Cornelius Mathews

The Indian Fairy Book

Publio

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From the Original Legends

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I.
THE CELESTIAL SISTERS.

Waupee, or the White Hawk, lived in a remote part of the forest, where animals abounded. Every day he returned from the chase with a large spoil, for he was one of the most skillful and lucky hunters of his tribe. His form was like the cedar; the fire of youth beamed from his eye; there was no forest too gloomy for him to penetrate, and no track made by bird or beast of any kind which he could not readily follow.

One day he had gone beyond any point which he had ever before visited. He traveled through an open wood, which enabled him to see a great distance. At length he beheld a light breaking through the foliage of the distant trees, which made him sure that he was on the borders of a prairie. It was a wide plain, covered with long blue grass, and enameled with flowers of a thousand lovely tints.

After walking for some time without a path, musing upon the open country, and enjoying the fragrant breeze, he suddenly came to a ring worn among the grass and the flowers, as if it had been made by footsteps moving lightly round and round. But it was strange—so strange as to cause the White Hawk to pause and gaze long and fixedly upon the ground—there was no path which led to this flowery circle. There was not even a crushed leaf nor a broken twig, nor the least trace of a footstep, approaching or retiring, to be found. He thought he would hide himself and lie in wait to discover, if he could, what this strange circle meant.

Presently he heard the faint sounds of music in the air. He looked up in the direction they came from, and as the magic notes died away he saw a small object, like a little summer cloud that approaches the earth, floating down from above. At first it was very small, and seemed as if it could have been blown away by the first breeze that came along; but it rapidly grew as he gazed upon it, and the music every moment came clearer and more sweetly to his ear. As it neared the earth it appeared as a basket, and it was filled with twelve sisters, of the most lovely forms and enchanting beauty.

As soon as the basket touched the ground they leaped out, and began straightway to dance, in the most joyous manner, around the magic ring, striking, as they did so, a shining ball, which uttered the most ravishing melodies, and kept time as they danced.

The White Hawk, from his concealment, entranced, gazed upon their graceful forms and movements. He admired them all, but he was most pleased with the youngest. He longed to be at her side, to embrace her, to call her his own; and unable to remain longer a silent admirer, he rushed out and endeavored to seize this twelfth beauty who so enchanted him. But the sisters, with the quickness of birds, the moment they descried the form of a man, leaped back into the basket, and

were drawn up into the sky.

Lamenting his ill-luck, Waupee gazed longingly upon the fairy basket as it ascended and bore the lovely sisters from his view. "They are gone," he said, "and I shall see them no more."

He returned to his solitary lodge, but he found no relief to his mind. He walked abroad, but to look at the sky, which had withdrawn from his sight the only being he had ever loved, was painful to him now.

The next day, selecting the same hour, the White Hawk went back to the prairie, and took his station near the ring; in order to deceive the sisters, he assumed the form of an opossum, and sat among the grass as if he were there engaged in chewing the cud. He had not waited long when he saw the cloudy basket descend, and heard the same sweet music falling as before. He crept slowly toward the ring; but the instant the sisters caught sight of him they were startled, and sprang into their car. It rose a short distance when one of the elder sisters spoke:

"Perhaps," she said, "it is come to show us how the game is played by mortals."

"Oh no," the youngest replied; "quick, let us ascend."

And all joining in a chant, they rose out of sight.

Waupee, casting off his disguise, walked sorrowfully back to his lodge—but ah, the night seemed very long to lonely White Hawk! His whole soul was filled with the thought of the beautiful sister.

Betimes, the next day, he returned to the haunted spot, hoping and fearing, and sighing as though his very soul would leave his body in its anguish. He reflected upon the plan he should follow to secure success. He had already failed twice; to fail a third time would be fatal. Near by he found an old stump, much covered with moss, and just then in use as the residence of a number of mice, who had stopped there on a pilgrimage to some relatives on the other side of the prairie. The White Hawk was so pleased with their tidy little forms that he thought he, too, would be a mouse, especially as they were by no means formidable to look at, and would not be at all likely to create alarm.

He accordingly, having first brought the stump and set it near the ring, without further notice became a mouse, and peeped and sported about, and kept his sharp little eyes busy with the others; but he did not forget to keep one eye up toward the sky, and one ear wide open in the same direction.

It was not long before the sisters, at their customary hour, came down and resumed their sport.

"But see," cried the younger sister, "that stump was not there before."

She ran off, frightened, toward the basket. Her sisters only smiled, and gathering round the old tree-stump, they struck it, in jest, when out ran the mice, and among them Waupee. They killed them all but one, which was pursued by the younger sister. Just as she had raised a silver stick which she held in her hand to put an end to it, too, the form of the White Hawk arose, and he clasped his prize in his arms. The other eleven sprang to their basket, and were drawn up to the skies.

Waupee exerted all his skill to please his bride and win her affections. He wiped the tears from her eyes; he related his adventures in the chase; he dwelt upon the charms of life on the earth. He was constant in his attentions, keeping fondly by her side, and picking out the way for her to walk as he led her gently toward his lodge. He felt his heart glow with joy as he entered it, and from that moment he was one of the happiest of men.

Winter and summer passed rapidly away, and as the spring drew near with its balmy gales and its many-colored flowers, their happiness was increased by the presence of a beautiful boy in their lodge. What more of earthly blessing was there for them to enjoy?

Waupee's wife was a daughter of one of the stars; and as the scenes of earth began to pall upon her sight, she sighed to revisit her father. But she was obliged to hide these feelings from her husband. She remembered the charm that would carry her up, and while White Hawk was engaged in the chase, she took occasion to construct a wicker basket, which she kept concealed. In the mean time, she collected such rarities from the earth as she thought would please her father, as well as the most dainty kinds of food.

One day when Waupee was absent, and all was in readiness, she went out to the charmed ring, taking with her her little son. As they entered the car she commenced her magical song, and the basket rose. The song was sad, and of a lowly and mournful cadence, and as it was wafted far away by the wind, it caught her husband's ear. It was a voice which he well knew, and he instantly ran to the prairie Though he made breathless speed, he could not reach the ring before his wife and child had ascended beyond his reach. He lifted up his voice in loud appeals, but they were unavailing. The basket still went up. He watched it till it became a small speck, and finally it vanished in the sky. He then bent his head down to the ground, and was miserable.

Through a long winter and a long summer Waupee bewailed his loss, but he found no relief. The beautiful spirit had come and gone, and he should see it no more!

He mourned his wife's loss sorely, but his son's still more; for the boy had both the mother's beauty and the father's strength.

In the mean time his wife had reached her home in the stars, and in the blissful employments of her father's house she had almost forgotten that she had left a husband upon the earth. But her son, as he grew up, resembled more and more his father, and every day he was restless and anxious to visit the scene of his birth. His grandfather said to his daughter, one day:

"Go, my child, and take your son down to his father, and ask him to come up and live with us. But tell him to bring along a specimen of each kind of bird and animal he kills in the chase."

She accordingly took the boy and descended. The White Hawk, who was ever near the enchanted spot, heard her voice as she came down the sky. His heart beat with impatience as he saw her form and that of his son, and they were soon clasped in his arms.

He heard the message of the Star, and he began to hunt with the greatest activity, that he might collect the present with all dispatch. He spent whole nights, as well as days, in searching for every curious and beautiful animal and bird. He only preserved a foot, a wing, or a tail of each.

When all was ready, Waupee visited once more each favorite spot—the hill-top whence he had been used to see the rising sun; the stream where he had sported as a boy; the old lodge, now looking sad and solemn, which he was to sit in no more; and last of all, coming to the magic circle, he gazed widely around him with tearful eyes, and, taking his wife and child by the hand, they entered the car and were drawn up—into a country far beyond the flight of birds, or the power of mortal eye to pierce.

Great joy was manifested upon their arrival at the starry plains. The Star Chief invited all his people to a feast; and when they had assembled, he proclaimed aloud that each one might continue as he was, an inhabitant of his own dominions, or select of the earthly gifts such as he liked best. A

very strange confusion immediately arose; not one but sprang forward. Some chose a foot, some a wing, some a tail, and some a claw. Those who selected tails or claws were changed into animals, and ran off; the others assumed the form of birds, and flew away. Waupee chose a white hawk's feather. His wife and son followed his example, and each one became a white hawk. He spread his wings, and, followed by his wife and son, descended with the other birds to the earth, where he is still to be found, with the brightness of the starry plains in his eye, and the freedom of the heavenly breezes in his wings.

II.
THE BOY WHO SET A SNARE FOR THE SUN.

At the time when the animals reigned in the earth, they had killed all the people but a girl and her little brother, and these two were living in fear, in an out-of-the-way place. The boy was a perfect little pigmy, and never grew beyond the size of a mere infant; but the girl increased with her years, so that the task of providing food and shelter fell wholly upon her. She went out daily to get wood for the lodge-fire, and she took her little brother with her that no mishap might befall him; for he was too little to leave alone. A big bird, of a mischievous disposition, might have flown away with him. She made him a bow and arrows, and said to him one day, "My little brother, I will leave you behind where I have been gathering the wood; you must hide yourself, and you will soon see the snow-birds come and pick the worms out of the logs which I have piled up. Shoot one of them and bring it home."

He obeyed her, and tried his best to kill one, but he came home unsuccessful. His sister told him that he must not despair, but try again the next day.

She accordingly left him at the gathering-place of the wood, and returned to the lodge. Toward night-fall she heard his little footsteps crackling through the snow, and he hurried in and threw down, with an air of triumph, one of the birds which he had killed. "My sister," said he, "I wish you to skin it, and stretch the skin, and when I have killed more, I will have a coat made out of them."

"But what shall we do with the body?" said she; for they had always up to that time lived upon greens and berries.

"Cut it in two," he answered, "and season our pottage with one half of it at a time."

It was their first dish of game, and they relished it greatly.

The boy kept on in his efforts, and in the course of time he killed ten birds—out of the skins of which his sister made him a little coat: being very small, he had a very pretty coat, and a bird skin to spare.

"Sister," said he, one day, as he paraded up and down before the lodge, enjoying his new coat, and fancifying himself the greatest little fellow in the world—as he was, for there was no other beside him—"My sister, are we really alone in the world, or are we playing at it? Is there nobody else living? And, tell me, was all this great broad earth and this huge big sky made for a little boy and girl like you and me?"

She told him, by no means; there were many folks very unlike a harmless girl and boy, such as they were, who lived in a certain other quarter of the earth, who had killed off all of their kinsfolk; and that if he would live blameless and not endanger his life, he must never go where they were. This only served to inflame the boy's curiosity; and he soon after took his bow and arrows and went in that direction. After walking a long time and meeting no one, he became tired, and stretched

himself upon a high green knoll where the day's warmth had melted off the snow.

It was a charming place to lie upon, and he fell asleep; and, while sleeping, the sun beat so hot upon him that it not only singed his bird-skin coat, but it so shrivelled and shrunk and tightened it upon the little boy's body, as to wake him up.

When he felt how the sun had seared and the mischief its fiery beams had played with the coat he was so proud of, he flew into a great passion, and berated the sun in a terrible way for a little boy no higher than a man's knee, and he vowed fearful things against it.

"Do not think you are too high," said he; "I shall revenge myself. Oh, sun! I will have you for a plaything yet."

On coming home he gave an account of his misfortune to his sister, and bitterly bewailed the spoiling of his new coat. He would not eat—not so much as a single berry. He lay down as one that fasts; nor did he move nor change his manner of lying for ten full days, though his sister strove to prevail on him to rise. At the end of ten days he turned over, and then he lay full ten days on the other side.

When he got up he was very pale, but very resolute too. He bade his sister make a snare, for, he informed her, that he meant to catch the sun. She said she had nothing; but after awhile she brought forward a deer's sinew which the father had left, and which she soon made into a string suitable for a noose. The moment she showed it to him he was quite wroth, and told her that would not do, and directed her to find something else. She said she had nothing—nothing at all. At last she thought of the bird-skin that was left over when the coat was made; and this she wrought into a string. With this the little boy was more vexed than before. "The sun has had enough of my bird-skins," he said; "find something else." She went out of the lodge saying to herself, "Was there ever so obstinate a boy?" She did not dare to answer this time that she had nothing. Luckily she thought of her own beautiful hair, and pulling some of it from among her locks, she quickly braided it into a cord, and, returning, she handed it to her brother. The moment his eye fell upon this jet black braid he was delighted. "This will do," he said; and he immediately began to run it back and forth through his hands as swiftly as he could; and as he drew it forth, he tried its strength. He said again, "this will do;" and winding it in a glossy coil about his shoulders, he set out a little after midnight. His object was to catch the sun before he rose. He fixed his snare firmly on a spot just where the sun must strike the land as it rose above the earth; and sure enough, he caught the sun, so that it was held fast in the cord and did not rise.

The animals who ruled the earth were immediately put into great commotion. They had no light; and they ran to and fro, calling out to each other, and inquiring what had happened. They summoned a council to debate upon the matter, and an old dormouse, suspecting where the trouble lay, proposed that some one should be appointed to go and cut the cord. This was a bold thing to undertake, as the rays of the sun could not fail to burn whoever should venture so near to them.

At last the venerable dormouse himself undertook it, for the very good reason that no one else would. At this time the dormouse was the largest animal in the world. When he stood up he looked like a mountain. It made haste to the place where the sun lay ensnared, and as it came nearer and nearer, its back began to smoke and burn with the heat, and the whole top of his huge bulk was turned in a very short time to enormous heaps of ashes. It succeeded, however, in cutting the cord with its teeth and freeing the sun, which rolled up again, as round and beautiful as ever, into the wide blue sky. But the dormouse—or blind woman as it is called—was shrunk away to a very small size; and that is the reason why it is now one of the tiniest creatures upon the earth.

The little boy returned home when he discovered that the sun had escaped his snare, and devoted himself entirely to hunting. "If the beautiful hair of my sister would not hold the sun fast, nothing in the world could," he said. "He was not born, a little fellow like himself, to look after the sun. It required one greater and wiser than he was to regulate that." And he went out and shot ten more snow-birds; for in this business he was very expert; and he had a new bird-skin coat made, which was prettier than the one he had worn before.

III.
STRONG DESIRE, AND THE RED SORCERER.

There was a man called Odshedoph, or the Child of Strong Desires, who had a wife and one son. He had withdrawn his family from the village, where they had spent the winter, to the neighborhood of a distant forest, where game abounded. This wood was a day's travel from his winter home, and under its ample shadow the wife fixed the lodge, while the husband went out to hunt. Early in the evening he returned with a deer, and, being weary and athirst, he asked his son, whom he called Strong Desire, to go to the river for some water. The son replied that it was dark, and he was afraid. His father still urged him, saying that his mother, as well as himself, was tired, and the distance to the water very short. But no persuasion could overcome the young man's reluctance. He refused to go.

"Ah, my son," said the father, at last, "if you are afraid to go to the river, you will never kill the Red Head."

The stripling was deeply vexed by this observation; it seemed to touch him to the very quick. He mused in silence. He refused to eat, and made no reply when spoken to. He sat by the lodge door all the night through, looking up at the stars, and sighing like one sorely distressed.

The next day he asked his mother to dress the skin of the deer, and to make it into moccasins for him, while he busied himself in preparing a bow and arrows.

As soon as these were in readiness, he left the lodge one morning, at sunrise, without saying a word to his father or mother. As he passed along, he fired one of his arrows into the air, which fell westward. He took that course, and coming to the spot where the arrow had fallen, he was rejoiced to find it piercing the heart of a deer. He refreshed himself with a meal of the venison, and the next morning he fired another arrow. Following its course, after traveling all day he found that he had transfixed another deer. In this manner he fired four arrows, and every evening he discovered that he had killed a deer.

By a strange oversight, he left the arrows sticking in the carcasses, and passed on without withdrawing them. Having in this way no arrow for the fifth day, he was in great distress at night for the want of food.

At last he threw himself upon the earth in despair, concluding that he might as well perish there as go further. But he had not lain long before he heard a hollow rumbling noise, in the ground beneath him, like that of an earthquake moving slowly along.

He sprang up, and discovered at a distance the figure of a human being, walking with a stick. He looked attentively, and saw that the figure was walking in a wide beaten path in a prairie, leading from a dusky lodge to a lake, whose waters were black and turbid.

To his surprise, this lodge, which had not been in view when he cast himself upon the ground, was now near at hand. He approached a little nearer, and concealed himself; and in a moment he

discovered that the figure was no other than that of the terrible witch, the little old woman who makes war. Her path to the lake was perfectly smooth and solid, and the noise Strong Desire had heard was caused by the striking of her walking staff upon the ground. The top of this staff was decorated with a string of the toes and bills of birds of every kind, who, at every stroke of the stick, fluttered and sung their various notes in concert.

She entered her lodge and laid off her mantle, which was entirely composed of the scalps of women. Before folding it, she shook it several times, and at every shake the scalps uttered loud shouts of laughter, in which the old hag joined. The boy, who lingered at the door, was greatly alarmed, but he uttered no cry.

After laying by the cloak, she came directly to him. Looking at him steadily, she informed him that she had known him from the time he had left his father's lodge, and had watched his movements. She told him not to fear or despair, for she would be his protector and friend. She invited him into her lodge, and gave him a supper. During the repast, she questioned him as to his motives for visiting her. He related his history, stated the manner in which he had been disgraced, and the difficulties he labored under.

"Now tell me truly," said the little old woman who makes war, "you were afraid to go to the water in the dark."

"I was," Strong Desire answered, promptly.

As he replied, the hag waved her staff. The birds set up a clamorous cry, and the mantle shook violently as all the scalps burst into a hideous shout of laughter.

"And are you afraid now," she asked again.

"I am," again answered Strong Desire, without hesitation.

"But you are not afraid to speak the truth," rejoined the little old woman. "You will be a brave man yet."

She cheered him with the assurance of her friendship, and began at once to exercise her power upon him. His hair being very short, she took a great leaden comb, and after drawing it through his locks several times, they became of a handsome length like those of a beautiful young woman. She then proceeded to dress him as a female, furnishing him with the necessary garments, and tinting his face with colors of the most charming dye. She gave him, too, a bowl of shining metal. She directed him to put in his girdle a blade of scented sword-grass, and to proceed the next morning to the banks of the lake, which was no other than that over which the Red Head reigned. Now Hah-Undo-Tah, or the Red Head, was a most powerful sorcerer, living upon an island in the centre of his realm of water, and he was the terror of all the country. She informed him that there would be many Indians upon the island, who, as soon as they saw him use the shining bowl to drink with, would come and solicit him to be their wife, and to take him over to the island. These offers he was to refuse, and to say that he had come a great distance to be the wife of the Red Head, and that if the chief could not seek her for himself, she would return to her village. She said, that as soon as the Red Head heard of this he would come for her in his own canoe, in which she must embark.

"On reaching the shore," added the little old woman, "you must consent to be his wife; and in the evening you are to induce him to take a walk out of the village, and when you have reached a lonesome spot, use the first opportunity to cut off his head with the blade of grass."

She also gave Strong Desire general advice how he was to conduct himself to sustain his assumed

character of a woman. His fear would scarcely permit him to consent to engage in an adventure attended with so much danger; but the recollection of his father's looks and reproaches of the want of courage, decided him.

Early in the morning he left the lodge of the little old woman who makes war, which was clouded in a heavy brackish fog, so thick and heavy to breathe, that he with difficulty made his way forth. When he turned to look back for it, it was gone.

He took the hard beaten path to the banks of the lake, and made for the water at a point directly opposite the Red Head's lodge.

Where he now stood it was beautiful day. The heavens were clear, and the sun shone out as brightly to Strong Desire as on the first morning when he had put forth his little head from the door of his father's lodge. He had not been long there, sauntering along the beach, when he displayed the glittering bowl by dipping water from the lake. Very soon a number of canoes came off from the island. The men admired his dress, and were charmed with his beauty, and almost with one voice they all made proposals of marriage. These, Strong Desire promptly declined.

When this was reported to Red Head, he ordered his royal bark to be launched by his chosen men of the oar, and crossed over to see this wonderful girl. As they approached the shore, Strong Desire saw that the ribs of the sorcerer's canoe were formed of living rattlesnakes, whose heads pointed outward to guard him from his enemies. Being invited, he had no sooner stepped into the canoe, than they began to hiss and rattle furiously, which put him in a great fright; but the magician spoke to them, when they became pacified and quiet. Shortly after they were at the landing upon the island. The marriage took place immediately; and the bride made presents of various valuables which had been furnished her by the old witch who inhabited the cloudy lodge.

As they were sitting in the lodge, surrounded by the friends and relatives, the mother of the Red Head regarded the face of her new daughter-in-law for a long time with fixed attention. From this scrutiny she was convinced that this singular and hasty marriage boded no good to her son. She drew him aside, and disclosed to him her suspicions. This can be no female, said she; she has the figure and manners, the countenance, and more especially the eyes, are beyond a doubt those of a man. Her husband rejected her suspicions, and rebuked her severely for entertaining such notions of her own daughter-in-law. She still urged her doubts, which so vexed the husband that he broke his pipe-stem in her face, and called her an owl.

This act astonished the company, who sought an explanation; and it was no sooner given, than the mock bride, rising with an air of offended dignity, informed the Red Head that after receiving so gross an affront from his relatives she could not think of remaining with him as his wife, but should forthwith return to her own friends.

With a toss of the head, like that of an angry female, Strong Desire left the lodge, followed by Red Head, and walked away until he came to the beach of the island, near the spot where they had first landed. Red Head entreated him to remain, urging every motive, and making all sorts of magnificent promises—none of which seemed to make the least impression. Strong Desire, Red Head thought, was very hard-hearted. During these appeals they had seated themselves upon the ground, and Red Head, in great affliction, reclined his head upon his fancied wife's lap. Strong Desire now changed his manner, was very kind and soothing, and suggested in the most winning accent that if Red Head would sleep soundly for awhile he might possibly dream himself out of all his troubles. Red Head, delighted at so happy a prospect, said that he would fall asleep immediately.

"You have killed a good many men in your time, Red Head," said Strong Desire, by way of

suggesting an agreeable train of ideas to the sorcerer.

"Hundreds," answered Red Head; "and what is better, now that I am fairly settled in life by this happy marriage, I shall be able to give my whole attention to massacre."

"And you will kill hundreds more," interposed Strong Desire, in the most insinuating manner imaginable.

"Just so, my dear," Red Head replied, with a great leer; "thousands. There will be no end to my delicious murders. I love dearly to kill people. I would like to kill you if you were not my wife."

"There, there," said Strong Desire, with the coaxing air of a little coquette, "go to sleep; that's a good Red Head."

No other subject of conversation occurring to the chief, now that he had exhausted the delightful topic of wholesale murder, he straightway fell into a deep sleep.

The chance so anxiously sought for had come; and Strong Desire, with a smiling eye, drawing his blade of grass with lightning swiftness once across the neck of the Red Head, severed the huge and wicked head from the body.

In a moment, stripping off his woman's dress, underneath which he had all along worn his male attire, Strong Desire seized the bleeding trophy, plunged into the lake, and swam safely over to the main shore. He had scarcely reached it, when, looking back, he saw amid the darkness the torches of persons come out in search of the new married couple. He listened until they had found the headless body, and he heard their piercing shrieks of rage and sorrow as he took his way to the lodge of his kind adviser.

The little old woman who makes war was in an excellent humor, and she received Strong Desire with rejoicing. She admired his prudence, and assured him his bravery should never be questioned again. Lifting up the head, which she gazed upon with vast delight, she said he need only have brought the scalp. Cutting off a lock of the hair for herself, she told him he might now return with the head, which would be evidence of an achievement that would cause his own people to respect him.

"In your way home," added the little old woman, "you will meet with but one difficulty. Maunkahkeesh, the Spirit of the Earth, requires an offering or sacrifice from all of her sons who perform extraordinary deeds. As you walk along in a prairie there will be an earthquake; the earth will open and divide the prairie in the middle. Take this partridge and throw it into the opening, and instantly spring over it."

With many thanks to the little old witch, who had so faithfully befriended him, Strong Desire took leave of her, and having, by the course pointed out, safely passed the earthquake, he arrived near his own village. He secretly hid his precious trophy.

On entering the village, he found that his parents had returned from the place of their spring encampment by the wood-side, and that they were in heavy sorrowing for their son, whom they supposed to be lost. One and another of the young men had presented themselves to the disconsolate parents, and said, "Look up, I am your son;" but when they looked up, they beheld not the familiar face of Strong Desire.

Having been often deceived in this manner, when their own son in truth presented himself they sat with their heads down, and with their eyes nearly blinded with weeping. It was some time before

they could be prevailed upon to bestow a glance upon him. It was still longer before they could recognize him as their son who had refused to draw water from the river, at night, for fear, for his countenance was no longer that of a timid stripling; it was that of a man who has seen and done great things, and who has the heart to do greater still.

When he recounted his adventures they believed him mad. The young men laughed at him—him, Strong Desire—who feared to walk to the river at night-time.

He left the lodge, and ere their laughter had ceased, returned with his trophy. He held aloft the head of the Red Sorcerer, with the great ghastly leer which lighted it up before his last sleep, at prospect of a thousand future murders, fresh upon it. It was easily recognized, and the young men who had scoffed at Strong Desire shrunk into the corners out of sight. Strong Desire had conquered the terrible Red Head! All doubts of the truth of his adventures were dispelled.

He was greeted with joy, and placed among the first warriors of the nation. He finally became a chief, and his family were ever after respected and esteemed.

IV.
THE WONDERFUL EXPLOITS OF GRASSHOPPER.

A man, of small stature, found himself standing alone on a prairie. He thought to himself, "How came I here? Are there no beings on this earth but myself? I must travel and see. I must walk till I find the abodes of men."

So soon as his mind was made up, he set out, he knew not whither, in search of habitations. He was a resolute little fellow, and no difficulties could turn him from his purpose: neither prairies, rivers, woods nor storms, had the effect to daunt his courage or turn him back. After traveling a long time, he came to a wood, in which he saw decayed stumps of trees, as if they had been cut in ancient times, but no other trace of men. Pursuing his journey, he found more recent marks of the same kind; after this, he came upon fresh traces of human beings; first their footsteps, and then the wood they had felled, lying in heaps. Pushing on, he emerged toward dusk from the forest, and beheld at a distance a large village of high lodges standing on rising ground.

"I am tired of this dog-trot," he said to himself. "I will arrive there on a run."

He started off with all his speed. On coming to the first lodge, without any especial exertion, he jumped over it, and found himself standing by the door on the other side. Those within saw something pass over the opening in the roof; they thought from the shadow it cast that it must have been some huge bird—and then they heard a thump upon the ground. "What is that?" they all said and several ran out to see.

They invited him in, and he found himself in company with an old chief and several men who were seated in the lodge. Meat was set before him; after which the old chief asked him whither he was going, and what was his name. He answered that he was in search of adventures, and that his name was "Grasshopper."

They all opened their eyes upon the stranger with a broad stare.

"Grasshopper!" whispered one to another; and a general titter went round.

They invited him to stay with them, which he was inclined to do; for it was a pleasant village, but so small as to constantly embarrass Grasshopper. He was in perpetual trouble; whenever he shook hands with a stranger, to whom he might be introduced, such was the abundance of his strength,

without meaning it, he wrung his arm off at the shoulder. Once or twice, in mere sport, he cuffed the boys, about the lodge, by the side of the head, and they flew out of sight as though they had been shot from a bow; nor could they ever be found again, though they were searched for in all the country round, far and wide. If Grasshopper proposed to himself a short stroll in the morning, he was at once miles out of town. When he entered a lodge, if he happened for a moment to forget himself, he walked straight through the leathern, or wooden, or earthen walls, as if he had been merely passing through a bush. At his meals he broke in pieces all the dishes, set them down as lightly as he would; and putting a leg out of bed when he rose, it was a common thing for him to push off the top of the lodge.

He wanted more elbow-room; and after a short stay, in which, by the accidentally letting go of his strength, he had nearly laid waste the whole place, and filled it with demolished lodges and broken pottery, and one-armed men, he made up his mind to go further, taking with him a young man who had formed a strong attachment for him, and who might serve him as his pipe-bearer; for Grasshopper was a huge smoker, and vast clouds followed him wherever he went; so that people could say, "Grasshopper is coming!" by the mighty smoke he raised.

They set out together, and when his companion was fatigued with walking, Grasshopper would put him forward on his journey a mile or two by giving him a cast in the air, and lighting him in a soft place among the trees, or in a cool spot in a water-pond, among the sedges and water-lilies. At other times he would lighten the way by showing off a few tricks, such as leaping over trees, and turning round on one leg till he made the dust fly; at which the pipe-bearer was mightily pleased, although it sometimes happened that the character of these gambols frightened him. For Grasshopper would, without the least hint of such an intention, jump into the air far ahead, and it would cost the little pipe-bearer half a day's hard travel to come up with him; and then the dust Grasshopper raised was often so thick and heavy as to completely bury the poor little pipe-bearer, and compel Grasshopper to dig diligently and with might and main to get him out alive.

One day they came to a very large village, where they were well received. After staying in it some time (in the course of which Grasshopper, in a fit of abstraction, walked straight through the sides of three lodges without stopping to look for the door), they were informed of a number of wicked spirits, who lived at a distance, and who made it a practice to kill all who came to their lodge. Attempts had been made to destroy them, but they had always proved more than a match for such as had come out against them.

Grasshopper determined to pay them a visit, although he was strongly advised not to do so. The chief of the village warned him of the great danger he would incur, but finding Grasshopper resolved, he said:

"Well, if you will go, being my guest, I will send twenty warriors to serve you."

Grasshopper thanked him for the offer, although he suggested that he thought he could get along without them, at which the little pipe-bearer grinned, for his master had never shown in that village what he could do, and the chief thought that Grasshopper, being little himself, would be likely to need twenty warriors, at the least, to encounter the wicked spirits with any chance of success. Twenty young men made their appearance. They set forward, and after about a day's journey they descried the lodge of the Manitoes.

Grasshopper placed his friend, the pipe-bearer, and the warriors, near enough to see all that passed, while he went alone to the lodge.

As he entered, Grasshopper saw five horrid-looking Manitoes in the act of eating. It was the

father and his four sons. They were really hideous to look upon. Their eyes were swimming low in their heads, and they glared about as if they were half starved. They offered Grasshopper something to eat, which he politely refused, for he had a strong suspicion that it was the thigh-bone of a man.

"What have you come for?" said the old one.

"Nothing," answered Grasshopper; "where is your uncle?"

They all stared at him, and answered:

"We ate him, yesterday. What do you want?"

"Nothing," said Grasshopper; "where is your grandfather?"

They all answered, with another broad stare:

"We ate him a week ago. Do you not wish to wrestle?"

"Yes," replied Grasshopper, "I don't mind if I do take a turn; but you must be easy with me, for you see I am very little."

Pipe-bearer, who stood near enough to overhear the conversation, grinned from ear to ear when he caught this remark. The Manitoes answered: