

The Song of Hiawatha

Henry W. Longfellow

Introductory Note

The Song of Hiawatha is based on the legends and stories of many North American Indian tribes, but especially those of the Ojibway Indians of northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. They were collected by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, the renowned historian, pioneer explorer, and geologist. He was superintendent of Indian affairs for Michigan from 1836 to 1841.

Schoolcraft married Jane, O-bah-bahm-wawa-ge-zhe-go-qua (The Woman of the Sound Which the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky), Johnston. Jane was a daughter of John Johnston, an early Irish fur trader, and O-shau-gus-coday-way-qua (The Woman of the Green Prairie), who was a daughter of Waub-o-jeeg (The White Fisher), who was Chief of the Ojibway tribe at La Pointe, Wisconsin.

Jane and her mother are credited with having researched, authenticated, and compiled much of the material Schoolcraft included in his *Algic Researches* (1839) and a revision published in 1856 as *The Myth of Hiawatha*. It was this latter revision that Longfellow used as the basis for *The Song of Hiawatha*.

Longfellow began *Hiawatha* on June 25, 1854, he completed it on March 29, 1855, and it was published November 10, 1855. As soon as the poem was published its popularity was assured. However, it also was severely criticized as a plagiarism of the Finnish epic poem *Kalevala*. Longfellow made no secret of the fact that he had used the meter of the *Kalevala*; but as for the legends, he openly gave credit to Schoolcraft in his notes to the poem.

I would add a personal note here. My father's roots include Ojibway Indians: his mother, Margaret Caroline Davenport, was a daughter of Susan des Carreaux, O-gee-em-a-qua (The Chief Woman), Davenport whose mother was a daughter of Chief Waub-o-jeeg. Finally, my mother used to rock me to sleep reading portions of Hiawatha to me, especially:

"Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly, Little, flitting, white-fire
insect Little, dancing, white-fire creature, Light me with your
little candle, Ere upon my bed I lay me, Ere in sleep I close my
eyelids!"

Woodrow W. Morris April 1, 1991

The Song of Hiawatha Introduction

Should you ask me, whence these stories? Whence these legends and traditions, With the odors of the forest With the dew and damp of meadows, With the curling smoke of wigwams, With the rushing of great rivers, With their frequent repetitions, And their wild reverberations As of thunder in the mountains? I should answer, I should tell you, "From the forests and the prairies, From the great lakes of the Northland, From the land of the Ojibways, From the land of the Dacotahs, From the mountains, moors, and fen-lands Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, Feeds among the reeds and rushes. I repeat them as I heard them From the lips of Nawadaha, The musician, the sweet singer." Should you ask where Nawadaha Found these songs so wild and wayward, Found these legends and traditions, I should answer, I should tell you, "In the bird's-nests of the forest, In the lodges of the beaver, In the hoofprint of the bison, In the eyry of the eagle! "All the wild-fowl sang them to him, In the moorlands and the fen-lands, In the melancholy marshes; Chetowaik, the plover, sang them, Mahng, the loon, the wild-goose, Wawa, The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!" If still further you should ask me, Saying, "Who was Nawadaha? Tell us of this Nawadaha," I should answer your inquiries Straightway in such words as follow. "In the vale of Tawasentha, In the green and silent valley, By the pleasant water-courses, Dwelt the singer Nawadaha. Round about the Indian village Spread the meadows and the corn-fields, And beyond them stood the forest, Stood the groves of singing pine-trees, Green in Summer, white in Winter, Ever sighing, ever singing. "And the pleasant water-courses, You could trace them through the valley, By the rushing in the Spring-time, By the alders in the Summer, By the white fog in the Autumn, By the black line in the Winter; And beside them dwelt the singer, In the vale of Tawasentha, In the green and silent valley. "There he sang of Hiawatha, Sang the Song of Hiawatha, Sang his wondrous birth and being, How he

prayed and how he fasted, How he lived, and toiled, and suffered, That the tribes of men might prosper, That he might advance his people!" Ye who love the haunts of Nature, Love the sunshine of the meadow, Love the shadow of the forest, Love the wind among the branches, And the rain-shower and the snow-storm, And the rushing of great rivers Through their palisades of pine-trees, And the thunder in the mountains, Whose innumerable echoes Flap like eagles in their eyries;- Listen to these wild traditions, To this Song of Hiawatha! Ye who love a nation's legends, Love the ballads of a people, That like voices from afar off Call to us to pause and listen, Speak in tones so plain and childlike, Scarcely can the ear distinguish Whether they are sung or spoken;- Listen to this Indian Legend, To this Song of Hiawatha! Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple, Who have faith in God and Nature, Who believe that in all ages Every human heart is human, That in even savage bosoms There are longings, yearnings, strivings For the good they comprehend not, That the feeble hands and helpless, Groping blindly in the darkness, Touch God's right hand in that darkness And are lifted up and strengthened;- Listen to this simple story, To this Song of Hiawatha! Ye, who sometimes, in your rambles Through the green lanes of the country, Where the tangled barberry-bushes Hang their tufts of crimson berries Over stone walls gray with mosses, Pause by some neglected graveyard, For a while to muse, and ponder On a half-effaced inscription, Written with little skill of song-craft, Homely phrases, but each letter Full of hope and yet of heart-break, Full of all the tender pathos Of the Here and the Hereafter; Stay and read this rude inscription, Read this Song of Hiawatha!

I The Peace-Pipe

On the Mountains of the Prairie, On the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry,
Gitche Manito, the mighty, He the Master of Life, descending, On the red
craggs of the quarry Stood erect, and called the nations, Called the tribes of
men together. From his footprints flowed a river, Leaped into the light of
morning, O'er the precipice plunging downward Gleamed like Ishkoodah,
the comet. And the Spirit, stooping earthward, With his finger on the
meadow Traced a winding pathway for it, Saying to it, "Run in this way!"
From the red stone of the quarry With his hand he broke a fragment,
Moulded it into a pipe-head, Shaped and fashioned it with figures; From
the margin of the river Took a long reed for a pipe-stem, With its dark
green leaves upon it; Filled the pipe with bark of willow, With the bark of
the red willow; Breathed upon the neighboring forest, Made its great
boughs chafe together, Till in flame they burst and kindled; And erect
upon the mountains, Gitche Manito, the mighty, Smoked the calumet, the
Peace-Pipe, As a signal to the nations. And the smoke rose slowly,
slowly, Through the tranquil air of morning, First a single line of darkness,
Then a denser, bluer vapor, Then a snow-white cloud unfolding, Like the
tree-tops of the forest, Ever rising, rising, rising, Till it touched the top of
heaven, Till it broke against the heaven, And rolled outward all around it.
From the Vale of Tawasentha, From the Valley of Wyoming, From the
groves of Tuscaloosa, From the far-off Rocky Mountains, From the
Northern lakes and rivers All the tribes beheld the signal, Saw the distant
smoke ascending, The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe. And the Prophets of
the nations Said: "Behold it, the Pukwana! By the signal of the Peace-Pipe,
Bending like a wand of willow, Waving like a hand that beckons, Gitche
Manito, the mighty, Calls the tribes of men together, Calls the warriors to
his council!" Down the rivers, o'er the prairies, Came the warriors of the
nations, Came the Delawares and Mohawks, Came the Choctaws and
Camanches, Came the Shoshonies and Blackfeet, Came the Pawnees and

Omahas, Came the Mandans and Dacotahs, Came the Hurons and Ojibways, All the warriors drawn together By the signal of the Peace-Pipe, To the Mountains of the Prairie, To the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry, And they stood there on the meadow, With their weapons and their war-gear, Painted like the leaves of Autumn, Painted like the sky of morning, Wildly glaring at each other; In their faces stem defiance, In their hearts the feuds of ages, The hereditary hatred, The ancestral thirst of vengeance. Gitche Manito, the mighty, The creator of the nations, Looked upon them with compassion, With paternal love and pity; Looked upon their wrath and wrangling But as quarrels among children, But as feuds and fights of children! Over them he stretched his right hand, To subdue their stubborn natures, To allay their thirst and fever, By the shadow of his right hand; Spake to them with voice majestic As the sound of far-off waters, Falling into deep abysses, Warning, chiding, spake in this wise : "O my children! my poor children! Listen to the words of wisdom, Listen to the words of warning, From the lips of the Great Spirit, From the Master of Life, who made you! "I have given you lands to hunt in, I have given you streams to fish in, I have given you bear and bison, I have given you roe and reindeer, I have given you brant and beaver, Filled the marshes full of wild-fowl, Filled the rivers full of fishes: Why then are you not contented? Why then will you hunt each other? "I am weary of your quarrels, Weary of your wars and bloodshed, Weary of your prayers for vengeance, Of your wranglings and dissensions; All your strength is in your union, All your danger is in discord; Therefore be at peace henceforward, And as brothers live together. "I will send a Prophet to you, A Deliverer of the nations, Who shall guide you and shall teach you, Who shall toil and suffer with you. If you listen to his counsels, You will multiply and prosper; If his warnings pass unheeded, You will fade away and perish! "Bathe now in the stream before you, Wash the war-paint from your faces, Wash the blood-stains from your fingers, Bury your war-clubs and your weapons, Break the red stone from this quarry, Mould and make it into Peace-Pipes, Take the reeds that grow beside you, Deck them with your brightest feathers, Smoke the calumet together, And as brothers

live henceforward!" Then upon the ground the warriors Threw their cloaks and shirts of deer-skin, Threw their weapons and their war-gear, Leaped into the rushing river, Washed the war-paint from their faces. Clear above them flowed the water, Clear and limpid from the footprints Of the Master of Life descending; Dark below them flowed the water, Soiled and stained with streaks of crimson, As if blood were mingled with it! From the river came the warriors, Clean and washed from all their war-paint; On the banks their clubs they buried, Buried all their warlike weapons. Gitche Manito, the mighty, The Great Spirit, the creator, Smiled upon his helpless children! And in silence all the warriors Broke the red stone of the quarry, Smoothed and formed it into Peace-Pipes, Broke the long reeds by the river, Decked them with their brightest feathers, And departed each one homeward, While the Master of Life, ascending, Through the opening of cloud-curtains, Through the doorways of the heaven, Vanished from before their faces, In the smoke that rolled around him, The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe!

II The Four Winds

"Honor be to Mudjekeewis!" Cried the warriors, cried the old men, When he came in triumph homeward With the sacred Belt of Wampum, From the regions of the North-Wind, From the kingdom of Wabasso, From the land of the White Rabbit. He had stolen the Belt of Wampum From the neck of Mishe-Mokwa, From the Great Bear of the mountains, From the terror of the nations, As he lay asleep and cumbrous On the summit of the mountains, Like a rock with mosses on it, Spotted brown and gray with mosses. Silently he stole upon him Till the red nails of the monster Almost touched him, almost scared him, Till the hot breath of his nostrils Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis, As he drew the Belt of Wampum Over the round ears, that heard not, Over the small eyes, that saw not, Over the long nose and nostrils, The black muffle of the nostrils, Out of which the heavy breathing Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis. Then he swung

aloft his war-club, Shouted loud and long his war-cry, Smote the mighty Mishe-Mokwa In the middle of the forehead, Right between the eyes he smote him. With the heavy blow bewildered, Rose the Great Bear of the mountains; But his knees beneath him trembled, And he whimpered like a woman, As he reeled and staggered forward, As he sat upon his haunches; And the mighty Mudjekeewis, Standing fearlessly before him, Taunted him in loud derision, Spake disdainfully in this wise: "Hark you, Bear! you are a coward; And no Brave, as you pretended; Else you would not cry and whimper Like a miserable woman! Bear! you know our tribes are hostile, Long have been at war together; Now you find that we are strongest, You go sneaking in the forest, You go hiding in the mountains! Had you conquered me in battle Not a groan would I have uttered; But you, Bear! sit here and whimper, And disgrace your tribe by crying, Like a wretched Shaugodaya, Like a cowardly old woman!" Then again he raised his war-club, Smote again the Mishe-Mokwa In the middle of his forehead, Broke his skull, as ice is broken When one goes to fish in Winter. Thus was slain the Mishe-Mokwa, He the Great Bear of the mountains, He the terror of the nations. "Honor be to Mudjekeewis!" With a shout exclaimed the people, "Honor be to Mudjekeewis! Henceforth he shall be the West-Wind, And hereafter and forever Shall he hold supreme dominion Over all the winds of heaven. Call him no more Mudjekeewis, Call him Kabeyun, the West-Wind!" Thus was Mudjekeewis chosen Father of the Winds of Heaven. For himself he kept the West-Wind, Gave the others to his children; Unto Wabun gave the East-Wind, Gave the South to Shawondasee, And the North-Wind, wild and cruel, To the fierce Kabibonokka. Young and beautiful was Wabun; He it was who brought the morning, He it was whose silver arrows Chased the dark o'er hill and valley; He it was whose cheeks were painted With the brightest streaks of crimson, And whose voice awoke the village, Called the deer, and called the hunter. Lonely in the sky was Wabun; Though the birds sang gayly to him, Though the wild-flowers of the meadow Filled the air with odors for him; Though the forests and the rivers Sang and shouted at his coming, Still his heart was sad within him, For he was alone in heaven. But one

morning, gazing earthward, While the village still was sleeping, And the fog lay on the river, Like a ghost, that goes at sunrise, He beheld a maiden walking All alone upon a meadow, Gathering water-flags and rushes By a river in the meadow. Every morning, gazing earthward, Still the first thing he beheld there Was her blue eyes looking at him, Two blue lakes among the rushes. And he loved the lonely maiden, Who thus waited for his coming; For they both were solitary, She on earth and he in heaven. And he wooed her with caresses, Wooed her with his smile of sunshine, With his flattering words he wooed her, With his sighing and his singing, Gentlest whispers in the branches, Softest music, sweetest odors, Till he drew her to his bosom, Folded in his robes of crimson, Till into a star he changed her, Trembling still upon his bosom; And forever in the heavens They are seen together walking, Wabun and the Wabun-Annung, Wabun and the Star of Morning. But the fierce Kabibonokka Had his dwelling among icebergs, In the everlasting snow-drifts, In the kingdom of Wabasso, In the land of the White Rabbit. He it was whose hand in Autumn Painted all the trees with scarlet, Stained the leaves with red and yellow; He it was who sent the snow-flake, Sifting, hissing through the forest, Froze the ponds, the lakes, the rivers, Drove the loon and sea-gull southward, Drove the cormorant and curlew To their nests of sedge and sea-tang In the realms of Shawondasee. Once the fierce Kabibonokka Issued from his lodge of snow-drifts From his home among the icebergs, And his hair, with snow besprinkled, Streamed behind him like a river, Like a black and wintry river, As he howled and hurried southward, Over frozen lakes and moorlands. There among the reeds and rushes Found he Shingebis, the diver, Trailing strings of fish behind him, O'er the frozen fens and moorlands, Lingering still among the moorlands, Though his tribe had long departed To the land of Shawondasee. Cried the fierce Kabibonokka, "Who is this that dares to brave me? Dares to stay in my dominions, When the Wawa has departed, When the wild-goose has gone southward, And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, Long ago departed southward? I will go into his wigwam, I will put his smouldering fire out!" And at night Kabibonokka, To the lodge came wild and wailing, Heaped

the snow in drifts about it, Shouted down into the smoke-flue, Shook the lodge-poles in his fury, Flapped the curtain of the door-way. Shingebis, the diver, feared not, Shingebis, the diver, cared not; Four great logs had he for firewood, One for each moon of the winter, And for food the fishes served him. By his blazing fire he sat there, Warm and merry, eating, laughing, Singing, "O Kabibonokka, You are but my fellow-mortal!" Then Kabibonokka entered, And though Shingebis, the diver, Felt his presence by the coldness, Felt his icy breath upon him, Still he did not cease his singing, Still he did not leave his laughing, Only turned the log a little, Only made the fire burn brighter, Made the sparks fly up the smoke-flue. From Kabibonokka's forehead, From his snow-besprinkled tresses, Drops of sweat fell fast and heavy, Making dints upon the ashes, As along the eaves of lodges, As from drooping boughs of hemlock, Drips the melting snow in spring-time, Making hollows in the snow-drifts. Till at last he rose defeated, Could not bear the heat and laughter, Could not bear the merry singing, But rushed headlong through the door-way, Stamped upon the crusted snow-drifts, Stamped upon the lakes and rivers, Made the snow upon them harder, Made the ice upon them thicker, Challenged Shingebis, the diver, To come forth and wrestle with him, To come forth and wrestle naked On the frozen fens and moorlands. Forth went Shingebis, the diver, Wrestled all night with the North-Wind, Wrestled naked on the moorlands With the fierce Kabibonokka, Till his panting breath grew fainter, Till his frozen grasp grew feebler, Till he reeled and staggered backward, And retreated, baffled, beaten, To the kingdom of Wabasso, To the land of the White Rabbit, Hearing still the gusty laughter, Hearing Shingebis, the diver, Singing, "O Kabibonokka, You are but my fellow-mortal!" Shawondasee, fat and lazy, Had his dwelling far to southward, In the drowsy, dreamy sunshine, In the never-ending Summer. He it was who sent the wood-birds, Sent the robin, the Opechee, Sent the bluebird, the Owaissa, Sent the Shawshaw, sent the swallow, Sent the wild-goose, Wawa, northward, Sent the melons and tobacco, And the grapes in purple clusters. From his pipe the smoke ascending Filled the sky with haze and vapor, Filled the air with dreamy softness, Gave a

twinkle to the water, Touched the rugged hills with smoothness, Brought the tender Indian Summer To the melancholy north-land, In the dreary Moon of Snow-shoes. Listless, careless Shawondasee! In his life he had one shadow, In his heart one sorrow had he. Once, as he was gazing northward, Far away upon a prairie He beheld a maiden standing, Saw a tall and slender maiden All alone upon a prairie; Brightest green were all her garments, And her hair was like the sunshine. Day by day he gazed upon her, Day by day he sighed with passion, Day by day his heart within him Grew more hot with love and longing For the maid with yellow tresses. But he was too fat and lazy To bestir himself and woo her. Yes, too indolent and easy To pursue her and persuade her; So he only gazed upon her, Only sat and sighed with passion For the maiden of the prairie. Till one morning, looking northward, He beheld her yellow tresses Changed and covered o'er with whiteness, Covered as with whitest snow-flakes. "Ah! my brother from the North-land, From the kingdom of Wabasso, From the land of the White Rabbit! You have stolen the maiden from me, You have laid your hand upon her, You have wooed and won my maiden, With your stories of the North-land!" Thus the wretched Shawondasee Breathed into the air his sorrow; And the South-Wind o'er the prairie Wandered warm with sighs of passion, With the sighs of Shawondasee, Till the air seemed full of snow-flakes, Full of thistle-down the prairie, And the maid with hair like sunshine Vanished from his sight forever; Never more did Shawondasee See the maid with yellow tresses! Poor, deluded Shawondasee! 'T was no woman that you gazed at, 'T was no maiden that you sighed for, 'T was the prairie dandelion That through all the dreamy Summer You had gazed at with such longing, You had sighed for with such passion, And had puffed away forever, Blown into the air with sighing. Ah! deluded Shawondasee! Thus the Four Winds were divided Thus the sons of Mudjekeewis Had their stations in the heavens, At the corners of the heavens; For himself the West-Wind only Kept the mighty Mudjekeewis.

III Hiawatha's Childhood

Downward through the evening twilight, In the days that are forgotten,
In the unremembered ages, From the full moon fell Nokomis, Fell the
beautiful Nokomis, She a wife, but not a mother. She was sporting with
her women, Swinging in a swing of grape-vines, When her rival the
rejected, Full of jealousy and hatred, Cut the leafy swing asunder, Cut in
twain the twisted grape-vines, And Nokomis fell affrighted Downward
through the evening twilight, On the Muskoday, the meadow, On the
prairie full of blossoms. "See! a star falls!" said the people; "From the sky
a star is falling!" There among the ferns and mosses, There among the
prairie lilies, On the Muskoday, the meadow, In the moonlight and the
starlight, Fair Nokomis bore a daughter. And she called her name
Wenonah, As the first-born of her daughters. And the daughter of Nokomis
Grew up like the prairie lilies, Grew a tall and slender maiden, With the
beauty of the moonlight, With the beauty of the starlight. And Nokomis
warned her often, Saying oft, and oft repeating, "Oh, beware of
Mudjekeewis, Of the West-Wind, Mudjekeewis; Listen not to what he tells
you; Lie not down upon the meadow, Stoop not down among the lilies,
Lest the West-Wind come and harm you!" But she heeded not the
warning, Heeded not those words of wisdom, And the West-Wind came at
evening, Walking lightly o'er the prairie, Whispering to the leaves and
blossoms, Bending low the flowers and grasses, Found the beautiful
Wenonah, Lying there among the lilies, Wooed her with his words of
sweetness, Wooed her with his soft caresses, Till she bore a son in sorrow,
Bore a son of love and sorrow. Thus was born my Hiawatha, Thus was
born the child of wonder; But the daughter of Nokomis, Hiawatha's gentle
mother, In her anguish died deserted By the West-Wind, false and faithless,
By the heartless Mudjekeewis. For her daughter long and loudly Wailed
and wept the sad Nokomis; "Oh that I were dead!" she murmured, "Oh
that I were dead, as thou art! No more work, and no more weeping,
Wahonowin! Wahonowin!" By the shores of Gitche Gumee, By the

shining Big-Sea-Water, Stood the wigwam of Nokomis, Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis. Dark behind it rose the forest, Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees, Rose the firs with cones upon them; Bright before it beat the water, Beat the clear and sunny water, Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water. There the wrinkled old Nokomis Nursed the little Hiawatha, Rocked him in his linden cradle, Bedded soft in moss and rushes, Safely bound with reindeer sinews; Stilled his fretful wail by saying, "Hush! the Naked Bear will hear thee!" Lulled him into slumber, singing, "Ewa-yea! my little owlet! Who is this, that lights the wigwam? With his great eyes lights the wigwam? Ewa-yea! my little owlet!" Many things Nokomis taught him Of the stars that shine in heaven; Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet, Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses; Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits, Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs, Flaring far away to northward In the frosty nights of Winter; Showed the broad white road in heaven, Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows, Running straight across the heavens, Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows. At the door on summer evenings Sat the little Hiawatha; Heard the whispering of the pine-trees, Heard the lapping of the waters, Sounds of music, words of wonder; 'Minne-wawa!' said the Pine-trees, Mudway-aushka!" said the water. Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee, Flitting through the dusk of evening, With the twinkle of its candle Lighting up the brakes and bushes, And he sang the song of children, Sang the song Nokomis taught him: "Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly, Little, flitting, white-fire insect, Little, dancing, white-fire creature, Light me with your little candle, Ere upon my bed I lay me, Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!" Saw the moon rise from the water Rippling, rounding from the water, Saw the flecks and shadows on it, Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?" And the good Nokomis answered: "Once a warrior, very angry, Seized his grandmother, and threw her Up into the sky at midnight; Right against the moon he threw her; 'T is her body that you see there." Saw the rainbow in the heaven, In the eastern sky, the rainbow, Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?" And the good Nokomis answered: "'T is the heaven of flowers you see there; All the wild-flowers of the forest, All the lilies of the prairie, When on earth they

fade and perish, Blossom in that heaven above us." When he heard the owls at midnight, Hooting, laughing in the forest, 'What is that?' he cried in terror, "What is that," he said, "Nokomis?" And the good Nokomis answered: "That is but the owl and owlet, Talking in their native language, Talking, scolding at each other." Then the little Hiawatha Learned of every bird its language, Learned their names and all their secrets, How they built their nests in Summer, Where they hid themselves in Winter, Talked with them whene'er he met them, Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens." Of all beasts he learned the language, Learned their names and all their secrets, How the beavers built their lodges, Where the squirrels hid their acorns, How the reindeer ran so swiftly, Why the rabbit was so timid, Talked with them whene'er he met them, Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers." Then Iagoo, the great boaster, He the marvellous story-teller, He the traveller and the talker, He the friend of old Nokomis, Made a bow for Hiawatha; From a branch of ash he made it, From an oak-bough made the arrows, Tipped with flint, and winged with feathers, And the cord he made of deer-skin. Then he said to Hiawatha: "Go, my son, into the forest, Where the red deer herd together, Kill for us a famous roebuck, Kill for us a deer with antlers!" Forth into the forest straightway All alone walked Hiawatha Proudly, with his bow and arrows; And the birds sang round him, o'er him, "Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!" Sang the robin, the Opechee, Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa, "Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!" Up the oak-tree, close beside him, Sprang the squirrel, Adjidaumo, In and out among the branches, Coughed and chattered from the oak-tree, Laughed, and said between his laughing, "Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!" And the rabbit from his pathway Leaped aside, and at a distance Sat erect upon his haunches, Half in fear and half in frolic, Saying to the little hunter, "Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!" But he heeded not, nor heard them, For his thoughts were with the red deer; On their tracks his eyes were fastened, Leading downward to the river, To the ford across the river, And as one in slumber walked he. Hidden in the alder-bushes, There he waited till the deer came, Till he saw two antlers lifted, Saw two eyes look from the thicket, Saw two nostrils point to

windward, And a deer came down the pathway, Flecked with leafy light and shadow. And his heart within him fluttered, Trembled like the leaves above him, Like the birch-leaf palpitated, As the deer came down the pathway. Then, upon one knee uprising, Hiawatha aimed an arrow; Scarce a twig moved with his motion, Scarce a leaf was stirred or rustled, But the wary roebuck started, Stamped with all his hoofs together, Listened with one foot uplifted, Leaped as if to meet the arrow; Ah! the singing, fatal arrow, Like a wasp it buzzed and stung him! Dead he lay there in the forest, By the ford across the river; Beat his timid heart no longer, But the heart of Hiawatha Throbbled and shouted and exulted, As he bore the red deer homeward, And Iagoo and Nokomis Hailed his coming with applauses. From the red deer's hide Nokomis Made a cloak for Hiawatha, From the red deer's flesh Nokomis Made a banquet to his honor. All the village came and feasted, All the guests praised Hiawatha, Called him Strong-Heart, Soan-ge-taha! Called him Loon-Heart, Mahngo-taysee!

IV Hiawatha and Mudjekeewis

Out of childhood into manhood Now had grown my Hiawatha, Skilled in all the craft of hunters, Learned in all the lore of old men, In all youthful sports and pastimes, In all manly arts and labors. Swift of foot was Hiawatha; He could shoot an arrow from him, And run forward with such fleetness, That the arrow fell behind him! Strong of arm was Hiawatha; He could shoot ten arrows upward, Shoot them with such strength and swiftness, That the tenth had left the bow-string Ere the first to earth had fallen! He had mittens, Minjekahwun, Magic mittens made of deer-skin; When upon his hands he wore them, He could smite the rocks asunder, He could grind them into powder. He had moccasins enchanted, Magic moccasins of deer-skin; When he bound them round his ankles, When upon his feet he tied them, At each stride a mile he measured! Much he questioned old Nokomis Of his father Mudjekeewis; Learned from her the

fatal secret Of the beauty of his mother, Of the falsehood of his father;
And his heart was hot within him, Like a living coal his heart was. Then
he said to old Nokomis, "I will go to Mudjekeewis, See how fares it with
my father, At the doorways of the West-Wind, At the portals of the
Sunset!" From his lodge went Hiawatha, Dressed for travel, armed for
hunting; Dressed in deer-skin shirt and leggings, Richly wrought with
quills and wampum; On his head his eagle-feathers, Round his waist his
belt of wampum, In his hand his bow of ash-wood, Strung with sinews of
the reindeer; In his quiver oaken arrows, Tipped with jasper, winged with
feathers; With his mittens, Minjekahwun, With his moccasins enchanted.
Warning said the old Nokomis, "Go not forth, O Hiawatha! To the
kingdom of the West-Wind, To the realms of Mudjekeewis, Lest he harm
you with his magic, Lest he kill you with his cunning!" But the fearless
Hiawatha Heeded not her woman's warning; Forth he strode into the forest,
At each stride a mile he measured; Lurid seemed the sky above him, Lurid
seemed the earth beneath him, Hot and close the air around him, Filled
with smoke and fiery vapors, As of burning woods and prairies, For his
heart was hot within him, Like a living coal his heart was. So he
journeyed westward, westward, Left the fleetest deer behind him, Left the
antelope and bison; Crossed the rushing Esconaba, Crossed the mighty
Mississippi, Passed the Mountains of the Prairie, Passed the land of Crows
and Foxes, Passed the dwellings of the Blackfeet, Came unto the Rocky
Mountains, To the kingdom of the West-Wind, Where upon the gusty
summits Sat the ancient Mudjekeewis, Ruler of the winds of heaven.
Filled with awe was Hiawatha At the aspect of his father. On the air about
him wildly Tossed and streamed his cloudy tresses, Gleamed like drifting
snow his tresses, Glared like Ishkoodah, the comet, Like the star with fiery
tresses. Filled with joy was Mudjekeewis When he looked on Hiawatha,
Saw his youth rise up before him In the face of Hiawatha, Saw the beauty
of Wenonah From the grave rise up before him. "Welcome!" said he,
"Hiawatha, To the kingdom of the West-Wind Long have I been waiting
for you Youth is lovely, age is lonely, Youth is fiery, age is frosty; You
bring back the days departed, You bring back my youth of passion, And

the beautiful Wenonah!" Many days they talked together, Questioned, listened, waited, answered; Much the mighty Mudjekeewis Boasted of his ancient prowess, Of his perilous adventures, His indomitable courage, His invulnerable body. Patiently sat Hiawatha, Listening to his father's boasting; With a smile he sat and listened, Uttered neither threat nor menace, Neither word nor look betrayed him, But his heart was hot within him, Like a living coal his heart was. Then he said, "O Mudjekeewis, Is there nothing that can harm you? Nothing that you are afraid of?" And the mighty Mudjekeewis, Grand and gracious in his boasting, Answered, saying, "There is nothing, Nothing but the black rock yonder, Nothing but the fatal Wawbeek!" And he looked at Hiawatha With a wise look and benignant, With a countenance paternal, Looked with pride upon the beauty Of his tall and graceful figure, Saying, "O my Hiawatha! Is there anything can harm you? Anything you are afraid of?" But the wary Hiawatha Paused awhile, as if uncertain, Held his peace, as if resolving, And then answered, "There is nothing, Nothing but the bulrush yonder, Nothing but the great Apukwa!" And as Mudjekeewis, rising, Stretched his hand to pluck the bulrush, Hiawatha cried in terror, Cried in well-dissembled terror, "Kago! kago! do not touch it!" "Ah, kaween!" said Mudjekeewis, "No indeed, I will not touch it!" Then they talked of other matters; First of Hiawatha's brothers, First of Wabun, of the East-Wind, Of the South-Wind, Shawondasee, Of the North, Kabibonokka; Then of Hiawatha's mother, Of the beautiful Wenonah, Of her birth upon the meadow, Of her death, as old Nokomis Had remembered and related. And he cried, "O Mudjekeewis, It was you who killed Wenonah, Took her young life and her beauty, Broke the Lily of the Prairie, Trampled it beneath your footsteps; You confess it! you confess it!" And the mighty Mudjekeewis Tossed upon the wind his tresses, Bowed his hoary head in anguish, With a silent nod assented. Then up started Hiawatha, And with threatening look and gesture Laid his hand upon the black rock, On the fatal Wawbeek laid it, With his mittens, Minjekahwun, Rent the jutting crag asunder, Smote and crushed it into fragments, Hurling them madly at his father, The remorseful Mudjekeewis, For his heart was hot within him,

Like a living coal his heart was. But the ruler of the West-Wind Blew the fragments backward from him, With the breathing of his nostrils, With the tempest of his anger, Blew them back at his assailant; Seized the bulrush, the Apukwa, Dragged it with its roots and fibres From the margin of the meadow, From its ooze the giant bulrush; Long and loud laughed Hiawatha! Then began the deadly conflict, Hand to hand among the mountains; From his eyry screamed the eagle, The Keneu, the great war-eagle, Sat upon the crags around them, Wheeling flapped his wings above them. Like a tall tree in the tempest Bent and lashed the giant bulrush; And in masses huge and heavy Crashing fell the fatal Wawbeek; Till the earth shook with the tumult And confusion of the battle, And the air was full of shoutings, And the thunder of the mountains, Starting, answered, "Baim-wawa!" Back retreated Mudjekeewis, Rushing westward o'er the mountains, Stumbling westward down the mountains, Three whole days retreated fighting, Still pursued by Hiawatha To the doorways of the West-Wind, To the portals of the Sunset, To the earth's remotest border, Where into the empty spaces Sinks the sun, as a flamingo Drops into her nest at nightfall In the melancholy marshes. "Hold!" at length cried Mudjekeewis, "Hold, my son, my Hiawatha! 'T is impossible to kill me, For you cannot kill the immortal I have put you to this trial, But to know and prove your courage; Now receive the prize of valor! "Go back to your home and people, Live among them, toil among them, Cleanse the earth from all that harms it, Clear the fishing-grounds and rivers, Slay all monsters and magicians, All the Wendigoes, the giants, All the serpents, the Kenabeeks, As I slew the Mishe-Mokwa, Slew the Great Bear of the mountains. "And at last when Death draws near you, When the awful eyes of Pauguk Glare upon you in the darkness, I will share my kingdom with you, Ruler shall you be thenceforward Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin, Of the home-wind, the Keewaydin." Thus was fought that famous battle In the dreadful days of Shah-shah, In the days long since departed, In the kingdom of the West-Wind. Still the hunter sees its traces Scattered far o'er hill and valley; Sees the giant bulrush growing By the ponds and water-courses, Sees the masses of the Wawbeek Lying still in

every valley. Homeward now went Hiawatha; Pleasant was the landscape round him, Pleasant was the air above him, For the bitterness of anger Had departed wholly from him, From his brain the thought of vengeance, From his heart the burning fever. Only once his pace he slackened, Only once he paused or halted, Paused to purchase heads of arrows Of the ancient Arrow-maker, In the land of the Dacotahs, Where the Falls of Minnehaha Flash and gleam among the oak-trees, Laugh and leap into the valley. There the ancient Arrow-maker Made his arrow-heads of sandstone, Arrow-heads of chalcedony, Arrow-heads of flint and jasper, Smoothed and sharpened at the edges, Hard and polished, keen and costly. With him dwelt his dark-eyed daughter, Wayward as the Minnehaha, With her moods of shade and sunshine, Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate, Feet as rapid as the river, Tresses flowing like the water, And as musical a laughter: And he named her from the river, From the water-fall he named her, Minnehaha, Laughing Water. Was it then for heads of arrows, Arrow-heads of chalcedony, Arrow-heads of flint and jasper, That my Hiawatha halted In the land of the Dacotahs? Was it not to see the maiden, See the face of Laughing Water Peeping from behind the curtain, Hear the rustling of her garments From behind the waving curtain, As one sees the Minnehaha Gleaming, glancing through the branches, As one hears the Laughing Water From behind its screen of branches? Who shall say what thoughts and visions Fill the fiery brains of young men? Who shall say what dreams of beauty Filled the heart of Hiawatha? All he told to old Nokomis, When he reached the lodge at sunset, Was the meeting with his father, Was his fight with Mudjekeewis; Not a word he said of arrows, Not a word of Laughing Water.

V Hiawatha's Fasting

You shall hear how Hiawatha Prayed and fasted in the forest, Not for greater skill in hunting, Not for greater craft in fishing, Not for triumphs in the battle, And renown among the warriors, But for profit of the people,

For advantage of the nations. First he built a lodge for fasting, Built a wigwam in the forest, By the shining Big-Sea-Water, In the blithe and pleasant Spring-time, In the Moon of Leaves he built it, And, with dreams and visions many, Seven whole days and nights he fasted. On the first day of his fasting Through the leafy woods he wandered; Saw the deer start from the thicket, Saw the rabbit in his burrow, Heard the pheasant, Bena, drumming, Heard the squirrel, Adjidaumo, Rattling in his hoard of acorns, Saw the pigeon, the Omeme, Building nests among the pinetrees, And in flocks the wild-goose, Wawa, Flying to the fen-lands northward, Whirring, wailing far above him. "Master of Life!" he cried, desponding, "Must our lives depend on these things?" On the next day of his fasting By the river's brink he wandered, Through the Muskoday, the meadow, Saw the wild rice, Mahnomonee, Saw the blueberry, Meenahga, And the strawberry, Odahmin, And the gooseberry, Shahbomin, And the grape.vine, the Bemahgut, Trailing o'er the alder-branches, Filling all the air with fragrance! "Master of Life!" he cried, desponding, "Must our lives depend on these things?" On the third day of his fasting By the lake he sat and pondered, By the still, transparent water; Saw the sturgeon, Nahma, leaping, Scattering drops like beads of wampum, Saw the yellow perch, the Sahwa, Like a sunbeam in the water, Saw the pike, the Maskenozha, And the herring, Okahahwis, And the Shawgashee, the crawfish! "Master of Life!" he cried, desponding, "Must our lives depend on these things?" On the fourth day of his fasting In his lodge he lay exhausted; From his couch of leaves and branches Gazing with half-open eyelids, Full of shadowy dreams and visions, On the dizzy, swimming landscape, On the gleaming of the water, On the splendor of the sunset. And he saw a youth approaching, Dressed in garments green and yellow, Coming through the purple twilight, Through the splendor of the sunset; Plumes of green bent o'er his forehead, And his hair was soft and golden. Standing at the open doorway, Long he looked at Hiawatha, Looked with pity and compassion On his wasted form and features, And, in accents like the sighing Of the South-Wind in the tree-tops, Said he, "O my Hiawatha! All your prayers are heard in heaven, For you pray not like the others; Not for

greater skill in hunting, Not for greater craft in fishing, Not for triumph in the battle, Nor renown among the warriors, But for profit of the people, For advantage of the nations. "From the Master of Life descending, I, the friend of man, Mondamin, Come to warn you and instruct you, How by struggle and by labor You shall gain what you have prayed for. Rise up from your bed of branches, Rise, O youth, and wrestle with me!" Faint with famine, Hiawatha Started from his bed of branches, From the twilight of his wigwam Forth into the flush of sunset Came, and wrestled with Mondamin; At his touch he felt new courage Throbbing in his brain and bosom, Felt new life and hope and vigor Run through every nerve and fibre. So they wrestled there together In the glory of the sunset, And the more they strove and struggled, Stronger still grew Hiawatha; Till the darkness fell around them, And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, From her nest among the pine-trees, Gave a cry of lamentation, Gave a scream of pain and famine. "'T Is enough!" then said Mondamin, Smiling upon Hiawatha, "But tomorrow, when the sun sets, I will come again to try you." And he vanished, and was seen not; Whether sinking as the rain sinks, Whether rising as the mists rise, Hiawatha saw not, knew not, Only saw that he had vanished, Leaving him alone and fainting, With the misty lake below him, And the reeling stars above him. On the morrow and the next day, When the sun through heaven descending, Like a red and burning cinder From the hearth of the Great Spirit, Fell into the western waters, Came Mondamin for the trial, For the strife with Hiawatha; Came as silent as the dew comes, From the empty air appearing, Into empty air returning, Taking shape when earth it touches, But invisible to all men In its coming and its going. Thrice they wrestled there together In the glory of the sunset, Till the darkness fell around them, Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, From her nest among the pine-trees, Uttered her loud cry of famine, And Mondamin paused to listen. Tall and beautiful he stood there, In his garments green and yellow; To and fro his plumes above him, Waved and nodded with his breathing, And the sweat of the encounter Stood like drops of dew upon him. And he cried, "O Hiawatha! Bravely have you wrestled with me, Thrice have wrestled stoutly with me, And the

Master of Life, who sees us, He will give to you the triumph!" Then he smiled, and said: "To-morrow Is the last day of your conflict, Is the last day of your fasting. You will conquer and o'ercome me; Make a bed for me to lie in, Where the rain may fall upon me, Where the sun may come and warm me; Strip these garments, green and yellow, Strip this nodding plumage from me, Lay me in the earth, and make it Soft and loose and light above me. "Let no hand disturb my slumber, Let no weed nor worm molest me, Let not Kahgahgee, the raven, Come to haunt me and molest me, Only come yourself to watch me, Till I wake, and start, and quicken, Till I leap into the sunshine" And thus saying, he departed; Peacefully slept Hiawatha, But he heard the Wawonaissa, Heard the whippoorwill complaining, Perched upon his lonely wigwam; Heard the rushing Sebowisha, Heard the rivulet rippling near him, Talking to the darksome forest; Heard the sighing of the branches, As they lifted and subsided At the passing of the night-wind, Heard them, as one hears in slumber Far-off murmurs, dreamy whispers: Peacefully slept Hiawatha. On the morrow came Nokomis, On the seventh day of his fasting, Came with food for Hiawatha, Came imploring and bewailing, Lest his hunger should o'ercome him, Lest his fasting should be fatal. But he tasted not, and touched not, Only said to her, "Nokomis, Wait until the sun is setting, Till the darkness falls around us, Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, Crying from the desolate marshes, Tells us that the day is ended." Homeward weeping went Nokomis, Sorrowing for her Hiawatha, Fearing lest his strength should fail him, Lest his fasting should be fatal. He meanwhile sat weary waiting For the coming of Mondamin, Till the shadows, pointing eastward, Lengthened over field and forest, Till the sun dropped from the heaven, Floating on the waters westward, As a red leaf in the Autumn Falls and floats upon the water, Falls and sinks into its bosom. And behold! the young Mondamin, With his soft and shining tresses, With his garments green and yellow, With his long and glossy plumage, Stood and beckoned at the doorway. And as one in slumber walking, Pale and haggard, but undaunted, From the wigwam Hiawatha Came and wrestled with Mondamin. Round about him spun the landscape, Sky and forest

reeled together, And his strong heart leaped within him, As the sturgeon leaps and struggles In a net to break its meshes. Like a ring of fire around him Blazed and flared the red horizon, And a hundred suns seemed looking At the combat of the wrestlers. Suddenly upon the greensward All alone stood Hiawatha, Panting with his wild exertion, Palpitating with the struggle; And before him breathless, lifeless, Lay the youth, with hair dishevelled, Plumage torn, and garments tattered, Dead he lay there in the sunset. And victorious Hiawatha Made the grave as he commanded, Stripped the garments from Mondamin, Stripped his tattered plumage from him, Laid him in the earth, and made it Soft and loose and light above him; And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, From the melancholy moorlands, Gave a cry of lamentation, Gave a cry of pain and anguish! Homeward then went Hiawatha To the lodge of old Nokomis, And the seven days of his fasting Were accomplished and completed. But the place was not forgotten Where he wrestled with Mondamin; Nor forgotten nor neglected Was the grave where lay Mondamin, Sleeping in the rain and sunshine, Where his scattered plumes and garments Faded in the rain and sunshine. Day by day did Hiawatha Go to wait and watch beside it; Kept the dark mould soft above it, Kept it clean from weeds and insects, Drove away, with scoffs and shoutings, Kahgahgee, the king of ravens. Till at length a small green feather From the earth shot slowly upward, Then another and another, And before the Summer ended Stood the maize in all its beauty, With its shining robes about it, And its long, soft, yellow tresses; And in rapture Hiawatha Cried aloud, "It is Mondamin! Yes, the friend of man, Mondamin!" Then he called to old Nokomis And Iagoo, the great boaster, Showed them where the maize was growing, Told them of his wondrous vision, Of his wrestling and his triumph, Of this new gift to the nations, Which should be their food forever. And still later, when the Autumn Changed the long, green leaves to yellow, And the soft and juicy kernels Grew like wampum hard and yellow, Then the ripened ears he gathered, Stripped the withered husks from off them, As he once had stripped the wrestler, Gave the first Feast of Mondamin, And made known unto the people This new gift of the Great Spirit.

VI Hiawatha's Friends

Two good friends had Hiawatha, Singled out from all the others,
Bound to him in closest union, And to whom he gave the right hand
Of his heart, in joy and sorrow; Chibiabos, the musician, And the very strong
man, Kwasind. Straight between them ran the pathway, Never grew the
grass upon it; Singing birds, that utter falsehoods, Story-tellers, mischief-
makers, Found no eager ear to listen, Could not breed ill-will between
them, For they kept each other's counsel, Spake with naked hearts together,
Pondering much and much contriving How the tribes of men might
prosper. Most beloved by Hiawatha Was the gentle Chibiabos, He the
best of all musicians, He the sweetest of all singers. Beautiful and
childlike was he, Brave as man is, soft as woman, Pliant as a wand of
willow, Stately as a deer with antlers. When he sang, the village listened;
All the warriors gathered round him, All the women came to hear him;
Now he stirred their souls to passion, Now he melted them to pity. From
the hollow reeds he fashioned Flutes so musical and mellow, That the
brook, the Sebowisha, Ceased to murmur in the woodland, That the wood-
birds ceased from singing, And the squirrel, Adjidaumo, Ceased his chatter
in the oak-tree, And the rabbit, the Wabasso, Sat upright to look and listen.
Yes, the brook, the Sebowisha, Pausing, said, "O Chibiabos, Teach my
waves to flow in music, Softly as your words in singing!" Yes, the
bluebird, the Owaissa, Envious, said, "O Chibiabos, Teach me tones as
wild and wayward, Teach me songs as full of frenzy!" Yes, the robin, the
Opechee, Joyous, said, "O Chibiabos, Teach me tones as sweet and tender,
Teach me songs as full of gladness!" And the whippoorwill, Wawonaissa,
Sobbing, said, "O Chibiabos, Teach me tones as melancholy, Teach me
songs as full of sadness!" All the many sounds of nature Borrowed
sweetness from his singing; All the hearts of men were softened
By the pathos of his music; For he sang of peace and freedom, Sang of beauty,
love, and longing; Sang of death, and life undying In the Islands of the

Blessed, In the kingdom of Ponemah, In the land of the Hereafter. Very dear to Hiawatha Was the gentle Chibiabos, He the best of all musicians, He the sweetest of all singers; For his gentleness he loved him, And the magic of his singing. Dear, too, unto Hiawatha Was the very strong man, Kwasind, He the strongest of all mortals, He the mightiest among many; For his very strength he loved him, For his strength allied to goodness. Idle in his youth was Kwasind, Very listless, dull, and dreamy, Never played with other children, Never fished and never hunted, Not like other children was he; But they saw that much he fasted, Much his Manito entreated, Much besought his Guardian Spirit. "Lazy Kwasind!" said his mother, "In my work you never help me! In the Summer you are roaming Idly in the fields and forests; In the Winter you are cowering O'er the firebrands in the wigwam! In the coldest days of Winter I must break the ice for fishing; With my nets you never help me! At the door my nets are hanging, Dripping, freezing with the water; Go and wring them, Yenadizze! Go and dry them in the sunshine!" Slowly, from the ashes, Kwasind Rose, but made no angry answer; From the lodge went forth in silence, Took the nets, that hung together, Dripping, freezing at the doorway; Like a wisp of straw he wrung them, Like a wisp of straw he broke them, Could not wring them without breaking, Such the strength was in his fingers. "Lazy Kwasind!" said his father, "In the hunt you never help me; Every bow you touch is broken, Snapped asunder every arrow; Yet come with me to the forest, You shall bring the hunting homeward." Down a narrow pass they wandered, Where a brooklet led them onward, Where the trail of deer and bison Marked the soft mud on the margin, Till they found all further passage Shut against them, barred securely By the trunks of trees uprooted, Lying lengthwise, lying crosswise, And forbidding further passage. "We must go back," said the old man, "O'er these logs we cannot clamber; Not a woodchuck could get through them, Not a squirrel clamber o'er them!" And straightway his pipe he lighted, And sat down to smoke and ponder. But before his pipe was finished, Lo! the path was cleared before him; All the trunks had Kwasind lifted, To the right hand, to the left hand, Shot the pine-trees swift as arrows, Hurlled the cedars light

as lances. "Lazy Kwasind!" said the young men, As they sported in the meadow: "Why stand idly looking at us, Leaning on the rock behind you? Come and wrestle with the others, Let us pitch the quoit together!" Lazy Kwasind made no answer, To their challenge made no answer, Only rose, and slowly turning, Seized the huge rock in his fingers, Tore it from its deep foundation, Poised it in the air a moment, Pitched it sheer into the river, Sheer into the swift Pauwating, Where it still is seen in Summer. Once as down that foaming river, Down the rapids of Pauwating, Kwasind sailed with his companions, In the stream he saw a beaver, Saw Ahmeek, the King of Beavers, Struggling with the rushing currents, Rising, sinking in the water. Without speaking, without pausing, Kwasind leaped into the river, Plunged beneath the bubbling surface, Through the whirlpools chased the beaver, Followed him among the islands, Stayed so long beneath the water, That his terrified companions Cried, "Alas! good-by to Kwasind! We shall never more see Kwasind!" But he reappeared triumphant, And upon his shining shoulders Brought the beaver, dead and dripping, Brought the King of all the Beavers. And these two, as I have told you, Were the friends of Hiawatha, Chibiabos, the musician, And the very strong man, Kwasind. Long they lived in peace together, Spake with naked hearts together, Pondering much and much contriving How the tribes of men might prosper.

VII Hiawatha's Sailing

"Give me of your bark, O Birch-tree! Of your yellow bark, O Birch-tree! Growing by the rushing river, Tall and stately in the valley! I a light canoe will build me, Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing, That shall float on the river, Like a yellow leaf in Autumn, Like a yellow water-lily! "Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-tree! Lay aside your white-skin wrapper, For the Summer-time is coming, And the sun is warm in heaven, And you need no white-skin wrapper!" Thus aloud cried Hiawatha In the solitary forest, By the rushing Taquamenaw, When the birds were singing gayly, In

the Moon of Leaves were singing, And the sun, from sleep awaking,
Started up and said, "Behold me! Gheezis, the great Sun, behold me!"
And the tree with all its branches Rustled in the breeze of morning, Saying,
with a sigh of patience, "Take my cloak, O Hiawatha!" With his knife
the tree he girdled; Just beneath its lowest branches, Just above the roots,
he cut it, Till the sap came oozing outward; Down the trunk, from top to
bottom, Sheer he cleft the bark asunder, With a wooden wedge he raised it,
Stripped it from the trunk unbroken. "Give me of your boughs, O Cedar!
Of your strong and pliant branches, My canoe to make more steady, Make
more strong and firm beneath me!" Through the summit of the Cedar
Went a sound, a cry of horror, Went a murmur of resistance; But it
whispered, bending downward, "Take my boughs, O Hiawatha!" Down
he hewed the boughs of cedar, Shaped them straightway to a frame-work,
Like two bows he formed and shaped them, Like two bended bows
together. "Give me of your roots, O Tamarack! Of your fibrous roots, O
Larch-tree! My canoe to bind together, So to bind the ends together That
the water may not enter, That the river may not wet me!" And the Larch,
with all its fibres, Shivered in the air of morning, Touched his forehead
with its tassels, Slid, with one long sigh of sorrow. "Take them all, O
Hiawatha!" From the earth he tore the fibres, Tore the tough roots of the
Larch-tree, Closely sewed the bark together, Bound it closely to the frame-
work. "Give me of your balm, O Fir-tree! Of your balsam and your resin,
So to close the seams together That the water may not enter, That the river
may not wet me!" And the Fir-tree, tall and sombre, Sobbed through all
its robes of darkness, Rattled like a shore with pebbles, Answered wailing,
answered weeping, "Take my balm, O Hiawatha!" And he took the tears
of balsam, Took the resin of the Fir-tree, Smear'd therewith each seam and
fissure, Made each crevice safe from water. "Give me of your quills, O
Hedgehog! All your quills, O Kagh, the Hedgehog! I will make a necklace
of them, Make a girdle for my beauty, And two stars to deck her bosom!"
From a hollow tree the Hedgehog With his sleepy eyes looked at him, Shot
his shining quills, like arrows, Saying with a drowsy murmur, Through the
tangle of his whiskers, "Take my quills, O Hiawatha!" From the ground

the quills he gathered, All the little shining arrows, Stained them red and blue and yellow, With the juice of roots and berries; Into his canoe he wrought them, Round its waist a shining girdle, Round its bows a gleaming necklace, On its breast two stars resplendent. Thus the Birch Canoe was builded In the valley, by the river, In the bosom of the forest; And the forest's life was in it, All its mystery and its magic, All the lightness of the birch-tree, All the toughness of the cedar, All the larch's supple sinews; And it floated on the river Like a yellow leaf in Autumn, Like a yellow water-lily. Paddles none had Hiawatha, Paddles none he had or needed, For his thoughts as paddles served him, And his wishes served to guide him; Swift or slow at will he glided, Veered to right or left at pleasure. Then he called aloud to Kwasind, To his friend, the strong man, Kwasind, Saying, "Help me clear this river Of its sunken logs and sand-bars." Straight into the river Kwasind Plunged as if he were an otter, Dived as if he were a beaver, Stood up to his waist in water, To his armpits in the river, Swam and scouted in the river, Tugged at sunken logs and branches, With his hands he scooped the sand-bars, With his feet the ooze and tangle. And thus sailed my Hiawatha Down the rushing Taquamenaw, Sailed through all its bends and windings, Sailed through all its deeps and shallows, While his friend, the strong man, Kwasind, Swam the deeps, the shallows waded. Up and down the river went they, In and out among its islands, Cleared its bed of root and sand-bar, Dragged the dead trees from its channel, Made its passage safe and certain, Made a pathway for the people, From its springs among the mountains, To the waters of Pauwating, To the bay of Taquamenaw.

VIII Hiawatha's Fishing

Forth upon the Gitche Gumee, On the shining Big-Sea-Water, With his fishing-line of cedar, Of the twisted bark of cedar, Forth to catch the sturgeon Nahma, Mishe-Nahma, King of Fishes, In his birch canoe exulting All alone went Hiawatha. Through the clear, transparent water

He could see the fishes swimming Far down in the depths below him; See the yellow perch, the Sahwa, Like a sunbeam in the water, See the Shawgashee, the craw-fish, Like a spider on the bottom, On the white and sandy bottom. At the stern sat Hiawatha, With his fishing-line of cedar; In his plumes the breeze of morning Played as in the hemlock branches; On the bows, with tail erected, Sat the squirrel, Adjidaumo; In his fur the breeze of morning Played as in the prairie grasses. On the white sand of the bottom Lay the monster Mishe-Nahma, Lay the sturgeon, King of Fishes; Through his gills he breathed the water, With his fins he fanned and winnowed, With his tail he swept the sand-floor. There he lay in all his armor; On each side a shield to guard him, Plates of bone upon his forehead, Down his sides and back and shoulders Plates of bone with spines projecting Painted was he with his war-paints, Stripes of yellow, red, and azure, Spots of brown and spots of sable; And he lay there on the bottom, Fanning with his fins of purple, As above him Hiawatha In his birch canoe came sailing, With his fishing-line of cedar. "Take my bait," cried Hiawatha, Dawn into the depths beneath him, "Take my bait, O Sturgeon, Nahma! Come up from below the water, Let us see which is the stronger!" And he dropped his line of cedar Through the clear, transparent water, Waited vainly for an answer, Long sat waiting for an answer, And repeating loud and louder, "Take my bait, O King of Fishes!" Quiet lay the sturgeon, Nahma, Fanning slowly in the water, Looking up at Hiawatha, Listening to his call and clamor, His unnecessary tumult, Till he wearied of the shouting; And he said to the Kenozha, To the pike, the Maskenozha, "Take the bait of this rude fellow, Break the line of Hiawatha!" In his fingers Hiawatha Felt the loose line jerk and tighten, As he drew it in, it tugged so That the birch canoe stood endwise, Like a birch log in the water, With the squirrel, Adjidaumo, Perched and frisking on the summit. Full of scorn was Hiawatha When he saw the fish rise upward, Saw the pike, the Maskenozha, Coming nearer, nearer to him, And he shouted through the water, "Esa! esa! shame upon you! You are but the pike, Kenozha, You are not the fish I wanted, You are not the King of Fishes!" Reeling downward to the bottom Sank the pike in great

confusion, And the mighty sturgeon, Nahma, Said to Ugudwash, the sun-fish, To the bream, with scales of crimson, "Take the bait of this great boaster, Break the line of Hiawatha!" Slowly upward, wavering, gleaming, Rose the Ugudwash, the sun-fish, Seized the line of Hiawatha, Swung with all his weight upon it, Made a whirlpool in the water, Whirled the birch canoe in circles, Round and round in gurgling eddies, Till the circles in the water Reached the far-off sandy beaches, Till the water-flags and rushes Nodded on the distant margins. But when Hiawatha saw him Slowly rising through the water, Lifting up his disk refulgent, Loud he shouted in derision, "Esa! esa! shame upon you! You are Ugudwash, the sun-fish, You are not the fish I wanted, You are not the King of Fishes!" Slowly downward, wavering, gleaming, Sank the Ugudwash, the sun-fish, And again the sturgeon, Nahma, Heard the shout of Hiawatha, Heard his challenge of defiance, The unnecessary tumult, Ringing far across the water. From the white sand of the bottom Up he rose with angry gesture, Quivering in each nerve and fibre, Clashing all his plates of armor, Gleaming bright with all his war-paint; In his wrath he darted upward, Flashing leaped into the sunshine, Opened his great jaws, and swallowed Both canoe and Hiawatha. Down into that darksome cavern Plunged the headlong Hiawatha, As a log on some black river Shoots and plunges down the rapids, Found himself in utter darkness, Groped about in helpless wonder, Till he felt a great heart beating, Throbbing in that utter darkness. And he smote it in his anger, With his fist, the heart of Nahma, Felt the mighty King of Fishes Shudder through each nerve and fibre, Heard the water gurgle round him As he leaped and staggered through it, Sick at heart, and faint and weary. Crosswise then did Hiawatha Drag his birch-canoe for safety, Lest from out the jaws of Nahma, In the turmoil and confusion, Forth he might be hurled and perish. And the squirrel, Adjidaumo, Frisked and chatted very gayly, Toiled and tugged with Hiawatha Till the labor was completed. Then said Hiawatha to him, "O my little friend, the squirrel, Bravely have you toiled to help me; Take the thanks of Hiawatha, And the name which now he gives you; For hereafter and forever Boys shall call you Adjidaumo, Tail-in-air the boys shall call

you!" And again the sturgeon, Nahma, Gasped and quivered in the water, Then was still, and drifted landward Till he grated on the pebbles, Till the listening Hiawatha Heard him grate upon the margin, Felt him strand upon the pebbles, Knew that Nahma, King of Fishes, Lay there dead upon the margin. Then he heard a clang and flapping, As of many wings assembling, Heard a screaming and confusion, As of birds of prey contending, Saw a gleam of light above him, Shining through the ribs of Nahma, Saw the glittering eyes of sea-gulls, Of Kayoshk, the sea-gulls, peering, Gazing at him through the opening, Heard them saying to each other, "T is our brother, Hiawatha!" And he shouted from below them, Cried exulting from the caverns: "O ye sea-gulls! O my brothers! I have slain the sturgeon, Nahma; Make the rifts a little larger, With your claws the openings widen, Set me free from this dark prison, And henceforward and forever Men shall speak of your achievements, Calling you Kayoshk, the sea-gulls, Yes, Kayoshk, the Noble Scratchers!" And the wild and clamorous sea-gulls Toiled with beak and claws together, Made the rifts and openings wider In the mighty ribs of Nahma, And from peril and from prison, From the body of the sturgeon, From the peril of the water, They released my Hiawatha. He was standing near his wigwam, On the margin of the water, And he called to old Nokomis, Called and beckoned to Nokomis, Pointed to the sturgeon, Nahma, Lying lifeless on the pebbles, With the sea-gulls feeding on him. "I have slain the Mishe-Nahma, Slain the King of Fishes!" said he' "Look! the sea-gulls feed upon him, Yes, my friends Kayoshk, the sea-gulls; Drive them not away, Nokomis, They have saved me from great peril In the body of the sturgeon, Wait until their meal is ended, Till their craws are full with feasting, Till they homeward fly, at sunset, To their nests among the marshes; Then bring all your pots and kettles, And make oil for us in Winter." And she waited till the sun set, Till the pallid moon, the Night-sun, Rose above the tranquil water, Till Kayoshk, the sated sea-gulls, From their banquet rose with clamor, And across the fiery sunset Winged their way to far-off islands, To their nests among the rushes. To his sleep went Hiawatha, And Nokomis to her labor, Toiling patient in the moonlight, Till the sun and moon changed

places, Till the sky was red with sunrise, And Kayoshk, the hungry sea-gulls, Came back from the reedy islands, Clamorous for their morning banquet. Three whole days and nights alternate Old Nokomis and the sea-gulls Stripped the oily flesh of Nahma, Till the waves washed through the rib-bones, Till the sea-gulls came no longer, And upon the sands lay nothing But the skeleton of Nahma.

IX Hiawatha and the Pearl-Feather

On the shores of Gitche Gumee, Of the shining Big-Sea-Water, Stood Nokomis, the old woman, Pointing with her finger westward, O'er the water pointing westward, To the purple clouds of sunset. Fiercely the red sun descending Burned his way along the heavens, Set the sky on fire behind him, As war-parties, when retreating, Burn the prairies on their war-trail; And the moon, the Night-sun, eastward, Suddenly starting from his ambush, Followed fast those bloody footprints, Followed in that fiery war-trail, With its glare upon his features. And Nokomis, the old woman, Pointing with her finger westward, Spake these words to Hiawatha: "Yonder dwells the great Pearl-Feather, Megissogwon, the Magician, Manito of Wealth and Wampum, Guarded by his fiery serpents, Guarded by the black pitch-water. You can see his fiery serpents, The Kenabeek, the great serpents, Coiling, playing in the water; You can see the black pitch-water Stretching far away beyond them, To the purple clouds of sunset! "He it was who slew my father, By his wicked wiles and cunning, When he from the moon descended, When he came on earth to seek me. He, the mightiest of Magicians, Sends the fever from the marshes, Sends the pestilential vapors, Sends the poisonous exhalations, Sends the white fog from the fen-lands, Sends disease and death among us! "Take your bow, O Hiawatha, Take your arrows, jasper-headed, Take your war-club, Puggawaugun, And your mittens, Minjekahwun, And your birch-canoe for sailing, And the oil of Mishe-Nahma, So to smear its sides, that swiftly You may pass the black pitch-water; Slay this merciless magician, Save

the people from the fever That he breathes across the fen-lands, And
avenge my father's murder!" Straightway then my Hiawatha Armed
himself with all his war-gear, Launched his birch-canoe for sailing; With
his palm its sides he patted, Said with glee, "Cheemaun, my darling, O my
Birch-canoe! leap forward, Where you see the fiery serpents, Where you
see the black pitch-water!" Forward leaped Cheemaun exulting, And the
noble Hiawatha Sang his war-song wild and woful, And above him the
war-eagle, The Keneu, the great war-eagle, Master of all fowls with
feathers, Screamed and hurtled through the heavens. Soon he reached
the fiery serpents, The Kenabeek, the great serpents, Lying huge upon the
water, Sparkling, rippling in the water, Lying coiled across the passage,
With their blazing crests uplifted, Breathing fiery fogs and vapors, So that
none could pass beyond them. But the fearless Hiawatha Cried aloud,
and spake in this wise, "Let me pass my way, Kenabeek, Let me go upon
my journey!" And they answered, hissing fiercely, With their fiery breath
made answer: "Back, go back! O Shaugodaya! Back to old Nokomis,
Faint-heart!" Then the angry Hiawatha Raised his mighty bow of ash-
tree, Seized his arrows, jasper-headed, Shot them fast among the serpents;
Every twanging of the bow-string Was a war-cry and a death-cry, Every
whizzing of an arrow Was a death-song of Kenabeek. Weltering in the
bloody water, Dead lay all the fiery serpents, And among them Hiawatha
Harmless sailed, and cried exulting: "Onward, O Cheemaun, my darling!
Onward to the black pitch-water!" Then he took the oil of Nahma, And
the bows and sides anointed, Smearred them well with oil, that swiftly He
might pass the black pitch-water. All night long he sailed upon it, Sailed
upon that sluggish water, Covered with its mould of ages, Black with
rotting water-rushes, Rank with flags and leaves of lilies, Stagnant, lifeless,
dreary, dismal, Lighted by the shimmering moonlight, And by will-o'-the-
wisps illumined, Fires by ghosts of dead men kindled, In their weary
night-encampments. All the air was white with moonlight, All the water
black with shadow, And around him the Suggema, The mosquito, sang his
war-song, And the fire-flies, Wah-wah-taysee, Waved their torches to
mislead him; And the bull-frog, the Dahinda, Thrust his head into the

moonlight, Fixed his yellow eyes upon him, Sobbed and sank beneath the surface; And anon a thousand whistles, Answered over all the fen-lands, And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, Far off on the reedy margin, Heralded the hero's coming. Westward thus fared Hiawatha, Toward the realm of Megissogwon, Toward the land of the Pearl-Feather, Till the level moon stared at him In his face stared pale and haggard, Till the sun was hot behind him, Till it burned upon his shoulders, And before him on the upland He could see the Shining Wigwam Of the Manito of Wampum, Of the mightiest of Magicians. Then once more Cheemaun he patted, To his birch-canoe said, "Onward!" And it stirred in all its fibres, And with one great bound of triumph Leaped across the water-lilies, Leaped through tangled flags and rushes, And upon the beach beyond them Dry-shod landed Hiawatha. Straight he took his bow of ash-tree, On the sand one end he rested, With his knee he pressed the middle, Stretched the faithful bow-string tighter, Took an arrow, jasperheaded, Shot it at the Shining Wigwam, Sent it singing as a herald, As a bearer of his message, Of his challenge loud and lofty: "Come forth from your lodge, Pearl-Feather! Hiawatha waits your coming!" Straightway from the Shining Wigwam Came the mighty Megissogwon, Tall of stature, broad of shoulder, Dark and terrible in aspect, Clad from head to foot in wampum, Armed with all his warlike weapons, Painted like the sky of morning, Streaked with crimson, blue, and yellow, Crested with great eagle-feathers, Streaming upward, streaming outward. "Well I know you, Hiawatha!" Cried he in a voice of thunder, In a tone of loud derision. "Hasten back, O Shaugodaya! Hasten back among the women, Back to old Nokomis, Faint-heart! I will slay you as you stand there, As of old I slew her father!" But my Hiawatha answered, Nothing daunted, fearing nothing: "Big words do not smite like war-clubs, Boastful breath is not a bow-string, Taunts are not so sharp as arrows, Deeds are better things than words are, Actions mightier than boastings!" Then began the greatest battle That the sun had ever looked on, That the war-birds ever witnessed. All a Summer's day it lasted, From the sunrise to the sunset; For the shafts of Hiawatha Harmless hit the shirt of wampum, Harmless fell the blows he dealt it With his mittens,

Minjekahwun, Harmless fell the heavy war-club; It could dash the rocks asunder, But it could not break the meshes Of that magic shirt of wampum. Till at sunset Hiawatha, Leaning on his bow of ash-tree, Wounded, weary, and desponding, With his mighty war-club broken, With his mittens torn and tattered, And three useless arrows only, Paused to rest beneath a pine-tree, From whose branches trailed the mosses, And whose trunk was coated over With the Dead-man's Moccasin-leather, With the fungus white and yellow. Suddenly from the boughs above him Sang the Mama, the woodpecker: "Aim your arrows, Hiawatha, At the head of Megissogwon, Strike the tuft of hair upon it, At their roots the long black tresses; There alone can he be wounded!" Winged with feathers, tipped with jasper, Swift flew Hiawatha's arrow, Just as Megissogwon, stooping, Raised a heavy stone to throw it. Full upon the crown it struck him, At the roots of his long tresses, And he reeled and staggered forward, Plunging like a wounded bison, Yes, like Pezhekee, the bison, When the snow is on the prairie. Swifter flew the second arrow, In the pathway of the other, Piercing deeper than the other, Wounding sorer than the other; And the knees of Megissogwon Shook like windy reeds beneath him, Bent and trembled like the rushes. But the third and latest arrow Swiftest flew, and wounded sorest, And the mighty Megissogwon Saw the fiery eyes of Pauguk, Saw the eyes of Death glare at him, Heard his voice call in the darkness; At the feet of Hiawatha Lifeless lay the great Pearl-Feather, Lay the mightiest of Magicians. Then the grateful Hiawatha Called the Mama, the woodpecker, From his perch among the branches Of the melancholy pine-tree, And, in honor of his service, Stained with blood the tuft of feathers On the little head of Mama; Even to this day he wears it, Wears the tuft of crimson feathers, As a symbol of his service. Then he stripped the shirt of wampum From the back of Megissogwon, As a trophy of the battle, As a signal of his conquest. On the shore he left the body, Half on land and half in water, In the sand his feet were buried, And his face was in the water. And above him, wheeled and clamored The Keneu, the great war-eagle, Sailing round in narrower circles, Hovering nearer, nearer, nearer. From the wigwam Hiawatha Bore the wealth of

Megissogwon, All his wealth of skins and wampum, Furs of bison and of beaver, Furs of sable and of ermine, Wampum belts and strings and pouches, Quivers wrought with beads of wampum, Filled with arrows, silver-headed. Homeward then he sailed exulting, Homeward through the black pitch-water, Homeward through the weltering serpents, With the trophies of the battle, With a shout and song of triumph. On the shore stood old Nokomis, On the shore stood Chibiabos, And the very strong man, Kwasind, Waiting for the hero's coming, Listening to his songs of triumph. And the people of the village Welcomed him with songs and dances, Made a joyous feast, and shouted: 'Honor be to Hiawatha! He has slain the great Pearl-Feather, Slain the mightiest of Magicians, Him, who sent the fiery fever, Sent the white fog from the fen-lands, Sent disease and death among us!' Ever dear to Hiawatha Was the memory of Mama! And in token of his friendship, As a mark of his remembrance, He adorned and decked his pipe-stem With the crimson tuft of feathers, With the blood-red crest of Mama. But the wealth of Megissogwon, All the trophies of the battle, He divided with his people, Shared it equally among them.

X Hiawatha's Wooing

"As unto the bow the cord is, So unto the man is woman; Though she bends him, she obeys him, Though she draws him, yet she follows; Useless each without the other!" Thus the youthful Hiawatha Said within himself and pondered, Much perplexed by various feelings, Listless, longing, hoping, fearing, Dreaming still of Minnehaha, Of the lovely Laughing Water, In the land of the Dacotahs. "Wed a maiden of your people," Warning said the old Nokomis; "Go not eastward, go not westward, For a stranger, whom we know not! Like a fire upon the hearth-stone Is a neighbor's homely daughter, Like the starlight or the moonlight Is the handsomest of strangers!" Thus dissuading spake Nokomis, And my Hiawatha answered Only this: "Dear old Nokomis, Very pleasant is the firelight, But I like the starlight better, Better do I like the moonlight!"

Gravely then said old Nokomis: "Bring not here an idle maiden, Bring not here a useless woman, Hands unskilful, feet unwilling; Bring a wife with nimble fingers, Heart and hand that move together, Feet that run on willing errands!" Smiling answered Hiawatha: 'In the land of the Dacotahs Lives the Arrow-maker's daughter, Minnehaha, Laughing Water, Handsomest of all the women. I will bring her to your wigwam, She shall run upon your errands, Be your starlight, moonlight, firelight, Be the sunlight of my people!" Still dissuading said Nokomis: "Bring not to my lodge a stranger From the land of the Dacotahs! Very fierce are the Dacotahs, Often is there war between us, There are feuds yet unforgotten, Wounds that ache and still may open!" Laughing answered Hiawatha: "For that reason, if no other, Would I wed the fair Dacotah, That our tribes might be united, That old feuds might be forgotten, And old wounds be healed forever!" Thus departed Hiawatha To the land of the Dacotahs, To the land of handsome women; Striding over moor and meadow, Through interminable forests, Through uninterrupted silence. With his moccasins of magic, At each stride a mile he measured; Yet the way seemed long before him, And his heart outran his footsteps; And he journeyed without resting, Till he heard the cataract's laughter, Heard the Falls of Minnehaha Calling to him through the silence. "Pleasant is the sound!" he murmured, "Pleasant is the voice that calls me!" On the outskirts of the forests, 'Twixt the shadow and the sunshine, Herds of fallow deer were feeding, But they saw not Hiawatha; To his bow he whispered, "Fail not!" To his arrow whispered, "Swerve not!" Sent it singing on its errand, To the red heart of the roebuck; Threw the deer across his shoulder, And sped forward without pausing. At the doorway of his wigwam Sat the ancient Arrow-maker, In the land of the Dacotahs, Making arrow-heads of jasper, Arrow-heads of chalcedony. At his side, in all her beauty, Sat the lovely Minnehaha, Sat his daughter, Laughing Water, Plaiting mats of flags and rushes Of the past the old man's thoughts were, And the maiden's of the future. He was thinking, as he sat there, Of the days when with such arrows He had struck the deer and bison, On the Muskoday, the meadow; Shot the wild goose, flying southward On the

wing, the clamorous Wawa; Thinking of the great war-parties, How they came to buy his arrows, Could not fight without his arrows. Ah, no more such noble warriors Could be found on earth as they were! Now the men were all like women, Only used their tongues for weapons! She was thinking of a hunter, From another tribe and country, Young and tall and very handsome, Who one morning, in the Spring-time, Came to buy her father's arrows, Sat and rested in the wigwam, Lingered long about the doorway, Looking back as he departed. She had heard her father praise him, Praise his courage and his wisdom; Would he come again for arrows To the Falls of Minnehaha? On the mat her hands lay idle, And her eyes were very dreamy. Through their thoughts they heard a footstep, Heard a rustling in the branches, And with glowing cheek and forehead, With the deer upon his shoulders, Suddenly from out the woodlands Hiawatha stood before them. Straight the ancient Arrow-maker Looked up gravely from his labor, Laid aside the unfinished arrow, Bade him enter at the doorway, Saying, as he rose to meet him, 'Hiawatha, you are welcome!' At the feet of Laughing Water Hiawatha laid his burden, Threw the red deer from his shoulders; And the maiden looked up at him, Looked up from her mat of rushes, Said with gentle look and accent, "You are welcome, Hiawatha!" Very spacious was the wigwam, Made of deer-skins dressed and whitened, With the Gods of the Dacotahs Drawn and painted on its curtains, And so tall the doorway, hardly Hiawatha stooped to enter, Hardly touched his eagle-feathers As he entered at the doorway. Then uprose the Laughing Water, From the ground fair Minnehaha, Laid aside her mat unfinished, Brought forth food and set before them, Water brought them from the brooklet, Gave them food in earthen vessels, Gave them drink in bowls of bass-wood, Listened while the guest was speaking, Listened while her father answered, But not once her lips she opened, Not a single word she uttered. Yes, as in a dream she listened To the words of Hiawatha, As he talked of old Nokomis, Who had nursed him in his childhood, As he told of his companions, Chibiabos, the musician, And the very strong man, Kwasind, And of happiness and plenty In the land of the Ojibways, In the pleasant land and peaceful. "After many years of

warfare, Many years of strife and bloodshed, There is peace between the Ojibways And the tribe of the Dacotahs." Thus continued Hiawatha, And then added, speaking slowly, "That this peace may last forever, And our hands be clasped more closely, And our hearts be more united, Give me as my wife this maiden, Minnehaha, Laughing Water, Loveliest of Dacotah women!" And the ancient Arrow-maker Paused a moment ere he answered, Smoked a little while in silence, Looked at Hiawatha proudly, Fondly looked at Laughing Water, And made answer very gravely: "Yes, if Minnehaha wishes; Let your heart speak, Minnehaha!" And the lovely Laughing Water Seemed more lovely as she stood there, Neither willing nor reluctant, As she went to Hiawatha, Softly took the seat beside him, While she said, and blushed to say it, "I will follow you, my husband!" This was Hiawatha's wooing! Thus it was he won the daughter Of the ancient Arrow-maker, In the land of the Dacotahs! From the wigwam he departed, Leading with him Laughing Water; Hand in hand they went together, Through the woodland and the meadow, Left the old man standing lonely At the doorway of his wigwam, Heard the Falls of Minnehaha Calling to them from the distance, Crying to them from afar off, "Fare thee well, O Minnehaha!" And the ancient Arrow-maker Turned again unto his labor, Sat down by his sunny doorway, Murmuring to himself, and saying: "Thus it is our daughters leave us, Those we love, and those who love us! Just when they have learned to help us, When we are old and lean upon them, Comes a youth with flaunting feathers, With his flute of reeds, a stranger Wanders piping through the village, Beckons to the fairest maiden, And she follows where he leads her, Leaving all things for the stranger!" Pleasant was the journey homeward, Through interminable forests, Over meadow, over mountain, Over river, hill, and hollow. Short it seemed to Hiawatha, Though they journeyed very slowly, Though his pace he checked and slackened To the steps of Laughing Water. Over wide and rushing rivers In his arms he bore the maiden; Light he thought her as a feather, As the plume upon his head-gear; Cleared the tangled pathway for her, Bent aside the swaying branches, Made at night a lodge of branches, And a bed with boughs of hemlock, And a fire before

the doorway With the dry cones of the pine-tree. All the travelling winds went with them, O'er the meadows, through the forest; All the stars of night looked at them, Watched with sleepless eyes their slumber; From his ambush in the oak-tree Peeped the squirrel, Adjidaumo, Watched with eager eyes the lovers; And the rabbit, the Wabasso, Scampered from the path before them, Peering, peeping from his burrow, Sat erect upon his haunches, Watched with curious eyes the lovers. Pleasant was the journey homeward! All the birds sang loud and sweetly Songs of happiness and heart's-ease; Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa, "Happy are you, Hiawatha, Having such a wife to love you!" Sang the robin, the Opechee, "Happy are you, Laughing Water, Having such a noble husband!" From the sky the sun benignant Looked upon them through the branches, Saying to them, "O my children, Love is sunshine, hate is shadow, Life is checkered shade and sunshine, Rule by love, O Hiawatha!" From the sky the moon looked at them, Filled the lodge with mystic splendors, Whispered to them, "O my children, Day is restless, night is quiet, Man imperious, woman feeble; Half is mine, although I follow; Rule by patience, Laughing Water!" Thus it was they journeyed homeward; Thus it was that Hiawatha To the lodge of old Nokomis Brought the moonlight, starlight, firelight, Brought the sunshine of his people, Minnehaha, Laughing Water, Handsomest of all the women In the land of the Dacotahs, In the land of handsome women.

XI Hiawatha's Wedding-Feast

You shall hear how Pau-Puk-Keewis, How the handsome Yenadizze Danced at Hiawatha's wedding; How the gentle Chibiabos, He the sweetest of musicians, Sang his songs of love and longing; How Iagoo, the great boaster, He the marvellous story-teller, Told his tales of strange adventure, That the feast might be more joyous, That the time might pass more gayly, And the guests be more contented. Sumptuous was the feast Nokomis Made at Hiawatha's wedding; All the bowls were made of bass-wood, White and polished very smoothly, All the spoons of horn of bison,

Black and polished very smoothly. She had sent through all the village Messengers with wands of willow, As a sign of invitation, As a token of the feasting; And the wedding guests assembled, Clad in all their richest raiment, Robes of fur and belts of wampum, Splendid with their paint and plumage, Beautiful with beads and tassels. First they ate the sturgeon, Nahma, And the pike, the Maskenozha, Caught and cooked by old Nokomis; Then on pemican they feasted, Pemican and buffalo marrow, Haunch of deer and hump of bison, Yellow cakes of the Mondamin, And the wild rice of the river. But the gracious Hiawatha, And the lovely Laughing Water, And the careful old Nokomis, Tasted not the food before them, Only waited on the others Only served their guests in silence. And when all the guests had finished, Old Nokomis, brisk and busy, From an ample pouch of otter, Filled the red-stone pipes for smoking With tobacco from the South-land, Mixed with bark of the red willow, And with herbs and leaves of fragrance. Then she said, "O Pau-Puk-Keewis, Dance for us your merry dances, Dance the Beggar's Dance to please us, That the feast may be more joyous, That the time may pass more gayly, And our guests be more contented!" Then the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis, He the idle Yenadizze, He the merry mischief-maker, Whom the people called the Storm-Fool, Rose among the guests assembled. Skilled was he in sports and pastimes, In the merry dance of snow-shoes, In the play of quoits and ball-play; Skilled was he in games of hazard, In all games of skill and hazard, Pugasaing, the Bowl and Counters, Kuntassoo, the Game of Plum-stones. Though the warriors called him Faint-Heart, Called him coward, Shaugodaya, Idler, gambler, Yenadizze, Little heeded he their jesting, Little cared he for their insults, For the women and the maidens Loved the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis. He was dressed in shirt of doeskin, White and soft, and fringed with ermine, All inwrought with beads of wampum; He was dressed in deer-skin leggings, Fringed with hedgehog quills and ermine, And in moccasins of buck-skin, Thick with quills and beads embroidered. On his head were plumes of swan's down, On his heels were tails of foxes, In one hand a fan of feathers, And a pipe was in the other. Barred with streaks of red and yellow, Streaks of blue and bright vermilion,

Shone the face of Pau-Puk-Keewis. From his forehead fell his tresses,
Smooth, and parted like a woman's, Shining bright with oil, and plaited,
Hung with braids of scented grasses, As among the guests assembled, To
the sound of flutes and singing, To the sound of drums and voices, Rose
the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis, And began his mystic dances. First he
danced a solemn measure, Very slow in step and gesture, In and out
among the pine-trees, Through the shadows and the sunshine, Treading
softly like a panther. Then more swiftly and still swifter, Whirling,
spinning round in circles, Leaping o'er the guests assembled, Eddying
round and round the wigwam, Till the leaves went whirling with him, Till
the dust and wind together Swept in eddies round about him. Then along
the sandy margin Of the lake, the Big-Sea-Water, On he sped with frenzied
gestures, Stamped upon the sand, and tossed it Wildly in the air around
him; Till the wind became a whirlwind, Till the sand was blown and sifted
Like great snowdrifts o'er the landscape, Heaping all the shores with Sand
Dunes, Sand Hills of the Nagow Wudjoo! Thus the merry Pau-Puk-
Keewis Danced his Beggar's Dance to please them, And, returning, sat
down laughing There among the guests assembled, Sat and fanned himself
serenely With his fan of turkey-feathers. Then they said to Chibiabos, To
the friend of Hiawatha, To the sweetest of all singers, To the best of all
musicians, "Sing to us, O Chibiabos! Songs of love and songs of longing,
That the feast may be more joyous, That the time may pass more gayly,
And our guests be more contented!" And the gentle Chibiabos Sang in
accents sweet and tender, Sang in tones of deep emotion, Songs of love
and songs of longing; Looking still at Hiawatha, Looking at fair Laughing
Water, Sang he softly, sang in this wise: "Onaway! Awake, beloved!
Thou the wild-flower of the forest! Thou the wild-bird of the prairie! Thou
with eyes so soft and fawn-like! "If thou only lookest at me, I am happy,
I am happy, As the lilies of the prairie, When they feel the dew upon them!
"Sweet thy breath is as the fragrance Of the wild-flowers in the morning,
As their fragrance is at evening, In the Moon when leaves are falling.
"Does not all the blood within me Leap to meet thee, leap to meet thee, As
the springs to meet the sunshine, In the Moon when nights are brightest?"

"Onaway! my heart sings to thee, Sings with joy when thou art near me,
As the sighing, singing branches In the pleasant Moon of Strawberries!
"When thou art not pleased, beloved, Then my heart is sad and darkened,
As the shining river darkens When the clouds drop shadows on it!
"When thou smilest, my beloved, Then my troubled heart is brightened, As
in sunshine gleam the ripples That the cold wind makes in rivers.
"Smiles the earth, and smile the waters, Smile the cloudless skies above us,
But I lose the way of smiling When thou art no longer near me! "I
myself, myself! behold me! Blood of my beating heart, behold me! Oh
awake, awake, beloved! Onaway! awake, beloved!" Thus the gentle
Chibiabos Sang his song of love and longing; And Iagoo, the great boaster,
He the marvellous story-teller, He the friend of old Nokomis, Jealous of
the sweet musician, Jealous of the applause they gave him, Saw in all the
eyes around him, Saw in all their looks and gestures, That the wedding
guests assembled Longed to hear his pleasant stories, His immeasurable
falsehoods. Very boastful was Iagoo; Never heard he an adventure But
himself had met a greater; Never any deed of daring But himself had done
a bolder; Never any marvellous story But himself could tell a stranger.
Would you listen to his boasting, Would you only give him credence, No
one ever shot an arrow Half so far and high as he had; Ever caught so
many fishes, Ever killed so many reindeer, Ever trapped so many beaver!
None could run so fast as he could, None could dive so deep as he could,
None could swim so far as he could; None had made so many journeys,
None had seen so many wonders, As this wonderful Iagoo, As this
marvellous story-teller! Thus his name became a by-word And a jest
among the people; And whene'er a boastful hunter Praised his own address
too highly, Or a warrior, home returning, Talked too much of his
achievements, All his hearers cried, "Iagoo! Here's Iagoo come among
us!" He it was who carved the cradle Of the little Hiawatha, Carved its
framework out of linden, Bound it strong with reindeer sinews; He it was
who taught him later How to make his bows and arrows, How to make the
bows of ash-tree, And the arrows of the oak-tree. So among the guests
assembled At my Hiawatha's wedding Sat Iagoo, old and ugly, Sat the

marvellous story-teller. And they said, "O good Iagoo, Tell us now a tale of wonder, Tell us of some strange adventure, That the feast may be more joyous, That the time may pass more gayly, And our guests be more contented!" And Iagoo answered straightway, "You shall hear a tale of wonder, You shall hear the strange adventures Of Osseo, the Magician, From the Evening Star descending."

XII The Son of the Evening Star

Can it be the sun descending O'er the level plain of water? Or the Red Swan floating, flying, Wounded by the magic arrow, Staining all the waves with crimson, With the crimson of its life-blood, Filling all the air with splendor, With the splendor of its plumage? Yes; it is the sun descending, Sinking down into the water; All the sky is stained with purple, All the water flushed with crimson! No; it is the Red Swan floating, Diving down beneath the water; To the sky its wings are lifted, With its blood the waves are reddened! Over it the Star of Evening Melts and trembles through the purple, Hangs suspended in the twilight. No; it is a bead of wampum On the robes of the Great Spirit As he passes through the twilight, Walks in silence through the heavens. This with joy beheld Iagoo And he said in haste: "Behold it! See the sacred Star of Evening! You shall hear a tale of wonder, Hear the story of Osseo, Son of the Evening Star, Osseo! "Once, in days no more remembered, Ages nearer the beginning, When the heavens were closer to us, And the Gods were more familiar, In the North-land lived a hunter, With ten young and comely daughters, Tall and lithe as wands of willow; Only Oweenee, the youngest, She the wilful and the wayward, She the silent, dreamy maiden, Was the fairest of the sisters. "All these women married warriors, Married brave and haughty husbands; Only Oweenee, the youngest, Laughed and flouted all her lovers, All her young and handsome suitors, And then married old Osseo, Old Osseo, poor and ugly, Broken with age and weak with coughing, Always coughing like a squirrel. "Ah, but beautiful within him Was the spirit of

Osseo, From the Evening Star descended, Star of Evening, Star of Woman, Star of tenderness and passion! All its fire was in his bosom, All its beauty in his spirit, All its mystery in his being, All its splendor in his language! "And her lovers, the rejected, Handsome men with belts of wampum, Handsome men with paint and feathers. Pointed at her in derision, Followed her with jest and laughter. But she said: 'I care not for you, Care not for your belts of wampum, Care not for your paint and feathers, Care not for your jests and laughter; I am happy with Osseo!' 'Once to some great feast invited, Through the damp and dusk of evening, Walked together the ten sisters, Walked together with their husbands; Slowly followed old Osseo, With fair Oweenee beside him; All the others chatted gayly, These two only walked in silence. "At the western sky Osseo Gazed intent, as if imploring, Often stopped and gazed imploring At the trembling Star of Evening, At the tender Star of Woman; And they heard him murmur softly, 'Ah, showain nemeshin, Nosa! Pity, pity me, my father!' 'Listen!' said the eldest sister, 'He is praying to his father! What a pity that the old man Does not stumble in the pathway, Does not break his neck by falling!' And they laughed till all the forest Rang with their unseemly laughter. "On their pathway through the woodlands Lay an oak, by storms uprooted, Lay the great trunk of an oak-tree, Buried half in leaves and mosses, Mouldering, crumbling, huge and hollow. And Osseo, when he saw it, Gave a shout, a cry of anguish, Leaped into its yawning cavern, At one end went in an old man, Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly; From the other came a young man, Tall and straight and strong and handsome. "Thus Osseo was transfigured, Thus restored to youth and beauty; But, alas for good Osseo, And for Oweenee, the faithful! Strangely, too, was she transfigured. Changed into a weak old woman, With a staff she tottered onward, Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly! And the sisters and their husbands Laughed until the echoing forest Rang with their unseemly laughter. "But Osseo turned not from her, Walked with slower step beside her, Took her hand, as brown and withered As an oak-leaf is in Winter, Called her sweetheart, Nenemoosha, Soothed her with soft words of kindness, Till they reached the lodge of feasting, Till they sat down in

the wigwam, Sacred to the Star of Evening, To the tender Star of Woman. "Wrapt in visions, lost in dreaming, At the banquet sat Osseo; All were merry, all were happy, All were joyous but Osseo. Neither food nor drink he tasted, Neither did he speak nor listen; But as one bewildered sat he, Looking dreamily and sadly, First at Oweenee, then upward At the gleaming sky above them. "Then a voice was heard, a whisper, Coming from the starry distance, Coming from the empty vastness, Low, and musical, and tender; And the voice said: 'O Osseo! O my son, my best beloved! Broken are the spells that bound you, All the charms of the magicians, All the magic powers of evil; Come to me; ascend, Osseo! "Taste the food that stands before you: It is blessed and enchanted, It has magic virtues in it, It will change you to a spirit. All your bowls and all your kettles Shall be wood and clay no longer; But the bowls be changed to wampum, And the kettles shall be silver; They shall shine like shells of scarlet, Like the fire shall gleam and glimmer. "And the women shall no longer Bear the dreary doom of labor, But be changed to birds, and glisten With the beauty of the starlight, Painted with the dusky splendors Of the skies and clouds of evening!' "What Osseo heard as whispers, What as words he comprehended, Was but music to the others, Music as of birds afar off, Of the whippoorwill afar off, Of the lonely Wawonaissa Singing in the darksome forest. "Then the lodge began to tremble, Straight began to shake and tremble, And they felt it rising, rising, Slowly through the air ascending, From the darkness of the tree-tops Forth into the dewy starlight, Till it passed the topmost branches; And behold! the wooden dishes All were changed to shells of scarlet! And behold! the earthen kettles All were changed to bowls of silver! And the roof-poles of the wigwam Were as glittering rods of silver, And the roof of bark upon them As the shining shards of beetles. "Then Osseo gazed around him, And he saw the nine fair sisters, All the sisters and their husbands, Changed to birds of various plumage. Some were jays and some were magpies, Others thrushes, others blackbirds; And they hopped, and sang, and twittered, Perked and fluttered all their feathers, Strutted in their shining plumage, And their tails like fans unfolded. "Only Oweenee, the youngest, Was not changed, but sat in

silence, Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly, Looking sadly at the others; Till Osseo, gazing upward, Gave another cry of anguish, Such a cry as he had uttered By the oak-tree in the forest. "Then returned her youth and beauty, And her soiled and tattered garments Were transformed to robes of ermine, And her staff became a feather, Yes, a shining silver feather! "And again the wigwam trembled, Swayed and rushed through airy currents, Through transparent cloud and vapor, And amid celestial splendors On the Evening Star alighted, As a snow-flake falls on snow-flake, As a leaf drops on a river, As the thistledown on water. "Forth with cheerful words of welcome Came the father of Osseo, He with radiant locks of silver, He with eyes serene and tender. And he said: `My son, Osseo, Hang the cage of birds you bring there, Hang the cage with rods of silver, And the birds with glistening feathers, At the doorway of my wigwam.' "At the door he hung the bird-cage, And they entered in and gladly Listened to Osseo's father, Ruler of the Star of Evening, As he said: `O my Osseo! I have had compassion on you, Given you back your youth and beauty, Into birds of various plumage Changed your sisters and their husbands; Changed them thus because they mocked you In the figure of the old man, In that aspect sad and wrinkled, Could not see your heart of passion, Could not see your youth immortal; Only Oweenee, the faithful, Saw your naked heart and loved you. ""In the lodge that glimmers yonder, In the little star that twinkles Through the vapors, on the left hand, Lives the envious Evil Spirit, The Wabeno, the magician, Who transformed you to an old man. Take heed lest his beams fall on you, For the rays he darts around him Are the power of his enchantment, Are the arrows that he uses.' "Many years, in peace and quiet, On the peaceful Star of Evening Dwelt Osseo with his father; Many years, in song and flutter, At the doorway of the wigwam, Hung the cage with rods of silver, And fair Oweenee, the faithful, Bore a son unto Osseo, With the beauty of his mother, With the courage of his father. "And the boy grew up and prospered, And Osseo, to delight him, Made him little bows and arrows, Opened the great cage of silver, And let loose his aunts and uncles, All those birds with glossy feathers, For his little son to shoot at. "Round and round they wheeled and darted, Filled

the Evening Star with music, With their songs of joy and freedom Filled the Evening Star with splendor, With the fluttering of their plumage; Till the boy, the little hunter, Bent his bow and shot an arrow, Shot a swift and fatal arrow, And a bird, with shining feathers, At his feet fell wounded sorely. "But, O wondrous transformation! `T was no bird he saw before him, `T was a beautiful young woman, With the arrow in her bosom! "When her blood fell on the planet, On the sacred Star of Evening, Broken was the spell of magic, Powerless was the strange enchantment, And the youth, the fearless bowman, Suddenly felt himself descending, Held by unseen hands, but sinking Downward through the empty spaces, Downward through the clouds and vapors, Till he rested on an island, On an island, green and grassy, Yonder in the Big-Sea-Water. "After him he saw descending All the birds with shining feathers, Fluttering, falling, wafted downward, Like the painted leaves of Autumn; And the lodge with poles of silver, With its roof like wings of beetles, Like the shining shards of beetles, By the winds of heaven uplifted, Slowly sank upon the island, Bringing back the good Osseo, Bringing Oweenee, the faithful. "Then the birds, again transfigured, Reassumed the shape of mortals, Took their shape, but not their stature; They remained as Little People, Like the pygmies, the Puk-Wudjies, And on pleasant nights of Summer, When the Evening Star was shining, Hand in hand they danced together On the island's craggy headlands, On the sand-beach low and level. "Still their glittering lodge is seen there, On the tranquil Summer evenings, And upon the shore the fisher Sometimes hears their happy voices, Sees them dancing in the starlight !" When the story was completed, When the wondrous tale was ended, Looking round upon his listeners, Solemnly Iagoo added: "There are great men, I have known such, Whom their people understand not, Whom they even make a jest of, Scoff and jeer at in derision. From the story of Osseo Let us learn the fate of jesters!" All the wedding guests delighted Listened to the marvellous story, Listened laughing and applauding, And they whispered to each other: "Does he mean himself, I wonder? And are we the aunts and uncles?" Then again sang Chibiabos, Sang a song of love and longing, In those accents sweet

and tender, In those tones of pensive sadness, Sang a maiden's lamentation
For her lover, her Algonquin. "When I think of my beloved, Ah me! think
of my beloved, When my heart is thinking of him, O my sweetheart, my
Algonquin! "Ah me! when I parted from him, Round my neck he hung
the wampum, As a pledge, the snow-white wampum, O my sweetheart,
my Algonquin! "I will go with you, he whispered, Ah me! to your
native country; Let me go with you, he whispered, O my sweetheart, my
Algonquin! "Far away, away, I answered, Very far away, I answered, Ah
me! is my native country, O my sweetheart, my Algonquin! "When I
looked back to behold him, Where we parted, to behold him, After me he
still was gazing, O my sweetheart, my Algonquin! "By the tree he still
was standing, By the fallen tree was standing, That had dropped into the
water, O my sweetheart, my Algonquin! "When I think of my beloved, Ah
me! think of my beloved, When my heart is thinking of him, O my
sweetheart, my Algonquin!" Such was Hiawatha's Wedding, Such the
dance of Pau-Puk-Keewis, Such the story of Iagoo, Such the songs of
Chibiabos; Thus the wedding banquet ended, And the wedding guests
departed, Leaving Hiawatha happy With the night and Minnehaha.

XIII Blessing the Cornfields

Sing, O Song of Hiawatha, Of the happy days that followed, In the
land of the Ojibways, In the pleasant land and peaceful! Sing the mysteries
of Mondamin, Sing the Blessing of the Cornfields! Buried was the
bloody hatchet, Buried was the dreadful war-club, Buried were all warlike
weapons, And the war-cry was forgotten. There was peace among the
nations; Unmolested roved the hunters, Built the birch canoe for sailing,
Caught the fish in lake and river, Shot the deer and trapped the beaver;
Unmolested worked the women, Made their sugar from the maple,
Gathered wild rice in the meadows, Dressed the skins of deer and beaver.
All around the happy village Stood the maize-fields, green and shining,
Waved the green plumes of Mondamin, Waved his soft and sunny tresses,
Filling all the land with plenty. `T was the women who in Spring-time

Planted the broad fields and fruitful, Buried in the earth Mondamin; `T was the women who in Autumn Stripped the yellow husks of harvest, Stripped the garments from Mondamin, Even as Hiawatha taught them. Once, when all the maize was planted, Hiawatha, wise and thoughtful, Spake and said to Minnehaha, To his wife, the Laughing Water: "You shall bless to-night the cornfields, Draw a magic circle round them, To protect them from destruction, Blast of mildew, blight of insect, Wagemin, the thief of cornfields, Paimosaid, who steals the maize-ear "In the night, when all Is silence,' In the night, when all Is darkness, When the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin, Shuts the doors of all the wigwams, So that not an ear can hear you, So that not an eye can see you, Rise up from your bed in silence, Lay aside your garments wholly, Walk around the fields you planted, Round the borders of the cornfields, Covered by your tresses only, Robed with darkness as a garment. "Thus the fields shall be more fruitful, And the passing of your footsteps Draw a magic circle round them, So that neither blight nor mildew, Neither burrowing worm nor insect, Shall pass o'er the magic circle; Not the dragon-fly, Kwo-ne-she, Nor the spider, Subbekashe, Nor the grasshopper, Pah-puk-keena; Nor the mighty caterpillar, Way-muk-kwana, with the bear-skin, King of all the caterpillars!" On the tree-tops near the cornfields Sat the hungry crows and ravens, Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, With his band of black marauders. And they laughed at Hiawatha, Till the tree-tops shook with laughter, With their melancholy laughter, At the words of Hiawatha. "Hear him!" said they; "hear the Wise Man, Hear the plots of Hiawatha!" When the noiseless night descended Broad and dark o'er field and forest, When the mournful Wawonaissa Sorrowing sang among the hemlocks, And the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin, Shut the doors of all the wigwams, From her bed rose Laughing Water, Laid aside her garments wholly, And with darkness clothed and guarded, Unashamed and unaffrighted, Walked securely round the cornfields, Drew the sacred, magic circle Of her footprints round the cornfields. No one but the Midnight only Saw her beauty in the darkness, No one but the Wawonaissa Heard the panting of her bosom Guskewau, the darkness, wrapped her Closely in his sacred

mantle, So that none might see her beauty, So that none might boast, "I saw her!" On the morrow, as the day dawned, Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, Gathered all his black marauders, Crows and blackbirds, jays and ravens, Clamorous on the dusky tree-tops, And descended, fast and fearless, On the fields of Hiawatha, On the grave of the Mondamin. "We will drag Mondamin," said they, "From the grave where he is buried, Spite of all the magic circles Laughing Water draws around it, Spite of all the sacred footprints Minnehaha stamps upon it!" But the wary Hiawatha, Ever thoughtful, careful, watchful, Had o'erheard the scornful laughter When they mocked him from the tree-tops. "Kaw!" he said, "my friends the ravens! Kahgahgee, my King of Ravens! I will teach you all a lesson That shall not be soon forgotten!" He had risen before the daybreak, He had spread o'er all the cornfields Snares to catch the black marauders, And was lying now in ambush In the neighboring grove of pine-trees, Waiting for the crows and blackbirds, Waiting for the jays and ravens. Soon they came with caw and clamor, Rush of wings and cry of voices, To their work of devastation, Settling down upon the cornfields, Delving deep with beak and talon, For the body of Mondamin. And with all their craft and cunning, All their skill in wiles of warfare, They perceived no danger near them, Till their claws became entangled, Till they found themselves imprisoned In the snares of Hiawatha. From his place of ambush came he, Striding terrible among them, And so awful was his aspect That the bravest quailed with terror. Without mercy he destroyed them Right and left, by tens and twenties, And their wretched, lifeless bodies Hung aloft on poles for scarecrows Round the consecrated cornfields, As a signal of his vengeance, As a warning to marauders. Only Kahgahgee, the leader, Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, He alone was spared among them As a hostage for his people. With his prisoner-string he bound him, Led him captive to his wigwam, Tied him fast with cords of elm-bark To the ridge-pole of his wigwam. "Kahgahgee, my raven!" said he, "You the leader of the robbers, You the plotter of this mischief, The contriver of this outrage, I will keep you, I will hold you, As a hostage for your people, As a pledge of good behavior!" And he left him, grim and sulky, Sitting in the

morning sunshine On the summit of the wigwam, Croaking fiercely his displeasure, Flapping his great sable pinions, Vainly struggling for his freedom, Vainly calling on his people! Summer passed, and Shawondasee Breathed his sighs o'er all the landscape, From the South-land sent his ardor, Wafted kisses warm and tender; And the maize-field grew and ripened, Till it stood in all the splendor Of its garments green and yellow, Of its tassels and its plumage, And the maize-ears full and shining Gleamed from bursting sheaths of verdure. Then Nokomis, the old woman, Spake, and said to Minnehaha: "T is the Moon when, leaves are falling; All the wild rice has been gathered, And the maize is ripe and ready; Let us gather in the harvest, Let us wrestle with Mondamin, Strip him of his plumes and tassels, Of his garments green and yellow!" And the merry Laughing Water Went rejoicing from the wigwam, With Nokomis, old and wrinkled, And they called the women round them, Called the young men and the maidens, To the harvest of the cornfields, To the husking of the maize-ear. On the border of the forest, Underneath the fragrant pine-trees, Sat the old men and the warriors Smoking in the pleasant shadow. In uninterrupted silence Looked they at the gamesome labor Of the young men and the women; Listened to their noisy talking, To their laughter and their singing, Heard them chattering like the magpies, Heard them laughing like the blue-jays, Heard them singing like the robins. And whene'er some lucky maiden Found a red ear in the husking, Found a maize-ear red as blood is, "Nushka!" cried they all together, "Nushka! you shall have a sweetheart, You shall have a handsome husband!" "Ugh!" the old men all responded From their seats beneath the pine-trees. And whene'er a youth or maiden Found a crooked ear in husking, Found a maize-ear in the husking Blighted, mildewed, or misshapen, Then they laughed and sang together, Crept and limped about the cornfields, Mimicked in their gait and gestures Some old man, bent almost double, Singing singly or together: "Wagemin, the thief of cornfields! Paimosaid, who steals the maize-ear!" Till the cornfields rang with laughter, Till from Hiawatha's wigwam Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, Screamed and quivered in his anger, And from all the neighboring tree-tops Cawed and

croaked the black marauders. "Ugh!" the old men all responded, From their seats beneath the pine-trees!

XIV Picture-Writing

In those days said Hiawatha, "Lo! how all things fade and perish! From the memory of the old men Pass away the great traditions, The achievements of the warriors, The adventures of the hunters, All the wisdom of the Medas, All the craft of the Wabenos, All the marvellous dreams and visions Of the Jossakeeds, the Prophets! "Great men die and are forgotten, Wise men speak; their words of wisdom Perish in the ears that hear them, Do not reach the generations That, as yet unborn, are waiting In the great, mysterious darkness Of the speechless days that shall be! "On the grave-posts of our fathers Are no signs, no figures painted; Who are in those graves we know not, Only know they are our fathers. Of what kith they are and kindred, From what old, ancestral Totem, Be it Eagle, Bear, or Beaver, They descended, this we know not, Only know they are our fathers. "Face to face we speak together, But we cannot speak when absent, Cannot send our voices from us To the friends that dwell afar off; Cannot send a secret message, But the bearer learns our secret, May pervert it, may betray it, May reveal it unto others." Thus said Hiawatha, walking In the solitary forest, Pondering, musing in the forest, On the welfare of his people. From his pouch he took his colors, Took his paints of different colors, On the smooth bark of a birch-tree Painted many shapes and figures, Wonderful and mystic figures, And each figure had a meaning, Each some word or thought suggested. Gitche Manito the Mighty, He, the Master of Life, was painted As an egg, with points projecting To the four winds of the heavens. Everywhere is the Great Spirit, Was the meaning of this symbol. Gitche Manito the Mighty, He the dreadful Spirit of Evil, As a serpent was depicted, As Kenabeek, the great serpent. Very crafty, very cunning, Is the creeping Spirit of Evil, Was the meaning of this symbol. Life and Death he drew as circles, Life was

white, but Death was darkened; Sun and moon and stars he painted, Man and beast, and fish and reptile, Forests, mountains, lakes, and rivers. For the earth he drew a straight line, For the sky a bow above it; White the space between for daytime, Filled with little stars for night-time; On the left a point for sunrise, On the right a point for sunset, On the top a point for noontide, And for rain and cloudy weather Waving lines descending from it. Footprints pointing towards a wigwam Were a sign of invitation, Were a sign of guests assembling; Bloody hands with palms uplifted Were a symbol of destruction, Were a hostile sign and symbol. All these things did Hiawatha Show unto his wondering people, And interpreted their meaning, And he said: "Behold, your grave-posts Have no mark, no sign, nor symbol, Go and paint them all with figures; Each one with its household symbol, With its own ancestral Totem; So that those who follow after May distinguish them and know them." And they painted on the grave-posts On the graves yet unforgotten, Each his own ancestral Totem, Each the symbol of his household; Figures of the Bear and Reindeer, Of the Turtle, Crane, and Beaver, Each inverted as a token That the owner was departed, That the chief who bore the symbol Lay beneath in dust and ashes. And the Jossakeeds, the Prophets, The Wabenos, the Magicians, And the Medicine-men, the Medas, Painted upon bark and deer-skin Figures for the songs they chanted, For each song a separate symbol, Figures mystical and awful, Figures strange and brightly colored; And each figure had its meaning, Each some magic song suggested. The Great Spirit, the Creator, Flashing light through all the heaven; The Great Serpent, the Kenabeek, With his bloody crest erected, Creeping, looking into heaven; In the sky the sun, that listens, And the moon eclipsed and dying; Owl and eagle, crane and hen-hawk, And the cormorant, bird of magic; Headless men, that walk the heavens, Bodies lying pierced with arrows, Bloody hands of death uplifted, Flags on graves, and great war-captains Grasping both the earth and heaven! Such as these the shapes they painted On the birch-bark and the deer-skin; Songs of war and songs of hunting, Songs of medicine and of magic, All were written in these figures, For each figure had its meaning, Each its separate song recorded.

Nor forgotten was the Love-Song, The most subtle of all medicines, The most potent spell of magic, Dangerous more than war or hunting! Thus the Love-Song was recorded, Symbol and interpretation. First a human figure standing, Painted in the brightest scarlet; `T Is the lover, the musician, And the meaning is, "My painting Makes me powerful over others." Then the figure seated, singing, Playing on a drum of magic, And the interpretation, "Listen! `T Is my voice you hear, my singing!" Then the same red figure seated In the shelter of a wigwam, And the meaning of the symbol, "I will come and sit beside you In the mystery of my passion!" Then two figures, man and woman, Standing hand in hand together With their hands so clasped together That they seemed in one united, And the words thus represented Are, "I see your heart within you, And your cheeks are red with blushes!" Next the maiden on an island, In the centre of an Island; And the song this shape suggested Was, "Though you were at a distance, Were upon some far-off island, Such the spell I cast upon you, Such the magic power of passion, I could straightway draw you to me!" Then the figure of the maiden Sleeping, and the lover near her, Whispering to her in her slumbers, Saying, "Though you were far from me In the land of Sleep and Silence, Still the voice of love would reach you!" And the last of all the figures Was a heart within a circle, Drawn within a magic circle; And the image had this meaning: "Naked lies your heart before me, To your naked heart I whisper!" Thus it was that Hiawatha, In his wisdom, taught the people All the mysteries of painting, All the art of Picture-Writing, On the smooth bark of the birch-tree, On the white skin of the reindeer, On the grave-posts of the village.

XV Hiawatha's Lamentation

In those days the Evil Spirits, All the Manitos of mischief, Fearing Hiawatha's wisdom, And his love for Chibiabos, Jealous of their faithful friendship, And their noble words and actions, Made at length a league against them, To molest them and destroy them. Hiawatha, wise and

wary, Often said to Chibiabos, "O my brother! do not leave me, Lest the Evil Spirits harm you!" Chibiabos, young and heedless, Laughing shook his coal-black tresses, Answered ever sweet and childlike, "Do not fear for me, O brother! Harm and evil come not near me!" Once when Peboan, the Winter, Roofed with ice the Big-Sea-Water, When the snow-flakes, whirling downward, Hissed among the withered oak-leaves, Changed the pine-trees into wigwams, Covered all the earth with silence, Armed with arrows, shod with snow-shoes, Heeding not his brother's warning, Fearing not the Evil Spirits, Forth to hunt the deer with antlers All alone went Chibiabos. Right across the Big-Sea-Water Sprang with speed the deer before him. With the wind and snow he followed, O'er the treacherous ice he followed, Wild with all the fierce commotion And the rapture of the hunting. But beneath, the Evil Spirits Lay in ambush, waiting for him, Broke the treacherous ice beneath him, Dragged him downward to the bottom, Buried in the sand his body. Unktahee, the god of water, He the god of the Dacotahs, Drowned him in the deep abysses Of the lake of Gitche Gumee. From the headlands Hiawatha Sent forth such a wail of anguish, Such a fearful lamentation, That the bison paused to listen, And the wolves howled from the prairies, And the thunder in the distance Starting answered "Baim-wawa!" Then his face with black he painted, With his robe his head he covered, In his wigwam sat lamenting, Seven long weeks he sat lamenting, Uttering still this moan of sorrow: "He is dead, the sweet musician! He the sweetest of all singers! He has gone from us forever, He has moved a little nearer To the Master of all music, To the Master of all singing! O my brother, Chibiabos!" And the melancholy fir-trees Waved their dark green fans above him, Waved their purple cones above him, Sighing with him to console him, Mingling with his lamentation Their complaining, their lamenting. Came the Spring, and all the forest Looked in vain for Chibiabos; Sighed the rivulet, Sebowisha, Sighed the rushes in the meadow. From the tree-tops sang the bluebird, Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa, "Chibiabos! Chibiabos! He is dead, the sweet musician!" From the wigwam sang the robin, Sang the robin, the Opechee, "Chibiabos! Chibiabos! He is dead, the sweetest singer!" And

at night through all the forest Went the whippoorwill complaining, Wailing went the Wawonaissa, "Chibiabos! Chibiabos! He is dead, the sweet musician! He the sweetest of all singers!" Then the Medicine-men, the Medas, The magicians, the Wabenos, And the Jossakeeds, the Prophets, Came to visit Hiawatha; Built a Sacred Lodge beside him, To appease him, to console him, Walked in silent, grave procession, Bearing each a pouch of healing, Skin of beaver, lynx, or otter, Filled with magic roots and simples, Filled with very potent medicines. When he heard their steps approaching~, Hiawatha ceased lamenting, Called no more on Chibiabos; Naught he questioned, naught he answered, But his mournful head uncovered, From his face the mourning colors Washed he slowly and in silence, Slowly and in silence followed Onward to the Sacred Wigwam. There a magic drink they gave him, Made of Nahma-wusk, the spearmint, And Wabeno-wusk, the yarrow, Roots of power, and herbs of healing; Beat their drums, and shook their rattles; Chanted singly and in chorus, Mystic songs like these, they chanted. "I myself, myself! behold me! `T Is the great Gray Eagle talking; Come, ye white crows, come and hear him! The loud-speaking thunder helps me; All the unseen spirits help me; I can hear their voices calling, All around the sky I hear them! I can blow you strong, my brother, I can heal you, Hiawatha!" "Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus, "Wayha-way!" the mystic chorus. Friends of mine are all the serpents! Hear me shake my skin of hen-hawk! Mahng, the white loon, I can kill him; I can shoot your heart and kill it! I can blow you strong, my brother, I can heal you, Hiawatha !" "Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus, "Wayhaway!" the mystic chorus. "I myself, myself! the prophet! When I speak the wigwam trembles, Shakes the Sacred Lodge with terror, Hands unseen begin to shake it! When I walk, the sky I tread on Bends and makes a noise beneath me! I can blow you strong, my brother! Rise and speak, O Hiawatha!" "Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus, "Way-ha-way!" the mystic chorus. Then they shook their medicine-pouches O'er the head of Hiawatha, Danced their medicine-dance around him; And upstarting wild and haggard, Like a man from dreams awakened, He was healed of all his madness. As the clouds are swept from heaven, Straightway from his brain

departed All his moody melancholy; As the ice is swept from rivers,
Straightway from his heart departed All his sorrow and affliction. Then
they summoned Chibiabos From his grave beneath the waters, From the
sands of Gitche Gumee Summoned Hiawatha's brother. And so mighty
was the magic Of that cry and invocation, That he heard it as he lay there
Underneath the Big-Sea-Water; From the sand he rose and listened, Heard
the music and the singing, Came, obedient to the summons, To the
doorway of the wigwam, But to enter they forbade him. Through a chink
a coal they gave him, Through the door a burning fire-brand; Ruler in the
Land of Spirits, Ruler o'er the dead, they made him, Telling him a fire to
kindle For all those that died thereafter, Camp-fires for their night
encampments On their solitary journey To the kingdom of Ponemah, To
the land of the Hereafter. From the village of his childhood, From the
homes of those who knew him, Passing silent through the forest, Like a
smoke-wreath wafted sideways, Slowly vanished Chibiabos! Where he
passed, the branches moved not, Where he trod, the grasses bent not, And
the fallen leaves of last year Made no sound beneath his footstep. Four
whole days he journeyed onward Down the pathway of the dead men; On
the dead-man's strawberry feasted, Crossed the melancholy river, On the
swinging log he crossed it, Came unto the Lake of Silver, In the Stone
Canoe was carried To the Islands of the Blessed, To the land of ghosts and
shadows. On that journey, moving slowly, Many weary spirits saw he,
Panting under heavy burdens, Laden with war-clubs, bows and arrows,
Robes of fur, and pots and kettles, And with food that friends had given
For that solitary journey. "Ay! why do the living," said they, "Lay such
heavy burdens on us! Better were it to go naked, Better were it to go
fasting, Than to bear such heavy burdens On our long and weary journey!"
Forth then issued Hiawatha, Wandered eastward, wandered westward,
Teaching men the use of simples And the antidotes for poisons, And the
cure of all diseases. Thus was first made known to mortals All the mystery
of Medamin, All the sacred art of healing.

XVI Pau-Puk-Keewis

You shall hear how Pau-Puk-Keewis, He, the handsome Yenadizze, Whom the people called the Storm-Fool, Vexed the village with disturbance; You shall hear of all his mischief, And his flight from Hiawatha, And his wondrous transmigrations, And the end of his adventures. On the shores of Gitche Gumee, On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo, By the shining Big-Sea-Water Stood the lodge of Pau-Puk-Keewis. It was he who in his frenzy Whirled these drifting sands together, On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo, When, among the guests assembled, He so merrily and madly Danced at Hiawatha's wedding, Danced the Beggar's Dance to please them. Now, in search of new adventures, From his lodge went Pau-Puk-Keewis, Came with speed into the village, Found the young men all assembled In the lodge of old Iagoo, Listening to his monstrous stories, To his wonderful adventures. He was telling them the story Of Ojeeg, the Summer-Maker, How he made a hole in heaven, How he climbed up into heaven, And let out the summer-weather, The perpetual, pleasant Summer; How the Otter first essayed it; How the Beaver, Lynx, and Badger Tried in turn the great achievement, From the summit of the mountain Smote their fists against the heavens, Smote against the sky their foreheads, Cracked the sky, but could not break it; How the Wolverine, uprising, Made him ready for the encounter, Bent his knees down, like a squirrel, Drew his arms back, like a cricket. "Once he leaped," said old Iagoo, "Once he leaped, and lo! above him Bent the sky, as ice in rivers When the waters rise beneath it; Twice he leaped, and lo! above him Cracked the sky, as ice in rivers When the freshet is at highest! Thrice he leaped, and lo! above him Broke the shattered sky asunder, And he disappeared within it, And Ojeeg, the Fisher Weasel, With a bound went in behind him!" "Hark you!" shouted Pau-Puk-Keewis As he entered at the doorway; "I am tired of all this talking, Tired of old Iagoo's stories, Tired of Hiawatha's wisdom. Here is something to amuse you, Better than this endless talking." Then from out his pouch of wolf-skin Forth he drew,

with solemn manner, All the game of Bowl and Counters, Pugasaing, with thirteen pieces. White on one side were they painted, And vermilion on the other; Two Kenabeeks or great serpents, Two Ininewug or wedge-men, One great war-club, Pugamaugun, And one slender fish, the Keego, Four round pieces, Ozawabeeks, And three Sheshebwug or ducklings. All were made of bone and painted, All except the Ozawabeeks; These were brass, on one side burnished, And were black upon the other. In a wooden bowl he placed them, Shook and jostled them together, Threw them on the ground before him, Thus exclaiming and explaining: "Red side up are all the pieces, And one great Kenabeek standing On the bright side of a brass piece, On a burnished Ozawabeek; Thirteen tens and eight are counted." Then again he shook the pieces, Shook and jostled them together, Threw them on the ground before him, Still exclaiming and explaining: "White are both the great Kenabeeks, White the Ininewug, the wedge-men, Red are all the other pieces; Five tens and an eight are counted." Thus he taught the game of hazard, Thus displayed it and explained it, Running through its various chances, Various changes, various meanings: Twenty curious eyes stared at him, Full of eagerness stared at him. "Many games," said old Iagoo, "Many games of skill and hazard Have I seen in different nations, Have I played in different countries. He who plays with old Iagoo Must have very nimble fingers; Though you think yourself so skilful, I can beat you, Pau-Puk-Keewis, I can even give you lessons In your game of Bowl and Counters!" So they sat and played together, All the old men and the young men, Played for dresses, weapons, wampum, Played till midnight, played till morning, Played until the Yenadizze, Till the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis, Of their treasures had despoiled them, Of the best of all their dresses, Shirts of deer-skin, robes of ermine, Belts of wampum, crests of feathers, Warlike weapons, pipes and pouches. Twenty eyes glared wildly at him, Like the eyes of wolves glared at him. Said the lucky Pau-Puk-Keewis: "In my wigwam I am lonely, In my wanderings and adventures I have need of a companion, Fain would have a Meshinauwa, An attendant and pipe-bearer. I will venture all these winnings, All these garments heaped about me, All this wampum, all these

feathers, On a single throw will venture All against the young man
yonder!" `T was a youth of sixteen summers, `T was a nephew of Iagoo;
Face-in-a-Mist, the people called him. As the fire burns in a pipe-head
Dusky red beneath the ashes, So beneath his shaggy eyebrows Glowed the
eyes of old Iagoo. "Ugh!" he answered very fiercely; "Ugh!" they
answered all and each one. Seized the wooden bowl the old man,
Closely in his bony fingers Clutched the fatal bowl, Onagon, Shook it
fiercely and with fury, Made the pieces ring together As he threw them
down before him. Red were both the great Kenabeeks, Red the Ininewug,
the wedge-men, Red the Sheshebwug, the ducklings, Black the four brass
Ozawabeeks, White alone the fish, the Keego; Only five the pieces
counted! Then the smiling Pau-Puk-Keewis Shook the bowl and threw
the pieces; Lightly in the air he tossed them, And they fell about him
scattered; Dark and bright the Ozawabeeks, Red and white the other pieces,
And upright among the others One Ininewug was standing, Even as crafty
Pau-Puk-Keewis Stood alone among the players, Saying, "Five tens! mine
the game is," Twenty eyes glared at him fiercely, Like the eyes of wolves
glared at him, As he turned and left the wigwam, Followed by his
Meshinauwa, By the nephew of Iagoo, By the tall and graceful stripling,
Bearing in his arms the winnings, Shirts of deer-skin, robes of ermine,
Belts of wampum, pipes and weapons. "Carry them," said Pau-Puk-
Keewis, Pointing with his fan of feathers, "To my wigwam far to eastward,
On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo!" Hot and red with smoke and gambling
Were the eyes of Pau-Puk-Keewis As he came forth to the freshness
Of the pleasant Summer morning. All the birds were singing gayly, All the
streamlets flowing swiftly, And the heart of Pau-Puk-Keewis Sang with
pleasure as the birds sing, Beat with triumph like the streamlets, As he
wandered through the village, In the early gray of morning, With his fan of
turkey-feathers, With his plumes and tufts of swan's down, Till he reached
the farthest wigwam, Reached the lodge of Hiawatha. Silent was it and
deserted; No one met him at the doorway, No one came to bid him
welcome; But the birds were singing round it, In and out and round the
doorway, Hopping, singing, fluttering, feeding, And aloft upon the ridge-

pole Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, Sat with fiery eyes, and, screaming, Flapped his wings at Pau-Puk-Keewis. "All are gone! the lodge Is empty!" Thus it was spake Pau-Puk-Keewis, In his heart resolving mischief "Gone is wary Hiawatha, Gone the silly Laughing Water, Gone Nokomis, the old woman, And the lodge is left unguarded!" By the neck he seized the raven, Whirled it round him like a rattle, Like a medicine-pouch he shook it, Strangled Kahgahgee, the raven, From the ridge-pole of the wigwam Left its lifeless body hanging, As an insult to its master, As a taunt to Hiawatha. With a stealthy step he entered, Round the lodge in wild disorder Threw the household things about him, Piled together in confusion Bowls of wood and earthen kettles, Robes of buffalo and beaver, Skins of otter, lynx, and ermine, As an insult to Nokomis, As a taunt to Minnehaha. Then departed Pau-Puk-Keewis, Whistling, singing through the forest, Whistling gayly to the squirrels, Who from hollow boughs above him Dropped their acorn-shells upon him, Singing gayly to the wood birds, Who from out the leafy darkness Answered with a song as merry. Then he climbed the rocky headlands, Looking o'er the Gitche Gumee, Perched himself upon their summit, Waiting full of mirth and mischief The return of Hiawatha. Stretched upon his back he lay there; Far below him splashed the waters, Plashed and washed the dreamy waters; Far above him swam the heavens, Swam the dizzy, dreamy heavens; Round him hovered, fluttered, rustled Hiawatha's mountain chickens, Flock-wise swept and wheeled about him, Almost brushed him with their pinions. And he killed them as he lay there, Slaughtered them by tens and twenties, Threw their bodies down the headland, Threw them on the beach below him, Till at length Kayoshk, the sea-gull, Perched upon a crag above them, Shouted: "It is Pau-Puk-Keewis! He is slaying us by hundreds! Send a message to our brother, Tidings send to Hiawatha!"

XVII The Hunting of Pau-Puk-Keewis

Full of wrath was Hiawatha When he came into the village, Found the people in confusion, Heard of all the misdemeanors, All the malice and the mischief, Of the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis. Hard his breath came through his nostrils, Through his teeth he buzzed and muttered Words of anger and resentment, Hot and humming, like a hornet. "I will slay this Pau-Puk-Keewis, Slay this mischief-maker!" said he. "Not so long and wide the world is, Not so rude and rough the way is, That my wrath shall not attain him, That my vengeance shall not reach him!" Then in swift pursuit departed Hiawatha and the hunters On the trail of Pau-Puk-Keewis, Through the forest, where he passed it, To the headlands where he rested; But they found not Pau-Puk-Keewis, Only in the trampled grasses, In the whortleberry-bushes, Found the couch where he had rested, Found the impress of his body. From the lowlands far beneath them, From the Muskoday, the meadow, Pau-Puk-Keewis, turning backward, Made a gesture of defiance, Made a gesture of derision; And aloud cried Hiawatha, From the summit of the mountains: "Not so long and wide the world is, Not so rude and rough the way is, But my wrath shall overtake you, And my vengeance shall attain you!" Over rock and over river, Through bush, and brake, and forest, Ran the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis; Like an antelope he bounded, Till he came unto a streamlet In the middle of the forest, To a streamlet still and tranquil, That had overflowed its margin, To a dam made by the beavers, To a pond of quiet water, Where knee-deep the trees were standing, Where the water lilies floated, Where the rushes waved and whispered. On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis, On the dam of trunks and branches, Through whose chinks the water spouted, O'er whose summit flowed the streamlet. From the bottom rose the beaver, Looked with two great eyes of wonder, Eyes that seemed to ask a question, At the stranger, Pau-Puk-Keewis. On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis, O'er his ankles flowed the streamlet, Flowed the bright and silvery water, And he

spake unto the beaver, With a smile he spake in this wise: "O my friend Ahmeek, the beaver, Cool and pleasant Is the water; Let me dive into the water, Let me rest there in your lodges; Change me, too, into a beaver!" Cautiously replied the beaver, With reserve he thus made answer: "Let me first consult the others, Let me ask the other beavers." Down he sank into the water, Heavily sank he, as a stone sinks, Down among the leaves and branches, Brown and matted at the bottom. On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis, O'er his ankles flowed the streamlet, Spouted through the chinks below him, Dashed upon the stones beneath him, Spread serene and calm before him, And the sunshine and the shadows Fell in flecks and gleams upon him, Fell in little shining patches, Through the waving, rustling branches. From the bottom rose the beavers, Silently above the surface Rose one head and then another, Till the pond seemed full of beavers, Full of black and shining faces. To the beavers Pau-Puk-Keewis Spake entreating, said in this wise: "Very pleasant Is your dwelling, O my friends! and safe from danger; Can you not, with all your cunning, All your wisdom and contrivance, Change me, too, into a beaver?" "Yes!" replied Ahmeek, the beaver, He the King of all the beavers, "Let yourself slide down among us, Down into the tranquil water." Down into the pond among them Silently sank Pau-Puk-Keewis; Black became his shirt of deer-skin, Black his moccasins and leggings, In a broad black tail behind him Spread his fox-tails and his fringes; He was changed into a beaver. "Make me large," said Pau-Puk-Keewis, "Make me large and make me larger, Larger than the other beavers." "Yes," the beaver chief responded, "When our lodge below you enter, In our wigwam we will make you Ten times larger than the others." Thus into the clear, brown water Silently sank Pau-Puk-Keewis: Found the bottom covered over With the trunks of trees and branches, Hoards of food against the winter, Piles and heaps against the famine; Found the lodge with arching doorway, Leading into spacious chambers. Here they made him large and larger, Made him largest of the beavers, Ten times larger than the others. "You shall be our ruler," said they; "Chief and King of all the beavers." But not long had Pau-Puk-Keewis Sat in state among the beavers, When there came a voice,

of warning From the watchman at his station In the water-flags and lilies,
Saying, "Here Is Hiawatha! Hiawatha with his hunters!" Then they heard
a cry above them, Heard a shouting and a tramping, Heard a crashing and
a rushing, And the water round and o'er them Sank and sucked away in
eddies, And they knew their dam was broken. On the lodge's roof the
hunters Leaped, and broke it all asunder; Streamed the sunshine through
the crevice, Sprang the beavers through the doorway, Hid themselves in
deeper water, In the channel of the streamlet; But the mighty Pau-Puk-
Keewis Could not pass beneath the doorway; He was puffed with pride
and feeding, He was swollen like a bladder. Through the roof looked
Hiawatha, Cried aloud, "O Pau-Puk-Keewis Vain are all your craft and
cunning, Vain your manifold disguises! Well I know you, Pau-Puk-
Keewis!" With their clubs they beat and bruised him, Beat to death poor
Pau-Puk-Keewis, Pounded him as maize is pounded, Till his skull was
crushed to pieces. Six tall hunters, lithe and limber, Bore him home on
poles and branches, Bore the body of the beaver; But the ghost, the Jeebi
in him, Thought and felt as Pau-Puk-Keewis, Still lived on as Pau-Puk-
Keewis. And it fluttered, strove, and struggled, Waving hither, waving
thither, As the curtains of a wigwam Struggle with their thongs of deer-
skin, When the wintry wind is blowing; Till it drew itself together, Till it
rose up from the body, Till it took the form and features Of the cunning
Pau-Puk-Keewis Vanishing into the forest. But the wary Hiawatha Saw
the figure ere it vanished, Saw the form of Pau-Puk-Keewis Glide into the
soft blue shadow Of the pine-trees of the forest; Toward the squares of
white beyond it, Toward an opening in the forest. Like a wind it rushed
and panted, Bending all the boughs before it, And behind it, as the rain
comes, Came the steps of Hiawatha. To a lake with many islands Came
the breathless Pau-Puk-Keewis, Where among the water-lilies Pishnekuh,
the brant, were sailing; Through the tufts of rushes floating, Steering
through the reedy Islands. Now their broad black beaks they lifted, Now
they plunged beneath the water, Now they darkened in the shadow, Now
they brightened in the sunshine. "Pishnekuh!" cried Pau-Puk-Keewis,
"Pishnekuh! my brothers!" said he, "Change me to a brant with plumage,

With a shining neck and feathers, Make me large, and make me larger, Ten times larger than the others." Straightway to a brant they changed him, With two huge and dusky pinions, With a bosom smooth and rounded, With a bill like two great paddles, Made him larger than the others, Ten times larger than the largest, Just as, shouting from the forest, On the shore stood Hiawatha. Up they rose with cry and clamor, With a whirl and beat of pinions, Rose up from the reedy Islands, From the water-flags and lilies. And they said to Pau-Puk-Keewis: "In your flying, look not downward, Take good heed and look not downward, Lest some strange mischance should happen, Lest some great mishap befall you!" Fast and far they fled to northward, Fast and far through mist and sunshine, Fed among the moors and fen-lands, Slept among the reeds and rushes. On the morrow as they journeyed, Buoyed and lifted by the South-wind, Wafted onward by the South-wind, Blowing fresh and strong behind them, Rose a sound of human voices, Rose a clamor from beneath them, From the lodges of a village, From the people miles beneath them. For the people of the village Saw the flock of brant with wonder, Saw the wings of Pau-Puk-Keewis Flapping far up in the ether, Broader than two doorway curtains. Pau-Puk-Keewis heard the shouting, Knew the voice of Hiawatha, Knew the outcry of Iagoo, And, forgetful of the warning, Drew his neck in, and looked downward, And the wind that blew behind him Caught his mighty fan of feathers, Sent him wheeling, whirling downward! All in vain did Pau-Puk-Keewis Struggle to regain his balance! Whirling round and round and downward, He beheld in turn the village And in turn the flock above him, Saw the village coming nearer, And the flock receding farther, Heard the voices growing louder, Heard the shouting and the laughter; Saw no more the flocks above him, Only saw the earth beneath him; Dead out of the empty heaven, Dead among the shouting people, With a heavy sound and sullen, Fell the brant with broken pinions. But his soul, his ghost, his shadow, Still survived as Pau-Puk-Keewis, Took again the form and features Of the handsome Yenadizze, And again went rushing onward, Followed fast by Hiawatha, Crying: "Not so wide the world is, Not so long and rough the way Is, But my wrath shall overtake you, But my vengeance

shall attain you!" And so near he came, so near him, That his hand was stretched to seize him, His right hand to seize and hold him, When the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis Whirled and spun about in circles, Fanned the air into a whirlwind, Danced the dust and leaves about him, And amid the whirling eddies Sprang into a hollow oak-tree, Changed himself into a serpent, Gliding out through root and rubbish. With his right hand Hiawatha Smote amain the hollow oak-tree, Rent it into shreds and splinters, Left it lying there in fragments. But in vain; for Pau-Puk-Keewis, Once again in human figure, Full in sight ran on before him, Sped away in gust and whirlwind, On the shores of Gitche Gumee, Westward by the Big-Sea-Water, Came unto the rocky headlands, To the Pictured Rocks of sandstone, Looking over lake and landscape. And the Old Man of the Mountain, He the Manito of Mountains, Opened wide his rocky doorways, Opened wide his deep abysses, Giving Pau-Puk-Keewis shelter In his caverns dark and dreary, Bidding Pau-Puk-Keewis welcome To his gloomy lodge of sandstone. There without stood Hiawatha, Found the doorways closed against him, With his mittens, Minjekahwun, Smote great caverns in the sandstone, Cried aloud in tones of thunder, "Open! I am Hiawatha!" But the Old Man of the Mountain Opened not, and made no answer From the silent crags of sandstone, From the gloomy rock abysses. Then he raised his hands to heaven, Called imploring on the tempest, Called Waywassimo, the lightning, And the thunder, Annemeekee; And they came with night and darkness, Sweeping down the Big-Sea-Water From the distant Thunder Mountains; And the trembling Pau-Puk-Keewis Heard the footsteps of the thunder, Saw the red eyes of the lightning, Was afraid, and crouched and trembled. Then Waywassimo, the lightning, Smote the doorways of the caverns, With his war-club smote the doorways, Smote the jutting crags of sandstone, And the thunder, Annemeekee, Shouted down into the caverns, Saying, "Where is Pau-Puk-Keewis!" And the crags fell, and beneath them Dead among the rocky ruins Lay the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis, Lay the handsome Yenadizze, Slain in his own human figure. Ended were his wild adventures, Ended were his tricks and gambols, Ended all his craft and cunning, Ended all his mischief-

making, All his gambling and his dancing, All his wooing of the maidens. Then the noble Hiawatha Took his soul, his ghost, his shadow, Spake and said: "O Pau-Puk-Keewis, Never more in human figure Shall you search for new adventures' Never more with jest and laughter Dance the dust and leaves in whirlwinds; But above there in the heavens You shall soar and sail in circles; I will change you to an eagle, To Keneu, the great war-eagle, Chief of all the fowls with feathers, Chief of Hiawatha's chickens." And the name of Pau-Puk-Keewis Lingers still among the people, Lingers still among the singers, And among the story-tellers; And in Winter, when the snow-flakes Whirl in eddies round the lodges, When the wind in gusty tumult O'er the smoke-flue pipes and whistles, "There," they cry, "comes Pau-Puk-Keewis, He is dancing through the village, He is gathering in his harvest!"

XVIII The Death of Kwasind

Far and wide among the nations Spread the name and fame of Kwasind; No man dared to strive with Kwasind, No man could compete with Kwasind. But the mischievous Puk-Wudjies, They the envious Little People, They the fairies and the pygmies, Plotted and conspired against him. "If this hateful Kwasind," said they, "If this great, outrageous fellow Goes on thus a little longer, Tearing everything he touches, Rending everything to pieces, Filling all the world with wonder, What becomes of the Puk-Wudjies? Who will care for the Puk-Wudjies? He will tread us down like mushrooms, Drive us all into the water, Give our bodies to be eaten By the wicked Nee-ba-naw-baigs, By the Spirits of the water! So the angry Little People All conspired against the Strong Man, All conspired to murder Kwasind, Yes, to rid the world of Kwasind, The audacious, overbearing, Heartless, haughty, dangerous Kwasind! Now this wondrous strength of Kwasind In his crown alone was seated; In his crown too was his weakness; There alone could he be wounded, Nowhere else could weapon pierce him, Nowhere else could weapon harm him.

Even there the only weapon That could wound him, that could slay him,
Was the seed-cone of the pine-tree, Was the blue cone of the fir-tree. This
was Kwasind's fatal secret, Known to no man among mortals; But the
cunning Little People, The Puk-Wudjies, knew the secret, Knew the only
way to kill him. So they gathered cones together, Gathered seed-cones of
the pine-tree, Gathered blue cones of the fir-tree, In the woods by
Taquamenaw, Brought them to the river's margin, Heaped them in great
piles together, Where the red rocks from the margin Jutting overhang the
river. There they lay in wait for Kwasind, The malicious Little People.
`T was an afternoon in Summer; Very hot and still the air was, Very
smooth the gliding river, Motionless the sleeping shadows: Insects
glistened in the sunshine, Insects skated on the water, Filled the drowsy air
with buzzing, With a far resounding war-cry. Down the river came the
Strong Man, In his birch canoe came Kwasind, Floating slowly down the
current Of the sluggish Taquamenaw, Very languid with the weather, Very
sleepy with the silence. From the overhanging branches, From the
tassels of the birch-trees, Soft the Spirit of Sleep descended; By his airy
hosts surrounded, His invisible attendants, Came the Spirit of Sleep,
Nepahwin; Like a burnished Dush-kwo-ne-she, Like a dragon-fly, he
hovered O'er the drowsy head of Kwasind. To his ear there came a
murmur As of waves upon a sea-shore, As of far-off tumbling waters, As
of winds among the pine-trees; And he felt upon his forehead Blows of
little airy war-clubs, Wielded by the slumbrous legions Of the Spirit of
Sleep, Nepahwin, As of some one breathing on him. At the first blow of
their war-clubs, Fell a drowsiness on Kwasind; At the second blow they
smote him, Motionless his paddle rested; At the third, before his vision
Reeled the landscape Into darkness, Very sound asleep was Kwasind. So
he floated down the river, Like a blind man seated upright, Floated down
the Taquamenaw, Underneath the trembling birch-trees, Underneath the
wooded headlands, Underneath the war encampment Of the pygmies, the
Puk-Wudjies. There they stood, all armed and waiting, Hurling the pine-
cones down upon him, Struck him on his brawny shoulders, On his crown
defenceless struck him. "Death to Kwasind!" was the sudden War-cry of

the Little People. And he sideways swayed and tumbled, Sideways fell into the river, Plunged beneath the sluggish water Headlong, as an otter plunges; And the birch canoe, abandoned, Drifted empty down the river, Bottom upward swerved and drifted: Nothing more was seen of Kwasind. But the memory of the Strong Man Lingered long among the people, And whenever through the forest Raged and roared the wintry tempest, And the branches, tossed and troubled, Creaked and groaned and split asunder, "Kwasind!" cried they; "that is Kwasind! He is gathering in his fire-wood!"

XIX The Ghosts

Never stoops the soaring vulture On his quarry in the desert, On the sick or wounded bison, But another vulture, watching From his high aerial look-out, Sees the downward plunge, and follows; And a third pursues the second, Coming from the invisible ether, First a speck, and then a vulture, Till the air is dark with pinions. So disasters come not singly; But as if they watched and waited, Scanning one another's motions, When the first descends, the others Follow, follow, gathering flock-wise Round their victim, sick and wounded, First a shadow, then a sorrow, Till the air is dark with anguish. Now, o'er all the dreary North-land, Mighty Peboan, the Winter, Breathing on the lakes and rivers, Into stone had changed their waters. From his hair he shook the snow-flakes, Till the plains were strewn with whiteness, One uninterrupted level, As if, stooping, the Creator With his hand had smoothed them over. Through the forest, wide and wailing, Roamed the hunter on his snow-shoes; In the village worked the women, Pounded maize, or dressed the deer-skin; And the young men played together On the ice the noisy ball-play, On the plain the dance of snow-shoes. One dark evening, after sundown, In her wigwam Laughing Water Sat with old Nokomis, waiting For the steps of Hiawatha Homeward from the hunt returning. On their faces gleamed the firelight, Painting them with streaks of crimson, In the eyes of old Nokomis

Glimmered like the watery moonlight, In the eyes of Laughing Water
Glistened like the sun in water; And behind them crouched their shadows
In the corners of the wigwam, And the smoke In wreaths above them
Climbed and crowded through the smoke-flue. Then the curtain of the
doorway From without was slowly lifted; Brighter glowed the fire a
moment, And a moment swerved the smoke-wreath, As two women
entered softly, Passed the doorway uninvited, Without word of salutation,
Without sign of recognition, Sat down in the farthest corner, Crouching
low among the shadows. From their aspect and their garments, Strangers
seemed they in the village; Very pale and haggard were they, As they sat
there sad and silent, Trembling, cowering with the shadows. Was it the
wind above the smoke-flue, Muttering down into the wigwam? Was it the
owl, the Koko-koho, Hooting from the dismal forest? Sure a voice said in
the silence: "These are corpses clad in garments, These are ghosts that
come to haunt you, From the kingdom of Ponemah, From the land of the
Hereafter!" Homeward now came Hiawatha From his hunting in the
forest, With the snow upon his tresses, And the red deer on his shoulders.
At the feet of Laughing Water Down he threw his lifeless burden; Nobler,
handsomer she thought him, Than when first he came to woo her, First
threw down the deer before her, As a token of his wishes, As a promise of
the future. Then he turned and saw the strangers, Cowering, crouching
with the shadows; Said within himself, "Who are they? What strange
guests has Minnehaha?" But he questioned not the strangers, Only spake
to bid them welcome To his lodge, his food, his fireside. When the
evening meal was ready, And the deer had been divided, Both the pallid
guests, the strangers, Springing from among the shadows, Seized upon the
choicest portions, Seized the white fat of the roebuck, Set apart for
Laughing Water, For the wife of Hiawatha; Without asking, without
thanking, Eagerly devoured the morsels, Flitted back among the shadows
In the corner of the wigwam. Not a word spake Hiawatha, Not a motion
made Nokomis, Not a gesture Laughing Water; Not a change came o'er
their features; Only Minnehaha softly Whispered, saying, "They are
famished; Let them do what best delights them; Let them eat, for they are

famished." Many a daylight dawned and darkened, Many a night shook off the daylight As the pine shakes off the snow-flakes From the midnight of its branches; Day by day the guests unmoving Sat there silent in the wigwam; But by night, in storm or starlight, Forth they went into the forest, Bringing fire-wood to the wigwam, Bringing pine-cones for the burning, Always sad and always silent. And whenever Hiawatha Came from fishing or from hunting, When the evening meal was ready, And the food had been divided, Gliding from their darksome corner, Came the pallid guests, the strangers, Seized upon the choicest portions Set aside for Laughing Water, And without rebuke or question Flitted back among the shadows. Never once had Hiawatha By a word or look reproved them; Never once had old Nokomis Made a gesture of impatience; Never once had Laughing Water Shown resentment at the outrage. All had they endured in silence, That the rights of guest and stranger, That the virtue of free-giving, By a look might not be lessened, By a word might not be broken. Once at midnight Hiawatha, Ever wakeful, ever watchful, In the wigwam, dimly lighted By the brands that still were burning, By the glimmering, flickering firelight Heard a sighing, oft repeated, From his couch rose Hiawatha, From his shaggy hides of bison, Pushed aside the deer-skin curtain, Saw the pallid guests, the shadows, Sitting upright on their couches, Weeping in the silent midnight. And he said: "O guests! why is it That your hearts are so afflicted, That you sob so in the midnight? Has perchance the old Nokomis, Has my wife, my Minnehaha, Wronged or grieved you by unkindness, Failed in hospitable duties?" Then the shadows ceased from weeping, Ceased from sobbing and lamenting, And they said, with gentle voices: "We are ghosts of the departed, Souls of those who once were with you. From the realms of Chibiabos Hither have we come to try you, Hither have we come to warn you. "Cries of grief and lamentation Reach us in the Blessed Islands; Cries of anguish from the living, Calling back their friends departed, Sadden us with useless sorrow. Therefore have we come to try you; No one knows us, no one heeds us. We are but a burden to you, And we see that the departed Have no place among the living. "Think of this, O Hiawatha! Speak of it to all the people,

That henceforward and forever They no more with lamentations Sadden
the souls of the departed In the Islands of the Blessed. "Do not lay such
heavy burdens In the graves of those you bury, Not such weight of furs
and wampum, Not such weight of pots and kettles, For the spirits faint
beneath them. Only give them food to carry, Only give them fire to light
them. "Four days is the spirit's journey To the land of ghosts and
shadows, Four its lonely night encampments; Four times must their fires
be lighted. Therefore, when the dead are buried, Let a fire, as night
approaches, Four times on the grave be kindled, That the soul upon its
journey May not lack the cheerful firelight, May not grope about in
darkness. "Farewell, noble Hiawatha! We have put you to the trial, To
the proof have put your patience, By the insult of our presence, By the
outrage of our actions. We have found you great and noble. Fail not in the
greater trial, Faint not In the harder struggle." When they ceased, a
sudden darkness Fell and filled the silent wigwam. Hiawatha heard a rustle
As of garments trailing by him, Heard the curtain of the doorway Lifted by
a hand he saw not, Felt the cold breath of the night air, For a moment saw
the starlight; But he saw the ghosts no longer, Saw no more the wandering
spirits From the kingdom of Ponemah, From the land of the Hereafter.

XX The Famine

Oh the long and dreary Winter! Oh the cold and cruel Winter! Ever
thicker, thicker, thicker Froze the ice on lake and river, Ever deeper,
deeper, deeper Fell the snow o'er all the landscape, Fell the covering snow,
and drifted Through the forest, round the village. Hardly from his buried
wigwam Could the hunter force a passage; With his mittens and his snow-
shoes Vainly walked he through the forest, Sought for bird or beast and
found none, Saw no track of deer or rabbit, In the snow beheld no
footprints, In the ghastly, gleaming forest Fell, and could not rise from
weakness, Perished there from cold and hunger. Oh the famine and the
fever! Oh the wasting of the famine! Oh the blasting of the fever! Oh the

wailing of the children! Oh the anguish of the women! All the earth was sick and famished; Hungry was the air around them, Hungry was the sky above them, And the hungry stars in heaven Like the eyes of wolves glared at them! Into Hiawatha's wigwam Came two other guests, as silent As the ghosts were, and as gloomy, Waited not to be invited Did not parley at the doorway Sat there without word of welcome In the seat of Laughing Water; Looked with haggard eyes and hollow At the face of Laughing Water. And the foremost said: "Behold me! I am Famine, Bukadawin!" And the other said: "Behold me! I am Fever, Ahkosewin!" And the lovely Minnehaha Shuddered as they looked upon her, Shuddered at the words they uttered, Lay down on her bed in silence, Hid her face, but made no answer; Lay there trembling, freezing, burning At the looks they cast upon her, At the fearful words they uttered. Forth into the empty forest Rushed the maddened Hiawatha; In his heart was deadly sorrow, In his face a stony firmness; On his brow the sweat of anguish Started, but it froze and fell not. Wrapped in furs and armed for hunting, With his mighty bow of ash-tree, With his quiver full of arrows, With his mittens, Minjekahwun, Into the vast and vacant forest On his snow-shoes strode he forward. "Gitche Manito, the Mighty!" Cried he with his face uplifted In that bitter hour of anguish, "Give your children food, O father! Give us food, or we must perish! Give me food for Minnehaha, For my dying Minnehaha!" Through the far-resounding forest, Through the forest vast and vacant Rang that cry of desolation, But there came no other answer Than the echo of his crying, Than the echo of the woodlands, "Minnehaha! Minnehaha!" All day long roved Hiawatha In that melancholy forest, Through the shadow of whose thickets, In the pleasant days of Summer, Of that ne'er forgotten Summer, He had brought his young wife homeward From the land of the Dacotahs; When the birds sang in the thickets, And the streamlets laughed and glistened, And the air was full of fragrance, And the lovely Laughing Water Said with voice that did not tremble, "I will follow you, my husband!" In the wigwam with Nokomis, With those gloomy guests that watched her, With the Famine and the Fever, She was lying, the Beloved, She, the dying Minnehaha.

"Hark!" she said; "I hear a rushing, Hear a roaring and a rushing, Hear the Falls of Minnehaha Calling to me from a distance!" "No, my child!" said old Nokomis, "'T is the night-wind in the pine-trees!" "Look!" she said; "I see my father Standing lonely at his doorway, Beckoning to me from his wigwam In the land of the Dacotahs!" "No, my child!" said old Nokomis. "'T is the smoke, that waves and beckons!" "Ah!" said she, "the eyes of Pauguk Glare upon me in the darkness, I can feel his icy fingers Clasp mine amid the darkness! Hiawatha! Hiawatha!" And the desolate Hiawatha, Far away amid the forest, Miles away among the mountains, Heard that sudden cry of anguish, Heard the voice of Minnehaha Calling to him in the darkness, "Hiawatha! Hiawatha!" Over snow-fields waste and pathless, Under snow-encumbered branches, Homeward hurried Hiawatha, Empty-handed, heavy-hearted, Heard Nokomis moaning, wailing: "Wahonowin! Wahonowin! Would that I had perished for you, Would that I were dead as you are! Wahonowin!. Wahonowin!" And he rushed into the wigwam, Saw the old Nokomis slowly Rocking to and fro and moaning, Saw his lovely Minnehaha Lying dead and cold before him, And his bursting heart within him Uttered such a cry of anguish, That the forest moaned and shuddered, That the very stars in heaven Shook and trembled with his anguish. Then he sat down, still and speechless, On the bed of Minnehaha, At the feet of Laughing Water, At those willing feet, that never More would lightly run to meet him, Never more would lightly follow. With both hands his face he covered, Seven long days and nights he sat there, As if in a swoon he sat there, Speechless, motionless, unconscious Of the daylight or the darkness. Then they buried Minnehaha; In the snow a grave they made her In the forest deep and darksome Underneath the moaning hemlocks; Clothed her in her richest garments Wrapped her in her robes of ermine, Covered her with snow, like ermine; Thus they buried Minnehaha. And at night a fire was lighted, On her grave four times was kindled, For her soul upon its journey To the Islands of the Blessed. From his doorway Hiawatha Saw it burning In the forest, Lighting up the gloomy hemlocks; From his sleepless bed uprising, From the bed of Minnehaha, Stood and watched it at the doorway, That it

might not be extinguished, Might not leave her in the darkness.
"Farewell!" said he, "Minnehaha! Farewell, O my Laughing Water! All my
heart is buried with you, All my thoughts go onward with you! Come not
back again to labor, Come not back again to suffer, Where the Famine and
the Fever Wear the heart and waste the body. Soon my task will be
completed, Soon your footsteps I shall follow To the Islands of the Blessed,
To the Kingdom of Ponemah, To the Land of the Hereafter!"

XXI The White Man's Foot

In his lodge beside a river, Close beside a frozen river, Sat an old man,
sad and lonely. White his hair was as a snow-drift; Dull and low his fire
was burning, And the old man shook and trembled, Folded in his
Waubewyon, In his tattered white-skin-wrapper, Hearing nothing but the
tempest As it roared along the forest, Seeing nothing but the snow-storm,
As it whirled and hissed and drifted. All the coals were white with ashes,
And the fire was slowly dying, As a young man, walking lightly, At the
open doorway entered. Red with blood of youth his cheeks were, Soft his
eyes, as stars In Spring-time, Bound his forehead was with grasses; Bound
and plumed with scented grasses, On his lips a smile of beauty, Filling all
the lodge with sunshine, In his hand a bunch of blossoms Filling all the
lodge with sweetness. "Ah, my son!" exclaimed the old man, "Happy are
my eyes to see you. Sit here on the mat beside me, Sit here by the dying
embers, Let us pass the night together, Tell me of your strange adventures,
Of the lands where you have travelled; I will tell you of my prowess, Of
my many deeds of wonder." From his pouch he drew his peace-pipe,
Very old and strangely fashioned; Made of red stone was the pipe-head,
And the stem a reed with feathers; Filled the pipe with bark of willow,
Placed a burning coal upon it, Gave it to his guest, the stranger, And began
to speak in this wise: "When I blow my breath about me, When I breathe
upon the landscape, Motionless are all the rivers, Hard as stone becomes
the water!" And the young man answered, smiling: "When I blow my

breath about me, When I breathe upon the landscape, Flowers spring up o'er all the meadows, Singing, onward rush the rivers!" "When I shake my hoary tresses," Said the old man darkly frowning, "All the land with snow is covered; All the leaves from all the branches Fall and fade and die and wither, For I breathe, and lo! they are not. From the waters and the marshes, Rise the wild goose and the heron, Fly away to distant regions, For I speak, and lo! they are not. And where'er my footsteps wander, All the wild beasts of the forest Hide themselves in holes and caverns, And the earth becomes as flintstone!" "When I shake my flowing ringlets," Said the young man, softly laughing, "Showers of rain fall warm and welcome, Plants lift up their heads rejoicing, Back Into their lakes and marshes Come the wild goose and the heron, Homeward shoots the arrowy swallow, Sing the bluebird and the robin, And where'er my footsteps wander, All the meadows wave with blossoms, All the woodlands ring with music, All the trees are dark with foliage!" While they spake, the night departed: From the distant realms of Wabun, From his shining lodge of silver, Like a warrior robed and painted, Came the sun, and said, "Behold me Gheezis, the great sun, behold me!" Then the old man's tongue was speechless And the air grew warm and pleasant, And upon the wigwam sweetly Sang the bluebird and the robin, And the stream began to murmur, And a scent of growing grasses Through the lodge was gently wafted. And Segwun, the youthful stranger, More distinctly in the daylight Saw the icy face before him; It was Peboan, the Winter! From his eyes the tears were flowing, As from melting lakes the streamlets, And his body shrunk and dwindled As the shouting sun ascended, Till into the air it faded, Till into the ground it vanished, And the young man saw before him, On the hearth-stone of the wigwam, Where the fire had smoked and smouldered, Saw the earliest flower of Spring-time, Saw the Beauty of the Spring-time, Saw the Miskodeed in blossom. Thus it was that in the North-land After that unheard-of coldness, That intolerable Winter, Came the Spring with all its splendor, All its birds and all its blossoms, All its flowers and leaves and grasses. Sailing on the wind to northward, Flying in great flocks, like arrows, Like huge arrows shot

through heaven, Passed the swan, the Mahnahbezee, Speaking almost as a man speaks; And in long lines waving, bending Like a bow-string snapped asunder, Came the white goose, Waw-be-wawa; And in pairs, or singly flying, Mahng the loon, with clangorous pinions, The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, And the grouse, the Mushkodasa. In the thickets and the meadows Piped the bluebird, the Owaissa, On the summit of the lodges Sang the robin, the Opechee, In the covert of the pine-trees Cooed the pigeon, the Omemee; And the sorrowing Hiawatha, Speechless in his infinite sorrow, Heard their voices calling to him, Went forth from his gloomy doorway, Stood and gazed into the heaven, Gazed upon the earth and waters. From his wanderings far to eastward, From the regions of the morning, From the shining land of Wabun, Homeward now returned Iagoo, The great traveller, the great boaster, Full of new and strange adventures, Marvels many and many wonders. And the people of the village Listened to him as he told them Of his marvellous adventures, Laughing answered him in this wise: "Ugh! it is indeed Iagoo! No one else beholds such wonders!" He had seen, he said, a water Bigger than the Big-Sea-Water, Broader than the Gitche Gumee, Bitter so that none could drink it! At each other looked the warriors, Looked the women at each other, Smiled, and said, "It cannot be so!" Kaw!" they said, it cannot be so!" O'er it, said he, o'er this water Came a great canoe with pinions, A canoe with wings came flying, Bigger than a grove of pine-trees, Taller than the tallest tree-tops! And the old men and the women Looked and tittered at each other; "Kaw!" they said, "we don't believe it!" From its mouth, he said, to greet him, Came Waywassimo, the lightning, Came the thunder, Annemeekee! And the warriors and the women Laughed aloud at poor Iagoo; "Kaw!" they said, "what tales you tell us!" In it, said he, came a people, In the great canoe with pinions Came, he said, a hundred warriors; Painted white were all their faces And with hair their chins were covered! And the warriors and the women Laughed and shouted in derision, Like the ravens on the tree-tops, Like the crows upon the hemlocks. "Kaw!" they said, "what lies you tell us! Do not think that we believe them!" Only Hiawatha laughed not, But he gravely spake and

answered To their jeering and their jesting: "True is all Iagoo tells us; I have seen it in a vision, Seen the great canoe with pinions, Seen the people with white faces, Seen the coming of this bearded People of the wooden vessel From the regions of the morning, From the shining land of Wabun. "Gitche Manito, the Mighty, The Great Spirit, the Creator, Sends them hither on his errand. Sends them to us with his message. Wheresoe'er they move, before them Swarms the stinging fly, the Ahmo, Swarms the bee, the honey-maker; Wheresoe'er they tread, beneath them Springs a flower unknown among us, Springs the White-man's Foot in blossom. "Let us welcome, then, the strangers, Hail them as our friends and brothers, And the heart's right hand of friendship Give them when they come to see us. Gitche Manito, the Mighty, Said this to me in my vision. "I beheld, too, in that vision All the secrets of the future, Of the distant days that shall be. I beheld the westward marches Of the unknown, crowded nations. All the land was full of people, Restless, struggling, toiling, striving, Speaking many tongues, yet feeling But one heart-beat in their bosoms. In the woodlands rang their axes, Smoked their towns in all the valleys, Over all the lakes and rivers Rushed their great canoes of thunder. "Then a darker, drearier vision Passed before me, vague and cloud-like; I beheld our nation scattered, All forgetful of my counsels, Weakened, warring with each other: Saw the remnants of our people Sweeping westward, wild and woful, Like the cloud-rack of a tempest, Like the withered leaves of Autumn!"

XXII Hiawatha's Departure

By the shore of Gitche Gumee, By the shining Big-Sea-Water, At the doorway of his wigwam, In the pleasant Summer morning, Hiawatha stood and waited. All the air was full of freshness, All the earth was bright and joyous, And before him, through the sunshine, Westward toward the neighboring forest Passed in golden swarms the Ahmo, Passed the bees, the honey-makers, Burning, singing In the sunshine. Bright above him

shone the heavens, Level spread the lake before him; From its bosom leaped the sturgeon, Sparkling, flashing in the sunshine; On its margin the great forest Stood reflected in the water, Every tree-top had its shadow, Motionless beneath the water. From the brow of Hiawatha Gone was every trace of sorrow, As the fog from off the water, As the mist from off the meadow. With a smile of joy and triumph, With a look of exultation, As of one who in a vision Sees what is to be, but is not, Stood and waited Hiawatha. Toward the sun his hands were lifted, Both the palms spread out against it, And between the parted fingers Fell the sunshine on his features, Flecked with light his naked shoulders, As it falls and flecks an oak-tree Through the rifted leaves and branches. O'er the water floating, flying, Something in the hazy distance, Something in the mists of morning, Loomed and lifted from the water, Now seemed floating, now seemed flying, Coming nearer, nearer, nearer. Was it Shingebis the diver? Or the pelican, the Shada? Or the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah? Or the white goose, Waw-be-wawa, With the water dripping, flashing, From its glossy neck and feathers? It was neither goose nor diver, Neither pelican nor heron, O'er the water floating, flying, Through the shining mist of morning, But a birch canoe with paddles, Rising, sinking on the water, Dripping, flashing in the sunshine; And within it came a people From the distant land of Wabun, From the farthest realms of morning Came the Black-Robe chief, the Prophet, He the Priest of Prayer, the Pale-face, With his guides and his companions. And the noble Hiawatha, With his hands aloft extended, Held aloft in sign of welcome, Waited, full of exultation, Till the birch canoe with paddles Grated on the shining pebbles, Stranded on the sandy margin, Till the Black-Robe chief, the Pale-face, With the cross upon his bosom, Landed on the sandy margin. Then the joyous Hiawatha Cried aloud and spake in this wise: "Beautiful is the sun, O strangers, When you come so far to see us! All our town in peace awaits you, All our doors stand open for you; You shall enter all our wigwams, For the heart's right hand we give you. "Never bloomed the earth so gayly, Never shone the sun so brightly, As to-day they shine and blossom When you come so far to see us! Never was our lake so tranquil, Nor so free from rocks, and

sand-bars; For your birch canoe in passing Has removed both rock and sand-bar. "Never before had our tobacco Such a sweet and pleasant flavor, Never the broad leaves of our cornfields Were so beautiful to look on, As they seem to us this morning, When you come so far to see us!" And the Black-Robe chief made answer, Stammered In his speech a little, Speaking words yet unfamiliar: "Peace be with you, Hiawatha, Peace be with you and your people, Peace of prayer, and peace of pardon, Peace of Christ, and joy of Mary!" Then the generous Hiawatha Led the strangers to his wigwam, Seated them on skins of bison, Seated them on skins of ermine, And the careful old Nokomis Brought them food in bowls of basswood, Water brought in birchen dippers, And the calumet, the peace-pipe, Filled and lighted for their smoking. All the old men of the village, All the warriors of the nation, All the Jossakeeds, the Prophets, The magicians, the Wabenos, And the Medicine-men, the Medas, Came to bid the strangers welcome; "It is well", they said, "O brothers, That you come so far to see us!" In a circle round the doorway, With their pipes they sat In silence, Waiting to behold the strangers, Waiting to receive their message; Till the Black-Robe chief, the Pale-face, From the wigwam came to greet them, Stammering in his speech a little, Speaking words yet unfamiliar; "It is well," they said, "O brother, That you come so far to see us!" Then the Black-Robe chief, the Prophet, Told his message to the people, Told the purport of his mission, Told them of the Virgin Mary, And her blessed Son, the Saviour, How in distant lands and ages He had lived on earth as we do; How he fasted, prayed, and labored; How the Jews, the tribe accursed, Mocked him, scourged him, crucified him; How he rose from where they laid him, Walked again with his disciples, And ascended into heaven. And the chiefs made answer, saying: "We have listened to your message, We have heard your words of wisdom, We will think on what you tell us. It is well for us, O brothers, That you come so far to see us!" Then they rose up and departed Each one homeward to his wigwam, To the young men and the women Told the story of the strangers Whom the Master of Life had sent them From the shining land of Wabun. Heavy with the heat and silence Grew the afternoon of Summer; With a drowsy sound the

forest Whispered round the sultry wigwam, With a sound of sleep the water Rippled on the beach below it; From the cornfields shrill and ceaseless Sang the grasshopper, Pah-puk-keena; And the guests of Hiawatha, Weary with the heat of Summer, Slumbered in the sultry wigwam. Slowly o'er the simmering landscape Fell the evening's dusk and coolness, And the long and level sunbeams Shot their spears into the forest, Breaking through its shields of shadow, Rushed into each secret ambush, Searched each thicket, dingle, hollow; Still the guests of Hiawatha Slumbered In the silent wigwam. From his place rose Hiawatha, Bade farewell to old Nokomis, Spake in whispers, spake in this wise, Did not wake the guests, that slumbered. "I am going, O Nokomis, On a long and distant journey, To the portals of the Sunset. To the regions of the home-wind, Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin. But these guests I leave behind me, In your watch and ward I leave them; See that never harm comes near them, See that never fear molests them, Never danger nor suspicion, Never want of food or shelter, In the lodge of Hiawatha!" Forth into the village went he, Bade farewell to all the warriors, Bade farewell to all the young men, Spake persuading, spake in this wise: I am going, O my people, On a long and distant journey; Many moons and many winters Will have come, and will have vanished, Ere I come again to see you. But my guests I leave behind me; Listen to their words of wisdom, Listen to the truth they tell you, For the Master of Life has sent them From the land of light and morning!" On the shore stood Hiawatha, Turned and waved his hand at parting; On the clear and luminous water Launched his birch canoe for sailing, From the pebbles of the margin Shoved it forth into the water; Whispered to it, "Westward! westward!" And with speed it darted forward. And the evening sun descending Set the clouds on fire with redness, Burned the broad sky, like a prairie, Left upon the level water One long track and trail of splendor, Down whose stream, as down a river, Westward, westward Hiawatha Sailed into the fiery sunset, Sailed into the purple vapors, Sailed into the dusk of evening: And the people from the margin Watched him floating, rising, sinking, Till the birch canoe seemed lifted High into that sea of splendor, Till it sank into the vapors

Like the new moon slowly, slowly Sinking in the purple distance. And they said, "Farewell forever!" Said, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!" And the forests, dark and lonely, Moved through all their depths of darkness, Sighed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!" And the waves upon the margin Rising, rippling on the pebbles, Sobbed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!" And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, From her haunts among the fen-lands, Screamed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!" Thus departed Hiawatha, Hiawatha the Beloved, In the glory of the sunset,. In the purple mists of evening, To the regions of the home-wind, Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin, To the Islands of the Blessed, To the Kingdom of Ponemah, To the Land of the Hereafter!

VOCABULARY

Adjidau'mo, the red squirrel Ahdeek', the reindeer Ahmeek', the beaver Annemee'kee, the thunder Apuk'wa. a bulrush Baim-wa'wa, the sound of the thunder Bemah'gut, the grape-vine Chemaun', a birch canoe Chetowaik', the plover Chibia'bos, a musician; friend of Hiawatha; ruler of the Land of Spirits Dahin'da, the bull frog Dush-kwo-ne'-she or Kwo-ne'-she, the dragon fly Esa, shame upon you Ewa-yea', lullaby Gitche Gu'mee, The Big-Sea-Water, Lake Superior Gitche Man'ito, the Great Spirit, the Master of Life Gushkewau', the darkness Hiawa'tha, the Prophet. the Teacher, son of Mudjekeewis, the West-Wind and Wenonah, daughter of Nokomis Ia'goo, a great boaster and story-teller Inin'ewug, men, or pawns in the Game of the Bowl Ishkoodah', fire, a comet Jee'bi, a ghost, a spirit Joss'akeed, a prophet Kabibonok'ka, the North-Wind Ka'go, do not Kahgahgee', the raven Kaw, no Kaween', no indeed Kayoshk', the sea-gull Kee'go, a fish Keeway'din, the Northwest wind, the Home-wind Kena'beek, a serpent Keneu', the great war-eagle Keno'zha, the pickerel

Ko'ko-ko'ho, the owl Kuntasoo', the Game of Plumstones Kwa'sind, the Strong Man Kwo-ne'-she, or Dush-kwo-ne'-she, the dragon-fly Mahnahbe'zee, the swan Mahng, the loon Mahnomo'nee, wild rice Ma'ma, the woodpecker Me'da, a medicine-man Meenah'ga, the blueberry Megissog'won, the great Pearl-Feather, a magician, and the Manito of Wealth Meshinau'wa, a pipe-bearer Minjekah'wun, Hiawatha's mittens Minneha'ha, Laughing Water; wife of Hiawatha; a water-fall in a stream running into the Mississippi between Fort Snelling and the Falls of St. Anthony Minne-wa'wa, a pleasant sound, as of the wind in the trees Mishe-Mo'kwa, the Great Bear Mishe-Nah'ma, the Great Sturgeon Miskodeed', the Spring-Beauty, the Claytonia Virginica Monda'min, Indian corn Moon of Bright Nights, April Moon of Leaves, May Moon of Strawberries, June Moon of the Falling Leaves, September Moon of Snow-shoes, November Mudjeeke'wis, the West-Wind; father of Hiawatha Mudway-aush'ka, sound of waves on a shore Mushkoda'sa, the grouse Nah'ma, the sturgeon Nah'ma-wusk, spearmint Na'gow Wudj'oo, the Sand Dunes of Lake Superior Nee-ba-naw'-baigs, water-spirits Nenemoo'sha, sweetheart Nepah'win, sleep Noko'mis, a grandmother, mother of Wenonah No'sa, my father Nush'ka, look! look! Odah'min, the strawberry Okahha'wis, the fresh-water herring Ome'mee, the pigeon Ona'gon, a bowl Opechee', the robin Osse'o, Son of the Evening Star Owais'sa, the blue-bird Oweenee', wife of Osseo Ozawa'beek, a round piece of brass or copper in the Game of the Bowl Pah-puk-kee'na, the grasshopper Pau'guk, death Pau-Puk-Kee'wis, the handsome Yenadizze, the son of Storm Fool Pe'boan, Winter Pem'ican, meat of the deer or buffalo dried and pounded Pezhekee', the bison Pishnekuh', the brant Pone'mah, hereafter Puggawau'gun, a war-club Puk-Wudj'ies, little wild men of the woods; pygmies Sah-sah-je'wun, rapids Segwun', Spring Sha'da, the pelican Shahbo'min, the gooseberry Shah-shah, long ago Shaugoda'ya, a coward Shawgashee', the craw-fish Shawonda'see, the South-Wind Shaw-shaw, the swallow Shesh'ebwug, ducks; pieces in the Game of the Bowl Shin'gebis, the diver, or grebe Showain'neme'shin, pity me Shuh-shuh-gah', the blue heron Soan-ge-ta'ha, strong-hearted Subbeka'she, the spider

Sugge'me, the mosquito To'tem, family coat-of-arms Ugh, yes Ugudwash',
the sun-fish Unktahee', the God of Water Wabas'so, the rabbit, the North
Wabe'no, a magician, a juggler Wabe'no-wusk, yarrow Wa'bun, the East-
Wind Wa'bun An'nung, the Star of the East, the Morning Star Wahono'win,
a cry of lamentation Wah-wah-tay'see, the fire-fly Waubewy'on, a white
skin wrapper Wa'wa, the wild goose Waw-be-wa'wa, the white goose
Wawonais'sa, the whippoorwill Way-muk-kwa'na, the caterpillar Weno'nah,
the eldest daughter; Hiawatha's mother, daughter of Nokomis Yenadiz'ze,
an idler and gambler; an Indian dandy