Two Indian Children

of

Long Ago

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INDIAN CHILDREN OF LONG AGO

THE FIRST AMERICANS

We are proud of being Americans. But we must not forget that the Indians once owned all America, north and south and east and west.

The Indians were the first Americans of whom we read. No people ever had a greater love for their land, and no race has ever taken more pleasure in out-of-door life.

After Columbus found the New World, white men came from Europe to make their homes here. As time went on they drove the Indians farther and farther west and took away their hunting grounds.

Let us try to imagine our country as it was when the Indians owned it. Can we picture our land without a

house or a store or a railroad? Can we think of great rivers with no cities on their banks and with no bridges on which to cross from one side to the other?

Every boy we know likes to go camping. But who would be willing to set up a camp far away in the deep woods without taking with him tent or food or blankets?

Before trade with the white men began, the Indians found everything they needed in the wild land about them. They could make their own weapons and tools, their canoes and paddles, their houses and clothing, and even build a fire without matches.

Your fathers leave home to earn money for your food and clothing. Your mothers see that your meals are cooked and that your clothes are bought or made.

The Indians took care of their children in much the same way. During the hunting season the fathers and big brothers went away every morning to hunt. The men provided all the meat for their families, and all the skins for clothing and covers.

When a deer or a bear was shot, the hunter brought it to the camp and threw it down. His work for the day was done—the women could do the rest.

And it was wonderful to see what the wives and mothers could do with a big animal. Was there a wigwam in the tribe without food? The meat was shared to the last mouthful. Was there an abundance? The meat was dried for long keeping.

Did the son need more covers for his bed? A bear's skin was finished like a fur rug for his comfort. Did the black-eyed daughter beg for a new dress? Her mother could make from the deerskin a soft garment beautifully trimmed with colored beads, stained quills, and fringes.

But what did the Indians do when they could find no more game to shoot with their arrows? Why, they sent out scouts to select a better place to live, and the chief gave orders for every one to move.

Down came the lodge poles. The trained dogs were called and loaded, and away they all went. Just think of a whole village moving and leaving nothing behind but the land!

The Indians spent much time in feasting, dancing, and games. During the summer the men had little else to do, for they seldom hunted while the wild animals were caring for their young.

Each tribe was ruled by a chief and a council of warriors. All their lands were held in common, and no one suffered want except when food was scarce for all.

Every boy was watched with interest by the whole village. His first walking was noticed, and his first success in hunting was often celebrated by a feast.

When the corn was ripe, the Indians held one of the most important dances of the year to show their thanks to the Great Spirit for the gift of corn.

In times of sickness, the medicine man came with rattle and drum to drive away the evil spirits that were believed to have caused the trouble. If the sick person grew worse, Indians, with their faces painted black, crowded the wigwam and more medicine men were called.

They drummed harder and harder. They yelled and beat their rattles, thinking that they were helping the sick one to recover.

When anyone in the tribe died, the things he had cared for most were placed in his grave. There were toys for a little child, and weapons and blankets for a warrior. The favorite horse of a chief was often killed to be his companion on the journey to the land of spirits. Even food was carried to the burial place because the trail was long that led to the Happy Hunting Grounds.

After many years, the early customs became greatly changed. To-day large numbers of Indians are living in the white man's way. Some are well educated and own houses, farms, and even automobiles. Their children are trained in government schools. There are writers among them whose books we like to read, and there are artists who paint interesting pictures of Indian life.

During the great World War the Indians begged to join the army, and hundreds enlisted. Young men from many tribes were in France, and there were no braver soldiers.

THE WILD-RICE INDIANS

Every boy and girl who studies geography can find the Great Lakes. In the states south and west there are hundreds of small lakes and rivers where wild rice grows in the shallow water.

During the early days of our country, different tribes of Indians gathered the wild rice for food, and many battles were fought for the rice fields.

From the birch trees of the forest the men obtained bark for their canoes. In these light boats the women pushed their way through the thickets of ripe grain. They beat the stalks with short sticks, letting the rice fall into the canoes.

The wild rice was eaten raw from the growing plants. It was also parched while green for daily use, and bushels of the ripe grain were stored away for the long, cold winter.

At harvest time there was always good hunting, for great flocks of ducks, geese, and other birds flew to the rice stalks to eat the seeds.

In the spring the women, boys, and old men spent weeks at the sugar camp. They caught the maple sap in small bark dishes and boiled it into sugar. The boys kept the fires going under the kettles and, for the first few days, ate nearly all the sugar they made.

Many kinds of berries grew in this northern country. These the Indian women picked and dried. Indeed, the underground storehouse of a wigwam housekeeper was full of good things to eat.

Hiawatha is said to have lived on the shore of one of the Great Lakes. Before the white men sold fire water to the Indians, there were many happy homes in the forest. The ways of living were the same as we read about

in Longfellow's poem, and the children were trained to be brave and honorable and to respect their elders.

The boys were trained in woodcraft. They learned the names and habits of wild animals. They could find their way alone through dense forests; and they could see farther and hear better than any boys we know.

The girls were taught by their mothers to be modest and industrious. They made beautiful beadwork to trim dresses and moccasins. They could set up a wigwam, prepare food, and keep a clean and orderly home.

This little book tells how children lived and played long ago in the wild-rice country. Their tribe was then at peace with the fierce Indians farther west. A few men of the village had traveled north with furs, but the children had never seen a white man.

The old-time life of the Indians is ended. But there are camps in the unsettled lands of the wild-rice region where many strange customs can still be seen; where the Indian drum is heard, and the women gather wild rice as in the olden time.

STORIES AND STORY-TELLERS

The Indians of long ago had no books and no schools; but each tribe had its story-tellers, who went from one wigwam to another. Everywhere they were welcomed by old and young and begged to return.

The stories were told and retold by their hearers until learned. Indian mothers quieted their fretful little ones by stories and songs just as other mothers have always done.

The Indian stories are strange, and some are very beautiful. There are wonderful tales of the sun, moon, and stars; of animals and birds and trees; of the thunder and the lightning and the winds.

Through stories the children learned the strange beliefs of their parents. They were taught to call the sun their father and the moon their mother, and all the animals and birds their brothers.

The Indians believed that good and bad spirits were all around them on the earth and above them in the sky.

They thought that animals and birds could talk, and that they listened to everything which was said in the wigwams.

Tales of fearless hunters and brave warriors made the boys wish to become as brave as their fathers. Tales of the men that had brought great good to their people led the children to hope that they, too, might sometime bring blessings to their tribe.

The children learned that their fathers worshiped the Great Spirit, and that no warrior ever went on the warpath without offering many prayers.

They were taught that many of their dances were thank offerings to the Great Spirit, and that the war dance was for success in battle.

In winter evenings the Indians gathered around the wigwam fire. This was their only light. The fathers and

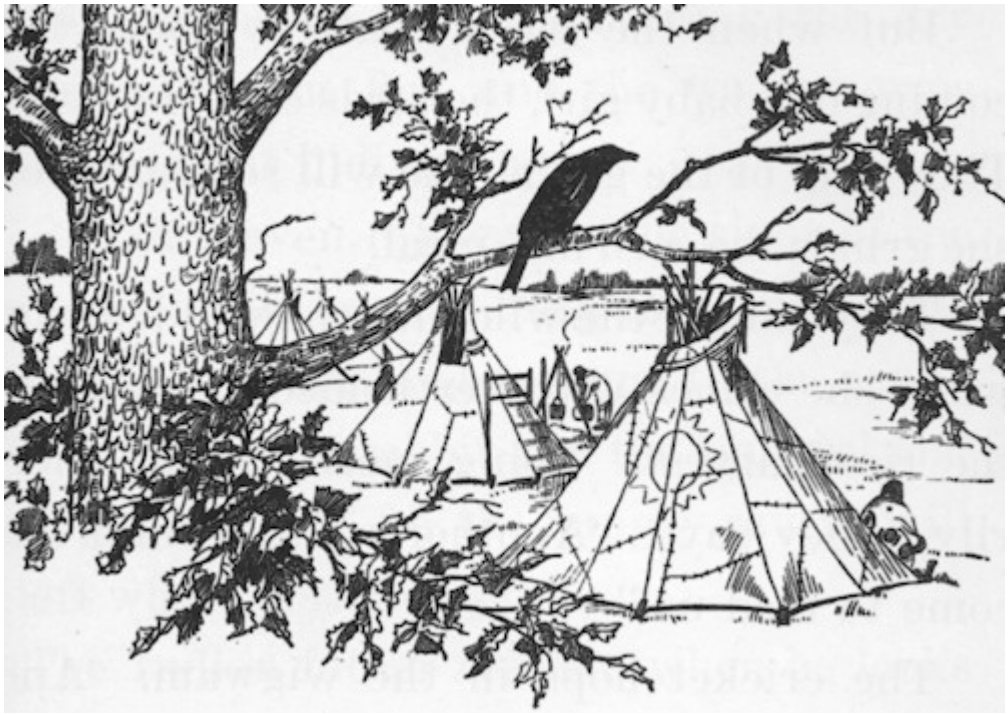
grandfathers told wonderful stories of war and hunting, and related the old tales they had heard when they were children.

Night after night the boys were drilled in repeating the stories they had heard. The whole family listened attentively, helping all, and praising the one who did the best.

Special training was given to the boys of the tribe who showed the most talent. They were carefully prepared to take the places of the older story-tellers, for the tribal tales must never be lost nor forgotten.

The Indian belief that animals can talk is shown in many of their best stories. Here is one about the birds.

WELCOME TO A PAPOOSE



Little Wren flies here and there about the village of wigwams. She is the news gatherer for the bird council.

She peers into the tent openings and listens to the talk of the mothers. She flits about the trees where children play.

When a little son is born, she carries the news to the birds, and they are sad. "Alas, alas!" they cry. "We hear the whistle of his arrow. The boy will grow, and he will shoot us with his bow and arrows."

But when the wren chatters about the coming of a baby girl, the birds chirp merrily. They sing of the grains she will scatter when she grinds the corn into meal.

They sing of the wild rice she will let drop when she comes with her loaded canoe from the rice harvest. "Sing merrily, sing merrily," they say. "Another woman child has come to feed us!"

The cricket hops in the wigwam. And the cricket is glad when the baby is a girl. "I shall hide among the floor mats and sing where she plays," he chirps.

But the cricket is sad when the baby is a boy. "He will shoot me, he will shoot me!" chirps the cricket. For, as soon as the boy is old enough, he will be given a tiny bow; and he will fit the sharp arrow and shoot the cricket and the grasshopper.

The woodpecker welcomes the girl baby. He sings of the wood worms he will find when the girl goes with her mother for wood. For the women of the wigwam break the dry branches for the fire, and the wood worms fall from their hiding places.

But the raven rejoices at the sight of the boy baby in his cradle. "My food, my food!" he croaks. A hunter has come to the camp. He will shoot the rabbit and the squirrel and the deer; and food for the hungry ravens will be left where his arrows fall.

The Indian father rejoices when he looks at his son. "May he grow to be a brave hunter and a fearless warrior." Such is the Indian's wish.

THE INDIAN BABY AND HER CRADLE

Why is the happy song of the robin heard beside the lodge? Why chirps the cricket so merrily?

Can you not guess? There is a new daughter in the wigwam. Another wood gatherer and fire maker has come to the tribe.

"Bring the new cradle, Nokomis. Let me have the beautiful cradle I have made for my little daughter." And Good Bird, the mother, points with pride to a strange-looking object that is not at all like the cradle your baby sleeps in.

A straight board leans against the inner lining of the lodge. To one side of it is fastened a white doeskin bag which is trimmed with beautiful fringes and beadwork. Can this be a baby's cradle?

Nokomis, the grandmother, opens the bag, which is laced down the middle with colored strings. She makes a bed of soft moss upon the hard board and lays the papoose very straight in its little frame.

Laced and bound, this strange cradle is hung to the top of the lodge. A bow of curved wood protects the baby's head from injury, should the cradle fall.

As the little papoose swings gently, the Indian mother sings a lullaby, and this is the one she often sings:

"Wa wa—wa wa—wa wa yea,
Swinging, swinging, lullaby.
Sleep thou, sleep thou, sleep thou.
Little daughter, lullaby.
Wa wa—wa wa—wa wa."

Slower and slower swings the cradle and the black eyes close in sleep.

"What shall we name the little one?" asks the mother.

Nokomis stands in the door of the wigwam. Through the trees she sees the blue water of the lake. White clouds are moving rapidly across the sky.

"White Cloud shall be her name," answers Nokomis.

Good Bird, the mother, smiles and nods. As she watches the cradle, she talks to the sleeping child.

"My little woman, you shall be a fire maker and a lodge keeper like your mother. You shall help me tan the skins for clothing. I will teach you to make beautiful dresses and trim them with beadwork and quills. Your father and your brother will be proud to wear the moccasins you make.

"You shall go with me to the lake when the rice is ready to harvest. Together we will hunt the wild berries and the nuts. You shall be your mother's helper, my little daughter, White Cloud."

WHITE CLOUD'S FIRST RIDE

White Cloud, the baby daughter of Good Bird, is having her first ride out of doors. Do you think she is in a baby buggy like your little sister's? Or do you suppose her mother draws her in a tiny cart?

You can never guess unless you know how Indian mothers contrive to take their babies with them when they are carrying heavy loads. White Cloud is laced in her strange cradle and bound securely to her mother's back.

On the bent strip of board that arches over the head of the cradle are fastened playthings made of carved wood and bone. The bright toys jingle and rattle, and the baby laughs.

To-day the little arms and hands are firmly laced inside the beaded bag. So the child can not reach out and play with the noisy images as she loves to do.

Laced, bound, and protected, the baby is safe even when her mother pushes through the thickest forest.

The boys, who run everywhere, have brought good news to the camp. "The June berries are ripe in the forest," they say. So the mothers are starting with children and bags for the berry picking.

It is not yet sunrise; but it is the custom of the Indians to rise early. The men, with bows and arrows, knives and spears, have already gone away to their daily business—the hunt.

The older lads are with their fathers, and the little boys have begun a long summer's day of shouting, swimming, mud throwing, and mischief. Among them is White Cloud's brother, a sturdy boy of four years.

Here and there are old men sitting in front of their lodges and smoking their long pipes. Inside, the grandmothers are busy preparing food and dressing skins for clothing.

Most of the women, like Good Bird, carry their babies and berry sacks upon their backs; but some of them have large dogs trained as burden carriers.

Here comes Two Joys, the mother of twins. She is followed by a pair of dogs, each dragging a strapping brown baby boy.

One by one, the women and girls wade the streams and climb the hills, following the trail that leads to the forest. There they separate, each to make her own choice of bushes.

White Cloud's mother chooses a thicket where the berries are large and abundant. She fastens her baby's cradle to the top of a low tree. The wind swings the cradle, and, like the Mother Goose baby, the Indian

papoose rocks on the tree top. Let us hope that the bough will not break.

The birds chirp and sing in the branches. A squirrel comes near to see what strange object is hanging in his tree. The baby wakes and cries with fright, and the squirrel scampers away.

Good Bird is filling her bags of woven grass with purple berries. She does not pick them as we do, but breaks off long branches loaded with fruit. Then, with a heavy stick, she beats the branch and the berries fall on a large skin that is spread on the ground.

For dinner Good Bird has only dried meat and the sweet, juicy berries. But she does not think of wishing for more.

At last the ripe fruit is gathered. The baby is fretting, and the mother takes the cradle from the tree top. She unlaces the bag and lays the little one on the warm grass.

Now the fruit must be packed and tied and the large skin be rolled up. While the mother works the child grows restless and cries. You can never guess why. She is asking in baby language to be put back on her stiff board!

Very soon Good Bird is ready and, with the cradle and bags strapped to her back, she starts for home. Other berry pickers loaded with fruit join her, and together they walk the trail that leads back to the camp.

Nokomis is watching for the baby. She lifts the cradle and hangs it to the lodge pole. The little one is restless. She turns her head from side to side, her black eyes shining.

Then the grandmother sings the owl song in which Indian babies delight:

"Ah wa nain, ah wa nain,
Who is this, who is this,
Giving light, light bringing
To the roof of my lodge?"

The singer changes her voice to imitate a little screech owl and answers:

"It is I—the little owl—
Coming
Down! down! down!"

As she sings, she springs toward the baby and down goes the little head. How the papoose laughs and crows! Again Nokomis sings:

"Who is this, eyelight bringing,
To the roof of my lodge?
It is I, hither swinging—
Dodge, baby, dodge."

Over and over the lullaby is sung, now softer and now slower. The eyelids droop, and the little one is quiet.

NOKOMIS TELLS A STORY

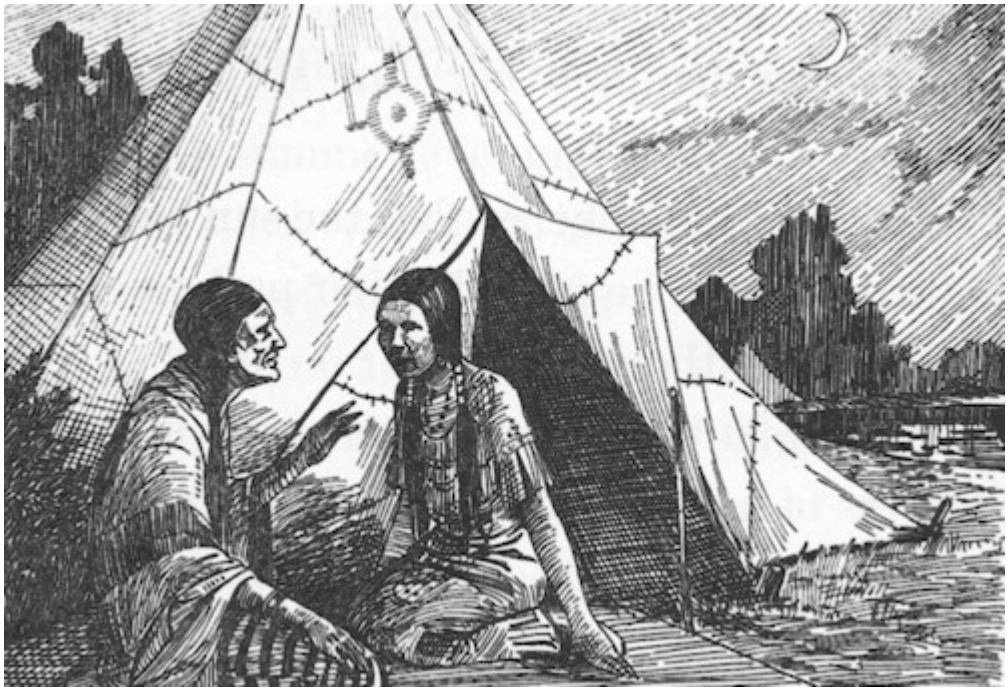
Good Bird had prepared the evening meal, but no one came to eat it. Her husband, Fleet Deer, was late in returning from the hunt, and her little son was still shouting and running with his boy playmates.

The tired baby slept, and the two women sat outside the wigwam in the warm June evening.

"Now that I have a little daughter, I must learn all your stories, Nokomis," said Good Bird. "Suppose you tell one while we wait."

"I heard a new one last moon," answered Nokomis. "Our village story-teller has traveled far from our camp. He visited another tribe and heard all their stories. I will tell you the tale he told about the first strawberries:

"In the very earliest times a young girl became so angry one day that she ran away from home. Her family followed her, calling and grieving; but she would not answer their calls, nor even turn her head.



"The great sun looked down with pity from the sky and tried to settle the quarrel. First he caused a patch of ripe blueberries to grow in her path.

"The girl pushed her way through the low bushes without stooping to pick a berry.

"Further on the sun made juicy blackberries grow by the trail, but the runaway paid no attention to them.

"Then low trees laden with the purple June berry tempted her, but still she hurried on.

"Every kind of berry that the sun had ever helped to grow, he placed in her path to cause delay, but without success.

"The girl still pressed on until she saw clusters of large ripe strawberries growing in the grass at her feet.

"She stooped to pick and to eat. Then she turned and saw that she was followed.

"Forgetting her anger, she gathered the clusters of ripe, red berries and started back along the path to share them with her family.

"Then she went home as if nothing had ever happened!"

THE FIREFLY DANCE

It is a summer evening. There is no moon, and the stars twinkle brightly in the sky. A half circle of Indian lodges fronts a small lake. Wide meadows slope to its shores.

All the air is alive with lights, twinkling, whirling, sparkling. Thousands of fireflies are swarming above the grass.

The meadow is full of Indian boys and girls, little and big, dancing the firefly dance. Advancing and retreating, turning and twisting, bowing and whirling, they imitate the moving lights about them and above them.

In front of the lodges sit the warriors and the squaws looking on.

Good Bird is watching every move of her son. He is one of the most active dancers on the field.

"Look, Nokomis!" she says, "No boy is straighter than your grandson, and there is no better dancer."

Fleet Deer says nothing, but he is thinking of the time when his son will take part in the war dance of his

tribe.

Little White Cloud stands by her mother. She has known three winters and is now a chubby, pretty little Indian girl.

Suddenly she begins to imitate her brother. She throws out her tiny brown arms, turns round and round, jumps and bows, while Nokomis and Good Bird shout with laughter.

Listen! the children are singing. What do they say? It is the song of the fireflies that we hear.

Nokomis has chanted the same words and melody for many a lullaby, and she keeps time, singing the same song:

"Wau wau tay see, wau wau tay see,
Flitting white fire insect,
Waving white fire bug,
Give me light before I go to bed,
Give me light before I go to sleep!
Come, little dancing white fire bug,
Come, little flitting white fire beast,
Light me with your bright white flame,
Light me with your little candle."

SWIFT ELK, THE INDIAN BOY

Four years have passed since the summer evening when Good Bird watched her children in the firefly dance. Her son, Swift Elk, is now a tall, straight lad of eleven winters. His sister, four years younger, is a sturdy little girl, already able to help her mother in many ways.

The boy is the pride of the lodge. From his earliest babyhood he has been trained to be strong and fearless.

"Lay him very straight," his father used to say when the baby boy was placed on his cradle board. "Do not make his bed too soft. My son must grow tall and strong, for he will sometime be a great warrior."

Since he could first walk he has gone with his father each day to the lake to take an early morning bath. Like all Indians, he learned to swim when he was very small, and he loves to splash and dive and play in the water.

Do you suppose that Swift Elk dresses himself after his bath? He does not think clothing at all necessary except in winter.

Does he help his mother in her work about the lodge? Never! "A boy does not do squaw's work," he says. "A boy must learn to hunt and shoot."

Is he not made to mind? Is he never punished? Oh, no; he will be a great warrior some day, and his father says he ought not to be afraid of any one. And so he lives the wild, free life of the Indian boy. He spends his day in play, with no school, no lessons, and no work to do.

When the father is at home he teaches the boy to notice very carefully everything he sees. He must learn the names of plants and birds. He must know the habits of animals and how to hunt them. Above everything, he must be brave and daring.

While the men are away hunting, the younger boys spend the day shooting, fishing, swimming, and playing games. If they wish to throw mud balls at each other, no one scolds them for being dirty. But if one of them whimpers or cries, his companions will not let him play. So the Indian boy learns early in life to bear pain without complaint.

Swift Elk's father made a little bow and arrow for his son as soon as he was old enough to run out of the wigwam. Each summer he received a larger bow and more destructive arrows.

Wherever the boy goes he carries his weapon, and he is always watching for the chance to shoot a bird, rabbit, squirrel, or any wild animal.

How his mother and grandmother praise him when he brings home game! "You will be a great hunter," they say. "Soon you will be able to go with your father to shoot bear and deer."

Swift Elk sleeps on a bed of cedar boughs covered with skins. As the first-born son, he has the place of honor. His bed is next to his father's, close against the inner lining of the lodge, and nearly opposite the entrance.

This is the boy's own place, and he is allowed to decorate it as he wishes. Birds' wings, feathers, and squirrels' tails show his skill in hunting.

Here he keeps nearly everything that he owns. He has hung his bow and arrows on the lodge pole above his bed. His snowshoes, tops, and balls are in a bag of skin high above the reach of baby hands.

Swift Elk looks forward to the time when he shall be admitted to the councils of his tribe and take part in their dances and yearly feasts.

Like other Indian children, he has been trained to count time by winters, moons, and sleeps, and so he does not know his exact age. He has never heard of keeping birthdays; but he has had many feasts given in his honor, which are the same to him as a party would be to you.

When an Indian boy wins a game which requires great skill, or shows himself brave in time of danger, his companions shout his praises.

They go with him to the door of his lodge, telling of the brave deed he has performed. Then they sing and dance in his honor.

It is expected that the women of the lodge will show their pleasure by giving each boy some dainty from the stores of food packed away for feasts.

On the day that Swift Elk first shot a rabbit his father gave a feast for him, inviting all his relatives. But the most important celebration of his whole life was when he won a victory in racing and received his name.

THE NAMING OF SWIFT ELK

Unlike their sisters, Indian boys are seldom named in babyhood. Some are known only as the sons of their fathers. Others bear the nicknames given by their companions. But often a boy's name is decided upon by reason of some important action of his own.

For the first few years of Swift Elk's life he was spoken of as the son of Fleet Deer. When he was quite small, he stood, one evening, watching the older boys race. They ran in couples, their companions standing on either side of the race course. There were yells of joy for the victors, and jeers and howls for those who were so unlucky as to trip or stumble in the way.

A young hunter standing near noticed the shining eyes of the little watcher and shouted, "Give the younger boys a chance!" And so the son of Fleet Deer was started in the race with a boy of his own size.

Once, twice, thrice, did the eager child outrun his playmate amid shouts and laughter. His little feet seemed to fly over the ground.

"He is as swift as a young elk," said the bystanders. And before the racing was ended, the child was called again to the trial of speed, this time with an older lad. Again he was first at the goal.

"He will be a runner like his father," said the warriors who had come near to watch the sports of their children.

Fleet Deer, when a young man, was the fastest runner in his tribe. And now his little son had won a race and the father was proud. He walked slowly toward his lodge and entered the curtained opening.

"Prepare a feast in honor of our son," he said to Good Bird, his wife.

Standing in front of his wigwam, he called in a loud voice the names of his brothers and kinsmen in the camp.

They came, one by one, entered the low doorway, and were seated in a circle close to the inner wall of the wigwam, some on the low beds and some on mats.

Nokomis and Good Bird passed to each a wooden dish containing meat, dried berries, parched rice, and maple sugar.

There were many prayers and much smoking of the long pipe which was passed from host to guest. Then Fleet Deer led his son to the middle of the wigwam. The child's face and body were painted, and his long hair was braided and wound around his head.

"You have seen my son outrun his playmates," said the father. "You know that he has taken the honors of victory from a companion that is older and larger. One and another who watched the race have said that my son is like a young elk in his running.

"I was but a lad, my kinsmen, when your former chief, my father, gave me the name I bear. He has taken the long journey to the land of spirits. Will you agree that his grandson bear the name of Swift Elk?"

The warriors gravely bowed their heads in approval. Again the pipe was passed, and the smoke curled and rose in the lodge.

Swift Elk, the grandson of a great chief, had earned his name.

FIRE AND THE FIRE MAKERS

"Are you going away, Grandmother? Take me with you."

"I am on my way to the forest, White Cloud. It will be a long walk for you. We need dry moss and decayed wood for tinder. Some cold morning we shall wake and find no red coals in the ashes. Then we shall need some pieces of the driest of wood to kindle a new fire."

"Let me go, and I will help you look for dry wood. I know I am big enough to be a fire maker. Haven't I seen seven winters?"

So Nokomis and White Cloud started on the trail that led to the wild forest. There great trees had died and fallen, and the branches had been decaying for many moons—no one can tell how many.

"Is the fire always lost when we move our camp, Grandmother?"

"Not always. Some lodge keepers try to carry a few coals, and the one who succeeds is glad to share with others. But one person is often sent ahead to the new camp to make a central fire out of doors. You know it takes a long time to get a spark by rubbing two sticks together."

"How did the Indians get fire in the first place? And how did fire get into wood?" asked White Cloud.

"I will tell you, my child. I have heard all about it from the story-tellers.

"Once there was only one fire in all the world. It was kept in a sacred wigwam and guarded by an old blind man.

"All the Indians had heard about fire and wanted very much to get it. But no one knew where it was hidden.

"The old man had two daughters who gathered his wood. He used only the driest branches, so that no smoke could be seen, and no odor from the burning of green boughs be lifted to the wind.

"But one day a tiny, curling wreath of smoke rose above the lodge opening.

"Of course the birds saw it, and flew over the lodge poles until they discovered the secret. You may be sure that they chirped the news wherever they flew.

"A woodpecker went into a hole in a tree to carry his mate some food and told her where fire was kept. He was overheard by a squirrel running up the tree trunk.

"'Chip, chip! chatter, chatter! Hear the squirrels in the tree tops,' said a rabbit. 'What are they talking about?' By listening he soon found out.

"Then Bruin heard the rabbits, and the bear teased the wolf by letting him know that the birds had a great secret.

"A flock of sparrows settled in front of the wolf's den, and the wolf soon heard all he wanted to know. He, in turn, told a dog that sometimes ran with him at night.

"Of course the dog told the boy he loved best, and so the Indians found out where fire was hidden.

"'We must have fire,' they said. 'Who will get it for us?'

"At last Manabush said that he would try to get fire for his tribe.

"Manabush was a daring young Indian hunter. Like Hiawatha, he spent his life trying to help his people. He saw how fire was needed to warm the lodges in winter, and to cook the raw meat freshly killed in the hunt.

"So Manabush made a birch canoe and started across the great lake. When he reached land he pulled his light canoe out of the water and carried it on his back to a near-by thicket. Then he changed himself into a rabbit and hopped away into the long grass.

"Soon there came up a great storm. The old man guarded the sacred fire with the utmost care until the rain was over. Then he went to sleep near the glowing coals.

"His daughters came out of the lodge to look at the sky. As they bent down to enter the low door, they saw a little rabbit lying on the grass. His fur was wet, and he was trembling with cold.

"One of the daughters carried him in and laid him down where it was warm. The rabbit hopped nearer the fire.

"The old man started from his sleep. 'What do I hear?' he asked.

"'You have heard nothing, Father. We picked up a little wet rabbit and brought him in to dry.'

"The old man closed his eyes again. His daughters turned and went on with their work. Quickly the rabbit seized a burning stick and hopped away by leaps and bounds.

"Up jumped the old man. 'My fire, my sacred fire, is stolen!' he cried. His daughters ran out of the lodge to

chase the thief.

"But the old blind man thought that someone was in the wigwam. So he snatched a long stick and pounded so hard on every side that he beat some of the fire into a log. This is the way that fire came to be in wood."

"What did the rabbit do, Grandmother?"

"He ran to the canoe, changed back to a man, put the fire in a magic bag, and paddled as fast as he could to his own camp.

"There he lighted a pile of wood for his grandmother, and then hurried away to the Thunderers. They have kept the sacred fire for the Indians since that day."

"Who are the Thunderers, Grandmother?" asked White Cloud.

"After we have had our dinner I will tell you the story. Now we will use some of our dry wood and make a fire."

"Can I learn to get the fire out of wood?" asked White Cloud.

"You will need to try again and again, for it is not an easy task. Watch me, my child, and see how it is done."

Nokomis soon had a pile of dry grass and twigs. Then she rubbed two pieces of wood together for a long time. At last a spark flew from the dry wood and the grass was lighted.

Meat and birds' eggs were soon roasted in the hot ashes. After the meal Nokomis and White Cloud started for home, each with a bundle of wood strapped to her back.

"Now I'm ready for the story you promised me," said White Cloud.

THE THUNDERERS

"Far in the east, above the sky, the great Thunderer lives with his two sons. They are the friends of the whole world. When you hear their voices be glad, for they are bringing the gift of rain.

"In the spring they come from their sky home with the showers that make the grass grow and the little plants peep out of the ground.

"They water the earth; and the corn comes up, the sap flows for our sugar, the trees open their leaves and blossoms, and the berries ripen.

"Without their help every growing plant would turn brown and fade away. The wild rice and the sugar trees would die. Animals would search in vain for food, and they would crawl into their dens and perish.

"There would be no game for the hunter to shoot. Then the terrible famine spirits would enter our lodges, and we would sicken and die.

"We should never fear the loud voices of the Thunderers, for they are always good and kind.

"They are the war chiefs of the world. When we see the rainbow, we catch a glimpse of the splendid robes they wear.

"In the middle of their great lodge burns the sacred fire, which they guard for all the people of the earth."

"I will never be afraid again when I hear them speaking," said White Cloud. "But I like to be in the lodge when they bring their rain storms. If they come to-day perhaps we can find a cave in the hills our trail crosses."

"It would not be safe for us to enter a cave in the forest," replied Nokomis. "The Little People might be in it, and they would be displeased."

THE LITTLE PEOPLE OF THE FOREST

"And now," said White Cloud, "I want to hear all about the Little People."

"Speak low, White Cloud. We are coming to the rocky hillside. We must listen, for we may hear them drumming."

"I wish we could! We would run and try to see them."

"It would be far better for us to turn and run the other way. The Little People do not like to be disturbed. If they should see us, they might cast a spell on us."

"What harm would that do us?" asked the child.

"We would forget where we are going and who we are. We might wander in the woods until we starved, for

we could never find the trail home."

"How do the Little People look, and what do they do? Does anyone know?"

"They are handsome little men, smaller than the tiniest babies. By daylight they drum and dance, for they are very fond of music.

"If they are not disturbed, they are very kind and helpful, especially to those who are in trouble. They do not like to be seen, and will never work if a man or woman, or even a child, is in sight.

"Sometimes they come to the cornfield when it is very dark. If they are heard, no Indian goes out of the lodge. Often the field will be found well weeded in the morning and the earth loose about the growing plants.

"Once, in the moon of ripe corn, there was a woman alone with a sick child. She heard the Little People near her lodge, and she remembered to be very quiet. In the morning her corn was all picked for her.

"If a hunter finds an arrow near the cornfield, he must say very loud: 'Little People, will you let me have this arrow?' for it may have been shot from their bows.

"If he takes it without asking, he may be hit with stones as he is walking home."

"Tell me about the boy who was changed into a hunter spirit," said White Cloud.

"There was once a boy," began Nokomis, "who ran away from home. He grew smaller and smaller until he became like the spirits of the woods.

"But he is full of mischief. You can sometimes tell what he is doing, although he himself is never seen.

"Have you not noticed your dog jump up quickly from the place where he has been sleeping? The spirit of the runaway boy is whipping him with nettles.

"You will often see a flock of birds suddenly leave their food and fly away. The little hunter spirit has frightened them.

"When the tired hunter stops, far from his lodge, to roast his meat, the little mischief-maker blows out his fire

and fans the smoke into his eyes.

"He catches the arrows which are aimed at the birds and hides them. He puts slippery clay in the path and laughs when the children fall. No one can tell all his tricks of mischief."

"Grandmother, look! Here is an arrow on the ground."

"Let it be. We will not annoy the spirits. Now we must hurry home, for the clouds darken and I can hear the loud voices of the Thunderers starting out from their sky home."

BLACK WOLF TELLS A STORY

The boys were practicing with their bows and arrows. After a few trials, in which little skill was shown, Swift Elk threw down his bow. "I'm tired of shooting," he said. "Come on, boys, let's go to the lake for a swim."

Black Wolf, the oldest warrior of the tribe, was sitting on the ground near by, watching the sport.

"Do not give up," said the old man. "You are a big boy now. Only by skill in shooting can you become a brave warrior. Let no one know you are tired or weak. Remember the boy who was changed to the lone lightning of the North."

"Tell us the story," Swift Elk begged. "Then we will practice again and do our best."

The boys threw themselves on the ground near Black Wolf, and he began the story.

"There was once a little boy who had no one to care for him. His father had been killed in war, and his mother taken captive by the enemy.

"Minno, the lonely boy, lived in his uncle's wigwam, but he was not wanted there. He had hard work to do and very little to eat.

"He was too weak to join the rough games of his playmates, and he did not become skillful with his bow and arrows like the other boys of the tribe.

"At last he became so thin from hunger that the uncle feared his cruel treatment would become known.

"So he told his wife to feed the boy with bear's meat. 'Give him plenty of fat,' he ordered. 'Cram him with bear's fat.' It was now the uncle's plan to kill the boy by overfeeding.

"One day when Minno had been nearly choked with fat meat, he ran away. He wandered about in the woods, and when night came he was afraid of the wild beasts. So he climbed into a tall tree and fell asleep in the branches.

"In his dreams a person came to him from the upper sky and said: 'My poor little lad, I pity you. Follow me, and be sure to step in my tracks.'

"So the lad arose and followed his guide up, up, into the upper sky. There he was given twelve magic arrows and told to shoot the manitoes of the North.

"'They are the evil spirits of the air,' said his guide. 'You must go to war against them. I have given you magic arrows that will kill them if your aim is true.'

"The boy placed an arrow with great care, but failed to kill a manito. One, two, three, four, five, six arrows had left his bow, each leaving behind it a long streak of lightning. But not one had reached its mark.

"Carefully he aimed; seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven. Alas! his skill was not equal to his task.

"Long he held the twelfth arrow. He looked around on every side. The evil spirits had wonderful power, and they could change their forms in a moment.

"The boy let his last arrow fly toward the heart of the chief of the manitoes. But the evil spirit saw it coming and changed himself into a rock.

"'How dare you try to kill me!' cried the angry manito. 'Now you shall suffer. You shall evermore be like the trail of your arrow.'

"And he changed the boy into the lone lightning which you so often see, my children, in the northern sky."

"I wish I could shoot as well as I can run," Swift Elk said. "It is easy to win in the races, but I can never beat in a shooting match."

"You can if you will practice more than the other boys. You remember how the crane beat the humming bird in a race."

"Tell us about it, tell us," begged all the boys. "Then we will shoot our arrows all day long until the sun hides his face."

The old man was silent for a time. Then he said, "I will tell you just one more story. And you shall keep your word and practice until the darkness creeps over the earth."

THE RACE BETWEEN THE CRANE AND THE HUMMING BIRD

The crane dared the humming bird to a race. The humming bird was as swift as an arrow, but the crane flew slowly.

At the word they both started. The humming bird was far ahead and he stopped to roost on a limb; but the crane flew all night.

The humming bird woke in the morning, thinking it would be no trouble to win the race. He was very much surprised when he passed the crane spearing fish for his breakfast!

"How did the Slow One get ahead?" he thought. "I must start earlier in the morning." He flew swiftly until dusk, when he stopped to roost on a tree.

The crane flew all night. Before morning he was again ahead, and he had finished his breakfast when the Swift One passed him.

"This is indeed strange," thought the humming bird. "But I can fly a little faster, and it will be no trouble to win." So he stopped again, far ahead, to take his usual sleep.

The crane flew all night, as usual. He passed the sleeping humming bird at midnight and was well on his way before he was overtaken. The humming bird flew as long as he could see, and before midnight he was again ahead.

Each night the humming bird slept. Each night the crane flew. "Gaining a little; gaining a little!" he said to himself.

Later and later in the day did the Swift One pass the Slow One. Earlier and earlier in the night did the Slow One pass the Swift One.

On the last day of the race the crane was a night's travel ahead. He took his time at breakfast. The humming bird passed him at sundown and stopped to sleep.

The next morning the humming bird flew like the wind and reached the goal early in the day. But there stood the heavy crane waiting, for he had flown all night!

HUNTING WILD DUCKS

Swift Elk had sharpened his arrows and taken his strongest bow from the wooden peg over his bed.

"I have seen wild ducks flying by the lake," he said. "I am going to hide in the long grass and watch for them. If they come again, they shall feel my arrows. To-night we eat roast duck."

The boy ran toward the lake. His sister, White Cloud, watched him until he was out of sight. "Why can't girls go hunting?" she said. "I have seen seven winters. I shall follow his trail."

The child ran along, hiding behind trees and bushes, and stepping softly so that no broken twig could tell of her approach.

Indian children can see farther and hear far better than we can. Although the old-time Indian never went to school, yet he trained his children to listen to every sound in the forest, and to notice all signs of animal life.

When White Cloud was near the lake, she hid in a clump of bushes and watched. Just in sight was a little stream winding through the low meadow.

She saw Swift Elk run along its banks. She waited without moving—waited as only an Indian child knows how to wait.

At last, far off, she saw a speck in the sky, then another and another. The specks grew larger. She held her breath.

A flock of wild ducks flew across the lake. Near the shore they turned and flew over the low meadow where the boy hunter was hiding in the high grass.

Suddenly the swift arrows flew. One, two, three, four ducks were hit and fell to the ground. Swift Elk picked up three and swung them over his shoulder.

He looked a long time for the fourth duck. Then, seeing another flock approaching, he ran toward the lake shore.

Again he was fortunate in choosing the place of their approach. White Cloud saw more arrows fly, and more ducks fall. Swift Elk ran on out of sight.

Then the little girl crawled from her hiding-place and crept along the ground in search of the missing duck. Surely there was something stirring in the long grass ahead. Almost afraid to move, the child crept closer and closer, until she saw a duck with a broken wing hanging useless by its side.

In a moment she had caught it. She held the bird in her arms until its struggles ceased. Then she bound its wing to its body with long pieces of grass.

She crawled to the stream and dropped water in its bill. The duck swallowed the water but refused all food.

White Cloud watched every movement in the distance, not daring to stand lest Swift Elk return. So she worked her way, concealed by high grass, to the home trail.

How she ran until she reached the low wigwam built for her dolls! Here she made a soft bed for the wounded bird. She smoothed its feathers and talked to it. How happy she was when she was able to coax the duck to eat the food she offered!

Swift Elk came home at night with all the game he could carry. His mother praised his hunting, and his father was pleased because he had passed the entire day alone and without a mouthful of food.

"You must endure hunger and thirst, cold and heat, danger and pain, if you would become a great warrior," said his father. "And you must find your way alone through the forest for miles and miles, listening every moment for the footsteps of an enemy or the approach of a wild beast."

A fire had been made in front of the lodge. The ducks were buried, feathers and all, in the hot ashes. White Cloud brought wild berries and water from the spring. As soon as the birds were roasted the feathers and skins were pulled off and the hungry boy enjoyed his meal.

But White Cloud watched her chance to carry part of her own food to the duck. How she hated to leave him when the dark came on! But she fastened the shelter securely, hoping that no lurking fox or weasel would force his way inside.

The next morning White Cloud was up before her brother. She hid in the tiny lodge, to protect her pet until Swift Elk had left for the day.

The duck soon became so tame that it followed her wherever she went. The difficulty in taming the wild creature, and the constant danger of losing it, led the child to be as kind and patient with her pet as an Indian mother is with her papoose.

One day Good Bird was roasting deer meat. She had made a hot fire in front of the lodge. Sticks sharpened at both ends were driven in the ground close to the bed of coals. The sticks were bent toward the fire, and each one held a large piece of raw meat.

When the meat was tender, Good Bird called her little daughter. "My father is old," she said. "He can no longer hunt. Take some of this roast meat to him."

White Cloud took the dish and went to her grandfather's lodge, the duck waddling behind her. After the old man had eaten, White Cloud said, "Grandfather, do you know any stories about ducks?"

"Point to the north, my grandchild, and tell me who live in the land of ice and snow."

"North Wind and Old Winter," answered the child.

"And what do they do, little one?"

"They send the game far from my father's arrows. They freeze our food and try to starve us. North Wind gives the war whoop as he flies in the forest.

"Then Old Winter comes like the Indians on the war trail. We cannot see him, and we cannot hear him. He does not break a twig, and his footsteps make no sound. He crowds into our lodge, and tries to steal our fire and freeze us. I wish he would never come again!"

"We must be brave, my grandchild. We must make ready with food and firewood to fight his power. I will tell you of a brave little duck that even North Wind could not conquer."

A BRAVE DUCK

Far to the north lived Wild Duck. His lodge was by the frozen lake. Winter was beginning, and he had but four logs of wood for his fire.

"Four logs will do," he said. "Each log will burn for many sleeps, and then spring will be on the way."

Wild Duck was as brave as a warrior. On the coldest days he went to the lake to fish. He found the rushes

that grew high above the water. With his strong bill he pulled up the frozen plant stems. Then he dived through the holes he had made in the ice and caught the fish swimming beneath.

In this way he found plenty of food. Every day he went home to his lodge dragging strings of fish. North Wind blew his fiercest blasts, but no wind was cold enough to keep Wild Duck in his wigwam.

"This is a strange duck!" said North Wind. "He seems as happy as if it were the moon of strawberries. He is hard to conquer, but I will freeze him."

So the wind blew colder and colder, and great drifts of snow were piled up about the wigwam. But still the fire burned brightly. The duck went daily to the lake, and daily he brought home fish.

"Soon I will visit him," said North Wind. "Then he shall feel my power."

That very night North Wind went to the door of the wigwam. He lifted the curtain and looked in.

Wild Duck had cooked his fish and was lying before the bright fire. He was singing a song to his enemy.

"You may blow as hard as you can, North Wind," he sang. "I dare you to freeze me. You may pile the snow to the top of my lodge. I shall climb the drifts and go fishing just the same."

"How dare a little duck sing like this about me?" blustered North Wind. "I will enter. I will blow my cold breath upon him, and he will freeze."

North Wind pushed his way through the door and sat down on the opposite side of the lodge. Cold blasts filled the hut.

Was Wild Duck afraid? He got up and poked the fire, singing his song louder and louder. Not once did he look at his guest.

"Does he not know that I am here?" thought North Wind.

The little duck stirred the great log until it crackled and snapped.

"I cannot stand this heat," said North Wind to himself. "I am melting. I must go out." The water was dripping from his hair, and tears ran down his cheeks. He crept out of the wigwam and left Wild Duck to his songs.

"What a wonderful duck!" he said. "I cannot freeze him, I cannot even stop his singing. The spirit of the fire is helping him, and I will let him alone."

And to this day you can see the wild duck fishing where the rushes grow. He is warm in his coat of thick feathers, and North Wind can never freeze the brave little duck.

SUMMER SPORTS

Swift Elk and his companions were cutting great chunks of clay from the bank near the stream. Soon a crowd of boys, each armed with a large piece of clay and a long green switch, ran shouting to the near-by forest.

Here they divided into two bands for a sham battle, and all hid behind trees. Balls of clay were pressed on the ends of the slender sticks and thrown, as you would throw green apples.

Swift Elk ran out from behind the tree where he had been hiding. Quickly he threw mud balls at every boy that he saw peeping at him.

Other boys rushed from their sheltering tree trunks to dare the opposing forces. A shower of mud balls filled the air. There were shouts and war whoops, advances and retreats.

Dogs, barking and jumping, rushed into battle with their masters.

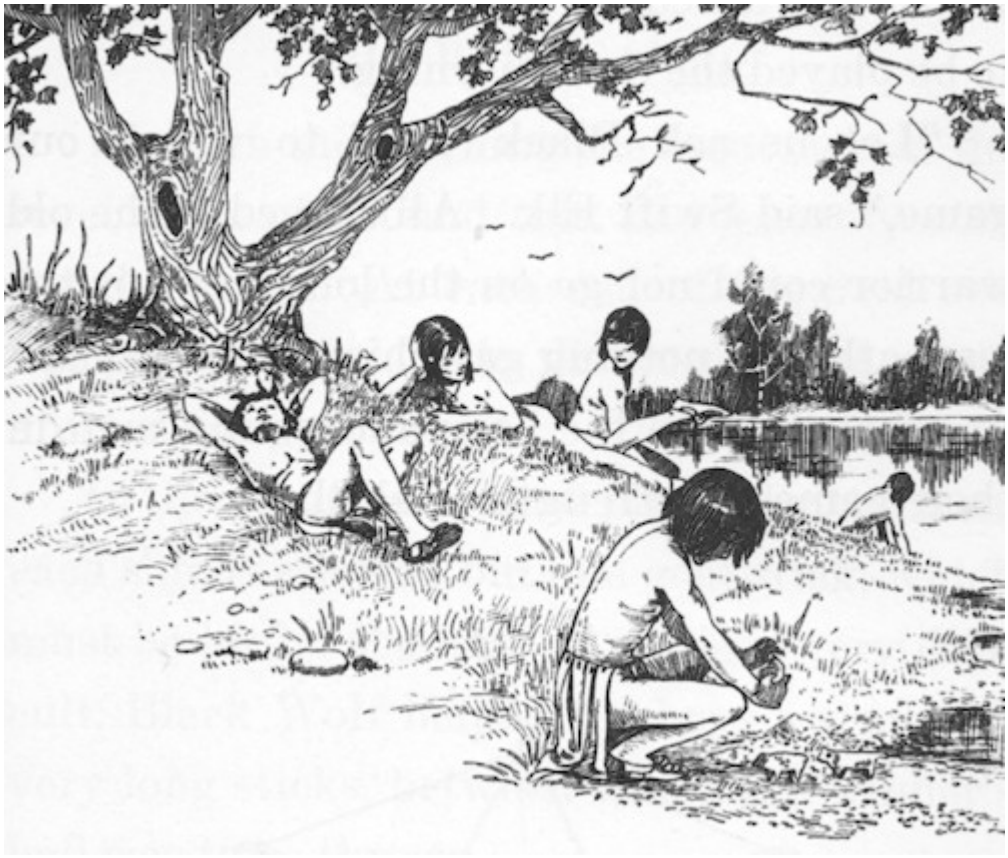
When the clay was all used, the boys ran to the bank for more. For half a day the fight went on, many prisoners being taken on both sides.

Here and there were young braves who had been hit in the face and badly hurt. One was suffering great pain with a swollen eye.

Do you think he left the game and ran home? Do you think he cried or told tales? A boy would rather stand pain than be laughed at by his companions. "Tears are for girls and women," they had all heard their fathers say. "A warrior must not notice pain."

At last, heated and mud-stained, they ran to the lake and jumped in. You would have thought they all needed a bath, could you have seen them.

Splashing and swimming, diving and yelling, they continued their battle by wrestling in the water. The day wore on. One by one, tired with action, they left the lake. Some lay on the grass, and others made images of animals with soft clay.



Two or three boys, very hungry, shot some birds, made a fire, and roasted their game. It mattered not to them that their food was far from clean.

Before they went home at night, Swift Elk's band dared the other side to a ball game, to be played the next morning.

"Let us ask Black Wolf to watch our game," said Swift Elk. All agreed. The old warrior could not go on the long hunt or the warpath, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to help the boys and young men in their games of strength or skill.

THE BALL GAME

Early in the morning the boys met on the level piece of ground that had been selected for the game. At each end of the field two upright poles, a little distance apart, were erected for goal sticks.

In the great ball games played by the men, each side is allowed but one goal stick, which must be hit by the ball. As this is very difficult, Black Wolf helped the boys set up two very long sticks, between which the winner's ball was to be thrown.

Each player always carries a ball stick bent at one end into a small hoop or ring. Strips of rawhide are passed through holes in the hoop, making a netted pocket in which the ball may rest half hidden.

The one simple rule that each player follows at all times is: "Keep the ball away from your own goal." Only by sending the ball off the field between the two goal sticks of the opposite side can victory be won.

Swift Elk and Antelope were chosen captains because they were good runners. All the best players stood in the middle of the field. The younger boys were grouped about the goal sticks with orders to send the ball back into the field.

At a signal from Black Wolf, Antelope tossed the ball into the air. It was caught by a player on his own side, who started to run in the opposite direction from his own goal sticks.

The ball was knocked out of his hand and thrown the other way. Back and forth it went until Antelope caught it in his ball stick. He started at full speed toward the goal on Swift Elk's side.

In a moment he was caught and the ball again turned. Running, screaming, throwing, pushing, striking each other's arms with ball sticks, the boys rushed together.

At last Antelope's side gained the advantage. Nearer and nearer the ball came to Swift Elk's goal sticks. One strong throw, and the game would be won. Antelope's players danced and yelled with joy.

Suddenly a younger boy, one of the poor players who was made to stand on guard, caught the ball and sent it whizzing toward Swift Elk.

The other side, sure of success, was taken by surprise. Before Antelope could turn, Swift Elk had the start and was speeding toward the opposite goal.

"Never was there a finer race," Black Wolf thought. All the boys had crowded together at one end of the line to see the victory, leaving an open field for the two fleetest runners.

You would have liked to see the two Indian lads with painted bodies running like the wind. They were followed by a crowd of boys shouting, howling, rushing, pushing, and trying in vain to overtake them.

But not even Antelope could regain the advantage he lost in starting. Swift Elk swung his stick and sent the ball spinning between the two poles of the goal. He had won the game for his side.

After the victors had shouted themselves hoarse, they lay down on the ground near Black Wolf and asked for a story.

"I will tell you," said the old man, "of the most wonderful ball game the world ever saw. It happened long ago when the animals ruled the land and there were no people on the earth."

THE ANIMALS AND THE BIRDS PLAY BALL

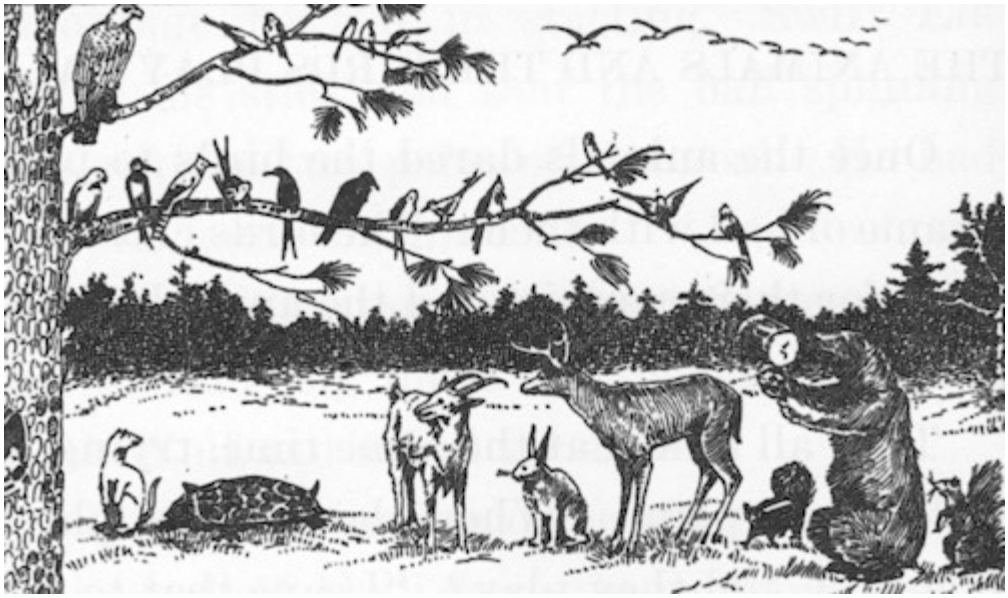
Once the animals dared the birds to play a game of ball with them. The birds chose the eagle for their captain, and the animals chose the bear.

They all talked at the same time, trying to make their plans. When should they play? Where should they play? "Leave that to the eagle and the bear," said the deer. And all agreed.

At the appointed time the animals met on a smooth, grassy plain and the birds in a tree top near by.

Captain Bear was so large and heavy that he could pull down anyone who came in his way. All along the trail to the ball ground he tossed up great logs to show his strength; and he bragged of what he would do to the birds when the game began.

The turtle, at that time, was very much larger than he is now. His shell was so hard that the heaviest blows could not hurt him.



He, too, was a great brag. Again and again he rose on his hind feet and dropped heavily to the ground. "Look at me," he said. "See how I will crush any bird that tries to take the ball from me." The swift deer, the mountain goat, and the rabbit were at their best speed. Indeed, the animals had a fine team.

The eagle gathered his forces together. There was the hawk, strong and swift, and the wild geese that can fly without resting. The black martin was there and the crow, with a host of other birds. The blue jay was chosen to scream in the ears of the animal players, and the humming bird to fly in their eyes.

The birds looked at the great animals on the field below, and were afraid. Just then two little things hardly larger than field mice climbed the tree where sat the bird captain.

They begged to join the game.

"You have four feet; why do you not go to the animals, where you belong?" asked the eagle.

"We did," said the little things, "but they drove us off because we are so small."

"Let them play, let them play," called out the birds in pity.

But how could they join the birds when they had no wings? The eagle and the hawk consulted, and it was decided to make wings for the little fellows. What could they find for wings?

At last someone remembered the drum they used in their dances. The head was made of ground-hog skin. So they took the drumhead, cut two wings, and made the bat.

Then they threw the ball to him. The bat dodged and circled about, keeping the ball always in the air; and the birds soon saw that he would be one of their best men.

The other little animal came for wings, but there was no more leather. What could be done? Two birds thought they might enable him to fly by stretching his skin. Thus was the flying squirrel made.

To try him, the bird captain threw up the ball. The flying squirrel sprang off the limb after it, caught it in his teeth, and carried it to another tree below.

All were now ready. The signal was given and the game began. At the first toss the flying squirrel caught the ball and carried it up a tree. He threw it to the birds, who kept it in the air for some time, until it dropped.

The bear rushed to get it, but the martin darted after it and threw it to the bat. By dodging and doubling, the bat kept it out of the way of the swift deer. And now the game was close. The great deer could not turn as quickly as the bat, and so he lost the game. The little bat threw the ball between the posts and won the victory for the birds.

And the bear and the turtle, who had done the most bragging, did not have a chance even to touch the ball.

For saving the ball when it dropped, the martin was given a gourd to build his nest in. And he still has it, for you can often see a gourd on a post near the Indian lodges.

GATHERING WILD RICE

"Have you seen the beautiful new canoe father has just finished?" asked White Cloud.

"Seen it! I helped make it," answered Swift Elk. "I cut nearly all the birch bark."

"Your father has it ready for the wild-rice harvest," said Good Bird. "To-day I go to tie the stalks. You are to help me, White Cloud."

Nothing could have pleased the little girl better. All summer she had hoped for this great pleasure. From a low hill near her home she had watched the growth of the rice.

When the June berries were ripe, the first shoots came up near the shore of the lake. In a few weeks the rice beds looked like beautiful green islands in the water.

And when the yellow-green blossoms opened, she coaxed her father to take her in his canoe to the rice plants. She picked the flowers, shaded with reddish purple, and she saw the spreading mass of blossoms, their straw-colored anthers moving with every breeze.

Swift Elk was very proud of the new canoe. He had made the paddles, and had cut the forked sticks that would be needed to force the boat through the shallow water.

"When the rice is ripe, I'll go with you and manage the boat," he said to his mother. "When you come home to-night, White Cloud, bring some green rice to parch for supper."

"I'll have some all ready for you," promised his sister. "You shoot a deer to-day, and to-night we'll have a feast. We'll ask grandfather, and perhaps he'll tell us a story."

Soon Good Bird was paddling rapidly toward the rice beds. It was a beautiful morning, and White Cloud was as happy as any little girl could ever be.

For many weeks she had helped her mother prepare the string for tying the rice stalks. It was cut from the inner bark of the basswood tree. The narrow bands were wound in a ball so large that the child could hardly reach around it.

"Why do you tie the wild rice stalks, Mother?" she asked.

"So that our little brothers, the birds, can not eat all our grain," answered Good Bird. "All the bunches we have tied are our own, and will be more easily harvested. No friendly Indian ever touches the heads of rice bound together by another."

With a curved stick Good Bird pulled a mass of stalks within her reach and bound the heads firmly together with the narrow strips of bark. For hours she worked, forcing her way through the thick mass of water plants and tying the stalks on both sides of the canoe.

"May I come here again with you when the wild rice is ripe?" asked White Cloud.

"It will take two strong women to gather the harvest, my child; but the canoe is very long and I think you can help."

"How is it done, Mother?" asked the child.

"Swift Elk will sit at one end of the canoe and paddle. Nokomis will bend the stalks over the boat and untie the long pieces of bark, and I shall beat the heads with a stick. The grain will fall until the boat holds as much as it is safe to carry."

"Are we going to take home any to-day?" asked White Cloud.

"Oh, yes; when the rice is not quite ripe it is just right for parching. As soon as my rows are all tied, you shall help me gather the greenish kernels."

Good Bird worked until she had used all her string. The long rows of heads, neatly tied, looked very fine.

New plants were found, and the stalks beaten with a stick. The rice fell into the canoe, and White Cloud found it was good to eat even without cooking. By sunset the bottom of the canoe was covered with grain, and they started home across the quiet lake.

"May we have maple sugar with our rice to-night, Mother?"

"There is very little left, my daughter. I think we would better save it for winter."

"When are we going to the sugar trees to make more?"

"After the winter is nearly over and the first crow comes to tell us that the sap is flowing. Then we will move to our sugar lodge and stay for a whole moon."

"May I take care of a kettle and boil sugar next time we go to the lodge?" asked White Cloud, "By that time I can count eight winters."

"You may if you will cut birch bark and make your own sap dishes. You will need a great many."

"Why can't we eat the sugar we have, Mother? What is the use of saving it?"

"There may be little food on the cold, snowy days that are coming. We shall need the sugar more then than we do now. Have you forgotten the story of the ant and the katydid?"

"Tell it again. Tell it now before we get home, Mother."

"I think there is time, as it is a short story," said Good Bird. And White Cloud listened to the tale of the lazy katydid and the hard-working ant while the canoe moved slowly across the quiet lake.

THE ANT AND THE KATYDID

The oldest ant was building an underground home. Through the long summer days she worked, carrying out a grain of sand at a time. Then she filled her storehouse with food for the winter.

Her work was finished just as the frost came to mow down the growing plants. All summer the katydid called from the trees, and the locust danced and buzzed in the sunshine.

When winter came, the oldest ant was warm and comfortable and she had enough food for her daily needs.

But the locust and the katydid were cold and hungry. "Why should we freeze?" chirped the katydid. "The ant has a warm house." "And why should we be hungry?" said the locust. "The ant has plenty of food." So together they went to the home of the oldest ant.

"Let us in, let us in, kind ant," they cried. "We are cold and hungry."

"What did you do through the warm weather?" asked the oldest ant.

"We played in the sunshine. We chirped and buzzed and sang."

"Did you build no lodge? Could you not store food for the time of frost and storm?"

"We had no need to work when the summer was here with its warmth and beauty. We danced away the happy hours."

"Go dance away the winter, then," said the oldest ant. "I worked hard through all the long summer days, and I had no time to dance or sing."

The locust and the katydid turned away shivering. "It is not fair," they said, "that the ant has plenty and we have nothing. She should be forced to let us in."

HOW WILD RICE WAS DISCOVERED

When Good Bird and White Cloud reached home, they found great rejoicing. Swift Elk had shot his first deer, and the meat was already roasting by an outdoor fire.

The hunters had found game in abundance that day, and many feasts were already called in the village.

Swift Elk had chosen to invite only his grandparents, and they were already listening to his story of the hunt.

White Cloud made haste to parch the rice, and soon a very hungry family was enjoying the fresh and abundant food.

After the supper the children asked their grandfather to tell them stories about wild rice.

The old man remembered more than one fierce battle for the possession of the rice fields. Many years had passed since the peace pipe was last smoked, and the children had lived without being in constant fear of war.

"My grandchildren," he said, "I will tell you how rice came to be used in the earliest times. There are many stories about Manabush, and you have heard how he wrestled with Mondamin and obtained the gift of corn.

"In his early youth Manabush lived with his grandmother, who taught him his duty to his people.

"One day she said to him: 'My grandson, you are old enough to prove yourself a man. Before you can become a great warrior you must show that you are able to endure many hardships without complaint.

"'Set forth on a long journey alone and without food. Travel through unknown forests, enduring hunger and thirst. Sleep on the cold ground, and pray for a vision that shall be your guide through life.'

"Manabush took his bow and arrows and went out into the forest. He fasted many days until he became weak and faint from hunger.

"In his wanderings he drew near the shore of a lake. Great beds of wild rice filled half its waters, but Manabush did not know that the seeds were good to eat.

"As he walked along within reach of the growing plants, he heard a soft voice say, 'Sometimes they eat us.'

"'Who is speaking?' he asked. All the bushes that grew so thickly in the water seemed full of whispers. He looked about and saw birds of many kinds feeding on the tall grass-like plants.

"So he picked some of the grain and ate it. 'Oh, but you are good! What do they call you?' he asked.

"Again the rustling whispers in the tall grass seemed to say, 'Wild rice. They call us wild rice!'

"Manabush waded out into the water and beat the grain from the heads. So his fast was broken by the new food given in answer to his prayers in the forest.

"And since that time, my children, the wild rice feeds thousands of our people every year. It grows without planting in the lakes and rivers of our forest land.

"Another story tells us that Manabush returned one day from a long hunt without game. The fire in front of his lodge was still burning, and a duck was sitting on the kettle eating boiled rice.

"Manabush tasted the new food and found it good. He followed the bird to a lake not far away where wild rice had grown and ripened. Afterwards boiled rice became a common food among his tribe."

MOVING THE DOLLS' CAMP

White Cloud ran out of her wigwam home. Her work was done, and a happy time of play was before her.

She hurried through the tall grass toward a near-by lodge, calling: "Flying Squirrel, come and play with me."

The skin curtain hanging over the lodge door was raised and a little head appeared. But there was no squirrel to be seen, only an Indian girl with the blackest of hair and eyes.

Her playmates had given her the name of Flying Squirrel because she was always climbing trees and jumping from one branch to another.

"Bring your dolls," said White Cloud. "We'll build lodges for them. Come as soon as you can, for my baby is trying to get away."

"Your baby! What do you mean? Where did you find a baby?"

White Cloud was rejoicing in a family of young puppies—new playthings for her. She had bound one of them to a board, and had tied the board cradle to her back, as a squaw carries a papoose.

"Be still! Be still, bad baby!" she cried to her squirming pet. But the little dog would not be still. He howled louder and louder, and struggled so hard that he broke away from his cords and bands.

"Bad baby! Bad baby!" said White Cloud. "Next time I'll tie you tighter!"

Flying Squirrel brought out an armful of dolls, and the children went to the bushes to cut long straight sticks. They soon found enough poles for their dolls' wigwams. Each child set up her sticks in a circle, bringing them together at the top.

"Now we'll hunt birch bark," said Flying Squirrel. "My father has made me a new knife."

Soon the small lodges were covered with long strips of bark and the floors sprinkled with cedar twigs.

"I wish we had skin covers for our dolls' wigwams," said White Cloud.

Flying Squirrel looked at the even strips of bark that were well placed around her frame of slender poles. "Lots of people have bark covers," she replied. "My father has seen whole villages of bark-covered lodges."

"When the peace pipe was smoked over west, my father was there," said White Cloud. "Now we can get big skins in trade, and sometime we'll have ponies. Have you ever seen a pony, Flying Squirrel?"

"No; but my father saw white men when he went north in the moon of snow to trade furs. He says the tribes west will come and fight us again for our rice beds. Let's play a war is coming and move our camp. Where are your dolls, White Cloud?"

"I couldn't bring them, for I had my puppy baby. You have dolls enough for both of us."

Flying Squirrel gave her playmate two of the queerest-looking dolls you ever saw. They were rolls of deerskin with faces painted in black on the ends.

The children tied the smaller dolls in board cradles, hung them to the lodge poles, and sang lullabies.

Good Bird had packed a basket of food for her little daughter. Dried meat, berries, parched rice, and corn made a fine feast. All were invited, even the puppy, and the largest dolls were honored guests.

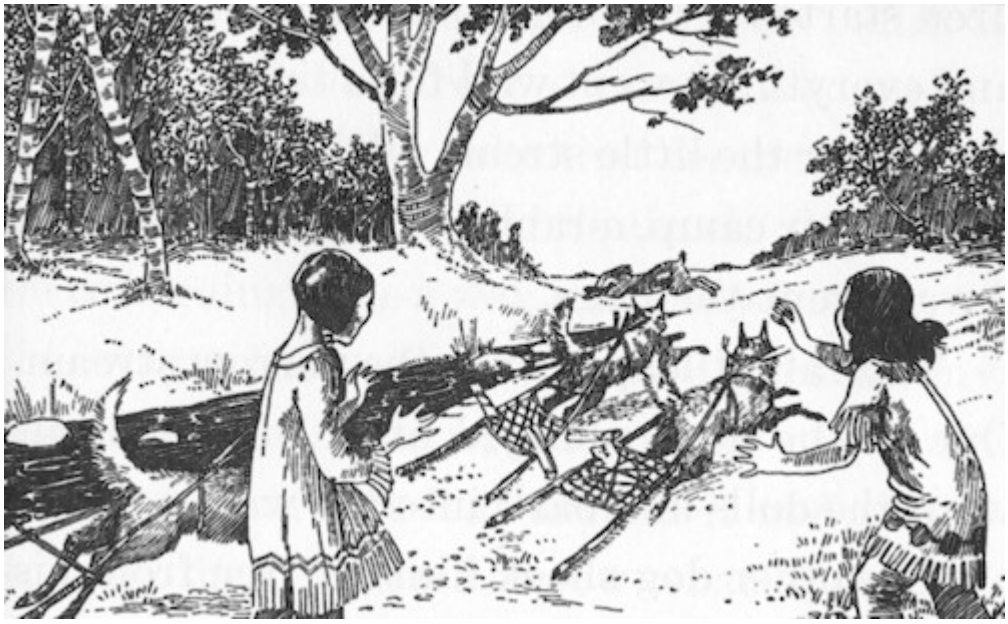
"I wish I had my new beaded bag to show you," said White Cloud. "I shall put my doll's best clothes in it and hang it over her bed. Are you learning to sew, Flying Squirrel?"

"I don't like to sew. I would rather climb trees. It's time to move now. Let's get ready. We will go to the stream that flows into the lake." And Flying Squirrel began to whistle for her dogs.

"My big dog is home with the rest of her puppies. May I have one of yours?" asked White Cloud. "Last moon my father visited a friendly camp. There were thirty lodges and more dogs than he could count. I wish he had brought me another big one."

White Cloud did not say "thirty," for she knew no word for so large a number. She raised her ten fingers three times, just as she had seen her father do.

Flying Squirrel called her dogs, and they came running to her. She had begun to train them to draw loads, and they stood quite still while the girls harnessed them for moving. The bark covers of the two lodges were taken off and carefully rolled. Then the lodge poles were corded in two long straight bundles. Flying Squirrel crossed the small ends and fastened them above the dog's back. The large ends dragged on the ground.



Back of the dog the sticks were held in place by two cross pieces of wood carefully tied a little way apart. Between the cross pieces was a strong netting that hung down like a shallow bag. The dolls and rolls of bark were laid in one of the nets. What should the other dog carry?

"I know," exclaimed White Cloud. "My puppy shall have a ride." He was caught and firmly tied. The net was a comfortable bed, and he made no objection.

Soon the camp was packed, and the children started. The dogs trotted along quietly, and everything went well for a time. As they came near the little stream where they wished to set their camp, a rabbit ran across the trail. Away went the dogs.

The rabbit leaped over the narrow stream. One of the dogs plunged after him, and out went the dolls and bark into the water.

The other dog shook himself free from his harness. The lodge poles he was dragging turned upside down, holding the howling puppy in the mud.

"Oh, my puppy will drown!" cried White Cloud as she dashed down the muddy banks in rescue.

"My dolls! My best dolls are spoiled!" mourned Flying Squirrel.

Soon the dogs were called back, everything found, the dolls bathed and laid out to dry. Then the lodges were set up, and the children rested in the sun.

As they looked about, White Cloud saw a feather lying on the grass. It was painted, as if it had fallen from a warrior's bonnet.

"You had better take that feather to your father now," said Flying Squirrel. "Perhaps there is going to be a war, and a spy has passed this way. I am afraid. I shall pack all my things and go home with my dogs.

"Here, put this leaf around it and run to your mother. She will know what to do."

Away ran White Cloud, holding a sprawling puppy in her arms and trying to protect the feather, which she had concealed in a large leaf.

FINDING A WAR FEATHER

"Look, Mother; look at the big feather I have found. It is not like the ones in my father's war bonnet."

Good Bird took the feather and examined it carefully.

"Where did you find it, White Cloud?" she asked.

"Near the little stream that runs into the lake. Flying Squirrel and I have moved our dolls' lodges this morning."

"You must take the feather to your father at once. It may be that some enemy is planning war and getting ready to surprise our camp.

"Then you must move your dolls and their lodge near by where I can see you play. You may be in danger.

"Your father is spearing fish in the lake. Now run to him. Let no one see the feather, and do not turn aside to talk to any one like the little hare that did not mind its mother."

"When will you tell me the story of the hare?" asked White Cloud.

"Do not talk about stories now. Run along. You must not wait a minute. I will watch you all the way. Your father, I think, will come back with you."

White Cloud soon found her father. He left his fishing and returned with his little daughter.

A council of the tribe was called, for the strange feather had been dropped by no friendly Indian.

Then the medicine drum was beaten to call the people together. They were told of the danger, and there was a great stir in the village. Everything was made ready for sudden moving in case of attack. All the trained dogs were called and tied in the wigwams of their owners.

A guard of young Indians was placed on watch for the night. Fleet Deer came late to his lodge, and after eating he joined the warriors.

As nothing more could be done, Good Bird comforted her frightened little daughter by stories. Swift Elk pretended to be very brave. He did not run out of the wigwam as usual, but lay on the ground and listened to his mother.

"Now, my daughter," she said, "I'll tell you the story you asked for this morning."

THE LYNX AND THE HARE

Once a little hare asked her mother if she might play on the big rock near the lodge.

"Yes, little one, but you must not leave the rock. And be sure that you do not speak to any stranger who passes by," replied her mother.

Now the rock was low near the lodge, but very high on the other side, where it overlooked a stream.

A hungry lynx saw the little hare jumping on the high rock. "I must have that hare for my dinner," he said. So he spoke in a kind voice. "Wabose, Wabose. Come here, my little white one."

The hare went to the edge of the rock and looked down.

"Come here, pretty Wabose. I want to talk with you," said the lynx in a coaxing voice.

"Oh, no," said the hare. "I am afraid of you. My mother told me not to talk to strangers."

"You are very pretty, and you are a good, obedient child. But I am not a stranger. I am a relative of yours. Go down the rock and come to the stream where I can see you better. I want to send some word to your lodge. Come down and see me, you pretty little hare."

The hare was pleased to be praised and called pretty. When she heard that the lynx was a relative, she forgot to obey her mother.

She jumped down from the rock where she stood and trotted to the stream. There the lynx pounced upon her and tore her to pieces.

"Don't you know any war stories?" asked Swift Elk.

"Yes; I heard one in the moon of snow that you will like," answered his mother.

HOW THE ANIMALS SAVED THE TRIBE

Once there was an Indian village in great danger. The trail of the enemy had been found on every side of the camp.

The women were making ready for flight. They had harnessed their dogs to the dragging poles. The rawhide netting between the braces that held the poles in place was packed with household goods.

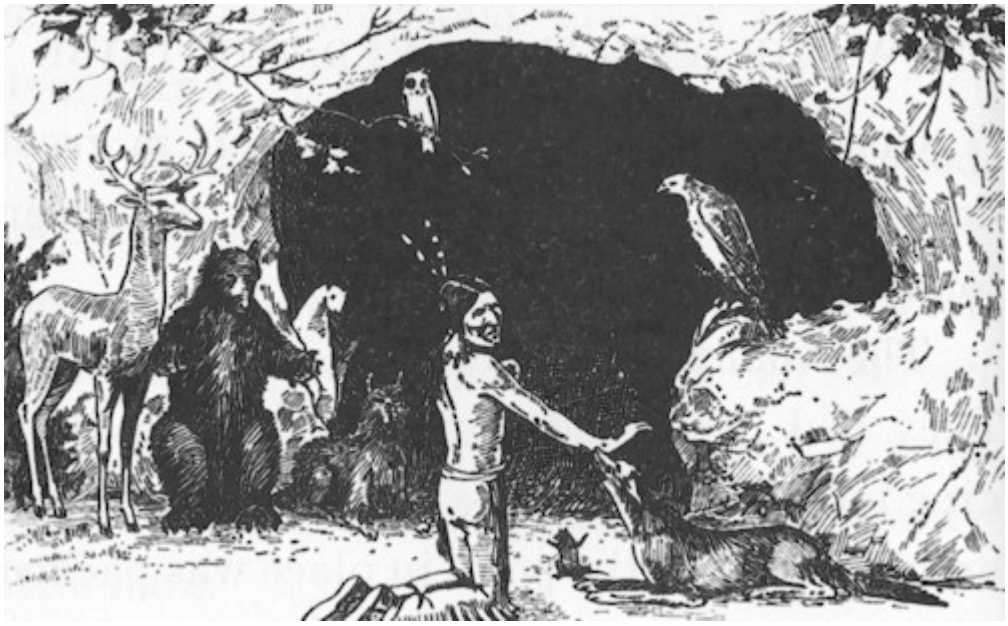
An attack was expected in the early morning. Guards were stationed to call the men to battle, and to tell the

women which way to flee with their children.

The warriors all were ready. Their chief went out alone under the stars, and prayed that he might be able to save his people from death.

Suddenly a deer with branching horns stood before him. "I have come to tell you that your prayers are heard," he said.

"We, the animals, invite you to our council. We shall give you the power to save your tribe."



They traveled on together until they came to a cave under a rocky bluff near the river. Here the warrior chief was welcomed and given the seat of honor.

Every animal of field and forest, and every bird of the air, had gathered in the immense cavern. There was silence for a moment. Then a great eagle flapped his wings. He stood on a jutting rock in sight of all.

"Your acts of kindness, oh, warrior, are known to us," said the eagle. "You have hunted only for food, as the animals hunt. Your arrows have not been shot to take life without a reason. No bird nor beast has been left by you to suffer and die.

"Therefore, I, the eagle, king of birds, give you of my courage. You shall fear no warlike band, however many. Alone you shall conquer the enemy."

"And I," said the bear, "give you of my gift of healing. You shall be able to cure yourself, and also your fellow warriors, of any wounds you may receive in battle."

"My fleetness is yours," said the deer. "You shall outstrip all others and run like the wind."

The wolf stretched himself and walked noiselessly into the circle. "When you creep into the enemy's camp," he said, "no eye shall be able to see you. Thus may you rout your enemies, and no one shall know who is striking the blows."

"I am small," said the field mouse; "I leave no tracks on the grass, and send no sound into the air. I give you my power, that none may follow your trail nor hear your footfall."

"No one can give a better gift than I," said the owl. "You shall see in the dark as I do. The night shall be to you like the day."

"You have fed me," said the dog. "You have taken me into your lodge and let me lie by the warm fire. I give you in return my power of smell that you may follow the trail of your enemy."

Suddenly there was no cave in sight, no animals in council. Where he had been praying under the open sky, the warrior chief stood alone. Was it all a dream?

From the grass came a faint strange smell. He followed it fast as the fleetest deer. In what seemed but a moment he was in sight of the sleeping foe.

He entered their camp as silently as the field mouse. Like the eagle he had no fear. He struck out with his weapons. In great surprise the painted Indians awoke and jumped to their feet.

Wounded men fell under blows that could not be seen nor heard. Their chief lay still upon the ground.

"There is magic here," they cried. "We cannot fight against magic." And they aroused their band and fled, leaving everything behind them.

Then the victor sped with the fleetness of the deer to his own tribe. The men, waiting for the battle signal, followed him to the deserted camp. They returned laden with weapons, the finest of bows and arrows, spears, war bonnets, stores of food, and other spoils of war.

Joy spread among the people. In the village of wigwams feasting took the place of fear.

"I wish I had been that warrior," said Swift Elk.

"You may have a chance to be just as brave to-morrow," answered his mother. "I depend on you to take your father's place here if he goes into battle."

The children could keep awake no longer, but Good Bird did not close her eyes. The dawn came on, the sun rose, and there was no attack.

For many days and nights the young braves took their turn in watching. There were no further signs of an enemy, and no one ever found out how the strange feather came to be dropped near the camp.

WINTER EVENINGS

The wind roared in the trees, and the snow was falling. But Fleet Deer's lodge was warm and comfortable. Good Bird, his wife, knew how to make a lodge, and how to keep it from being smoky.

She had sewed heavy skins together for the outside cover of the wigwam. Inside, the lower walls were of tanned doeskin, nearly white. The cold air passing between the lining and the cover ventilated the room and

carried the smoke out of the smoke hole.

In the middle of the circular floor was a stone-lined fire pit, now filled with glowing coals that gave light to the room.

Warm skins with the fur uppermost covered the three long platforms that were used for seats in the daytime and for beds at night.

Good Bird took great pride in her home. She kept the floor swept with a cedar broom and everything in its place.

When not busy in preparing food, she made clothing and moccasins. She stained porcupine quills for trimmings, and made necklaces of shells. The teeth of wild animals were used for ornaments.

On this cold winter evening Good Bird was dressed in a handsome garment trimmed with fringe and colored quills. Her moccasins and leggings were also ornamented.

She had braided her hair neatly, and drawn a line of fresh red paint along the parting. Her forehead and cheeks were also touched with red.

"Are you going to a dance, Mother?" asked White Cloud.

Good Bird said nothing, but smiled as she thought of the guest who was expected and the pleasant surprise in store for her children.

The evening meal was over. Nokomis had opened her stores of maple sugar and corn in honor of Swift Elk, who had won the game of tops that day.

Whipping his winter top over level snow and high drifts alike, he had outdistanced his companions by fifty paces.

White Cloud sat by the fire drying her moccasins. She had been out sliding with her playmates until the sun left the sky. You would have thought their sleds very funny, for they were made of the curved rib bones of a large deer.

Swift Elk was studying the strange signs and markings on the lining of the wigwam. He was never tired of hearing the pictures explained, for they showed in order the chief events in his father's life.

Here was the grizzly bear that Fleet Deer had killed single-handed. For this deed of bravery he was entitled to wear an eagle's feather.

Here was the deer that was killed in time of famine, after a long and dangerous hunt.

Other pictures showed Indians in the war dance, on the war trail, surprising the foe, returning with the honors of battle, holding a council, and smoking the peace pipe.

Fleet Deer was master of the Indian art of picture writing, and he had, that very day, added new paintings to the record. His children had never heard of any other way to read or write, and they had never seen a book.

The flap of skin covering the lodge entrance was raised and a man entered.

"The story-teller! The story-teller!" shouted the children with delight. He was given the seat of honor and the best food that Good Bird could provide.

When the guest was warm and his meal over, favorite stories were asked for.

"We ought to hear again of the great gift of corn to our people," said Good Bird.

"New stories, I want new stories. Will you tell us some new stories?" asked White Cloud.

"War stories, I want, and stories of boys," said Swift Elk.

Then Fleet Deer, the father, spoke: "I wish my son to know the tale of the White Canoe and how a great warrior honored his parents."

Nokomis had no request. She was a fine story-teller herself and interested in hearing everything that might be related.

Then, to the joy of his hearers, the story-teller began.

First he delighted the children by telling of the ground hog that saved his own life by teaching a new dance.

The next tale was about the first animals and how they came to live in the forests and on the plains.

After the story-teller had explained how sickness came into the world, Fleet Deer wanted to be a medicine man and find all the plants that cure disease.

And so they all listened to one tale after another until the midnight stars shone overhead and the embers grew white where the burning logs had sparkled.

Now you may read for yourselves the stories that were told in an Indian lodge on a winter evening.

THE GROUND-HOG DANCE

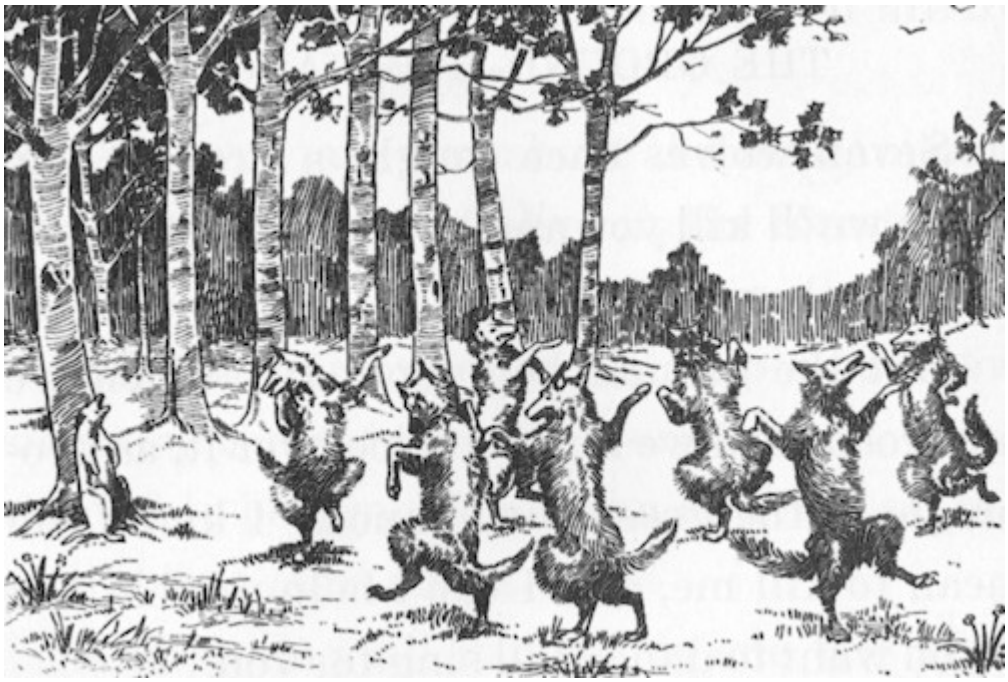
Seven wolves once caught a ground hog. "Now we'll kill you and have something good to eat," they said.

But the ground hog replied: "When we find good food we must rejoice over it, as people do in the green-corn dance. I know you mean to kill me, and I can't help myself, but if you want to dance I'll sing for you.

"I will teach you a new dance. I'll lean up against seven trees in turn, and you will dance away, then come back toward me. At the last turn you may kill me."

The wolves were very hungry, but they wanted to learn the new dance. So they told the ground hog to go ahead. The ground hog leaned up against the first tree and began the song.

All the wolves danced away from the trees. When the signal was given they danced back in line.



"That's fine!" said the ground hog, as he went to the second tree and began the second song. The wolves danced away, then turned at the signal and danced back again.

"That's very fine," said the ground hog; and he went to another tree and started the third song.

The wolves danced their best, and were praised by the ground hog. At each song he took another tree, and each tree was a little nearer to his hole under a stump.

At the seventh song he said, "Now this is the last dance. When I give the signal you will all turn and come after me. The one who catches me may have me."

So the ground hog began the last song, and kept it up until the wolves were many steps away. Just as the signal was given he made a jump for his hole.

The wolves turned and were after him. But the ground hog reached his hole and dived in. He was scarcely inside when the foremost wolf caught him by the tail and pulled so hard that it broke off.

And the ground hog's tail has been short ever since.

THE LUCKY HUNTER

Soon after the world was made, a hunter lived with his wife and only son near a high mountain. No matter when the man went into the woods he was sure to come back with plenty of meat. And so he went by the name of the Lucky Hunter.

The little boy used to play every day by a river not far from the house. One morning the old people thought they heard laughing and talking in the bushes as if two children were playing together.

When the boy came home at night he was asked who had been with him all day.

"A wild boy comes out of the water," answered the son. "He says he is my elder brother."

The father and mother wished very much to see their son's companion, but the wild boy always ran into the river when he heard them coming.

"This must not go on," said the father.

That night the Lucky Hunter said to his son: "To-morrow when the wild boy comes to play, ask him to wrestle with you. When you have your arms around him, you must hold him and call us."

In this way the wild boy was caught and kept in the house until he was tamed. He was full of mischief, and he led the smaller boy into all kinds of trouble.

One day the wild boy said to his brother: "I wonder where our father gets all his game. Let's follow him and find out."

A few days afterward the Lucky Hunter took a bow and some feathers in his hand and went toward a swamp. After waiting a short time, the boys followed.

The old man cut reeds, fitted the feathers to them, and made arrows.

"What are those things for, I wonder?" said the wild boy.

When the Lucky Hunter had finished his arrows, he went on over the low hills and up the mountain.

Keeping out of sight, the boys watched him. When he was halfway to the top he stopped and lifted a large rock in the side of the mountain.

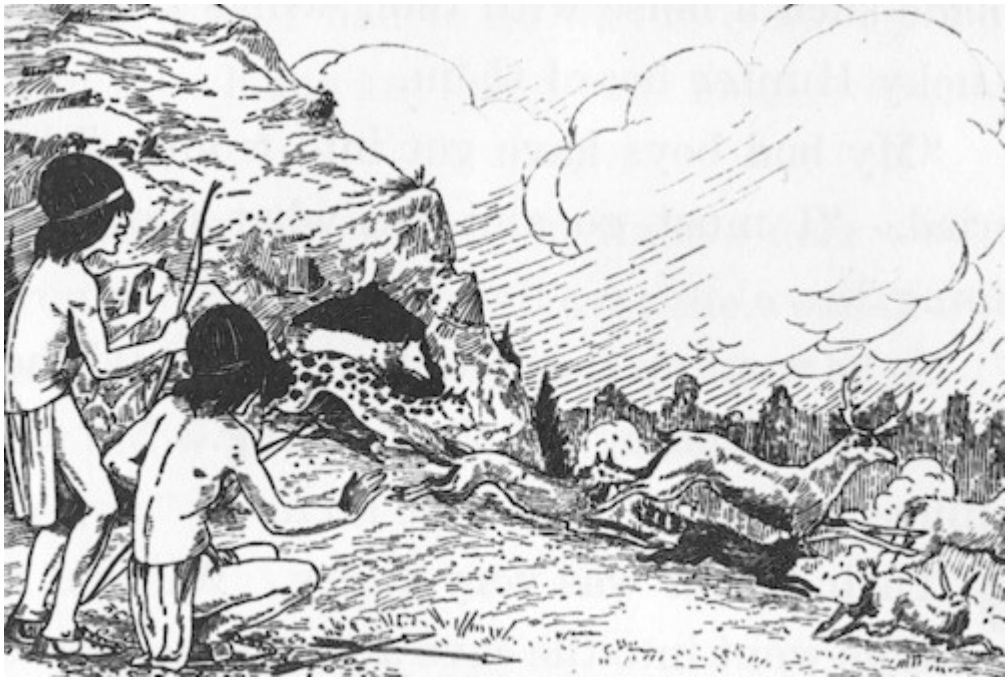
At once a deer ran out. The Lucky Hunter killed it with his first arrow. Then he carefully replaced the heavy stone and pulled a strong vine over it to conceal the cracks.

"Oho," said the boys. "He keeps the deer shut up inside of the mountain. When he wants meat he lets one out and kills it with the arrows he made in the swamp."

They hurried to reach home before their father, who had the heavy deer to carry.

A few days later the boys went to the swamp, made arrows, and started up the mountain. When they came to the hole, they lifted the rock and a deer came running out.

Before they could shoot him another came, and another. The boys could not stop them, and they could not shoot them.



Other animals made a rush for the entrance. There were elk, antelope, raccoons, wolves, foxes, panthers, and many others. They scattered in all directions and disappeared in the wilderness.

Then a great flock of birds came flying out of the hole. There were turkeys, geese, ducks, quail, eagles, robins, hawks, and owls.

They darkened the air like a cloud and made such a noise with their wings that the Lucky Hunter heard them.

"My bad boys have got into trouble," he cried. "I must go and see what they are doing."

So he went up the mountain and found the two boys standing by the opening. Not an animal nor a bird was to be seen.

Their father was very angry. Without a word he went into the cave and kicked off the covers of four jars. Out swarmed wasps, hornets, gnats, flies, mosquitoes, and all manner of stinging and biting insects and bugs.

The boys screamed with pain. They rolled over and over on the ground, trying to brush off their tormentors.

Their father looked on until he thought they had been punished enough. Then he spoke.

"See what you have done, you rascals. Always before you have had enough to eat without working for it. Whenever you were hungry, all I had to do was to come up here and take home anything your mother wanted to cook.

"After this when you want a deer to eat, you will have to hunt all over the woods for it, and then may not find one.

"Now you may go and take care of yourselves."

HOW SICKNESS CAME

In the old days when the beasts, birds, fishes, insects, and plants could talk, they lived in peace and friendship with the children of men.

But, as time went on, the people increased in number, and they crowded the animals out of their homes.

This was bad enough, but, to make it worse, man invented bows and arrows, spears, knives, and hooks, and began to kill the animals.

They were killed for clothing, and they were killed for food, and still they were patient. But when man began to kill them for sport, they determined to unite for common safety.

The bears first met in council with their chief. After each in turn had complained of the cruel treatment of man, they all declared war against him.

Some of the bears proposed to make weapons and use them. But the chief said: "It is better to trust to the teeth and claws which Nature has given us."

As no one could think of other plans, their chief dismissed the council. The bears returned to the woods, and have done little harm to man ever since.

The deer next held a council. They decided that any one who killed a deer without asking his pardon should be lame with many pains.

The reptiles and the fish talked the matter over. They agreed to punish man by making him dream of snakes and of eating raw fish.

In the last council the birds, rabbits, squirrels, ducks, and the smaller animals came together. All complained of stolen nests, stones, and arrows.

The ground squirrel alone said a good word for man. This made the others so angry that they fell upon the

little animal and tore him with their claws. You can see the stripes on his back even to this day.

Then all the squirrels that had lost legs or tail by arrows, all rabbits running on three legs, all birds that had seen their little ones die, all wild ducks lamed, and all animals that had ever been wounded for sport rose up and called for revenge.

"Let the pains and the trouble that man has sent to us and our children be sent to him and his children," they demanded.

"But how can we do this?" asked the others. "We cannot turn man's weapons against him."

"Let us send new diseases," proposed a limping fox.

All rose up with pleasure at this proposal. And they commenced to invent diseases so fast that they had soon named every kind of sickness that you ever heard of. Had they thought of many more, no human beings would now be alive.

The grubworm, who had been stepped on by man, was so delighted that he fell over backwards and has had to wriggle on his back ever since.

But the plants continued friendly to man. When they heard what the animals had done, they promised to help him and his children forever.

Every tree and plant, even the grass and the moss, agreed to furnish a cure for one of the diseases sent by the animals.

Each said in turn: "I shall help man when he calls on me in his need."

Thus came medicine. And if we only knew where to look, we might find among the plants a cure for every kind of sickness.

HOW SPRING CONQUERED WINTER

Far to the North lives the terrible giant, Winter. When he leaves his home, all people dread his coming. He whistles, and the storms roar about him. Where he steps, the ground turns to rock and plants bow their heads to the earth.

All the animals flee before him and hide in caves and hollow trees. The children leave their happy play and sit shivering by the wigwam fire.

One day old Winter looked about him. He saw no life in field or forest. The wind raged, and the drifts almost hid the lodges of the Indians.

"The world is conquered; I am the only king," said giant Winter. He sat alone in his lodge. The fire was white with ashes, and the tempest howled.

A step was heard, and a young warrior entered the lodge.

He was tall and straight and youthful.

Old Winter welcomed the stranger. "Sit here on the mat beside me," he said. "Let us pass the night together. You shall tell me of your strange adventures, and of the lands in which you have traveled."

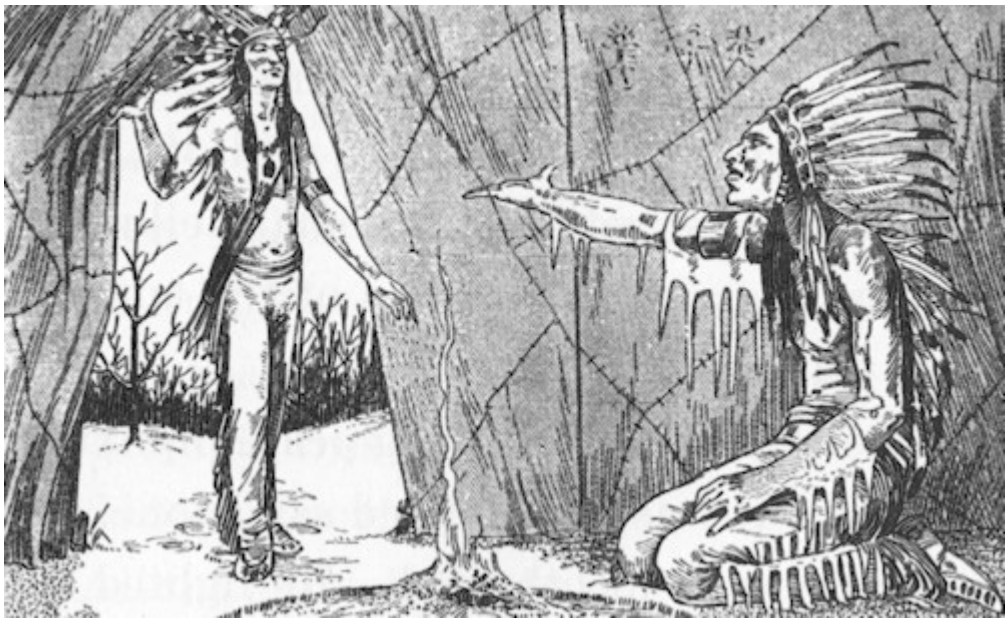
The old man drew his long peace pipe from its pouch. It was made of red sandstone, and its stem was a smooth reed. He lighted the pipe from the dying embers and passed it to his guest.

Long they talked and smoked together, each boasting of his power.

"When I blow my breath about me," said old Winter, "rivers stop their flowing, and water turns to stone."

The young man smiled. "When I blow my breath about me," he replied, "I free your prisoned waters, and they rush onward to the seas."

"My power is greater than yours," boasted Winter. "I have only to shake my long hair[Pg 146] and the leaves die on the branches. Plants bow their heads before me and go back into the earth."



And now the stranger laughed as he boasted of greater power. "When I shake my curling locks, I call the leaves back on the branches. The plants come out of the brown earth and bring forth their flowers and fruit."

Old Winter frowned. "I speak, and the birds fly away. I command, and the wild beasts obey me. They hide in caves. They burrow in the earth. They do not venture to look upon my face!"

"I call back the birds you have sent away," replied the stranger. "They hear my voice and return to their nesting places. I speak, and the beasts leave their shelters and fill the forests and the plains with life."

"I am the king," shouted Winter, "for even man obeys me. When I send the tempest, the mightiest warriors turn and flee. They close the doors of their lodges, and I imprison them with drifts of snow."

"I also have power over man," replied the stranger. "My name is Spring. I melt your snow and open the wigwam doors. All men rejoice, and they come forth to hunt and feast and dance."

The night waned, and the sun came from his lodge like a painted warrior. The air grew warm and pleasant, and the bluebird and the robin sang on the lodge poles.

But the giant! What was taking place? He was growing smaller. Now he was no larger than a common man. His war bonnet was no longer white, but old and gray, and its feathers were falling one by one.

Still the giant dwindled. Smaller and smaller he grew. Tears flowed from his eyes. He vanished from sight, and fled away with a noise like the rush of waters. Far to the north he flew where the snow never melts.

Thus did Spring, the beautiful youth, conquer the great and mighty Winter.

"Thus it was that in the Northland
Came the Spring with all its splendor,
All its birds and all its blossoms,
All its flowers and leaves and grasses."

THE GIFT OF CORN

A tribe of Indians once lived on the beautiful islands of a large lake. They were driven from their homes by hostile tribes. Men, women, and children left everything they owned and paddled their canoes westward to the mainland.

But Manabush, the bravest of the warriors, remained behind. It was his purpose to keep close watch of the enemy, and to send warning in time to prevent surprise.

Every day he paddled his birch canoe close to the shore, hiding in nooks and bays. He had with him two boys, and with their aid the canoe was hauled every night into the thick woods.

As they walked, they carefully covered their footprints with sand.

Each day Manabush thought of his suffering people, whose supplies of food had been stolen by the enemy. The brave warrior prayed to the spirits of earth and air, asking that food be given to his tribe.

One morning Manabush rose early, leaving the two boys asleep. He went out from the tent and walked in the forest, where he could not be seen.

Suddenly he came out upon an open plain. Approaching him was a handsome youth dressed in garments of green and yellow. In his hair he wore a red plume.

Truly this stranger must come from skyland, he thought. What answer does he bring?

"I am Mondamin," said the strange man. "Your prayers are heard, for you pray, not for yourself, but for your people. I have come to show you how by labor and struggle you can gain what you have prayed for. You must wrestle with me."

Long they strove together. The man of the red feather was strong and active, but at last he was thrown to the earth.

"I have thrown you! I have thrown you!" shouted Manabush.

"You have gained a great gift for your people," said Mondamin, "for I am the spirit of the corn."

Even as he spoke, a wonderful change took place. Gone was the man who had wrestled with such strength. His garments had turned into green and yellow corn husks, and his body to a ripe red ear of corn. But the red plume was still waving.

Again the voice of Mondamin was heard from the ground. "Take from me my covers. Scatter my kernels over the plain. Break my spine and throw it all about you.

"Make the earth soft and light above me. Let no bird disturb me, and let no weed share my resting place. Watch me till I stand once more tall and beautiful. Then you shall have food for your people."

Manabush obeyed all that the voice had commanded. On the way back to his canoe he killed a deer, but he said no word to his companions of his strange adventure with the man of the red feather.

When the new moon hung like a bow in the west, he visited the field alone. What were the wide grass-like blades making green the plain? What were the vines that sent their runners all about?

Carefully he tilled the field. The stems grew strong, and the broad leaves gleamed in the sunshine. Still he kept the secret, spending many hours in watching for his enemies.

When summer drew near its close, Manabush paddled his canoe to the shore nearest the wrestling ground. He found the corn clad in green and yellow, with red plumes waving. And great yellow pumpkins were ripening on the green vines.

As he picked the ripe red ears he heard a voice from the field, saying: "Victory has crowned your struggles, O Manabush. The gift of corn is to your people, and will always be their food."

THE MAGIC CANOE

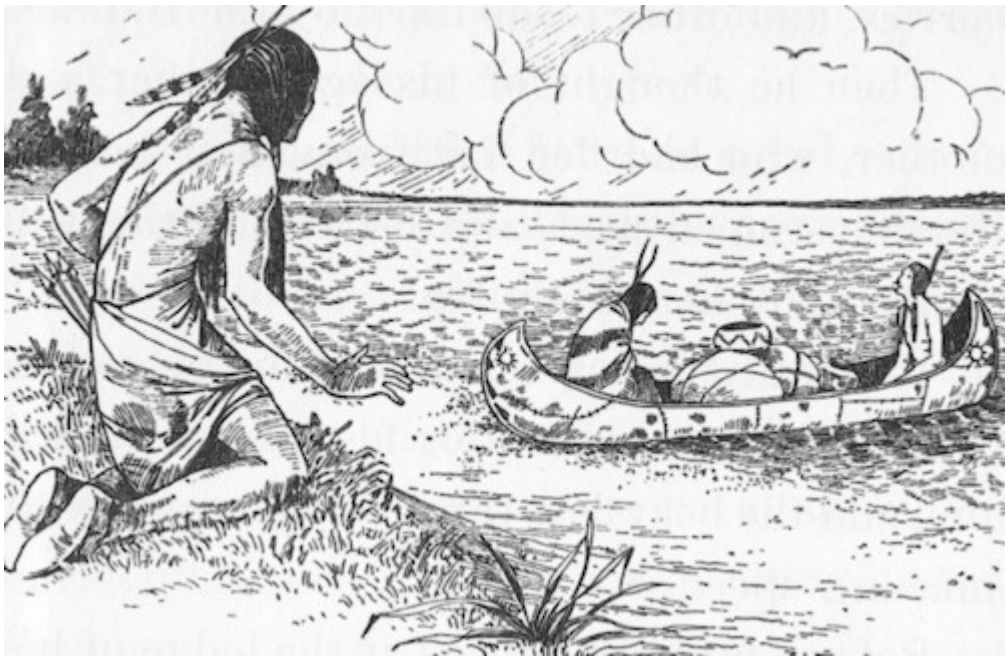
One night, as Manabush was lying on the ground in the thick woods, he heard strange voices. "This is no common enemy," he said to himself. But he lay motionless and listened.

The evil spirits were plotting to take his life. By his magic power he was able to defend himself from their attacks, and they slipped away unseen.

In the morning he went to the open shore. There he saw a canoe drawn up on the beach. Coming near, he found a man in the bow and another in the stern. They had been changed into stone images as a punishment for their wicked deeds.

The canoe was the largest and finest that Manabush had ever seen. It was full of bags of the most beautiful clothing and stores of the rarest food.

Manabush carried all the treasures into the wood and concealed them in a cave. Then he took the magic canoe and hid it among the rocks.



A voice was heard from one of the stone images: "In this way will the canoes of your people be loaded when they pass again along this coast."

Manabush returned to his two young companions, bidding them arise and cook. He showed them the abundance of meat and fish, the bags of maple sugar and dried berries, and other foods liked by the Indians.

Then he thought of his aged father and mother, who had fled far from their homes. Danger seemed past, and he wished them to return and share his gifts.

Westward he sailed in the magic canoe. He needed no paddles, for his wishes guided him, and the boat flew

through the water with amazing speed.

Before daylight he was at the lodge of his parents. He found them asleep, and he carried them to his canoe so gently that they did not awaken.

When they awoke in the morning, they could hardly believe their eyes. They had left behind hunger and a barren lodge. They found themselves in their own country, with abundance all about them.

Food was placed before them. Then the bags were opened. There were beaded dresses for the mother and war bonnets for the father. There were moccasins and warm blankets. There were skins as soft as the most skilled work could produce.

Manabush built his parents a lodge near the cornfield and filled it with every comfort. Then he brought ears of corn and pumpkins and laid before them. He told them of his wrestling with Mondamin, and he showed them the field where the corn stood in its garments of green and yellow, waving its red plumes.

The secret of the magic canoe, the stone images, and the wonderful gifts was shared by Manabush with his father and mother.

When spring returned a large cornfield grew and prospered. The exiled tribe came back, and from that time they were noted for their fine crops of maize.

THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS

All who leave the earth must follow the death trail. Each walks alone—warrior, squaw, or child. All but papoose. The good spirits carry papoose.

The trail goes on and on to the place where the sun slips over the edge of the earth plane. There it comes to a deep, rapid stream, and the only bridge is a slippery pine log.

On the other side of the river are six strange beings with rocks in their hands. These rocks are magic stones which can injure only those who have done evil, but can never touch nor harm the good.

When the one who follows the death trail reaches the middle of the log, he sees the stones come flying toward him.

If his life has been evil, he tries to dodge; therefore, he slips off the log and falls into the black, swirling water.

Sometimes he crawls out of the stream and climbs to the top of the rocks. But he can never reach the country of the good spirits.

There is only one trail to the Happy Hunting Grounds, and that is over the narrow, slippery log. But if the one who is crossing has brought good to his kinsmen and his tribe, he does not fear.

He knows that no harm can come from the stones that fly around him, and so he keeps his footing and walks safely over.

The trail winds on over high rocks to the beautiful land. No storms and no winter enter the Happy Hunting Grounds. The sky is always blue, and the grass never grows dry with heat nor brown with frost.

The trees are full of birds, the bushes of fruit, and the forests are alive with game. Feasting and dancing fill the day, and the war cry is heard no more.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The facts and stories which have made this little book possible are found in the works of Schoolcraft and in the Government reports of Ethnology. Especial credit is due to Albert E. Jenks, author of "The Wild-Rice Indians of the Upper Lakes," and to James Mooney, who reported for the Government the tribal myths told by famous Cherokee story-tellers.

There is evidence that the Indians of early times had regular trade routes across the continent, north and south, and east and west. It was the custom of their story-tellers to exchange stories, and it is therefore possible that some of the myths told in the south found their way in northern wigwams. The story of the birds welcoming a papoose, for example, is obtained in part from the Cherokee collection, and in part from Schoolcraft, who lived among the Ojibways, or Chippewas as they are often called. That certain tales are similar to fables of Æsop is explained by the theory that a primitive people, observing nature, would originate similar myths.

The forests where rice grew wild in the shallow water of lakes and streams, were coveted lands and the cause of many Indian wars. Here game was abundant, and maple sugar, berries, and nuts could be obtained in season.

After years of conflict for the rice lands, peace was made between the Ojibways of the Great Lakes and the Sioux, or Dakotahs, farther west. Trade with the whites had begun, but there were many villages which the white men had never entered, and where the primitive customs were still unchanged.

As Hiawatha was not the only Indian who married a Dakotah, it follows that there were homes where the family life was influenced by the customs of both tribes.

The author has endeavored to describe child life in the Wild-Rice region west of the Great Lakes at this period, and to retell some of the most interesting stories enjoyed by Indian children.

The aim of the book is to gratify the American child's natural interest in primitive life by stories of our own land and to increase his respect for all that is original and worthy in the lives of the First Americans.

T H E E N D