

**FOLK-LORE AND
LEGENDS: NORTH
AMERICAN INDIAN**

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Folk-Lore and Legends: North American Indian by Anonymous

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J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

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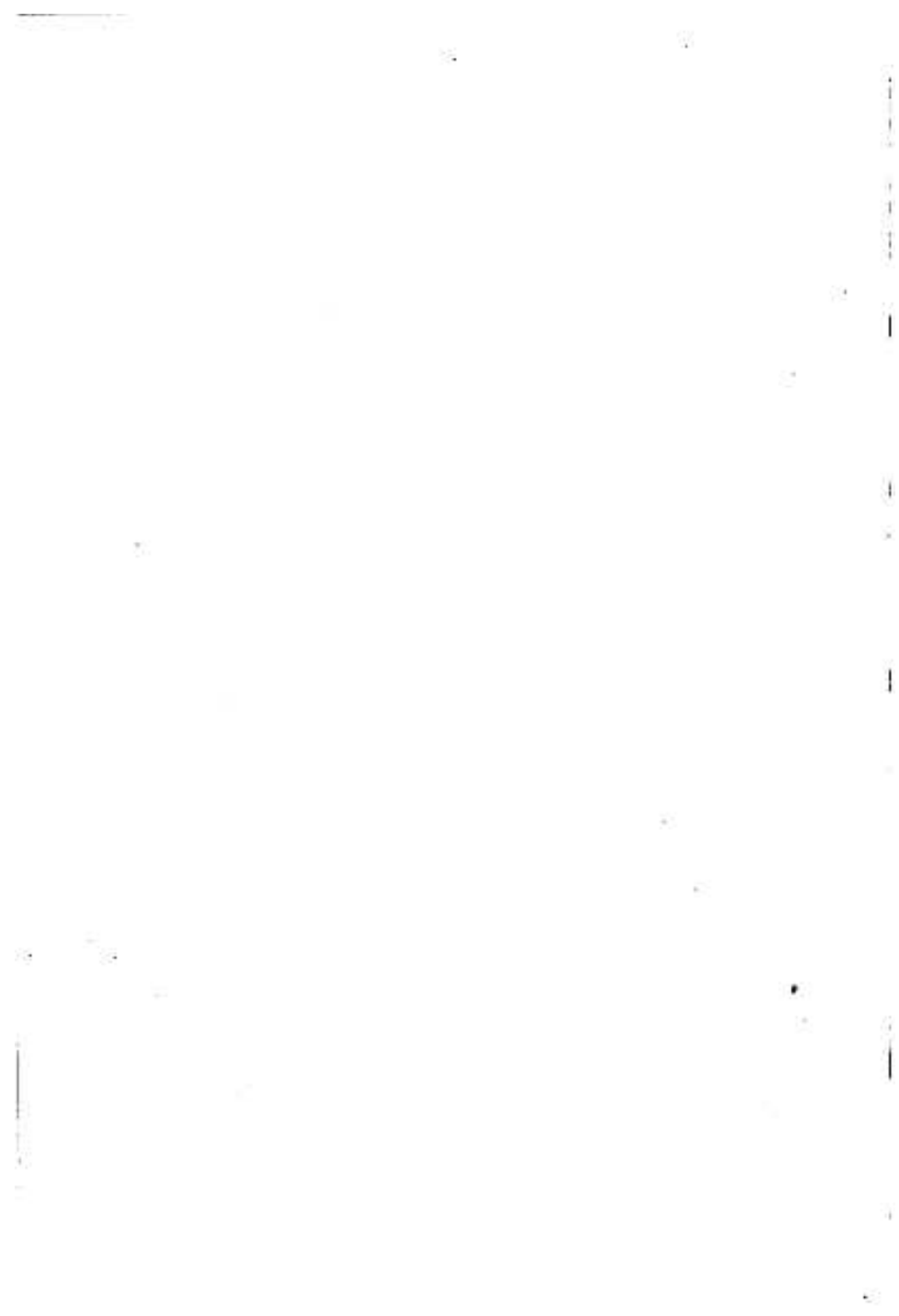
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PREFATORY NOTE.

It might have been expected that the Indians of North America would have many Folklore tales to tell, and in this volume I have endeavoured to present such of them as seemed to me to best illustrate the primitive character and beliefs of the people. The belief, and the language in which it is clothed, are often very beautiful. Fantastic imagination, magnanimity, moral sentiment, tender feeling, and humour are discovered in a degree which may astonish many who have been apt to imagine that advanced civilisation has much to do with the possession of such qualities. I know of nothing that throws so much light upon Indian character as their Folk-tales.



MOOWIS.

IN a large village there lived a noted belle, or Ma-mon-dá-go-Kwa, who was the admiration of all the young hunters and warriors. She was particularly admired by a young man who, from his good figure and the care he took in his dress, was called the Beau-Man, or Ma-mon-dá-gin-in-e. This young man had a friend and companion whom he made his confidant.

"Come," said he one day, in a sportive mood, "let us go a-courting to her who is so handsome, perhaps she may fancy one of us."

She would, however, listen to neither of them; and when the handsome young man rallied her on the coldness of her air, and made an effort to overcome her indifference, she repulsed him with the greatest contempt, and the young man retired confused and abashed. His sense of pride was deeply wounded, and he was the more piqued because he had been thus treated in the presence of others, and this affair had been noised about in the village, and became the talk of every lodge circle. He was,

Indian.

besides, a very sensitive man, and the incident so preyed upon him that he became moody and at last took to his bed. For days he would lie without uttering a word, with his eyes fixed on vacancy, and taking little or no food. From this state no efforts could rouse him. He felt abashed and dishonoured even in the presence of his own relatives, and no persuasions could induce him to rise, so that when the family prepared to take down the lodge to remove he still kept his bed, and they were compelled to lift it from above his head and leave him upon his skin couch. It was a time of general removal and breaking up of the camp, for it was only a winter hunting-camp, and as the season of the hunt was now over, and spring began to appear, his friends all moved off as by one impulse to the place of their summer village, and in a short time all were gone, and he was left alone. The last person to leave him was his boon companion and cousin, who had been, like him, an admirer of the forest belle. The hunter disregarded even his voice, and as soon as his steps died away on the creaking snow the stillness and solitude of the wilderness reigned around.

As soon as all were gone, and he could no longer, by listening, hear the remotest sound of the departing camp, the Beau-Man arose.

Now this young man had for a friend a powerful guardian spirit or personal manito, and he resolved, with this spirit's aid, to use his utmost power to punish and humble the girl, for she was noted in her tribe for her coquetry, and had treated many

young men, who were every way her equals, as she had treated this lover. He resolved on a singular stratagem by way of revenge.

He walked over the deserted camp and gathered up all the cast-off bits of soiled cloth, clippings of finery, and old clothing and ornaments, which had either been left there as not worth carrying away, or forgotten. These he carefully picked out of the snow, into which some of them had been trodden, and collected in one place. These gaudy and soiled stuffs he restored to their original beauty, and made of them a coat and leggings, which he trimmed with beads, and finished and decorated after the best fashion of his tribe. He then made a pair of moccasins and garnished them with beads, a bow and arrows, and a frontlet and feathers for the head. Having done this he searched about for cast-out bones of animals, pieces of skin, clippings of dried meat, and even dirt. Having cemented all this together he filled the clothes with it, pressed the mass firmly in, and fashioned it, externally, in all respects like a tall and well-shaped man. He put a bow and arrows in its hands, and the frontlet on its head. Having finished it he brought it to life, and the image stood forth in the most favoured lineaments of his fellows. Such was the origin of Moowis, or the Dirt-and-Rag Man.

"Follow me," said the Beau-Man, "and I will direct you how you shall act."

Moowis was, indeed, a very sightly person, and as the Beau-Man led him into the new encampment

where the girl dwelt, the many colours of his clothes, the profusion of his ornaments, his manly deportment, his animated countenance, drew all eyes to him. He was hospitably received, both old and young showing him great attention. The chief invited him to his lodge, and he was there treated to the moose's hump and the finest venison.

No one was better pleased with the handsome stranger than Ma-mon-dá-go-Kwa. She fell in love with him at first sight, and he was an invited guest at the lodge of her mother the very first evening of his arrival. The Beau-Man went with him, for it was under his patronage that he had been introduced, and, in truth, he had another motive in accompanying him, for he had not yet wholly subdued his feelings of admiration for the object against whom he had, nevertheless, exerted all his necromantic power, and he held himself ready to take advantage of any favourable turn which he secretly hoped the visit might take in relation to himself. No such opportunity, however, arose. Moowis attracted the chief attention, every eye and heart was alert to entertain him. In this effort on the part of his entertainers they had well-nigh brought about his destruction by dissolving him into his original elements of rags, snow, and dirt, for he was assigned the most prominent place near the fire, where he was exposed to a heat that he could by no means endure. However, he warded this calamity off by placing a boy between him and the fire; he shifted his position frequently, and evaded, by dexterous manœuvres and timely