

Myths *and*  
Legends *of the*  
Great Plains

Katharine B. Judson

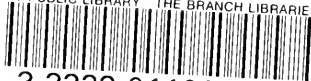
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Myths and legends of the  
great plains

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OF THE GREAT PLAINS

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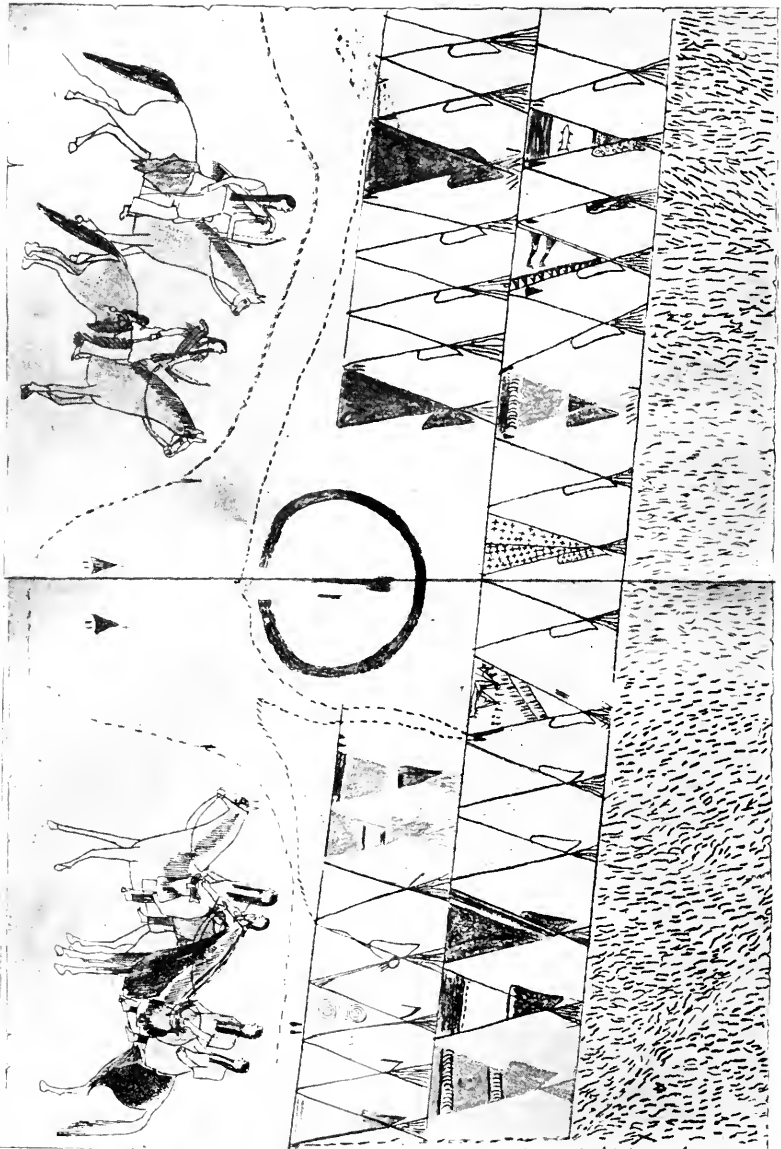
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# MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF THE GREAT PLAINS

## BIANKI'S VISION (Kiowa Drawing)

*The ghost dance among the Sioux was based on the belief that the dead Indians would all come to life and drive out the white intruders. Then the buffaloes, which were disappearing, would come back in the immense herds of the olden time.*

*The vision of one of the dreamer priests is represented. After reaching the spirit world, Bianki found himself on a vast prairie covered with innumerable buffaloes and ponies. He went through the herds (dotted lines) until he came to a large Kiowa camp, with its ornament tepees. He met four young women who had died years before, and asked about two of his brothers, also dead. He soon met them coming into camp, with buffalo meat hanging from their saddles.*

# MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF THE GREAT PLAINS,

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

KATHARINE BERRY JUDSON

AUTHOR OF "MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF CALIFORNIA AND THE OLD SOUTHWEST," "MYTHS AND  
LEGENDS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST," "MONTANA," "MYTHS AND LEGENDS  
OF ALASKA" AND "WHEN THE FORESTS ARE ABLAZE."

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CHICAGO  
A. C. McCLURG & CO.  
1913

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1913

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Published November, 1913

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Chicago, Ill.

Printed by  
The McClurg Printing Company  
Chicago, Ill.

The McClurg Printing Company  
Chicago, Ill.

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## PREFACE

**F**ROM the edge of the Darkening Land, where stand the mountains which encircle the earth-plain, eastward toward the Sunland, lie the great plains of America. Smooth and flat and green they stretch away, hundreds of miles, rising from a dead level into a soft rolling of the land, then into the long green waves of the prairies where rivers flow, where the water ripples as it flows, and trees shade the banks of the gleaming water.

Here, amidst the vast sweep of the plains which stretch away to the horizon on every side, boundless, limitless, endless, lived the plains Indians. Standing in the midst of this vast green plain on a soft May morning, after the Thunder Gods have passed, when the sun is shining in the soft blue above, and the sweet, rain-swept air is blown about by the Four Winds which are always near to man; day and night, — standing far out on the plains with no hint of the white man or his work — one sees the earth somewhat as the Indian saw it and wonders not at his reverence for the Mysterious One who dwelt overhead, beyond

## PREFACE

the blue stone arch, and for the lesser powers which came to him over the four paths guarded by the Four Winds. It was Wakoda, the Mysterious One, who gave to man the sunshine, the clear rippling water, the clear sky from which all storms, all clouds are absent, the sky which is the symbol of peace. Through this sky sweeps the eagle, the "Mother" of Indian songs, bearing upon her strong wings the message of peace and calling to her nestlings as she flies. Little wonder that to some tribes song was an integral part of their lives, and that emotions too deep for words were expressed in song.

Other songs there were, with words, songs of the birds which fly through that soft, tender blue:

All around the birds in flocks are flying;  
Dipping, rising, circling, see them coming.  
See, many birds are flocking here,  
All about us now together coming.

[*Pawnee*]

The power to fly has always inspired Indians of all tribes and of all degrees of civilization with wonder and reverence. The bird chiefs have their own places in Indian myths. Owl is chief of the night; Woodpecker, with his ceaseless tattoo on the trees, is chief of the trees; Duck is chief of the water; but Eagle is chief of the

## PREFACE

day. It is always Eagle who is chief of the birds, even though Wren may outwit him in a tale told by the fire glimmering in the tepee, when the story tellers of the tribe tell of the happenings in the days "way beyond." It is Eagle who inspires admiration, and becomes the most sacred bird.

Round about a tree in ever widening circles an eagle flies, alert,  
watching o'er his nest;  
Loudly whistles he, a challenge sending far, o'er the country wide  
it echoes, there defying foes.

[*Pawnee*]

In the breeze that rippled the long grass of the prairie and fluttered the flaps of the graceful tepee, waved also the corn, sent by Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies, the ever returning life of the green thing growing. In the ravines and on the lower slopes of the grassy waves of the prairie bellowed the buffalo, or grazed in silence, having long since come up from the underground world and become the source of the Indian's food, clothing, home, utensils, and comfort. Endless were the charms and enchantments to bring the buffalo herds near his camping ground. Severe was the punishment meted out to the thoughtless warrior whose unguarded eagerness frightened the herds and sent them away.

Over the plains and prairies, at other times, swept

## PREFACE

the Thunder Gods, with their huge jointed wings, darkening all the land, and flashing fire from angry eyes which struck down man and beast. Terrified were the Indians when the Thunder Gods rolled. Vows made to them must be kept, for relentless were they.

“Oh, grandfather,” prayed the Indian when the sky was black and the lightning flashed, as he filled a pipe with tobacco and offered it skyward, “Oh, grandfather! I am very poor. Somewhere make those who would injure me leave a clear space for me.” Then he put the sacred green cedar upon the fire — the cedar which stayed awake those seven nights and therefore does not lose its hair every winter — and the smoke from the sacred, burning wood, rolling upward, appeased the rolling Thunders.

The authorities used in this compilation are those found in the annual reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology and the Publications of the United States Geographical and Geological Survey: contributions to North American Ethnology. Of the various ethnologists whose work has been used, those of especial importance are Alice C. Fletcher, whose wonderful work among the Omaha and Pawnee Indians is deserving of the most careful study, J. Owen Dorsey, James Mooney, and S. R. Riggs.

## PREFACE

No claim whatever is made for original work. Indeed, original work of any kind in a compilation such as this would impair the authenticity of the myths, and therefore destroy the value of this work. Nor has any effort been made towards "style." The only style worth having in telling an Indian legend is that of the Indian himself.

K. B. J.

*Seattle, Washington.*





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MYTHS AND LEGENDS  
OF THE GREAT PLAINS





# MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF THE GREAT PLAINS

## THE CREATION

*Osage (Wazhá zhe group)*

**W**AY beyond, once upon a time, some of the Osages lived in the sky. They did not know where they came from, so they went to Sun.

They said, "From where did we come?"

He said, "You are my children."

Then they wandered still further and came to Moon.

Moon said, "I am your mother; Sun is your father. You must go away from here. You must go down to the earth and live there."

So they came to the earth but found it covered with water. They could not return up above. They wept, but no answer came to them. They floated about in the air, seeking help from some god; but they found none.

Now all the animals were with them. Elk was the finest and most stately. They all trusted Elk. So they called to Elk, "Help us."

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Then Elk dropped into the water and began to sink. Then he called to the winds. The winds came from all sides and they blew until the waters went upwards, as in a mist. Now before that the winds had traveled in only two directions; they went from north to south and from south to north. But when Elk called to them, they came from the east, from the north, from the west, and from the south. They met at a central place; then they carried the waters upwards.

Now at first the people could see only the rocks. So they traveled on the rocky places. But nothing grew there and there was nothing to eat. Then the waters continued to vanish. At last the people could see the soft earth. When Elk saw the earth, he was so joyous, he rolled over and over on the earth. Then all the loose hairs clung to the soil. So the hairs grew, and from them sprang beans, corn, potatoes, and wild turnips, and at last all the grasses and trees.

Now the people wandered over the land. They found human footsteps. They followed them. They joined with them, and traveled with them in search of food.

*(Hoga group)*

The Hoga came down from above, and found the earth covered with water. They flew in every direction. They sought for gods who would help them

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

and drive the water away. They found not one. Then Elk came. He had a loud voice and he shouted to the four corners of the sky. The four winds came in answer. They blew upon the water and it vanished upwards, in a mist. Then the people could see the rocks. Now there was only a little space on the rocks. They knew they must have more room. The people were crowded. So they sent Muskrat down into the water. He did not come back. He was drowned. Then they sent Loon down. He did not come back. He was drowned. Then they sent Beaver down into the water. The water was too deep. Beaver was drowned. Then Crawfish dived into the water. He was gone a long time. When he came up there was a little mud in his claws. Crawfish was so tired he died. But the people took the mud out of his claws and made the land.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### HOW THE WORLD WAS MADE

*Cherokee*

**T**HE earth is a great floating island in a sea of water. At each of the four corners there is a cord hanging down from the sky. The sky is of solid rock. When the world grows old and worn out, the cords will break, and then the earth will sink down into the ocean. Everything will be water again. All the people will be dead. The Indians are much afraid of this.

In the long time ago, when everything was all water, all the animals lived up above in Galun'lati, beyond the stone arch that made the sky. But it was very much crowded. All the animals wanted more room. The animals began to wonder what was below the water and at last Beaver's grandchild, little Water Beetle, offered to go and find out. Water Beetle darted in every direction over the surface of the water, but it could find no place to rest. There was no land at all. Then Water Beetle dived to the bottom of the water and brought up some soft mud. This began to grow and to spread out on every side until it became the

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

island which we call the earth. Afterwards this earth was fastened to the sky with four cords, but no one remembers who did this.

At first the earth was flat and soft and wet. The animals were anxious to get down, and they sent out different birds to see if it was yet dry, but there was no place to alight; so the birds came back to Galun'lati. Then at last it seemed to be time again, so they sent out Buzzard; they told him to go and make ready for them. This was the Great Buzzard, the father of all the buzzards we see now. He flew all over the earth, low down near the ground, and it was still soft. When he reached the Cherokee country, he was very tired; his wings began to flap and strike the ground. Wherever they struck the earth there was a valley; whenever the wings turned upwards again, there was a mountain. When the animals above saw this, they were afraid that the whole world would be mountains, so they called him back, but the Cherokee country remains full of mountains to this day. [This was the original home, in North Carolina.]

When the earth was dry and the animals came down, it was still dark. Therefore they got the sun and set it in a track to go every day across the island from east to west, just overhead. It was too hot this way. Red Crawfish had his shell scorched a bright red, so that

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

his meat was spoiled. Therefore the Cherokees do not eat it.

Then the medicine men raised the sun a handsbreadth in the air, but it was still too hot. They raised it another time; and then another time; at last they had raised it seven handsbreadths so that it was just under the sky arch. Then it was right and they left it so. That is why the medicine men called the high place "the seventh height." Every day the sun goes along under this arch on the under side; it returns at night on the upper side of the arch to its starting place.

There is another world under this earth. It is like this one in every way. The animals, the plants, and the people are the same, but the seasons are different. The streams that come down from the mountains are the trails by which we reach this underworld. The springs at their head are the doorways by which we enter it. But in order to enter the other world, one must fast and then go to the water, and have one of the underground people for a guide. We know that the seasons in the underground world are different, because the water in the spring is always warmer in winter than the air in this world; and in summer the water is cooler.

We do not know who made the first plants and animals. But when they were first made, they were told

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

to watch and keep awake for seven nights. This is the way young men do now when they fast and pray to their medicine. They tried to do this. The first night, nearly all the animals stayed awake. The next night several of them dropped asleep. The third night still more went to sleep. At last, on the seventh night, only the owl, the panther, and one or two more were still awake. Therefore, to these were given the power to see in the dark, to go about as if it were day, and to kill and eat the birds and animals which must sleep during the night.

Even some of the trees went to sleep. Only the cedar, the pine, the spruce, the holly, and the laurel were awake all seven nights. Therefore they are always green. They are also sacred trees. But to the other trees it was said, "Because you did not stay awake, therefore you shall lose your hair every winter."

After the plants and the animals, men began to come to the earth. At first there was only one man and one woman. He hit her with a fish. In seven days a little child came down to the earth. So people came to the earth. They came so rapidly that for a time it seemed as though the earth could not hold them all.



## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE FLOOD AND THE RAINBOW

*Delaware (Lenni-Lenapi)*

**T**HE Lenni-Lenapi are the First People, so that they know this story is true.

After the Creation of the earth, the Mysterious One covered it with a blue roof. Sometimes the roof was very black. Then the Manitou of Waters became uneasy. He feared the rain would no longer be able to pour down upon the earth through this dark roof. Therefore the Manitou of Waters prayed to the Mysterious One that the waters from above be not cut off.

At once the Mysterious One commanded to blow the Spirit of the Wind, who dwells in the Darkening Land. At once thick clouds arose. They covered all the earth, so that the dark roof could no longer be seen.

Then the voice of the Mysterious One was heard amongst the clouds. The voice was deep and heavy, like the sound of falling rivers.

Then the Spirit of Rain, the brother of the Spirit of Waters and the Spirit of the Winds, poured down water from above. The waters fell for a long time.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

They fell until all the earth was covered. Then the birds took refuge in the branches of the highest trees. The animals followed the trails to the mountain peaks.

Then the Manitou of Waters feared no longer. Therefore the Mysterious One ordered the rain to cease and the clouds to disappear. Then Sin-go-wi-chi-na-xa, the rainbow, was seen in the sky.

Therefore the Lenni-Lenapi watch for the rainbow, because it means that the Mysterious One is no longer angry.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE FIRST FIRE

*Cherokee*

**I**N the beginning there was no fire and the world was cold. Then the Thunders, who lived up in Galun'lati, sent their lightning and put fire into the bottom of a hollow sycamore tree which grew on an island. The animals knew it was there because they could see the smoke coming out at the top, but they could not get to it on account of the water, so they held a council to decide what to do. This was a long, long time ago.

Every animal was anxious to go after the fire. Raven offered. He was large and strong, so he was sent first. He flew high and far across the water, and lighted on the sycamore tree. There he perched, wondering what to do next. Then he looked at himself. The heat had scorched his feathers black. Raven was so frightened he flew back across the water without any fire.

Then little Wa-hu-hu, the Screech Owl, offered to go. He flew high and far across the water and perched

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

upon a hollow tree. As he sat there looking into the hollow tree, wondering what to do, a blast of hot air came up and hurt his eyes. Screech Owl was frightened. He flew back as best he could, because he could hardly see. That is why his eyes are red even to this day.

Then Hooting Owl and the Horned Owl went, but by the time they reached the hollow tree, the fire was blazing so fiercely that the smoke nearly blinded them. The ashes carried up by the breeze made white rings around their eyes. So they had to come home without fire. Therefore they have white rings around their eyes.

None of the rest of the birds would go to the fire. Then Uk-su-hi, the racer snake, said he would go through the water and bring back fire. He swam to the island and crawled through the grass to the tree. Then he went into the tree by a small hole at the bottom. But the heat and smoke were dreadful. The ground at the bottom of the tree was covered with hot ashes. The racer darted back and forth trying to get off the ashes, and at last managed to escape through the same hole by which he had entered. But his body had been burned black. Therefore he is now the black racer. And that is why the black racer darts around and doubles on his track as if trying to escape.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Then great Blacksnake, "The Climber," offered to go for fire. He was much larger than the black racer. Blacksnake swam over to the island and climbed up the tree on the outside, as the blacksnake always does, but when he put his head down into the hole the smoke choked him so that he fell into the burning stump. Before he could climb out, he, too, was burned black.

So the birds, and the animals, and the snakes held another council. The world was still very cold. There was no fire. But all the birds, and the snakes, and all the four-footed animals refused to go for fire. They were all afraid of the burning sycamore.

Then Water Spider said she would go. This is not the water spider that looks like a mosquito, but the other one—the one with black downy hair and red stripes on her body. She could run on top of the water, or dive to the bottom.

The animals said, "How can you bring back fire?"

But Water Spider spun a thread from her body and wove it into a *tusti* bowl which she fastened on her back. Then she swam over to the island and through the grass to the fire. Water Spider put one little coal of fire into her bowl, and then swam back with it.

That is how fire came to the world. And that is why Water Spider has a *tusti* bowl on her back.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE ANCESTORS OF PEOPLE

*Osage*

**T**HERE are people who come from under the water. They lived in the water weeds that hang down, all green, into the water. They have leaves upon their stems. Now the water people lived in shells. The shells were their houses and kept the water out.

There were other animals who lived under the earth. Cougar lived under the earth, and bear, and buffalo. These creatures came up out of the ground. Then the shell people came up to the earth also; and the sky people came down. So all these three peoples lived together. They are the fathers of the people who live on the earth today.

# MYTHS AND LEGENDS

## ORIGIN OF STRAWBERRIES

*Cherokee*

**W**HEN the world was new, there was one man and one woman. They were happy; then they quarreled. At last the woman left the man and began to walk away toward the Sunland, the Eastland. The man followed. He felt sorry, but the woman walked straight on. She did not look back.

Then Sun, the great Apportioner, was sorry for the man. He said,

“Are you still angry with your wife?”

The man said, “No.”

Sun said, “Would you like to have her come back to you?”

“Yes,” said the man.

So Sun made a great patch of huckleberries which he placed in front of the woman's trail. She passed them without paying any attention to them. Then Sun made a clump of blackberry bushes and put those in front of her trail. The woman walked on. Then Sun created beautiful service-berry bushes which stood beside the trail. Still the woman walked on.



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

WOMAN'S COSTUME  
(Omaha)





*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

AN ELDERLY OMAHA BEAU

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

So Sun made other fruits and berries. But the woman did not look at them.

Then Sun created a patch of beautiful ripe strawberries. They were the first strawberries. When the woman saw those, she stopped to gather a few. As she gathered them, she turned her face toward the west. Then she remembered the man. She turned to the Sunland but could not go on. She could not go any further.

Then the woman picked some of the strawberries and started back on her trail, away from the Sunland. So her husband met her, and they went back together.

# MYTHS AND LEGENDS

## SACRED LEGEND

*Omaha*

**I**N the beginning the people were in water. They opened their eyes, but they could see nothing. As the people came out of the water, they first saw the daylight. They had no clothing. Then they took weeds and grasses and from them wove clothing.

The people lived near a large body of water; it was in a wooded country where there was game. The men hunted the deer with clubs; they did not know the use of the bow. The people wandered about the shores of the great water. They were poor and cold. The people thought, "What shall we do to help ourselves?" So they began chipping stones. They found a bluish stone that was easily flaked and chipped; so they made knives and arrowheads out of it. But they were still poor and cold. They thought, "What shall we do?"

Then a man found an elm root that was very dry. He dug a hole in it and put a stick in and rubbed it. Then smoke came. He smelled it. Then the people smelled it and came near. Others helped him to rub. At last a spark came. They blew this into a flame.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

Thus fire came to warm the people and to cook their food.

After this the people built grass houses; they cut the grass with the shoulder blade of a deer. Now the people had fire and ate their meat roasted. Then they grew tired of roast meat. They thought, "How shall we cook our meat differently?"

A man found a piece of clay that stuck well together. Then he brought sand to mix with it. Then he molded it as a pot. Then he gathered grass until he had a large heap of it; he put the clay pot into the midst of the grass and set it on fire. This made the clay hard. After a time he put water into the pot; the water did not leak out. This was good. So he put water into it and then meat into it, and put the pot over the fire. Thus the people had boiled meat to eat.

Now their grass coverings would grow fuzzy and drop off. It was hard to gather and keep these coverings. The people were not satisfied. Again they thought, "What can we do to have something different to wear?"

Before this, they had been throwing away the hides from the game which they killed. But now they took their stone knives to scrape down the hides and make them thin. They rubbed the hides with grass and with their hands to make them soft. Then they used the

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

hides for clothing. Now they had clothing and were warm.

Now the women had to break the dry wood to keep up the fires. They had no tools. So the men made a stone ax with a groove. Then they put a handle on the grooved stone and fastened it with rawhide. This was used. Then they wanted something better to break the wood. So they made wedges of stone.

Now the grass shelter came to pieces easily. Then the people thought, "What shall we do? How can we get something that will not come to pieces?" Then they tried putting skins on poles.

First they tried deerskins. But they were too small. They tried elk skins. But they became hard and stiff in the rain and sun. Then they did not try skins longer. They used bark to cover the poles of their tepees.

But the bark houses were not warm. Then the people took the leg bone of the deer and splintered it. So they made sharp pieces for awls. Then they took buffalo skins and sinews, and with the awl they fastened the skins together. So they made comfortable covers for their tepees.

Then a man wandered around a long time. One day he found some small pieces of something which were white, and red, and blue. He thought they must be something of great value, so he hid them in a mound of

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

earth. Now one day he went to see if they were safe. Behold! When he came to the mound, green stalks were growing out of it. And on the stalks were small kernels of white, and red, and blue. Behold! It was corn. Then the man took the corn, and gave it to the people. They tried it for food. They found it good, and have ever since called it their life.

Now when the people found the corn good, they thought to hide it in mounds as the first man had done. So they took the shoulder blade of an elk and made mounds. Then they hid the corn in it. So the corn grew and the people had food.

Now as the people wandered around, they came to a forest where the birch trees grew. There was a great lake there. Then they made canoes of birch bark. They traveled in them on the water. Then a man found two young animals. He carried them home. He fed them so they grew bigger. Then he made a harness which he placed upon them and fastened it to poles. So these animals became burden bearers. Before that, every burden had to be carried on the back. Now the dogs helped the people.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE LEGEND OF THE PEACE PIPES

*Omaha*

**T**HE people came across a great water on logs tied together. They pitched their tents on the shore. Then they thought to make for themselves certain bounds within which they were to live and rules which should govern them. They cleared a space of grass and weeds so they could see each other's faces. They sat down and there was no obstruction between them.

While they were holding a council, an owl hooted in the trees near by. The leader said, "That bird is to take part in our council. He calls to us. He offers us his aid."

Immediately afterward they heard a woodpecker. He knocked against the trees. The leader said, "That bird calls to us. He offers us his aid. He will take part in our council."

Then the chief appointed a man as servant. He said, "Go into the woods and get an ash sapling." The servant came back with a sapling having a rough bark.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

“We do not want that,” said the leader. “Go again and get a sapling with a smooth bark, bluish in color at the joint where a branch comes.” So the servant went out, and came back with a sapling of the kind described.

When the leader took up the sapling, an eagle came and soared about the council which was sitting in the grass. He dropped a downy feather; it fell. It fell in the center of the cleared space. Now this was the white eagle. The chief said, “This is not what we want,” so the white eagle passed on.

Then the bald eagle came swooping down, as though attacking its prey. It balanced itself on its wings directly over the cleared space. It uttered fierce cries, and dropped one of its downy feathers, which stood on the ground as the other eagle’s feather had done. The chief said, “This is not what we want.” So the bald eagle passed on.

Then came the spotted eagle, and soared over the council, and dropped its feather as the others had done. The chief said, “This is not what we want,” and the spotted eagle passed on.

Then the imperial eagle, the eagle with the fantail, came, and soared over the people. It dropped a downy feather which stood upright in the center of the cleared space. The chief said, “This is what we want.”



## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

So the feathers of this eagle were used in making the peace pipes, together with the feathers of the owl and woodpecker, and with other things. These peace pipes were to be used in forming friendly relations with other tribes.

When the peace pipes were made, seven other pipes were made for keeping peace within the tribe. One pipe was to prevent revenge. If one man should kill another, the chief took this pipe to the relatives and offered it to them. If the relatives of the dead man refused to accept it, it was offered again. It was offered four times. If it was refused four times, the chief said, "Well, you must take the consequences. We will do nothing, and you cannot now ask to see the pipes." He meant if they took revenge and any trouble came to them, they could not ask for help or for mercy.

Each band had its own pipe.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### A TRADITION OF THE CALUMET

*Lenni-Lenapi*

**I**N the days of the old men, far to the north there lived a nation with many villages. Their warriors were as many as the buffalo herds on the plains toward the Darkening Land. Their tepees were many on the shores of a beautiful lake and along wide rivers.

Then the Mysterious One, whose voice is in the clouds, told the chiefs of a great nation, also of many villages, which hunted through all the country from the Big Water in the sunrise to the mountains in the Darkening Land.

Then the chiefs and the old men held a council. Runners came from many villages to the great council. And the council voice was to go to the great nation to the south, the nation with many villages, and bring back scalps and horses.

So the chiefs and warriors went out, one by one. Then runners were sent to all the villages, ordering the chiefs to dance the scalp dance.

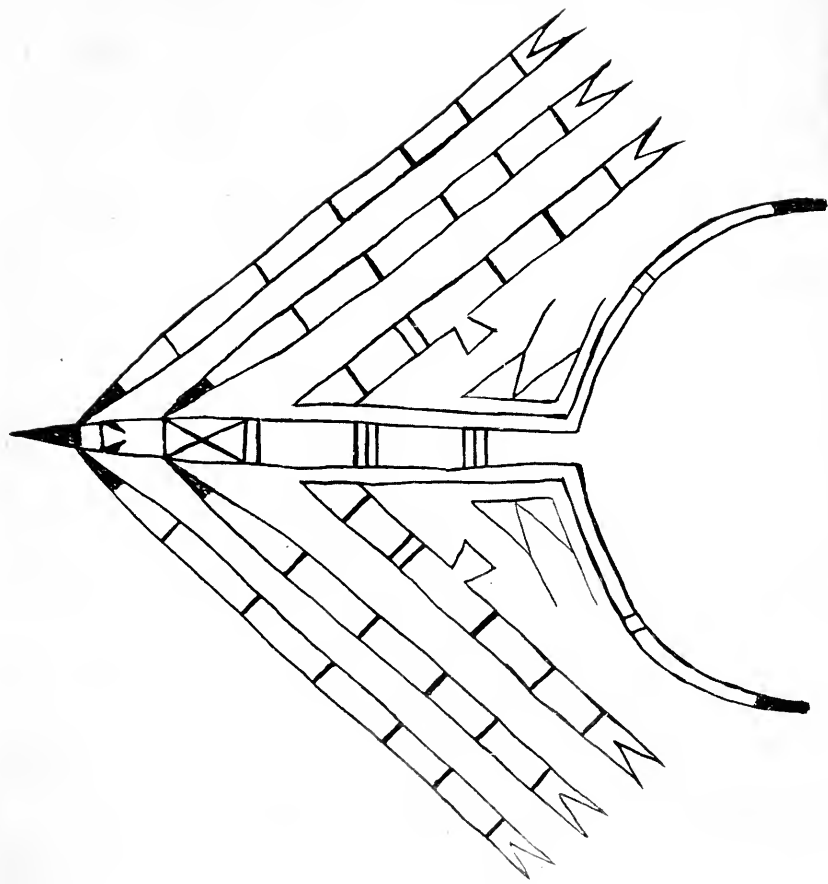
Suddenly there came through the sky a great white bird. It came from the forest, and flew into the village

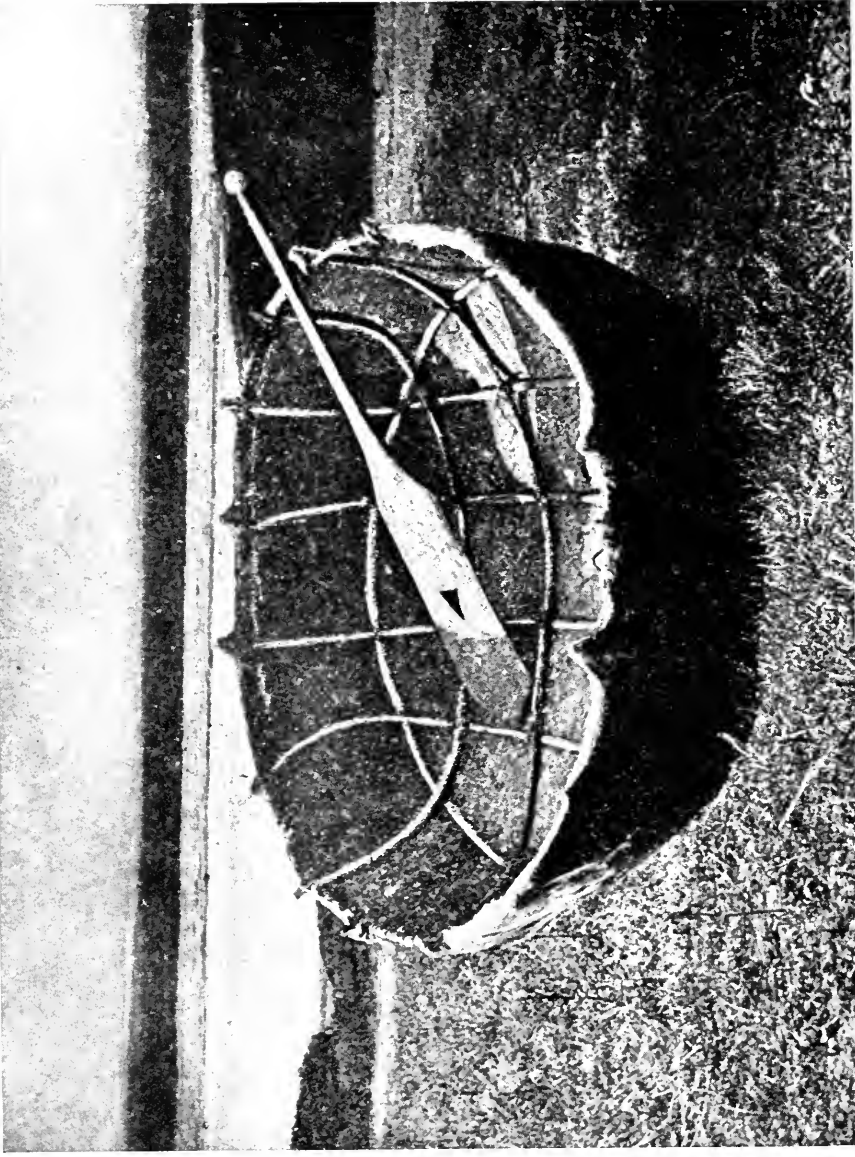
## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

of the great chief. It rested above the head of the chief's daughter.

Then the chief's daughter heard a voice in her heart. The voice said, "Call all the chiefs and warriors together. Tell them the Mysterious One is sad because they seek the scalps of the Lenni-Lenapi, the First People. Tell the warriors they must wash their hands in the blood of a young fawn. They must go with many presents to the First People. They must carry to the First People Hobowakan, the calumet."

Thus the First People and the mighty people with many villages on the shore of the lake smoked together the pipe of council. So there was peace.





**BULL BOAT**

Made of the hide of the buffalo bulls. The only boat used by the plains Indians

*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE SACRED POLE

*Omaha*

**A** YOUNG man who had been wandering came back to his village. When he reached his home he said, "Father, I have seen a wonderful tree." Then he told his father about it. The old man was silent because all was not yet settled between the tribes. The Cheyenne, the Arikara, the Omaha, Ponca, and Iowa were having a great council, so as to adopt rules concerning the hunting of game, and of peace, and war.

After a while, the young man went to visit the tree. When he reached home, he told his father again of it. The old man was silent, for the chiefs were still holding their council. At last, when the council was over and the rules decided upon, the old man sent for the chiefs. He said, "My son has seen a wonderful tree. The Thunder Birds come and go upon this tree. They make a trail of fire which leaves four paths on the burnt grass that stretch towards the Four Winds. When the Thunder Birds alight upon the tree, it bursts into flame. The fire mounts to the top. The

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

tree stands burning, but no one can see the fire except at night.”

When the chiefs heard this tale, they sent runners to see what this tree might be. The runners came back and told the same story. In the night they had seen the tree burning as it stood. Then all the people held a council as to what this might mean. The chiefs said, “We shall run for it. Put on your ornaments and prepare as if for battle.”

The warriors painted themselves as if for war. They put on their ornaments. They set out for the tree, which stood near a lake. They ran as if it were a race to attack the enemy. All the men ran. A Ponca was the first to reach the tree and he struck it as if it were an enemy.

Then they cut the tree down. Four men, walking in a straight line, carried it on their shoulders to the village. The chiefs for four nights sang the songs made in honor of the tree. They held a council about the tree. A tent was made for it, and it was set up in the circle of lodges. The chiefs worked upon it; they trimmed it and called it a human being. They made a basket of twigs and feathers and tied it half way up the tree. Then they said, “It has no hair!” So they sent out to get a large scalp lock and they put it on top of Pole for hair. Afterwards the chiefs told the criers

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

to tell the people that when Pole was completed they should see it.

Then they painted Pole and set it up before the tent. They leaned it on a crotched stick. Then they called all the people and all the people came. Men, women, and children came.

When they were all together, the chiefs said, "This is a mystery. Whenever we meet with trouble, we shall bring all our prayers to Pole. We shall make offerings to him. We shall ask him for what we need. When we ask anything, we must make gifts. If anyone desires to become a chief, he shall make presents to the Keepers of the Pole, and they shall give him authority to be a chief."

When all was finished the people said, "Let us appoint a time when we shall again paint Pole; when we shall act before him the battles we have fought." So they fixed the time in the moon when the buffaloes bellow.



## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### IKTO AND THE THUNDERS

*Teton*

**I**KTO once stood on the bank of a stream across which he could not swim. He stood on the bank and thought. Then he sang:

I stand,  
Thinking often,  
Oh, that I might reach the other side.

Just then a long Something passed, swimming against the current. When it reached Ikto, it said,

“I will take you across, but you must not lift your head above the water. Should you notice even a small cloud, warn me at once, as I must go under the water. If you see a small cloud, you must say, “Younger brother, your grandfather is coming.”

Before the other bank was reached, Ikto looked up. He saw a small cloud and said, “Younger brother, your grandfather is coming.”

There was a sudden commotion. When Ikto became conscious again, the Thunder Beings were roaring, and the water was dashing high, but the monster had vanished.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE THUNDER BIRD

*Comanche*

**I**N the olden times, a hunter once shot at a large bird which was flying above him. It fell to the ground. It was so large he was afraid to go to it alone, so he went back to the camp for others.

When they came back to the place where the bird had been shot, thunder was rolling through the ravine. Flashes of lightning showed the place where the bird lay. They came nearer. Then the lightning flashed so that they could not see the bird. One flash killed a hunter.

The other Indians fled back to the camp. They knew it was the Thunder Bird.

Once the Thunder Bird, in the days of the grandfathers, came down to the ground and alighted there. You may know that is so, because the grass remains burned off a large space, and the outlines are those of a large bird with outspread wings.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE THUNDER BIRD

*Assiniboin*

**T**HE Sioux, or Dakotas, of whom the Assiniboins are a branch, pretend that thunder is an enormous bird, and that the muffled sound of the distant thunder is caused by a countless number of young birds! The great bird, they say, gives the first sound, and the young ones repeat it; this is the cause of the reverberations. The Sioux declare that the young Thunders do all the mischief, like boys who will not listen to good advice; but the old Thunder, or big bird, is wise and excellent; he never kills or injures any one!

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### SONG TO THE THUNDER GODS \*

*Omaha*

Ye four, come hither and stand, near shall ye stand,†  
In four groups shall ye stand,  
Here shall ye stand, in this place stand.

[The thunder rolls]

Turned by the wind goes the one I send yonder;  
Yonder he goes who is whirled by the winds;  
Goes, where the four hills of life and the four winds  
are standing;

There in the midst of the winds do I send him,  
Into the midst of the winds standing there.

[The thunder rolls]

\* By Alice C. Fletcher.

† The "four" are the four winds.

# MYTHS AND LEGENDS

## SONGS OF THE BUFFALO HUNT

*Sioux*

The whole world is coming,  
A nation is coming, a nation is coming,  
The Eagle has brought the message to the tribe.  
The father says so, the father says so,  
Over the whole earth they are coming.  
The buffalo are coming, the buffalo are coming,  
The Crow has brought the message to the tribe,  
The father says so, the father says so. §

§ "This fine song summarizes the whole hope of the Ghost-dance — the return of the buffalo and the departed dead, the message being brought to the people by the sacred birds, the Eagle and the Crow."

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### SONGS OF THE BUFFALO HUNT \*

*Sioux*

*He!* They have come back racing, †  
*He!* They have come back racing,  
Why, they say there is to be a buffalo hunt over here,  
Why, they say there is to be a buffalo hunt over here.  
Make arrows! Make arrows!  
Says the father, says the father.  
Give me my knife,  
Give me my knife,  
I shall hang up the meat to dry — *Ye' ye!*  
I shall hang up the meat to dry — *Ye' ye!*  
Says grandmother — *Yo' yo!*  
Says grandmother — *Yo' yo!*

\* Songs and comments as given by James Mooney.

† "When going on a buffalo hunt, it was customary among the Sioux to send out a small advance party to locate the herd. On finding it, these men returned at once at full gallop to the main body of hunters, but instead of stopping on reaching them, they dashed past and then turned and fell in behind. It is to this custom the first line refers."

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

When it is dry I shall make pemmican,  
When it is dry I shall make pemmican,  
Says grandmother — *Yo' yo!*  
Says grandmother — *Yo' yo!\**

\*“ In the old days an Indian camp during the cutting up of the meat after a buffalo hunt was a scene of the most joyous activity. . . . Preparations were made for days and weeks ahead. Couriers were sent out to collect the neighboring bands at a common rendezvous, medicine-men began their prayers and ceremonies to attract the herd, the buffalo songs were sung, and finally when all was ready the confederated bands or sometimes the whole tribe — men, women, children, horses, dogs, and travois — moved out into the buffalo grounds. Here the immense camp of hundreds of tipis was set up, more ceremonies were performed, and the mounted warriors rode out in a body to surround and slaughter the herd. The women followed close after them to strip the hides from the fresh carcasses, and cut out the choice portion of the meat and tallow and bring it into camp.”

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### ORIGIN OF THE BUFFALO

*Teton*

**I**N the days of the grandfathers, buffaloes lived under the earth. In the olden times, they say, a man who was journeying came to a hill where there were many holes in the ground. He entered one of them. When he had gone inside he found buffalo chips and buffalo tracks on all sides. He found also buffalo hairs where the buffaloes had rubbed against the walls. These were the real buffaloes and they lived under the ground. Afterwards some of them came to the surface of the earth and lived there. Then the herds on the earth increased.

These buffaloes had many lodges and there they raised their children. They did many strange things. Therefore when a man escapes being wounded by an enemy, people say he has seen the buffaloes in his dreams, and they have helped him.

Men who dream of the buffaloes act like them and dance the buffalo-bull dance. Then the man who acts the buffalo has a real buffalo inside of him, people say, a little hard ball near the shoulder blade; and therefore



## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

he is very hard to kill. No matter how often he is wounded, he does not die.

People know that the buffaloes live in earth lodges; so they never dance the buffalo dance vainly.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE BUFFALO BEING

*Teton*

ONCE upon a time, a Buffalo Being attacked a party of Indians. He killed one of them, but the others ran away and climbed a tree. The Buffalo Being followed them and rushed at the tree. He rushed many times, knocking off piece after piece of the tree, until very little was left.

Then the frightened Indians lighted some tinder, and threw it far off into the tall grass. The fire scorched the Buffalo Being's eyes, and injured his horns. The hard part of the horn slipped off, leaving only the softer part, so that he could no longer injure any one.

But the Buffalo Being was still dangerous. At last one of the Indians slipped down the tree, with his bow and arrow. He killed the Buffalo Being. Then all the men came down the tree and skinned the animal and cut up the flesh. Into the buffalo-skin robe they placed the body of the dead Indian. But suddenly another Buffalo Being appeared. The Indians again climbed the tree. But this Being only walked four times around the dead Indian. Then he said, "Arise to your feet."

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

At once the dead man came to life. The Buffalo Being said to him, " Hereafter you shall be mysterious. The sun, the moons, the four winds, day and night shall be your slaves."

Then it was so. The Indian could take the form of a fine plume, which was blown against a tree. It would stick to the tree and wave many times in the breeze.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

At once the feet were gone to the The Indian  
Being said to have been after that had been a dream  
The substance of the feet of the Indian and light shall  
be very slight.

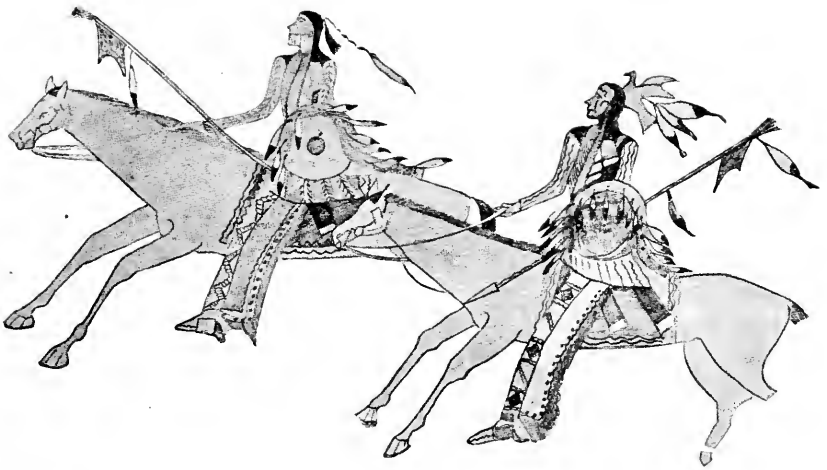
Then it was so the Indian could take the form of  
a line of the, which enabled him to go to the  
back to the tree and then to the other side of the river.

### GERMAN KNIGHTS AND INDIAN WARRIORS

*The German knights are from a sketch in a Ms., dated 1220, in the University of Leipzig. The sketch was copied from Rudolph Cronau's "Geschichte der Solinger Klingenindustrie." They are Knights of the 13th century*

*The Indian warriors were drawn by an Apache Indian at Anadarko, in 1884, though the insignia is really that of the Cheyenne Indians*

*The comparison and contrast are made by the Bureau of Ethnology*



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE YOUTH AND THE UNDERGROUND PEOPLE

*Omaha*

**T**HERE were some villages which were very populous. The chief's son and his daughter were unmarried. There were two sons. They surrounded the herds of buffaloes. They used to kill buffaloes.

One of the sons of this chief attacked a buffalo when far apart from the rest. He shot it; but the buffalo had gone out of sight into the ground. The man and his horse, too, went headlong; but the buffalo went down first.

Now the father sent out criers. "He says that his son reached the buffaloes, but he has not come home. He says that ye who have seen his son will please tell it," shouted the criers.

One said he had seen him. "I saw him very distinctly. He went in pursuit. Perhaps he went headlong into a sunken place, for when on very level ground he vanished altogether. I did not see him again," he said.

The father commanded the people to join him in

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

seeking his son. When the man who had seen him said, "It was just here," the people scattered far and wide, seeking the chief's son. All the people sought him. Behold, he had gone down the pit some time before. The buffalo had gone down, having kicked off a piece of the soil. The horse, too, had gone down, having kicked off a piece of the soil.

There was no trail beyond the pit. All the people went directly to it, without hesitation.

The pit was very large and extended far downward. The chief spoke of removing the village there, at once. So there they camped. They camped around the pit.

Then the chief implored the young men and those who had been his friends. If there was one man who was stout-hearted, one who had a firm heart, the father wished him to enter the pit and go after the young man. So he implored them.

At length one rode round and round the village. Then he promised to enter the pit and go after the missing son.

"Tell his father. He must also collect cords," he said.

Having cut buffalo hides in strips, he collected the cords.

"Make a round piece of skin for me, and tie the long line of cord to it," he said. So they finished it.



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

“Now it matters not to what place I go, I will put the body in the skin bucket. I go to take hold of him. When I reach the ground at the bottom, I will pull suddenly on the cord. When I pull on it many times, you will draw it up.” Thus he said.

At last he reached the ground inside the pit. It was very dark. When he felt around in the dark, the buffalo was lying alone, being killed by the fall. The horse, too, was lying by itself, having been killed by the fall. And the man lay apart from them, having been killed by the fall.

Picking up the body of the chief's son, he put it in the hollow skin. Then he pulled many times on the cord.

But when the young man went down, strange to say, he did not ask favors for himself. And they rejoiced because he had put the chief's son in the hollow skin. Having brought up the dead man they forgot the living one.

Though he sat waiting for the hollow skin to come down again, he was not drawn up. So he sat wailing.

Now the chief had promised him his daughter to go down into the pit. “If you bring my son back, you shall marry her,” he had said.

The young man wandered about in the darkness. At

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length when walking along the trail, he came suddenly upon an old woman.

“Venerable woman, though this land is very difficult to reach, I have come hither. I came to the hole in the ground above. One person came hither, having fallen into this pit. I came to take him back. They have not drawn me up; and I have no way of going back. Venerable woman, help me.” So he spoke.

“There is nothing that I can do to help you,” she said. “A person is in that place, out of sight. Go there. He is the one who will do it for you.”

He went there. When he arrived, he knocked repeatedly on the door. Though he stood hearing them speaking, they did not open the door for him.

The woman said, “Fie! A person has come. Open the door for him.”

Behold! The man’s child was dead, and therefore he sat without speaking. He sat still, being sad. Then the young man arrived within the lodge, the woman having opened the door for him. Yet her husband sat without speaking. The young man was impatient from hunger. The husband questioned him:

“From what place have you walked?” he asked.

The young man told his story. “I walked up above, but a man headed off the herd, and having fallen, he came here. I came here to take him back. They did

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

not take me back; I have no way of going back. Help me," he said.

The man said, "We had a child, but it died. We will treat you just like the child who died." He meant he would adopt him. "All things which I have are yours," said the father.

The young man did not speak. He wished to go homeward.

"Whatever you say I will do it for you," said the father. "Even if you desire to go homeward, it shall be so," he said.

At last the young man spoke of going homeward.

"If you say, 'I will go homeward riding a horse of such a color, O father!' it shall be so," said the father.

"Fie!" said the woman. "Heretofore we were deprived of our child. The young man who has just come home is like him. Give him one thing which you have."

"I make you my child. I will give you something. Whatever I desire I always make with it, when I wish to have anything," said the father. He had a piece of iron and when he wished anything he used to point at the iron.

"O father, I wish to go homeward riding a horse with very white hair. I also desire a mule with very white hair, and a good saddle," said the young man.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

“Come, go there. Open the door of that stable. When you wish to see us again, you shall see us. When you will go homeward, you will say, ‘Come, O father, I desire to go homeward,’” said the father.

The young man went homeward. He made the rocks open suddenly by pointing at them with the iron. He went up, making the ground echo under the horse’s feet. When he pushed aside a very large rock which was in his way, he found himself again on the surface of the earth. The horse and mule were very sudden in their movements. They shied at every step. They sniffed the odor of a bad land.

The young man found his nation that he had left. Behold! they had recently removed and departed. After they waited some time for him to appear, they had removed their camp and departed. The horse and mule went along, fearing the sight of the old camping ground. They followed the trail of the departing village.

Then the young man saw two people on a large hill, walking in the trail. They were the head chief and his wife who were walking along, mourning for the dead.

They looked behind and said, “Yonder comes one on horseback, following the trail made by the departing village.”

He drew near. They sat waiting for him to appear.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

The horse and mule feared the sight of them; they sniffed a bad odor.

“Why! Of what nation are you?” asked the chief.

“It is I,” said the young man.

“But which one are you?” said the chief.

“Your son went headlong into a pit when they surrounded the herd,” said the young man. “And I went down to get him. You did not bring me back. It is I.”

As he was very much changed, the old man doubted.

“Fie! Tell the truth about yourself.”

“When they surrounded the herd, your son went headlong as well as the buffalo, and he was killed by falling into a pit. When you commanded them to get him, they drew back through fear. I am he who went to get him when you offered your daughter as a reward,” said the young man. “I have hardly been able to come again to the surface.”

Then they recognized him. The two men stood talking together on the large hill. The chief's son looked back from the camp.

“Why! The chief and his wife have come as far as the large hill and a man on horseback has come, too. He stands talking to them. I will go thither. Let me see! I will go to see them.”

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

He went back on horseback and came to his father.

“With what person do you talk?” said the son.

“Why! He who went to get your elder brother has come back!” said the head chief.

They shook hands. And the head chief gave his daughter to the young man.

“Let all the men and chiefs assemble. Let all the stout-hearted young men assemble. They can look at my daughter’s husband,” he said.

They assembled. They came to see the young man and brought the things they intended giving him.

“He says that he who went to get the man who was killed by falling has come back. The chief says that as he has made the young man his daughter’s husband you shall go to see the young man. He says that you will take to him what things you wish to give him. The chief says he will give thanks for them.” So shouted the crier.

All the young men and those who were brave and generous went thither. They all gave him clothing and good horses. His wife’s father made him the head chief.

“Make ye a tent for him in the center,” said the old chief.

They set up a tent for him in the center. They finished it.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

“The people did not eat. As they sat waiting for you to appear, the nation did not eat. You came back when they were just removing camp,” said the old chief.

“Ho!” said the one who had just reached home. “Let two old men go as criers.”

So the criers shouted: “The chief’s daughter’s husband says that you will rest tomorrow. He says you will not go in any direction whatever.”

The next day he commanded those who had come back on horseback to act as scouts. And the scouts came back very soon; because by means of the iron rod which he had asked of his father, he made a great many buffaloes very quickly. He spoke of surrounding them. They shot down many of the buffaloes. He went to take part in surrounding them.

His wife said, “I desire to go to see them surround the herd. I must go to see the buffaloes. When they are killed, I will be quite likely to come back.”

When they killed the buffaloes she was coming back; the wife stood on the hill. Her husband came to that place.

“Though I killed the buffaloes, they will cut them up,” he said. They who surrounded them reached home.

Again they spoke of a buffalo hunt. “The chief’s

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

daughter's husband speaks indeed of sending them to act as scouts," said the criers.

Again the herd of buffaloes had come to that country. They surrounded them. Again they shot down many of them.

At last the son of the old head chief was in a bad humor. He was in a bad humor because his sister's husband had been made chief.

Now at night, the horse used to say to the young man, "O father, a man desires very much to kill us. It is so every night." And after that at night the young man used to take care of his horse and mule.

On the next day they surrounded the herd in the land where the deed was done. It was just so again; a great many buffaloes had been coming. At length the son wished the buffaloes to trample his sister's husband to death. When they attacked the buffaloes, he waved his robe. Turning around in his course, he waved his robe again. When the sister's husband went right in among the buffaloes, they closed in on him and he was not seen at all.

The people said, "The buffaloes have trampled to death the chief's daughter's husband."

When the buffaloes trampled him to death, they scattered and went homeward in every direction, moving in long lines. And the people did not find any trace



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

whatever of what was done. They did not find the horse. Even the man they did not find. When the buffaloes killed him by trampling, the horse had gone back to Him Who Made Things.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE BUFFALO AND THE GRIZZLY BEAR

*Omaha*

**G**RIZZLY BEAR was going somewhere, following the course of a stream, and at last he went straight towards the headland. When he got in sight, Buffalo Bull was standing beneath it. Grizzly Bear retraced his steps, going again to the stream, following its course until he got beyond the headland. Then he drew near and peeped. He saw that Buffalo Bull was very lean, and standing with his head bowed, as if sluggish. So Grizzly Bear crawled up close to him, made a rush, seized him by the hair of his head, and pulled down his head. He turned Buffalo Bull round and round, shaking him now and then, saying, "Speak! Speak! I have been coming to this place a long time, and they say you have threatened to fight me. Speak!" Then he hit Buffalo Bull on the nose with his open paw.

"Why!" said Buffalo Bull, "I have never threatened to fight you, who have been coming to this country so long."

"Not so! You have threatened to fight me."

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

Letting go the buffalo's head, Grizzly Bear went around and seized him by the tail, turning him round and round. Then he left, but as he did so, he gave him a hard blow with his open paw.

"Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! you have caused me great pain," said Buffalo Bull. Bobtailed Grizzly Bear departed.

Buffalo Bull thought thus: "Attack him! You too have been just that sort of a person."

Grizzly Bear knew what he was thinking, so he said, "Why! what are you saying?"

"I said nothing," said Buffalo Bull.

Then Grizzly Bear came back. He seized Buffalo Bull by the tail, pulling him round and round. Then he seized him by the horns, pulling his head round and round. Then he seized him again by the tail and hit him again with the open paw. Again Grizzly Bear departed. And again Buffalo Bull thought as he had done before. Then Grizzly Bear came back and treated Buffalo Bull as he had before.

Buffalo Bull stepped backward, throwing his tail into the air.

"Why! Do not flee," said Grizzly Bear.

Buffalo threw himself down, and rolled over and over. Then he continued backing, pawing the ground.

"Why! I say, do not flee," said Grizzly Bear.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

When Buffalo Bull backed, making ready to attack him, Grizzly Bear thought he was scared.

Then Buffalo Bull ran towards Grizzly, puffing a great deal. When he neared him, he rushed on him. He sent Grizzly Bear flying through the air.

As Grizzly Bear came down towards the earth, Buffalo Bull caught him on his horns and threw him into the air again. When Grizzly Bear fell and lay on the ground, Buffalo Bull made at him with his horns to gore him, but just missed him. Grizzly Bear crawled away slowly, with Buffalo Bull following him step by step, thrusting at him now and then, though without striking him. When Grizzly Bear came to a cliff, he plunged over headlong, and landed in a thicket at the foot. Buffalo Bull had run so fast he could not stop at the edge where Grizzly Bear went over, but followed the cliff for some distance. Then he came back and stood with his tail partly raised. Grizzly Bear returned to the bank and peeped.

“Oh, Buffalo Bull,” said Grizzly Bear. “Let us be friends. We are very much alike in disposition.”

When Buffalo Bull had finished, ready to attack  
and chase the Indians, they had to be spared.

One Indian drew towards the buffalo, holding  
a great bow. When he finished, he raised on his  
He saw the Buffalo Bull being drawn in the

As the Buffalo Bull was being drawn, the white man  
was holding a spear. When he finished, he raised on his  
He saw the Buffalo Bull being drawn in the

As the Buffalo Bull was being drawn, the white man  
was holding a spear. When he finished, he raised on his  
He saw the Buffalo Bull being drawn in the

**RIVALRY OVER THE BUFFALO**

(Comanche drawing on a buffalo shoulder blade)

*The Indian chase is by arrow; the white man's by the lasso, gun, and  
spear. The rivalry is indicated by half the buffalo being drawn as belonging  
to one race, half to the other. The white men are supposed to be Spaniards.  
The shoulder blade was found in the Comanche country, in Texas*

The illustration shows a buffalo shoulder blade with a drawing of a buffalo being chased by an Indian and a white man. The Indian is on the left, and the white man is on the right. The buffalo is in the center, being drawn towards the white man.

The drawing is a simple line drawing. The Indian is on the left, holding a bow and arrow. The white man is on the right, holding a spear. The buffalo is in the center, being drawn towards the white man. The drawing is on a buffalo shoulder blade.



*Enlarged from a sketch in Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*



*Enlarged from a sketch in Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*

CAPTURE OF A WANDERING BUFFALO  
(Indian drawing)

*A buffalo has wandered near an Indian village, and is being captured. The dotted lines indicate footprints. One Indian, having secured the buffalo by his forefeet, tells his companion of his success— indicated by the line drawn from his mouth to its feet. Another, having secured the buffalo by the horns, gives a companion a chance to kill it with an axe. This he intends to do—indicated by the line from his mouth to its head, as well as by his attitude. The Indian in the upper corner is told by his squaw to take an arrow and join in the capture. He turns his head to inform her that he has an arrow — indicated by holding it up, and by the line from his mouth to her*

I

WENT...  
I was there...  
I did not sleep...  
...of the past...  
...When the sun...  
...I know...  
...and I thought...  
...a bad reason...  
...MY...  
...they...  
...coming to...  
...but... And...  
...the man...  
...Const...

\*The author, being...  
...years old when...



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### MY FIRST BUFFALO HUNT \*

*Omaha*

I WENT three times on the buffalo hunt. When I was there the first time, I was small; therefore, I did not shoot the buffaloes. But I used to take care of the pack horses for those who surrounded the herd. When they surrounded the herd at the very first, I spoke of shooting at the buffaloes. But my father said, "Perhaps the horse might throw you suddenly, and then the buffalo might gore you." And I was in a bad humor.

My father went with me to the hill. We sat and looked on them when they attacked the buffaloes. And notwithstanding my father talked to me, I continued there without talking to him. At length one man was coming directly toward the tents in pursuit of a buffalo bull. And the buffalo bull was savage. He attacked the man now and then.

"Come! Go thither," said my father. I tied a lariat

\* The author, Frank La Flèche, an Omaha Indian, was about twelve years old when this occurred.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

on a large red mare that was very tall. And taking a very light gun which my father had, I went over there. When I arrived the buffalo bull was standing motionless. The man said he was very glad that I had come. The buffalo bull was savage. The man shot suddenly at him with a bow and wounded him on the back. And then he attacked us. The horse on which I was seated leaped very far four times, and had gone off, throwing me suddenly. When the buffalo bull had come very close, he wheeled around and departed. So I failed to shoot at him before he went. I reached home just as my mother was scolding my father about me. When the horse reached home with the bridle sticking to it, she knew that I had been thrown. My father said nothing at all, but sat laughing. Addressing me, he said, "Did you kill the buffalo bull?" And I did not speak.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### BIRD OMENS

*Sioux*

**W**HEN whippoorwills sing together at night, "Hohin, hohin," one says in reply, "No."

If the birds stop talking at once, then the person will die soon. But if the birds continue talking, then the man will live a long time.

The gray screech owl foretells cold weather. When the night is to be very cold, then the owl cries out; it sounds just as if a person's teeth chattered. When the owl cries out, all people wrap themselves in their thickest robes; and they put plenty of wood on the fires.

The Ski-bi-bi-la is a small gray bird, with a black head, and spotted on the breast. It lives in the woods, and it answers a person who calls to it. When this bird says, "Has it returned?" people are glad. They know that spring is near. When a boy hears the bird ask this question, he runs to his mother; she tells him he must answer, "No; it has not yet returned."

When the people first hear the cry of the nighthawk in the spring, they begin to talk of hunting buffalo. This is because when the hawk returns, the buffaloes have become fat again and the birds bring the news.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE BIRD CHIEF

*Omaha*

**A**LL the birds were called together. To them was said, "Whichever one of you can fly farthest into the sky shall be chief."

All the birds flew to a great height. But Wren got under the thick feathers of Eagle and sat there as Eagle flew. When all the birds became wing-tired, they flew down again; but Eagle flew still higher. When Eagle had gone as far as he could, Wren flew still higher.

When all the birds reached the ground, Eagle alone returned, after a great while. Behold! Wren only was absent. So they awaited him. At last he returned. Eagle had too highly been thinking of himself, being sure of being made chief; and behold! Wren was made chief.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### SONG OF THE BIRDS \*

*Pawnee*

All around the birds in flocks are flying.  
Dipping, rising, circling, see them coming.  
See, many birds are flocking here,  
All about us now together coming.

Yonder see the birds in flocks, come flying;  
Dipping, rising, circling, see them gather.  
Loud is the sound their winging makes.  
Rushing, come they on the trees alighting.

From the flock an eagle now comes flying;  
Dipping, rising, circling, comes she hither.  
Loud screams the eagle, flying swift,  
As an eagle flies, her nestlings seeking.

It is Kawas coming, Kawas flying;  
Dipping, rising, circling, she advances.  
See! Nearer she comes, nearer comes.  
Now, alighted, she her nest is making.

\* Rendition by Alice C. Fletcher.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Yonder people like the birds are flocking;  
See them circling, this side, that side coming.  
Loud is the sound their moving makes,  
As together come they, onward come they.

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### SONG OF KAWAS, THE EAGLE \*

*Pawnee*

O'er the prairie flits in ever widening circles the  
shadow of a bird about me as I walk;

Upward turn my eyes, Kawas looks upon me, she turns  
with flapping wings and far away she flies.

Round about a tree in ever widening circles an eagle  
flies, alert watching o'er his nest;

Loudly whistles he, a challenge sending far, o'er the  
country wide it echoes, there defying foes.

\* Rendition by Alice C. Fletcher.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE EAGLE'S REVENGE

*Cherokee*

ONCE a hunter in the mountains heard a noise at night like a rushing wind. He went outside his tepee, and found an eagle was sitting on the drying pole, feasting at the deer he had shot. So he shot the eagle.

The next morning the hunter took the deer back to the village. He told how he had shot the deer and then the eagle. Therefore the chief sent out men to bring in the eagle, and have an Eagle dance.

That night when they were dancing, there was a *whoop* outside. A strange warrior walked into the circle. He was not of that village. They thought he had come from one of the other Cherokee villages.

This warrior told how he had killed a man. At the end of the story, he yelled, "*Hi!*" One of the men with rattles, who was leading the dance, fell dead. The stranger sang of another deed. At the end he yelled, "*Hi!*" Another rattler fell dead. The people were frightened. But the stranger sang of another great deed. Then again he yelled, "*Hi!*" 'Again a



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

man with the rattles fell dead. So all seven men who had rattles and who were leading the dance fell dead. And the people were too frightened to leave the lodge where they were dancing.

Then the stranger vanished into the darkness. Long after they learned that the stranger was the brother of the eagle that had been killed.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE RACE BETWEEN HUMMING BIRD AND CRANE

**H**UMMING BIRD and Crane were both in love with a pretty woman. She liked Humming Bird, who was handsome. Crane was ugly, but he would not give up the pretty woman. So at last to get rid of him, she told them they must have a race, and that she would marry the winner. Now Humming Bird flew like a flash of light; but Crane was heavy and slow.

The birds started from the woman's house to fly around the world to the beginning. Humming Bird flew off like an arrow. He flew all day and when he stopped to roost he was far ahead.

Crane flew heavily, but he flew all night long. He stopped at daylight at a creek to rest. Humming Bird waked up, and flew on again, and soon he reached a creek, and behold! there was Crane, spearing tadpoles with his long bill. Humming Bird flew on.

Soon Crane started on and flew all night as before. Humming Bird slept on his roost.

Next morning Humming Bird flew on and Crane

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

was far, far ahead. The fourth day, Crane was spearing tadpoles for dinner when Humming Bird caught up with him. By the seventh day Crane was a whole night's travel ahead. At last he reached the beginning again. He stopped at the creek and preened his feathers, and then in the early morning went to the woman's house. Humming Bird was far, far behind.

But the woman declared she would not marry so ugly a man as Crane. Therefore she remained single.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### RABBIT AND THE TURKEYS

*Omaha*

**R**ABBIT was going somewhere. At length he reached a place where there were wild Turkeys.

“Come,” said Rabbit. “I will sing dancing songs for you.”

Turkeys went to him saying, “Oho! Rabbit will sing dancing songs for us!”

“When I sing for you, you larger ones must go around the circle next to me. Beware lest you open your eyes. Should one of you open his eyes, your eyes shall be red,” said Rabbit.

Then he began to sing,

Alas for the gazer!  
Eyes red! Eyes red!  
Spread out your tails!  
Spread out your tails!

Whenever a large Turkey came near, Rabbit seized it and put it in his bag. While he was putting in a Turkey, another one opened his eyes a little, and

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

exclaimed, "Why! He has captured nearly all of us large ones!"

Off they all flew with a whirring sound.

Rabbit took home those he had in his bag, saying to his grandmother, "Do not look at what is in that bag! I have brought it home on my back and I wish you to guard it!"

Then he went out to cut spits on which to roast the Turkeys. When the old woman was alone, she thought, "What could he have brought home on his back?" So she untied the bag, and when she looked in out flew all the Turkeys, hitting their wings hard against the grass lodge, and flying out the smoke hole. The old woman barely killed one by hitting it. At length Rabbit came home.

"Oh I have inflicted a severe injury on my grandchild," she said.

"Really," he answered. "Grandmother, I told you not to look at it."

But that is why Turkeys have red eyes.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### UNKTOMI AND THE BAD SONGS

*Dakota*

**U**NKTOMI was going along; his way lay along by the side of a lake. Out on the lake there were a great many ducks, geese, and swans swimming. When Unktomi saw them he went backward out of sight, and picking some grass, bound it up in a bundle. He placed this on his back and so went again along by the side of the lake.

“Unktomi, what are you carrying?” asked the ducks and the geese and the swans.

“These are bad songs I am carrying,” said Unktomi.

The ducks said, “Unktomi, sing for us.”

Unktomi replied, “But the songs are very bad.”

But the ducks insisted upon it. Then Unktomi said, “Make a grass lodge.” So they went to work and made a large grass lodge.

“Now, let all the ducks, geese, and swans gather inside the lodge and I will sing for you,” said Unktomi. So all the ducks and the geese and the swans gathered inside and filled the grass lodge. Then Unktomi took his place at the door of the lodge and said, “If I sing

# STORIES AND LEGENDS

## THE BIRD AND THE BIRDSONGS

1910

**U**NTIL THE coming of the white man, the Sioux were hunters and warriors. They were brave and strong, and they were also very wise. They had many legends and stories, and they were very fond of them.

### SWINDLER'S FIVE CHIEFS OF THE OGALLA SIOUX

W Rank is shown by pipe and pouch. The first is Cankutanka, Big Road; often called Good Road — big and broad and well traveled. The bird flying through the dusk shows that one may fly rapidly over a good road. Next is Low Dog. The dog figure is "low," as shown by the shortness of the legs. In the center is Long Dog, as shown by the long legs on the dog figure. Below, to the left, is Iron Crow, the crow painted blue indicating iron. The last is Little Hawk. Each chief has three bands on the cheek, but with variant colors and patterns

The Swindler's Five Chiefs of the Ogalla Sioux

First on the left is Cankutanka, Big Road

Next is Low Dog

In the center is Long Dog

Below, to the left, is Iron Crow

The last is Little Hawk

Each chief has three bands on the cheek

but with variant colors and patterns

The Swindler's Five Chiefs of the Ogalla Sioux

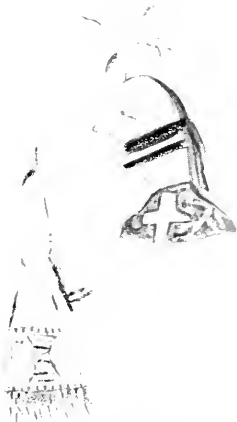
First on the left is Cankutanka, Big Road

Next is Low Dog

In the center is Long Dog

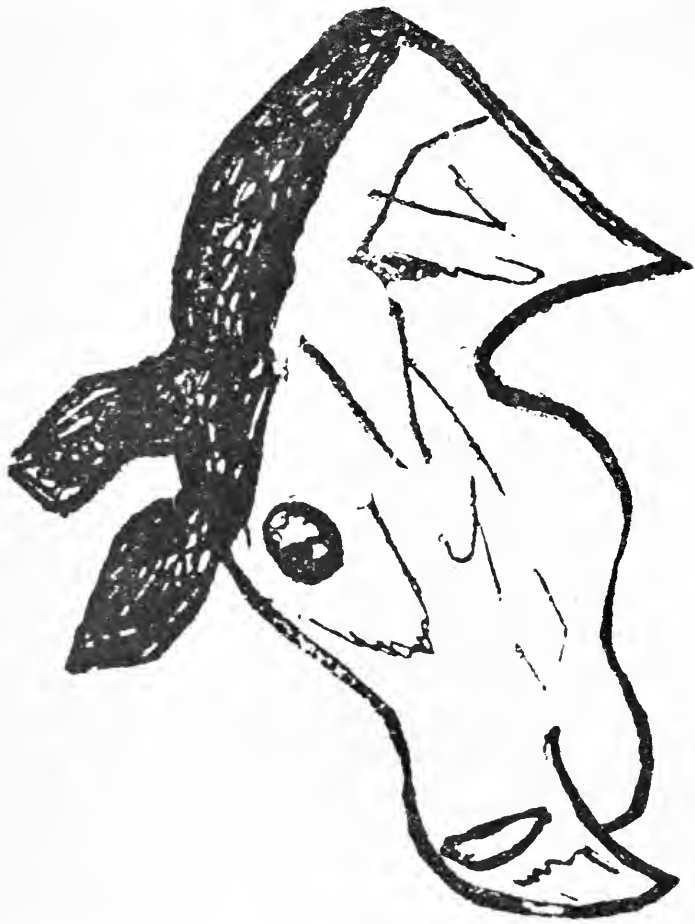
Below, to the left, is Iron Crow

The last is Little Hawk



*From Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*





*Enlarged from a sketch in Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*

3

OLD HORSE

Name of an Indian chief, as shown in Red Cloud's census. Old age is represented by the wrinkles and projecting lips

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

for you, no one must look, for that is the meaning of the song.”

Then he began to sing,

Dance with your eyes shut;  
If you open your eyes  
Your eyes shall be red!  
Your eyes shall be red!

When he said and sang this, the geese, ducks, and swans danced with their eyes shut. Then Unktomi rose up and said,

I even, even I  
Follow in my own;  
I even, even I,  
Follow in my own.

So they all gabbled as they danced, and Unktomi, dancing among them, commenced twisting off the necks of the fattest of the geese and ducks and swans. But when he tried to twist off the neck of a large swan and could not, he only made him squawk. Then a small duck, called Skiska, partly opened his eyes. He saw Unktomi try to break the swan's neck, and he made an outcry:

Look ye, look ye!  
Unktomi will destroy us all.  
Look ye, look ye!

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

At once they all opened their eyes and attempted to go out. But Unktomi threw himself in the doorway and tried to stop them. They rushed upon him with their feet and wings, and smote him and knocked him over, walking on his stomach, and leaving him as though dead. Then Unktomi came to life, and got up, and looked around.

But they say that the Wood Duck, which looked first, had his eyes made red.

Then Unktomi gathered up the ducks and geese and swans he had killed and carried them on his back. He came to a river and traveled along by the side of it till he came to a long, straight place where he stopped to boil his kettle. He put all the ducks and geese and swans whose necks he had twisted into the kettle, and set it on the fire to boil, and then he lay down to sleep.

As he lay there, curled up on the bank of the river, he said, "Mionze [familiar spirit], if anyone comes you wake me up." So he slept.

Now a mink came paddling along on the river, and coming close to Unktomi's boiling place, saw him lying fast asleep. Then he went there. While Unktomi slept, he took out all the boiling meat and ate it up, putting the bones back into the kettle. Then Unktomi waked up. He sat up and saw no one.

"Perhaps my boiling is cooked for me," he said.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

He took the kettle off the fire. He poked a stick into it and found only bones. Then he said, "Indeed, the meat has all fallen off." So he took a spoon and dipped it out; nothing was there but bones.

This is the story of Unktomi and the Bad Songs.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### HOW THE PHEASANT BEAT CORN

*Cherokee*

ONCE Pheasant saw a woman beating corn in a wooden mortar in front of her lodge.

“I can do that, too,” said Pheasant.

“I do n't believe you,” said the woman.

“Yes, I can,” said Pheasant. So Pheasant went into the woods behind the lodge. He flew to a hollow log and drummed with his wings until the people thought he really was beating corn.

That is why the Indians have the Pheasant dance, as a part of the Green-corn dance.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### WHY THE TURKEY GOBBLES

*Cherokee*

**I**N the old days, Grouse had a good voice and Turkey had none. Therefore Turkey asked Grouse to teach him. But Grouse wanted pay, so Turkey promised to give him some feathers for a collar. That is how the Grouse got his collar of turkey feathers.

So the Grouse began to teach Turkey. At last Grouse said, "Now you must try your voice. You must halloo."

Turkey said, "Yes."

Grouse said, "I'll stand on this hollow log, and when I tap on it, you must halloo as loudly as you can."

So Grouse climbed upon a log, ready to tap on it, but when he did so, Turkey became so excited that when he opened his mouth, he only said, "*Gobble, gobble, gobble!*"

That is why the Turkey gobbles whenever he hears a noise.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### OMAHA BELIEFS

#### *Omaha*

**S**ONG was an integral part of Omaha life. Through song, the Omaha approached the mysterious Wakoda; through song he voiced his emotions, both individual and social; through song he embodied feelings and aspirations that eluded expression in words. In one of their ceremonies, the Wa' wa, "to sing for somebody," songs are one of the chief characteristics.

In this ceremony, the eagle is "Mother." She calls to her nestlings and upon her strong wings she bears the message of peace. Peace and its symbol, the clear, cloudless sky, are the theme of the principal songs. The curlew, in the early morning, stretches its neck and its wing as it sits on the roost, and utters a long note. The sound is considered an indication that the day will be cloudless.

Green represents the verdure of the earth; blue is the color of the sky; red is the color of the sun, typifying life. The eagle is the bird of tireless strength. The owl represents night, and the woodpecker the

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

day and sun. These two birds also stand for life and death.

Wakoda gives to man the sunshine, the clear sky from which all storms, all clouds are absent; in the Wa'wa ceremony, they stand for peace. In this connection, black storm clouds with their thunder and lightning are emblematic of war.



# MYTHS AND LEGENDS

## PAWNEE BELIEFS

### *Pawnee*

**A**T the creation of the world, lesser powers were made, because Tira'wa-tius, the Mighty Power, could not come near to man, or be seen or felt by him. These lesser powers dwell in the great circle of the sky. One is North Star; another is Brown Eagle. The Winds were the first of the lesser powers to come near man. Therefore, when man calls for aid, he calls first to the Winds. They stand at the four points, and guard the four paths down which the lesser powers come when they help mankind. The Winds are always near us, by day and by night.

The Sun is one of these powers. It comes from the mighty power above; therefore it has great strength.

Mother Earth is another power. She is very near to man. From her we get food; upon her we lie down. We live and walk on her. We could not exist without Mother Earth, without Sun, and without the Winds.

Water is another lesser power. Water is necessary to mankind.

Fire made by rubbing two sticks together is sacred.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

It comes direct from the power granted Toharu, vegetation, in answer to man's prayer as he rubs the sticks. When the flame leaps from the glowing wood, it is the word of the fire. The power has come near.

Blue is the color of the sky, the dwelling place of Tira'wahut, the circle of powers which watch over man. As a man paints the blue stick he sings.

Red is the color of the sun. Green is the color of Mother Earth.

Eagle is the chief of day; Owl is chief of the night; Woodpecker is chief of the trees; Duck is chief of the water.

The ear of corn represents the supernatural power that dwells in the earth, which brings forth the food that sustains life; there corn is spoken of as *h'Atira*, "mother breathing forth life." The power which dwells in the earth, which enables it to give life to all growing things, comes from above. Therefore, in the Hako, the Pawnee ceremony, the ear of corn is painted with blue.

The wildcat was made to live in the forest. He has much skill and ingenuity. The wildcat shows us we must think, must use tact, must be shrewd when we set out to do anything. The wildcat is one of the sacred animals.

Trees grow along the banks of the streams; we can

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

see them at a distance, like a long line, and we can see the river glistening in the sunlight in its length. We sing to the river, and when we come nearer and see the water and hear it rippling along, then we sing to the water, the water that ripples as it runs.

Hills were made by Tira'wa. We ascend hills when we go away alone to pray. From the top of a hill we can look over the country to see if there are enemies in sight, or if any danger is near us. We can see if we are to meet friends. The hills help man, so we sing to them.

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### A SONG OF HOSPITALITY \*

*Sioux*

I am mashing the berries,  
I am mashing the berries,  
They say travelers are coming on the march,  
They say travelers are coming on the march,  
I stir [the berries] around, I stir them around,  
I take them up with a spoon of buffalo horn,  
I take them up with a spoon of buffalo horn,  
And I carry them, I carry them [to the strangers],  
And I carry them, I carry them [to the strangers].

“Word comes that travelers are approaching . . . on the march with their children, dogs, and household property. She stirs them around with a spoon of buffalo horn and goes to offer them to the strangers. The translation is an exact paraphrase of the rhythmic repetition of the original.”

\* James Mooney.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### A SONG OF THE MARCH \*

*Sioux*

Now set up the tipi,  
Now set up the tipi,  
Around the bottom,  
Around the bottom,  
Drive in the pegs,  
Drive in the pegs,  
In the meantime I shall cook,  
In the meantime I shall cook.

“To those who know the Indian life it brings up a vivid picture of a prairie band on the march, halting at noon or in the evening. As soon as the halt is called by some convenient stream, the women jump down and release the horses from . . . the travois, in the olden times, and hobble them to prevent them from wandering away. Then, while some of the women set up the tipi poles, draw the canvas over them, and drive in the pegs around the bottom and the wooden pins up the side, other women take axes and buckets and go down to the creek for wood and water. When they return, they find the tipis set up and the blankets spread out on the grass, and in a few minutes fires are built and the meal is in preparation.”

\* James Mooney.

A SONG OF THE MARSH

111

Now set up the tent

Now set up the tent

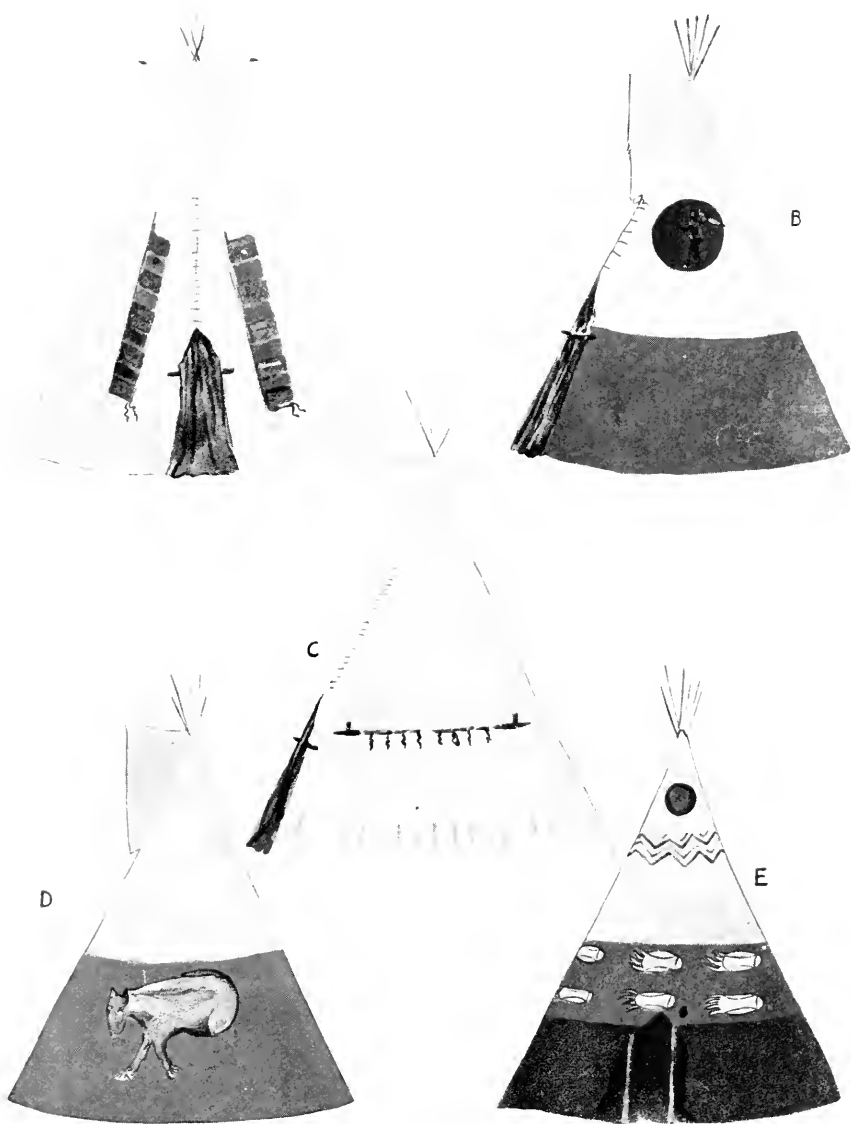
ADD SIOUAN TENTS

B. *Tent of Little Cedar, belonging to the order of Sun and Moon shamans. The circle represents the sun in which stands a man holding deer rattles*

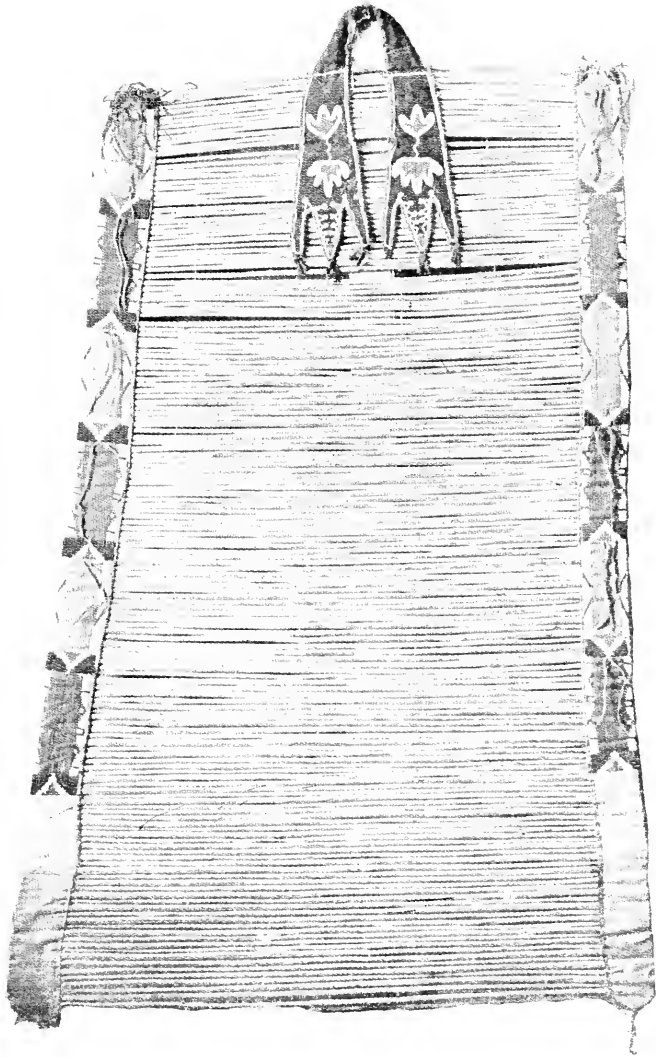
C. *Those persons who belong to the Inke-sabe sub-gens known as Keepers of the Pipes, paint their tents with the pipe decorations*

D. *Used by a member of the order of Grizzly Bear shamans. "When they have had visions of grizzly bears, they decorate their tents accordingly." (George Miller.) The bear is represented as emerging from his den. The dark band represents the ground*

E. *Sketch furnished by Chief Dried Buffalo. The circle at the top represents a bear's cave. Below there are lightnings, then prints of bears' paws. E also represents the grizzly bear vision*



*Enlarged from plate in report of the Bureau of Ethnology*



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

AN ARAPAHOE BED



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### SONG OF THE PRAIRIE BREEZE \*

*Kiowa*

That wind, that wind  
Shakes my tipi, shakes my tipi,  
And sings a song for me,  
And sings a song for me.

“To the familiar, this little song brings up pleasant memories of the prairie camp when the wind is whistling through the tipi poles and blowing the flaps about, while inside the fire burns bright and the song and the game go round.”

\* James Mooney.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### OLD-WOMAN-WHO-NEVER-DIES

*Mandan*

**I**N the sun lives the Lord of Life. In the moon lives Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies. She has six children, three sons and three daughters. These live in the sky. The eldest son is the Day; another is the Sun; another is Night. The eldest daughter is the Morning Star, called "The Woman who Wears a Plume"; another is a star which circles around the polar star, and she is called "The Striped Gourd"; the third is Evening Star.

Every spring Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies sends the wild geese, the swans, and the ducks. When she sends the wild geese, the Indians plant their corn and Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies makes it grow. When eleven wild geese are found together, the Indians know the corn crop will be very large. The swans mean that the Indians must plant gourds; the ducks, that they must plant beans.

Indians always save dried meat for these wild birds, so when they come in the spring they may have a corn feast. They build scaffolds of many poles, three or

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

four rows, and one above the others. On this they hang the meat. Then the old women in the village, each one with a stick, meet around the scaffold. In one end of the stick is an ear of corn. Sitting in a circle, they plant their sticks in the ground in front of them. Then they dance around the scaffolds while the old men beat the drums and rattle the gourds.

Afterwards the old women in the village are allowed to eat the dried meat.

In the fall they hold another corn feast, after the corn is ripe. This is so that Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies may send the buffalo herds to them. Each woman carries the entire cornstalk, with the ears attached, just as it was pulled up by the roots. Then they call on Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies and say,

“Mother, pity us. Do not send the cold too soon, or we may not have enough meat. Mother, do not let the game depart, so that we may have enough for winter.”

In the fall, when the birds go south to Old-Woman, they take back the dried meat hung on the scaffolds, because Old-Woman is very fond of it.

Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies has large patches of corn, kept for her by the great stag and by the white-tailed stag. Blackbirds also help her guard her corn patches. The corn patches are large, therefore the Old

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Woman has the help also of the mice and the moles. In the spring the birds go north, back to Old-Man-Who-Never-Dies.

In the olden time, Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies lived near the Little Missouri. Sometimes the Indians visited her. One day twelve came, and she offered them only a small kettle of corn. They were very hungry and the kettle was very small. But as soon as it was empty, it at once became filled again, so all the Indians had enough to eat.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### LEGEND OF THE CORN

*Arikara*

**T**HE Arikara were the first to find the maize. A young man went out hunting. He came to a high hill. Looking down a valley, he saw a buffalo bull near where two rivers joined. When the young man looked to see how he could kill the buffalo, he saw how beautiful the country was. The banks of the two rivers were low, with many trees. The buffalo faced the north; therefore he could not get within bow-shot of him. He thought he should wait until the buffalo moved close to the banks of one of the rivers, or to a ravine where there were bushes and shrubs. So the young man waited. The sun went down before the buffalo moved.

Nearly all night the hunter lay awake. He had little food. He felt sorry he could not reach the buffalo. Before the sun rose, he hurried to the top of the hill. The buffalo stood just where it had, but it faced the east. Again he waited for it to move. He waited all day. When the sun went down, the buffalo still stood in the same place.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Nearly all night the young man lay awake. He had very little food indeed. The next morning he rose early, and came to the top of the hill, just as the sun came up. The buffalo was still standing in the same place; but now it faced the south. He waited all day. Then the sun went down.

Now the next morning, when he arose early, the buffalo stood in the same place; this time it faced the west. All day the young man waited, but the buffalo did not move.

Now the young man thought, "Why does not the buffalo move?" He saw it did not drink, did not eat, did not sleep. He thought some power must be influencing it.

Now the next morning, the young man hurried to the top of the hill. The sun had risen and everything was light. The buffalo was gone. Then he saw where the buffalo had stood there was a strange bush.

He went to the place; then he saw it was a plant. He looked for the tracks of the buffalo. He saw where it had turned to the east and to the south and to the west. In the center there was one track; out of it the small plant had grown. There was no track to show where the buffalo had left the place.

Then the hunter hurried to his village. He told the chiefs and the people of the strange buffalo and the

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

plant. So all the chiefs and the people came to the place. They saw the tracks of the buffalo as he had stood, but there were no tracks of his coming or going.

So all the people knew that Wahkoda had given this strange plant to the people. They knew of other plants they might eat. They knew there was a time when each plant was ripe. So they watched the strange plant; they guarded it and protected it.

Then a flower appeared on the plant. Afterwards, at one of the joints, a new part of the plant pushed out. It had hair. At first the hair was green; then it was brown. Then the people thought, "Perhaps this fruit is ripe." But they did not dare touch it. They met together. They looked at the plant.

Then a young man said, "My life has not been good. If any evil comes to me, it will not matter."

So the people were willing, and the young man put his hand on the plant and then on its fruit. He grasped the fruit boldly. He said to the people, "It is solid. It is ripe." Then he pulled apart the husks, and said, "It is red."

He took a few of the grains and showed them to the people. He ate some. He did not die. So the people knew Wahkoda had sent this plant to them for food.

Now in the fall, when the prairie grass turned brown, the leaves of this plant turned brown also. Then the

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

fruit was plucked, and put away. After the winter was over, the kernels were divided. There were four to each family.

Then the people moved the lodges to the place where the plant had grown. When the hills became green, they planted the seed of the strange plant. But first they built little mounds like the one out of which it grew. So the fruit grew and ripened. It had many colors; red, and yellow, and white, and blue.

Then the next year there were many plants and many ears of corn. So they sent to other tribes. They invited them to visit them and gave them of the new food. Thus the Omahas came to have corn.



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### TRADITION OF THE FINDING OF HORSES

*Ponca*

**L**ONG ago, the people followed the Missouri River northward to a place where they could step over the water. Then they turned, and were going across the land. Then they met the Padouca [Comanche].

At that time the Ponca had no animals but dogs to help them carry burdens. Wherever they went they had to go on foot, but the people were strong and fleet. They could run a great distance and not be weary. One day when they were hunting buffalo, they met the Padouca. Then they had many battles with them. The Padouca were mounted on strange animals. At first the Ponca thought it was all one animal. The Padouca had bows made from elk horn. They were not very long, nor were they very strong. They boiled the horn until it was soft; then they scraped it, and bound it together with sinews and glue. Their arrows were tipped with bone. They fought also with a stone battle-ax. The handle was a sapling; a grooved stone ax head, pointed at both ends, was fastened to this with

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

rawhides. So the Padouca were terrible fighters. They protected their horses with a covering of thick rawhide cut in round pieces, and put together like fish scales. They spread glue over the outside and then sand. So when the Comanches fought, the arrows of their enemies glanced off the horses' armor. Then the Padouca made breastplates for themselves like those of the horses.

When the Ponca met these terrible warriors, they were afraid. They thought man and horse were one. They named it "Kawa" because they noticed the odor of the horse. Then they knew by this odor when the Padouca were coming. When a man smelled the horses, he would run to the camp and say, "The wind tells us the Kawa are coming." Then the Ponca would make ready to defend themselves. The Ponca had many battles with the Comanches. They did not know how to use the animals, so they killed the horses as well as the men. Neither could they find out where the Padouca lived.

One day the two tribes had a great battle. The people fought all day. Sometimes the Ponca were driven back, sometimes the Padouca. Then at last a Ponca shot a Padouca so that he fell from his horse. Then the battle ceased. After this, one of the Padouca came toward the Ponca and said in plain Ponca,

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

“ Who are you? What do you call yourselves? ”

The Ponca replied, “ We call ourselves Ponca. You speak our language, are you of our tribe? ”

The other said, “ No. I speak your language as a gift from a Ponca spirit. One day I lay on a Ponca grave after a battle. Then a man rose from the grave and spoke to me. So I know your language.”

Then it was agreed to make peace. The tribes visited each other. The Ponca traded their bows and arrows for horses. They knew where the Padouca lived. Then the Padouca taught the Ponca how to ride, and how to put burdens on the horses.

When the Ponca had learned how to ride, and had horses, they went to war again. They attacked the Padouca in their own village. They attacked them so many times and stole so many of their horses that at last the Padouca fled. We do not know where they went. The Ponca followed the Platte River toward the rising sun; then they came back to the Missouri, and they brought their horses with them.

# MYTHS AND LEGENDS

## DAKOTA BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS

### *Dakota*

**T**HE Dakotas have names for the natural divisions of time. Their years they count by winters. A man is so many winters old, or so many winters have passed since such an event. When one goes on a journey, he says he will be back in so many sleeps. They have no division of time into weeks, and their months are literally by moons.

The Dakotas believe that when the moon is full, a great number of small mice begin to nibble on one side. They nibble until they eat up the entire moon. So when the new moon begins to grow, it is to them really a new moon; the old one has been eaten up.

The Dakota mother loves her baby as well as the white woman does hers. When the spirit takes its flight a wild howl goes up from the tent. The baby form is wrapped in the best buffalo calfskin, or the best red blanket, and laid away on a scaffold or on the branch of some tree. There the mother goes with disheveled hair and oldest clothes, the best ones having been given away, and wails out her sorrow in the twilight, wailing

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

often until far into the cold night. The nice kettle of hominy is prepared, and carried to the scaffold where the spirit hovers for several days. When the kettle has remained there long enough for the *wanagi*, the spirit, to inhale the food, the little children of the village are invited to eat up the rest.

When a hunter dies, the last act of the medicine man is to sing a song to conduct the spirit over the *wanagi tacanku*, the spirit's road, as the Milky Way is called. The friends give away their good clothes. They wear ragged clothes, with bare feet, and ashes on their hands. Both within and without the lodge there is a great wailing. "*Micinski, micinski, my son, my son,*" is the lamentation in Dakota land as it was in Israel.

The dead hunter is wrapped in the most beautifully painted buffalo robe, or in the newest red and blue blanket. Young men are called and feasted, and their duty it is to carry the body away and place it on a scaffold, for the dead remain not long in the tepee. In more recent times they bury it. The custom of burial immediately after death, however, was not a Dakota custom. The spirit did not bid farewell to the body for several days after death, and so the body was laid on a high scaffold or in some tree crotch where it would have a good view of the surrounding country, and also be safe from wolves.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### WHY THE TETONS BURY ON SCAFFOLDS

*Teton*

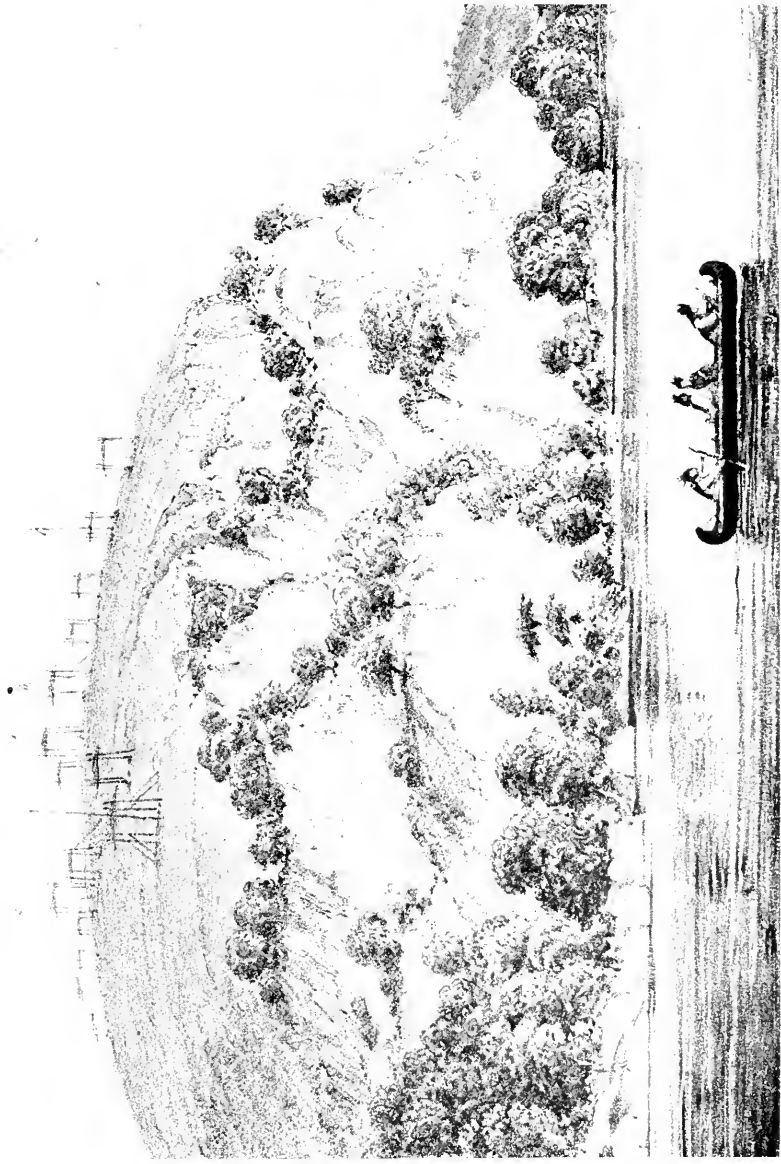
**I**N the olden days, the people buried some men on a hill. Then they removed their camp to another place. Many winters afterwards, a man visited the hill; but there were no graves there. So he told the people.

Then many men came and dug far down into the hill. By and by a man said, "There is a road here."

There they found a road, a tunnel, large enough for men to walk, stooping. Other roads there were. They followed the first road and they came to a place where a strange animal had dragged the bodies of those who were buried in the hill.

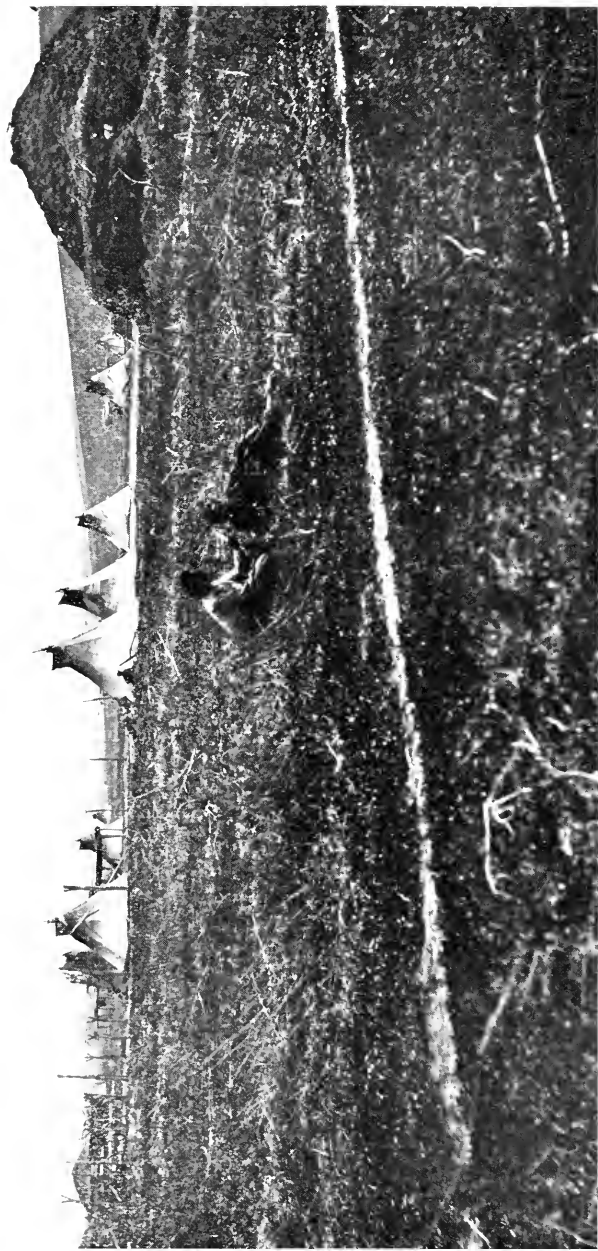
Therefore the people refused to bury their dead in the ground. They bury them on scaffolds where the animals cannot reach them.\*

\* At the present day, the Teton gives three reasons for not burying in the ground: animals or persons might walk over the graves; the dead might lie in mud and water after rain or snow; wolves might trouble the bodies.



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

INDIAN SCAFFOLD CEMETERY ON THE MISSOURI RIVER



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

AN OMAHA VILLAGE, SHOWING EARTH LODGE AND CONICAL TEEpees



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE GHOST'S RESENTMENT

*Dakota*

**L**ONG, long ago, a Dakota died and his parents made a death lodge for him on the bluff. In the lodge they made a grave scaffold, on which they laid the body of their son.

Now in that same village of Dakotas lived a young married man. His father lived with him, and there were two old men who used to visit the father and smoke with him, and talk with him about many things.

One night the father of the young man said, "My friends, let us go to the death scaffold and cut off summer robes for ourselves from the tent skins."

The young man said, "No! Do not do so. It was a pity the young man died, and as his parents had nothing else to give up for him they made the death lodge and left it there."

"What use can he get from the tent?" asked the father. "We have no robes, so we wish to use part of the tent skins for ourselves."

"Well, then," said the young man. "Go as you have said and we shall see what will happen."

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

The old men arose without saying a word and went to the lodge on the bluff. As soon as they were gone, the young man said, "Oh, wife, get my piece of white clay. I must scare one of those old men nearly to death."

But the woman was unwilling, saying, "Let them alone. They have no robes. Let them cut off robes for themselves."

But as the husband would not stop talking about it, the wife got the piece of white clay for him. He whitened his whole body and his face and hands. Then he went to the lodge in a course parallel to that taken by the old men. He went very quickly and reached there before they did.

He climbed the scaffold and lay on it, thrusting his head out through the tent skins just above the doorway.

At last the old men approached, ascending the hill, and talking together in a low tone. The young man lay still, listening to them. When they reached the lodge, they sat down.

The leader said, "Fill your pipe, friends. We must smoke this last time with our friend up there."

"Yes, your friend has spoken well. That should be done," answered one of them.

So he filled the pipe. He drew a whiff, and when

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the fire glowed, he turned the pipestem toward the seam of the skins above the doorway. He looked up towards the sky, saying, "Ho, friend, here is the pipe. We must smoke with you this last time. And then we must separate. Here is the pipe."

As he said this, he gazed above the doorway and saw a head looking out from the tent.

"Oh! My friends!" he cried. Look at this place behind you."

When the two looked, they said, "Really! Friends, it is he!" And all fled.

Then the young man leaped down and pursued them. Two of them fell to the ground in terror, but he did not disturb them, going on in pursuit of his father. When the old man was overtaken, he fell to the ground. He was terrified. The young man sat astride of him. He said, "You have been very disobedient! Fill the pipe for me!"

The old man said, "Oh! My grandchild! Oh! My grandchild!" hoping that the ghost would pity him. Then he filled the pipe as he lay stretched there and gave it to his son.

The young man smoked. When he stopped smoking, the old man said, "Oh! My grandchild! Oh! My grandchild! Pity me, and let me go. We thought we must smoke with you this last time, so we went

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

to the place where you were. Oh! My grandchild, pity me.”

“If that be so, arise and extend your hands to me in entreaty,” said the young man.

The old man arose and did so, saying continually, “Oh! My grandchild! Oh! My grandchild!”

It was as much as the young man could do to keep from laughing. At length he said, “Well! Begone! Beware lest you come again and go around my resting place very often! Do not visit it again!” Then he let the old man go.

On returning to the burial lodge, he found the two old men still lying where they had fallen. When he approached them, they slipped off, with their heads covered, as they were terrified, and he let them go undisturbed. When they had gone, the young man hurried home. He reached there first and after washing himself, reclined at full length.

He said to his wife, “When they return, be sure not to laugh. Make an effort to control yourself. I came very near making them die of fright.”

When the old men returned, the young people seemed to be asleep. The old men did not lie down; all sat in silence, smoking together until daylight. When the young man arose in the morning, the old men appeared very sorrowful.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

Then he said, "Give me one of the robes that you and your friends cut off and brought back. I, too, have no robe at all."

His father said, "Why! We went there, but we did not get anything at all. We were attacked. We came very near being killed."

To this the son replied, "Why! I was unwilling for this to happen, so I said, 'Do not go,' but you paid no attention to me, and went. But now you think differently and you weep."

When it was night, the young man said, "Go again and make another attempt. Bring back a piece for me, as I have no robe at all."

The old men were unwilling to go again, and they lost their patience, as he teased them so often.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE FORKED ROADS

*Omaha*

**L**ONG ago, in the days of the grandfathers, a man died and was buried by his village. For four nights his ghost had to walk a very dark trail. Then he reached the Milky Way and there was plenty of light. For this reason, people ought to keep the funeral fires lighted for four nights, so the spirit will not walk in the dark trail.

The spirit walked along the Milky Way. At last he came to a point where the trail forked. There sat an old man. He was dressed in a buffalo robe, with the hair on the outside. He pointed to each ghost the road he was to take. One was short and led to the land of good ghosts. The other was very long; along it the ghosts went wailing.

The spirits of suicides cannot travel either road. They must hover over their graves. For them there is no future life.

A murderer is never happy after he dies. Ghosts surround him and keep up a constant whistling. He is always hungry, though he eat much food. He is never allowed to go where he pleases, lest high winds arise and sweep down upon the others.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### TATTOOED GHOSTS

*Dakota*

**I**F a ghost wishes to walk the Ghost Road safely, then during living the person must tattoo himself either in the forehead or on the wrists. An old woman sits in the Ghost Road and she examines each ghost who passes. If she finds the tattoo marks, then the ghost travels on at once to Many Lodges. If the tattoo marks are not there, the old woman pushes the ghost from a cloud and he falls to this world again. Then he wanders all over the world. He is never quiet. He goes about whistling, with no lodge, and people are afraid of him.

When these ghosts visit the sick, they are driven away by smoke from the sacred cedar, or else cedar is laid outside the lodge. When a person hears a ghost whistling he goes outside the lodge and makes a loud noise. If a ghost calls to a loved one and he answers, then he is sure to die soon.

If a ghost meets a man who is alone, he will catch hold of him and pull his mouth and eyes until they are crooked. Indeed, a ghost did this to a person who only dreamed about one.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### A GHOST STORY

*Ponca*

**A** GREAT many persons went on the warpath. They were Ponca. As they approached the foe, they camped for the night. They kindled a fire. It was during the night. After kindling a bright fire, they sat down; they made the fire burn very brightly. Rejoicing greatly, they sat eating. Very suddenly a person sang.

“Keep quiet. Push the ashes over that fire. Seize your bow in silence!” said their leader. All took their bows. And they departed to surround him. They made the circle smaller and smaller, and commenced at once to come together. And still he stood singing; he did not stir at all. At length they went very near to the tree. And when they drew very near to it, the singer ceased his song. When they had reached the tree, bones lay there in a pile. Human bones were piled there at the foot of the tree. When persons die, the Dakotas usually suspend the bodies in trees.



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE GHOST AND THE TRAVELER

*Teton*

ONCE an Indian alone was just at the edge of a forest. Then the Thunder Beings raised a great storm. So he remained there for the night. After it was dark, he noticed a light in the woods. When he reached the spot, behold! there was a sweat lodge, in which were two persons talking.

One said, "Friend, someone has come and stands without. Let us invite him to share our food."

Then the Indian fled because they were ghosts. But they followed him. He looked back now and then, but he could not see them.

All at once he heard the cry of a woman. He was glad to have company. But the moment he thought about the woman, she appeared. She said, "I have come because you have just wished to have company."

This frightened the man. The woman said, "Do not fear me; else you will never see me again."

They journeyed until daybreak. The man looked at her. She seemed to have no legs, yet she walked without any effort. Then the man thought, "What if she should choke me." Immediately the ghost vanished.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE MAN WHO SHOT A GHOST

*Teton*

**I**N the olden time, a man was traveling alone, and in a forest he killed several rabbits. After sunset he was in the midst of the forest. He had to spend the night there, so he made a fire.

He thought this: "Should I meet any danger by and by, I will shoot. I am a man who ought not to regard anything."

He cooked a rabbit, so he was no longer hungry. Just then he heard many voices. They were talking about their own affairs. But the man could see no one.

So he thought: "It seems now that at last I have encountered ghosts."

Then he went and lay under a fallen tree, which was a great distance from the fire. They came around him and whistled, "*Hyu! hyu! hyu!*"

"He has gone yonder," said one of the ghosts. Then they came and stood around the man, just as people do when they hunt rabbits. The man lay flat beneath the fallen tree, and one ghost came and climbed on the trunk of that tree. Suddenly the ghost gave the cry

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

that a man does when he hits an enemy, "*A-he!*" Then the ghost kicked the man in the back.

Before the ghost could get away, very suddenly the man shot at him and wounded him in the legs. So the ghost cried as men do in pain, "*Au! au! au!*" At last he went off, crying as women do, "*Yun! yun! yun! yun!*"

The other ghosts said to him, "Where did he shoot?"

The wounded ghost said, "He shot me through the head and I have come apart." Then the other ghosts were wailing on the hillside.

The man decided he would go to the place where the ghosts were wailing. So when day came, he went there. He found some graves. Into one of them a wolf had dug, so that the bones could be seen; and there was a wound in the skull.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### THE INDIAN WHO WRESTLED WITH A GHOST

*Teton*

**A** YOUNG man went alone on the warpath. At length he reached a wood. One day, as he was going along, he heard a voice. He said, "I shall have company." As he was approaching a forest, he heard some one halloo. Behold, it was an owl.

By and by he drew near another wood, and as night was coming on he lay down to rest. At the edge of the trees he lay down in the open air. At midnight he was aroused by the voice of a woman. She was wailing, "My son! my son!" Still he remained where he was, and put more wood on the fire. He lay with his back to the fire. He tore a hole in his blanket large enough to peep through.

Soon he heard twigs break under the feet of one approaching, so he looked through his blanket without rising. Behold, a woman of the olden days was coming. She wore a skin dress with long fringe. A buffalo robe was fastened around her at the waist.

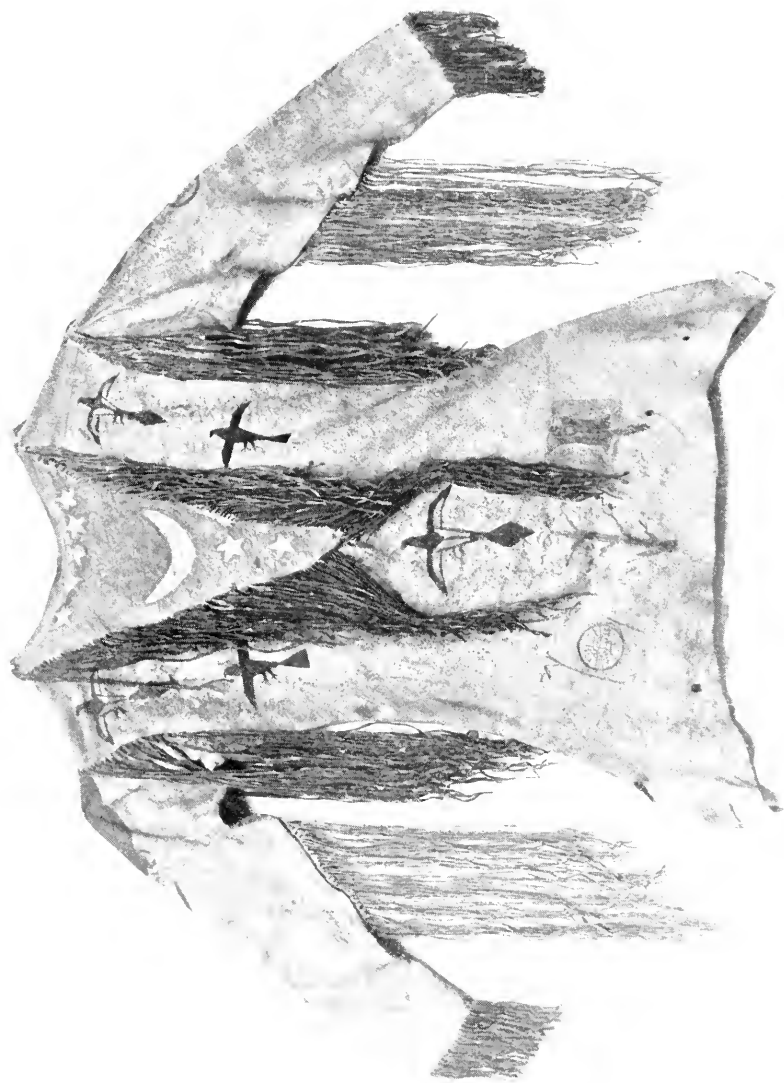


MARY IRVIN WRIGHT

*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

BLACK COYOTE

Arapahoe chief, and a leader in the ghost-dance



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

ORNAMENTATION ON THE REVERSE OF AN ARAPAHOE "GHOST-DANCE" SHIRT

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

Her necklace was of very large beads, and her leggings were covered with beads or porcupine work. Her robe was drawn over her head and she was snuffing as she came.

The man lay with his legs stretched out, and she stood by him. She took him by one foot, which she raised very slowly. When she let it go, it fell with a thud as though he were dead. She raised it a second time; then a third time. Still the man did not move. Then the woman pulled a very rusty knife from the front of her belt, seized his foot suddenly and was about to lift it and cut it, when up sprang the man. He said, "What are you doing?" Then he shot at her suddenly. She ran into the forest screaming, "*Yun! yun! yun! yun! yun! yun!*" She plunged into the forest and was seen no more.

Again the man covered his head with his blanket but he did not sleep. When day came, he raised his eyes. Behold, there was a burial scaffold, with the blankets all ragged and dangling. He thought, "Was this the ghost that came to me?"

Again he came to a wood where he had to remain for the night. He started a fire. As he sat there, suddenly he heard someone singing. He made the woods ring. The man shouted to the singer, but no answer was paid. The man had a small quantity of *wasna*,

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

which was grease mixed with pounded buffalo meat, and wild cherry; he also had plenty of tobacco.

So when the singer came and asked him for food, the man said, "I have nothing." The ghost said, "Not so; I know you have some *wasna*."

Then the man gave some of it to the ghost and filled his pipe. After the meal, when the stranger took the pipe and held it by the stem, the traveler saw that it was nothing but bones. There was no flesh. Then the stranger's robe dropped back from his shoulders. Behold, all his ribs were visible. There was no flesh on them. The ghost did not open his lips when he smoked. The smoke came pouring out through his ribs.

When he had finished smoking, the ghost said, "Ho! we must wrestle together. If you can throw me, you shall kill the enemy without hindrance and steal some horses."

The young man agreed. But first he threw an armful of brush on the fire. He put plenty of brush near the fire.

Then the ghost rushed at the man. He seized him with his bony hands, which was very painful; but this mattered not. The man tried to push off the ghost, whose legs were very powerful. When the ghost was pulled near the fire, he became weak; but when he pulled the young man toward the darkness, he became



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strong. As the fire got low, the strength of the ghost increased. Just as the man began to get weary, the day broke. Then the struggle began again. As they drew near the fire again, the man made a last effort; with his foot he pushed more brush into the fire. The fire blazed up again suddenly. Then the ghost fell, just as if he was coming to pieces.

So the man won in wrestling. Also he killed his enemy and stole some horses. It came out just as the ghost said. That is why people believe what ghosts say.

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### THE WAKANDA, OR WATER GOD

*Yankton*

**A** MAN and his wife had only one child, they say, whom they loved very much. He used to go playing every day, they say; and one day he fell into the water. His father and mother and all his relations wailed regularly. His father was very sad, they say. He would not sleep within the lodge; he lay out of doors, without any pillow at all. When he lay on the ground with his cheek on the palm of his hand, he heard his child crying. He heard him crying down under the ground, they say. Having assembled all his relations, he spoke of digging into the ground. The relations collected horses to be given as pay; they collected goods and horses. Then came two old men who said they were sacred. They spoke of seeking for the child. An old man went to tell the father. He brought the two sacred men to the lodge. The father filled a pipe with tobacco. He gave it to the sacred men, and said, "If you bring my child back, I will give all this to you."

So they painted themselves; one made his body very

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black, the other made his body very yellow. Both went into the deep water. So they arrived there, they say. They talked to the wakanda. The child was not dead; he was sitting up, alive.

The men said, "The father demands his child. We have him; we will go homeward," they said.

"You have him; but if you take him homeward with you, he shall die. Had you taken him before he ate anything, he might have lived. Begone ye, and tell those words to his father."

The two men went. They arrived at the lodge, they say.

"We have seen your child; the wakanda's wife has him. We saw him alive, but he has eaten of the food of the wakandas. Therefore the wakanda says that if we bring the child back with us out of the water, he shall die."

Still, the father wished to see him.

"If the wakanda's wife gives you back your child, she desires a very white dog as pay."

"I promise to give her the white dog," said the father.

Again the two men painted themselves; the one made himself very black, the other made himself very yellow. Again they went beneath the water. They arrived at the place again.

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“The father said we were to take the child back at any cost; he spoke of seeing his child.”

So the wakanda gave the child back to them; homeward they went with him. When they reached the surface of the water with him, the child died. They gave him back to his father. Then all the people wailed when they saw the child, their relation.

They plunged the white-haired dog into the water. When they had buried the child they gave pay to the two men.

After a while, the parents lost another child, a girl, in the same way, they say. But she did not eat any of the wakanda's food, therefore they took her home alive. But it was another wakanda who took her, and he promised to give her back if they would give him four white-haired dogs.

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### THE SPIRIT LAND

*Arapahoe*

**T**HE spirit world is toward the Darkening Land, higher up, and separated from the world of living by a great lake. Now when the spirits came back to this world [in the ghost-dance excitement] Crow was their leader. That is because Crow is black; his color is the same as that of the Darkening Land. Crow was followed by all the Indians. But when they reached the edge of the shadow land, below them was a great sea.

Far away, toward the Sunrise Land were their people in the world of living. So Crow took a pebble in his beak. He dropped it into the water, and it became a mountain, towering up to the shadow land. So the Indians came down the mountain side to the edge of the water.

Then Crow took some dust in his bill. He flew out and dropped it into the water, and it became solid land. It stretched between the spirit land and the world of living.

Then Crow flew out again, with blades of grass in

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his beak. He dropped these upon the new made land. At once the earth was covered with green grass.

Again Crow flew out with twigs in his beak, and he dropped these upon the new earth. At once it was covered with a forest of trees.

Again he flew back to the base of the mountain. Then he called all the spirit Indians together. Now he is coming to help the living Indians. He has already passed the sea. He is now on the western edge of the world of living.

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### WAZIYA, THE WEATHER SPIRIT

*Teton*

**T**HE giant called Waziya knows when there is to be a change of weather. He is a giant. When he travels, his footprints are large enough for several Indians to stand in abreast. His strides are very far apart; at one step he can go over a hill.

When it is cold, people say, "Waziya has returned." They used to pray to him, but when they found he paid no attention to him, they ceased to do it.

When warm weather is coming, Waziya wraps himself in a thick robe. But when cold weather is coming, he wears nothing at all. Waziya, the giant god of the north, and Itokaga, the god of the south, are ever battling. Each in turn wins the victory.

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### KANSAS BLIZZARDS

*Kansa*

**W**HEN there is a blizzard, the other Kansa beg the members of the Tcihaci gens to interpose, as they are the Wind People.

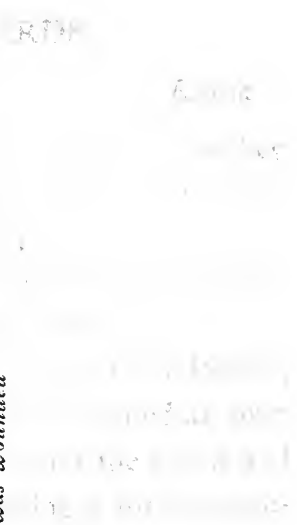
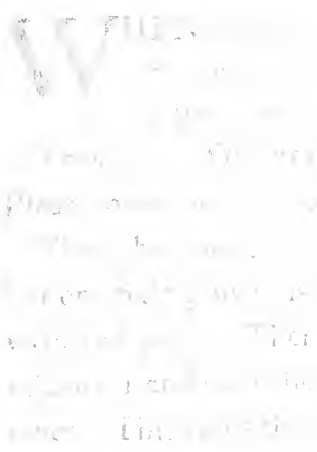
They say, "Oh, grandfather, I wish good weather. Please have one of your children decorated."

Then the youngest son of one of the Wind People, but one half grown, is selected. He is painted all over with red paint. Then he goes out into the storm and rolls over and over the snow, reddening it for some distance. This stops the storm.



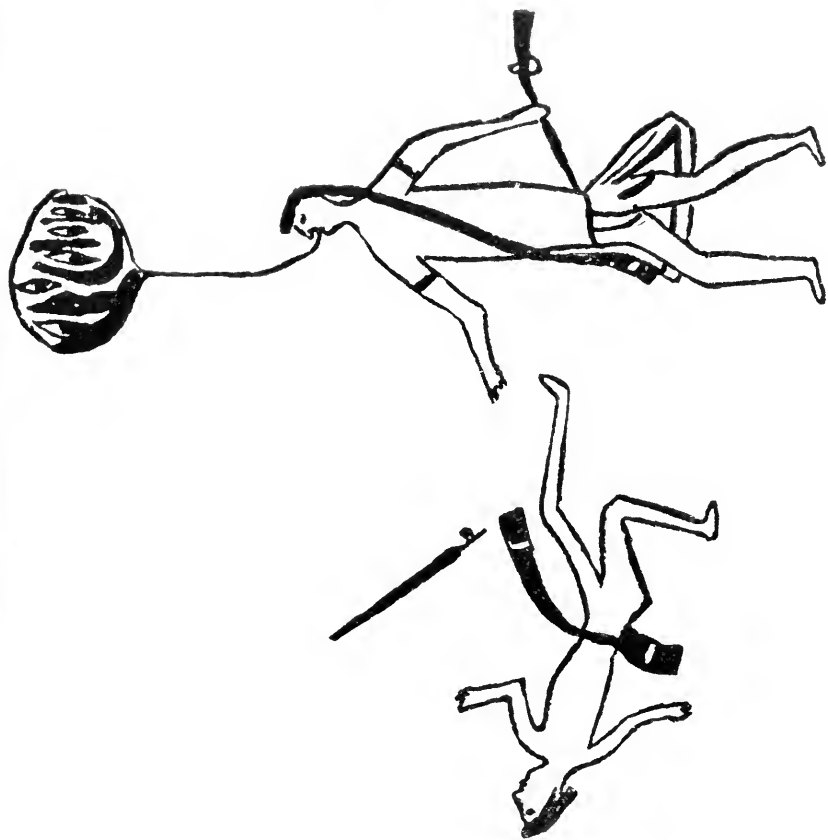
"KILLED TWO ARIKARA CHIEFS"  
(Indian drawing)

*The rank of the chiefs is shown by the white weasel skins attached to their costumes. The arrow in the thigh of the horseman indicates that he was wounded*





*Enlarged from a sketch in Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*



*Enlarged from a sketch in Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*



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### IKTO AND THE SNOWSTORM

*Teton*

**I**KTO was the first person in this world. He is more cunning than human beings. He it was who named all the animals and people. But sometimes Ikto was tricked by the beings he had created.

One day Ikto was hungry; just then he caught a rabbit. He was about to roast him.

Suddenly Rabbit said, "Oh, Ikto, I will teach you a magic art."

Ikto said, "I have created all things."

"But I will show you something new," said Rabbit. Therefore Ikto consented. He let go of Rabbit.

Rabbit stood in front of Ikto and said, "Elder brother, if you wish snow to fall at any time, take some hair such as this," — and he pulled out some of his rabbit fur — "and blow it in all directions; there will be a blizzard."

Rabbit made a deep snow in this way, though the leaves were green.

At once, Ikto began to pull his own fur and say magic words. Rabbit made a long leap and ran away.

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**I**ko pulled his fur and blew it about. But there was no snow. Then he pulled more fur, and blew it about. Still there was no snow. It was only rabbit fur that made the snow.

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### THE SOUTHERN BRIDE

*Cherokee*

**N**ORTH went traveling, and after a long time, and after visiting many tribes, he fell in love with the daughter of South.

South and his wife said, "No. Ever since you came the weather has been cold. If you stay we will all freeze."

North said he would go back to his own country. So South let his daughter marry him. Then North went back to his own country with South's daughter. All the people there lived in ice houses.

The next day, after sunrise, the houses began to leak. The ice began to melt. It grew warmer and warmer. Then North's people came to him. They said, "It is the daughter of the South. If she lives here all the lodges will melt. You must send her back to her father."

North said, "No."

But every day it grew hotter. The lodges began to melt away. The people said North must send his wife home. Therefore North had to send her back to South.

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### THE FALLEN STAR

*Dakota*

**A** PEOPLE had this camp. And there were two women sleeping out of doors and looking up at the stars.

One of them said, "I wish that that large and bright shining star were my husband."

The other said, "I wish the star that shines less brightly were my husband."

And immediately both were immediately carried upward, they say. They found themselves in a beautiful country which was full of beautiful twin flowers. And they found that the star which had shone most brightly was a large man; the other star was only a young man. So the two stars married the two women and they lived in that beautiful Star Country.

Now in that country was a plant, the Teepsinna, with large, attractive stalks. The wife of the large star wanted to dig them. Her husband said, "No; no one does so here."

Then the camp moved. When the woman had pitched her tepee, and came inside to lay the mats, she



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saw there a beautiful teepsinna. She said to herself, "I will dig this; no one will see me." So she took her digging stick and dug the teepsinna; but when she pulled it out of the earth, the foundation of the Star Country broke and she fell through with her baby. So the woman died; but the baby was not injured. It lay there stretched out.

An old man came that way. When he saw that the baby was alive, he took it in his blanket and took it to his own lodge. He said to his wife, "Old woman, I saw something today that made my heart feel badly."

"What was it?" she asked.

"A woman lay dead; and a little baby boy lay beside her kicking."

"Why did you not bring it home, old man?" she asked.

"Here it is," he said. Then he took it out of his blanket.

The wife said, "Old man, let us adopt this child."

The old man said, "We will swing it around the tepee." He whirled it up through the smoke hole. It went whirling around and around and fell down, and came creeping into the tent.

Again he took up the baby and threw it up through the smoke hole. It got up and came into the tent walking. Again the old man whirled him out. In came a

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boy with some green sticks. He said, "Grandfather, I wish you would make me arrows."

Again the old man whirled him out. No one knows where he went. This time he came back into the tepee a long man, with many green sticks. He said, "Grandfather, make me arrows of these."

So the old man made him arrows, and he killed a great many buffaloes, and they made a large tepee, and built up a high sleeping place in the back part of the tepee, and were very rich in dried meat.

The old man said, "Old woman, I am glad we are well off; I will proclaim it abroad." So when morning came, he went to the top of the tent, and sat, and said, "I, I have abundance laid up. I eat the fat of the animals."

That is how the meadow lark came to be made, they say. It has a yellow breast and black in the middle, which is the yellow of that morning, and they say the black stripe is made by a smooth buffalo horn worn for a necklace.

The young man said, "Grandfather, I want to go visiting."

"Yes," said the old man. "When one is young is the time to go visiting."

The young man went and came to a people, and lo! they were engaged in shooting arrows through a hoop.

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And there was a young man who was simply looking on. By and by he said, "My friend, let us go to your house."

So they came to his lodge. Now this young man also had been raised by his grandmother, and lived with her, they say.

"Grandmother, I have brought my friend home with me; get him something to eat," said the grandson.

Grandmother said, "What shall I do?"

Then the visiting young man said, "How is it, grandmother?"

She said, "The people are about to die of thirst. All who go for water will not come back again."

Fallen Star said, "My friend, take a kettle; we will go for water."

"With difficulty have I raised my grandchild," objected the old woman.

"You are afraid of trifles," said the grandson. So he went with Star-born.

They reached the side of the lake. By the water of the lake stood troughs half full of water.

Star-born called out, "You who they say have killed every one who has come for water, where have you gone? I have come for water."

Then immediately whither they went is not manifest. Behold, there was a long house which was extended,

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and it was full of young men and women. Some of them were dead and some were dying.

“How did you come here?” asked Star-born.

They replied, “What do you mean? We came for water and something swallowed us.”

Something kept striking on the head of Star-born.

“What is this?” he said.

“Get away,” they replied, “that is the heart.”

Then he drew out his knife and cut it to pieces. Suddenly something made a great noise. In the great body, these people were swallowed up. When the heart died, death came to the body. Then Star-born cut a great hole in the side, and came out, bringing the young men and the young women. All came to life again.

So the people were thankful and offered him two wives.

But he said, “I am journeying. My friend here will marry them.”

Then Star-born went on, they say. Again he found a young man standing where they were shooting through a hoop. He said, “I will look on with my friend,” and went and stood beside him.

Then the other said, “My friend, let us go home,” so he went with him to his tepee.

“Grandmother, I have brought my friend home with me,” he said. “Get him something to eat.”

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Grandmother replied, "How shall I do as you say?"

"How is it?" said Star-born.

"This people are perishing for wood," she said; "when any one goes for wood, he never comes home again."

Star-born said, "My friend, take the packing strap; we will go for wood."

The old woman protested. "This one, my grandchild, I have raised with difficulty," she said. He answered, "Old woman, what you are afraid of are trifles," and went with the young man. "I am going to bring wood," he said. "If any wish to go, come along."

"The young man who came from somewhere says this," they said, so they followed him.

They had now reached the wood. They found it tied up in bundles. He ordered them to carry it home, but he stood still and said, "You who killed every one who came to this wood, where have you gone?"

Then, suddenly, where he went was not made manifest. And lo! a tepee, and in it some young men and young women; some were eating, and some were waiting.

He said to them, "How came you here?"

They answered, "What do you mean? We came for

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wood and something brought us here. Now you also are lost."

He looked behind him, and lo! there was a hole.

"What is this?" he asked.

"Stop!" they said. "That is the thing itself."

He drew out an arrow and shot it. Then suddenly it opened out and behold! it was the ear of an owl in which they had been shut up. When it was killed, it opened out. Then he said, "Young men and women, come out," so they went home.

Again they offered him two wives. But he said, "My friend will marry them. I am traveling."

Again he passed on. And he came to a dwelling place of people and found them shooting the hoop. There stood a young man looking on. He joined him as his friend. While they stood there together, he said:

"Friend, let us go to your home." So he went with him to his tepee.

The young man said, "Grandmother, I have brought my friend home with me; get him something to eat."

She said, "Where shall I get it from, that you say that?"

"Grandmother, how is it that you say so?" asked the stranger.

She replied, "Waziya treats this people very badly.

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When they go out to kill buffalo, he takes it all, and now they are starving to death.”

Now Waziya was a giant who caused very cold weather and blizzards.

Then he said, “Grandmother, go to him and say, ‘My grandchild has come on a journey and has nothing to eat; so he has sent me to you.’”

So the old woman went and standing at a distance, cried, “Waziya, my grandchild has come on a journey and has nothing to eat; so he has sent me to you.”

He replied, “Bad old woman, get you home; what do you mean by coming here?”

The old woman came home crying, and saying that Waziya had threatened to kill some of her relations.

Star-born said, “My friend, take your strap; we will go there.”

The old woman interfered: “I have with difficulty raised my grandchild.”

Grandchild replied to this by saying, “Grandmother is very much afraid.” So the two went together.

When they came to the house of Waziya, they found a great deal of dried meat outside. He put as much on his friend as he could carry, and sent him home with it; then Star-born entered the tepee of Waziya, and said to him, “Waziya, why did you answer my grandmother as you did when I sent her to you?”

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Waziya only looked angry.

Hanging there was a bow of ice. "Waziya, why do you keep this?" he said.

The giant replied, "Hands off; whoever touches that gets a broken arm."

Star-born said, "I will see if my arm breaks." He took the ice bow and snapped it into many pieces, and then started home.

The next morning all the people went on the chase and killed many buffaloes. But, as he had done before, the Waziya went all over the field, gathered up all the meat, and put it in his blanket.

Star-born was cutting up a fat cow. Waziya came and stood there. He said, "Who cuts this up?"

"I am," answered Star-born.

Waziya said, "From where have you come that you act so haughtily?"

"Whence have you come, Waziya, that you act so proudly?" he retorted.

Waziya said, "Fallen Star, whoever points his finger at me dies." The young man thought, "I will point my finger at him and see if I die." He pointed his finger, but it made no difference.

Then Fallen Star said, "Waziya, whoever points his finger at me, his hand loses all use." So Waziya thought, "I will point my finger and see." He pointed





*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

**PETROGLYPH IN NEBRASKA**



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

his finger. His forearm lost all use. Then he pointed his finger with the other hand. It was destroyed even to the elbow.

Then Fallen Star drew out his knife and cut up Waziya's blanket, and all the buffalo meat he had gathered there fell out. Fallen Star called to the people, "Henceforth kill and carry home."

So the people took the meat and carried it to their tepees.

The next morning, they say, it was rumored that the blanket of Waziya, which had been cut to pieces, had been sewed up by his wife. He was about to shake it.

The giant stood with his face toward the north and shook his blanket. Then the wind blew from the north. Snow fell all about the camp so that the people were all snowed in. They were much troubled. They said, "We did live in some fashion before; but now this young man has acted so we are in great trouble."

But he said, "Grandmother, find me a fan."

Then she made a road under the snow, and went to people and said, "My grandchild says he wants a fan."

"What does he mean by saying that?" they asked and gave him one.

Now the snow reached to the top of the lodges, and so Fallen Star pushed up through the snow, and sat on the ridge of the lodge. While the wind was blowing

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

to the south, he sat and fanned himself and made the wind come from the south. Then the heat became great. The snow went as if boiling water had been poured over it. All over the ground there was a mist. Waziya and his wife and children all died with the great heat. But the youngest child, the littlest child of Waziya, took refuge in the hole made by the tent pole, where there was a frost, and so he lived. So they say that is all that is left of Waziya now, just the littlest child.

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### QUARREL OF THE SUN AND MOON

*Omaha*

“**I** AM out of patience with you,” said Moon to Sun. “Although I bring people together, you scatter them. Thus many are lost.”

“I have desired many people to grow,” said Sun, “and so I have scattered them; but you have been putting them in darkness and thus have you been killing many with hunger. Ho! ye people!” called the Sun. “Many of you shall mature. I will look down on you from above. I will direct you, whatever you do.”

Then Moon said, “And I, too, will dwell so. I will collect you; when it is dark, you shall assemble in full numbers, and sleep. I myself will rule you, whatever you do. And we shall walk in the road, one after the other. I will walk behind him.”

Moon is just like a woman. She always walks with a kettle on her arm.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### WHY THE POSSUM PLAYS DEAD

*Cherokee*

**R**ABBIT and Possum each wanted a wife, but no one would marry either of them. They talked over the matter and Rabbit said, "We can't get wives here. Let's go to the next village. I'll say I'm messenger for the council and that everybody must marry at once, and then we'll be sure to get wives."

Off they started for the next town. As Rabbit traveled the faster, he got there first. He waited outside the village until people noticed him and took him into the council lodge. When the chief asked his business, Rabbit said he brought important message: everyone must be married at once. So the chief called a great council of the people and told them the message.

Every animal took a mate at once, and thus Rabbit got a wife.

But Possum traveled slowly. Therefore he reached the village so late that all the men were married and there was no wife for him. Rabbit pretended to be sorry. He said, "Never mind, I'll carry the same message to the next village."

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So Rabbit traveled ahead to the next village. He waited outside until they invited him to the council lodge. There he told the chief he brought an important message: there had been peace so long, there must be war at once. The war must begin in the council lodge.

The animals all began to fight at once, but Rabbit got away in just four leaps. Then Possum reached the lodge. Now Possum had brought no weapons. So all the animals began to fight Possum. They hit him so hard that after a while he rolled over in a corner and shut his eyes and pretended to be dead. That is why Possum pretends to be dead when he finds the hunters after him.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### BOG MYTH

*Dakota*

**B**OGS are very mysterious. Strange things, with thick hair, remain at the bottom of a bog. These things have no eyes, but they eat everything which comes to them, and from their bodies water flows always. When one of these Beings wishes, he changes his place of abode. He lives at a new place. Then the old place where he lived dries up; but a fresh spring of water gushes from his new lodge. The water of this spring is warm in winter; but in summer it is as cold as ice. Before one dares drink of it, he prays to the water, else he may bring illness on himself for irreverence.

In the olden days, one of the Bog Beings was pulled out of a bog and carried to the camp. A special tepee was built for him. But so much water flowed all around that the people were almost drowned. Then those who were not drowned offered him food. He sat motionless, gazing at them. But the food vanished before they could see it go; and no one saw the Bog Being eat it.



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### COYOTE AND SNAKE

*Omaha*

COYOTE was going in a straight line across the prairie. While he was seeking something, a person said suddenly, "Stop!" Coyote thought, "Who can it be?"

He looked all around but saw no one. Then he walked on a few steps, when some one said, "Walk around me!" Then Coyote saw it was Snake.

"Humph!" said Coyote. "When I walk here, I do not wish to walk around anyone at all. You go to one side. Get out of my way!"

Snake replied, "I am here. I have never thought for a moment of giving place to anyone!"

"Even if you think so," said Coyote, "I will run over you."

"If you do so, you shall die," said Snake.

"Why should I die? There is nothing that can kill me," said Coyote.

"Come! Step over me. Do it in spite of me," said Snake. Then Coyote stepped over him. And Snake bit him. But Coyote did not feel it.

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“Where is it? You said that if I stepped over you, I should die. Where have I received my death blow?” said Coyote.

Snake made no reply and Coyote walked on. After some time he came to a creek. As he was about to drink, he saw himself in the water. He seemed very fat.

“Whew!” he said. “I was never so before. I am very fat.” Saying this, he felt himself all over; but that was all he did. Then he walked on until he felt sleepy. He said, “I am very sleepy.” So he pushed his way into the thick grass and fell asleep. Coyote did not wake up. Snake had told the truth.

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### WHY THE WOLVES HELP IN WAR

*Dakota*

ONCE upon a time an Indian found a wolf den, and began digging into it to get the cubs.

Wolf Mother appeared, barking. She said, "Pity my children," but he paid no attention to her. So she ran for her husband.

Wolf Father soon appeared. He barked. Still the man dug into the den. Then Wolf Father sang a beautiful song. He sang, "O man, pity my children, and I will teach you one of my arts." He ended with a howl which caused a fog. When the Wolf Father howled again, the fog disappeared.

The man thought, "These animals have mysterious gifts." So he tore up his red blanket into small pieces. He tied a piece around the neck of each of the wolf cubs, as a necklace. Then he painted them with red paint and put them back into the den.

Wolf Father was very grateful. He said, "When you go to war hereafter, I will go with you. I will bring about whatever you wish." Then the man went away.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

After a while the man went on the warpath. Just as he came in sight of the village of the enemy, a large wolf met him.

Wolf said, "By and by I will sing. Then you shall steal their horses when they least suspect danger."

So the man stopped on a hill close to the village. And the wolf sang. After that he howled, making a high wind arise. The horses fled to the forest, but many stopped on the hillside. When the wolf howled again, the wind died down and a mist arose. So the man on the warpath took as many horses as he pleased.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### HOW RABBIT ESCAPED FROM THE WOLVES

*Cherokee*

ONCE upon a time, Wolves caught Rabbit. They were going to eat him, but Rabbit said he would show them a new dance. Now the Wolves knew that Rabbit was a good dancer, so they made a ring around him.

Rabbit pattered with his feet and began to dance around in a circle, singing,

On the edge of the field I dance about,  
*Ha' nia lil! lil! Ha' nia lil! lil!*

Then the Rabbit stopped a minute. He said, "Now when I sing 'on the edge of the field,' I dance that way" — and he danced over in that direction; "and when I sing 'lil! lil!' you must all stamp your feet hard."

The Wolves liked that. They liked new dances.

Rabbit began singing the same song, dancing nearer to the field, while all the Wolves stamped their feet. He sang the song again, dancing still nearer the edge

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

of the field. The fourth time he sang it, while the Wolves were stamping their feet as hard as they could. Rabbit made one jump off and leaped through the long grass. The Wolves raced after him, but Rabbit ran for a hollow stump and climbed inside. When the Wolves got there, one of them put his head inside, but Rabbit hit him on the eye and he pulled his head out. The others were afraid to try, so they went away and left Rabbit in the stump.



*By permission of Sumner H. Matteson, the photographer*

**PLAINS INDIANS DRAGGING BRUSH FOR A MEDICINE LODGE**



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

AN EARTH LODGE



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### HOW RABBIT LOST HIS FAT

*Omaha*

**A**T first all the four-footed animals were fat. The one who made them wished to know if they looked well so fat. So he called all the four-footed animals together. He seized by the head each one who did not look handsome with the fat, and scraped it all off.

At length someone took Rabbit to him.

“Fat makes me handsome,” said Rabbit. “I will be the one.”

“Let me see! Come here!” said the one who made the animals. Then he made Rabbit fat. Then he looked at him. “Fat makes you ugly beyond measure.”

So he seized Rabbit by the head and scraped off the fat from the base of his neck. But he pulled suddenly at the flesh in the space between the shoulders. Therefore, ever since then Rabbit has had a hollow space between his shoulders, and only in that place is there a piece of fat.

At length the person who made the animals saw that Raccoon was the only person who looked well when fat. So he made the whole body of Raccoon fat.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### HOW FLINT VISITED RABBIT

*Cherokee*

**L**ONG ago, in the old days, Flint lived up in the mountains, and all the animals hated him because he had helped to kill so many of them. All the arrowheads were made of flint. They used to have councils. They tried to think of some means of killing him. But everybody was afraid to go near to his house, until at last Rabbit, who was the boldest, offered to try to kill Flint.

So Rabbit asked the trail to Flint's house. At last he reached the house.

Flint was standing at the door of his lodge when Rabbit reached there. He said, "*Siyu!* Hello! Are you the fellow they call Flint?"

"Yes; that's what they call me," said Flint.

"Is this where you live?"

"Yes; this is where I live."

All the time Rabbit was looking at the lodge and all about him. He was trying to think how to kill Flint. Rabbit had expected Flint to invite him into his lodge. But Flint only stood in the door.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

Rabbit said, "My name is Rabbit. I've heard a good deal about you, so I came to see you."

Flint said, "Where is your lodge?"

"Down in the broom-grass field near the river," said Rabbit.

Flint said, "I will come and visit you after a while."

Rabbit said, "Come now and have supper with me."

So Rabbit coaxed Flint until he said yes, and the two started down the mountain side together.

When they came near Rabbit's hole, Rabbit said, "There is my lodge, but in summer I stay outside here, where it is cooler."

So he made a fire and they had their supper on the grass. When supper was over, Flint stretched out on the grass to rest. Rabbit picked up some heavy sticks and his knife, and cut a mallet and wedge.

Flint looked up and said, "What is that for?"

"Oh," said Rabbit, "I like to be doing something and they may come in handy."

Flint lay down again and soon he was sound asleep. Rabbit spoke to him once or twice, but he did not answer. Then Rabbit came over to Flint and with one blow of the mallet drove the stake through Flint. Then he ran with all his might for his own hole. But before he reached it, there was a loud explosion, and pieces of flint flew all about. That is why we find flint in

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

so many places now. One piece struck Rabbit and cut him just as he dived into his hole. He sat listening until everything was quiet again. Then he put his head out to look around, just as another piece fell. It cut his lip, just as we see it now.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### HOW RABBIT CAUGHT THE SUN IN A TRAP

*Omaha*

ONCE upon a time Rabbit dwelt in a lodge with no one but his grandmother. It was his custom to go hunting very early in the morning. But no matter how early in the morning he went, a person with a very long foot had been along, leaving a trail. Rabbit wished to know him.

“Now,” he thought, “I will go in advance of that person.” Having risen very early in the morning, he departed, but again it happened that the person had been along, leaving a trail. Then Rabbit went home.

“Grandmother,” he said, “though I arrange for myself to go first, a person goes ahead of me every time. Grandmother, I will make a snare and I will catch him.”

“Why should you do it?” she asked.

“I hate the person,” he said.

Again Rabbit departed. And again had the footprints gone along. So Rabbit lay waiting for night to come. Then he made a noose of a bowstring, setting it where the footprints were commonly seen.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Next morning Rabbit reached the place very early, to see what he had caught in his trap. And it happened that he had caught the Sun. Running very fast, he went homewards to tell about it.

“Grandmother,” he said, “I have caught something or other but it scares me. Grandmother, I wished to take away my bowstring, but I was scared every time.”

So he went there again with a knife. This time he got very near it.

“You have done wrong. Why have you done it? Come and untie me,” said the Sun.

The Rabbit, although he went to untie him, kept going past him a little on one side. Then he made a rush with his head bent down and his arm stretched out, and cut the bowstring with his knife. And the Sun rose into the sky. But Rabbit had the hair between his shoulders scorched yellow by the heat of the Sun as he stooped and cut the bowstring. Then Rabbit arrived at his lodge.

“I am burnt. Oh, grandmother! the heat has left nothing of me,” he said.

Grandmother said, “Oh, my grandchild! I think the heat has left to me nothing of him!”

From that time Rabbit has always had a singed spot upon his back, between his shoulders.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### HOW RABBIT KILLED THE GIANT

*Omaha*

**W**HEN Rabbit was going on a journey, he came to a certain village. The people said, "Halloo! Rabbit has come as a visitor."

On meeting him, they said, "Whom did you come to see?"

"Why, I will go to the lodge of any one," said Rabbit.

"But the people have nothing to eat," they said. "The Giant is the only one who has anything to eat. You ought to go to his lodge."

Yet, the Rabbit passed on to the end lodge and entered it.

"Friend, we have nothing to eat," said the host.

"Why, my friend," said Rabbit, "when there is nothing, people eat anything they can get."

At length the Giant invited Rabbit to a feast.

"Oh ho!" called the man whose lodge Rabbit had entered. "Friend, you are invited. Hasten!"

Now all the people were afraid of the Giant. No matter what animal anyone killed, the Giant kept all of the meat.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Rabbit arrived at the lodge of the Giant. As he entered, the host said, "Oh! Pass around to that side." But Rabbit leaped over and took a seat. At length food was given him. He ate it very rapidly but left some which he hid in his robe. Then he pushed the bowl aside.

"Friend," he said to the Giant, "here is the bowl." Then he said, "Friend, I must go." He sprang past the fireplace at one leap, at the second leap his feet touched the chest of the Giant's servant, and with another leap he had gone.

When Rabbit reached the lodge where he was visiting, he gave his host the food he had not eaten. The man and his wife were glad to eat it, since they had been without food.

Next morning, the crier passed through the village, commanding the people to be stirring.

They said, "The Giant is the one for whom they are to kill game." So they all went hunting. They scared some animals out of a dense forest and shot at them. Rabbit went thither very quickly. He found Giant had reached there before him and taken all the game. When Rabbit heard shooting in another place, he went thither, but again found the Giant was before him.

"This is provoking!" thought Rabbit.

When some persons shot at game in another place



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

Rabbit noticed it, and went thither immediately, reaching the spot before the Giant.

"Friend," he said to the man who had killed the deer, "let us cut it up."

The man was unwilling. He said, "No, friend, the Giant will come by and by."

"Pshaw, friend," said Rabbit. "When one kills animals, he cuts them up and then makes an equal distribution of the pieces," said the Rabbit.

Still the man refused, fearing the Giant. So Rabbit rushed forward and seized the deer by the feet.

When he had only slit the skin, the Giant arrived.

"You have done wrong. Let it alone," Giant said.

"What have I done wrong?" asked Rabbit. "When one kills game, he cuts it up and makes an equal distribution of the pieces."

"Let it alone, I say," said the Giant.

But Rabbit continued to insert the knife in the meat.

"I will blow that *thing* into the air," said the Giant.

"Blow me into the air! Blow me into the air!" said Rabbit.

So the Giant went closer to him, and when he blew at him the Rabbit went up into the air with his fur blown apart. Striding past, the Giant seized the deer, put it through his belt, and departed. That was his custom. He took all the deer that were killed, hung

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

them on his belt, and took them to his lodge. He was a very tall person.

At night Rabbit wandered around, and at last went all around the Giant's lodge. He seized an insect and said to it, "Oh, insect! You shall go and bite the Giant right in the side."

At length when it was morning, it was said the Giant was ill. Then he died.

The people said, "Make a village for Rabbit!"

But Rabbit said, "I do not wish to be chief. I have left my old woman by herself, so I will return to her."

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### HOW THE DEER GOT HIS HORNS

*Cherokee*

**L**ONG ago, in the beginning, Deer had no horns. His head was smooth like a doe's. Now Deer was a very fast runner, but Rabbit was a famous jumper. So the animals used to talk about it and wonder which could go the farther in the same time. They talked about it a great deal. They decided to have a race between the two, and they made a pair of large antlers to be given to whoever could run the faster. Deer and Rabbit were to start together from one side of a thicket, go through it, and then turn and come back. The one who came out of the thicket first was to receive the horns.

On a certain day all the animals were there. They put the antlers down on the ground to mark the starting point. Everyone admired the horns. But Rabbit said, "I do n't know this part of the country; I want to look through the bushes where I am to run."

So the Rabbit went into the thicket, and stayed a long time. He was gone so long the animals suspected he was playing a trick. They sent a messenger after

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

him. Right in the middle of the thicket he found Rabbit, gnawing down the bushes and pulling them away to make a clear road for himself.

The messenger came back quietly and told the animals. When Rabbit came back, they accused him of cheating. Rabbit said, "No," but at last they all went into the thicket and found the road he had made. Therefore the animals gave the antlers to Deer, saying that he was the better runner. That is why deer have antlers. And because Rabbit cut the bushes down, he is obliged to keep cutting them down, as he does to this day.



*Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

KANSA CHIEF



*Portrait of Big Goose, Omaha*

Big Goose  
(Omaha)

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### WHY THE DEER HAS BLUNT TEETH

*Cherokee*

ONE day after the race which they did not run, Rabbit stretched a large grapevine across the trail, gnawing it nearly in two in the middle. Then he went back on the trail, took a run, and jumped up at the vine. He did this again and again. At last Deer came along and asked him to tell what he was doing.

“Do n't you see?” said Rabbit. “I'm so strong I can bite through that grapevine at one jump.”

Deer said, “Do it.” Rabbit ran back, made a long leap, and bit through the vine where he had gnawed it before.

Deer said, “Well, I can do it if you can.”

So Rabbit stretched a larger grapevine across the trail but without gnawing it in the center. Deer ran back as he had seen Rabbit do, made a spring, and struck the grapevine right in the center. It only flew back and threw him over.

Deer tried again and again, but he was only bruised and hurt.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

“Let me see your teeth,” said Rabbit. They were long like a wolf’s teeth but not very sharp.

“No wonder you cannot do it,” said Rabbit. “Your teeth are too blunt to bite anything. Let me sharpen them for you so they are like mine. My teeth are so sharp I can cut through a stick just like a knife.”

And Rabbit showed Deer a black locust twig, of which rabbits gnaw the young shoots, which he had shaved off as well as a knife could do it.

So Deer let Rabbit sharpen his teeth. But Rabbit got a hard stone with rough edges and ground down the Deer’s teeth until they were blunt.

“Now try it,” said Rabbit to Deer. So Deer tried it again, but he could not bite at all.

“Now you’ve paid for your horns,” said Rabbit as he sprang through the underbrush. That is why the Deer’s teeth are blunt.



## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### LEGEND OF THE HEAD OF GOLD

*Dakota*

**A** MAN had four children. And they were all young men, but they were poor and it seemed as if they would die of laziness. The old man said, "Behold! old woman. I have the greatest pity for my youngest child, and I do not wish him to die of poverty. See here; let us seek the Great Mystery, Wakantanka. If we find him, behold! I will give the boy to him to train up well for me."

"Yes, old man; you say well. We will do so," said the old woman. So at once they went toward the Darkening Land, seeking Wakantanka. They came to a very high hill; and as they came to it, behold! another man came there also.

The stranger said, "For what are you seeking?"

"Alas, my friend," the old man said, "my child, whom I pity, I wish to give to Wakantanka, the Great Mystery, and so I am seeking him."

"Yes, friend. I am Wakantanka," said the man. "My friend, give him to me. I will take him to my home."

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

So when the father gave up the boy, the Great Mystery took him to a house that stood up like the clouds. He said, "Look at this house as much as you like. Take good care of these horses. But do not look into the little house that stands here."

Having said this, he gave him all the keys. He added, "Yes, have a watch of this. Lo, I am going on a journey." He said this and went away.

It was evening; he came home with a great many men, who sat down, filling the house. When they had been there a good while one of them said, "The boy is good; that is enough." Saying this, he went out. In like manner, all the men went home.

Then again Wakantanka said, "Behold, I go on a journey. Stay here and keep watch." So again he went away.

While the boy was watching, one of the horses said, "Friend, go into the little house where you are commanded not to look, and inside in the middle of the floor stands something yellow. Dip your head in that and make haste—we two are together. When he brings home a great many men, they will eat you, as they will eat me, but I am unwilling—we two shall share the same," he said.

So the boy went into the little house. In the middle of the floor stood a round yellow thing into which he

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dipped his head. Immediately his head became golden and the house was shining and full of light.

Then he came out and jumped on the horse that had talked to him and they fled.

They went very fast. Now when they had gone a long way, behold! there came after them the one who called himself Wakantanka. He shouted, "You bad rascals, stop! You shall not live! Where will you go in such a small country as this?"

Saying this he came toward them and they were much frightened. Again he shouted, "You bad rascals, stop! You shall not live." And indeed it seemed as if they could not live.

Then the horse said, "Take the egg you have and throw it behind us." The boy did so. At once the whole country became a sea. He who followed was obliged to stop. He said, "Alas, my horse, have mercy on me and take me to the other side. If you do, I will value you very highly."

"Oh, I am not willing to do that," the horse replied. But he continued to urge. Then he threw himself down from above the water, so that when he came to the middle of it, he went down and both he and the horse were drowned. But the boy passed safely on.

So he came to the dwellings of people and remained there. But from behind they came to attack and fought

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

with them. But the boy turned his head around, and his head was covered with gold; also the horse he sat upon was golden, and those who came against him were thrown off their horses and only a few remained when the battle was over. Again, when they returned to the attack, he destroyed them all. So the boy was much thought of by the people.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

### THE MILKY WAY

*Cherokee*

**N**OW the Indians had a corn mill, in which they pounded the corn into meal. Several mornings when they came to the stone in which the corn was pounded, they saw that some of the meal had been stolen. Therefore they looked at the ground. They found the tracks of a dog.

The next night, the people watched, and when the dog came from the north, they saw him begin to eat meal out of the stone bowl. Then they sprang out and whipped him.

The dog ran howling back to the north, dropping the meal from his mouth as he ran. Therefore he left behind a white trail where we now see the Milky Way. But the Cherokees called it "Where-the-dog-ran."

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### COYOTE AND GRAY FOX

*Ponca*

**G**RAY FOX was very fat. Coyote said, "Younger brother, what has made you fat?" "Elder brother," said the Gray Fox, "I lie down on the trail in the way of those who carry crackers, and I pretend to be dead. When they throw me in the wagon, I lie there, kicking the crackers out. Then I leap out and start home eating. It is the crackers which make me fat. Elder brother, I wish you would do likewise. Elder brother, you have large feet, so I think will knock out a great many crackers."

Coyote went to the place and lay down in the trail. When the white man came along, he threw Coyote into the wagon. The white man thought, "It is not the first time he has acted in this way," so he tied the feet of Coyote. Having put the Coyote in the wagon, the white man went to his house. He threw Coyote out near an old outhouse. Then the white man brought a knife, and cut the cords which bound Coyote's feet. He acted as if Coyote was dead, so he threw him over his back and started off for the house.

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

But Coyote managed to get loose and ran homeward. He went back to get even with Gray Fox.

“Oh, younger brother,” said Coyote, “you have made me suffer.”

“You yourself are to blame,” said Gray Fox. “Be silent and listen to me. You brought the trouble on yourself as you lay down in the place where the white man came with his load of goods.”

“Oh, younger brother, you tell the truth,” said Coyote. But Gray Fox had tempted him.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### ICTINIKE AND THE TURTLE

*Omaha*

**I**CTINIKE was journeying. When he came in sight at a bend of a stream, Big Turtle was sitting there in a sheltered place warmed by the sun. Ictinike drew himself back out of sight, crouching at intervals as he retraced his steps, and ran down the hill to where Big Turtle was.

“Why! How is it that you continue to pay no attention to what is going on? It has been said that yonder stream is to dry up so that all the four-footed animals that frequent the water have kept close to the deep water,” said Ictinike.

Big Turtle said, “Why! I have been coming here regularly, but I have not heard anything at all. I usually come and sit in this place when the sun gets as high as it is at present.”

“Hurry!” said Ictinike, “for some of the young men died very soon for want of water. The young otters died, so did the young muskrats, the young beavers, and the young raccoons.”

“Come, let us go,” said Big Turtle. So Ictinike



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departed with him. As he accompanied him, Ictinike sought for a dry bone. Having found one that would be good as a club, Ictinike said, "Friend, go on. *Mingam.*"

When he was alone, Ictinike seized the bone, and before long overtook Big Turtle, walking along beside him.

"Friend," said he, "when a person walks, he stretches his neck often."

So Big Turtle began to stretch his neck very far, and he was walking with his legs bent very much. As he was going thus, Ictinike gave him a hard blow on the neck, knocking him senseless, and he did not stop beating him until he had killed him.

"Ha, ha!" said Ictinike, as he carried Big Turtle away. "There are some days when I act thus for myself."

He kindled a fire and began to roast Big Turtle. Then he became very sleepy, and said, "Ho! I will sleep, but you, O, Ijaxe, must keep awake. Big Turtle, when you are cooked, you must say, '*Puff!*'"

So he went to sleep. Now Coyote came along, very cautiously. He seized Big Turtle, pulled one of the legs out of the fire, and sat there, biting off the meat. When he had eaten all the meat on all the legs, he pushed the bones back just as they had been before,

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

arranged the fire over them, and left after putting everything just as he had found it.

At length Ictinike awoke. He pushed into the ashes to find Big Turtle, took hold of a leg, and pulled it out. Only that leg came out. "Pshaw!" said he. Then he tried another leg, with a like result, and still another, but only the bones appeared. When he had pulled out the fourth leg, he was astonished. All at once he exclaimed, "Surprising! I had already eaten the Turtle, but I had forgotten it."

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### ICTINIKE AND THE CREATORS

*Omaha*

**I**CTINIKE married and dwelt in a lodge. One day he said to his wife, "Hand me that tobacco pouch. I must go visit your grandfather, Beaver." So he departed.

As he was entering Beaver's lodge, Beaver said, "Ho, pass around to one side." And they seated Ictinike on a pillow. Beaver's wife said, "We have been without food. How can we give your grandfather anything to eat?" Now Beaver had four young ones.

The youngest Beaver said, "Father, let me serve for food." So the youngest Beaver served for food. Beaver's wife therefore gave some of the meat to Ictinike, who ate it. But before letting him eat it, Beaver said to him, "Be careful lest you break even a single bone by biting! Do not break a bone!" Yet Ictinike broke one of the toe bones.

After the meal, Beaver gathered the bones, put them in a skin, and plunged them beneath the water. In a moment the youngest Beaver came up from the water, alive again.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

When the father said, "Is all right?" the son said, "Father, he broke one of my toes by biting." Therefore, from that time, every beaver has had one little toe (the next to the little one), which has seemingly been split by biting.

When Ictinike was about to go home, he pretended he had forgotten about his tobacco pouch, which he left behind. So Beaver said to one of the children, "Take that to him. Do not go near him, but throw it to him when you are at a great distance from him, as he is always very talkative."

Then the child took the tobacco pouch and started after Ictinike. After getting in sight of the latter, Little Beaver was about to throw the pouch, when standing at a great distance; but Ictinike called to him, "Come closer! come closer!" When young Beaver took the pouch closer, Ictinike said, "Tell your father that he is to visit me."

When young Beaver reached home, he said, "Oh, father, he said you were to visit him."

Beaver replied, "As I feared that very thing, I said to you, 'Throw it to him while standing at a great distance from him.'"

Then Beaver went to visit Ictinike. When he arrived there, Ictinike wished to kill one of his own children, as Beaver had done, and was making him cry by hitting

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

him often. Beaver was unwilling for him to act thus, so he said, "Let him alone! You are hurting him!" Then Beaver went to the stream where he found a young beaver that he took back to the lodge, and they ate it.

On another day, Ictinike said to his wife, "Hand me that tobacco pouch. I must go call on your grandfather, Muskrat." So he departed. As he was entering Muskrat's lodge, the host said, "Ho, pass around to one side." And Ictinike was seated on a pillow.

Muskrat's wife said, "We have been without food. How can we give your grandfather anything to eat?"

Muskrat said, "Fetch some water."

The woman brought the water. He told her to put it in the kettle and hang the kettle over the fire. When the water was boiling very fast, the husband upset the kettle, and instead of water, out came wild rice! So Ictinike ate the wild rice.

When Ictinike departed he left his tobacco pouch, as before. Then Muskrat called one of his children, and said, "Take that to him. Do not go near him! Throw it to him when you are a great distance from him, as he is always very talkative."

So the child took the tobacco pouch to return it to Ictinike. When he was about to throw it to him, he said, "Come closer! Come closer!" When the child

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

took the pouch closer, Ictinike said, "Tell your father he is to visit me."

When the young Muskrat reached home, he said, "Oh, father, he said that you were to visit him." Muskrat replied, "As I feared that very thing, I said to you, 'Throw it to him while standing at a great distance from him.'"

Then Muskrat went to see Ictinike. And Ictinike said to his wife, "Fetch water." The woman went after water. She filled the kettle and hung it over the fire until it boiled. When Ictinike upset the kettle, only water came out. Ictinike wished to do just as Muskrat had done, but he was unable. Then Muskrat had the kettle refilled, and when the water boiled he upset it, and an abundance of wild rice was there, which he gave to Ictinike. Thereupon Muskrat departed, leaving plenty of wild rice.

On another day, Ictinike said to his wife, "I am going to see your grandfather, Kingfisher." When he arrived there, Kingfisher stepped on a bough of a large white willow, bending it down so far that it was horizontal; and he dived from it into the water. He came up with a fish, which he gave to Ictinike to eat. And as Ictinike was starting home, he left one of his gloves, pretending he had forgotten it. So Kingfisher directed one of his boys to take the glove and restore it to the

## OF THE GREAT PLAINS

owner. But he charged the boy not to go near him, as Ictinike was very talkative and might detain him too long. Just as the boy was about to throw the glove, Ictinike called, "Come closer! Come closer!" So the boy carried the glove closer. And Ictinike said, "Tell your father that he is to visit me."

The boy said to his father, when he reached home, "Oh, father, he said you were to visit him." Kingfisher replied, "As I feared that very thing, I said 'Throw it to him while you stand at a great distance from him.'"

Then Kingfisher went to see Ictinike. When he arrived there, the host climbed upon a bough of a large white willow, bending it until it was horizontal. Then he leaped from it and plunged into the water. It was with great difficulty that Kingfisher seized him and brought him to land. Ictinike had swallowed more of the water than he liked. Then Kingfisher plunged into the stream, brought up a fish, which he gave to Ictinike. But Kingfisher departed without eating any portion of it.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### HOW BIG TURTLE WENT ON THE WARPATH

*Omaha*

**T**HE people dwelt in a very populous village. Big Turtle joined them. And people dwelling at another village came regularly to war against them. Having killed one person they went homeward. Big Turtle cooked for the warpath. He caused two persons to go after guests. The servants whom he sent after guests were Redbreasted Turtle and Gray Squirrel. He made two round bunches of grass and placed them at the bottom of the stick to which the kettle was fastened.

Now they were coming. They came in sight.

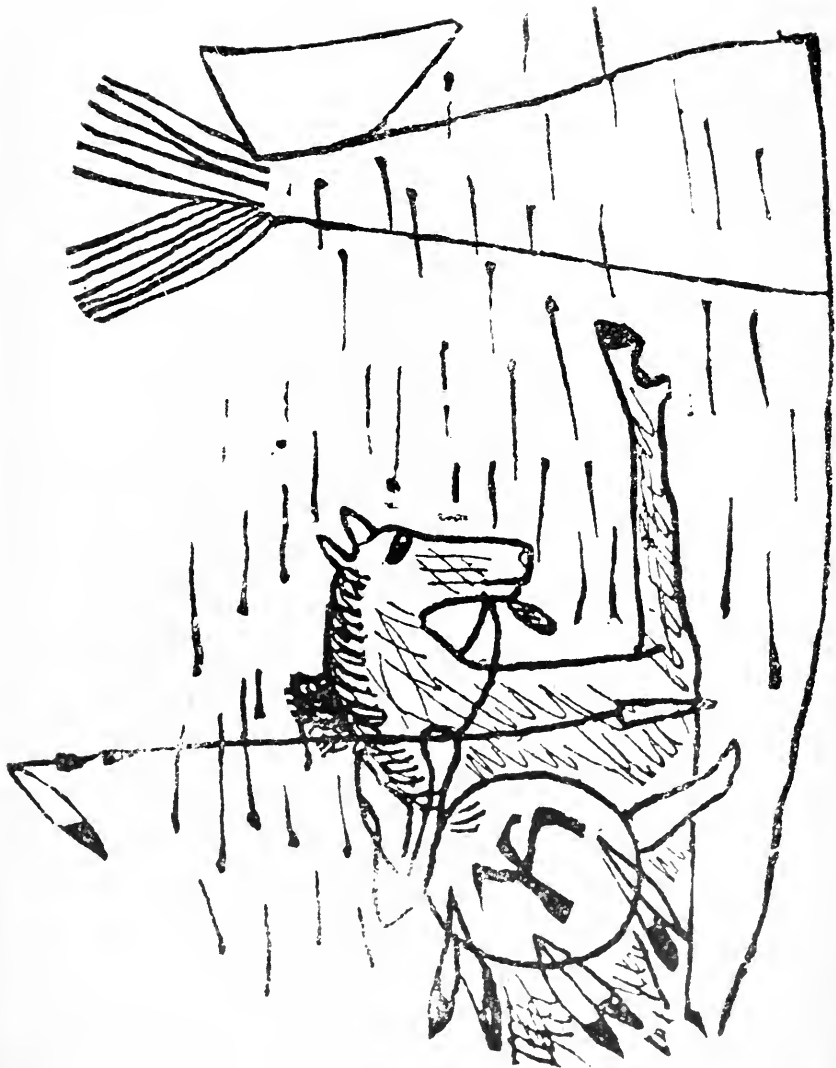
“Ho, warriors!” said Big Turtle. “Warriors, when men are injured, they always take revenge. I cook this for the warpath. I cook sweet corn and a buffalo paunch. You will go after Corn Crusher for me,” saying this to his servants. “Call to Comb, Awl, Pestle, Firebrand, and Buffalo Bladder also,” said Big Turtle.

The two men went to call them. They called to Corn Crusher. “Corn Crusher, be sure to bring your



OMAHA ASSAULT ON A DAKOTA VILLAGE  
(Indian drawing)

*The single tepee represents the Dakota village; the single horseman, covered by a shield, and hanging behind his horse's neck in a characteristic way, represents the attacking Omahas. Bullets are flying, the direction indicated by the head.*



*Enlarged from a sketch in Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*



*Enlarged from a sketch in Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*

“ KILLED TEN MEN AND THREE WOMEN ”

An Indian drawing, with striking similarity to Egyptian drawing

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bowl! Corn Crusher, be sure to bring your bowl! Corn Crusher, be sure to bring your bowl! Corn Crusher, be sure to bring your bowl!" Four times they called.

They called to Comb. "Comb, be sure to bring your bowl!" So they called four times.

They called to Awl. "Awl, be sure to bring your bowl!" So they called four times.

Then they called to Pestle. "Pestle, be sure to bring your bowl!" So they called four times.

They called to Firebrand, too. "Firebrand, be sure to bring your bowl!" So they called four times.

Then they called to Buffalo Bladder. "Buffalo Bladder, be sure to bring your bowl!" So they called four times to him.

Then the criers reached home, having invited the guests.

"Oh, war chief," they said, "all heard it."

All those who were called arrived at the lodge of Big Turtle.

"Ho! Oh, war chiefs! Corn Crusher, Comb, Awl, Pestle, Firebrand, and Buffalo Bladder, though those people have been injured they do not seem to stir. Let us go on the warpath for them," said Big Turtle. "Let us go in four nights."

He commanded Corn Crusher to cook. "O war

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chief, Corn Crusher, you will cook. And you, O Comb, will cook on the night after that. And you, O Awl, will cook, and complete the number."

That many war chiefs, four, cooked. They were war chiefs. The rest were servants.

The people of the village said, "Why! Of the persons who have been called, who is cooking for the war-path?"

And one said, "Why! Big Turtle cooked. Pshaw! Has he gathered all those who cannot move well enough, those who cannot move fast enough? Pshaw! If the foe find them out, they will destroy them. When a war chief has sense, he will carry on war."

Corn Crusher cooked. He cooked turnips, and he cooked a buffalo paunch with them, just as Big Turtle had cooked one with sweet corn. Awl cooked wild rice. Comb cooked other things.

Big Turtle said, "Time enough has passed. Let us go at night."

So they departed. Big Turtle made leggings with large flaps. He tied short garters around them. He rubbed earth on his face and he reddened it. He wore grass around his head. He put white feathers on top of his head. He took his gourd rattle thus. He rattled it. He sang the song of the war chief:

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“ Big Turtle is coming back from touching the foe, it is said, you say. He is coming back from touching.”

He walked, stepping very lively in the dance. He walked around them. As they went, it was day.

At length a young Buffalo Bull came. “ Warriors, wait for him,” said Big Turtle.

He said to Buffalo Bull, “ While I walk on a journey, I am in a great hurry. Speak rapidly. Why are you walking?”

“ Yes, war chief, it is so. As they have told of you while you have been walking, I thought that I would walk there with you, and I have sought you,” said Buffalo Bull.

“ Do so,” said Big Turtle. “ I wish to see your movements.”

Buffalo Bull rolled himself back and forth. He arose suddenly. He thrust repeatedly at the ground with his horns. He pierced the ground and threw pieces away suddenly. He stood with his tail in the air and its tip bent downward. An ash tree stood there. He rushed on it. Pushing against it, he sent it flying through the air to a great distance.

“ O war chief, I think I will do that, if they speak of vexing me,” he said.

“ Look at the persons with whom I am traveling. There are none who are faint-hearted in the least

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degree. You are not at all like them. You have disappointed me. Come, begone," said Big Turtle.

Again Big Turtle sang the song. "Big Turtle is coming back from touching the foe, it is said, you say. He is coming back from touching," said he.

Again they departed. "Warriors, pass on!" said he.

There before them lay a stream, which was not small. They crossed it. Firebrand was ahead, walking with a great effort. At length, because he was weary, he plunged into the water and was extinguished.

"O war chief, I am not going beyond here with you," he said.

"Remain here for a while," said Big Turtle.

Having reached the other side, they departed. At length a Puma came.

"Warriors, wait for him. I suspect what he will say. Stand in a row," said he. "Speak quickly," he said, addressing Puma.

"Yes, O war chief," said Puma. "It was told of you regularly, saying you walked on a journey. And there I wish to walk, so I have sought you."

"Yes?" said Big Turtle. "Let me see your ways."

Puma made his hair bristle up all over his body. He bent his tail backward and upward. He went leaping to the bottom of a small hill. Having caught by the

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throat a fawn, about two years old, he came back, making it cry out as he held it in his teeth.

“I think I will do that, O war chief, if anything threatens to vex me,” he said.

“Do something else,” said Big Turtle.

“No, O war chief; that is all,” said Puma.

“You have disappointed me,” said Big Turtle. “Look at these persons with whom I am. Where is one who is imperfect? You are very inferior. Come, depart. You have disappointed me.”

They departed. At length when they reached the foot of a hill, Black Bear came.

“O war chief, again one has come,” said the warriors.

“I suspect what he will say, warriors. Wait for him. Stand in a row,” said Big Turtle. “Ho,” he said, addressing Black Bear. “Come, speak quickly. What is your business? When I walk on a journey, I am in a great hurry,” said Big Turtle.

“Yes, O warrior, it is so. It was told of you regularly that you walked on a journey. And as I desired to walk there, I have sought you diligently,” said Black Bear.

“Ho! Do something,” said Big Turtle. “You may have thought how you would do it. I wish to see your ways.”



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Black Bear pierced the ground with his claws, and threw lumps of earth to a great distance. And there stood an oak tree which had been blackened by fire. He attacked it. Having hugged it, he threw it with force to a great distance.

“O war chief, if anything vexes me, I think I will do that,” said Black Bear.

Big Turtle said, “Ho! warrior, you have disappointed me. These persons with whom I am — look at them. There is none who is faint-hearted in the least degree. You have disappointed me. Come, depart. Thus do I regularly send off the inferior ones.”

They went into a dense undergrowth. At length Buffalo Bladder was torn open, making the sound, “*Qu’e.*” “Alas! I am not going beyond with you,” said he.

“Ho, warrior. I will come back very soon. Remain here for a while,” said Big Turtle.

Again they departed. As they went, they reached a bad path. Very high logs were lying across it. Red-breasted Turtle failed to step over them.

“Ho, O war chief,” he said. “I am not going beyond here with you.”

“Ho, warrior. I will come again very soon. Remain here for a while,” said Big Turtle.

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Again they departed. As they went, behold, a Big Wolf came.

“O war chief, again one has come,” said they.

“I suspect what he will say, warriors. Wait for him. Stand in a row,” said Big Turtle.

“Ho,” he said, addressing Wolf, “Come, speak quickly, whatever may be your business. When I walk on a journey, I am in a very great hurry.”

“Yes, O war chief. It is so. It was told of you regularly, saying that you walked on a journey; and as I desired to walk there, I have sought you,” said Wolf.

“Ho! Show me what you can do,” said Big Turtle. “You may have been thinking about it. I wish to see your ways.”

Wolf decorated himself. He reddened his nose; he reddened all his feet. He tied eagle feathers to his back.

“Well, do so. Do so. I wish to see your ways,” said Big Turtle.

Wolf turned himself round and round. He went to the attack by the wood on a small creek. He killed a deer. He brought it back, holding it with his teeth.

“O war chief, I think I will do that, if anything vexes me,” said Wolf.

“You have disappointed me,” said Big Turtle. “See these people with whom I travel. There is none who is

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faint-hearted in the least degree. Come, depart. Thus do I regularly send off the inferior ones.

“Warrior Gray Squirrel, go as a scout,” said Big Turtle. Gray Squirrel went as a scout. At length he was coming back, blowing a horn.

“Ho, war chief, he is coming back to you,” they said. Big Turtle went there. “Ho, warrior. Act very honestly. Tell me just how it is,” said Big Turtle.

“Yes, O war chief, it is just so. I have been there without their finding me out at all,” said he.

“Let us sit at the very boundary of their camp,” said Big Turtle. He spoke of going. “Warriors, I will look around to see how things are, and how many persons there may be there,” he said.

He came back. “Warriors, let us go in that direction. This far is a good place for sitting,” he said. So they moved forward. Then he said, “O war chief Corn Crusher, go to the end lodge of the village before us, and sit on the outside.”

Corn Crusher did so. A woman came out of the lodge. When she saw him, she said, “Oh! Heretofore have I desired mush. I have found for myself an excellent corn crusher.” But when she pounded on the corn with it, she hurt her hand. Then she threw it out. “Bad Corn Crusher!” she said.

He came back to Big Turtle, who was near. “He

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whom you call 'Corn Crusher' has come back," he "having killed one right at the lodge."

Big Turtle said, "O war chief Comb, make an attempt. Sit in the door of the lodge where Corn Crusher sat."

Comb did so. He was very handsome. Then a woman came out of the lodge. She found Comb. "Heretofore I have been without a comb. I have found a good comb for myself," she said. Very soon she combed her hair with it. Comb pulled out all the hair on one side by the roots.

She said, "A very bad comb, but I thought it was good." She threw him away at the door. Then he went back. He went back with the hair he had pulled out.

"He whom you call 'Comb,'" he said, "has come back, having snatched all the hair from one at the lodge."

"Good!" said Turtle. "O war chief, when we reach home, we shall cause the women to dance."

Then Big Turtle said, "O war chief Awl, make an attempt. Go sit in the door of the lodge where war chief Comb sat."

Awl was very handsome. He was very good to look at. He sat in the door of the lodge. A woman passing out, found him. "Oh! I have found a good awl for

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myself," she said. "Heretofore I have had no awl. It makes me thankful." She went back to the lodge with him. She spoke of sewing her moccasins with him. "I will sew my moccasins with it," she said. She sewed them. She pierced her fingers with him. She missed in pushing him, sending him with force. There was much blood from her fingers. She threw him away at the door. "The awl is indeed bad. I have indeed hurt myself. I have wounded myself badly." She threw him far out from the door, sending him homeward.

"He whom you have called 'Awl,' O war chief," he reported, returning to Big Turtle. "I stabbed one right at the lodge; I killed her." He returned with his spear very bloody.

"O war chief," said the others to Big Turtle. "Awl is coming back, telling his own name. He has killed one."

Big Turtle said, "Ho! O war chief. You make me thankful. Since it is you, I will blacken my face. The village shall be joyful. Ho! O Pestle, make an attempt. You will lie in the door of the lodge where Awl lay."

Now Pestle was very handsome. Then he arrived there. He lay where he was commanded to lie. A woman went out and found Pestle. "Oh! I have

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found a very good pestle for myself. I had no pestle heretofore," she said.

She took him back to the lodge. She took some corn. She filled the mortar and pounded the corn. She beat it fine. She thrust Pestle beyond, right on her knee. She missed the mark in pushing, sending him with force, and so she struck him on her knee.

"*Oh!* A very bad pestle," she said. She threw him outside, sending him homeward suddenly.

"You have been used to saying 'Pestle.' He is coming, having stabbed one right at the lodge. He has killed one," said Pestle, returning. He reached Big Turtle again. "O war chief, I have killed one."

"You make me thankful," said Big Turtle. "Ho! warrior Gray Squirrel, make an attempt."

"O war chief, how can I do anything?" said Gray Squirrel. Now the lodges were placed among the trees.

"You will pass along the trees above the smoke holes of the lodges. If they find you, they will shoot at you. Do your best. Do your best to evade the blows or arrows. If one goes aside, rush on him," said Big Turtle.

At length a boy found Gray Squirrel. "This moving one is a gray squirrel," he said. They went in a great uproar. They shot at him. They even hit him with sticks. One boy stood aside. Gray Squirrel

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attacked him and bit him. They said, "Wonderful! Heretofore the gray squirrel has been very easy to approach, but we have failed. He has bitten us; we have done nothing to him," they said.

"He whom you used to call 'Gray Squirrel' is coming back, having killed one right among them," he called. He told it to Big Turtle.

"Ho! real warrior, act very honestly," said Big Turtle.

"O war chief, it is just so. I have killed one," said he.

"Ho! warrior, you make me thankful," said Big Turtle.

"Ho! warriors," said Big Turtle again. "I, even I, will make a trial. I shall not come back for some time. Beware lest you go homeward. Beware lest you leave me and go homeward."

He arrived there. Some ashes had been poured out. They were extinguished. At length Big Turtle pushed his way through. He went within. He sat within, with his eyes sticking out, looking around. A woman approached when it was morning. She stood very close to where Big Turtle sat.

"You will tread on my shield," he said. The woman looked around. "From what place does he speak?" she thought; therefore she looked around. Again he

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said to her, "You will tread on my shield. Stand further away." And the woman found him.

"Oh!" she said.

"Stand still. I send you with a message," said Big Turtle. "Go home and say, 'Big Turtle says he has come to war. He says he has come desiring the chief's daughter, whose body has been placed on the bough of a tree.'"

The people came. All the people said, "Break in his skull suddenly." He said, "How is it possible for you to break in my skull suddenly? If you let your weapons slip off suddenly from me each time, you will break your legs with the blows."

They said, "When the water is hot, it will be good to put him in it."

"Fie!" said Big Turtle. "When the water is hot and I scatter it with kicking, many of you will be scalded to death."

"He tells what is probably true," they said.

"And if it be so, it is good to burn him," said the people.

"For shame! If I scatter the fire by kicking, I will cause all the land to blaze. Beware lest many of your children, too, die from the fire," he said.

"He tells what is probably true," they said.

A child begged for water. "O mother, some water,"



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it said. Big Turtle said, "Oh!" He tempted them with reference to water.

"Cause the child to ask for water," said one.

"What do you mean by that?" said others.

"When the child said, 'O mother, some water,' this one, Big Turtle, said 'Oh!'" answered one.

"Wonderful!" they said. "He is fearing the sight of water." They took him to the water, holding him by the tail. Notwithstanding Big Turtle clung to the ground with his forelegs, they held his tail, and reached the water with him. They threw him forcibly right into the water. He walked the water for a while, crying a little, and pretended he did not know how to swim. He said, "*Wi! wi! wi!*"

"Wonderful! Throw him out into the middle of the stream," they said. Again they sent him headlong. He was wandering around. At length he sank. They said, "He is dead," and went homeward. "You should have done that to him at first," said the people.

When the people went homeward, some boys stood there. Big Turtle approached, floating. He came peeping. Some boys stood looking at the place where the deed was done.

Big Turtle said, "When Big Turtle came in the past to war on you, you said that you killed him. Look here at me."

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The boys went homeward to tell it. "You said that you killed Big Turtle, but as this one behind us showed his body, he laughed at us. Big Turtle is he who is alive."

"Ho! We attack him," said the people. They attacked him. They arrived there.

"In what place?" said they.

"In this place," said the boys.

"Where is Otter? Where is Grass Snake? Let those two seek him," said they.

Big Turtle sat under the mud at the bottom of the water. Only the tip of his nose and his eyes were sticking out. Snake and Otter sought him beneath the water. They passed very near to him, and stepped regularly over his head. When Otter was about to pass the second time, Big Turtle bit him in the stomach.

"Ho! elder brother, you give me pain," said Otter. Big Turtle said, "Why do you seek me?"

"I did not seek you. As I desired food, we have met each other," said Otter.

"No, you wished to join those who desire to kill me, so you sought me," said Big Turtle.

"O elder brother! O elder brother! O elder brother! I pray to you. I have not sought you," he said.

"I will by no means let you go from my mouth," said Big Turtle.

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“Ho! elder brother! How long before you will open your mouth and let me go?” said Otter.

“When the Thunder God has come back, I will let you go.”

“Halloo!” shouted Otter to the people. “He will let me go when the Thunder God comes back. Halloo! He bites me between the legs. Halloo!” said he.

“He says that he is bitten,” said the people. “He says that he is bitten between the legs. Hit tent skins for him.”

They made the tent skins resound by hitting them.

“Ho! elder brother, the Thunder God has come back,” said Otter.

“They hit the tent skins,” said the Big Turtle.

The people said, “It is good to fell trees.” They began felling trees here and there. The trees said, “*Qwi! qwi!*” as they fell.

“Ho! elder brother, the Thunder God has come back,” said Otter.

“They are felling trees,” said Big Turtle.

At length the Thunder God roared, very far away.

“Ho! elder brother, he has come back,” said he. Big Turtle let him go. Otter was very thin. He went homeward. He reached home very lean.

“Let the two birds drink the stream dry,” said the people. “Bring the Pelicans here.”

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When they came, the people said, "Drink the stream dry. A person came here to war and we killed him, but he is alive. He laughs heartily at us."

The birds drank the stream dry. There was only a very small quantity left in which Big Turtle sat.

Big Turtle called, "Ho! warrior Gray Squirrel, be coming hither, wherever you may be moving. They have almost killed me."

Gray Squirrel was coming back, crying loud. He was coming back to attack them. He attacked the two birds. He tore open their water pouches by biting. He bit holes in them. At length all the water returned to its former place. At the creek and the lake it was as before; they were filled with water.

"Sew up their pouches for them," said the people. So they sewed up the water pouches of the Pelicans. They finished sewing them.

"Come, drink it dry again. Do your best. Beware lest we fail," said the people. They drank the stream dry again. Again very little of the water was left.

"Ho! warrior Gray Squirrel, wherever you may be moving. They have nearly killed me. Be coming hither again," said Big Turtle. He came back again. He bit and tore the throats in many places. It made their throats very bad. He made them bad to be sewed at all. It was difficult to sew them.

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“Yet we shall fail,” said the people. “Gray Squirrel is abominable! I think Gray Squirrel is the only one with Big Turtle. I think he is the only one siding with them. Therefore we have failed to hurt them,” said the people.

They ceased. When it was night, Big Turtle went back. He reached his comrades again.

“Ho! Warriors, when men get the better of their enemies in a fight, they usually go homeward. I suspect that your sisters are tired of waiting to dance!”

They went homeward. He walked around them, rattling his gourd.

“Warriors, I said that I would do thus, and so it is,” he said. He burnt the grass.

He burnt the grass so that they might think he was coming home after killing the foe. At length they arrived at the village. They tied scalps to a stick. Then those in the village said, “Yonder come those who went to war!” The returning warriors raced around and around as victorious warriors do. People said, “There they are coming home, having killed the people of the enemy.”

An old man shouted: “Corn Crusher says that he killed one. *Halloo!* He says he killed her right at the lodge. *Halloo!* Comb says he killed one right at the lodge. *Halloo!* Awl says he killed one right at

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the lodge. *Halloo!* Gray Squirrel says that he killed three right in the midst of the people. *Halloo!* It is said they held the war chief, Big Turtle, right among them, in a great uproar. *Halloo!* It is said they failed to injure him. *Halloo!*"

Big Turtle walked very proudly, carrying his shield. He went homeward to enter the lodge. He sat there telling them about himself. As people wished to hear it, they continued arriving there.

"Why did they fail, when they were so near you? If you sat very near them, how is it that you are alive?" asked the people.

"I pretended to be afraid of water, so I am alive," he said.

"If so, then those over there have no eyes. How is it that they did not find you when you were alive?"

"I sat in the ashes, therefore I am alive. I have come home, having killed people. Why did you doubt me? As you did not take vengeance on the people who used to kill you, I went to war on them myself. I killed them. How can you doubt me? I will tell no more about myself," said Big Turtle. "I have ceased."

THE END

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PUBLISHED  
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PHYSICS DEPARTMENT









