

THE COMING OF THE LIGHT . . .

Long, long ago before there was human life, there was only animal life. There was the bird tribe, the animal tribe, and the reptile tribe. Once a year, in the Spring time, all these different tribes met, and held a great festival, called a "Munmundi."

The bird tribe were great talkers. The cockatoos cried, "Come and let us prepare ourselves for this great "Mun-mun-di"! So they retired into the bush, and decorated themselves with leaves and bushes. When they came out again they began to dance in their decorations before the kangaroos, the carpet snake, the goanna, and all the others of the reptile and animal tribes.

The animal and reptile tribes cheered and praised the feathered tribe's dancing. This admiration and praise made the feathered tribe very conceited. The cockatoo, who was always a very cheeky fellow, went to the eagle hawk, chief of the feathered tribe, and said, "Oh, Father Eagle Hawk, are not we feathered tribe greater than the kangaroo, the carpet snake, the goanna, and all the tribes?"

The eagle hawk answered, "Oh my son, birds of course are superior to all the other tribes."

Now, the other tribes overheard all this, and it made them very angry. So after much wrangling the feathered tribe challenged the other tribes to fight, and to prove who was the superior.

But there was one little tribe that did not take sides, and that was the bat tribe. The chief of the bat tribe advised his tribe to wait and see who was the victor—and then to side with the victor.

So the great conflict began. First one side seemed likely to win, and then the other. The little bats were kept busy, first cheering the feathered tribe, and then turning over to the side of the animal tribe.

After much bloodshed and slaughter the Emu and Kangaroo met in mortal combat. Just as they both had their spears raised to throw, the Kangaroo cried, "Oh Emu, why should we continue all this foolish killing; let us be friends." The Emu answered, "Oh, yes, that conceited cockatoo began all this killing." So they all at once became friends, and all the different feathered, animal and reptile tribes were filled with joy.

But the little bat tribe did not know what to do, as they had been false to both parties. So the bat tribe had to go and live with the wicked owls, who always lived away by themselves, and who delighted in the dark.

Now the Sun, the great ruler of all, saw this fighting and killing among the animals. So the sun became very angry, hid his face, and all the earth became very dark. Life in the darkness was a great burden to all the animals. They found it hard to live, and the birds could not sing.

WHY ALL OUR WILD CREATURES

PECK AT THE SELFISH OWL



David Unaipon

Folk-Lore has a peculiar fascination always. The original inhabitants of Australia have handed down the centuries many strange and beautiful legends. It has been left to David Unaipon, a full-blood aborigine and cultured gentleman, to make public some of these legends. Mr. Unaipon, a talented representative of his race, was born at Port Macleay, South Australia. He was educated among white people and became a brilliant scholar.