

The TOMAHAWK.

GUS. H. BEAULIEU - - - Publisher.

White Earth Agency, Minn.

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER devoted to the interests of the White Earth Reservation and general Northwestern News. Published and managed by members of the Reservation.

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THE OJIBWAS.

Their Customs and Traditions.

AS HANDED DOWN FOR CENTURIES FROM FATHER TO SON.

WAY-NAH-BOZHO.

His Origin, Birth and Life.

BY THEO. H. BEAULIEU.

When Way-nah-bozho awoke from his peaceful slumbers, he refreshed himself with a hearty breakfast, and then he caused a wind to blow from the North in the direction of the Indian village from whence his grandmother and her daughter (his mother) had come, and he said, "Nokomis, I am going to send fire to all my relatives who live in the country where you and my mother came from."

Nokomis had never told Way-nah-bozho of his origin, and she was continually in dread lest he would seek to know more of his ancestors, and whenever he spoke of the village, etc., she would be come very much alarmed. One day it was decided to move to the outlet of a big lake, and when they had selected a convenient location, Way-nah-bozho instructed Nokomis to go and prepare poles and birch bark with which to build a wigwam. When the wigwam was completed and they had moved and got settled down, Way-nah-bozho arranged to go on a beaver hunt; there were a great many beavers in those days, and so it was not long before he had secured a good supply, which were brought home to the wigwam. Nokomis was instructed how to prepare the pelts and make them into nice comfortable blankets, such as the Indians used before the white man came into the country.

NOKOMIS' NARRATIVE.

One day when Way-nah-bozho had enjoyed the pleasure of a hearty meal of beaver tail, and lay in comfort on his couch of skins and boughs, he asked Nokomis to relate the history of his ancestors, his father and mother, etc. Nokomis endeavored to evade answering his questions, but Way-nah-bozho seemed so determined to know that she finally answered him in this wise: "Your mother was a very beautiful girl who had many suitors, but the chief of the tribe desired that the youngest of his three sons should marry her. I opposed this marriage because the young man was indolent, lazy and good for nothing. The chief sent four requests for the hand of my daughter, (your mother) but I firmly refused to listen to his proposition. When he found that I would not consent to my daughter's marriage with his son he called in one of his counsellors and after a private conference the latter advised the chief to cause me to be assassinated, that by doing this the only obstacle to his son's marriage with my daughter, would be removed. A friend of mine overheard this plot and immediately informed me of it. That day I prepared for a journey, and left the village with your mother at night, and after a weary journey of many days we camped by the lake where you were born. When the chief heard of our flight he was terribly enraged, and forth-

with dispatched runners in all directions to endeavor to overtake and bring us back to the village, the chief himself joining in the pursuit. This pursuit was kept up for four days, when the chief ordered a halt to council with his Gesah-ke-we-neina (magician), but the spirits, who favored our flight, refused to give them any information as to our whereabouts. We had lived on the shore of the lake for many moons, when, one night, I was warned in a dream not to allow your mother to stand on her feet for seven days, and to face the wind during that time." This was during the blueberry season, and I guarded her very closely after that in order that she would not stand up. One day, however, while we were picking blueberries, I had occasion to leave her for a short time. During my absence she espied a large bunch of blueberries in a marsh along the edge of which she was picking berries, and it being too wet to crawl towards them, she thought there would be no harm in walking to the berries, but the moment she stood up, the North wind, who had been lurking in the vicinity, came and embraced her. When this had occurred she fell prostrated on the ground, I ran to her, and when she again opened her eyes, she as well as myself, knew that she had conceived. And after you were born, she went down into the clear water of the lake to bathe and was there attacked and swallowed up by the Me-she-nah-may-gway (whale)."

Nokomis knew she had been telling a falsehood, but she was afraid that if she related the truthful history of Way-nah-bozho's birth, the sad abduction of his mother and of her being borne to her far away Island home, etc., he would get injured if he endeavored to fight the spirits who had caused all this to come about and which had left him an orphan in the world.

ADVENTURE WITH THE WHALE.

After the conclusion of Nokomis' narrative, Way-nah-bozho pondered long and silently. Finally he requested Nokomis to go and prepare him a Gee-sah-kahn, as he wished to invoke the spirits to give him information and power as to where he would find and destroy the Me-she-nah-may-gway. After he had completed the service of that solemn occasion he came out and informed Nokomis of his purpose and to prepare him for his journey. Said he, "I will be gone four days on the war-path; on the fourth day, if all goes well with me I will be on the shore of that bay where the winds cease to breathe. You will know this by the skies, which will appear red and smiling, and should I have trouble and not reach there the skies will be very dark and cloudy. He then painted his face black and bidding Nokomis an affectionate adieu, he embarked into his canoe and started in search of the Me-she-nah-may-gway. After wandering about for two or three days, he concluded, as the spirits had told him, that he was near where the whale lived, and as he had been instructed, commenced to sing "Me-she-nah-may-gway, hay, hay, be nah we co she shin," (whale, oh come and swallow me). Me-she-nah-may-gway heard this singing and it annoyed him very much. He said that Way-nah-bozho was 'too filthy' for him to swallow, so he directed a large pickerel to go and swallow the filthy morsel. When the pickerel appeared to Way-nah-bozho he was hailed by the latter with, "Ish nee cheem, keen e-nah?" (my little brother, is it you?) meaning the whale, but

the answer he received was, "No, I am only a pickerel, and came to obey the command of Me-she-nah-may-gway who got tired of your song." When Way-nah-bozho heard this he became very angry and said to the pickerel, "Go back you are not the one who killed my mother." The pickerel returned, and related to the whale what Way-nah-bozho had said. This provoked Me-she-nah-may-gway and as the taunting song of the former kept ringing in his ear, he determined to go himself and make a meal out of the 'filthy' intruder. Me-she-nah-may-gway's father remonstrated against his resolution, by saying that Way-nah-bozho coming amongst them with his invitation to be 'swallowed up,' etc., boded no good, and it were best to leave him alone. But Me-she-nah-may-gway was in such a rage he would listen to no further argument but went forthwith and swallowed Way-nah-bozho, canoe and all!

When the whale had swallowed Way-nah-bozho he felt very sick and he soon became insensible. And when he had revived a little, he felt that he must have swallowed all the disagreeable things in the world. He also heard Way-nah-bozho soliloquizing to himself in this wise: "Verily, verily it is a fact that I have been swallowed—fool, he shall now suffer for having swallowed my mother, and making me an orphan." Then Way-nah-bozho commenced to take note of his surroundings and the first thing he saw was a weasel, who, like himself, had been swallowed by the whale; then his eyes rested on a large object above him which seemed to keep up a constant, fluttering motion. As Way-nah-bozho could not reach up and being anxious to know more of his surrounding, he inquired of the weasel what the object was, and the weasel informed him that was Me-she-nah-may-gway's heart. At this intelligence, Way-nah-bozho was greatly pleased, tho' he thought the whale was very foolish to keep his heart in such an exposed position in that portion of his internal menagerie. Then Way-nah-bozho addressing the weasel, said: "We must destroy Me-she-nah-may-gway or we, ourselves, will both die. If you will go up there and fight his heart, and help me destroy him I will reward you by making you white in winter and brown in summer so that you can better avoid your enemies, I will also show you where to strike your enemy so that you can always draw his heart's blood." The weasel, nothing loth, attacked Me-she-nah-may-gway's heart vigorously. The latter commenced, at once to complain of being sick at the stomach, and he attributed the disorder to indigestion caused by the 'unsavory mess' he had lately swallowed.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE LEGALIZED THEFT.

According to the twin city press Commissioner Richards of general land office has announced, since his return to Washington from this state, that the selections of land on the Chippewa reservations for forestry purposes have been approved, and that the agricultural lands will also be opened to settlement without further delay. This action is the final stroke which takes from the Indians two hundred and twenty five thousand acres of land and five per cent of the pine timber thereon without due compensation therefor. Besides being a shameless act of injustice, the taking of these lands by an act

of Congress is a violation of treaty obligations on the part of the United States and nothing short of a legalized theft.

During the negotiations of the Nelson Act between the representatives of the government and the Indians, the former repeatedly assured the latter that they would receive pay for every acre of land that they would cede to the government under the act, and the report of the council proceedings show this conclusively.

Not being satisfied with taking the lands referred to from the Indians, the commissioner of the general land office now proposes to open the balance of the reservation lands to settlement regardless of the fact that several hundred Indians who are entitled to allotments on the reservations at Leech, Cass and Winnebagoish lakes have not yet secured their allotments. Those who have received allotments, except in a few cases, have not made selections for themselves or their minor children as provided by law, but these allotments have been selected for them by government allotting agents, in a great many instances in swamps and other worthless lands.

The time for trying to enforce treaty rights by going on the war-path has passed, and the only way for our brethren who are entitled to allotments on the reservations named, and who have not received them according to law, is to invoke the courts to compel the officials of the government to fulfill the laws.

The Indian; Right and Wrong.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that ALL MEN are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these, are LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS"—Declaration of Independence July 4th, 1776.

THE INDIAN QUESTION.

The "Indian question" seems to be likely to settle itself in a normal way, according to the bread and butter law, after all. Now that the negro problem has come to the front of discussion the red man has a chance to show what he can do when left to work out his own passage to civilization without so much advice.

The other day, on an Interurban car, an Indian with all the evidences of his race in his countenance, but dressed in the conventional business suit and derby hat of the white man was seated very quietly. He was taking views of trolley lines and their occupants with the same air of interest in worldly affairs that other civilized persons do. No reversion to the wilderness type was apparent in his dress or manner. Had he been in Europe he would have been an indistinguished part of the motley crowd of races that are assimilating European civilization and would not have aroused a remark but here an Indian on a street car is still a little of a curiosity.

This relation ought to pass and will soon. The Indian develops too much business sense, when he takes to business at all, to be regarded as out of the reckoning of American business and industrial life. It will be industrial life that must first absorb the Indian, and that, preferably, in small places. There is little doubt that the Indian is still a good ways behind the white man in the race, but the results of Indian education are proving that he is gaining and anxious to gain even faster. He can do better things than to make

baskets and bead-work and draw reservation allowances; and it is his right to be taught to his fullest powers instead of to his second rate ones. We have made profit out of the Indian in the wrong way for both parties.

In Monday's news from the northwest were two items that show that the Indian will work and that he will look out for himself in a business way. From the agent of the Grand Portage reservation comes the report that the Indians of his section have earned by their work as laborers in mines and the woods \$10,000 which has been distributed among them by the government. In South Dakota the Rosebud reservation Indians will meet this week to decide upon the question of making more money out of the surplus lands of the reservation which have been granted to the cattlemen. From this and from other cooperative signs of the times it is plain that the Indian will not much longer remain outside of the influences of trade and contact with business that form such educating powers to the rest of us. Instead of being a ward of the nation he will, by his own initiative, and the right help, become an individual of the nation. We make the most of the Indian problem ourselves now.—Minneapolis Times.

AGENCY NEWS.

WORK FOR ALL.—Agent Michelt has been keeping a force of reservation young men busily engaged for several week past making some much needed improvements in the village; brush which obstructed the view of some of the principal government buildings has been cut and removed, and new fences and sidewalks have replaced the old ones. In addition to these improvements it is the Agent's intention to extend the sidewalks to the Catholic and Episcopal churches, and to have street lamps put in from the village to the boarding school. The Agent also says that he intends to furnish employment to all the Indians who may wish to work next month repairing the roads on this reservation.

We trust that the Agent will keep on with the good work, and as making improvements seems to be his hobby judging from his work during the past year, we are sure that he will keep it up if he has the means placed in his hands to do so.

A TEST CASE.—Mrs. Louisa Lynch recently made an application to Chippewa Commissioner Hall for an additional eighty acre tract of land as an allotment under the improvement clause of the treaty of 1867, between the Mississippi bands and the United States, but this application was rejected by Mr. Hall on the grounds that he had been directed by the secretary of the interior to cease allotting lands to the Chippewas. Mrs. Lynch's application was made for the express purpose of placing on record her claim with the view of commencing a suit in the United States Circuit Court to establish her right to the allotment. The questions involved in her case are of so much importance to each member of the Mississippi bands on this reservation that we trust she will receive financial assistance in prosecuting her claim from all of them, for a decision in her favor will result in the allotment of eighty acres more to each member of the bands.

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