

## **The Australian Grasshopper**

by Ambrose Bierce

A Distinguished Naturalist was travelling in Australia, when he saw a Kangaroo in session and flung a stone at it. The Kangaroo immediately adjourned, tracing against the sunset sky a parabolic curve spanning seven provinces, and vanished below the horizon. The Distinguished Naturalist looked interested, but said nothing for an hour; then he said to his native Guide:

"You have pretty wide meadows here, I suppose?"

"No, not very wide," the Guide answered; "about the same as in England and America."

After another long silence the Distinguished Naturalist said:

"The hay which we shall purchase for our horses this evening--I shall expect to find the stalks about fifty feet long. Am I right?"

"Why, no," said the Guide; "a foot or two is about the usual length of our hay. What can you be thinking of?"

The Distinguished Naturalist made no immediate reply, but later, as in the shades of night they journeyed through the desolate vastness of the Great Lone Land, he broke the silence:

"I was thinking," he said, "of the uncommon magnitude of that grasshopper."