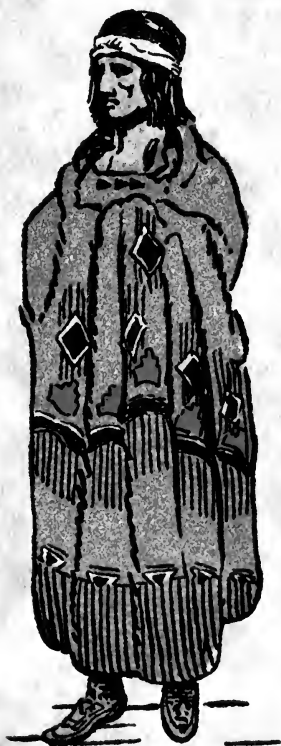


LEGENDS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



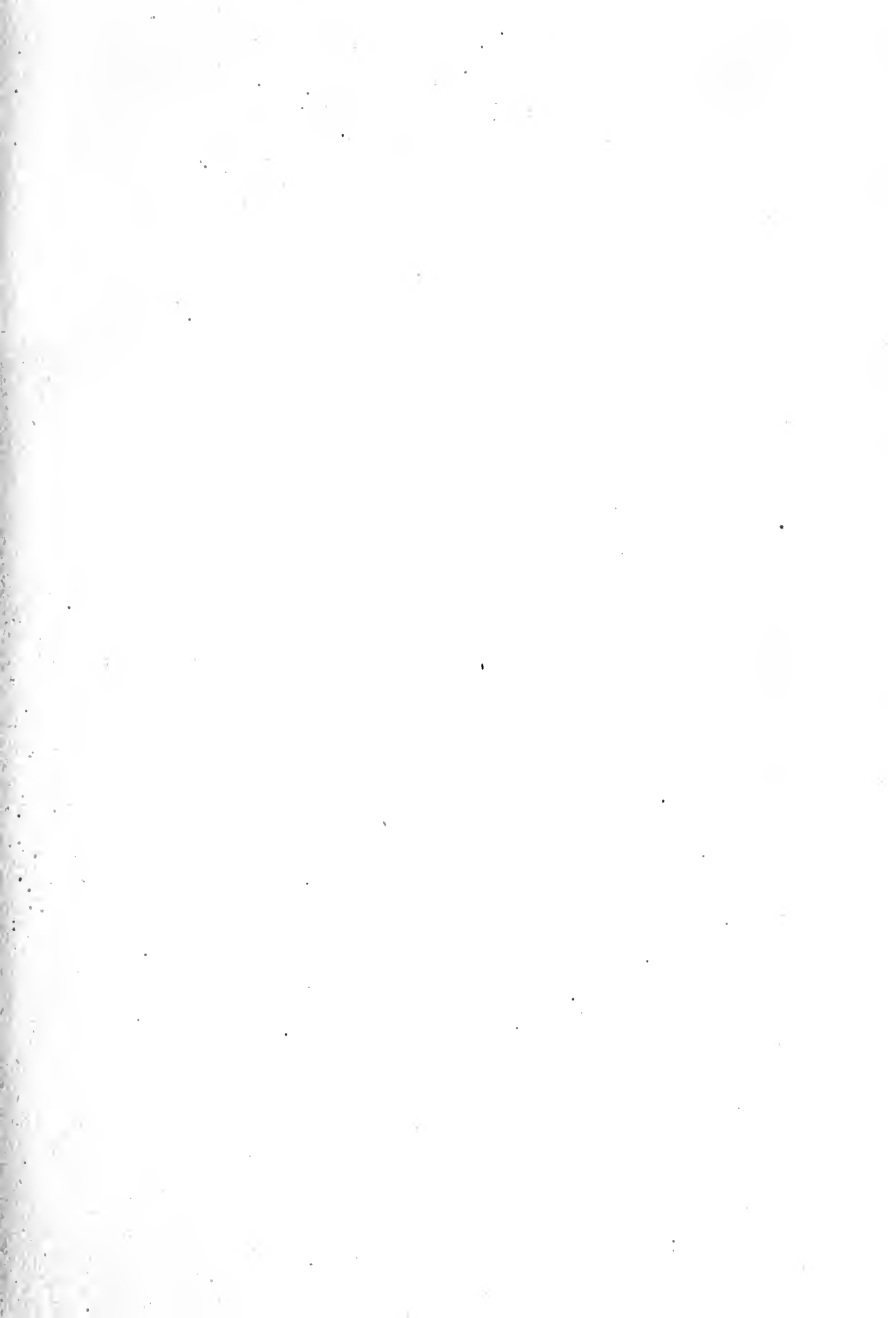
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LEGENDS
OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

LEGENDS OF SAN FRANCISCO
RAINBOW STORIES
ORIENTAL RAMBLES
THE WIZZYWAB





LEGENDS
OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

By
GEORGE W. CALDWELL, M. D.

Illustrated By
JANE JEFFERSON FLIPPIN

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GEORGE W. CALDWELL, M. D.

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MY CALIFORNIA

*There's a land that I know where the oranges grow,
And roses climb over my own bungalow;
The heliotrope curtains my windows with bloom,
And fills every corner with sweetest perfume.*

*The pepper trees sway with red berries gay,
And tall eucalyptus trees border the way;
The scent of the sage brush is keen in the air,
And poppies and lupins are seen everywhere.*

*There the soft balmy breeze has the tang of the seas,
And Nature is trying her hardest to please
With desert and garden and mountain and shore—
Ah, never were beauties so clustered before!*

*There's a land that I know where the oranges grow,
And roses climb over my own bungalow;
And there I will live, in the glorious West,
In my dear California, Land of the Blest.*

Giff Sutherland (via U.C. Lib.) 1946

INTRODUCTION

The human mind has in all ages sought a reasonable explanation for natural phenomena. The modern mind demands scientific demonstration, but primitive mind was perforce obliged to deduce a fanciful explanation based upon the supernatural, which was at least satisfying to his religious instinct. Such tales were handed down from generation to generation. Some of them, like the ones herein related, were not readily confided to the white trespassers on their territory, and hence have to this time remained unpublished.

The following stories are founded on legends of the Soboba Indians of Southern California, with the exception of the one entitled "The Echo" which refers to the tribe whose hunting grounds were in the region of the Merced River.

The legend entitled "The Blue Lizard" is the Indian explanation of the curious fact that the Blue Lizard is found only in the region of the San Jacinto mountains at an elevation exceeding 1800 feet above sea level.

The legend entitled "The Rumbling of Tauquitz" is the Indian explanation for the mysterious noises, coming from the depths of the mountain, which are occasionally heard. It may be interesting to mention that the rumblings of Tauquitz have been studied on the spot for months at a time by Government and University savants, but they have been unable to agree upon an explanation.

In the legend entitled "The Lights of Elsinore" is found the Indian explanation for the will-o'-the-wisps that sometimes appear over the marshy ground at the lower end of the lake, and also for the small white flower which they believe grows only in that locality.

In other legends the animals are endowed with human attributes and supernatural wisdom. They possess the especial confidence of the Great Spirit, and under certain circumstances hold converse with the Medicine Man. To this day, educated as the Indian has become, when a question of great importance is before the council and its decision is perplexing, a conclusion will not be made until the Medicine Man has gone into the wilds at night and consulted the Coyote, the Puma or other wild animal. When the Medicine Man has received a communication from the Great Spirit, through the intermediary of a wild

creature, no Indian will dare oppose his mere human judgment against such an authoritative revelation.

If in the translation we have lost the sonorous measure of the original as related by the Indian himself, we have at least endeavored to follow his poetic imagery, and to preserve, through the medium of printed pages, a few of the beautiful legends of a vanishing people.

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THE LIGHTS OF ELSINORE

Theca was an Indian Princess,
Daughter of the haughty Tondo,
Chief of all the brave Sobobas,
In the dim and distant ages
When they ruled the broad savannahs,
From the mountains to the ocean.

Fairest was she of the maidens,
Fairest of the comely maidens
Of the tribe of the Sobobas;
Tall and slender, lithe and graceful,
Flashing eyes of midnight splendor,
Laughing eyes, yet kind and tender.
Braids of glossy raven tresses
Fell like heavenly caresses
On her sloping sun-kissed shoulders.

To her Father came the warriors,
Youthful, brave and handsome warriors,

Asking for the hand of Theca,
Fairest of Soboba maidens ;
Brought their gifts of furs and ponies,
Gifts of gaily painted ollas,
Laid their wealth of beads of turquoise,
Laid them at the feet of Tondo,
Asking for the hand in marriage
Of his peerless only daughter.

When the suitors came before her,
Theca saw not one among them
Who could cause her heart to flutter
With the tender recognition
Of the mate whom she had dreamed of ;
Would not listen to their pleading,
Turned her face with scorning from them.

Then came Palo, Prince of Pala,
Straight and slender, like an arrow,
Small of hip and wide of shoulder,
Holding high his head, commanding
With a glance of eyes where smouldered
Hidden fires of love, which only
His beloved could uncover.

When her eyes at first beheld him,
In her heart there came a tumult,
Swelling in her breast with rapture.
Ran she with glad cries to meet him,
Lifted up her face to greet him.
"You have come at last," she murmured
"The ideal of my dreaming;
Long and patiently I waited,
I have loved and loved you only,
I shall wed and wed you only,
I am yours and yours forever."

"And you are mine," he said, and held her,
Close within his arms he held her,
To his throbbing heart he held her,
Pressed her, kissed her and caressed her.
While the tears of love were falling,
Souls within them both were calling.
To each other they were mated
When the things that are were fated,
And predestined by the Spirit
Ruling in the earth and heavens.

Hand in hand they went to Tondo,
Haughty Chief of the Sobobas,
Went to tell him the glad tidings
Of their love so pure and sacred,
Of their happiness so holy,
Of their bright hopes for the future,
Went with fond hearts gaily singing
Of the blessings love was bringing,
Went to make their glad confessing,
Eager for the Father's blessing.

Tondo listened while a tempest
Gathered on his furrowed features,
While his blood-shot eyes with anger
Flamed within their sunken sockets.
Then he rose in pride and passion
To his feet, and flushed with fury,
Crushed with cruel words the future
Of the children who would love him.

"What," he cried, "a child of Tondo
Mate with any son of Pala,
Ancient foes of the Sobobas,
Victors in an ancient battle
Fought between our Father's Fathers!

Rather would I see my daughter
Mated with a wild Coyote
Than the Scion of the Pala!
Never while the sun is swinging
Through the heavens shall my daughter
Mate with Palo, Prince of Pala!"

Then the lovers, sad and weeping,
Bowed their heads before the Chieftain,
Left the Chieftain in his tepee.
Hand in hand but broken hearted,
Wandered in the cooling shadows
Of the sycamores and bay trees
Growing by the sun-lit river.
Butterflies were on the roses,
Bees were gathering the honey
From the flowers for their babies,
Bluejays nested in the branches,
Meadowlarks sang in their wooing,
Turtle Doves were softly cooing
Perching on their nests and billing;
Creatures everywhere were filling
Their short lives with love and beauty;
Yet, because of tribal duty,
They, unlike the birds, were fated
Never to be blessed and mated.

Years went by, but never lessened
Love between the parted lovers.
Theca grew in grace and wisdom,
Sad and wistful was her beauty,
Less of earth and more of heaven.
In her soul a light was burning,
In her heart a tender yearning
For the love that was denied her,
Yearning for a child beside her.

Turned her holy Mother nature
To the homeless, loveless orphans,
And the children of her people.
To her came the little orphans,
Drawn toward her by the magic
Of her calm and sainted person.
Nurtured by her love and wisdom,
Children grew in grace and beauty
Of their bodies and their spirits
Till her charges were more perfect
Than the others of her people;
And the Mothers watched and marveled,
Saying the Great Spirit guided
Her and guarded with his blessing.

Came a tribal great fiesta
At the village of Soboba.
All the neighboring tribes were gathered
There to honor the Great Spirit.
Tondo stood before his warriors,
Panoplied in all his splendor
With his sacred bear claw necklace,
With his royal robes and armlets.
Theca, Princess of Soboba,
As becoming one so royal,
Stood receiving the obeisance
Of the Old Men and the Chieftains.
Beautiful she was and queenly
In her robes of rarest feathers,
Girt about with strands of wampum,
In her breastplates and her bracelets,
With the royal feather fastened
In her hair of midnight blackness.
Grouped behind her were her children,
Orphans who revered and loved her,
Decked in feather robes and flowers.

Last came Palo, Prince of Pala,
Now the Chief of all the Palas.
Noble was his face and bearing,
Royal were his robes and feathers,
On his breast the royal necklace,
Set with tourmaline and turquoise.
On the scene there fell a silence,
Silence and a tense foreboding.
All the Chieftains and the people
Knew the hopeless love between them,
Knew the iron will of Tondo.
Not a whisper broke the silence,
Not a word by them was spoken.
Waited they for sign or token
That should pass between the lovers.

Eyes of Palo, Prince of Pala,
Gazed into the eyes of Theca,
Saw in them her true devotion,
Saw the love within them burning,
Saw the soul within her yearning.
Theca looked upon her lover,
Her's alone; she saw no other
In that company of warriors.

In his eyes she saw the longing,
And the love that was belonging
To her only through the power
Of the laws of the Great Spirit,
Foreordained from the beginning.
Slowly walked they to each other,
Slowly walked with arms extended,
Eyes into each other blended,
Drawn as by a mighty magnet,
Magnet of the Gods and Angels
Which no human power can sever—
Walked they till their hands were clasping
And their lips had met in kisses.

Then the magic spell was broken.
Tondo, Chief and King, had spoken,
Spoken in a raging fury,
Spoken in a voice of thunder;
"Take the Princess to her tepee,
Seize this bold young Prince of Pala,
War shall follow for presuming
To oppose my royal orders."

But Prince Palo was not taken.
Round his head his heavy war club
Swung like pine boughs in a tempest,
Beating down all who attacked him
Till they lay in heaps and windrows,
Like the drift-wood on the sea shore.
Then Prince Palo left the village,
Left with challenge and defiance
Of the boldest braves to take him,
Vowing to return and carry
Princess Theca to the Palas.

In her tepee sat the Princess
Weeping while her cruel Father
Scorned her pleading for his mercy.
"You shall be," he said, "imprisoned,
Separated from your children,
Who, though innocent, shall suffer,
Scattered wide like frightened rabbits."

Later came a maid to Tondo
Saying "Theca and her children
Have been carried off by Palo."
Then the loud alarm was sounded,
Beating on the wooden tom-toms,
Beating, beating, beating, beating,
Till their weird reverberations
Came in echoes from the mountains,
Waking all the sleeping village.
Beacon fires were quickly lighted,
In the ruddy glow the people
Ran about in wild confusion,
Like the ants upon an ant hill,
Looking into every tepee,
Searching every nook and corner.
Still the tom-toms beating, beating!
All the people joined the uproar,
All the village in a tumult,
Calling, calling to the children
Who with Theca had escaped them.
Still the tom-toms beating, beating!
Further ran the warriors, vainly
Searching for the missing Princess,
Loudly calling, "Theca, Theca!"

Still the tom-toms beating, beating!
O'er the plains and through the valleys,
O'er the hills and up the canyons
Ran the warriors bearing torches,
Still the tom-toms beating, beating!

Came at last the old King Tondo
To the Pass of Granite Boulders.
Looked he then on Minnechica,
Lake of Elsinore the mystic,
Where the gods have left their cauldrons,
Springs of boiling mud and waters,
Steaming springs with reek of sulphur
From the underworld of spirits.
Round the lake the mountains towered,
Crowned by pine trees, slashed by canyons.
Over them a full moon floated,
Floated in the purple heavens,
In the star incrustated heavens.
On the lake the moonlight glistened,
Glistened in a silver pathway,
From the tules and the sedges,
From the iris at the edges
To the distant mountain bases.

Silhouetted in the gleaming
Moonlit mirror of the waters
Stood the Princess with her lover,
With her lover and the orphans,
At the border of the water
Where the purple iris blossoms—
Stood like statues supplicating,
Stood in prayer with arms uplifted,
Supplicating the Great Spirit
For assistance in their journey
To the village of the Palas.

Loudly called the Chieftain Tondo,
Called upon his men to follow.
In his heart was hate and anger,
“Seize my daughter,” he commanded,
“Slay Prince Palo and the orphans.”
With exultant cries the warriors
Ran toward the lake to seize them.

Theca turned toward her father:
"Hear me, Father, calm your anger,
Lest forever you regret it,
Lest in vain you shall repent it.
Cease pursuing, stop your warriors,
Be my Father, not my Chieftain,
For the love you bore my Mother.
Give your blessing on my marriage
With Prince Palo, my beloved.
For the stars that shine above me
Shall not set until I wed him,
Since the gods at last have led him
To my side I shall not leave him.
He has sworn, and I believe him,
That our souls shall be united.
For all time our faith is plighted;
We shall live and die together,
Never part again forever.
Speak, my Father, bless your daughter,
Or our souls will haunt the water."

But the Chief advanced, unheeding
Of his daughter's tearful pleading:
"Never shall my will be broken.
Seize them, warriors. I have spoken."
Then, too late, the Chieftain halted,
Chilling horror came upon him,
Loudly called he to his daughter,
Called with anguish, vainly pleading.

Out upon the silver pathway
Of the moonlight on the waters,
Sinking deeper—ever deeper—
Hand in hand as to an altar,
To their wedding went the lovers,
Wedding of their souls forever.
But the song that they were singing
Was the death song of their people,
Mournful death song of their people.
And behind them walked the children,
Like the bridesmaids at a wedding ,
Chanting in their childish treble,
Mournful death song of their people,
Strewing flowers on the waters,

White and fragrant bridal flowers.
Thus were wedded Princess Theca
And her lover, Prince of Pala.

When the warriors reached the water,
Silenced was the mournful death song.
Gentle breezes moved the tules
In a sad and eerie rustle,
Like the whispering of spirits,
Spirits breathing o'er the waters.
Came a chilling fear upon them
As they paused to look and listen,
Paused to listen and to wonder.
Then the moon, as though in sorrow,
Hid her face behind a storm cloud,
Hid her face and sent the darkness
Brooding o'er the silent waters.

Then appeared a light uncanny
Like a point of fire unearthly,
Floating o'er the murky waters,
Then another, and another,
Till they equaled in their number,
Theca, Palo, and the children.
And they danced above the sedges,
Danced above the whispering tules,
Danced across the gloomy marshes,
Danced as children dance with gladness.
"They are spirits," said the warriors,
"Lo their ghosts come back to haunt us!"
Then they fled away in terror,
Chief and warriors fled in terror,
To their village with the tidings,
With the sad and tragic story
Of the passing of the Princess
And the brave and faithful lover,
And the orphans who adored her;
Of the coming of their spirits
Back in dancing lights to haunt them.

When the people on the morrow
Went to wail their grief and sorrow
On the shores of Minnechica,
There they found a strange white flower
Growing where the orphans gathered
For their death march to the water.

To this day that flower blossoms
On the shores of Minnechica,
White and pure is the flower,
Like the spirits of the orphans.
And on moonless summer evenings,
Over marshes and the sedges,
Where the purple iris blossoms
And the wind blown tules whisper,
Dance the souls of Princess Theca,
And her lover with the orphans.

O'er the lake forevermore
Dance the Lights of Elsinore.

THE STEPPING STONES

The Gods had provided the hot springs,
Fountains of steaming hot water
Bubbling up from the fires
Deep in the heart of the mountain ;
Hot springs for cooking the acorns,
Fountains for healing the people,
Healing the sick and the crippled,
Bringing back youth to the aged,
Driving out Spirits of Evil.
Battles were fought for the hot springs,
Only the strongest possessed them.
Happy the tribe in possession,
Jealous the covetous neighbors.

Peaceful and calm was the village
Under the wide spreading live oaks.
Smoke from the tepees was rising,
Women were grinding the acorns.
Children were playing and laughing
As children have done in all ages.

Maidens were carrying ollas
Filled with the steaming hot water,
Gracefully balanced on shoulders
Gleaming like bronze in the sunlight.

Wateka, the Chief's only daughter,
Sat in the shade of the bay tree,
The pungently odorous bay tree,
And talked with her lover, Katona.
Whispered as lovers have always
Of love, and their dreams of the future,
Laughter at intervals ringing
In ripples of music between them.

Into the village a runner
Came with the speed of the whirlwind,
Came with a shout and a warning,
Ran till he fell at the tepee
Of Zantah, the Chief of Soboba.
"Cahuillas are coming," he shouted,
"The warriors of the Cahuillas
Are coming to conquer or kill us,
Coming with weapons to fight us,
To drive us away from our hot springs."

Then came the shouting and turmoil,
Weeping and wailing of women,
Calling of Mothers to children,
Beating of war drums, the war drums,
Continuous beating of war drums,
Rolling a thunderous clamor
Into the far distant gardens,
Into the valleys and canyons,
Echoing back from the hillsides,
Calling the warriors together,
Calling the braves who were hunting,
Or fishing in valleys and rivers.
The thunderous din of the war drums,
The shouting of gathering warriors—
The terrified wailing of women,
Mingled their clamors together.

Forth went the warriors to battle,
Armed with the long bows and arrows,
Spears and the stone-headed war clubs,
Carrying shields made of rawhide,
Brandishing weapons and singing
The battle songs of the Sobobas.

When the Cahuillas were sighted,
Stilled were the songs and the war drums.
Silently forward they ventured,
Creeping like snakes on their stomachs,
Hidden by grasses and bushes.
They fought in the ways of their Fathers,
Fought with the cunning of foxes,
With feints, and with traps for the ambush,
Speeding the spears and the arrows
Straight at the Cahuilla warriors
Who were exposed for the moment
In dashing across open places
To hide behind tree trunks and boulders.
No campfires were lighted that evening
Unless as a trap for an ambush.
So fought the valliant Sobobas
With the intrepid Cahuillas,
Fought for three days and fought bravely,
Yet neither tribe won the advantage.

To Yozo, the Chief of Cahuillas,
A runner came bearing the message,
"The Yaquis are taking the warpath,
Coming to capture the hot springs;
Little care they who shall hold them!
Neither Sobobas nor Cahuillas
Alone can contend with the Yaquis."

Yozo then sent to Chief Zantah
A messenger with a white feather
Asking a council, and saying:
"The Yaquis are coming to fight you.
You cannot win if we join them.
Let us unite, and together
Our people will live at the hot springs.
United, no tribe dare attack us.
We can defend them and hand them,
A heritage, down to our children.
Our sons and our daughters shall marry,
But I, Yozo, Chief of Cahuilla,
Shall marry your daughter Wateka,
Wateka, the rose of Soboba."

A truce was declared to their warfare.
A counsel was held 'round the campfire.
The Chieftains and wise men palavered.
The terms of the peace were agreed on.
The peace pipe was passed round the circle.
Wateka was called for betrothal
To Yozo, the Chief of Cahuilla.

Wateka was not in her tepee.
Wateka was not at the hot spring,
Nor sycamore grove by the river.
Wateka was not in her bower
Among the low-sweeping bay trees.
The call for Wateka resounded—
Wateka! Wateka! Wateka!

Wateka had fled with Katona,
Fled with her lover, Katona,
Scorning the proffer of Yozo,
Flaunting the edict of counsel.
Only her heart should control her,
Only her lover should wed her;
Rather the hazard of fleeing
To neighboring tribes who were strangers.

Into the night fled the lovers,
Into the moonlight that burnished
The sycamore branches with silver.
The twinkling stars were above them,
The world with its freedom before them,
And true love was singing within them.

Over the pebbly streamlet,
Over the sage covered desert,
By thickets of lilac and heather,
Hand in hand hastened the lovers.
Lions and wolves and coyotes
Looked in their faces and passed them,
Passed them and would not molest them.

Over the eastern horizon
Spread the pink glow of the morning.
Clouds turned to crimson and orange,
Glorious! Constantly changing.
Then came the sun in its splendor,
Drinking the mists in the valleys,
Drying the dews on the grasses.

Onward still hastened the lovers,
Southward to safety with strangers.
Round them the wild flowers were blooming.
Hillsides were dappled with splashes
Of mustard and deep golden poppies.
Lupins of blue, white and purple
Lay like a carpet before them.
Violets, purple and yellow,
Buttercups, lilies and iris,
Paint brush, and primrose and wild rose
Grew in a riot of color,
Filling the air with their perfume.

Under a live oak the lovers
Paused to admire the flowers
Spread like a bright colored blanket
Over the hillsides and valleys.
Light were their hearts, little knowing
The turmoil their flight had created,
Or that, even then, their pursuers
Were following close on their footsteps.

Onward they went through the meadows,
Over the hills to a lakelet
Formed in the course of a river—
A lakelet in winter and springtime
That sinks in the heat of the summer.
Tall tules bordered the edges,
Water fowls swam on the surface,
Wild pigeons cooed in the thickets
Of cottonwoods, wild grapes and willows.
Now must they turn in their pathway,
Retracing their steps to the hill top,
To circle the lake at a distance.

But hark! There were people approaching,
Shouting like men on the warpath.
Shouting "Katona!" in anger,
Calling "Wateka" with pleading.
"Wateka! Wateka! Wateka!"
"Surrender Katona, or perish."
On came the men down the hillside,
Baying like dogs on a fox hunt,
Knowing the lovers were helpless,
Knowing they could not escape them.

Then turned the lovers in anguish,
And prayed to the Guardian of Lovers.
Lifting their arms toward heaven
They prayed "*Oh, Great Spirit defend us.
Thou, who hast twined us together,
Binding our hearts to each other,
Do not desert us, but save us.
Show us the way to escape them.*"

A rippling came in the waters,
A tinkling sound like the laughter
Of water sprites playing with raindrops,
As up from the lake bed were lifted
Stepping stones covered with mosses,
Dripping with water, but forming
A pathway as straight as an arrow
To the opposite bank of the lakelet.
Over the stepping stones lightly
Ran the two lovers with laughter,
But when the pursuers attempted
To follow the stepping stones vanished,
Plunging them all in the water.

The lovers escaped and were married,
And happily lived with each other
For many years in a far country,
Thanking the Guardian of Lovers.

The stepping stones covered with mosses
Appear to this day in the springtime
When lovers eloping shall need them,
And woe to whoever pursues them!



THE ECHO

In a barren desert country
Lived the tribe of the Wa-wo-na.
On their plains was sand and sage brush,
On their hillsides, rock and heather ;
Blizzards chilled them in the winter,
Scorching winds in summer burned them.

Like the country that they lived in,
Grim and cruel were the people.
All their lives were spent in fighting,
Fighting for a mere existence,
For the food for their subsistence ;
Ever watchful for a foeman
Or a serpent to destroy them.
When not fighting with their neighbors
They were fighting with each other ;
Killing beasts and birds for pleasure,
Not for food, nor furs, nor feathers.

Little wonder that their natures
Grew vindictive, harsh and cruel;
Knew they naught of love nor kindness,
Even love for little children.

For that reason the Great Spirit
Looked with frowning down upon them;
And, to show his dire displeasure,
Beckoned to their unborn children
To remain among the Spirits,
Seeking not to find their Mothers.

When six summer suns had faded
In the snows and rains of winter
And no children came among them,
Chief and Old Men held a council
To devise a potent Magic
To appease the angry Spirits
Who withheld the children from them.

In the tepee sat the Council,
Sat with bowed heads, sad of feature.
I-pah, Chief of the Wa-wo-na,
Drew upon his pipe of greenstone,
Blew the smoke of the tobacco
North and south, and east and westward.
Then he spoke in weary accents,
For his heart was sorely troubled:
"Well you know our charms have failed us,
All our magic is impotent,
All our prayers have been unheeded;

Therefore, go I to the mountains
To commune with the Great Spirit,
Seeking wisdom from wild creatures.
I will ask Old Man Coyote,
I will ask the Bear and Puma,
I will ask the wise old Night Owl,
With the mournful voice, to tell me
The commands of the Great Spirit."

For a moon, Chief I-pah wandered
In the forest of the pine trees,
Calling to the forest creatures
To give aid, and lend their counsel;

But the forest creatures answered
Him with snarls, and howls and chatter
That their help was for friends only,
Not for cruel, heartless people
Like the people of Wa-wo-na.

Came a time when the Great Spirit
Heard the constant, patient pleading;
Listened to the prayer of I-pah,
Looked with pity down upon him.
To a Grizzly Bear the Spirit
Gave a message to deliver
To Chief I-pah, in the night time,
When he slept beside his camp-fire.

From the shadows came the Grizzly.
Grizzly sat upon his haunches,
Leaned his back against a pine tree,
Then he spoke in human language:
"I will answer, Oh, Chief I-pah,
I will answer, I will tell you
Of the will of the Great Spirit,
Father of all men and creatures.

Long your people have forgotten
That all men and tribes are brothers,
Kin of all the living creatures,
Sharing equally the favors
Of the Spirit, their Creator.
If you wish to save your people
From extinction—hear his orders.
Lead your people to the mountains,
To the distant purple mountains,
Where the snow-peaks gleam and glisten
When the sun comes up behind them.
Let them cease their wars and quarrels,
Teach them kindness to each other;
Let them learn to care for children,
Learn to love and make them happy,
Joining in their games and pastimes;
When he finds the parents worthy,
He will send the children to them.
He will send the children to them.”

When Chief I-pah told his people
Of the message given to him,
Rose their spirits in rejoicing,
Hastened they to move their village.
Ponies dragged the slender tent poles
Loaded down with willow baskets
Filled with pottery and blankets,
Mortars, pestles, corn and acorns,
Dried meat, furs and all the luggage
Of a tribe in its migration.

On they marched for seven sunsets,
Over scorching, sandy deserts;
Through the sagebrush and the yucca;
Through the tules of the marshes;
Through the valleys of the live oaks;
By the pleasant river borders
Where the sycamore and willows
Cast a cooling shade in midday;
Over foothills; through the valleys;
Up the ridges; to the region
Where the fragrant breezes murmur
In the branches of the pine trees.

As they traveled the Great Spirit
Marked their every thought and action.
What a change had come upon them!
Cruelty had changed to kindness;
Cheering words were passed between them;
Strong men helped their weaker brothers;
Fathers carried tired children;
Took the burdens from the women.
When a Bear Cub crossed their pathway
Weapons were not raised against it;
Fawns were passed and not molested;
Nesting wild Birds were protected.

As they camped among the pine trees,
Came a woman from the forest
With a babe upon her bosom;
Ill she was, and faint with hunger.

From their scanty store they fed her
Of their choicest foods, and lead her
To a place beside their camp-fire;
Wrapped her in a robe of beaver;
Cheered her with a cordial welcome.

As the days went by the stranger
Grew in strength, as did the infant
At her breast, now full and ample.
"For your kindness," said the stranger,
"I will lead you to a valley,
Hidden in the mountain fastness,
Where the Deer herds roam in hundreds,
Feeding in the grassy meadows;
Where the streams with fish are teeming;
Where the corn will grow with vigor
To supply your food for winter."

"Who are you?" the Chief demanded,
But the woman only answered:
"I am she who bears an infant,
Sent to guide you by the Spirit,
Should you prove that you are worthy!"

Onward then the tribe proceeded;
For two suns they traveled onward
Till they stood upon a cliff top.
Far below them lay a valley
Of such wondrous, peaceful beauty,
That they stood in awe and wonder,

Long to contemplate the picture,
Then along a narrow game trail,
Made by Antelope and Bison,
Deer and Elk and Bear and Puma,
They descended to the valley.

Round them towered cliffs of Granite
Over which the rivers tumbled
Breaking into clouds of vapor
Where the rainbows flashed their colors.
Through the parks, where Deer were grazing,
Gently flowed a limpid river;
Fishes leaping in the sunlight
Broke the surface into ripples.
In the oak trees hung the acorns;
In the thickets berries ripened,
Quail were calling, Rabbits leaping.

Quickly rose their huts and tepees
In the fragrant shade of pine trees
By the gently flowing river.
Thus the tribe of the Wa-wo-na
Took possession of the valley.

Gone were all their cruel habits,
Gentle had become their natures.

Many moons had grown from crescents
Into round moons, then had faded,
Yet the Stranger-Mother lingered,
Guiding wisely with her counsel.
Strong and robust grew the infant,
Only baby in the village.
All the women vied to serve him,
Love him, hold him and caress him.
When he smiled, the passing dimples
Drew their laughter and their kisses;
When he cried, they feared a sickness.
When a tooth appeared they marveled,
As if teeth were unexpected;
"Baby has a tooth!" they shouted,
Every woman came to see it.
When he spoke his first word, "Mother,"
All the women gathered round him:
"He has spoken! He has spoken!"
Went the tidings through the village.

In his willow papoose basket,
Padded with the fur of Rabbits,
Women carried him with pleasure
On their backs about the village.
Came a day when one young woman
Ventured further up the river,
Gathering the golden poppies
And the Mariposa lilies
To adorn the baby's basket.
Past the Happy Isles she wandered
Where the stream, in rills dividing,
Rushes babbling over boulders,
And the quaking aspens cluster
With their leaves all in a flutter
At the kiss of mountain breezes.
To a lake she came and halted;
Speechless was she at the beauty
Of the lake, wherein reflected
Was the image of the mountains,
Like a picture, though inverted.

As she knelt to drink, the woman
Saw her face reflected clearly
From the surface of the water,
And the smiling face of baby
Peering at her from her shoulder;
"Mother, Mother," cooed the baby.
From the mystic Land of Nowhere,
From the air, the cliffs, the mountains,
From the open gates of Heaven,
Came the sweet voice of a baby
Faintly calling: "Mother, Mother."
Startled by the eerie whisper
She stood up and looked about her;
She could see no living being!
"It's the spirit of a baby
Calling to me from the Heavens!
Calling me as to a Mother!
Now, at last, my prayers are answered;
He is coming! He is coming!"

Thus she thought, and hastened homeward
With a new light brightly shining
In her eyes, and told the women
That a miracle had happened
Through the magic of the baby.
“I have heard a spirit baby
Calling to me from the Heavens,
Where the lake reflects the Heavens!
Blessed am I, of all women,
For a child is coming to me,
Soon a babe will call me Mother!”

Then another took the baby
In her arms, and ran with eager
Footsteps to the Lake of Mirrors.
Would the Gods in pity hear her?
Would they lay a blessed baby
On her breast, so void and aching?
When she stood upon the border
Of the mystic Lake of Mirrors
Hope and fear swelled in her bosom.
Was the spirit of her baby
Waiting for her in the Heavens?

Would it hear her, hear her pleading?
Would it answer to her calling?
"Help me, Gods!" she prayed, "Oh, help me!"

Then she spoke into the silence:
"Hear me, baby, hear your Mother."
"Mother, Mother," came a whisper!
"Will you come to me, and love me?"
"Love me," came a pleading whisper!
"Come into my arms and nestle,
Lay your head upon my bosom,
I will love you, love you always."
"Always, always," breathed the answer!
"Will you come to me in summer,
Winter, fall, or in the springtime?"
"In the springtime," came the answer!

With rejoicing came the woman
To the camp and told her story.
All the women went to listen
To the spirit voices calling.
In the village all was gladness;
Songs were heard in every tepce.

Loving hands were turned to braiding
Papoose baskets made of willow,
Or of rushes from the marshes.
Dainty robes were made of Mole skin,
Or the fur of Squirrels and Rabbits,
Gaily painted, or embroidered
With the feathers of the Bluebird,
Redwing, Meadow Lark, and Robin;
Brilliant colors, gaily mingled,
Fitting wardrobes for the babies
Of the women of Wa-wo-na.

When the happy Mothers gathered
In the shade of fragrant pine trees,
With their papoose baskets near them,
Prayers of thankfulness ascended
For the many blessings given;
For their children, for their valley,
For the peace with all their neighbors,
For the Bear that spoke to I-pah,
For the stranger who had guided,
For her infant who had tempted
From the spirit land their babies.

Then one asked the Stranger-Mother
Whom they now called Yo-se-me-ta,
"Tell me, Yo-se-me-ta, tell me,
In the Spirit Land of babies,
Waiting to be born of mortals,
Are there names for every spirit?"
"No," she answered, gravely smiling,
"One name only for all spirits
Who are waiting for their parents
To grow worthy to receive them;
One name only shall you call them;
Call them Echoes, call them Echoes."

ARROWHEAD HOT SPRINGS

He was resting in the shadow
Of the roadside eucalyptus,
While his pony cropped the grasses
By the ditch where waters murmured
In a minor key, while flowing
To the orange groves around us—
Orange groves where golden fruitage
Gleamed like lanterns in the verdure.

On the air the heavy fragrance
Of the orange blossoms mingled
With the perfume of the roses
Rioting in crimson hedges.
In the fervent heat of mid-day
Birds were silent in the branches,
But the honey bees were droning
At their labor in the flowers.

Long he gazed toward the mountain,
Where, upon a lower foothill,
Was the outline of an arrow,
Silver gray, against the background
Of the dark green manzanita.

"Yes," he said, at length, in answer
To the question I had asked him,
"Yes, I know the ancient legend
Of the arrow on the mountain.
It has come from down the ages,
From the dim and distant ages,
When the arrow fell from Heaven.
I have heard it from the old men
Of my people—the Sobobas.

When the world was first created
There were rival powers in Heaven;
One was God, the God of Goodness;
One, a Demon, King of Evil.

God created all the flowers,
Fruits and grasses, springs and rivers,
Vines and trees, and friendly creatures;
But the Demon made the cactus,
Weeds and poison oak and thistles,
Spiders, scorpions and serpents.

God then made all human beings,
Made then perfect, strong and healthy,
With good thoughts and honest purpose;
Gave them power to rule all creatures
Made by Him or by the Demon.

Demon saw the human beings
Given power to rule his creatures,
And was filled with raging fury.
In the darkness of his caverns
Fires were lighted 'neath the cauldrons;
And he brewed, with wicked magic,
Envy, jealousy and malice,
Greed and hate, revenge and anger—
Weapons, all, for self destruction;
And afflictions and diseases
Of the mind and of the body.

Then he dipped his smallest arrows
In the broth, and shot them earthward.

In the hearts of men the arrows
Fell and poisoned with their virus.
Some were struck with many arrows,
Some, more fortunate, escaped them.

Long and loud the Demon boasted
Of his skill in evil magic,
Of the power of his poisons,
Of his strength to draw the bow-string.

Then a plan of heartless cunning
Darkened on his evil features,
And his lurid caverns echoed
With his words and fiendish laughter.
"God has made his springs of water
Sweet and clear for all his creatures.
I will make one to *my* liking,
Yet, no mark will I place on it."

Then he took his blackest arrow,
Charged with alkali and arsenic,
Placed it on his bow and shot it.
And he said, "Where falls this arrow
Will arise a spring of water,
Cold as snow, and clear as crystal
With no other water near it.
Thirsty travelers will find it,
Thanking God for springs, and drink it,
Then shall die beside the pathway."

Where the arrow fell, there bubbled
Up a spring of sparkling water.
Birds flew down, and drank, and perished.
Then the plants recoiled in horror,
Dying, in a widening circle,
Till, where blossomed fields and forests,
Now are deserts, salt and barren,
Where the creatures of the Demon
Only, have their habitation.

Then the God of Good was troubled
For the sorrows of His people,
For the ills the Demon sent them,
For the evil springs created;
So, He took His strongest long-bow,
Fixed an arrow at the bow-string,
Drew the bow and shot it earthward;
And He said, "Where falls *My* arrow
Will arise a spring of water,
Pure and good, and charged with healing
For the ills of all *My* people."

Through the heavens sped the arrow
With a trail of light behind it—
As a comet sped the arrow,
And it plunged into the hillside,
Burning in the earth its image.

From the depths where lies the arrow,
Bubbled up the healing waters,
Steaming hot, and ever flowing,
Forming pools, wherein the people
Bathed, and found their health and vigor.

Gone are now the Indian tepees
That of old stood by the hot springs ;
Gone the Indian to wander
In his narrow reservations.
But the pigeons still are calling
From the sycamores at evening,
And a restful calm is brooding
In the quiet of the canyon.
Still the arrow marks the hillside,
Pointing to the magic fountain,
As a sign that God remembers,
And sends healing to His people.

THE BLUE LIZARD OF
SAN JACINTO

There was mourning in the village,
There was weeping in the tepees ;
Mothers sat beneath the willows
Holding empty papoose baskets,
Wailing, wailing, swaying, swaying.
Children sickened with the fever,
Flushed to scarlet, paled, and perished.
Priests of medicine were helpless,
All their charms and herbs were useless.

The Chieftain called to all his people,
Called his people to a council,
To a sad and somber council.
For many days they danced and chanted,
Danced in slow and sacred measure,

Sang the solemn songs of sorrow,
Sang, and burned the sacred pollen,
Praying to the good Great Spirit
That He send to them a magic
That would save their little children.
And the prayer of all Sobobas
In a single voice united,
Rose, and reached the Chief of Heaven,
The Great Spirit in the heavens.

But in all the tents of Heaven
Not an angel was remaining
As a messenger to carry
Magic charms to the Sobobas.
They were gone to every corner
Of the earth to carry healing;
People everywhere were calling
To the Father for His magic.

Then the Father, filled with pity,
Reached His hand into the heavens,
Stripping off the thinnest ribbon
From the sky where it was bluest,
Rolled it gently in His fingers,
Fashioned it into a lizard.

And He gave to him the magic,
Saying, "Take it to My people;
Be My messenger, Blue Lizard;
Save the children of Soboba;
Take the sunshine always with you;
Travel only on a sunbeam."

Then He sent the sky-blue Lizard
Sliding down a slanting sunbeam
To the village of Soboba;
And the Lizard saved the children
By the power of the magic
That was wrapped about with sunbeams.

When the Lizard's work was finished,
When the children, well and happy,
Romped around the camp as ever,
He was lonely for the heavens,
For his home among the star-clouds;
But no sunbeam ever travels
From the earth into the heavens.
So the Lizard climbing upward
Reached the sides of San Jacinto.

There he prayed to his Creator
For a helpmate and companion,
And the Father sent another
Lizard down upon a sunbeam.

To this day their sky-blue children
May be seen on San Jacinto
Darting over sunny ledges,
Basking in the brilliant sunshine,
Never going to the valleys,
Ever seeking to climb upward
Till they reach the blue of heaven.
No Soboba ever harms them,
For the Heavenly Father sent them
From the sky to save the children.

If you wish to see the marking
On the heavens where the ribbon
Of the sky was stripped for making
The Blue Lizard, I will ask you
To observe on moonless evenings,
The milky way that stretches over,
Where the blue so thinly covers
That the light shines through from Heaven.

THE RUMBLINGS OF
TAUQUITZ

A rumbling came from the mountain,
A rumbling, deep pitched and muffled,
Like thundering heard from a distance.
Yet, all the vault of the heavens
Was cloudless, and blue as a sapphire.
Motionless drooped the green branches
Of pepper trees, decked with red clusters
Of pungently odorous berries.
Still was the air, as if Nature
Was taking its mid-day siesta.

Pedro, the aged Soboba,
Turned to the eastward and listened—
Gazed at the towering mountains
That thrust through their blankets of forests
Two rocky heads that were wearing
The white frosted turbans of winter.

“Tauquitz is angry,” said Pedro,
Tauquitz is rolling the boulders
Deep in his cave in the mountain.
Why do you ask me the reason?
Why so persistently question?
I know the ways of the paleface.

You may deride if I tell you
No Indian climbs to the summit,
Nor sleeps on the slope of Mount Tauquitz.
You may smile in superior fashion,
And call it a dark superstition.
No? You will not? Then I'll tell you
Why rumblings come from the mountain.

This is the legend of Tauquitz,
Old as the lore of Soboba.
Long, long ago, on the mountain
Lived a great Giant named Tauquitz.
He sat on his mountain and brooded—
A lonely, old bachelor Giant.
His brother on San Bernardino
Was married to Mount Cucamonga;
A row of their children, the foothills,
Were growing in line to the ocean.

The Giantess on Mount San Jacinto
Was handsome, unmarried and waiting,
But Tauquitz was sullen and silent ;
He wanted a wife from the mortals.

He turned to the east, where the desert
Lay barren and baked in the sunshine,
And wind-devils danced on the sandhills ;
Useless to search in the desert ;
Beauty thrives not in an oven.

He turned to the west. A fair country
Lay blooming from mountain to ocean ;
Villages dotted the landscape ;
Maidens were there beyond counting,
But none were so fair nor so gentle
As Mena, the Rose of Soboba.

Tauquitz determined to win her
And bring her away to his mountain.
By magic and strange incantations
He changed himself into a mortal,
And sauntering down to the village,
Courtied the beautiful Mena.

But Mena was deaf to the pleading
Of Tauquitz, mysterious stranger,
For she was in love with another—
The boldest and bravest Soboba.

Then Tauquitz, despairing of winning
By fair means the beautiful maiden,
Changed himself back to a Giant,
And seizing her, ran to the mountain,

Over the hills—through the valleys—
He ran with the people pursuing,
Shouting and brandishing weapons.
Reaching the forest, the Giant
Pulled up a pine tree and swung it
Round and around in a circle,
Causing a terrible whirlwind,
That lifted the women like dry leaves,
Blowing them back to their village.
Tauquitz then ran to the foothills;
Still the Sobobas pursued him.
Tauquitz then hurled at them boulders,
The thousands and thousands of boulders
That still may be seen in the river.

Tauquitz then ran to the mountains ;
Still the Sobobas pursued him ;
Tauquitz, then raging with fury,
Stamped on the mountains and shook them
Until the earth slipped from the bedrock
In great avalanches upon them.
Tauquitz then ran up Dark Canyon,
And paused at the mouth of his cavern.
Only one warrior still followed—
The warrior-lover of Mena.

“Stop!” the great Giant commanded—
His voice was as loud as the thunder—
“Stop, or I shake down the mountain ;
Because you are brave I will spare you.”
“No,” said the warrior, “I follow,
Defying your magic and power ;
I follow you into the cavern
To rescue the Rose of Soboba.”

Tauquitz then straightened his shoulders,
Lifting the roof of the cavern,
Turning the mountain-side over,
Closing the cavern forever,

Covering deep in a white rock
The bravest of all the Sobobas.

He stands, to this day, in the canyon,
Enclosed in a white rocky mantle,
Waiting to rescue the maiden
From Tauquitz, who lives in the mountain.
His moans, and the wailing of Mena,
May often be heard in Dark Canyon
At night when the cool wind is blowing.

When rumblings come from the mountain
Sobobas say Tauquitz is angry,
Because Mena mourns for her lover,
And rolls the great rocks in his cavern
To cover the sound of her weeping.

THE PRINCE OF PLENTY

Mahalla, daughter of the Chief of the Sobobas, sat before her tepee playing with her pets, a Coyote kitten and a young Rabbit.

"My daughter," said the Chief, "again I say you must choose a husband. You have scorned the suitors of our tribe. You have driven away the son of the Chief of the Cahuillas. Now have I brought the son of the Chief of the Cocopahs. Him shall you marry."

Mahalla glanced at the young man, but shook her head sadly. "No, Father, my heart goes not out to meet him. I am young. Give me yet a little more time to play with my wild animal friends."

"It is time you should marry," said her Father, and withdrew.

Mahalla arose and sought the tent of the old Medicine Man. She entered and dropped the curtain of deer skin.

The Medicine Man was old, wrinkled and decrepit, yet kind and very wise in the ways of the animals.

"Tonight shall it be, Father?"

"Aye, my daughter. Tonight when the moon is full you shall learn the ways of the Rabbit."

That night, when the village was still, and the people deep in sleep, Mahalla stole from her tepee. Joining

the old Medicine Man they went together to the plain. Threading their way among the clumps of sage brush they finally reached an elevation of sand. The odor of the sage was in the air, the grey-green of the foliage was changed to silver by the moonlight. The stars twinkled in an azure dome.

"This, as I have told you before," continued the Medicine Man, "is the call for the wolf; this for the Puma; this for the Fox." Each he demonstrated with a call made in a low tone for her ear only. "Tonight we will converse with the Rabbit—a modest and kind-hearted animal well worthy of your friendship."

Forming a funnel with his hands before his face the old man gave a peculiar call. Three times he repeated it. Then from the shadows of the mesquite thickets, from the groves of cottonwoods along the river bed, from the fields of sage surrounding them came the Rabbits with long and graceful leaps—Jack Rabbits, Brush Rabbits and Cottontails. As they arrived they flopped their ears in salutation and sat on their haunches.

When the circle was complete the Medicine Man addressed them. "Behold, I have brought you a new friend—the Princess of the Sobobas. She will love you and care for you as I have done. I am an old man, my joints

stiffen. The Princess will help you when I am gone." The Rabbits bowed and flopped their ears. "But tell me," continued the Medicine Man, "how fares it this season with the Rabbits?"

"Badly, very badly," replied an old grey Jack Rabbit. "See, we are thin and weak. Seeds and berries are scarce this season. We hunt for days to find a small amount."

"That is bad. I am so sorry," said the Princess in a sympathetic voice, "tomorrow I will search the hills and plains and wherever I find wild food I will blaze a tree that you may see it from a distance. Every day I will search and leave a sign wherever I find the favorite food of Rabbits."

"Mahalla is our friend," the Rabbits agreed. "We will tell the other animals of the good Mahalla."

The next night the Medicine Man introduced the Princess to the Coyotes. They were much in need of wild carrots. Mahalla promised to hunt for them and to leave her sign where they could be found.

On other nights she was made acquainted with the Pumas. They complained of the shortage of roots and berries. Mahalla would help them find fields where the berries grew more plentifully.

Through the teachings of the wise old Medicine Man

Mahalla became learned in the language of the wild things. She became the friend of them all. They would come at her call. Their food supplies were marked by signs which they understood and so they were able to live through the lean year in comparative comfort.

Again her Father conversed with her on the subject of her marriage. "You must choose a husband," he said. "Tomorrow you shall meet the Chief of the Yumas, and the Chief of the Hopi. They are great Chiefs and they sue for your hand. Choose between them. Time passes. I grow old. Before I die I would see my daughter's son, who will some day be Chief of the Sobobas. My line must live. Its fate is in your hands."

"Father, I understand. Tomorrow I will choose a husband."

On the next day Mahalla met the Chief of the Hopi. He was small. He was thin. His smile was continuous and vacant. Him, she decided, she could not wed.

She met the Chief of the Yumas. He was big, gross and fat. He was harsh and gruff. He was repellant. Of a certainty she could not wed him.

"How then, will the Princess be suited?" the Father stormed. "One is too fat, another too lean. One is too tall, another too short. One is too old, another too

young. Have done with such nonsense. You shall marry. Choose a husband worthy of the daughter of the Chief of the Sobobas."

"Have patience with me, my Father. It is a grievous question. Tomorrow I will choose a mate."

That night Mahalla went into the wilds and called her animal friends around her. When they had gathered she addressed them. "My friends, I have loved you and served you. Your intuition is stronger than mine. Give me your council. Shall I marry the Chief of the Hopi?" A snarl of disapproval went around the circle.

"Shall I marry the Chief of Yuma?" A fiercer snarl of disapproval.

"Will another come—one of whom I have dreamed?" Purrs and bows came from the animals.

The next morning as Mahalla was seated in front of her tepee deeply pondering on the problem of her marriage, she lifted her eyes and beheld a stranger coming down the hill in the pathway to her village. An Eagle feather was in his hair. His robe, rich, but much worn, was of an unknown tribe. His face was eager and alert, his eyes those of a dreamer. When their glances met his face lighted in a smile and he quickened his pace. In Mahalla's eyes came an expression of surprise, then they



softened and smiled. Her lips parted in a sigh, and she held out her hands with palms up.

The stranger approached and laid his hands, palms down, upon hers. Long and intently they gazed into each other's eyes.

"At last I have found you," he said, almost in a whisper.

"Long have I waited," she breathed in reply.

"Long have I sought you among all the tribes, but now I am content."

He sat beside her and, hand in hand, they conversed in low voices until the shadows lengthened. Then she arose and went to her Father's tepee.

"I have chosen," she said, "my mate has come."

"Who is he?"

"I know not, Father. I only know that he is my mate—the mate I have waited for."

"Send him to me."

The stranger stood before the Chief. "Who are you? Whence came you? Where go you, and whom do you seek?"

"I am a stranger. I come from afar. I go to all tribes. I seek my mate and happiness, or rather, I have been among many tribes, and I have found my mate. I seek

no further. Here I remain. I have found her. She is your daughter, Oh great Chief."

"And do you, a stranger, a wanderer, a dreamer, presume to claim as wife the Princess of Soboba who is courted by the great Chieftains?"

"I claim only Mahalla, my mate, by the right of love alone."

"Mahalla is the Princess of Soboba."

"Of that I know nothing. I only know she is my mate, and I am hers. The Great Spirit has so willed it. We know it."

"Nay, bold stranger, it is not so. Begone."

Mahalla, having overheard the stormy interview, hastened to her old friend the Medicine Man and poured out her story with tears. "Shall I leave my Father and my people," she asked, "and flee in the night to a far country?"

The wrinkled old man was silent. With his claw-like fingers he made marks upon a pile of sand. At length he said, "I know not. The Spirits give no sign. The wisdom of Man in such matters is imperfect. You should consult the wild animals. Tonight, at the darkest hour, go you to the counsel place of the animals. Go with love and with faith. Go wearing only your royal breast

plates and the Girdle of your Soul. Call all the animals, They love you and will not fail you. They shall decide."

Accordingly, at the darkest hour, Mahalla emerged from her tent and hastened to the desert place where no plant would grow—the counsel place of the animals. She called to the Puma, the Coyote, the Fox, the Rabbit and to all the animals and night birds. She called to the east, the west, the north and the south. They came singly, in pairs and in packs. There was a soft patter of padded feet as they trotted, leaped and loped to the circle. The wings of the Hawk and the Owl made a whirring sound as they circled in the air. The animals sat upon their haunches in a circle around her.

"Hear me, oh, my friends, I love you, and have served you, and will serve you and help you for all time. Give me your aid and counsel now. My mate has called me. My Father opposes. Shall I abandon my people and my Father, and flee to a far country with the mate of my soul—the stranger?"

The animals wagged their heads and counseled together.

"We would see the stranger," said the Fox, and all the animals purred their approval.

"I will bring him," Mahalla replied. "He will surely be waiting near my tepee."

In a short time Mahalla returned hand and hand with the stranger. The animals looked into his face and whispered together. "It is the Prince of Plenty. Happy the tribe that shall hold him." They fawned against his legs and purred their welcome.

"Tell me," said the Princess, "shall we flee together?"

"Too late!" interrupted the Coyote, "the village is aroused. The warriors are pursuing."

All the animals tipped their heads to listen. The angry shouts of men could be heard. Nearer and nearer they came.

"Then we will die together," said the Princess, taking the hand of the stranger. "Death together is better than life without love."

"Hear me, oh friends," said the stranger, "wherever our blood shall mingle together in the sand, that soil shall be sacred to our friends, the wild creatures. Here our blood will fall, and here will spring up the plants that furnish food to the wild creatures only. Plants that shall produce food abundantly so that there shall never be famine again for our friends. You, Puma, and you, Coyote, and you, Rabbit, shall carry the seeds and scatter them on barren spots and on hillsides, and wherever they shall grow that land shall be cursed for Man and sacred to

the wild creatures, for nothing that Man can eat will grow with vigor upon it."

The lovers knelt upon the sand, clasped hands and bowed their heads. The warriors were upon them. The heavy war clubs fell and the blood of the lovers mingled in the sand.

With a snarl of rage the Pumas and Coyotes bounded forward. "Go back to your people," they roared. "Go back and tell them you have killed our Princess. Henceforth there shall be war between Man and wild creatures. We shall kill you and you shall kill us. Tell your Chief you have killed his daughter and her mate—the Prince of Plenty—who was the mysterious stranger. Henceforth the Indian shall know want and famine, but from this ground, consecrated by the blood of the friends of wild animals, shall grow strange new plants to produce food for the wild creatures only. Wherever those plants will grow the soil belongs to us and will produce nothing for Man. The Prince of Plenty has provided for the friends of his mate."

In due time there grew from the blood-moistened ground three plants never known before—the wild buckwheat, the wild barley and the manzanita. They produced seeds and berries, foods especially suited for wild crea-

tures, but not for Man. The Puma, the Coyote, and the Rabbit carried the seeds to the waste and barren places on the plains and on the rocky hillsides where they grow, to this day, producing abundant food for wild creatures; and to this day there has been bitter warfare between Man, and the Puma and Coyote.

HOW THE ROAD RUNNER WON HIS RED FEATHER

ONCE upon a time—long before time—an Indian went to the Chief of the Soboba Indians bearing a strange tale. The Apaches, their eastern neighbors and ancient enemies, had secured from a burning mountain a wonderful new magic called Fire. The Coyote had carried it to them. This Fire which consumed dry wood, not only gave out a pleasant warmth, but had the power of making the corn and acorns, upon which they subsisted, more delicious to the taste.

The burning mountain was in the Land of the Apaches, far beyond the desert, and beyond the great river that flows from the deep chasm. The Apaches would not give or sell the fire to the Sobobas because of the bitter warfare which had existed between the tribes for generations.

The Chief called a council of all the tribe, and as was the custom in those days, all the birds and animals were invited, for they lived together in peace, and understood each other's languages.

When the council was assembled the Chief addressed them, and in conclusion, said :

“We, too, must secure this new magic called Fire which brings the heat of the day to the cold nights, and which works a charm on food to make it more delicious. As our enemies, the Apaches, will neither give nor sell it to us, we must go through their country to the burning mountain to secure it. Who will be the messenger? He must be the strongest, for he must swim the great river. He must be the bravest, for our enemies are cruel, and the burning mountain is guarded by venomous serpents. He must be the swiftest to bring the fire while a spark still burns. Who will go?”

There was much talking among the braves, but each had an excuse to offer.

Then the Chief addressed the animals: “Man is not equal to the task. Among the animals many are brave and sagacious. Who will go?”

All eyes were turned toward the Lion.

The Lion lifted his chin from his outstretched paws, and flicked his tail nervously. “I like my food raw,” he roared. “My mane keeps me warm.” His roar changed to a whine as he added, “And I just know I am going to be afraid of fire.”

The Dog was called upon. “I am a friend of Man,” he barked, wagging his tail, “and I like the idea of cooked

food. If Man will come with me I will do my best, but I will be too lonesome to go alone."

The Bear was exempted because he had flat feet, and several animals of a retiring nature, who suffered from nervous chilliness of the pedal extremities.

Then the council turned to the birds, and called for the Eagle.

The Eagle flapped his wings, and swept the council with a glance of his fearless eyes. "I am a public spirited bird," he screamed, "and this fire may be a good thing for the people, but I am a mountain bird. I would be lost in the desert; therefore I beg to be excused."

The Dove begged to be excused because he was a bird of peace. Fighting was quite abhorrent to him, and besides, he was just married, and preferred to stay at home to bill and coo.

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The Owl contended that he was a bird of wisdom much needed in council. He preferred a desk position.

The Chief was in despair. "Is no man, beast, or bird brave enough to bring the fire?"

Into the circle walked a lean, brown bird of sprightly demeanor. He was a handsome bird. His head was erect, and his tail feathers stood up like a teapot handle. His legs were long and thin. He was especially proud of

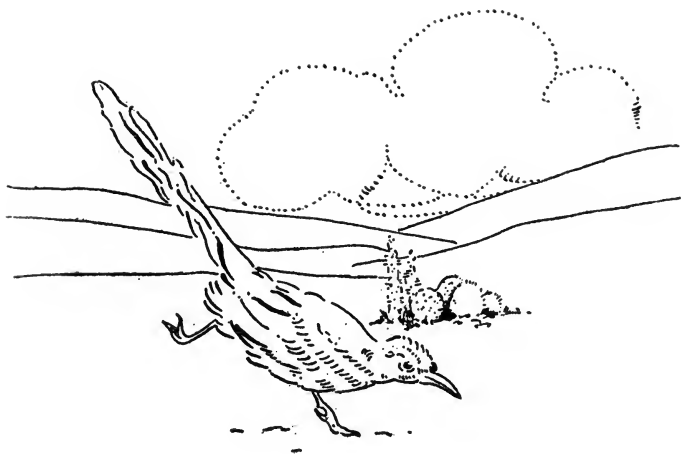
his legs. He was a Road Runner—and still is, for that matter.

“I will bring the fire,” he said in a steady voice. “I may not be wise or famous, but I am spry on my feet. I am at home on the desert, and I know how to fight the snakes. I will bring the fire.”

Loud and prolonged cheering followed this announcement.

After a few words of thanks and advice from the Chief, the Road Runner started on his dangerous journey. He ran easily and swiftly with lowered head. In a few hours he entered the desert—a sandy waste, quivering with heat, and barren of verdure excepting for an occasional cactus and a few thorny bushes. At long intervals he passed small water courses with a thin fringe of willows and a narrow strip of cultivated land where the desert Indians made their homes. They paid no attention to him, for he was only a Road Runner, all bones, pride and feathers, and too tough to eat.

When he reached the Great River he sat down to rest his aching legs, and to gaze at the broad waters rushing swiftly toward the Sea. He had never seen such a large river. It was far too wide for him to fly across, and he was a poor swimmer. How was he to get over?



While considering the question he heard the sharp rattle of his hereditary enemy—the Rattle Snake. Guided by the sound he soon came upon the snake, who, having found the nest of a Wild Goose, was about to devour the eggs. The Road Runner attacked at once. When the snake turned and glided away, the Goose, having returned and witnessed the fight, wept for joy.

“Thank you, thank you,” she repeated in a quacking voice, the tears streaming down her bill. “What can a Goose do to show her gratitude and repay your kindness?”

“Are you a good swimmer?”

“I may not be swift, but I am strong and considered graceful in the water.”

“Will you carry me across the river?”

“I will, and bring you back too. It is a small service to offer one who has saved my home.”

“It will be a great favor to me.”

The Goose waddled into the water and the Road Runner clambered on her broad back. In a short time he was across the river, and having thanked the Goose, went racing away toward the burning mountain whose smoking cone could be seen in the distance.

When he began to ascend the mountain he entered the region of the Snakes. He had not proceeded far when

he was challenged by a huge Rattler who coiled into his fighting position and shook the rattles on the end of his tail defiantly.

The Road Runner seized a piece of thorny cactus in his bill and laid it in front of the Snake. Then he found another and laid it beside the first one; then another, and another until he had made a circle completely around the Snake.

The trap thus being laid, the Road Runner stood at a safe distance in front of the Snake and jeered at him, saying bitter and taunting things, and daring him to strike.

The Snake became more and more angry until, being unable to control his fury, lunged full length at his tormenter.

The Road Runner having expected this, stepped lightly to one side, and the Snake came down with a hard thump on the ground impaling his neck on one of the sharp thorns. Before he could extricate himself the Road Runner had finished the fight by driving his beak into the Snake's head.

A short distance beyond he was stopped by another Snake whom he fought and conquered in the same way. All day long he was carrying cactus and fighting Snakes,

until at evening when he reached the fire at the top of the mountain he was exhausted but triumphant.

As he looked at the fire he remembered with regret that he had brought nothing to carry the fire in.

All night long he pondered over the question of how he was to carry the fire.

Early the next morning he was ready to return. He had the fire. And where do you suppose he carried it? You will never guess, so I will have to tell you. He had it concealed among the feathers of his ear.

He ran down the mountain to the river. The Goose carried him across. He raced over the desert, and over the hills and never stopped until he reached the council place.

There he shook his head over a pile of dry leaves. Out dropped a spark. The leaves blazed up. Little sticks were piled on, then bigger sticks, then big logs. That bonfire was the first council fire of the Indians. Around it they learned to parch corn and roast acorns—the first lesson in cooking food.

The Road Runner was praised and thanked. The Chief announced that, as a medal of valor he should always wear in his ear the single feather that had been scorched red by the fire, and promised that he would always be protected by man.

That was ages and ages ago, but even to this day there are laws to protect the Road Runner, and anyone harming him may be severely punished.

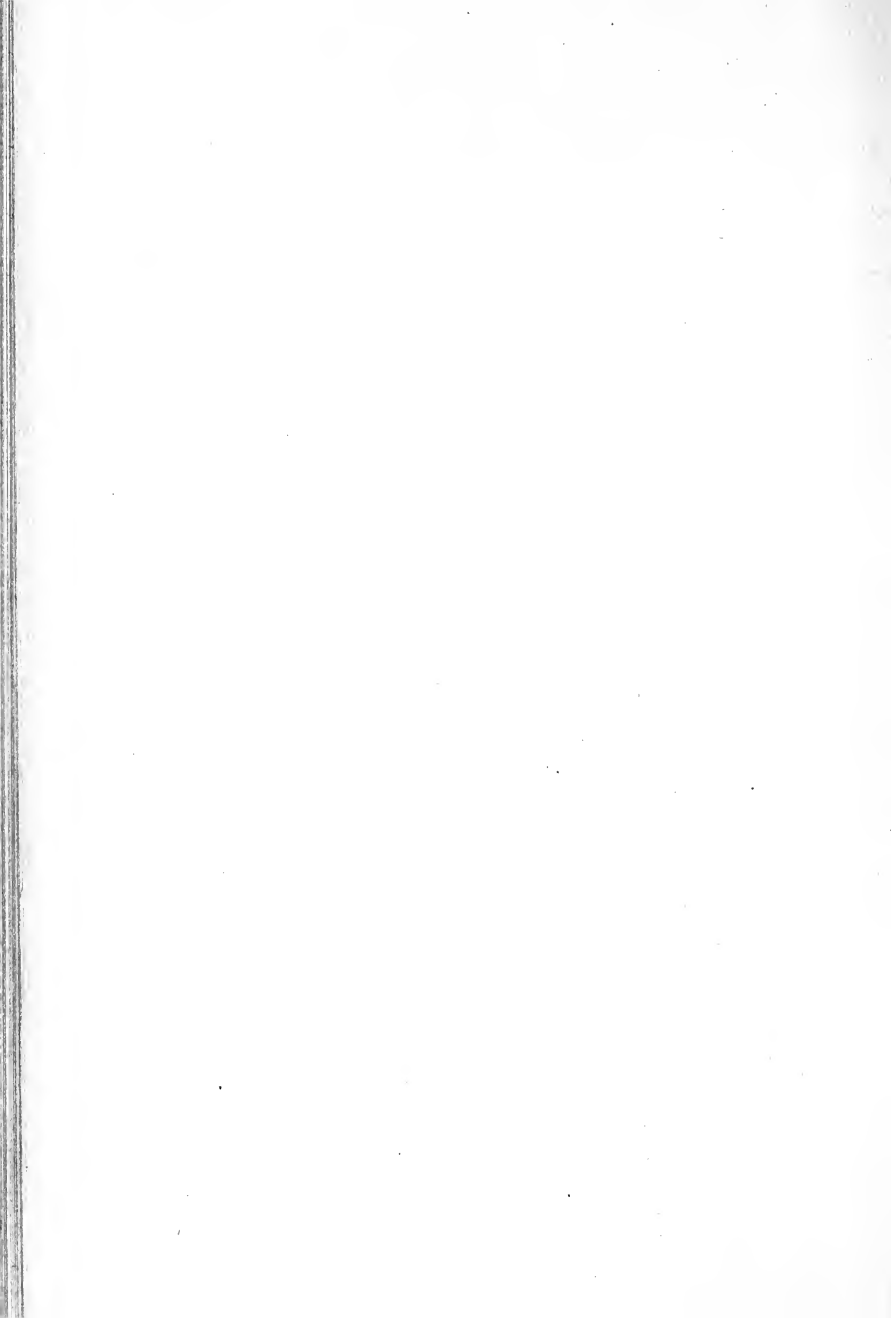
His principal occupation now is killing Snakes, but experience has taught him discretion, and he prefers to attack while they sleep.

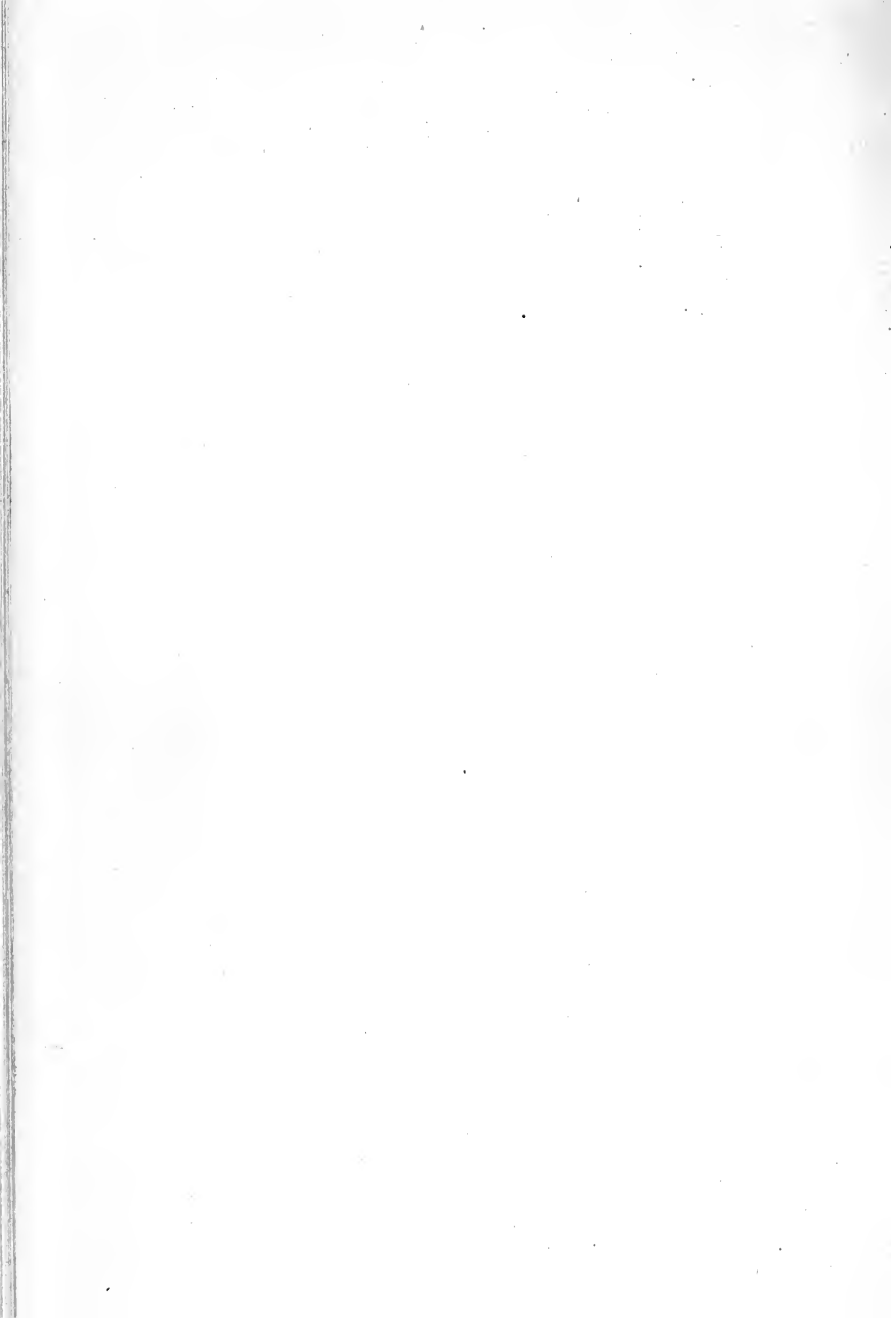
For amusement he likes to run in the middle of the road ahead of automobiles.

If you should be able to catch one, which I very much doubt, examine the feathers around his ear. You will find concealed there a single small feather of the bright red color of fire.

[THE END]







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