. He was a fine muscular bird, standing a little under two feet high, with deep rusty-red shoulders and reddish-brown back, while his head, neck,
and under parts were spotted and cross-barred with rusty and white. He had a black tail crossed by half a dozen white bars.

"I am a Hawk of eastern North America, living from the great plains to the Atlantic coast, going northward to the British lands and southward to the warm-watered Gulf of Mexico. I am often called Hen Hawk by those who speak without thinking, but in truth I am not much of a bird-thief, for a good reason. I am a thoughtful bird, with the deliberate flight of a Night Owl, rather
than the dash of my daylight brethren. I clear the fields of mice and other gnawers, besides spiders, grass-hoppers, and snails; while as a frog-lover, I am a veritable Frenchman.

"I am a faithful Hawk besides, and when I am protected will nest for a lifetime in the same woodland, if there is a marsh or spring near by to furnish my daily frogs. I am faithful also to my mate through life. I help her build the nest and rear our young. If House People are kind to me, I can be a gentle friend to them, even in the trials of captivity; but if I suspect a stranger, he must look at me only at long range, heavy though my flight appears.

"So I say boldly that I am a useful bird and a good Citizen. If you think a Hawk has stolen a pet Hen, look well before you shoot; and if he has rusty-red shoulders count yourself mistaken—and let him go."

"A true account," said the Eagle; "you stand acquitted. Sparrow Hawk, your turn."

This charming little Hawk, about the size of a Shrike, had all the beauty of shape and color of a song bird, combined with Hawk-like dash. His wings were narrow and pointed. His back was reddish-brown with a few black bars, and there was a broad one on the end of his tail; his wings were partly bluish. Underneath he was white, shading to cream color and spotted with black. His head was bluish with black markings on the sides and a red spot on the top. He was not at all embarrassed at being in such grand company, for he was used to the best society, having come of noble ancestry in the Hawk line.

"You all know me," he said in a clear voice. "Since
Sparrow-killing is ordered by the Wise Men, you should think well of me—especially you House People, who love song birds. I will tell you a secret—I am thinking of eating no birds but English Sparrows in future!"

"So you have been eating other birds?" said Dodo.

"Y-e-s, I have, but not many more than the Shrike takes, and mostly seed-eaters—hardly ever an insect-eating song bird. Do you know how many bad insects I eat?" The little Hawk rattled off a long list, beginning with grasshoppers and ending with beetles; but he spoke so fast that the children could not remember half the names he mentioned.

"Where do I live? All over North America, though I leave the colder parts in winter, for I like to be comfortable. I make my nest in some snug hole that a Woodpecker has kindly left. Sometimes, for a joke, I kill Sparrows and take their nest! Or make myself a home in a dove-cote—only I never seem to stay there
ong, for the Doves tell tales about me. I can sing a little, too; I have a high soprano voice and I——”

“That will do,” interrupted the Eagle. “For a small bird you are a great talker. But you are acquitted! Who comes next? Brother Osprey?”

The children recognized the Fish Hawk they had seen the first day they went to the sea-shore.

“The Osprey is a fisherman like myself, so we need not question him about his habits,” continued the Eagle, who had his own private reasons for not caring to hear all the Osprey might say, remembering that he had sometimes stolen fish the Osprey had caught; “but I should like to tell the House Children that he is one of the long-lived birds who mate for life after the manner of true Eagles, many of whom have lived a hundred years, and also very industrious. Golden Eagle, what is your bill of fare?”

“The food of a wild bird of the mountains, far from the homes of men. I seize Wild Ducks and other game birds, hares, rabbits, fawns—yes, and young calves also, if House People make their dwellings near me and bring cattle into my fortress; but if they keep away from me, I never molest them.”

“Humph!” said the Bald Eagle; “you and I are somewhat alike, for though I chiefly fish for a living I also kill the young of large animals, and even eat carrion when game is scarce. But as it is unusual for a judge to condemn himself, I think I must go free; and as there are not very many of either of us, it really doesn’t matter much.”

“How many did you condemn as really bad cannibals?” asked Nat, speaking to the Eagle.
"The Sharp-shinned Hawk, and the Great Horned Owl are held over for further trial!" answered Judge Eagle. "These two are the only ones who have been brought before this court, though accusations have been made against that big brother of his whom the Sharp-shin spoke of, and also against a still bigger relative he did not mention. The names of these two offenders are Cooper's Hawk and the Goshawk, who will both be brought to the bar of justice at our next session. This court is now adjourned!"
CHORUS BY THE BIRDS

Swallows were perching on the same telegraph wires where they had met in May. Now it was September. There were Swallows of all kinds, both old and young, with whom a great many other birds stopped for a little chat.

“In a few weeks we must be off—how have you enjoyed the summer?” asked the Bank Swallow of his sharp-tailed brother from the barn.

“Excellently well! Times have changed for the better; not a single cat or rat has been seen in my hayloft all the season, and the window has been always open.”

“So you have changed your mind about House People?” said the Bank Swallow slyly.

“Yes—that is, about some House People.”

“I wish so many of the Bird Brotherhood did not leave in the winter; it makes me quite sad,” murmured the Bluebird.

“Yes. Stay-at-homes, like yourself and Robins and Finches, must feel very lonely without us,” said Barney kindly; “but I think likely these House People will scatter food about, so that at least you will not be hungry—that is, unless they migrate too, as the Catbird says they sometimes do.”
"Dear, dear! *Think of it, think of it!*" warbled the Bluebird.

"Zeay! zeay!" screamed the Catbird, flying up.

"N-e-w-s! N-e-w-s! The House People are to stay at our farm all winter! The man who owns this farm, the big girl, and the little girl and boy—and the mother and father bird they belong to—they are all down in the orchard, talking about it now—how they are going to something they call 'school,' over in the village, and how that boy who hops along on one leg with a stick under his wing is going with them."

"Did they say anything about the Bird Brotherhood?"

"No, but I heard them say that when the snow falls they are going up to those horrid dark Owl woods to see the foxes and little fur beasts—'Four-footed Americans' our House Man calls them."

"He gave me a better name than that," said the Barn Swallow, "one day when he was telling the children about the Brotherhood, over in the old barn. He looked straight at me and said a whole tree full of nice things."

"What did he call you? What did he say about the Brotherhood?" asked all the others, crowding around Barney.

"He said that I swept the sky free of evil insects, that I was patriotic in coming back to my birthplace to nest, and that I worked to pay my rent and taxes, and—"

"And what?" cried the others in excitement.

"He called me 'Citizen Bird'! He said *all* well-behaved birds, who have their own nests, and belong
to the guilds of the Brotherhood, are American Citizens and should be protected!"

"How badly the Cowbirds must feel!" said the chorus.

"Hip, hip, hurrah! for Citizen Bird and friendly House People!" drummed the Downy Woodpecker, beating away for dear life on a telegraph pole.

Then all the Swallows and Flycatchers began to dash about the air, whispering "Citizen Bird! Citizen Bird!" And the Bluebird flew down to the garden bushes to tell his winter companion, the Song Sparrow, all about it.
BEFORE dusk, on Thanksgiving Day, dinner was over, and the family had all gathered in Camp Saturday. Mr. Gobble, with his chestnut stuffing, proved so tempting that two small people even begged for a third piece, and every one agreed to have only a light supper before bedtime, and tell stories first.

"Is Turkey a real American, or did he come over with House People?" asked Dodo. "I suppose he did, because he's a farm bird and very cranky to raise, Rod says."

"Turkey is not only a true American, and the emblem of Thanksgiving Day, but our native wild Turkey is the great-grandfather of all the other Turkeys that live everywhere on farms."

The camp was quite in order now, for Dr. Roy had sent to various places for chests of odds and ends that had been stored away and almost forgotten. The board floor was nearly covered by the furry pelts of various beasts, while others were fastened against the walls, where some fine Deer's heads spread their
pronged and forked antlers, and seemed to wink their
glass eyes as the fire flickered, casting startling
shadows.

"Let's make mother a throne by the fire," said Nat,
drawing out the settle.

"This old woolly cow skin will mostly cover it," said Dodo, tugging at a bundle that lay partly un-
folded in the corner.

"Gently, gently," called the Doctor, coming to her
aid. "That 'old cow skin' is something that belongs
to the past which I could hardly replace. It once
belonged to a Buffalo—that one whose head is over
the window. Nat, take the other corner and we will
spread the skin carefully."

"It's a pretty big skin—bigger than any of the
beasts we saw at the circus; but I didn't know that
Buffaloes were rare," said Nat. "I thought the wild
West was full of them, and all the Indians did when
they wanted meat or a coat was to go out and kill
one."

"So they did once, my boy, and not so very long
ago."

"There is a picture of some in your animal port-
folio," said Dodo, "and in it there are lots and lots of
Buffaloes all over everywhere, more than all the cows
in the pasture down at the milk farm."

"What shall you tell us about to-night, father?" asked Olive, coming in, followed by the dogs. "How
will you manage about the stories; take the animals by
families as you did the birds?"

"No, I have another plan. In this portfolio are
portraits of our most famous American Mammals,
from 'big game,' as it is called, down to the smallest nuisance animal. You shall all take turns in choosing the picture you like, and then I will tell you its story, or, if I do not know it myself, you shall hear Nez, Uncle Jack, or Olaf for a change. Then when each story is finished, you must find the animal on the ladder, and see to what family and guild he belongs. Is it a bargain?

"Dodo may choose to-night, as she is the youngest. I will turn the pictures, for the portfolio is heavy."

"Did you draw all these pictures?" Dodo asked, as she took her place by her uncle, hardly knowing what to choose from among so many.

"No, indeed, the man who drew these knew the beast brotherhood as well as we know each other. In fact, they are so true that I think Heart of Nature must have stood beside him and touched his brush and pencil."

"There is a Gray Squirrel in here," chattered Dodo, "that looks so funny and real, just like the one in our hickory, that I knew it right away. All these animals seem to be doing something, too, not sitting round looking uncomfortable, waiting to have their pictures taken like some beasts in my reader. I can't choose, uncle; I like them all. Here are three cats' heads with no bodies; they must have as nice a story as the Cheshire Cat. I think I'll shut my eyes and take the first I touch," she said finally, and her choice fell on the Buffalo, or Bison as the Wise Men call it.

"You could not have chosen better, for from this story you will learn why I value that 'old cow skin' so much. I think, if we name our stories, they will seem more interesting. Let us call this one 'Monarchs
in Exile,’” said the Doctor, as he fastened the picture with thumb pins beside the map on the wall, “and I will tell you why the Buffalo was a king, where his kingdom was, and how he comes now to be exiled.”

“My!” said Dodo, studying the picture, “he looks like a great, wild, hump-backed bull gone to fur. Doesn’t the Buffalo belong to the cow family?”

Nat laughed, but the Doctor said: “Both the imported race of cows and this wild American belong to the Bovidae, which we may call the meat family for short, because all the members of it are good for food. The members of this meat family have their toes arranged in cloven hoofs, and wear pairs of hollow horns which, when once grown, last for life. They all chew the cud and are therefore vegetable eaters. You can easily remember that all of the meat family belong to the guild of Hoofed, Hollow-horned Cud-chewers.”

“Are not the horns of all animals hollow, and don’t they last for life, unless something breaks them?” asked Rap.

“No, the meat family have hollow, curving, rather smooth horns, that begin to sprout when the animal is a few months old, and continue growing until the wearer is fully grown. In the Deer family of cud-chewers these horns, or antlers as they are then called, are of solid bone, pronged, tined, or spreading. They are shed and grown anew every year, and the reason for this is very interesting—horns, prongs, and antlers being a whole story by itself. Now let me return to our Buffalo. First look at the head and hide, then at the complete animal in the picture. Can you imagine a more powerful or fierce beast?”
"No," said Nat and Dodo, promptly; but Rap hesitated a little and answered shyly:—

"He must be very big and strong, yet somehow he looks rather stupid, too, as if he wasn't thinking about much of anything. But then," he added, as if fearing to be unjust, "perhaps it is the glass eyes that make the head look so sleepy."

"You are perfectly right, Rap; stupidity was the chief fault, or rather misfortune, of the Buffalo. The foremost Buffalo in the picture is an old male; these males were often six feet high at the shoulder, and measured ten feet from the tip of the nose to the root of the tail, eight feet around the body just behind the fore legs, and weighed from fifteen to seventeen hundred pounds. Those we saw at the circus were born in captivity, and were much smaller. The ponderous head is shaggy, with a tufted crown between the curved horns that match the hoofs in blackness. The nose and lips are bare, but the chin is bearded. The shoulders and fore legs down to the knees are covered, as you see, with thick woolly hair, while the hair on the back parts of the body is shorter and more wavy. The hair varies in color and length on the different parts of the animal, ranging from yellowish brown to nearly black, and being from four to ten inches in length. Under the long hair and wool is a thick underfur, which grows on the approach of cold weather and is shed, or moulted, again before summer."

"Oh, what a mess the poor thing must get into when he moult," said Dodo, stroking the Buffalo robe. "He has nobody to comb him, and I should think he would all stick together and tangle. How does he
manage, uncle? Does he scrape through the bushes the way a snake does to pull off its old skin?"

"You have judged rightly; the Buffalo has a hard time with his coat, and only looks really respectable a very small part of the year. During four months he is well dressed, for the other eight he appears in various stages of rags and tatters. In October he is quite a gentleman, wearing a new suit of beautifully shaded brown and buff which he manages to keep fresh and bright until after Christmas. Soon after this the effect of wear and tear, storm and snow, appear in a general fading. You can easily see, however, that the Buffalo with his winter coat, added to a thick hide, could defy the weather even of the most open, wind-swept country, and must be one of the hardiest of our fourfoots.

"All this tells you how the animal looked. Next you must know why he was king of American fourfoots: it was because of his usefulness to the two-footed Americans—the Indians who lived with him in wood, plain, and prairie, but chiefly in the open plains. In the long ago every part of the Buffalo was of service to the wild people who had never seen a white face, a horse, or a gun. In fact, it is strange that this shaggy brown monster of the plain was not worshipped by the savages as a god; for during the last three hundred years of their liberty it was the Buffalo chiefly that made it possible for them to live. As long as the Indian had the Buffalo to supply his needs, he was independent and unconquerable.

"In the far back time, of which there is no written history, man had no other instruments of killing than
did the beast brotherhood, not even the stone axe, or bow and arrow, being closely akin to the wild beasts themselves, who were armed only with teeth, claws, and cunning. Man must have lived originally on fruits or animals weaker and less sure-footed than himself. In this struggle for a living the mind in man began to develop, and he shaped a club or a stone axe, made traps and then caught animals that gave him material for better weapons. What animal could give him more than the Buffalo?

"The hairy skin made warm robes and other garments, the hairless hides furnished tent coverings, bags for carrying food, and, later, when horses came, saddles, also boats, shields, rawhide ropes, etc. The sinews made the thread to sew the robes, the lattice for snow-shoes and strings for bows; from the bones were fashioned many articles of use and ornament; the hoofs and horns gave drinking cups and spoons, as well as the glue with which the Indian fastened his stone arrow-heads to their wooden shafts. Even the droppings of the Buffalo, when dried, were precious for fuel. These parts of the Buffalo would alone have made him valuable; but we have not mentioned the meat, the rich, nourishing, wild beef of North America. Think of the hundreds of pounds of food one beast would yield!"

"Wasn't it rather tough meat?" asked Nat. "That old fellow there on the wall looks as if he would have needed as much chewing as the gum Rod gave me from the old cherry tree."

"The meat of an old Buffalo bull certainly was tough, as the meat of any other old animal is likely to
be; but the beef of the three-year-old, or the cows, is as delicious as our best roast beef.

"Only a part of the meat was eaten fresh, the rest was dried in various ways and kept for further use; for the whole thought of the savage was given to self-preservation from two ghosts that crossed his path at every step,—his human enemies and starvation. Often the last was the more cruel of the two. So the Buffalo tongues were smoked and dried, the marrow from the bones packed away in skins, while all the titbits were pounded fine, mixed with melted fat, and sometimes berries also, to make a sort of hash more nearly like sausage-meat than anything else, which was called pemmican. When we think of the Buffalo, we must think of the Indian also, and if the Indian did much at last to send this beast brother into exile, he also has shared it with him."

"Have Indians and Buffaloes always lived in North America," asked Olive, "and if they did not, where did they come from?"

"Always is a long time, for when the earth was very young there were no people anywhere. I suppose you mean were the Indians the first people known to live here. Yes, and they may have been the very first people to live on this soil—a race by themselves. At any rate one of the first European discoverers to set foot on the North American continent found the Indian here and also the Buffalo. Strangely enough the first Buffalo described did not appear as a king of the plains, but a captive in a Menagerie.

"It was nearly four hundred years ago, when Montezuma II was Emperor of Aztec Mexico, that a Men-
agerie stood in the square of the Capitol. Among the other beasts in it was one called by an early writer a 'Mexican Bull, resembling many animals combined in one, having a humped back like a Camel, a Lion's mane, horns like a Bull, a long tail, and cloven hoofs,' — this beast was the American Buffalo.

"How he came to be there no one knows, for they were not afterward found to range so far south, but he was probably captured by some of the Mexicans on their northward expeditions.

"Between this first Buffalo of the Mexican Menagerie and the last (which one of you young people may live to see) stretches the history of this tribe that exceeded in numbers any other of the greater beasts of the earth. It reads like some wild legend or impossible fairy tale, yet it is all true and took place in the western half of our own country, and when the west wind blows fiercely around the farm, it has often swept over the very plains that were the Buffalo's kingdom. Whole books have been written, and yet have not told half the tale, which is in a way the history of the killing of all the great American fourfoots as well.

"The Buffalo's history is in three acts and many scenes. First, the golden days of peace and plenty, the rightful killing for food, with laborious hunting, a fair fight between man and beast. 'Take what ye need to eat,' said Heart of Nature to man and beast alike.

"Then the white and red men joined in the pursuit; fleet horses were used in the chase instead of men's feet, bullets killing from afar replaced the arrows shot at close range. Not merely meat to eat or hides for covering, or reasonable trade, but waste and butchery. Skins
traded for whiskey, — the skins too of cows and their young.

"Last of all came the railroads, bringing the white hunter with his deadly aim into the last retreat of the herds. These three acts will show you the living, the hunting, and the butchering of the Buffalo.

"At first the Buffaloes ranged over all parts of North America where they could find suitable pasture. See, I have made lines on the map to show you how it was found in two-thirds of what are now the United States, living in western prairies, forest-park land, the plains, and far up on mountain sides, being found in the Northwest up to the land of snow. Buffaloes, as you know, are cud-chewers and, of course, grass-eaters, though when pushed to it they will eat sage brush, and for this reason they were obliged to move about during the year more than any other fourfoots, except one kind of deer; those in the south going north as summer dried the grass, and the northerly herds leaving their summer pasture before heavy snow falls. Buffaloes usually moved several hundred miles south as winter came on, and in these annual migrations great numbers lost their lives; for often the vast herds would make this journey on the full run,— stampeding, it is called. Pushing blindly along, masses of them fell into quicksand and over cliffs, or broke through river and lake ice."

"What made them stampede? Was not that very stupid of them?" said Nat.

"Yes, but like most animals who live in flocks or herds, and people who live in thick communities, they were both curious and stupid — what one did they all
did. You know if Nanny Baa starts to run all the other sheep follow her,—where, it does not matter to them."

"Yes, and I've noticed that they all try to get through the same hole in the wall, or pack tight into some little corner."

"The grass was best in the valleys along the watercourses, and you would expect the Buffaloes to stay in such places; but they were stupid even in their search for food, and wandered out on the dry plains where the grass that bore their name was turned to standing hay by drought and heat.

"The Buffalo had no private life; his time was spent in a crowd from the time in spring, when as an awkward calf he found it difficult to keep up with the herd in its march, until his life was ended either by rushing with the stampeding herd into an engulfing bog, or, if straggling from the herd, wounded or feeble he fell a victim to the grim gray Wolves who were as the Buffaloes' shadows, following them ceaselessly.

"The fact that the Buffaloes grazed far and wide made their daily march to the watercourses a ceremony of great importance, and their kingdom was furrowed deeply by these trails worn by innumerable feet as they all followed their leader to the chosen watering-place."

"How did they choose their leader?" asked Dodo.

"Why, the strongest bull, of course," said Nat.

"No, on the contrary, the leader whom they trusted was often some wise old cow. When she gave the signal, the feeding stopped, off they all marched, perhaps miles across country until water was reached,
always, in spite of their stupidity, choosing the safest
and most direct route to the desired spot."

"How did people find that out, by watching them?"
asked Rap.

"Partly, but their paths or trails were cut so deep,
sometimes two feet, in the clayey ground, that they
remain to this day. You see in the picture the Buf-
faloes are coming down a trail, and with them is
another king of the plains,—the sand-colored sluggish
prairie Rattlesnake. Big as the Buffalo is, he does
not care to pull the leaves from a tuft of curly grass if
he sees one of these snakes near it. Nature evidently
whispers to the Buffalo very early in life: 'The little
horney knobs on your head will surely grow, a lap for
each year: at three you will carry sharp spikes; at ten
polished black curved horns; at twenty, if you live so
long, gnarled, furrowed stubs,—yet do not be proud,
remember that gray Rattlesnake coiled in the dust
carries in his mouth two fangs as deadly as your fiercest
charge. Be friends; do not dispute, but share your
kingdom with him.' So they lived together, but the
snake has outlasted his brother king."

"I shouldn't think then that plains would be nice
places to stay," said Dodo.

"They are not," said Olive, decidedly.

"You are thinking of my story about the time I was
belated, twenty years ago, and had to camp on the
ground instead of coming on to your mother at the
ranch," said the Doctor, laughing.

"Did snakes chase you?" asked Nat.

"No, but the spot where we were obliged to make
camp was full of their holes, and our horses knew i
and were uneasy; yet they were utterly spent, so we had no choice but to rest and picket them. We stopped up the snake holes with hot ashes from our fire, which by the way was made of Buffalo chips or droppings, spread a hair rope or lariat in a circle inside, while we put ourselves on rather than in our blankets."

"Why did you make a circle with the rope?" asked Rap.

"Because one of our party, a scout, said a Rattlesnake would never cross a hair rope, so we put it there to please the man."

"Did they cross it?" asked all the children together.

"No, we started in the morning on our search for water before a single evil-eyed snake had wiggled out, but I thanked the ashes, not the magic rope."

"Isn't the water rather warm and stale in these water holes? It usually is in such places here," said Rap, looking at the picture again.

"Of course it is! Dearie me!!" exclaimed the Doctor. "You youngsters would not even know it for water. Wetness is the only thing it has in common with the poorest puddle on the farm. Much of the water of prairie and Bad Lands is a cross between green whitewash and pea soup. Sometimes the lime, of which it is full, shows white and crusty round the pool edges as early ice does here. But to return to our Buffalo procession.

"If it was a warm day they would often take a roll in the pools after drinking, and you can imagine what a spectacle a woolly Buffalo would be after such a bath in a mud puddle."

"How could they like to be so dirty?" said Olive,
who, in spite of her love of everything wild, was as dainty as a white kid glove.

"They had a practical reason: the mud dried into a crust that kept the insects from driving them wild. From doing this frequently, and turning round and round as they wallowed and splashed, many of these pools were shaped into sort of deep, round bath tubs, as a potter shapes a clay vessel with his thumb. In fact, Buffaloes were so fond of rolling to scratch themselves, that they also rolled head first in earth and sand, as well as water, and in time their horns came, in this way, to be worn and stubby. An English traveller, early in this century, wrote that in Pennsylvania, before the Buffaloes had learned to fear people, a man built a log house near a salt spring where many Buffaloes came to drink. The Buffaloes evidently thought the house would make a delightful place to rub and scratch, for history says they actually rubbed it down!

"Before they learned the dread of House People, and the necessity of keeping constantly on the watch, the Buffalo's life was much like that of the great herds of domestic cattle that now range the same prairie pastures. The calves frisked and played, the herds had their times of rest, of plenty and of scarcity, though the Buffalo was a difficult animal to starve, and faced out blizzards before which the domestic cattle would turn tail and perish. This was one great reason why he should have been protected, and this magnificent monarch kept in his kingdom and developed to suit present need. The Buffalo was able to withstand all the natural dangers, of cold, hunger, and prowling Wolves, to which he was exposed,
and still increase and multiply. They made good fathers, too, taking the young calves under their protection, sometimes hustling them along through the Wolf packs with horns lowered and tails raised, keeping the calves well inside the flying wedge. Their vitality was so great that, if in falling over a precipice after some foolish run, a leg was broken, its owner was quite able to go about on the other three until it knit again. This is the first scene,—the golden days of the Buffaloes,—when they swarmed by hundreds of thousands like mosquitoes over a marsh. These were the days when the red men had no weapons sufficient to kill them.

"Listen to what came upon the Buffalo in the second scene, in the days of fair hunting, this time beginning we do not know when and lasting until threescore years ago."

"How many is a score, more than a dozen?" interrupted Dodo.

"A score is twenty."

"Are there two kinds of scores?" persisted Dodo, "for you know, Uncle Roy, a baker's dozen is thirteen, and a dozen postage stamps is twelve, and down at the store they sell sticks of candy by postage-stamp measure."

"A score is no more nor less than twenty," laughed the Doctor; "but do not lead me away from our second scene. When the Indian had no weapons, he could slay only small game, and even when he had only a club and stone axe to help him the killing of the thick-skinned, wool-clad Buffalo must have been a difficult task. Do the best he could, the red man had to work
desperately hard for every pound of flesh or hide he captured.

"Then the mind of man began to develop and aid him. The Indian, knowing the Buffalo's habit of stampeding from fright, laid stones, sticks, and brush on either side of some open space to make a sort of drive-way, wide apart at first, but gradually narrowing until it ended either in a sort of pen or at the edge of a precipice.

"After a herd was located, and this in itself was not always easy, a disturbance was made to start it running in the right direction. Perhaps a man went out and waved his arms, retreating down the driveway as the first of the herd came near to look at him. The curious animal would quicken his pace, and as soon as he was fairly started the Indian slipped behind the barricade and joined with his comrades in shouting to frighten the herd that were now following their leader at full gallop.

"On the mad throng rushed, crowding and trampling each other as the track narrowed, until, when they arrived in the pen, they were giving each other mortal wounds, the calves tossed on the horns of the old bulls and the weaker trampled to death. Then, amid great personal danger, the Indians rushed in and killed those not already wounded, with stone axes, or in later days shot them with their flint arrows. You can see that it must have taken a strong arm to send a clumsy stone arrow through the thick Buffalo hide. If the animals were driven over a cliff and fell crippled at the bottom, the killing took place there in the same manner as in the pen. After the slaughter, the men discussed various
scenes of the affair as if it had been a battle between tribes, and the women came in, skinned the animals, cut up the meat, packed it on their wheel-less dog-carts, and took it to camp."

"How can there possibly be a cart without wheels? It would only be a box that would bump and spill," said Dodo, who had kept quiet an unusually long time for her.

"This Indian cart, as wheel-less as the Eskimo sledge, is called a travois, and is still in use among the scattered tribes, except that now it is dragged by horses. Can you imagine how it was made?"

"Oh, I know what it is; we saw it at the Wild West Show! Don't you remember?" shouted Nat. "The thing like a pair of cross-legged shafts fastened to the horse's back, with the big ends trailing on the ground, and braces across right behind the horse's back knees, to keep it together and make a place to hold things!"

"Yes, that was a travois, and it is possible to drag it over ground that would quickly break cart wheels. Some time after, when the civilized races or House People came to America and settled along the coasts, the horse found its way among the Indians. He came with the Spanish through Mexico in the South, and from the Canadian French in the North. Soon an Indian's wealth began to be measured by horses, as we measure ours by dollars. Indians mounted on half-breed horses followed the Buffalo over the plains, with greater success, for, as the old range of these animals in the East and South was being peopled and cultivated, the Buffalo crowded westward, as the
Indians themselves were soon to be crowded from their hunting-grounds. This was the beginning of the end, though it took many years yet to drive the monarch from his kingdom.

"Act third came, passed rapidly and with it the Buffalo. Firearms, from musket to pistol, were plentiful, and then followed the deadly, long-range rifle. Stupid greed fell upon the Indian and white settler alike. No one listened to the warning cry, 'Take what ye need to eat.' It was not only flesh for food and hides for covering, but hides for sale, and cow hides at that, with no respect of season. The Indian found that much deadly fire-water could be bought for Buffalo skins, and also that the hides of the females and calves were the softest and most valuable.

"So then the massacre began; for it was outright murder to kill the females and young. Whites and Indians went out to kill, as an army prepared to manoeuvre, surprise, trap, and give no quarter. The Buffaloes were chased by men on horseback, who shot with pistols, as more easily used with one hand, and were also shot at from ambush with the long-range rifle, so that the poor bewildered things, often seeing no enemy, did not know in what direction to escape, and huddled together helpless victims. Still they held their own and increased until the last scene of all took place; and it seems to me that it was only yesterday.

"A railroad stretched its iron arm across the country,—it was the Union Pacific. Have you ever seen the ants rush out of a great hill that has been disturbed? Could you count them?"

"Oh," said Rap, "I've seen them often, and you
could no more count them than you could drops of
water in a hurry."

"Well, so it was with the Buffaloes; there were
never any large fourfoots on earth to equal them in
numbers, and even in my day we have true records of
a single herd of no less than 4,000,000 head. A friend
of mine once, riding on a train, passed for more than
one hundred miles through a single herd. It was dan-
gerous, I can tell you, for the trains, and they often
had to stop to let the Buffaloes pass by. At this time
the Buffaloes were then in two great herds, the north-
er and the southern. Then these began to melt away
as great snowballs do in the sun. Railroads meant an
easy way to reach the Buffaloes, an easy way to trans-
port the skins; for it was the skin more than the
meat that was desired. The engine whistle sounded
the exile of this monarch, and for ten years his kingdom,
shrinking and shifting, was a battlefield strewn with
skinned carcasses. Next, the horns were gathered, and
finally the bleached bones themselves were carried
away to be ground into fertilizer, and thus make the
obliteration complete.

"During a few years more there were stragglers here
and there, and, in 1890, when I was going westward
from the Black Hills in Wyoming, I shot the beast
whose head and skin we have here now. I said, 'I
will take this eastward when I have a home again, that
my grandchildren may believe that such beasts lived,
and that their grandfather knew them on their native
plains, for by that time this king will be in exile.' It
has all happened sooner than I thought.

"Now a few, a mere handful, twenty-four perhaps in
all, live wild in the Yellowstone Park. A hundred more are scattered here and there in kind captivity, where they may live for some time, but lose their type and spirits like the captive Indians. Now you may travel the plains from New Mexico north and see no other trace of the Buffalo than a weather-beaten skull,—the perch for a burrowing Owl, or the retreat of the other king, the Rattlesnake.

"As the Buffalo vanished, the Indian as a freeman vanished also; his wild beef is gone and he is given rations in begrudged charity. Once both Buffalo and Indian might have been developed to useful citizens; now, if we succeed in preserving either race, it will be only as captives. The kingdom of each is destroyed, and the people of this land are not blameless."

"It's a very sad story, and I'm afraid the left-over Buffaloes won't like it very well even in the new Zoology Garden," said Dodo, attacking the word bravely, but missing it. "Any sort of land with a fence around it must seem crampy for them. I'm very glad, anyhow, that I saw those at the circus."
"ILL you please choose one of the dog family?" asked Rap the next Saturday, when it was Nat's turn to select a picture for the story.

"Yes, I meant to choose this one—the Wolf," said Nat; "and the picture looks as if a story really belonged to it."

"'A Trap' is printed on the picture," said Dodo, "but I don't see any trap, unless the Wolf is caught in one and can't move."

"Wrong, quite wrong, missy," said the Doctor, settling himself by the fire, after taking a couple of skins from those hanging about the walls and spreading them before him on the floor.

"Listen, and I will tell you the story of the great Gray Wolf, whose picture you have here, and also about his little barking brother, the Coyote."

"It is sure to be a good fierce story," said Dodo, "because Wolves gobble people, you know. When you lived far away, were you good friends with Wolves, uncle?"

"Our American Wolves are not man-eaters as some
of their Old World brothers are thought to be, but saying that I am a friend of Wolves and know all about them — that is quite a different matter."

"A Wolf has no friends; he is hated by twofoots and fourfoots alike. As for knowing all about Wolves we may know some things and think we know others, but the comings and goings of a Wolf are as mysterious as the track of the wind itself. They move from place to place so suddenly and so swiftly that it would be easy to believe they flew on the storm, as witches were said to do on broomsticks."

"Why do you say that some Wolves in other countries are thought to eat people — don't you believe they do?" asked Nat.

"They may sometimes, but it is best not to believe all that is said about animals; for there are a great many of what Rap calls 'boast stories' floating around, especially about Wolves. The Wolf is one of the easiest animals to see doubled and hear quadrupled. One may believe that a whole pack is outside the tent, bent on tearing you limb from limb, or swallowing you, sleeping blanket and all, when it is really only one mangy starveling, sniffing about for scraps of bacon or a bit of venison you have cached a little carelessly."

"Cashed!" said Nat. "I thought cash was money. How could you make money out of meat, uncle?"

"Cached, with a c, means hidden. It's a word that came from the French, round by way of the Canadian voyageurs. It is in common use in camp talk; a cache is a hiding-place. The Gray Squirrel, instead of caching his nuts all in one place as a Red Squirrel does, puts each one in a separate cache."
TIMBER WOLF.
"Oh, yes, I can understand that," said Dodo.

"When the Squirrel goes to find a nut, he plays cache-cache then, for that is what French children call hide-and-seek," said Olive, laughing.

"Wolves all over the world bear very much the same character. The Wolf is an emblem of deceit and cunning. A Wolf, in the legend, ate Red Riding Hood's grandmother and tried to trick the child herself. When it is said of people, 'They have hard work to keep the Wolf from the door,' it means that want, or some trouble as cruel and cunning as a Wolf, is threatening them. The Gray Wolf, whose skin (the larger of the two) lies there on the floor, is, next to the Grizzly Bear, the most cruel and desperate of our fourfoots. Yet he is a coward; if he were not he would have given battle to the death to thousands of the pioneers who, as it was, struggled inch by inch in face of desperate dangers to settle this country. Why the Wolf is such a coward no one knows; but, fortunately, he is, or his race would not yet have been driven back until even the sight of a Wolf, except in a part of the West from Texas to North Dakota, is a great rarity."

"If this old Wolf skin could only tell what it knows, the story would not be a dull one. Look at it there, with its long bristling gray and black hair, brindled with traces of an under-color of yellowish brown at its base. The under-fur is soft brown, while on the belly both hair and fur are white. There is a bit of buff also about its face, ears, and flanks. See its black whiskers, the slantwise eye holes, pointed ears, and straight, bushy tail.

"The body and head are both long. This Wolf
must have been four feet and a half from nose tip to root of tail. Ah, yes, you handle the empty skin freely enough; but give it life, let the strong white dog teeth snap in its jaws, the bright eyes gleam, and its long-drawn howl come from the black lips, and you would not stay near it long. If it only could speak!" said the Doctor, pausing and looking at the fire.

"Wough-ow-ow owou-ough," sounded a weird voice outside the door. "Wough-oble-oble-oble-ough-o-u-gooow!"

"Horrors, what is that?" cried Olive, startled from her usual calmness.

"It's Wolves!" screamed Nat and Rap.

"A whole pack, but they’ve come for bacon scraps, they don't want us," shivered Dodo, trying to seem brave.

Even the Doctor was a little startled, but the suspense only lasted a moment. It was broken by a ringing laugh which, even before he came in, they all knew belonged to Mr. Blake.

"Oh, daddy! daddy!" said Dodo, "I didn't know! How can you be such an intimate friend of Wolves that you could cry their cry, when uncle says they have no friends?"

"I'm not sure that I am a friend of theirs either," said Mr. Blake, throwing himself down on the wolf-skin rug; "but I've been among them where they live, and have heard their talk, and have seen their work."

"Tell them your story of this Wolf skin, then," said the Doctor; so after thinking for a few moments, Mr. Blake began:

"Every one knows the name of Wolf. This animal
is sometimes called Gray Wolf, and the Wise Men now say Timber Wolf; but the simple word Wolf stands for both cruelty and cunning. His family history, from the time the white men came to settle in this land, is full of dark deeds and darker punishments. The Indians repeat many tales about him, and tell how that long ago the Wolf ate of the meat of knowledge. This meat was the flesh of the great wide-eared, hornless Deer who is no longer living, but who was so wise in his day that he taught the winds how to blow. Whoever among the four-footed should take one of these Deer by fair hunting, and eat its flesh, won great wisdom for his race, with keen eyes to read hidden sign languages and a nose to scent every message of the wind.

"The Bear only licked a bit of this magical meat; this brought it cunning and stupidity. The Fox, being too small to hunt it, nibbled at a piece he did not kill; this gave him cunning, together with the penalty that he should be hunted by the beasts of his own tribe. The Puma seized a piece of flesh another beast had hidden, and so was given cunning and a sure, swift leap, but heavy paws that weigh in running. Then a Wolf slew the last wing-eared Deer of all, not by fair chase, but by trap and treachery, so that the Deer in dying branded the Wolf a coward.

"'Hunt and be ever hunted,' he shrieked. 'Hunt with hanging head and tail; hunt treacherously with wile and snare, for you will have great need of cunning. An enemy comes from far across the seas, who walks upright as Bears walk, having a moon-white face, in one hand carrying fire, and in the other the fine white
earth that kills, and he shall likewise devise magic wands to spring and hold you fast.

"You will wage war together, this man and you, but he will conquer. And as a punishment for your way of killing me, you shall fear to kill him, for your real name is Coward!"

"So after many years the white men came from over seas and settled, though at first there were but few, and the Wolves still roamed at will about the country—from the land where the snow never melts, down through the woods and plains to where the Rio Grande runs slantwise through the country and the prickly Peccaries and cacti live. The northern Wolves were large and grizzly; but those in the hot south were smaller and had thinner fur. Wolves wore handsome robes in those days, and had as many names as Bobolinks. They were called White Wolves and Black in the northwest, Red Wolves in the cactus country, and Gray Wolves everywhere.

"There were some smaller Wolves, who were less savage and less swift of foot than their brothers, more doglike and talkative, who babbled the secrets of the tribe and liked to hang about the homes of House People, rather than live in woods or caves. The larger Wolves disliked them, because they were afraid lest they should tell tribe secrets; so they turned these small ones out to be a tribe apart, to feed on meaner game, and snatch and steal in open places.

"These small Wolves were given charge over sheep, Jack Rabbits, and such timid things, and men called them Coyotes (ground burrowers). But the Coyote is

1 Strychnine.
also a cunning huntsman, and lays his own traps and chases Antelope on the plains; yet to-day there is hatred between the two tribes, and, if a hungry Timber Wolf meets his little brother, he will often eat him!

"Look at that Coyote skin on the settle; you can see it is of a finer texture than this Gray Wolf robe. It is softly furred, a dark ripple running from head to tail and across the brindled shoulders, it has white lips, a rusty face, and a black tip to the tail, and measures a full tail length shorter than this Gray Wolf's pelt. The Coyote is little more than a vagabond wild dog, who barks and howls around the edges of settlements, licking his lips when a lamb bleats or a cock crows.

"When the Buffalo herds blackened the plains, the Gray Wolves lived by following them, snatching the calves or killing the wounded and feeble old ones. Then great bands of Deer, Elk, Antelope, furnished them with food at all seasons; for Wolves with their spreading feet could follow these heavy, sharp-hoofed beasts over the deep snow, through which they sank, and, spent and overcome, soon became the Wolves' prey.

"As the country was settled, the Wolves crept back; for whether the Indian's tale was true or not, a spell seemed to prevent their killing men. Gun, trap, and poison were all turned at the Wolves, who were also chased with dogs; but still they worked mischief among horses, flocks, and herds, and still the cry among the frontiersmen was 'Wolf! Wolf! how shall we destroy him?'

"Wolves have another fault besides sneak hunting, they break Nature's law, 'Take what ye need to eat,'
and kill in times of plenty as if for the mere greed of killing, snatching a bite here, a fragment there, then wasting all the rest. They also have one virtue, which is common enough among the birds, but rare in four-foots,—they love their mates; and a friend of mine who knows Wolves as well as we know people, tells a story of the fiercest, slyest Wolf of all the southwest, who, in despair at having lost his mate, rushed headlong into a trap.

"The home life of the Wolf is very short. His house is only a hole under some roots, or a sheltering cave, which covers half a dozen little woolly puppies in the late spring. Then the Wolves are happy, for it is the season when the Deer are fattening on the young grass and wear soft new horns. From this time follows six months of good living, then half a year that is a war with famine. Wolves do not sleep the lazy winter sleep like Bears, but hunt in packs, plotting to make a living like human thieves. If it had not been that long ago they ate the meat of knowledge, they would be gone and no one would understand the cry of Wolf! As it is, there are still many of them in the northwest grazing country, and they increase here and there mysteriously from Texas to North Dakota even if men continually hunt and harry them and Deer are few; for if bread fails them, they relish cake, by which I mean to say that, if they can't find venison, they are quite content with veal and mutton.

"All fourfoots understand the speech of scent, more or less, but Wolves certainly are wise with uncommon wisdom and have a wonderful sign and scent language. If one of the tribe dies of poison, the others will not eat
food scraps in that place. Does a Wolf of some other tribe run by, driven by fear; he may not be even seen, but he writes in his track and stopping-places the message that he wishes other Wolves to know. Every hair that bristles on a Wolf's back has its own meaning.

"Now listen to the story of this Wolf, whose skin is on the floor. He and his mate hunted together, often dashing at a horse or Deer, tearing its running sinews from behind, with their sharp teeth, or sometimes picking up a calf that ran beside its mother, always having good eating. Often they would find a Deer's trail, running from its day cover to a spring, or to its dainty wood pasturage. The Wolves did not wish to run together openly, for Deer are very swift, and would lead them a weary race, so they would sniff the night wind and get before it so that it might not tell their doings to the Deer. The wind is fickle, an enemy to all hunters, always carrying along the latest gossip. Then one wolf would lie hidden by the runway, while his mate would show herself openly, and drive the Deer, at first gently, then fiercely, until it would run blindly in a circle (a habit of the family) to its first cover, past the very spot where the other Wolf lay like a living trap; one spring brought down the Deer and then the pair feasted at leisure."

"Oh, then that is what 'A Trap' means on this picture. The Wolf was a trap for the Deer," said Dodo. "But how did the Wolf come to die and be made into this rug?"

"Bad days came soon after to the pair. The she-wolf vanished, House People cleared the timber from
that place and shot most of the Deer to feed themselves. The next winter was bitter cold, and yet the snow was not deep enough for our Wolf to chase and overcome what Deer remained. So he prowled too recklessly about a camp, and one night stepped into a trap that gripped his leg, that hind leg that you see now wears no foot. The Wolf struggled in vain to pull himself away, and then with awful bites gnawed himself free, leaving his foot fast in the trap.

"Soon he grew hungrier and hungrier; he could find no food. Then, being desperate, he said, 'I would even kill a man!'

"Early the next night he stole down to the camping place, but he found no one there, and the campfire was nearly out. Wolves do not like fire — and he thought, 'Surely this is my chance, perhaps they have left some food,' so he stalked in as boldly as his mangled leg allowed. Then he stopped, for he scented man! Soon he went on again, for stretched in the corner lay a bundle in a blanket, — a man, but hurt and helpless.

"The signs said, 'This man went out hunting with his friends, he lost their track, he fell and broke his leg, his gun is buried in the snow, he crawled back alone to shelter.' Then again the signs whispered to the Wolf as he hesitated, 'Kill him! He is yours. He set the trap that robbed you of your foot.'

"The Wolf growled defiantly and crouched beside the bundle, waiting until it should give some sign of life to give the rending bite. The bundle moved and raised itself, fixing its eyes upon the Wolf, look for look!

"The Wolf glared, but saw in those two human eyes a light that never is in the eyes of beasts. His breath
blew coldly back to him, he shivered, for in his heart he was a coward. He longed to bite, and yet he did not dare.

"The sleeping fire outside, that marked the camp, shot out a flaming tongue. The Wolf started, crouched, fearing to pass it. Then scenting on the wind that other men were coming, he slunk out and, not stopping to read the signs, seized a lump of meat, bolted it, and ran until he reached the wood edge.

"The tramp of many feet bent the ice crust, hurried words came from the camp, mingled with the cry of Wolf! and the crash of logs. The fire leaped high. Fire also burned within the Wolf; then came the end — the scrap of meat that he had swallowed held the fine white earth that kills!"
UCH wind and threatening weather, then two days of falling snow that buried the fences, and at last the northwest wind sent the clouds scurrying, and bright sunshine returned with the day before Christmas.

"It is like the pictures in a fairy story; do look at the trees and the top of the rose arbor!" said Dodo that Friday morning, as she rubbed a peep-hole in the frost on the dining-room window. "Rod is breaking the road up the hill, and all you can see is the top of his head, and Tom and Jerry step in up to where their blankets are strapped. It's lucky we had the Christmas tree cut down and waiting in the shed before the snow came."

"It isn't in the shed," said Nat, mischievously, coming in with dancing eyes and a very red, cold nose, the only parts of his face that could be seen between his muffler and cap brim.

"Oh, where is it?" wailed Dodo. "Do you think
any one has stolen it—was there any trail in the snow?"

"Yes, some one has dragged the tree out; I saw the footprints and marks of the branches!"

"Do let's go and tell Uncle Roy, or it will be too late to cut another."

"Nat is teasing you," said Olive. "Father and Uncle Jack are the thieves, for I see them dragging the tree round to the camp now."

Bang! went the door, and the dining room was empty.

The tree touched the ceiling and was fastened to a beam with wire to keep the top steady, while the stand that held it was so prettily covered with moss and pine needles that it looked quite like the ground where the spruce grew. Pine knots would have been the proper lights for a camp Christmas tree, but Dr. Roy was so afraid of setting the old dry beams afire, that he objected even to candles, and so Mr. Blake had sent to the city for a number of tiny electric lights that would twinkle in safety.

Nat and Dodo helped twine the beams with evergreens and hang the decorations on the tree, but no more. They would not for worlds have peeped at even the corner of a present, they were so fond of being surprised. In spite of the temptation to go outdoors, they were too much excited to care for making snow houses, or throwing snowballs, and kept in a perfect fidget until three o'clock, the hour when Rod was to take the big sleigh to the depot to meet the party from the mountain.
“They are coming, they are almost at the corner, for I can hear the bells!” cried Dodo. “Now they’ve stopped!”

“They are waiting for Rap and his mother, you know the sleigh was to call for them. Here they are!” shouted Nat, dashing down to the gate,—“that is, all but Toinette!”

Sure enough she had not come. “Got bashful at the last minit,” said Nez; “allowed she’d better stay home and keep house along with her brother who’s winterin’ with us, but they’re goin’ over to the Ridge to-morrer to keep Christmas Canady style with some country folks o’ theirn. Reckon they’ll see their Christmas candles in church!”

This was a very long speech for Nez, and he immediately retired to the barn with Rod, looking as if he was afraid of a real house with carpets and curtains.

Olaf took some oddly shaped parcels from the bottom of the sleigh and carried them to the stoop, driving Phonse and Dominique in front of him like a pair of balky geese; but they soon felt at home and began to talk when they had been introduced to the dogs and saw Mammy Bun preparing supper.

“I think those long bundles look as if they might hold show-shoes,” said Nat to Olive; “but what is in that green bag, I wonder?”

“I have brought my fiddle,” said Olaf, as if in answer to Nat’s question. “Your father said to me: ‘Olaf, I have a banjo; bring your fiddle and we will make music together.’”

Olaf often spoke slowly, as if he thought in his own
tongue and turned the words to English as he said them, yet always using good language.

The children began the entertainment of their guests by showing them everything on the farm, from Sausage up, and had only half explained the wonder room when the bell rang for tea.

“The little boys have brought funny knit nighties and nightcaps with red tassels,” whispered Nat to Dodo, as he returned from showing the Brownies — as Olive called them — their room and had helped unwind some of their wrappings.

Supper was a rather mixed, but very merry, meal. Olive had difficulty in keeping Dodo from asking the Brownies why they preferred fingers to forks, while Mr. Wolf and Quick saw instantly that something unusual was in the air and roved about the table trying to snatch scraps, something that they had never before dreamed of doing. But then if Christmas comes but once a year, having a party of two Brownies, a real live woodsman, and a Fin who knows a Dream Fox, is rarer yet.

The men went out in the clear starlight for a breath of air and to smoke their pipes. Rap’s mother helped Mammy Bun in washing dishes and making the kitchen neat, so that by eight o’clock everything was in order for the march upon Camp Saturday.

“Isn’t it nice?” said Dodo to the Brownies; “eight o’clock is go-to-bed-time on common nights, but Christmas eve it is the very beginning, for daddy says we may stay up until ten!”

The Brownies, however, did not understand much about time, for they usually went to bed whenever it
grew dark. While they all stood waiting for the sign to be given for opening the camp door, a scream came from Mammy Bun, who was already inside.

"For de Ian' sakes, Massa Doctor, come hyar right smart! Billy Coon, he am in der tree eatin' eberyting! I tink he hab bit one o' dem fancy lights, shor' nuff!"

The waiting procession immediately stampeded. Fortunately the tree was fastened at the top, or Billy's fat body would have overturned it and wrought dire mischief. As it was, he had only eaten a few lady apples and a candy cane, so he was driven into a far corner, where he sat devouring a string of popcorn that caught round his neck, for the Brownies were delighted to see their old friend, and the children all begged that he might not be banished.

The tree lights twinkled in earnest, and made such a blaze that the Brownies blinked, and an hour was spent in exploring the branches of the tree after the ground had been gleaned of the larger gifts. If this was not a story of fourfoots, I would tell you all about the presents,—the names of the bicycles that Olive, Nat, and Dodo received, of Rap's bird book, Mrs. Blake's soft sealskin jacket, the Brownies' toys, Olaf's carved pipe, and Nez' knife that had a blade for everything and one extra. I must not even whisper about these things, except to say that the snow-shoes were there; but hurry to the story that Olaf told as he gazed from the tree to the campfire, listening now and then, as if his words came from the wind outside.

"Who shall choose the pictures to-night?" asked Olive. "It is Dodo's turn to-morrow, but this is an extra evening."
“Let Olaf choose for himself,” said the Doctor. “He has a story in mind and knows what he needs to illustrate it.”

Olaf took six pictures from the portfolio; the first three were of a Polar Bear, a Caribou, and the Musk Ox, a shaggy, brown beast with drooping horns, that looked half sheep and half Buffalo. The other three were of Sea Lions, Seals, and a Walrus.

“They are all strange, far-away, cold country animals,” said Rap; “just the right sort for a winter story.”

“Mine is a tale of ice and snow, long nights and short days, of a country whose north border sleeps in the twilight a third of the year,—if it were not so the people would be sightless from the snow blindness,—a land of hunger and cold, of sore famine, and then brutal hunting. We may call this place Fur Land, and it lies under the Polar star and is the place where the white Bear rug and sealskin jacket are at home.”

“Please, Olaf,” interrupted Dodo, “if you know about this far-away, cold country, can you tell if the Reindeer that Santa Claus drove have any American cousins, and why children never see him driving over the roofs or coming down the chimneys any more?”

“Yes,” said Olaf, hesitating a moment; “those Reindeer have cousins living with us. They are called the Caribou, and grow of two varieties,—one short-legged and stunted, that tracks the treeless Barren Grounds, and the other here pictured, the Woodland Caribou. But ‘why do children no longer see the good Santa Claus?’ That question has a sad, sad answer, coming from unfair hunting, which drives so many fine things
out of this land. Think you Saint Nicholas will bring his magic Deer here for men to shoot with their long-reaching guns? He knows their cruel hearts too well, and keeps away so that no man, pointing to a row of antlers over his chimney-piece, may say, 'Those are the horns of Santa Claus' Reindeer; I myself shot them all with a single bullet!'

"Come then, whistle to our Woodland Caribou to take us to this Fur Land, but do not be impatient; he has far to journey to us.

"He has his home in the woods, upon our northern borders and on into the British Kingdom, as far as trees
grow to give him shelter. In summer he loves cool marshes, where he feeds on plant roots and fresh tree buds; in winter he journeys to high ground and paws the snow away to find grass, moss, or lichens, so he is always restless, moving about more than his stunted brother of the Barren Grounds, and we must often look far and wide to find him. Ah, he is a fourfoot built to stand the cold, and shod for snow striding! Look at his picture. See the strange antlers, both palmed and tined, branching downward as gnarled old trees, no two pairs growing quite alike. Even the female Caribou, or, as she is called in this tribe, the cow, wears small, spiked horns. See his long, stout hair that makes a thatch like straw to keep the wet and cold out of his undercoat. He is not pretty, this Caribou; ah, no! his face and neck look faded, and he is at best a dingy sort of brown with a lighter colored rump. His tail is lined with white, and, when raised, becomes his signal flag of danger. See the foot gear he wears; is it not wonderful? Two hoofed, spreading toes, curved inward, with two more behind, all edged with stiff hairs. When he plants his feet his hind legs bend toward the ground, making long snow-shoes such as no other deer wears. The palm-horned Moose, the largest of our deer, sinks in the snow, and after much running, falls exhausted. The Elk, the king of all his tribe, has small, sharp-edged hoofs; but this, the third from the largest, the awkward Caribou, wears such snow-shoes that, if he were tamed and trained, he too, like his Reindeer cousin, would be a useful beast of burden in our bleak, north country.

"He does not come; whistling will not bring him;
we must go without him, for we cannot wait. Perhaps, as he sheds his great antlers near Christmas time, he feels shy and helpless. I will call the 'Day-Dream Fox' to guide us. Look well at the map while we are travelling open eyed, for he leads the mind in minutes, where it would take the feet long months to follow.

"Go up through our plains to the British countries, where the great company of Hudson's Bay catches fur for half the world, and the Beaver, Otter, Sable, Mink, Wolverine, and Silver Fox still flourish,—on across Assiniboia and Saskatchewan. See, we find the names of fourfoots everywhere: Bear Lake and Reindeer Lake, while curving from the Rockies toward Hudson's Bay we cross the Caribou Mountains."

"Did you learn American geography when you went to school 'way up in Finland?' asked Dodo, "or did you learn it by walking over the country?"

"I learned a little even then, and much more afterward, and I have lived in this North Country for three years. Beyond the Caribou Mountains we come to Great Slave Lake, and from there up to the water's edge we are in the Barren Grounds. Barren of trees, of everything but fiercest Wolves, the White Fox, Musk Ox, Caribou, and a few grim Bears who wear changed faces from their grizzly mountain brothers, through living in this bare wilderness. This place is like a battle ground, where Wolf kills Ox, Caribou, and Fox, while the Indian, when he ventures up so far, kills all these in turn.

"There I can fancy the Musk Oxen standing in a herd of twenty or more, packed closely for defence, frightened by scent of blood, as if wild dogs or Wolves
surrounded them. If it were spring, I should know that the young calves were there inside the protecting ring. What are they watching? One of their herd in terror sniffs and paws the ground where a Wolf has dragged some bleeding meat, like the ox in our picture. This beast, though called an ox, is really more like a great sheep, measuring over four feet at the shoulders."

"How is it more like a sheep?" asked Nat.

"The Wise Men say that its teeth are like a sheep's, and its feet like those of an ox," said Dr. Roy, to help Olaf, who knew what he had seen, but not so much about the bones and building material of animals. "He has, you see, an ox's nose, but his horns curve strangely downward. His brown robe is longer and thicker than the coat of any other of our fourfoots, quite covering his short sheep's tail. The hairy coat is almost two feet long, while underneath, packed closely to the body, is a fleece blanket that falls away in summer."

"I see his funny, turned-in, hairy, snow-shoe toes, and he has a bit of a Buffalo's hump," said Dodo, after looking at the picture. "How queer it is to find that such strange beasts belong in our America!"

"Yes," said Dr. Roy, "and, what is more, with the exception of Greenland they live nowhere else but in North America."

"Does the Musk Ox make good meat, like the Buffalo?" asked Rap.

"Oh, no, very poor meat, coarse and tough, with the rank flavor of musk that gives this ox its name. Only Wolves and starving Indians care to eat it. The skin is tough and serviceable enough if you can get it off without tearing."
"What does the Musk Ox eat?" asked Nat.

"Moss, wiry grass, and lichens, a scanty living dug from beneath the snow with the hooked horns, or scraped up with the hoofs that do double service in digging and helping the ox climb rocks, and also to run swiftly over slippery ground. The cud-chewers fare poorly in the Northlands. Where the prowling flesh-eaters can feed upon each other, the grass-eaters often go hungry, and all the beasts of the Barren Grounds are flesh-eaters, save the Caribou and Musk Ox.

"Now we go further north and reach frozen sea edges. Round these ice-clad borders prowl the Polar Bears, following the ice downward as it creeps to open sea in winter, and going north again in summer, seldom coming twoscore miles inland, like the coast-loving Eskimo himself.

"What is he made of, this great, clumsy, half-ton mass of flesh, clothed in thick, yellow-white fur from nose tip to point of claws? Clothed? — no; padded is the better word, for his long neck and small head grow from a rolling bale of fur on legs. This White Bear sleeps on ice and soaks in ice water, never dreaming of the cold. Can he be warm-blooded flesh? But yes, he is. The she Bears bring forth their young in icy caves and harden their cubs to swim with them in icy seas, and to follow their parents while they track and hunt down their Seal and Walrus meat, or shuffle along the shores to feed upon dead Whales.

"A great hunter is this Bear, quick of tooth and claw; he stalks the Seals as men do, stealing behind them when they come upon land, seizing them when they turn to hide in their water-holes. Over all the
POLAR BEAR AND SEAL.
lands and seas of ice this Bear is king of fourfoots. Of man, too, he was king, when man meant only the Eskimo armed with a knife and spear. Then Bear hunting was dangerous indeed,—blow for blow, tooth against knife-blade, arm of muscle tipped with long claws against brittle harpoon. Now a long-range rifle, keen eyes, and a steady hand, have turned the peril from man to Bear, and soon the great hungry beasts will have left the Arctic twilight as the Bison left the prairie. Snow may be her bed, but the she Bear's heart beats warm and lovingly for her cubs,—or rather cub, for she usually has but one,—and she will let herself be killed before man or beast may touch it.

"Tramp, tramp, tramp, go the Bear's feet through the snow, leaving the even-planted print of heel and toe, as a man's foot does. Now follow them round Hudson's Bay, across the north coast, turning southward down Alaska. Then crossing Behring Strait, go on to where ice floes go through the chains and dots of islands to the Pribilofs, where in summer there are no nights and in winter moonlight is daylight, the islands where the sealskin jacket lived when it was at home, for I can guess that this jacket was once the covering of three bachelor Seals!"
IX

A SEALSKIN JACKET AT HOME

E now leave dry land, though when one follows the Polar Bear over the caked ice, who can tell if it is earth, rock, or frozen water that lies underneath.

"The tribe of fin-footed watermen (Pinnipeds) live on the frozen sea edges and islands from Labrador around the north coast to the Pacific Ocean. The Polar Bear spends the chief part of his time on the land, going in fishing and swimming for pleasure; but these watermen pass most of their time in the water where their food is, floating with drifting ice floes, and hauling up on the islands to rest for a time in summer when their cubs are born."

"Why do you say hauling up?" asked Nat. "Haven't these beasts legs, and can't they walk? In my spelling book it says haul means to pull or drag."

"It says rightly," answered Olaf, "for these beasts drag themselves when on land, and their legs are not as the limbs of Deer or Bear, but flippers set deep in the flesh, shaped half like the fins of a fish. To see them it seems impossible that they should move at all, either
in water or on land. Four kinds of these fin-footed ones I know, for two of my three cold northern years I lived where they are killed. Pah! it was a cruel country, reeking with smells, and mine was a loathsome living.

"These four watermen are named the Walrus, the Sea Lion, the Sea Bear or Fur Seal, and the Harbor Seal. Of these the Walrus is king, if size and ancient name make royalty. Back in the legends of my country this 'Whale Horse,' as he was called, of the Atlantic coast is pictured, and one was taken to good King Alfred's court by Othere, the Viking. What they thought of it I do not know, but those were the days when men believed the sea peopled with monsters and saw mermaids riding on the waves, and fashioned the Unicorn upon their shields from memory of that spikenosed Whale, the Narwhal, that they had doubtless seen stranded upon some northern beach. But no dream beast could match the Walrus in homeliness.

"Look at the picture of this lump of fat, flesh, and bones — it is the giant of the coast, those on the Pacific shore growing larger than their Atlantic brothers. Is he not monstrously ugly? Twelve feet and more from nose to rump, twelve feet and more in girth. The huge wrinkled neck supporting a small head with small eyes and two long tusk teeth, while the rough whiskers on the snout look like seaweeds clinging to a water-mossed rock. What has the beast to help him either swim or walk? Four limbs so deeply sunk in flesh and skin that you see only five-fingered hands, wearing skin mittens. These serve well for paddles, and their owner can rest almost upright in the water, floating easily, for
all about his chest and neck are layers of oily fat or blubber, which make a life raft of him, while his thick, tough hide, scarred with wounds from rocks, harpoons, Bears' claws, and the tusks of rivals, keeps him from growing water soaked and chilly. He is warm blooded, and yet able to stay under water half an hour at a time without coming up to breathe.

"How does he feed this great body of his, and lay up the layers of fat that draw his hide in creases like seams in rocks? By digging clams and water roots, scraping mussels and other shell-fish from the kelp beds with his tusks, and he also uses these tusks as hooks to help in pulling himself over the rocks and shoals of the summer breeding-grounds."

"Why doesn't he eat seaweed?" said Dodo. "I should think it would be a great deal of trouble to open clams enough to feed such a 'mense thing!"

"All of this tribe of Pinnipeds, as the Wise Men call them, live chiefly on animal food," said the Doctor, "their teeth showing them to be flesh eating or car-niv-o-rous, but Olaf will tell you that they do not stop to open the clams—they are not so dainty in their fishing as the Crows!"

"No, they swallow them by the bushel, shells and all," continued Olaf. "If it hurts them or not, who can say, for they tell no one their secrets, but it may be that they are complaining when they cry and roar, as they do at all times of the year, with a growling honk that might be the call of a wild goose goblin. Sometimes in the spring and early summer, the season of cool fog on the northwest breeding islands, I have stood on a cliff and could not tell by sight alone if it
ATLANTIC WALRUS.
was ocean all about me — then I would hear their honk below, different in key from the roar of the Sea Lion.”

“Aren’t they awfully fierce beasts to meet?” asked Rap.

“They look fierce, and when killed with spear or harpoon may give the whaler or Eskimo some scars or crush him by rolling their ton weight on him, in their terror to get back from land to sea. But that is all, and how can such a piece of clumsiness long escape extermination if he is hunted persistently with the rifle?”

“Are they good for much?” asked Nat. “Of course you couldn’t use that ugly skin to make fur coats, and daddy says that the oil from wells in the ground is easier to get nowadays than animal oil.”

“We could do without them well enough, but they mean food and clothes, heat, light, and life itself to the poor Eskimos. Even with the Walrus, life to them is not easy; without him it means awful, slow starvation. Listen to what the Walrus gives. First of all, his coarse meat is the Eskimos’ beef, their only change from fish, for many of them live out of the range of Bear meat and dare not venture through the Barren Grounds for the Musk Ox. Walrus meat is eaten fresh and also packed away as food, for all the year. Its oil gives him light and fuel also in that treeless land.”

“Oh, then the Eskimos have oil stoves, the same as we do!” cried Dodo. “I wonder if they make the choky, smoky smell that the one does in daddy’s dressing room?”

“They burn the oil without the stove, and the smoky smell is very, very large,” said Olaf, spreading his
hands wide apart and wrinkling his face as if he re-
membered a very bad smell. “Next to the oil in value,
comes the hide. When it is stretched and well dried
it makes a fine cover for boats, that is stronger to stand
the sharp-edged ice than any wood could be; the hide
also serves to make harness for the Eskimo’s sledge
dogs. The strong sinews of the back make thongs for
bird and fish nets, boot laces, and thread for sewing
boat covers and clothes. The gullet or throat is used
for boot legs, with the flipper bottoms fitted on for
soles. The intestines, which are perhaps sixty feet
long, are cut in strips, and when stretched and dried
are sewn together to make the waterproof clothing that
these people wear in their fishing and hunting.”

“Oh, dear, how much the poor Eskimo women must
have to sew!” murmured Dodo, “and what long seams;
I’ve seen Mammy Bun take those wormy looking insides
out of a chicken, and even they were ever so long!”

“The tusks, though of a poor quality of ivory, serve
many purposes, not the least of them being to trade
away for such iron and steel articles as the Eskimo
needs but cannot make. Now you can well understand
how he could not live long without the beast that yields
him so much. But greedy people, who have many other
ways to make a living, do not think of this, and fit out
steam vessels that can go everywhere, with guns that
kill from far, and take from the Eskimo his all.

“This Walrus is a first cousin to the Sea Bear or
Fur Seal of the jacket, and we must go down the
Behring Straits to catch him in his home. Down past
the St. Lawrence and St. Matthew Islands, the Walrus’
summer haunts, we come to the Pribilof Islands,—St.
Paul and St. George, — where I spent those two years of much disgust!"

"What does Pribilof mean?" asked Nat. "It sounds as if it might be the Indian for pretty-far-off"; whereupon Dodo laughed in great glee and said, —

"I shall always call those the Pretty-far-off Islands, for it is a true name for them and much easier to remember than the other. I missed that last week in my geography lesson!"

"Pribylov was the name of the Russian explorer who discovered this group which now belongs to us," said Dr. Hunter; "his ship the St. George giving the name to one of the islands. These islands were too far off shore for Indians to reach them, so that the Sea Bears and Sea Lions lived there in peace until the coming of civilized people a little more than one hundred years ago, but since then the cry has been, 'Kill! kill! kill! — bulls, cows, cubs, everything!' — the Buffalo's story again, but this time carried out to sea until the poor, persecuted water brothers are the cause of dispute between nations, and it seems that soon nothing will be left of them but the very bones of contention!"

"Wasn't it awfully cold on these islands, Olaf?" asked Rap.

"Not so cold as on the mainland, far less cold than you would think, for the warm Pacific current flows around them. In midwinter, it is true, ice floes come from the north and hush the song of the surf on the beaches, yet it is not so keenly cold as it is here. With June comes summer, for there are no half seasons like your spring and fall. In winter there are no days, in summer no nights."
"It seems quite right, too," said Nat, "for in a place like that there can't be many leaves to spring up and fall down again."

"Summer is the season of cool fogs and mists that shield the Seals from the sun and keep them comfortable while on land. In fact, the summer weather is like your autumn season."

"Then it is no wonder, as one story says, that the Seal tribe, ages ago, going from its Antarctic home on a swimming excursion, should have found these islands a pleasant camping spot and passed word of it to all their relations," added Dr. Roy.

"What do you call the people on these islands, Uncle Roy?" asked Nat — "Eskimos or Indians?"

"They are Aleuts, one of the lowest northwest tribes of Indians and akin to Eskimos."

"Now," continued Olaf, "picture to yourself a fine, full-grown male Fur Seal as he comes up on the land the last of May to select the square of shore he wishes for his summer home. He is not more than five or six years old, which is the prime of Seal life. He is more clever than the Walrus, moves more easily, and measures about seven feet from tip of nose to where his tail would be, if it had not forgotten to grow. At this time, fresh from the feeding-grounds, he is fat and should weigh five hundred pounds. His head is small, but the eyes large and speaking. He wears a long mustache, but it is of bristles and not like that of the Walrus, and he has a way of closing his nose and ears in swimming to keep water out. The neck is long and the shoulders are thick, and he is a better shape, not sloping so much aft as the Walrus. His fore limbs are
merely a pair of black gloved hands, but his hind feet are wider, like a drawn-out human foot spread at right angles from its body. He uses these fore flippers in walking quite like legs, and, though he shuffles along, does not cling and crawl like the Walrus. His hind flippers propel him through the water like paddles.

"The male wears two coats, like most fur beasts. One of shining, strawlike over-hair, the other the soft under-fur we see in jackets. At the first glance you would say that this Seal is dark brown in color, with some white or grizzly hairs. The female is much smaller, not measuring more than five feet. She is less clumsy and of more graceful shape. Her head is well formed and she has gentle, lustrous eyes. Her skin, when wet, varies in color from beautiful deep gray and
whitish underneath, to an ashy brown mantle and buffy belly, when dry.

"From early May until the middle of June the Seals come from their winter feeding-grounds and haul upon land. The males come first, each striving for the place he likes best and fighting fierce battles with his rivals to secure it. Thus it happens that the strongest Seals keep the best places near the water's edge, and the weaker are driven further inland.

"When the females come in late June or early July, only a day or so before their cubs are born, there is fierce war, each male Seal seizing the mates he wishes to come and live in the square of ground he calls his house, lifting them as if they were only so many kittens. Thus it happens that those strong ones near the shore secure a houseful, while those far up have hard work to find even one mate. Then there is always a herd of roving bachelors, young Seals and those who have no homes or mates, who go together in a separate place to spend the summer. The law holds that these bachelors are the only ones that should be killed for fur, and that no guns or dogs shall aid in their killing. If this law had been kept, then would the tribe still hold its own.

"The fur of this Sea Bear must be taken in June or July, before the winter coat is shed, or in early autumn when the new coat is fresh, for the law says these animals may not be taken on American ground between October and June."

"But suppose people follow them and kill them in the water and shoot the females, too, — what happens then?" asked Rap.
“Trouble,” said Dr. Roy. “Trouble between nations, unwise, angry words in the newspapers, and the killing out of Seals!”

“If Seals may not be chased with dogs or shot at, how are they caught?” asked Olive.

“They are driven up to the killing grounds, as pigs or cattle are driven to the slaughter house!” said Olaf, “and in this way it is done.

“The bachelor Seals, who are chiefly those under five or six years old, live by themselves, and lie near the water and sleep soundly, but in the homes or rookeries there is noise and tumult all night. These bachelors sleep on the beach, one close to the other, like rows of tiles upon a roof top. Down go the drivers, native Islanders, and take their stand between the water and the Seals, who, being awakened and seeing the men between them and the water, start landward, thinking to escape, and so are driven up to the killing places near the villages, where the Seal families will not be disturbed by them.”

“Isn’t it very slow walking?” asked Dodo.

“Yes, very; for though a Seal can run a few yards, he can walk safely only half a mile an hour, and the drivers must be careful not to hurry the Seals, or the heat makes their fur drop off and spoils the pelt.”

“If a Seal is driven too fast he gasps and has to stop and fan himself, for Seals have no sweat glands to cool off the blood, and can only perspire by panting, like dogs,” said Dr. Roy.

“Care must be taken not to kill very young Seals also. A Seal’s skin is best when it is three or four years old, after that it grows uneven and ragged. The pelt
is taken quickly, as soon as the animal is dead, lest it heat and the fur loosens. Is it ready then to make a coat? Ah, no; it must be dried and sent away for skilful hands to pluck out the long rough hairs that cover the soft fur, and then they dye this under-fur to the soft color that you know, the color of that jacket that has in it the pelts of three Seal bachelors. Of the killing of the Seal I will not speak, only to say that I could not harden myself to it and so I came away.

"Meanwhile what happens in the rookeries? The male Seals roar and fight among themselves, the young are born, and the cows go daily to the sea for food, sometimes staying all night and leaving the sucklings hungry, for the cows are poor mothers, not caring much for their cubs. The males are brave, however, and fight most fiercely to defend their homes. So jealously are these homes guarded, lest any rival should touch their families, that the males will not leave to go down to the sea for their food, and so they stay on land and starve all summer. In the autumn, when housekeeping is over, they are thin and wretched, having used up all their fat, like the Bears at the end of winter."

"How strange," said Olive, "the Bear goes without eating in winter and the Seal in summer!"

"They suffer greatly in hot weather," continued Olaf; "you may see them lying on their sides fanning themselves with their hind flippers, or find the females, as soon as the young have learned to swim, sleeping in the water with only their nostrils out. This habit of floating and sleeping makes them an easy prey for Sharks and the fierce Killer Whales. Even on land
the Seal sleeps so soundly that I have crept up and pulled his whiskers before he awoke. In August the homes break up, all is in an uproar, and the 'choo-choo-choo' call of the female sounds loud above the surf, though it is December before the last male has left for the winter feeding-grounds.

"The Fur Seal's brother, the Sea Lion, haunts these same islands, though he is hunted elsewhere with Otter spears and guns. He is useful chiefly to the natives of the Aleutian Islands, giving them all that the Walrus yields the Eskimo.

"The California Sea Lion looks much like a male Seal, but his neck is straight and thinner and his front flippers are cased in mittens without even a thumb, while the Seal, you see by the picture, wears short-fingered gloves. This Sea Lion wears no fur, but is covered with short hair, which varies in color with the season from yellow to dark brown. His voice is a deep lion's roar that can be heard above the storm, and his food is almost like the Seal's,—fish, shell-fish, crabs, and a few sea-birds. His flesh is not bad eating, and the fat and blubber are without the evil smell that makes the Seal so sickening to handle.

"This Sea Lion is shy, keener of eye and ear than the Sea Bear, and must be hunted by moonlight, the driving season being early autumn. When the Lions awake suddenly, like the Seals they start to escape the way they happen to face, some going seaward, the others being slowly driven up to the villages, for they can only creep and hobble along, and they have none of the cleverness of the Fur Seal. These also we will leave at the killing grounds; to follow them would only
sadden you. But we know at best they are useless to us, and trouble the Fur Seals by worrying them and disputing their breeding grounds, so the Aleuts are welcome to them.

"Another waterman there is that, even now, you may see for yourselves some day about a rocky harbor or river mouth. He wears hair and no fur, and he is the true Seal, not the Sea Bear. He is, or was, common to all coasts, and has many names,—Sea Dog, Hair Seal, Common Seal, or Harbor Seal."

"Harbor Seal is the name that Wise Men prefer," said Dr. Roy; "and when my father was a young man these Seals haunted the rocks of New York harbor in great numbers. Robbins Reef, that we have so often passed, Olive, was called after these Seals by Dutch sailors, robyn meaning Seal in their language."

"I knew not that," said Olaf; "but in spring they herd about Newfoundland, having their young in May and June, but going to the warmer sea islands in
winter. They are beautiful little Seals, with dull yellow skins, often handsomely mottled with black, such as they cover trunks with in my country; and among the Greenlanders it is said the women love the skin above all others for making trousers.

"Do savage women there wear trousers, the same as some women do here when they ride bicycles?" asked Dodo, much to her uncle's amusement.

"I have not seen those savages here," said Olaf; "but up in the north land women must dress much like men, or they would surely freeze.

"The Harbor Seal cow has a gentle, half-human face, and a better heart than the Fur Seal. She is a kind mother also to her single cub, protecting and loving it, and grieving if it dies. These seals are shy beasts, too, and are never caught in great numbers, even though their flesh makes the best seal beef. They lead lonely but happy lives, catching sea-birds and fishing and sporting in the water with their families.

"Now we will leave these watermen and hurry back home across country lest the 'Day-Dream Fox' grows sleepy and the real Dream Fox finds us far from home, and we have to lie out in the snow like the Polar Bear."
THE BEAVER'S STORY
(AS TOLD BY HIMSELF)

BEAVERS are strangely wise animals," said Dr. Roy, the evening that Nat chose a Beaver picture, "and the best way to give you a glimpse of their habits and homes will be to read you a Beaver's story of himself."

So saying the Doctor took some sheets of paper from the table and asked Nat to bring a lamp, for they usually listened to the stories by the fire-light alone.

"Who wrote this story?" asked Dodo, "for of course a Beaver can't write, at least, I mean, in our language," for she had come to believe that animals can do almost everything. "Is it your writing, Uncle Roy, or is it daddy's?"

"Come and see for yourself."

"It is nobody's writing; it is printed with a typewriter machine," said Olive. "I suppose Olaf would say that the Dream Fox did it."

"No questions answered," laughed the Doctor. "No matter how the story found its way into words, or if it sounds like a fairy tale, I can promise that every word
of it is true. If you doubt it, you may ask the very first Wise Man you meet.

(A Beaver leaves his Work to chat a Few Moments in the Moonlight)

"I am a fourfoot of a very ancient family and one of the oldest of Mammals. Land and water both desired to own me, so Nature planned me to be shared by both, giving me the fore paws of a land animal and the strong webbed hind feet of a swimmer.

"As I sit on this low bank and look at my reflection in the pond, it seems to me that, though I am a decidedly remarkable and intelligent beast, I am very plain, or, an ill-natured person might say, ugly in appearance. My body is about three feet long from my nose to the beginning of my tail. I slope fore and aft, humping up in the middle like a haystack. My long claws are of the pattern given to burrowers, from the Badger to the Gopher, and my four gnawing teeth, of a strange design, are curved and powerful, the lower two being five and the upper pair four inches long. Yet they are set so deeply in the jaw that little more than an inch of them is seen, like tools that are braced deeply in their handles to give extra strength. The outside of these teeth is of a stronger texture than the inside, which causes them to wear down toward the back, giving them the cutting edge of a keen chisel.

"Look at my tail! It is nine inches long, and in the middle half as wide as its length; it is a flat, scaly paddle, in fact. You shall see how it serves me as a rudder, a danger signal, and a mason's trowel.

"The color of my fur coat is usually reddish brown,
tinged variously with yellow and sometimes veiled with black. My under-fur is all plain brown, about half an inch long and soft as a Seal’s. It was this fur that led my race into trouble, and caused us to be so popular with trappers that we were killed out from about the rivers and ponds where House Children might have seen our lodges and runways as freely as they do those of the Muskrat. Our soft, even fur made fine Beaver hats; our pelts were strong and elastic—they made good gloves; our tails were layered with fat—they made good eating for the Indians. Once we were so important that the great Fur Company of Hudson’s Bay stamped our name upon a coin for a sign of value, “1 Made Beaver.”

“So we were trapped in and out of season, cruelly and wastefully, young and old together, until we are but a small tribe, and in all this wide country we inhabit but a few solitary spots, and so you do not know us.

“I am a wonder to the Wise Men, and there are many things about me that they cannot understand. According to their ways of measuring and judging, I am low among the Mammals. They find that I have a small heart and lungs, that I breathe slowly, have no skill as a hunter, and prefer to live on harsh vegetable food, such as the bark of soft-wooded trees. They look at my teeth and put me in the tribe of gnawers,—the family of Rats, Mice, and other nuisance animals. But when they come to watch me at my work, and see that I am a wood-chopper, architect, engineer, and mason, they are indeed puzzled, for they say: “A Beaver has a small, smooth brain; people who think have wrinkled brains. How comes this, for a Beaver thinks and plans?” Then
Beavers at Work.
the Wise Men confess that I am the most interesting animal on the whole Mammal tree (except man himself), and that they really know very little about me. The Indian, who knows all our ways, holds us more highly, weaving many stories about us, welcoming us as pets in the lodges, and loving us as House People love their dogs.

"Now you know how I look. I will tell you how and where I live, beginning with the springtime, in May, when every industrious pair of Beavers who own a home burrow and a woodpile, have, maybe two, or maybe half a dozen little Beavers in their house. As you know, we live about ponds and watercourses, and our summer homes are made in this fashion: Finding a good bank of clay or loam, by a favorite stream, we look for a place where the soil is braced by tree roots. Then we dive and begin a burrow under the water, going up into the bank, cutting through roots, and rolling out stones, until we have made two chambers,—an outer one for food, and an inner one above the water level for a living room, with a place for air to come in at the top among the tree roots. You may wonder why our doorway is always under water. It is so that we may swim out and not rise to the surface near our home, showing enemies where we live. Does not the Ovenbird slip from her nest, and, running through the underbrush, make her flight at a distance, for the same reason?

"A few weeks after our young are born they begin to gnaw soft bark, and then they soon join us in our wood-cutting excursions. The trees we love best for food are those with juicy bark, like the yellow birch, cotton-wood, poplar, and willow. If we are very hungry,
we can eat walnut, ash, and the harder maples; but we
do not relish them, and we sometimes use lily roots and
grass for salad. It would be wasteful merely to gnaw
the bark around the trunks of trees, besides this is not
as tender as the bark covering the branches; so, as we
may not climb, nothing is left us but to fell the trees.
Then we select a tree a foot or more in thickness, and
begin our cutting from each side, upward and down-
ward, our teeth making short, chisel-like grooves, hew-
ing out wide chips. When the tree falls we run, and,
diving, swim to our burrows lest some enemy should
hear the noise and catch us at our work.
""When all is quiet, we come out again, and like
good craftsmen begin to chop our wood in lengths to
carry home. We cut our fagots, measuring by their
weight instead of length, so that a thick limb will be
chopped in strips a foot in length, a thinner one two
feet long, and so on, for we know how much a Beaver
may carry easily. The wood is then taken to the store-
house of the burrow. The thick pieces we roll along
down the bank perhaps, holding them between paws
and chin in swimming, which we do easily, using our
tails as rudders to guide us with our load. The smaller
twigs we hold in our mouths, the ends trailing over our
shoulders to the ground. If any logs are hard to move,
we often use our tails as levers to pry them along, and
our tails also help us to lift up in our arms the great
stones, which we often have to move in building.
""When the right trees are near our water homes,
all goes well, but sometimes the near woods are all
eaten or otherwise destroyed. The water from the
ponds often runs back and floods the lowlands where
we have cut down all the trees, making it so wet that no more trees will grow; and rich, tall grass springs up, covering the decayed stumps. House People call these places Beaver Meadows. We do not like the wood of evergreens, and so often we have to search far away from water for our food, and after the trees are cut, they must be carried a weary distance home. We have two ways of doing this: one is to make a straight pathway by felling everything that would interfere with us; the other is to dig a canal between ponds or streams and, letting in water, float our wood home, as House People float their logs from lumber camps to sawmills.

"Having made our canal, three feet wide and as many deep, we must arrange to keep the water deep enough for our work. Deep water is a "must be" in the Beaver world, whether in canals or in the ponds and rivers. The water must be high enough to cover the doorway of the burrows."

"Next comes our work as engineers, for we have to build dams to keep the water back and make it stand at the exact depth we wish.

"House People have all seen the dams that keep the water in their mill ponds; but we build longer, better ones than theirs, sometimes perhaps they may be only a few feet in length, but at others many hundred. Often we begin by interlacing growing bushes with sticks, filling the gaps with stones and mud on the water side, then adding sticks from time to time below, until we have made our barrier strong enough. At other times we build over fallen trees, and raise a dam from them of almost solid mud, strengthened with tree boughs. We are never wasteful, and seldom use fresh wood for
this work, but save the sticks from which the bark has all been gnawed for all our building. Another thing we do,—we curve our dams up stream. Do you know why? If you were trying to push something, or some one back, would you stand straight up, or would you bend forward to meet the strain, and thus gain added strength? You would bend, of course, and so we bend our dams to push the waters back. We may be stupid and clumsy and ranked with Rabbits and Rats; our eyes and brains may be small, but you must see by this that we are rather clever at thinking.

"All summer we feed and work and play, making and repairing dams and felling our wood by night, but sometimes stopping to be idle, and rolling and basking in the sunlight. We are ever on the watch, however, even in play time, our keen ears catching the faintest sound of warning, and our alarm signal is far reaching. Our sentry has but to dive, bringing his flat tail with a quick, sharp blow upon the water, and the noise is echoed far and wide. Spat! spat! spat! go the tails of all the Beavers in the region as they disappear. Even when we lie sunning ourselves, we are on the alert, for it is Beaver law that when at rest every pair must lie facing each other so that, one looking each way, nothing may steal up unawares, and if we are suspicious even, we rise up on our haunches and listen to catch every breath.

"In September the serious task of cutting winter wood begins. We do not sleep the winter sleep, so we need food in plenty and better shelter than our bank burrows, for we live in places where ice and snow have a long season. Once in the far back, perhaps, the
climate was not so cold, but the Wise Men say that we American Beavers have been building dams and winter lodges for thousands of years, and they can prove their words by digging and showing you our ancient earthworks. How we came to need our island lodges is a legend in our family, but one that Heart of Nature will not yet let us tell, lest no one should believe it.

"'Each Beaver family has its own lodge, for though we are sociable we do not approve of hotel life, and at most, several families may have lodges in the same pond. We Beavers know the places where warm springs, deep from the earth, feed the ponds, and near these spots we make our buildings. Starting from some sunken island, we begin our heap of sticks, building a thick mud and wicker wall and arching poles to support the roof of a living room, which is some half dozen feet across and well above the water line. This lodge has two entrances below water,—one for the family and one for food wood.

"'Before ice and snow stop our tree-cutting excursions, every Beaver household moves into its lodge and has a sunken woodpile close at hand, from which the daily provisions can be taken by swimming under the ice. We Beavers can swim a half mile under water without rising through the breathing holes. You may wonder why, in the cold countries where we live, the ponds and rivers do not freeze to the bottom, or sudden thaws drown us out. In the first place, we make our dams the right height to give us the exact depth of water we need, and nature guides us where to build near the warm spring holes that keep the ice thin, and the heavy snows also helping us by shutting out the cold.
Then, if we see a freshet coming, we make a gap in the dam to let the water off, or if it rises too quickly, as sometimes in early spring, we swim for refuge to our summer bank burrows. Sometimes our woodpile grows water-soaked and sour, and we are glad when a thaw lets us cut down a fresh supply; but usually our winter life is happy and comfortable, for here in this spot no trappers may come to harry us from our homes.

"Our children stay with us until they are two years old, so each lodge harbors, besides the parents, the eight or ten children of two seasons. We are affectionate among ourselves, but are bound to keep Beaver law, which says that the young of every lodge, when fully grown, shall go out, find mates, and build lodges for themselves. Also, that they shall always go further down stream than their old homes. Down stream means the building of new dams and extra labor, which is most suitable for those with strong young teeth. The older Beavers, when they need new lodges, may go up stream to easy quarters; for as a Beaver grows old, and toward the end of his fifteen years of life, his teeth are dulled, and he cannot cut wood so easily for house and dam building. Beaver law despises laziness and says no Beaver shall steal from another Beaver’s woodpile, and the penalty for such a theft is death! The Indians know these laws and how well we keep them. Often in a long cold winter, when all our bark is eaten, we gnaw up the hard wood itself for food, or pinch and starve rather than break the law.

"Each pair of Beavers are rulers in their lodge, building and repairing their own dams unaided except by members of their families; for sociable as we are, we
neither live nor work in colonies. If our young do not choose mates the first season that they leave us, they may come home that winter, but not again. Afterwards they must join the wanderers and those Beavers who, having lost their mates, refuse to take another. Thus our lives go on,—hewing, storing, planning, building, and repairing, unless trappers break up our peaceful homes.

"'I who tell this story live on Lost Creek, which runs through protected land, where no trap may take me, and I am fat, happy, and content. I have a mate who is a clever tree chopper, and we are now building, raising our dam a foot or so, and mending places where our mischievous cousins the Muskrats have poked holes; sometimes they even try to share our lodges with us, like the impudent rats they are. We must deepen the water around a new lodge that we shall finish to-morrow; its roof poles are of poplars from the nearby bank, the sides are braced by willow and poplar basketwork, and I have beaten the mud covering hard and smooth with my flat tail. Our lodge has a broad entrance for wood also, where the cuttings will not stick when carried in, and a large dry room for my family of nine young and half-grown Beavers who helped me with the work, thus learning how to hew and build the lodges some of them will have to make for themselves next season.

"'Yet in spite of all this work of mine, the Wise Men say, and think they prove it by my body, that I am but a slow, lowly Mammal, no huntsman, and a cousin of Rabbits and Rats, with a small smooth brain that has no business to think and plan. I prove by my own works that I have both thought and judgment, and I wish that you could visit me and see my work yourself.
“‘Hist! the alarm beat comes down river! Beaver law says dive and strike water with your tail in going; so travels the signal through the moonlight. I hear a crashing in the brushwood—now my turn comes! A good evening to you!’ (The Beaver dives.)

“Splash! not a Beaver within sight. The September moon shows heaps of sticks and black water, while a restless Moose, seeking its mate, wades along the pond edge drinking and snatching mouthfuls of water-lily stems that will be soon cut down by the frost, then bellows a joyful answer to a faint call from far up the river.”
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