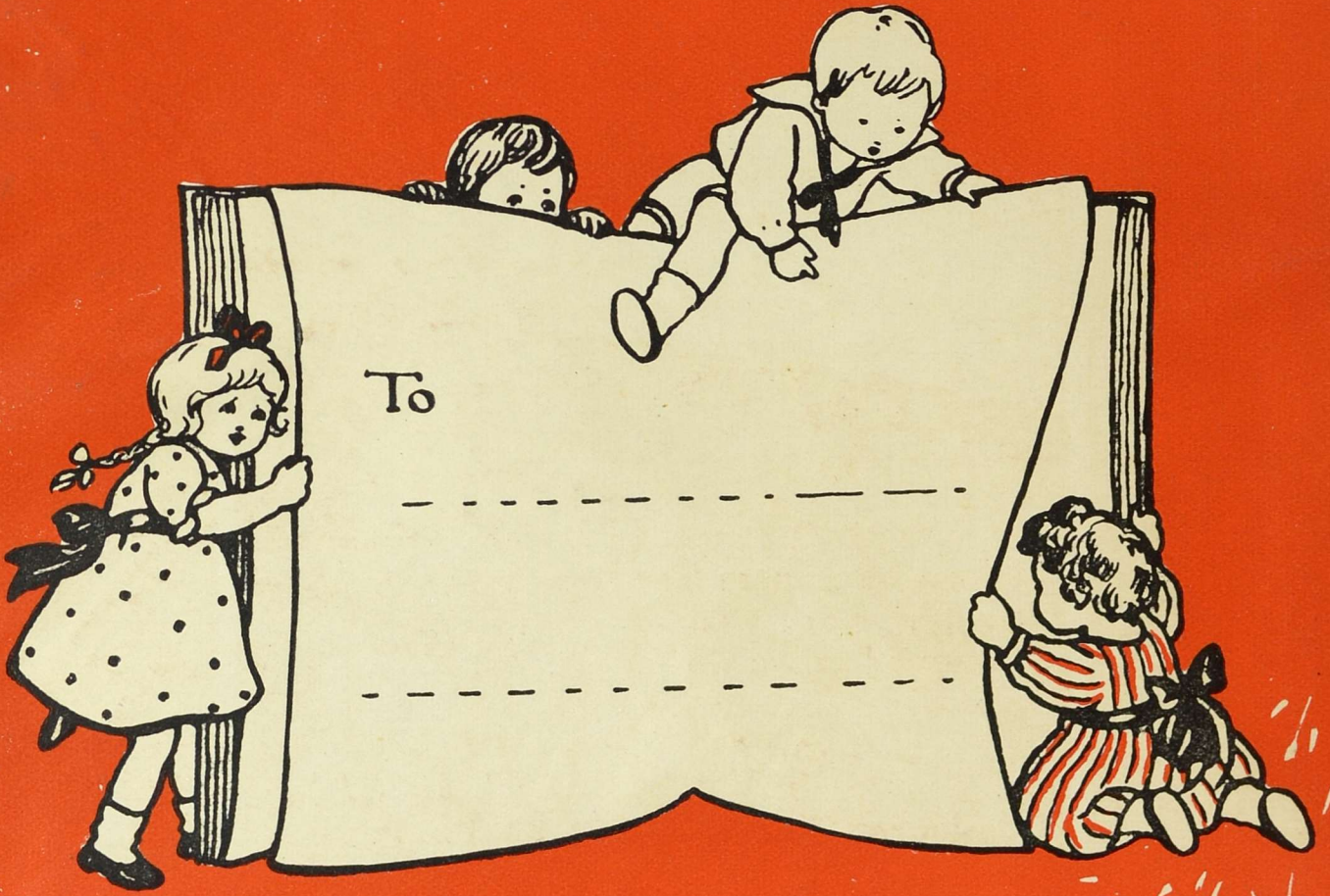




MY · VERY · FIRST · LITTLE  
ANIMAL · BOOK

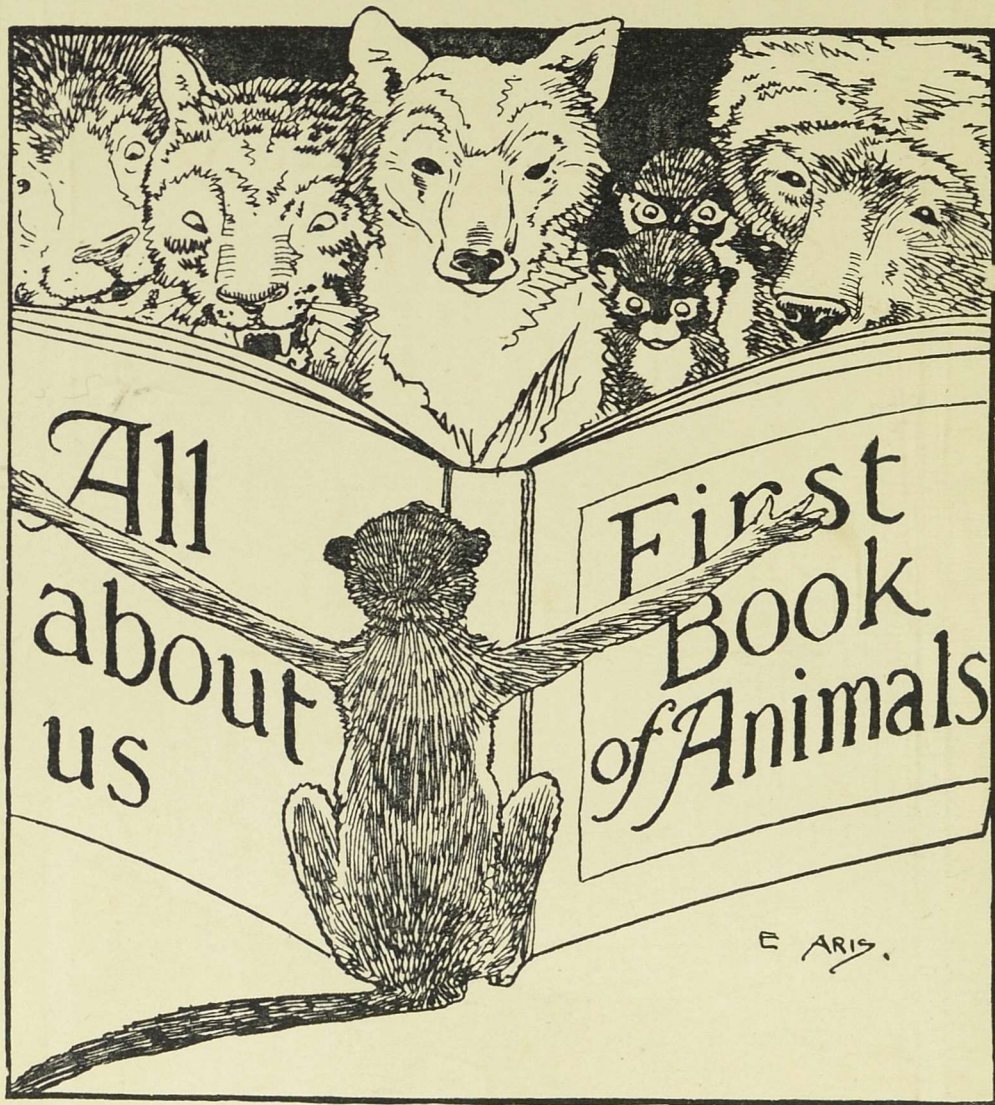


# My very first little Book of Animals



London  
Henry Frowde and  
Hodder & Stoughton





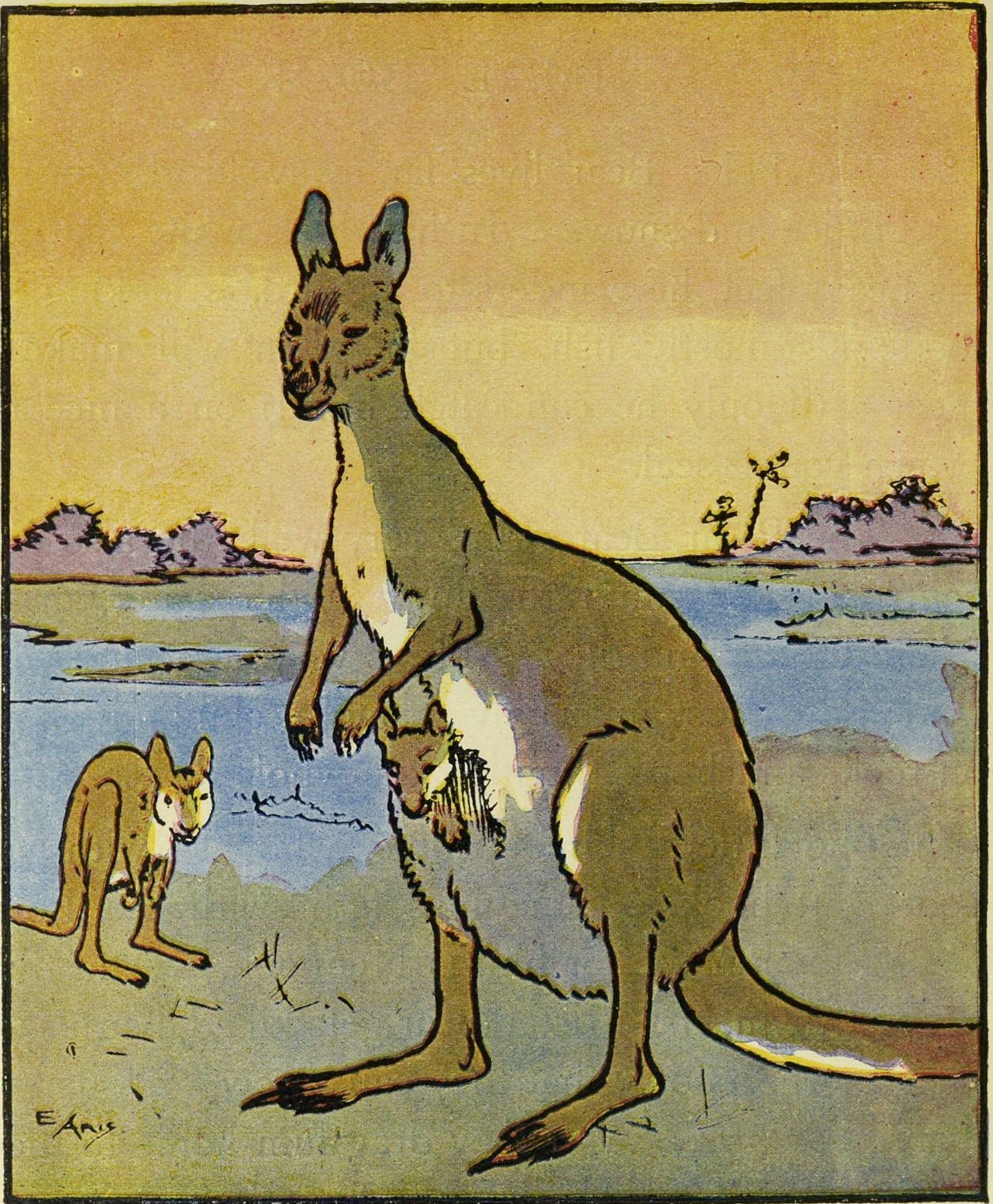
This is about the beasts that range  
In the forests and mountains wild,  
Most of them very fierce and strange,  
And not fit pets for a child,  
But all of them clever, each in its way,  
And each, in its own way too,  
Very industrious day by day,  
And fond of its home, like you!

# MY VERY FIRST LITTLE ANIMAL BOOK

The Polar Bear lives far away North, in the land of ice and snow. ~ In his thick white coat, on his heavy feet, he wanders to and fro, ~ looking for food ; it's mostly fish, but he often will make a meal ~ (if only he can catch him !) on a nice fat brown young seal.

The Polar Bear swims very well : he also can contrive ~ to swim right down under water, or to take a header and dive. ~ He is very fierce and very wild : he is most amazingly strong, ~ climbing about on rocks and bergs, hunting the whole day long.

The little Eskimo people, who fish with harpoon and hook, ~ sometimes fight with the Polar Bear : their name for him is Nennook. ~ And they generally win, and Mister Bear gets killed, because ~ their big harpoons, that they can throw, are sharper than his claws. ~ And they drag him home to their round snow-huts : oh, what a fuss they make, ~ if they can have for supper a piece of tough bear-steak !



THE KANGAROO

# THE KANGAROO

Of all the curious animals—there are plenty of them, too! ~ one of the very oddest is the jumping Kangaroo. ~ In the deserts of Australia, the travellers see it roam; ~ it hasn't got a den or cave, or any sort of home. ~ So it takes its young ones with it in a pocket, as you see, ~ a sort of pouch: how useful and convenient that must be! ~ And if there's any danger, they will run at once and hide, ~ in that comfortable pocket—there is room for all inside.

The Kangaroo can only jump; it cannot walk at all. ~ Its forelegs, you may notice, are unusually small, ~ but its hind-legs, which it jumps with, they are springy, firm, and strong, ~ and its tail is like another leg, extremely thick and long.

It's a quiet, gentle creature, that lives on odds and ends ~ of leaves and grass and green stuff, among its peaceful friends. ~ But if you were to vex it, oh, then you might turn pale, ~ to see it coming towards you with a jumping-pole of tail!



THE RHINOCEROS



# THE RHINOCEROS

There is, perhaps, no creature quite so ugly or so cross, ~ as that leathery, clumsy, one-horned beast: the black Rhinoceros. ~ Along the rivers of Africa he loves to plunge and wade, ~ keeping close to the reedy shore, for he likes the trees and shade. ~ He turns his little beady eyes cautiously to and fro, ~ to see if any harm is near.

But presently he will grow ~ in a temper all about nothing; he'll rush and rage and ramp. ~ All among the rushes and reeds, he then will snort and stamp, ~ and tear the trees to pieces, and tread the bushes flat: ~ and you too, if he met you—there's little doubt about that! ~ And in these fits of fury he will trample all the ground, ~ and root up all that grows in it, for half a mile around.

But when his temper lessens, and he feels a bit more cool, ~ he takes a little plunge-bath in the nearest river pool, ~ and then he has his dinner: he always wants it quickly, ~ and it's mostly ready for him. It is very hard and prickly. ~ What *do* you think he lives on? Indeed, you'd never guess. ~ He eats the plant called "Wait-a-bit": *Thorns*, neither more nor less!



THE ZEBRA

# THE ZEBRA

One looks at him, and says, "Of course : ∞ that is a horse. No, not a horse. ∞ A donkey." Yet, on drawing near, ∞ he is no donkey, that is clear. ∞ All over stripes of black and yellow : ∞ surely a very curious fellow ! ∞ But do not try to pat or stroke, ∞ or you'll be sorry that you spoke. ∞ For he has teeth and loves to bite ; ∞ and he can kick with all his might ; ∞ and he has lots of spiteful tricks, ∞ and he is crosser than two sticks ! ∞ Especially, when, as at present, ∞ he has a foal, he's most unpleasant !

The Zebra, in his home afar, ∞ in Africa, where forests are, ∞ enjoys himself, and thinks it grand ∞ to gallop in the desert sand. ∞ But if he's caught, in the hope to tame him, ∞ it makes him angry ; who can blame him ! ∞ If you were shut inside a cage, ∞ you surely would be in a rage, ∞ to think of all the air and space ∞ you had in your own dwelling-place. ∞ And in the Zebra's native home, ∞ there is such boundless room to roam.

He lives on grasses, green or seedy ; ∞ for though he's cross, he's never greedy. ∞ A few small blades of grassy stuff ; ∞ a drink of water ; that's enough.



THE REINDEER

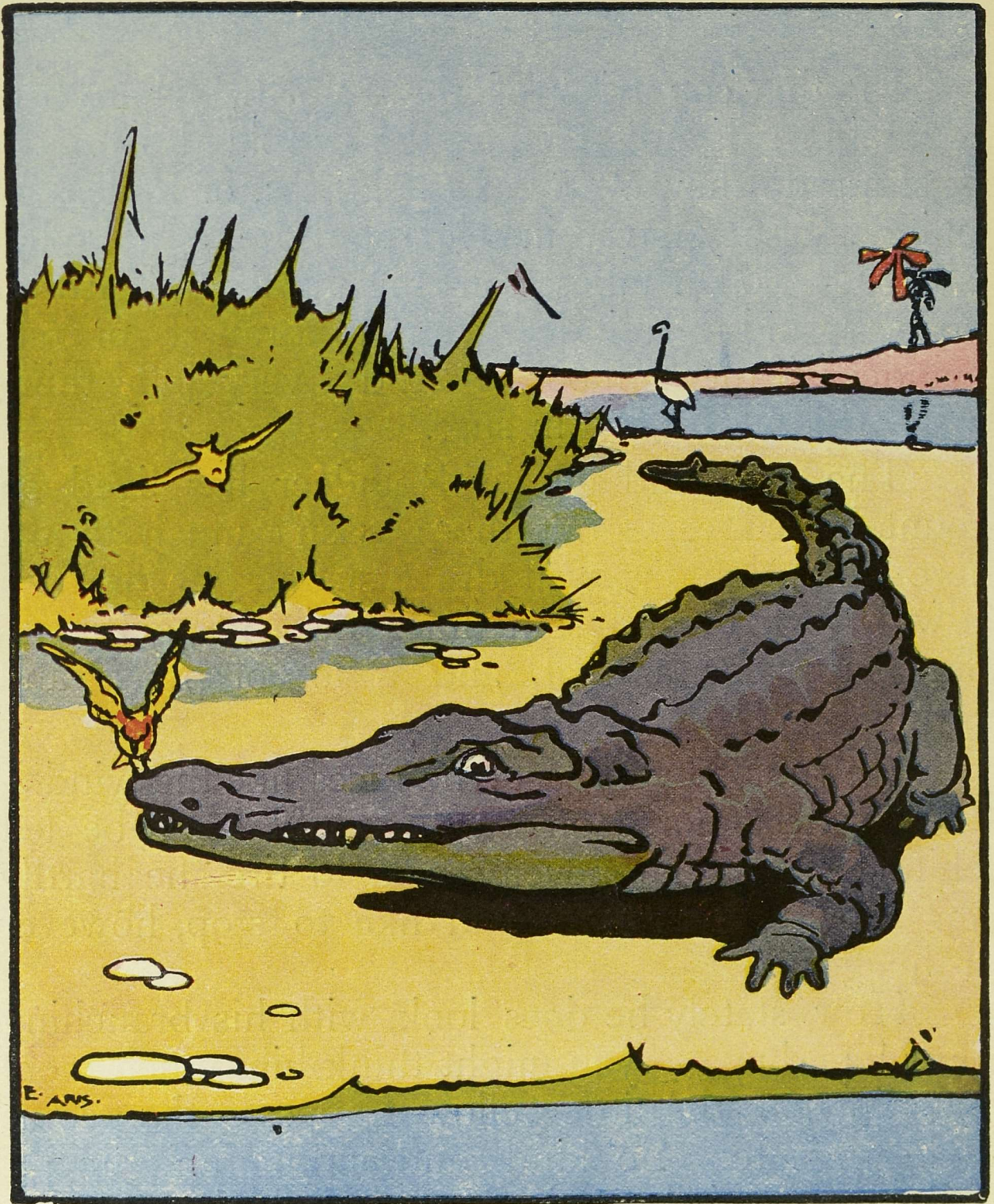
# THE REINDEER

In the countries of the North, where the mountain-roads are steep, ∞ the people don't have carts, nor do they ever keep ∞ horses, or mules, or ponies. They have, instead of those, ∞ a sledge that glides on runners on the hard and frozen snows, ∞ and a Reindeer-team to draw it, or one Reindeer, if they're poor. ∞ And a very jolly thing it is to ride like that, I'm sure.

The mild and gentle Reindeer has lived on mountain edges, ∞ but there wasn't much to eat there—he might as well draw sledges, ∞ for then he will be fed—and sometimes he'll be getting ∞ some sugar for a treat, and a lot of praise and petting.

He runs so very fast! he races like the wind. ∞ The swiftest horse on earth would soon be left behind. ∞ And he never seems to tire, he hardly ever shows ∞ that he would like to stop, however far he goes.

How stately he does look, with his branching horns! perhaps ∞ you might think him much more splendid than the little yellow Lapps, ∞ the people he belongs to. So kind, and strong and fine, ∞ and tame, he is! I wish I had a Reindeer that was mine!



THE CROCODILE

# THE CROCODILE

In Egypt, by the river Nile, one sees the crawling crocodile, ~ among the rushes and the reeds, where the cranes go down and the ibis feeds. ~ And he is dressed from head to tail ~ in a scaly coat, a coat of mail. ~ He lies and basks there half his time ~ in sunshine, on the yellow slime. ~ But if some person came to swim, ~ and didn't chance to notice him ~ until he saw those sharp white teeth ~ just opening in the mud beneath, ~ that horrid long red mouth agape, ~ he'd have a bother to escape. ~ For Mr. Crocodile can run ~ so very quickly after one! ~ But fish are mostly what he swallows.

And while he basks, and wades, and wallows, ~ he knows that he need have no fear ~ of any enemies being near. ~ Because, although it seems absurd, ~ he has a friend, a tiny bird, ~ who comes and hovers all about, ~ or perches calmly on his snout, ~ and lets him know, with curious cry, ~ if danger should be drawing nigh. ~ There's no one so unprepossessing, ~ but has a friend: O, what a blessing!



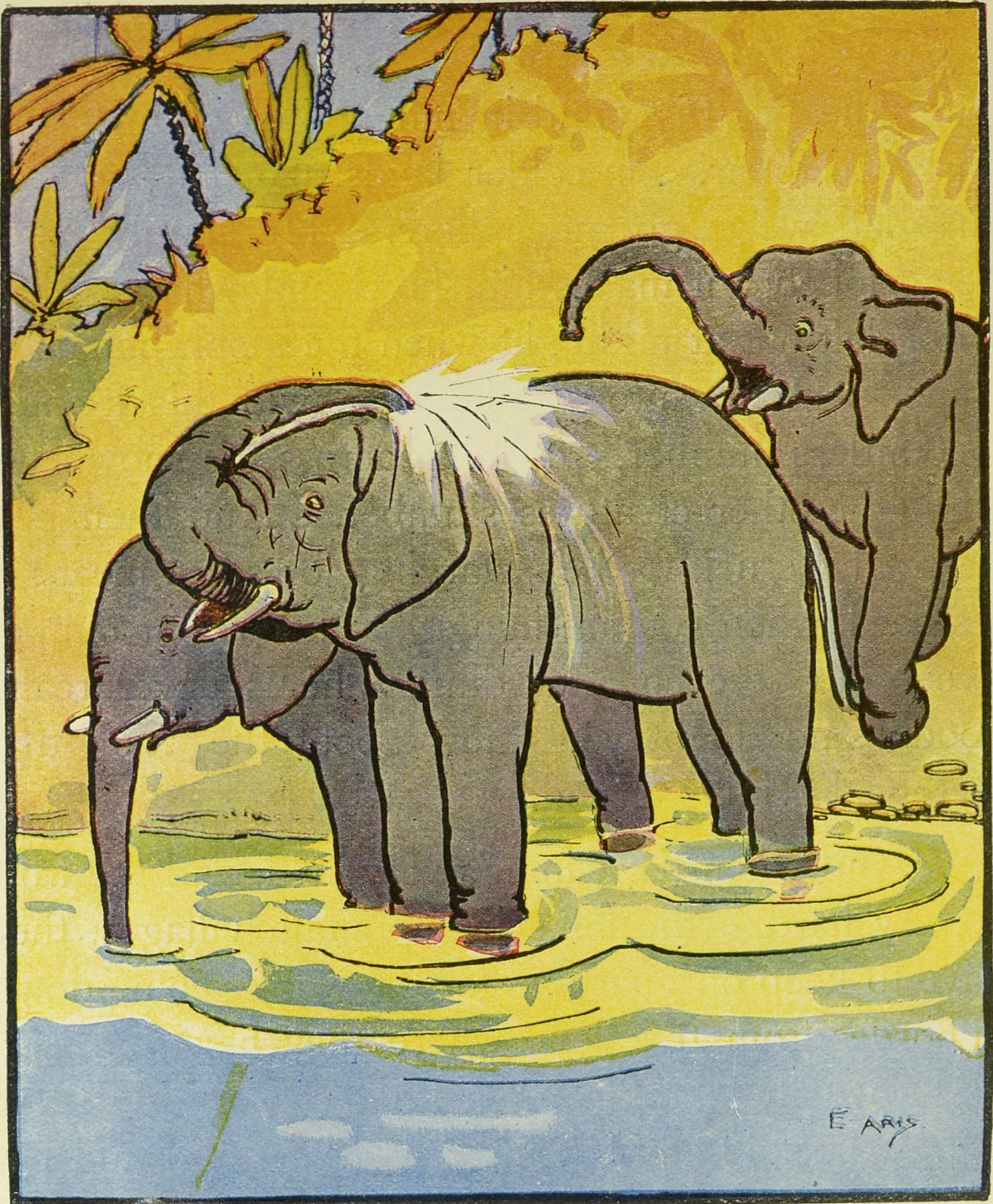
THE WOLF



# THE WOLF

The Wolf is found in mountains, or in forests dark and drear, ∞ in colder lands than England : I am glad we've got none here. ∞ He simply hates being lonely : it makes him howl and whine, ∞ like a dog left out at midnight when the moon begins to shine. ∞ He likes to go a-hunting, with his friends, a countless number, ∞ trotting across the snowfields while the other creatures slumber. ∞ And then he's fierce and cruel, for he's starving for some meat : ∞ it's hard, when you are hungry, to keep your temper sweet. ∞ But even after dinner, he is never really good ; ∞ no doubt you know about the Wolf that met Red Riding Hood.

And when the winter's very cold, and the frost is very hard, ∞ the folks in mountain villages, they have to keep on guard : ∞ for the wolves come down in hordes from the dens where they have hid, ∞ to find a woolly lambkin, or a little calf or kid. ∞ All round the folds and farmsteads, they sniff and pry and prowl : ∞ and if they're disappointed, my goodness, how they howl !



THE ELEPHANT

# THE ELEPHANT

One cannot call the Elephant pretty, or say he's a graceful figure. ∞ But he is so very big, you hardly could think of anything bigger. ∞ He has two large tusks, and a long thick trunk, and odd little twinkly eyes, ∞ and he is amazingly clever, and also remarkably wise. ∞ With his trunk, he can shut and open a gate, he can tie or untie a knot, ∞ he can turn a key, push back a bolt, pick fruit, and I don't know what.

He is trained to do all sorts of work, in India, where he dwells : ∞ carrying people, drawing logs ; and everybody tells ∞ most curious tales of his sensibleness. He doesn't like fish or flesh : ∞ he lives upon roots and herbs and leaves, and grass, if he gets it fresh. ∞ And he is patient, and mild, and good : he loves to obey his master ; ∞ the smallest sign will make him kneel, or stop, or travel faster. ∞ He seems to like being ordered about, and having to work for men ; ∞ and I even heard of an Elephant who tried to sweep out his den !

The baby Elephant's very fat ; it takes a long time to grow ∞ as big a size as its father—some thirty years or so. ∞ The mother is very kind to it, she will carry it tucked up tight ∞ in her trunk when she crosses a river—it must be a funny sight !



THE POLAR BEAR



THE BROWN BEAR

# THE OTTER

Although you might not think it in the least, ∞ the furry Otter is a British beast ; ∞ he's brown and graceful, very long and thin : ∞ but he has sharp white teeth, and such a grin ! ∞ Fish is the only food he seems to care for ; ∞ he lives by streams and running rivers, therefore ; ∞ it doesn't matter if they're deep, to him, ∞ for he can dive as well as he can swim.

Anglers and fishermen of every sort ∞ hate Master Otter, for he spoils their sport. ∞ “ That greedy animal ! ” they say, “ I wish ∞ he wouldn't come and eat up all our fish ! ” ∞ So, every now and then, with dogs they go, ∞ and hunt him up and down and to and fro ; ∞ and then he has to put forth all his cunning, ∞ hiding in holes, swimming, or swiftly running.

He's very dainty : all that he bites out, ∞ if he has caught a salmon or a trout, ∞ is just one bit from the fish's shoulder. ∞ He leaves the rest upon a bank or boulder ; ∞ or sometimes lying on a rocky shelf. ∞ And as he doesn't want it for himself, ∞ poor people come and look there every day, ∞ and take the fish that he has left, away. ∞ Hunger is hard to bear : but it is harder ∞ if folks are driven to rob an otter's larder !



THE OTTER

# THE TIGER

“ Handsome is as handsome does, ” that’s what the old folks said. ~ Perhaps they had just then a thought of the Tiger in their head. ~ For though he has the handsomest skin that you could wish to see : ~ he’s very cruel, very fierce : as bad as bad can be.

In the Indian jungles where he lives, the other creatures go ~ as far as ever they can from him, they fear and hate him so. ~ For he will kill for killing’s sake : not simply for his food : ~ and no respectable animal considers that is good. ~ He climbs along the heavy boughs, he crouches in the grass, ~ waiting to spring, like cat on mouse, on any one who may pass. ~ And people come to hunt him : for they say, “ We cannot stand ~ a savage tiger roaming loose and frightening all the land. ”

They ride on great big elephants, they carry guns and shot. ~ But the Tiger would as soon attack an Elephant as not. ~ Like some enormous splendid cat, all striped with gold and black, ~ he creeps beneath the bushes while he hears the rifles crack. ~ Till, suddenly, while the hunters think they must have killed him quite, ~ he fastens on the Elephant : and then there is a fight !





E. Aris

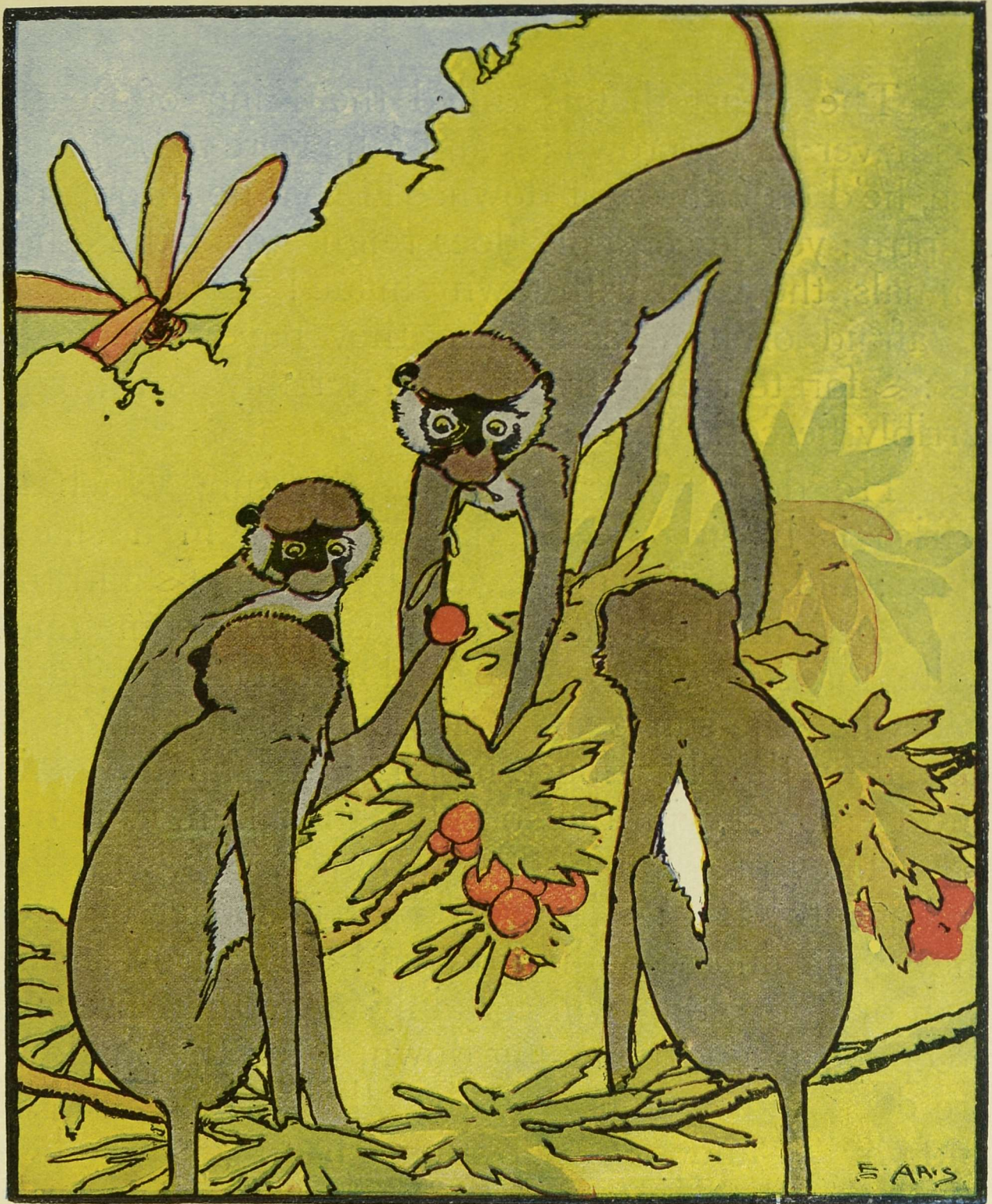
THE TIGER

# THE MONKEY

There are lots of monkeys of every sort, some of them tall and some of them short ; some of them weak, and meek, and mild, with sad brown eyes like a little lost child. Some of them ugly, and spiteful too, as you will know, if you've been to the Zoo. There are plenty of monkeys for your choosing ; and many of them are extremely amusing. Most of the monkeys that one sees, live in the branches of leafy trees ; they feed on berries and nuts and fruits, bitter or sweet ones : anything suits.

And how they gobble, and how they chatter ! It makes you wonder what is the matter, when you hear the monkeys make such a noise. And, just like mischievous girls and boys, they love to worry and mock and tease. They throw things down at you out of the trees. They try to imitate all you do, that noisy, ugly, chattering crew.

But they are often kind to each other ; the hairy monkey father and mother will get in a dreadful state of alarm, if they think their children might come to harm. They guard them carefully night and day ; and often join in their games of play : hide-and-seek, up ever so high, and monkey leap-frog, and monkey " I spy."



THE MONKEY

# THE LION

The Beast that is called the King of Beasts has never had a crown ; ~ and if he were to be given one, he'd only throw it down. ~ He has no throne nor sceptre ; yet he certainly does reign ~ over the other animals, the Lion with tawny mane ! ~ They are all so afraid of him, as indeed they have reason to be : ~ for terribly strong, and terribly swift, and terribly fierce is he.

He does not care to face the sun, which in Africa is blazing ; ~ all day he stays in a shady place ; and the deer go peacefully grazing, ~ and the antelopes, and the little gazelles, they sometimes quite forget ~ what a dreadful enemy they have. But when the sun is set, ~ the Lion and the Lioness go out on the chase once more, ~ and fill the plain and the forest with the sound of their hungry roar.

They prowl along like two great cats, with soft and stealthy feet ; ~ it's very odd if sooner or later they don't find something to eat ! ~ Deer or sheep, man or horse, they will certainly make their prey : ~ creeping up and pouncing down, when the shadows are deep and grey. ~ And the other animals huddle and hide, and whisper in a fright, ~ " Their Majesties the King and Queen are out for a walk to-night ! "



THE LION

## THE WALRUS

The Walrus lives on the Arctic shores, where it always is very cold ; and you could hardly say that he was beautiful to behold. A sort of moustache, two tusky teeth, and a very heavy, fat unwieldly body,—well, we ourselves should not care much about that !

And he has a most ferocious face, if you were to see him peep from behind an iceberg, you'd jump ! But I've heard that beauty is only skin-deep, so ugliness may be just the same, with a nice kind heart beneath.

The Walrus climbs about the rocks by the aid of his long sharp teeth, and eats the shrimps and seaweeds—and sometimes—but please don't tell ! he is hungry enough, or greedy enough, to eat young seals as well.

He also fights the Polar Bear, the battle is fierce and hot, and the Walrus, with his powerful teeth, will win as often as not.

He is hunted very frequently, though, for the sake of his tusks and skin. First come the little Esquimo ; and then the sailors begin to follow him across the ice ; and he either fights or runs, for he doesn't like the big harpoons or the sound of the banging guns.



THE WALRUS

# THE OPOSSUM

No other creature, I suppose, can play such a trick as the 'possum. ∞ You might find it lying flat on the ground, as still as a fallen blossom ; ∞ you might roll it about, and shove it, or even kick it, to prove, ∞ it *must* be dead ; and all the time that 'possum wouldn't move. ∞ But when it had watched you out of sight through the chink of its half-shut eye : ∞ it would slowly, slowly come to life, as it seemed ; and by and by ∞ it would swing itself to the nearest tree, by the aid of its hands and tail. ∞ And if you came back to find it again : why, certainly you would fail. ∞ For the 'possum would be a mile away, hunting birds in the trees : ∞ it lives on birds and eggs, and indeed, on anything it can seize : ∞ and it hangs by its tail, its furry tail, which is very thick and strong, ∞ and so, as fast as anything, it silently swings along.

Some 'possums live on shell-fish, in swamps ; and there are others, too, ∞ who carry their young in pouches, the same as the kangaroo. ∞ They are not by any means pleasing ; you never can make them tame, ∞ but the thing for which they are known the best, is the “ playing 'possum ” game, ∞ pretending to be dead, you know. But you could soon find out, ∞ by putting a finger in 'possum's mouth—oh, wouldn't he make you shout !





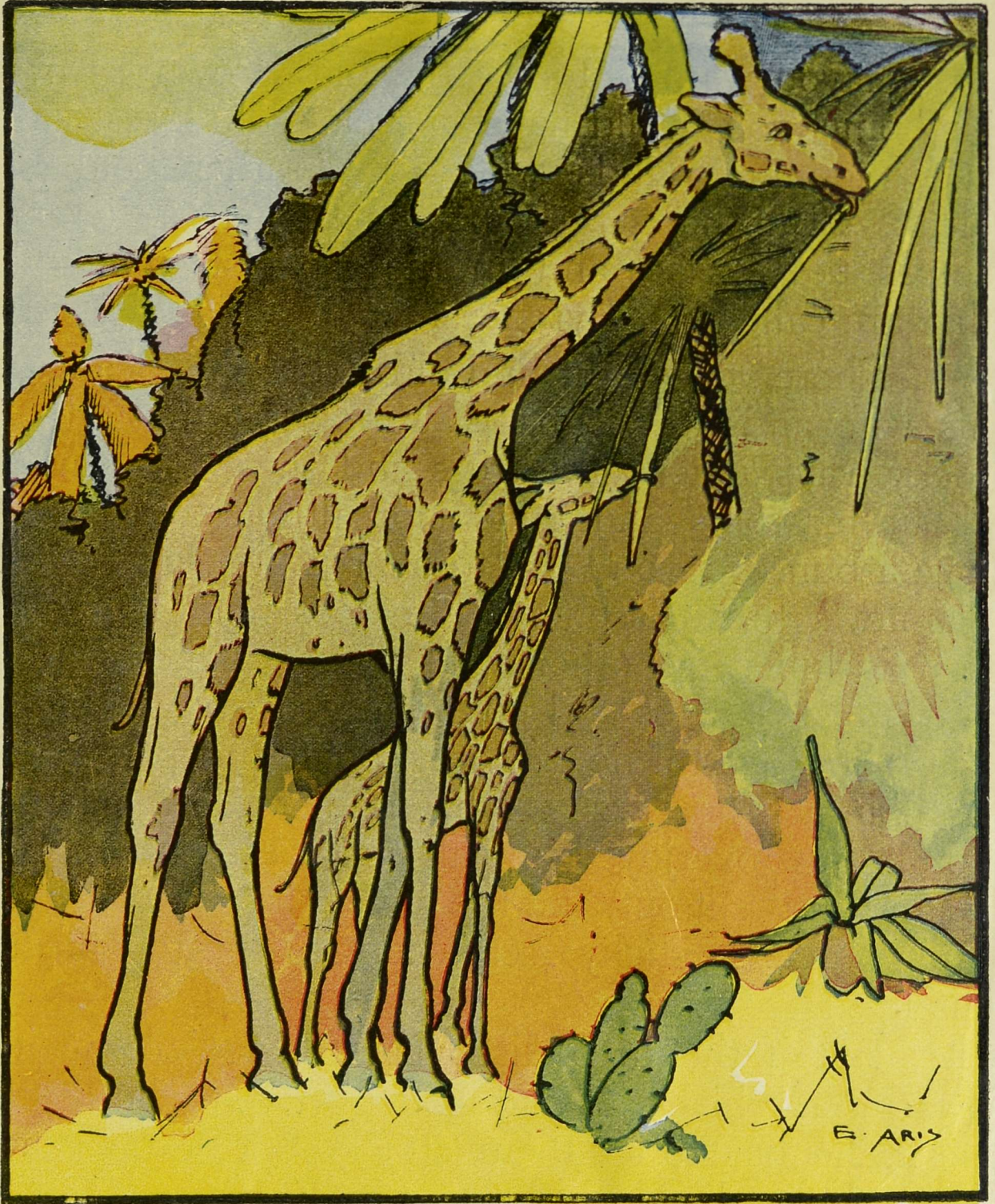
THE OPOSSUM

# THE GIRAFFE

Some animals, as no doubt you know, ∞ have very long legs, the quicker to go. ∞ Some have long tails to swish about : ∞ some have long teeth, to bite, no doubt. ∞ Some have long beaks, the better to peck. ∞ The Giraffe has got a very long neck. ∞ This is in order that he may reach ∞ the leaves of the trees—not oak and beech, ∞ but tall, tall trees in the tangled glade ∞ of the African wood where his home is made. ∞ And big as he is, he is gentle and mild ; ∞ he wouldn't be rough with the smallest child. ∞ And he's all over spots ; we should think it a pity, ∞ if we were like that, but on him they look pretty.

He takes the leaves that are tender and young, ∞ and, curling round them his long thin tongue, ∞ he sucks the juices ; his little one, too, ∞ eats as it sees its father do, ∞ nibbling leaves, which are all it can need ; ∞ exceedingly simple food indeed!

The Giraffe can run very fast if he likes : ∞ his long legs carry him over the spikes ∞ and thorny boughs of the plants that grow there. ∞ But he doesn't like it if strangers go there. ∞ For, though he's so big, he is ever so shy, ∞ and much more timid than you or I. ∞ *We* shouldn't run if we saw a stranger. ∞ But Giraffes are always expecting danger.



THE GIRAFFE

