

**HENRY SCHOOLCRAFT**

**THE MYTH  
OF HIAWATHA  
AND OTHER STORIES  
OF THE NORTH  
AMERICAN INDIANS**

Henry Schoolcraft

# The Myth of Hiawatha and Other Stories of the North American Indians

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# **PREFACE.**

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There is but one consideration of much moment necessary to be premised respecting these legends and myths. It is this: they are versions of oral relations from the lips of the Indians, and are transcripts of the thought and invention of the aboriginal mind. As such, they furnish illustrations of Indian character and opinions on subjects which the ever-cautious and suspicious minds of this people have, heretofore, concealed. They place the man altogether in a new phasis. They reflect him as he is. They show us what he believes, hopes, fears, wishes, expects, worships, lives for, dies for. They are always true to the Indian manners and customs, opinions and theories. They never rise above them; they never sink below them. Placing him in almost every possible position, as a hunter, a warrior, a magician, a pow-wow, a medicine man, a meda, a husband, a father, a friend, a foe, a stranger, a wild singer of songs to monedos or fetishes, a trembler in terror of demons and wood genii, and of ghosts, witches, and sorcerers—now in the enjoyment of plenty in feasts—now pale and weak with abstinence in fasts; now transforming beasts and birds, or plants and trees into men, or men into beasts by necromancy; it is impossible not to perceive what he perpetually thinks, believes, and feels. The very language of the man is employed, and his vocabulary is not enlarged by words and phrases foreign to it. Other sources of information depict his exterior habits and outer garb and deportment; but in these legends and myths, we perceive the interior man, and are made cognizant of the secret workings of his mind, and heart, and soul.

To make these collections, of which the portions now submitted are but a part, the leisure hours of many seasons,

passed in an official capacity in the solitude of the wilderness far away from society, have been employed, with the study of the languages, and with the very best interpreters. They have been carefully translated, written, and rewritten, to obtain their true spirit and meaning, expunging passages, where it was necessary to avoid tediousness of narration, triviality of circumstance, tautologies, gross incongruities, and vulgarities; but adding no incident and drawing no conclusion, which the verbal narration did not imperatively require or sanction. It was impossible to mistake the import of terms and phrases where the means of their analysis were ample. If the style is sometimes found to be bald, and of jejune simplicity, the original is characteristically so. Few adjectives are employed, because there are few in the original.<sup>1</sup> The Indian effects his purposes, almost entirely, by changes of the verb and demonstrative pronoun, or by adjective inflections of the substantive. Good and bad, high and low, black and white, are in all cases employed in a transitive sense, and with strict relation to the objects characterized. The Indian compound terms are so descriptive, so graphic, so local, so characterizing, yet so flexible and transpositive, that the legends derive no little of their characteristic features as well as melody of utterance from these traits. Sometimes these terms cannot be literally translated, and they cannot, in these cases, be left out without damaging the stories.

With regard to the thought-work of the legends, those who have deemed the Indians exclusively a cruel and blood-thirsty race, always seeking revenge, always invoking evil powers, will not be disappointed that giants, enchanters, demons, and dark supernatural agencies, should form so large a part of the dramatis personæ. Surprise has been expressed,<sup>2</sup> that the kindlier affections come in for notice at all, and particularly at the occurrence of such refined and terse allegories as the origin of Indian Corn, Winter and

Spring, and the poetic conception of the Celestial Sisters, &c. I can only add, that my own surprise was as great when these traits were first revealed. And the trait may be quoted to show how deeply the tribes have wandered away from the type of the human race in which love and affection absorb the heart;<sup>3</sup> and how little, indeed, we know of their mental character.

These legends have been out of print several years. They are now reproduced, with additional legendary lore of this description from the portfolios of the author, in a revised, and, it is believed, a more terse, condensed, and acceptable form, both in a literary and business garb.<sup>4</sup>

HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT.

Washington, D.C., *April 28, 1856.*

# **HIAWATHA; OR, MANABOZHO.**

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The myth of the Indians of a remarkable personage, who is called Manabozho by the Algonquins, and Hiawatha by the Iroquois, who was the instructor of the tribes in arts and knowledge, was first related to me in 1822, by the Chippewas of Lake Superior. He is regarded as the messenger of the Great Spirit, sent down to them in the character of a wise man, and a prophet. But he comes clothed with all the attributes of humanity, as well as the power of performing miraculous deeds. He adapts himself perfectly to their manners, and customs, and ideas. He is brought up from a child among them. He is made to learn their mode of life. He takes a wife, builds a lodge, hunts and fishes like the rest of them, sings his war songs and medicine songs, goes to war, has his triumphs, has his friends and foes, suffers, wants, hungers, is in dread or joy—and, in fine, undergoes all the vicissitudes of his fellows. His miraculous gifts and powers are always adapted to his situation. When he is swallowed by a great fish, with his canoe, he escapes by the exertion of these powers, but always, as much as possible, in accordance with Indian maxims and means. He is provided with a magic canoe, which goes where it is bid; yet, in his fight with the great wampum prince, he is counselled by a woodpecker to know where the vulnerable point of his antagonist lies. He rids the earth of monsters and giants, and clears away windfalls, and obstructions to the navigation of streams. But he does not do these feats by miracles; he employs strong men to help him. When he means to destroy the great serpents, he changes himself into an old tree, and stands on the beach till they come out of the water to bask in the sun. Whatever man could do, in strength or wisdom, he could do. But he



never does things above the comprehension or belief of his people; and whatever else he is, he is always true to the character of an Indian.

This myth is one of the most general in the Indian country. It is the prime legend of their mythology. He is talked of in every winter lodge—for the winter season is the only time devoted to such narrations. The moment the leaves come out, stories cease in the lodge. The revival of spring in the botanical world opens, as it were, so many eyes and ears to listen to the tales of men; and the Indian is far too shrewd a man, and too firm a believer in the system of invisible spirits by which he is surrounded, to commit himself by saying a word which they, with their acute senses on the opening of the spring, can be offended at.

He leaps over extensive regions of country like an ignis fatuus. He appears suddenly like an avatar, or saunters over weary wastes a poor and starving hunter. His voice is at one moment deep and sonorous as a thunder-clap, and at another clothed with the softness of feminine supplication. Scarcely any two persons agree in all the minor circumstances of the story, and scarcely any omit the leading traits. The several tribes who speak dialects of the mother language from which the narration is taken, differ, in like manner, from each other in the particulars of his exploits. His birth and parentage are mysterious. Story says his grandmother was the daughter of the moon. Having been married but a short time, her rival attracted her to a grape-vine swing on the banks of a lake, and by one bold exertion pitched her into its centre, from which she fell through to the earth. Having a daughter, the fruit of her lunar marriage, she was very careful in instructing her, from early infancy, to beware of the west wind, and never, in stooping, to expose herself to its influence. In some unguarded moment this precaution was neglected. In an instant, the gale accomplished its Tarquinic purpose.

Very little is told of his early boyhood. We take him up in the following legend at a period of advanced youth, when we find him living with his grandmother. And at this time he possessed, although he had not yet *exercised*, all the anomalous and contradictory powers of body and mind, of manship and divinity, which he afterward evinced. The timidity and rawness of the boy quickly gave way in the courageous developments of the man. He soon evinced the sagacity, cunning, perseverance, and heroic courage which constitute the admiration of the Indians. And he relied largely upon these in the gratification of an ambitious, vainglorious, and mischief-loving disposition. In wisdom and energy he was superior to any one who had ever lived before. Yet he was simple when circumstances required it, and was ever the object of tricks and ridicule in others. He could transform himself into any animal he pleased, being man or manito, as circumstances rendered necessary. He often conversed with animals, fowls, reptiles, and fishes. He deemed himself related to them, and invariably addressed them by the term "my brother;" and one of his greatest resources, when hard pressed, was to change himself into their shapes.

Manitoes constitute the great power and absorbing topic of Indian lore. Their agency is at once the groundwork of their mythology and demonology. They supply the machinery of their poetic inventions, and the belief in their multitudinous existence exerts a powerful influence upon the lives and character of individuals. As their manitoes are of all imaginary kinds, grades, and powers, benign and malicious, it seems a grand conception among the Indians to create a personage strong enough in his necromantic and spiritual powers to baffle the most malicious, beat the stoutest, and overreach the most cunning. In carrying out this conception in the following myth, they have, however, rather exhibited an incarnation of the power of Evil than of the genius of Benevolence.

Manabozho was living with his grandmother near the edge of a wide prairie. On this prairie he first saw animals and birds of every kind. He there also saw exhibitions of divine power in the sweeping tempests, in the thunder and lightning, and the various shades of light and darkness, which form a never-ending scene of observation. Every new sight he beheld in the heavens was a subject of remark; every new animal or bird an object of deep interest; and every sound uttered by the animal creation a new lesson, which he was expected to learn. He often trembled at what he heard and saw. To this scene his grandmother sent him at an early age to watch. The first sound he heard was that of the owl, at which he was greatly terrified, and, quickly descending the tree he had climbed, he ran with alarm to the lodge. "Noko! Noko!"<sup>6</sup> he cried, "I have heard a monedo." She laughed at his fears, and asked him what kind of a noise it made. He answered, "It makes a noise like this: Ko-ko-ko-ho." She told him that he was young and foolish; that what he had heard was only a bird, deriving its name from the noise it made.

He went back and continued his watch. While there, he thought to himself, "It is singular that I am so simple, and my grandmother so wise, and that I have neither father nor mother. I have never heard a word about them. I must ask and find out." He went home and sat down silent and dejected. At length his grandmother asked him, "Manabozho, what is the matter with you?" He answered, "I wish you would tell me whether I have any parents living, and who my relatives are." Knowing that he was of a wicked and revengeful disposition, she dreaded telling him the story of his parentage, but he insisted on her compliance. "Yes," she said, "you have a father and three brothers living. Your mother is dead. She was taken without the consent of her parents by your father the West. Your brothers are the North, East, and South, and, being older than yourself, your

father has given them great power with the winds, according to their names. You are the youngest of his children. I have nourished you from your infancy, for your mother died in giving you birth, owing to the ill treatment of your father. I have no relations besides you this side of the planet in which I was born, and from which I was precipitated by female jealousy. Your mother was my only child, and you are my only hope."

He appeared to be rejoiced to hear that his father was living, for he had already thought in his heart to try and kill him. He told his grandmother he should set out in the morning to visit him. She said it was a long distance to the place where Ningabiun<sup>7</sup> lived. But that had no effect to stop him, for he had now attained manhood, possessed a giant's height, and was endowed by nature with a giant's strength and power. He set out and soon reached the place, for every step he took covered a large surface of ground. The meeting took place on a high mountain in the West. His father was very happy to see him. He also appeared pleased. They spent some days in talking with each other. One evening Manabozho asked his father what he was most afraid of on earth. He replied, "Nothing." "But is there not something you dread here? tell me." At last his father said, yielding, "Yes, there is a black stone found in such a place. It is the only thing earthly I am afraid of; for if it should hit me or any part of my body, it would injure me very much." He said this as a secret, and in return asked his son the same question. Knowing each other's power, although the son's was limited, the father feared him on account of his great strength. Manabozho answered, "Nothing!" intending to avoid the question, or to refer to some harmless object as the one of which he was afraid. He was asked again and again, and answered, "Nothing!" But the West said, "There must be something you are afraid of." "Well! I will tell you," says Manabozho, "what it is." But, before he would pronounce the

word, he affected great dread. "/e-ee—/e-ee—it is—it is," said he, "yeo! yeo!"<sup>8</sup> I cannot name it; I am seized with a dread." The West told him to banish his fears. He commenced again, in a strain of mock sensitiveness repeating the same words; at last he cried out, "It is the root of the *apukwa*."<sup>9</sup> He appeared to be exhausted by the effort of pronouncing the word, in all this skilfully acting a studied part.

Some time after he observed, "I will get some of the black rock." The West said, "Far be it from you; do not do so, my son." He still persisted. "Well," said the father, "I will also get the *apukwa* root." Manabozho immediately cried out, "*Kago! Kago!*"<sup>10</sup> affecting, as before, to be in great dread of it, but really wishing, by this course, to urge on the West to procure it, that he might draw him into combat. He went out and got a large piece of the black rock, and brought it home. The West also took care to bring the dreaded root.

In the course of conversation he asked his father whether he had been the cause of his mother's death. The answer was "Yes!" He then took up the rock and struck him. Blow led to blow, and here commenced an obstinate and furious combat, which continued several days. Fragments of the rock, broken off under Manabozho's blows, can be seen in various places to this day."<sup>11</sup> The root did not prove as mortal a weapon as his well-acted fears had led his father to expect, although he suffered severely from the blows. This battle commenced on the mountains. The West was forced to give ground. Manabozho drove him across rivers, and over mountains and lakes, and at last he came to the brink of this world.

"Hold!" cried he, "my son; you know my power, and that it is impossible to kill me. Desist, and I will also portion you out with as much power as your brothers. The four quarters of the globe are already occupied; but you can go and do a great deal of good to the people of this earth, which is

infested with large serpents, beasts, and monsters,<sup>12</sup> who make great havoc among the inhabitants. Go and do good. You have the power now to do so, and your fame with the beings of this earth will last forever. When you have finished your work, I will have a place provided for you. You will then go and sit with your brother Kabibboonocca in the north."

Manabozho was pacified. He returned to his lodge, where he was confined by the wounds he had received. But from his grandmother's skill in medicines he was soon recovered. She told him that his grandfather, who had come to the earth in search of her, had been killed by Megissogwon,<sup>13</sup> who lived on the opposite side of the great lake. "When he was alive," she continued, "I was never without oil to put on my head, but now my hair is fast falling off for the want of it." "Well!" said he, "Noko, get cedar bark and make me a line, whilst I make a canoe." When all was ready, he went out to the middle of the lake to fish. He put his line down, saying, "Me-she-nah-ma-gwai (the name of the kingfish), take hold of my bait." He kept repeating this for some time. At last the king of the fishes said, "Manabozho troubles me. Here, Trout, take hold of his line." The trout did so. He then commenced drawing up his line, which was very heavy, so that his canoe stood nearly perpendicular; but he kept crying out, "Wha-ee-he! wha-ee-he!" till he could see the trout. As soon as he saw him, he spoke to him. "Why did you take hold of my hook? Esa! esa!<sup>14</sup> you ugly fish." The trout, being thus rebuked, let go.

Manabozho put his line again in the water, saying, "King of fishes, take hold of my line." But the king of the fishes told a monstrous sunfish to take hold of it; for Manabozho was tiring him with his incessant calls. He again drew up his line with difficulty, saying as before, "Wha-ee-he! wha-ee-he!" while his canoe was turning in swift circles. When he saw the sunfish, he cried, "Esa! esa! you odious fish! why did you dirty my hook by taking it in your mouth? Let go, I

say, let go." The sunfish did so, and told the king of fishes what Manabozho said. Just at that moment the bait came near the king, and hearing Manabozho continually crying out, "Me-she nah-ma-gwai, take hold of my hook," at last he did so, and allowed himself to be drawn up to the surface, which he had no sooner reached than, at one mouthful, he took Manabozho and his canoe down. When he came to himself, he found that he was in the fish's belly, and also his canoe. He now turned his thoughts to the way of making his escape. Looking in his canoe, he saw his war-club, with which he immediately struck the heart of the fish. He then felt a sudden motion, as if he were moving with great velocity. The fish observed to the others, "I am sick at stomach for having swallowed this dirty fellow Manabozho." Just at this moment he received another severe blow on the heart. Manabozho thought, "If I am thrown up in the middle of the lake, I shall be drowned; so I must prevent it." He drew his canoe and placed it across the fish's throat, and just as he had finished the fish commenced vomiting, but to no effect. In this he was aided by a squirrel, who had accompanied him unperceived until that moment. This animal had taken an active part in helping him to place his canoe across the fish's throat. For this act he named him, saying, "For the future, boys shall always call you Ajidaumo."<sup>15</sup>

He then renewed his attack upon the fish's heart, and succeeded, by repeated blows, in killing him, which he first knew by the loss of motion, and by the sound of the beating of the body against the shore. He waited a day longer to see what would happen. He heard birds scratching on the body, and all at once the rays of light broke in. He could see the heads of gulls, who were looking in by the opening they had made. "Oh!" cried Manabozho, "my younger brothers, make the opening larger, so that I can get out." They told each other that their brother Manabozho was inside of the fish.

They immediately set about enlarging the orifice, and in a short time liberated him. After he got out he said to the gulls, "For the future you shall be called Kayoshk<sup>16</sup> for your kindness to me."

The spot where the fish happened to be driven ashore was near his lodge. He went up and told his grandmother to go and prepare as much oil as she wanted. All besides, he informed her, he should keep for himself.

Some time after this, he commenced making preparations for a war excursion against the Pearl Feather, the Manito who lived on the opposite side of the great lake, who had killed his grandfather. The abode of this spirit was defended, first, by fiery serpents, who hissed fire so that no one could pass them; and, in the second place, by a large mass of gummy matter lying on the water, so soft and adhesive, that whoever attempted to pass, or whatever came in contact with it, was sure to stick there.

He continued making bows and arrows without number, but he had no heads for his arrows. At last Noko told him that an old man who lived at some distance could make them. He sent her to get some. She soon returned with her conaus or wrapper full.<sup>17</sup> Still he told her he had not enough, and sent her again. She returned with as much more. He thought to himself, "I must find out the way of making these heads." Cunning and curiosity prompted him to make the discovery. But he deemed it necessary to deceive his grandmother in so doing. "Noko," said he, "while I take my drum and rattle, and sing my war songs, go and try to get me some *larger* heads for my arrows, for those you brought me are all of the same size. Go and see whether the old man cannot make some a little larger." He followed her as she went, keeping at a distance, and saw the old artificer at work, and so discovered his process. He also beheld the old man's daughter, and perceived that she was very beautiful. He felt his breast beat with a new



emotion, but said nothing. He took care to get home before his grandmother, and commenced singing as if he had never left his lodge. When the old woman came near, she heard his drum and rattle, without any suspicion that he had followed her. She delivered him the arrow-heads.

One evening the old woman said, "My son, you ought to *fast* before you go to war, as your brothers frequently do, to find out whether you will be successful or not."<sup>18</sup> He said he had no objection, and immediately commenced a fast for several days. He would retire every day from the lodge so far as to be out of reach of his grandmother's voice. It seems she had indicated this spot, and was very anxious he should fast there, and not at another place. She had a secret motive, which she carefully hid from him. Deception always begets suspicion. After a while he thought to himself, "I must find out why my grandmother is so anxious for me to fast at this spot." Next evening he went but a short distance. She cried out, "A little farther off;" but he came nearer to the lodge, and cried out in a low, counterfeited voice, to make it appear that he was distant. She then replied, "That is far enough." He had got so near that he could see all that passed in the lodge. He had not been long in his place of concealment, when a paramour in the shape of a bear entered the lodge. He had very long hair. They commenced talking about him, and appeared to be improperly familiar. At that time people lived to a very great age, and he perceived, from the marked attentions of this visitor, that he did not think a grandmother too old to be pleased with such attentions. He listened to their conversation some time. At last he determined to play the visitor a trick. He took some fire, and when the bear had turned his back, touched his long hair. When the animal felt the flame, he jumped out, but the open air only made it burn the fiercer, and he was seen running off in a full blaze.

Manabozho ran to his customary place of fasting, and assuming a tone of simplicity, began to cry out, "Noko! Noko! is it time for me to come home?" "Yes," she cried. When he came in she told him what had taken place, at which he appeared to be very much surprised.

After having finished his term of fasting and sung his war-song—from which the Indians of the present day derive the custom—he embarked in his canoe, fully prepared for war. In addition to the usual implements, he had a plentiful supply of oil. He travelled rapidly night and day, for he had only to will or speak, and the canoe went. At length he arrived in sight of the fiery serpents. He stopped to view them. He saw they were some distance apart, and that the flame only which issued from them reached across the pass. He commenced talking as a friend to them; but they answered, "We know you, Manabozho, you cannot pass." He then thought of some expedient to deceive them, and hit upon this. He pushed his canoe as near as possible. All at once he cried out, with a loud and terrified voice, "What is that behind you?" The serpents instantly turned their heads, when, at a single word, he passed them. "Well!" said he, placidly, after he had got by, "how do you like my exploit?" He then took up his bow and arrows, and with deliberate aim shot them, which was easily done, for the serpents were stationary, and could not move beyond a certain spot. They were of enormous length and of a bright color.

Having overcome the sentinel serpents, he went on in his magic canoe till he came to a soft gummy portion of the lake, called Pigiwagumee or Pitchwater. He took the oil and rubbed it on his canoe, and then pushed into it. The oil softened the surface and enabled him to slip through it with ease, although it required frequent rubbing, and a constant reapplication of the oil. Just as his oil failed, he extricated himself from this impediment, and was the first person who ever succeeded in overcoming it.

He now came in view of land, on which he debarked in safety, and could see the lodge of the Shining Manito, situated on a hill. He commenced preparing for the fight, putting his arrows and clubs in order, and just at the dawn of day began his attack, yelling and shouting, and crying with triple voices, "Surround him! surround him! run up! run up!" making it appear that he had many followers. He advanced crying out, "It was you that killed my grandfather," and with this shot his arrows. The combat continued all day. Manabozho's arrows had no effect, for his antagonist was clothed with pure wampum. He was now reduced to three arrows, and it was only by extraordinary agility that he could escape the blows which the Manito kept making at him. At that moment a large woodpecker (the ma-ma) flew past, and lit on a tree. "Manabozho," he cried, "your adversary has a vulnerable point; shoot at the lock of hair on the crown of his head." He shot his first arrow so as only to draw blood from that part. The Manito made one or two unsteady steps, but recovered himself. He began to parley, but, in the act, received a second arrow, which brought him to his knees. But he again recovered. In so doing, however, he exposed his head, and gave his adversary a chance to fire his third arrow, which penetrated deep, and brought him a lifeless corpse to the ground. Manabozho uttered his saw-saw-quan, and taking his scalp as a trophy, he called the woodpecker to come and receive a reward for his information. He took the blood of the Manito and rubbed it on the woodpecker's<sup>19</sup> head, the feathers of which are red to this day.

After this victory he returned home, singing songs of triumph and beating his drum. When his grandmother heard him, she came to the shore and welcomed him with songs and dancing. Glory fired his mind. He displayed the trophies he had brought in the most conspicuous manner, and felt an unconquerable desire for other adventures. He felt himself

urged by the consciousness of his power to new trials of bravery, skill, and necromantic prowess. He had destroyed the Manito of Wealth, and killed his guardian serpents, and eluded all his charms. He did not long remain inactive. His next adventure was upon the water, and proved him the prince of fishermen. He captured a fish of such monstrous size, that the fat and oil he obtained from it formed a small lake. He therefore invited all the animals and fowls to a banquet, and he made the order in which they partook of this repast the measure of their fatness. As fast as they arrived, he told them to plunge in. The bear came first, and was followed by the deer, opossum, and such other animals as are noted for their peculiar fatness at certain seasons. The moose and bison came tardily. The partridge looked on till the reservoir was nearly exhausted. The hare and marten came last, and these animals have, consequently, no fat. When this ceremony was over, he told the assembled animals and birds to dance, taking up his drum and crying, "New songs from the south, come, brothers, dance." He directed them to pass in a circle around him, and to shut their eyes. They did so. When he saw a fat fowl pass by him, he adroitly wrung off its head, at the same time beating his drum and singing with greater vehemence, to drown the noise of the fluttering, and crying out, in a tone of admiration, "That's the way, my brothers, *that's* the way." At last a small duck (the diver), thinking there was something wrong, opened one eye and saw what he was doing. Giving a spring, and crying "Ha-ha-a! Manabozho is killing us," he made for the water. Manabozho followed him, and, just as the duck was getting into the water, gave him a kick, which is the cause of his back being flattened and his legs being straightened out backward, so that when he gets on land he cannot walk, and his tail feathers are few. Meantime the other birds flew off, and the animals ran into the woods.

After this Manabozho set out to travel. He wished to outdo all others, and to see new countries. But after walking

over America and encountering many adventures, he became satisfied as well as fatigued. He had heard of great feats in hunting, and felt a desire to try his power in that way. One evening, as he was walking along the shores of a great lake, weary and hungry, he encountered a great magician in the form of an old wolf, with six young ones, coming towards him. The wolf, as soon as he saw him, told his whelps to keep out of the way of Manabozho, "for I know," continued he, "that it is him that we see yonder." The young wolves were in the act of running off, when Manabozho cried out, "My grandchildren, where are you going? Stop, and I will go with you." He appeared rejoiced to see the old wolf, and asked him whither he was journeying. Being told that they were looking out for a place, where they could find most game, to pass the winter, he said he should like to go with them, and addressed the old wolf in the following words: "Brother, I have a passion for the chase; are you willing to change me into a wolf?" He was answered favorably, and his transformation immediately effected.

Manabozho was fond of novelty. He found himself a wolf corresponding in size with the others, but he was not quite satisfied with the change, crying out, "Oh, make me a little larger." They did so. "A little larger still," he exclaimed. They said, "Let us humor him," and granted his request. "Well," said he, "*that* will do." He looked at his tail. "Oh!" cried he, "do make my tail a little longer and more bushy." They did so. They then all started off in company, dashing up a ravine. After getting into the woods some distance, they fell in with the tracks of moose. The young ones went after them, Manabozho and the old wolf following at their leisure. "Well," said the wolf, "who do you think is the fastest of the boys? can you tell by the jumps they take?" "Why," he replied, "that one that takes such long jumps, he is the fastest, to be sure." "Ha! ha! you are mistaken," said the old wolf. "He makes a good start, but he will be the first to tire out; this one, who appears to be behind, will be the one to

kill the game." They then came to the place where the boys had started in chase. One had dropped his small bundle. "Take that, Manabozho," said the old wolf. "Esa," he replied, "what will I do with a dirty dogskin?" The wolf took it up; it was a beautiful robe. "Oh, I will carry it now," said Manabozho. "Oh no," replied the wolf, who at the moment exerted his magic power; "it is a robe of pearls!" And from this moment he omitted no occasion to display his superiority, both in the hunter's and magician's art, above his conceited companion. Coming to a place where the moose had lain down, they saw that the young wolves had made a fresh start after their prey. "Why," said the wolf, "this moose is poor. I know by the tracks, for I can always tell whether they are fat or not." They next came to a place where one of the wolves had bit at the moose, and had broken one of his teeth on a tree. "Manabozho," said the wolf, "one of your grandchildren has shot at the game. Take his arrow; there it is." "No," he replied; "what will I do with a dirty dog's tooth!" The old man took it up, and behold! it was a beautiful silver arrow. When they overtook the youngsters, they had killed a very fat moose. Manabozho was very hungry; but, alas! such is the power of enchantment, he saw nothing but the bones picked quite clean. He thought to himself, "Just as I expected, dirty, greedy fellows!" However, he sat down without saying a word. At length the old wolf spoke to one of the young ones, saying, "Give some meat to your grandfather." One of them obeyed, and, coming near to Manabozho, opened his mouth as if he was about to vomit. He jumped up, saying, "You filthy dog, you have eaten so much that your stomach refuses to hold it. Get you gone into some other place." The old wolf, hearing the abuse, went a little to one side to see, and behold, a heap of fresh ruddy meat, with the fat, lying all ready prepared. He was followed by Manabozho, who, having the enchantment instantly removed, put on a smiling face. "Amazement!" said he; "how fine the meat is." "Yes,"

replied the wolf; "it is always so with us; we know our work, and always get the best. It is not a long tail that makes a hunter." Manabozho bit his lip.

They then commenced fixing their winter quarters, while the youngsters went out in search of game, and soon brought in a large supply. One day, during the absence of the young wolves, the old one amused himself in cracking the large bones of a moose. "Manabozho," said he, "cover your head with the robe, and do not look at me while I am at these bones, for a piece may fly in your eye." He did as he was told; but, looking through a rent that was in the robe, he saw what the other was about. Just at that moment a piece flew off and hit him on the eye. He cried out, "Tyau, why do you strike me, you old dog?" The wolf said, "You must have been looking at me." But deception commonly leads to falsehood. "No, no," he said, "why should I want to look at you?" "Manabozho," said the wolf, "you *must* have been looking, or you would not have got hurt." "No, no," he replied again, "I was not. I will repay the saucy wolf this," thought he to himself. So, next day, taking up a bone to obtain the marrow, he said to the wolf, "Cover your head and don't look at me, for I fear a piece may fly in your eye." The wolf did so. He then took the leg-bone of the moose, and looking first to see if the wolf was well covered, he hit him a blow with all his might. The wolf jumped up, cried out, and fell prostrate from the effects of the blow. "Why," said he, "do you strike me so?" "Strike you!" he replied; "no, you must have been looking at me." "No," answered the wolf, "I say I have not." But he persisted in the assertion, and the poor magician had to give up.

Manabozho was an expert hunter when he earnestly undertook it. He went out one day and killed a fat moose. He was very hungry, and sat down to eat. But immediately he fell into great doubts as to the proper point to begin. "Well," said he, "I do not know where to commence. At the head? No! People will laugh, and say 'he ate him

backward." He went to the side. "No!" said he, "they will say I ate sideways." He then went to the hind-quarter. "No!" said he, "they will say I ate him forward. I will commence *here*, say what they will." He took a delicate piece from the rump, and was just ready to put it in his mouth, when a tree close by made a creaking noise, caused by the rubbing of one large branch against another. This annoyed him. "Why!" he exclaimed, "I cannot eat when I hear such a noise. Stop! stop!" said he to the tree. He was putting the morsel again to his mouth, when the noise was repeated. He put it down, exclaiming, "I *cannot eat* with such a noise;" and immediately left the meat, although very hungry, to go and put a stop to the noise. He climbed the tree and was pulling at the limb, when his arm was caught between the two branches so that he could not extricate himself. While thus held fast, he saw a pack of wolves coming in the direction towards his meat. "Go that way! go that way!" he cried out; "what would you come to get here?" The wolves talked among themselves and said, "Manabozho must have something there, or he would not tell us to go another way." "I begin to know him," said an old wolf, "and all his tricks. Let us go forward and see." They came on, and finding the moose, soon made way with the whole carcass. Manabozho looked on wishfully to see them eat till they were fully satisfied, and they left him nothing but the bare bones. The next heavy blast of wind opened the branches and liberated him. He went home, thinking to himself, "See the effect of meddling with frivolous things when I had certain good in my possession."

Next day the old wolf addressed him thus: "My brother, I am going to separate from you, but I will leave behind me one of the young wolves to be your hunter." He then departed. In the act Manabozho was disenchanted, and again resumed his mortal shape. He was sorrowful and dejected, but soon resumed his wonted air of cheerfulness. The young wolf who was left with him was a good hunter,



and never failed to keep the lodge well supplied with meat. One day he addressed him as follows: "My grandson, I had a dream last night, and it does not portend good. It is of the large lake which lies in *that* direction (pointing). You must be careful never to cross it, even if the ice should appear good. If you should come to it at night weary or hungry, you must make the circuit of it." Spring commenced, and the snow was melting fast before the rays of the sun, when one evening the wolf came to this lake, weary with the day's chase. He disliked to go so far to make the circuit of it. "Hwooh!" he exclaimed, "there can be no great harm in trying the ice, as it appears to be sound. Nesho<sup>20</sup> is over cautious on this point." But he had not got half way across when the ice gave way and he fell in, and was immediately seized by the serpents, who knew it was Manabozho's grandson, and were thirsting for revenge upon him. Manabozho sat pensively in his lodge.

Night came on, but no son returned. The second and third night passed, but he did not appear. He became very desolate and sorrowful. "Ah!" said he, "he must have disobeyed me, and has lost his life in that lake I told him of. Well!" said he at last, "I must mourn for him." So he took coal and blackened his face. But he was much perplexed as to the right mode. "I wonder," said he, "how I must do it? I will cry 'Oh! my grandson! Oh! my grandson!'" He burst out laughing. "No! no! that won't do. I will try so—'Oh! my heart! Oh! my heart! ha! ha! ha!'. That won't do either. I will cry, 'Oh my grandson *obiquadj!*'"<sup>21</sup> This satisfied him, and he remained in his lodge and fasted, till his days of mourning were over. "Now," said he, "I will go in search of him." He set out and travelled some time. At last he came to a great lake. He then raised the same cries of lamentation for his grandson which had pleased him. He sat down near a small brook that emptied itself into the lake, and repeated his cries. Soon a bird called *Ke-ske-mun-i-see*<sup>22</sup> came near

to him. The bird inquired, "What are you doing here?" "Nothing," he replied; "but can you tell me whether any one lives in this lake, and what brings you here yourself?" "Yes!" responded the bird; "the Prince of Serpents lives here, and I am watching to see whether the obiquadj of Manabozho's grandson will not drift ashore, for he was killed by the serpents last spring. But are you not Manabozho himself?" "No," he answered, with his usual deceit; "how do you think *he* could get to this place? But tell me, do the serpents ever appear? when? and where? Tell me all about their habits." "Do you see that beautiful white sandy beach?" said the bird. "Yes!" he answered. "It is there," continued the Kingfisher, "that they bask in the sun. Before they come out, the lake will appear perfectly calm; not even a ripple will appear. After midday (na-wi-qua) you will see them."

"Thank you," he replied; "I am Manabozho himself. I have come in search of the body of my son, and to seek my revenge. Come near me that I may put a medal round your neck as a reward for your information." The bird unsuspectingly came near, and received a white medal, which can be seen to this day.<sup>23</sup> While bestowing the medal, he attempted slyly to wring the bird's head off, but it escaped him, with only a disturbance of the crown feathers of its head, which are rumped backward. He had found out all he wanted to know, and then desired to conceal the knowledge of his purposes by killing his informant.

He went to the sandy beach indicated, and transformed himself into an oak stump. He had not been there long before he saw the lake perfectly calm. Soon hundreds of monstrous serpents came crawling on the beach. One of the number was beautifully white. He was the prince. The others were red and yellow. The prince spoke to those about him as follows: "I never saw that black stump standing there before. It may be Manabozho. There is no knowing but he may be somewhere about here. He has the power of an evil

genius, and we should be on our guard against his wiles." One of the large serpents immediately went and twisted himself around it to the top, and pressed it very hard. The greatest pressure happened to be on his throat; he was just ready to cry out when the serpent let go. Eight of them went in succession and did the like, but always let go at the moment he was ready to cry out. "It cannot be him," they said. "He is too great a weak-heart<sup>24</sup> for that." They then coiled themselves in a circle about their prince. It was a long time before they fell asleep. When they did so, Manabozho took his bow and arrows, and cautiously stepping over the serpents till he came to the prince, drew up his arrow with the full strength of his arm, and shot him in the left side. He then gave a saw-saw-quan,<sup>25</sup> and ran off at full speed. The sound uttered by the snakes on seeing their prince mortally wounded, was horrible. They cried, "Manabozho has killed our prince; go in chase of him." Meantime he ran over hill and valley, to gain the interior of the country, with all his strength and speed, treading a mile at a step. But his pursuers were also spirits, and he could hear that something was approaching him fast. He made for the highest mountain, and climbed the highest tree on its summit, when, dreadful to behold, the whole lower country was seen to be overflowed, and the water was gaining rapidly on the high lands. He saw it reach to the foot of the mountain, and at length it came up to the foot of the tree, but there was no abatement. The flood rose steadily and perceptibly. He soon felt the lower part of his body to be immersed in it. He addressed the tree: "Grandfather, stretch yourself." The tree did so. But the waters still rose. He repeated his request, and was again obeyed. He asked a third time, and was again obeyed; but the tree replied, "It is the last time; I cannot get any higher." The waters continued to rise till they reached up to his chin, at which point they stood, and soon began to abate. Hope revived in his heart. He then cast his

eyes around the illimitable expanse, and spied a loon. "Dive down, my brother," he said to him, "and fetch up some earth, so that I can make a new earth." The bird obeyed, but rose up to the surface a lifeless form. He then saw a muskrat. "Dive!" said he, "and if you succeed, you may hereafter live either on land or water, as you please; or I will give you a chain of beautiful little lakes, surrounded with rushes, to inhabit." He dove down, but he floated up senseless. He took the body and breathed in his nostrils, which restored him to life. "Try again," said he. The muskrat did so. He came up senseless the second time, but clutched a little earth in one of his paws, from which, together with the carcass of the dead loon, he created a new earth as large as the former had been, with all living animals, fowls, and plants.

As he was walking to survey the new earth, he heard some one singing. He went to the place, and found a female spirit, in the disguise of an old woman, singing these words, and crying at every pause:—

"Ma nau bo sho, O dó zheem un,;  
Ogeem' au wun, Onis' sa waun,;  
Hee-Ub bub ub bub (crying).;  
Dread Manabozho in revenge,;  
For his grandson lost—;  
Has killed the chief—the king."

"Noko," said he, "what is the matter?" "Matter!" said she, "where have you been, not to have heard how Manabozho shot my son, the prince of serpents, in revenge for the loss of his nephew, and how the earth was overflowed, and created anew? So I brought my son here, that he might kill and destroy the inhabitants, as he did on the former earth. But," she continued, casting a scrutinizing glance, "N'yau! indego Manabozho! hub! ub! ub! ub! Oh, I am afraid you are Manabozho!" He burst out into a laugh to quiet her fears.

"Ha! ha! ha! how can that be? Has not the old earth perished, and all that was in it?" "Impossible! impossible!" "But, Noko," he continued, "what do you intend doing with all that cedar cord on your back?" "Why," said she, "I am fixing a snare for Manabozho, if he should be on this earth; and, in the mean time, I am looking for herbs to heal my son. I am the only person that can do him any good. He always gets better when I sing—

"Manabozho a ne we guawk,  
Koan dan mau wah, ne we guawk,  
Koan dan mau wah, ne we guawk.'  
It is Manabozho's dart,  
I try my magic power to withdraw."

Having found out, by conversation with her, all he wished, he put her to death. He then took off her skin, and assuming this disguise, took the cedar cord on his back, and limped away singing her songs. He completely aped the gait and voice of the old woman. He was met by one who told him to make haste; that the prince was worse. At the lodge, limping and muttering, he took notice that they had his grandson's hide to hang over the door. "Oh dogs!" said he; "the evil dogs!" He sat down near the door, and commenced sobbing like an aged woman. One observed, "Why don't you attend the sick, and not set there making such a noise?" He took up the poker and laid it on them, mimicking the voice of the old woman. "Dogs that you are! why do you laugh at me? You know very well that I am so sorry that I am nearly out of my head." With that he approached the prince, singing the songs of the old woman, without exciting any suspicion. He saw that his arrow had gone in about one half its length. He pretended to make preparations for extracting it, but only made ready to finish his victim; and giving the dart a sudden thrust, he put a period to the prince's life. He performed this act with the power of a giant, bursting the