

NEBRASKA FOLKLORE PAMPHLETS

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MORE SANTEE-SIOUX INDIAN LEGENDS

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These seven Santee-Sioux Indian legends, like those previously collected (see Nebraska Folklore Pamphlet No. Twenty-one), have been taken from the files of the Word Carrier, a missionary paper published by the Santee Mission School, at Santee, Nebraska. They appeared between the years of 1883 and 1887, when the paper had a circulation of less than 300 copies.

With the exception of the legends entitled "Neeshu," and "How Gold came to the Black Hills," which were translated by Charles Hoffman and Walking Elk, respectively, the translators are anonymous.

The missionaries and Indian students who translated these legends for the Word Carrier made very little attempt to attain a smooth, literary style. Consequently considerable editing has been necessary, although every attempt has been made to retain the simple, childlike style of the Santee-Sioux.

Like most Indian legends, these have lost much of their atmosphere and picturesqueness in the translation and in print; since they were originally composed for narration around an evening campfire, where, silhouetted in front of an unbroken sky in a windswept plains country, the Indian story-teller dramatized the exciting parts of the legends.

THE FLINT CHIEF

Translator Anonymous

Perhaps, in your search for prairie flowers, you have chanced upon bits of flint and wondered how they came to be. The tradition of our tribe tells us that they came from the Flint Chief, who once lived in our midst. This was many years ago, before the coming of the paleface.

The Flint Chief, as tradition tells us, was a very large and unusual man, whose head and shoulders were made of iron, his belly and thighs of flint, while his legs were of two granite boulders.

His huge size forbade his joining the chase or following the warpath. But none in the tribe was more skilled in the mysteries of the hunt, or knew more about the arts of war. He was also wise in the council, where he decided the arguments which arose from time to time among his people. It was he who furnished his tribe with the sinews for war and the implements of the chase, because, during the days when the braves were absent, he carved arrowheads. This is why he was called the Flint Chief.

One day, when this kindly old chief sighted his arrows for balance and straightness of line,

bending his head this way and that during the process, he dropped his knife against his left thigh. Immediately a happy thought came to him, causing his eyes to twinkle merrily as he laughed in a low chuckle that sounded like the gurgle of a mountain brook. Then he laughed again, this time so loud and long that the rocks and woods vibrated with echoing joy. You see, his knife, falling against his thigh, had set off sparks, ending his life-long search for fire.

The discovery of fire had been the Flint Chief's greatest ambition. It could only be obtained by lighting sticks of wood to trees or bushes that had been ignited by lightning. The fire, when once secured in this manner, sometimes went out and the tribe had to wait for weeks before another tree or bush was set on fire by the great Thunder Bird. So some means of making fire at will was of great importance to the tribe. Now the Flint Chief had found that he carried this great gift within his body, ready for instant use. What could be more precious to his people than this? All they had to do now in order to obtain fire was to carry a piece of flint that had been chipped from his body.

As soon as his warriors had returned he called them together, showed the piece of flint he had broken off of his body and explained its use. Their joy became great when each in turn became the possessor of a piece of flint.

And so it came about that ever after they supplied themselves, as occasion required, from this never-failing source. One precaution, however, was necessary. The Flint Chief had explained to them that while they might smite him on either thigh with impunity, a blow in the belly would prove fatal. But the unerring eye and unfaltering arm of the warrior feared naught.

Happy Chief, fortunate people! Alas that perfection does not dwell on this earth! Into this fine harmony came a discordant note in the form of Matoschecha (Bad Bear), who brought upon them the calamity that still survives in the tradition of our tribe after so many generations have passed.

After one of their grand hunting expeditions the warriors came home laden with great packs of buffalo meat, robes and skins. While the women made moccasins, gaily bedecked with ribbons and beads, the pot was kept boiling for the young braves. Chaskay, one of the tribe's best warriors, was eating lazily from his wooden bowl on top of his bear skin, when he good-naturedly asked his pretty girl-wife to tie his moccasins. As she complied with his request he felt as if he had attained the total sum of human happiness. But he little knew of the dreadful tragedy in which he was to play a part. It was caused by Matoschecha, the warrior who tattooed his tally of scalps on his right arm, and, with equal faithfulness, tattooed the number of bears he had slain on his left arm. He was an evil-eyed, ill-conditioned man, whose violent temper brought disturbance and unhappiness to everyone with whom he came into contact.

That evening he was bitter and morose. He felt that his twenty-one bear skins availed him nothings as long as Chaskay possessed the beautiful bear skin on which he was eating his meal. Its large size and unusually fine fur made Matoschecha insane with jealousy. So he walked over to the good-natured Chaskay and claimed it for his own, accusing Chaskay of stealing it. Chaskay, with an expression of bewildered surprise, told Matoschecha that he was mistaken, but was willing to let the Flint Chief settle the argument.

The Flint Chief, as soon as he was told of the quarrel, decided in the ease-loving Chaskay's favor. Matoschecha, with vengeful look and heedless hand, immediately threw a large stone at his enemy. But Matoschecha, in his blind fury, missed his aim, and the stone intended for Chaskay struck, with great force, the Flint Chief's stomach.

The Flint Chief immediately let out such a piercing scream that he caused low rumblings to come from under the ground and the hill to shake as he fell to the earth among a heavy shower of flying flints which came from his body. He looked with reproachful eyes on Matoschecha; then a flare

of fire began consuming his body as his great head and granite shoulders rolled away, covering the form of Matoschecha from the face of day. All that was left was a pile of flints, which to this day has been used by our tribe for making fire.

NEESHU

PART I -- NEESHU AS A YOUNG CHILD

Translated by Charles Hoffman

A long time ago there lived in a big village an old man who was always alone. If a visitor went into his tent he was never seen afterwards, and no one knew what had become of him, it being supposed that he had been killed. The Chief heard so many complaints from his people about these strange disappearances that one day he sent five warriors to bring the old man to him. Then they came back with him the Chief told the warriors to tie his hands and feet and put him into prison.

The next day the Chief and some of the people who lived with him went away from their home, leaving no one behind but Neeshu, the Chief's little son, who was about 10 years old. Neeshu played with an iron ring outside his father's tent. He would roll it around to see how far it would go without falling over. After awhile he rolled it a long way, and it went into the prisoner's tent where the old man had been put the day before. Neeshu peeped in, and asked to have his plaything back. The old man answered that he would do a great many things for him if he would only come in and untie his hands and feet. Neeshu said he did not think his father would like it if he did that. But the old man told him that he would take him to live with him if his father said or did anything to him. Neeshu was so anxious to get the ring back that he untied the tent door and went in to let the old man out. The old man, before escaping, told Neeshu how to find his home. He said he lived on an island in the river, but that Neeshu need not be afraid of the water when he came to see him because he could walk on it without the risk of drowning. When he came he would be met by the old man.

Neeshu, after helping the old man to escape, played around the tents all day until late in the evening, when the Chief and his people returned to the camp. The first thing the Chief did was to look into the tent where he kept the prisoner. He became very angry when he found it empty, and immediately sent for everyone in the camp to stand in a line in front of him. Then he took a magic glass out of his pocket which, by looking through it, gave him the power to distinguish the innocent from the guilty.

The chief put it up to his eyes and looked a long time at each member of his tribe, but all were innocent, since they appeared the same when he held the glass up to his eyes as they did before; and he knew that when he held it up before the guilty man he should see him as he appeared when he was untying the old man's feet. But he kept them all standing there, wondering what to do next, when someone said, "Your son, Neeshu, ought to be examined as well as us." So the Chief had someone awaken him and bring him out to where the others were. Neeshu stood before his father, and the Chief raised the glass instrument to his eyes to have a good look at his son. He peeked through his magic glass for a long time. When he put it down he was too surprised to speak, but finally said that he had seen his son untying the old man's hands and letting him out of the prison.

This raised a shout, as he had said that he would certainly kill the one who had done it. But he could not kill his own son, so he said that he would give him a severe whipping and keep him shut up for a long time.

Neeshu did not like to be shut up and did not feel very good after the whipping he received, so made up his mind to run away to find the old man he had helped to escape.

So, after the stillness of night had come upon the camp, Neeshu took a blanket and ran as fast as he could to the river. When he came to the bank he waited a few minutes, wondering if he could really walk on the water, as the old man had told him. At last he took a step or two and found that he got along all right. He kept on walking on the water until he came to the island, where the old man met him and took him to his large tent.

They lived together on the island for a long time. Neeshu, during the year, grew very rapidly. The old man, whom Neeshu now called grandfather, was what the Indians call "wakau;" that is he possessed the power to make things grow as much in a day as they would have done in a year under ordinary conditions.

One day, when they were out hunting, they went to a part of the island where Neeshu had never been before. Here he saw four pools of water of different colors; the smallest was yellow, and the others were red, black and white. The grandfather told Neeshu to put his head into the yellow water and see what it would do. He did so, and found that it made his hair very long and yellow. He was delighted, and coiled it up on top of his head and covered it with a deerskin cap. Then he told him to step into the large pool of black water, and to cover himself all over with it. When he came out he was dressed in black, and was on a splendid black horse that had fine black skins thrown over its back. Then he went into the red and white pools of water, from which he came out with clothes and horses the same color as the water he had gone into.

He was very careful of all the new things he had; he put the clothes away, and found good places for his three horses, of which he was very proud.

PART II -- NEESHU AS A YOUNG MAN

One evening, when Neeshu and his friend were sitting by the tent talking, his grandfather told him of a beautiful young woman who lived six suns away, and who was much admired by all the men, young and old. A number of men had endeavored to win her for a wife, but none of them were ever seen after their first visit to her because her father and mother were "wakau" (possessed mysterious powers) and always did something with all the young men who came to see her. Nevertheless, Neeshu made up his mind that he would go to see Sunapahat anyway. The old man was a little afraid to have him go, but admired the boy's courage so much that he did not say much against it.

Soon after this discussion Neeshu set out to find the home of Sunapahat. He had walked about three miles when he saw a lion, a bear, a hawk and an ant sitting around a buffalo which they had killed. They were now trying to decide how to divide the spoils.

The ant, as soon as she saw Neeshu, asked him if he had a knife. He answered that he had, so she asked them to cut up the buffalo for them. He agreed to do it, and after skinning it divided the bones between the lion and the bear, gave the flesh to the hawk and the head to the ant.

After finishing his work he was about to leave them when the ant again spoke to him, saying: "We know where you are going, and know that you have a difficult task before you. So, to show how grateful we are for the help you have given us we will do everything we can to make your journey easier." So saying, she took one of her little legs, wrapped it in a deerskin, and handed it to Neeshu, telling him that if he was ever in trouble and wanted to escape to take out this little foot and say, "I will be an ant," and immediately he would be one, and could slip away unnoticed. The lion and the bear gave him one of their claws, telling him the same that the ant had: that whenever he required their service to take out these claws, call to them and they would be there

to do anything that he wished. The hawk gave him one of her wing feathers, saying: "When you want to go very fast, produce this feather and say, "I will be a hawk," and you will find yourself flying away as fast as I can. Should you get hungry," she continued, "you can kill something and eat it; that is the way I always do."

After leaving these strange friends he walked a short distance, then became tired because the day had been long. At this moment he happened to think of what the hawk had told him. So, taking the feather from the deerskin, he said: "I will be a hawk," and in a moment was delighted to find himself flying away in the air, up above the tallest trees.

He flew so fast that it did not take him very long to come to the village where Sunapahat lived. He circled above the tops of the tents trying to determine where she was. After hunting for some time he found her sitting in a little arbor of boughs, sewing. Her beauty took his breath away. She was even lovelier than he had expected.

As soon as he had found where she was he began wondering where he should go to transform himself from a hawk to a man again. Finally he found a quiet place where he made himself ready to see Sunapahat.

When he arrived at the door of her tent he was greeted by Sunapahat's mother, who said: "Did you come to see my daughter?" "Yes, I came to see her," he answered. She said, "I am glad to see you; walk in." After he had entered the tent she gave him something to eat, and, although he was much too excited to be hungry, ate all she set before him. When he had finished eating she told him she would have something for him to do the next day. He answered that he would go into the village, but would be back to spend the night with them.

In the village he met some men who asked him what his business was. He told them that he had heard much of Sunapahat, and had come to see her. They were much surprised, and told him that it would do him no good; that all who ever went to the house for the purpose of seeing Sunapahat were always killed. Neeshu said meant to try anyway, and perhaps he would succeed.

He talked with the villagers for a while, then went back to where Sunapahat lived. The first one whom he saw was her mother again, who was a dreadful looking old woman. She told him his bed was ready, showed him where it was, and then went away. He sat quietly for a long time, wondering what would befall him on the morrow. While in the midst of his thoughts Sunapahat herself came into the room. She was pleased with his appearance, and decided to help Neeshu perform the tasks that her mother and father would require of him. She knew that he next day her mother would ask him to do something that seemed impossible for him to do; still, if he did not do it he would be killed, just as many others had been. After telling him what she knew she left him.

In the morning the mother called to him, saying his breakfast was ready. He followed her to a room where two large kettles full of the flesh of the former suitors of Sunapahat were boiling. As the old woman prepared to leave she warned him that unless she ate the entire contents of both kettles he could not have her daughter.

Neeshu looked with disgust at the dreadful stuff the old woman had placed before him, then slowly unrolled the bear and lion claws from the deerskin, and said; "I want both of you to come and eat this up for me." They immediately came and did as he requested, leaving only a few bones in the kettle, and the two claws, which he carefully wrapped up in the deerskin.

When the old woman came back she was thinking, "I suppose he is dead by this time and we shall not hear anymore of him." Consequently she was much surprised to see him sitting there, smiling. She did not show her surprise but said: "I am glad that you could eat all that I had

cooked for you." Then she went away to find her husband to tell him about what had occurred. He listened patiently, then said he was afraid that the man was wakau (possessor of mysterious powers).

That evening Neeshu's beloved, Sunapahat, came to him to tell him what he would have to do the next day. She said: "My father will give you an axe and tell you to level a high hill that is nearby. When you are ready to go be sure to call me, since I think that I can help you."

The next morning her father told him that he had always had the desire to see a long distance without climbing to the top of the great hill in front of the tent, so he wished Neeshu would take the old axe and level it off.

Neeshu took the axe and climbed the hill, wondering all the way how he could ever dispose of so much earth. He sat down to think it over but could not hit upon a good plan. Then he remembered that Sunapahat had told him to call her as soon as he got to the hill. He felt ashamed that he had forgotten her request for so long. As soon as he had called she appeared to him in a cloud, so that none but he could see her. She asked for the axe, which he handed to her, then waved it back and forth over the hill until it gradually became level and flat. Sunapahat then went away as she had come, concealed in a cloud.

Neeshu went to the old man and told him that his work was done. The old man went to his tent door, where he became sad when he saw that the hill had actually disappeared. He and his wife talked about it a long time, and were sorry that Neeshu had been able to comply with their foolish request, since the hill belonged to them and had been covered with good timber. Now that it was leveled they would not have so much wood. Still, they did not want Neeshu to know that they were not pleased with his work. The father was afraid that Sunapahat had helped him, but her mother would not believe his suspicion. The father then went to Neeshu and told him that he had one more thing for him to do, and that he would tell him in the morning what it was.

So, in the morning, the mother took Neeshu to the door of her tent and pointed to the lake, saying: "Whenever I want to go anywhere that lake seems to be in my way. I wish that you would drain all the water out; here is a thimble to do it with." Then she went back into the tent while he slowly walked to the lake, trying to think of some way out of his difficulty. He sat down upon the bank and thought of many different ways until he remembered what Sunapahat had said to him the evening before. He had forgotten her again. He was ashamed to call her, so dipped a few thimblefuls out, but soon saw that he could do nothing that way. Then he called her, and she came as she had come to the hill on the previous morning, hidden from everyone but him. She asked for the thimble, held it a certain way in her hand, then waved it back and forth over the water. With every motion the water gradually lowered until there was only a little water left at one side. This she told Neeshu he must dip out with his thimble. Soon after she had gone her mother came to see how Neeshu was getting along, and was surprised to see him dipping out the last few thimblefuls and supposed that all the water had been disposed of in the same way. He merely said that she was glad he had done as she had asked him to do, and went to find her husband to talk it over. They agreed that they had done a very foolish thing. Yesterday the hill with most of their wood had gone, and now the lake where they got water and fish had also disappeared. They were convinced that Neeshu was wakau and did not like to give Sunapahat up without one more test of his powers. The mother said that she would have a plan ready by morning.

That evening, as before, Sunapahat came to Neeshu, saying that she did not know what her mother and father would ask of him next, but that he could rely on any assistance from her that she could possibly give.

The mother came to him the next morning, and said: "We will do something together this time;

we will see who can fly the higher, and who will remain in the air the longest." Then they went a short distance off, where they were to take off, and found the entire village assembled to witness the trial. The mother took a richly embroidered deerskin, wrapped it about her, and sailed into the air. Neeshu then took out the hawk feather and said softly, "I will be a hawk." He was immediately flying above the heads of the people. He went up and up, until he seemed but a speck among the clouds. The old woman, meanwhile, did not know that Neeshu had flown above her, and getting tired of gliding, started down. After he had once started down she descended very rapidly. The village people were so disgusted with her flight that as soon as she had landed they put her and her husband to death.

When Neeshu came down he was greeted with cheers and shouts of delight from the villagers. He had been successful, so he took Sunapahat, who was now his bride, and returned to his island home, where the old man lived who had done so much for him.

The grandfather was very glad to see Neeshu, and asked him if the young woman with him was really Sunapahat. Being told that she was, he told Neeshu that he was a brave, good boy; and then after telling Sunapahat that he was glad to have her there, began to arrange things for her comfort.

The three lived together for a long time until one day the grandfather asked Neeshu if he would like to go back to see his father and mother. He answered; "Yes, I would like to go." So Neeshu packed the clothes that he had gotten in the pools and took the three nice horses, with which he and Sunapahat left the island to go back to his old home. The grandfather went with them a little way.

After a short journey he came to the camp of his people, where the first one he saw was his mother. He said, "Mother, don't you know me?" She looked at him a moment, then embraced him. She was also glad to have the beautiful girl, Sunapahat, with them, and made her welcome.

THE GREAT FISH WHO IS CALLED A SANDBAR

Translator anonymous

A party of warriors were winding their way homeward along the bank of a muddy river after a successful invasion of the country of their enemies. Their war paint and dancing eagle plumes gleamed in the last rays of the setting sun. Toward the right of the party walked a couple of stalwart braves. There was a tenderness in their manner to each other that at once revealed a close comradeship, since the love of two men who have faced danger together often surpasses their love for women.

They had been on the warpath for many days and nights, and now over forty-eight hours had passed since their last morsel of food had been consumed. So it was with much pleasure that Chaske, one of the two friends, caught a large pike in the river.

Chaske quickly prepared the fish for his friend, Hegan, who was weaker than he. But after it had been prepared in perfect Indian style Hegan refused to eat it. In vain Chaske urged, hoping to overcome his friend's reluctance to share his meal. At length, being unable to resist the pleadings of Chaske, Hegan said; "My friend, I do as you urge because you love me; but if I eat the pike don't become weary of bringing me water from the river during the night." So, with this understanding, the two joyfully partook of the fish. But the meal was scarcely over before Hegan said: "Chaske, bring me some water." Chaske joyfully brought his friend water, since he was happy to do any service for him. But soon the large pailful was empty and his friend was still panting for water.

Chaske, in an attempt to allay his friend's painful thirst, made frequent trips to the river. But the thirst, instead of becoming quenched, became more and more intense; and as the night wore on the flagging energy of Chaske suggested an easier and surer method of quenching his friend's unaccountable thirst. It was to move him to the bank of the stream where he could drink his fill. Upon proposing it his friend agreed to the idea, but at the same time exclaimed: "My friend, you have undone me." So Chaske carefully helped Hegan to the river's edge, and then left him to snatch an hour's rest before the dawn came.

Chaske had scarcely dozed off before the voice of his friend awoke him with the words: "Behold me." When Chaske reached him the upper half of his body had turned into a pike. In distress and anguish, Chaske upbraided himself for bringing about his friend's misfortune by taking him to the river's edge, but it was too late to help him now; the fish part was already submerged in the river, and the remainder of his body was following fast until the last vestige of a man had disappeared, having been replaced by a great pike that stretched across the mouth of the river. As time sped on the sand washed upon it until to casual observers it looked like an ordinary sandbar.

Many canoes, during the years that followed, were wrecked on the big fish. These accidents kept on occurring until one day an Indian maiden, who had been Hegan's beloved, came slowly down the stream in a birch bark canoe that was loaded with beaded moccasins and all kinds of maiden handiwork, which she dropped into the water for her lost lover. The large fish, as a token of acceptance, did the one thing it could do: submerged itself under the water.

The paleface, who now use the Missouri, call the great fish a sandbar because their river boats are sometimes left stranded on top of it. Only we, the Indians, know that it is a great fish who was one a man.

THE LEGEND OF PORCUPINE BUTTE

Translator Anonymous

There was a young warrior, many years ago, who was often seen wandering about with a very downcast expression upon his face. He had a sufficient reason for his forlorn countenance, because for many days and nights he and his companions had been carrying on an unsuccessful search for buffalo, whose meat was needed for their starving tribe.

The young man slowly climbed up to the top of a very high hill, where he looked over the landscape for a buffalo herd. But it was of no avail. He could see nothing but the wide country, its hills and valleys, and the pine trees dotting the hillsides here and there. His face grew more downcast, and his vision more troubled than ever. Suddenly he was startled by a voice which broke the stillness. "Why are you so sad at heart?" it asked.

The young man gazed about him in astonishment. He had seen no living being. "Who spoke to me?" was the thought. He looked around, but he didn't see anyone. "I must have been dreaming," he said to himself, and again his countenance fell. But again the same voice spoke. "Why are you so sad? Why is your face so sorrowful?"

Again the young man looked about him carefully. No human being was visible. The only living thing he saw was a porcupine, lying with its head in a northerly direction. "But the porcupine could never talk," the young man said softly to himself. However the porcupine spoke once more, and urged the young man to tell him why his countenance was so sad. Then the young man answered that it was because they could find no buffalo. "And my people are starving," he finished. The porcupine said then to him, "Take notice the way in which I am lying, and where

my head points. Follow on, in that direction, and you will surely find buffalo." The young man believed what the porcupine had told him, and gathered the warriors together. Once more they started on their quest for buffalo. This time they were successful. The porcupine had spoken truly. Never were buffalo more abundant. So the tribe, which had been starving, had more buffalo meat than it could eat.

The hill, in gratitude to the porcupine, was named Pahinsintela Paha, or Porcupine Butte, and so its name remains to this day.

HOW GOLD CAME TO THE BLACK HILLS

Translated by Walking Elk

A man had four children, all of whom were young men. But they were poor, and it seemed as if they would die because of their poverty. So one day the husband said to his wife, "Behold, old woman, I feel the greatest pity for my youngest child, who may die because of hunger. Let us, therefore, seek the Great Spirit and beg him to take care of our youngest son for us."

The old woman replied, "Yes, old man, you say well; we will do so." The couple then went on a journey westward in search of the Great Spirit. One day, after they had climbed a very high hill, they met a man who was sitting on its top.

This man asked, "What do you seek?" The old man answered, "Alas, my friend, I want to give my child, whom I pity, to the Great Spirit, so I am seeking him." The man then answered, "My friends, I am the Great Spirit. Give him to me. I will take him to my home and care for him."

So, after the old couple had given their son up, the Great Spirit took him to his home in the clouds. Here, after they had arrived, he said, "Examine this house as much as you like. Make yourself at home. My only request is that you take good care of this horse, and keep away from the small hut that adjoins my mansion. Never, under any condition, go inside of it." After this warning he gave the young man the keys to the rooms, adding, "Watch and protect this place carefully, because I am going on a long journey." The Great Spirit then went away.

When evening came the Great Spirit returned. He had many men with him, who filled the house. When they had been there a long time one of the men said, "The boy is good, that is enough." After saying this he went out. All the other men, in a like manner, left for their homes.

Then, again, the Great Spirit said, "I am going on a long journey. You stay and keep watch."

One day, when the young man was watching over the palace in the way his benefactor had requested, the horse spoke to him. He said, "Friend, go into the small hut into which you are commanded not to look. You will find something yellow in the middle of the floor. When you come to it dip your head into this yellow liquid--only make haste, before the Great Spirit comes back. Because when he returns he will bring many men with him who will eat both of us, but I, like you, am unwilling to die in such a horrible manner."

So the young man went into the little hut, where, in the middle of the floor, stood a pool of yellow liquid into which he dipped his head. His head immediately became golden and the house was filled with a shining light. Then he went out and jumped on the waiting horse, and together they fled.

After they had traveled a long way, a distance of many suns, the man who called himself the Great Spirit caught up with them. He called out, "You bad rascals, stop! You shall not live. Whither will you go in such a small country as this?" Saying this he came toward them faster

than ever and they became very frightened. Again he called out, "You are bad rascals, stop! You shall not live." And indeed it seemed as if they would not live.

Then the horse said, "Wave your right hand rearward." The young man did as he had been told, whereupon the whole breadth of the country became a sea, so that he who followed the came to a standstill and said, "Alas! My horse, have mercy on me and take me to the other side; if you do that I will value you very much." But the horse replied: "Ah! I am not willing to do that." But he who called himself the Great Spirit continued to plead with his horse, to no avail. Whereupon the man who called himself the Great Spirit became drowned; while the horse, still carrying the young man, kept on swimming until they sighted land.

So it came about that one day, after they had traveled a great distance, they came to the dwellings of a tribe who lived in high hills.

Here both the horse and the young man settled down. They lived here for many years in peace; but one day they were attacked by many warriors from an enemy tribe. The boy, during the course of the battle, turned his head around so his enemies could see the portion that was covered with gold. The gold blinded the enemies, making it easy for the young man to kill them, one by one, until only a few were left alive. But those who remained made a second attack; this time he destroyed them all. The young man was much thought of by the hill people after his victory.

A complete understanding of the fable may be difficult because of the man double meanings it contains. The word "head", for instance, means when more literally translated, "head-hair" or "scalp"; and the same word also means "hill". This double meaning is apparent in the fable. The desire for gold is the great temptation. Gold, to the Indian, was forbidden by the Great Spirit. For this reason the Black Hills were sacred ground. But even the Indian comes to desire it, and mysteriously clothes himself with its power. So he is obliged to flee, and is pursued by the white man, who in the fable is called the Great Spirit. The head, or hill, of gold is the cause. The Indian, though he flees, obtains the victory once more, notably in the Custer massacre, and, in consequence, is much thought of by the people in whose land he finds a home. This is Sitting Bull's tribe.

Neither party is to be blamed; certainly not the Indian. He wants only to live. First he hopes to accomplish this desire by nestling himself in the bosom of the Great Spirit. Disobeying, he is obliged to flee. But in all the destruction he wreaks on his enemies his only object is self-preservation. He cannot be blamed for wanting to live. And on the other hand, the white people wanted the Hill of Gold, for which they too, were not greatly to be blamed.

A DOG'S REVENGE

Translator Anonymous

At one time there lived an old woman who had stored away a large supply of dried buffalo meat. A hungry dog, who knew where the meat was stored, tried to creep into her tent one night when he supposed the old woman was asleep, with the purpose of stealing some of it. But the old woman was aware of his coming and kept watch. When the dog thrust his head under the tent she struck him across the face and made a great gash, which swelled greatly.

The next morning a companion dog came and attempted to talk with him. But the injured dog was sullen and silent. The visitor asked, "Tell me, what makes you so heartsick?" The injured dog replied, "Be still, an old woman has treated me badly." "What did she do to you?" was the

visitor's next question. "She had a pack of dried meat, which I tried to take away in the middle of the night, when I supposed her to be asleep. But, when I poked my head under her tent she cried out, 'Shoo! What are you doing in here?' and struck me on the head and wounded me, as you see.'

The visiting dog, upon hearing the story, said, "Alas! Alas! She has treated you badly; verily we will eat up her pack of meat. Call an assembly: call Water-mist (rain), call Bite-off-silently, call Strong-neck, call Sharp-knife." The injured dog invited them all for a council.

When all the dogs were assembled the companion dog, who presided over the council, said, "An old woman has treated our friend badly, so bestir yourselves before the night is past. We, in a group, will attack her tent and eat up the dried meat which she prizes so highly."

The dogs, after working out their strategy, began their attack on the old woman in this manner: Rain-mist caused it to rain throughout the day. This drenched and softened the tent-pins. Then Bite-off-silently bit off all the lower fastenings so quietly that the old woman didn't know what was taking place. Strong-neck then came and seized the pack with his mouth and carried it far away. After this had been done Sharp-knife ripped the pack through the middle. The remainder of the night was devoted to the feast, during which they ate up all the old woman's dried buffalo meat.

The moral of this myth is that a common sneak thief becomes more dangerous after he has associated himself with daring companions.

THE UNVISITED ISLAND

Translator anonymous

A young warrior once lived with his older brother, who was married. The wife of the older brother was a bad woman who often tried to entice the younger brother. But he always answered, "How can I do a thing that will shame my brother?" By and by this unfaithful woman brought false charges against the younger brother to her husband, who believed her, and ordered his brother to be exiled on the Unvisited Island. The Spider (who in Santee-Sioux fables is the Devil, or Evil Spirit), was commanded to carry out the order, and for his reward was to marry the false wife's sister.

The Spider enticed the younger brother to the Unvisited Island with the pretext of an egg hunt. Then, when the younger brother was gathering eggs on the shore, he turned the head of the canoe and paddled away. The younger brother called after him with cries and entreaties, begging him to bring the canoe back. But it did not avail. Then he cursed the Spider as a mean deceiver. The Spider replied by telling him that he would meet with a Gray Bear, the Arm-Awls, and the Two Women, then left him. Thus the younger brother was left on the Unvisited Island.

When he met the Gray Bear he made himself into a dead fish, which the bear swallowed whole. Then, after he was inside of the bear's body he stabbed the bear in the heart, out his way out, and took off the paws for trophies.

The Arm-Awls were two old hags who sat all day outside their tent. The younger brother, before visiting them, folded up his blanket; then, without paying any attention to them, went into the tent. They looked daggers at him, but did not say anything because they meant to pierce him with their arms when he came out. He knew this, so threw out his blanket, which they pierced through and into each other. In this way they killed each other.

He had now met and vanquished the majority of his enemies, but the worst was still ahead in the

form of the Two Women. He took, before he went to their tent, a tooth and a bundle, which represented the gopher and the badger. With these he hoped to circumvent the wiles of the two Women.

So, armed and warned, he came to their tent. They were cannibals, who boiled and set before him man-flesh. But he, doing as he had been instructed, looked to the earth and prayed, "Grandmother, where are you?" His prayer was answered by a white pail, which came out of the ground, into which he emptied the contents of the pot that had been set before him. Then came the second trial. When he lay down they covered him with blankets to smother him. But he bored a hole through the blanket with his teeth so he could breathe freely. Then he made the hole larger, after which he talked to the Two Women until they were persuaded to give up their cannibalism. After this had been done he married them.

It turned out that the Two Women, who were the daughters of Ooktahee, the Great Spirit of the water, had been changed into cannibals by the Evil Spirit. They were very happy with the younger brother, and bore children for him. But, by and by, he began to pine for his own country. The Two Women, upon seeing something was the matter, inquired the cause. So he told them. "Oh, is that all!" they said. "We will take you back." So they called their mother and told her to bake pumice stone. When the pumice stone was baked and ground to powder, they said, "Call father." So she stood by the water and said, "Old man, come; the girls want to go to the mainland." Then immediately something floated up on the water and came to the shore. This was Ooktahee, the Water Spirit. They filled his eyes with the burnt stone, then put the younger brother in the sack and hung it on one of the numerous horns of the Great Spirit of the waters. Then they, and their boys, got on and paddled for the mainland. But Ooktahee was very uneasy. He felt that shadows were coming over. He bade them look out for the Wakinyan (the Thunder Spirit) who was his immemorial enemy. "No, father, the sky is blue," they said. But indeed there were thick clouds and a great storm coming. No sooner had they landed and gotten to shore than it burst upon them. Then they said, "Father, hurry away, the Thunder is near." "Alas, my daughters, I thought so," was the reply. Just then the Thunder hurled his bolts at him, and all the water was turned into blood. The younger brother said, "Alas! For my poor father-in-law." But the Two Women said, "He will not die of that. He never dies."

They were now in his own country, but saw no one until after the tent had been put up, when he saw a woman walking to a nearby spring for water. She looked like his sister, but she was so disfigured it was difficult to recognize her. It was only after she had approached closer that he knew for certain who it was. He said, "My sister." She answered, "My brother," and they embraced each other. Then he asked of her welfare, and why her face was scarred. She told him that her husband treated very badly--that when she came for water and returned he charged her with having been courted by someone, and put hot ashes on her face. Moreover he had destroyed all the people of the village. After giving her brother this information she picked up her water pitcher and went home. The Spider, who was her husband, was very angry when he saw her, and said, "Now, someone has been courting you again." To which she replied: "See, you have destroyed all the people; who is there to say anything to me?" and she dashed the water on him. He only laughed and said: "Woman, has my brother-in-law come home?" "If you had been left on the Unvisited Island would you ever have returned?" she asked. Then she left him and went to her brother's tent. Here she took a bath, was given beautiful clothes to put on, then told to retire to the back part of the tent.

Then the Younger Brother said to his two boys, "Go, call Spider." They went and said, "Spider, we call you." He said, "Oh, how beautiful my nephews are," and following them went into the tent. He was hoping to see his wife, now dressed so nicely and seated in the back part of the tent; but the young brother said: "Spider, sit there in the door," to which he made answer, "Yes, brother-in-law, I will do what you tell me." It was now Younger Brother's turn to take vengeance. So he said: "Spider, weave tamarack roots; weave a basket over the fire. Spider

squirmed, but did as he was told. He was killed by the smoke, after which the younger brother cut out the Spider's heart, dried it, then pounded it up fine and made a medicine from it which he gave to his two boys, saying, "Go, scatter it on the ruins of the village."

When the next morning came he said to them: "Go and see what has happened to the medicine you have scattered." They returned and said: "Father, all over there are crawling worms." He sent them again the second day. They returned and said: "Father, the things are now very large." The third day they brought word: "Father, they are now little men, and we heard them say to each other, 'Stand up, you are crooked.'"

On the fourth day the people were perfected; and at the early dawn, with loud voices, beating drums and proclamations they came and pitched their tents around the tent of the Younger Brother, who was made their chief. In this way all the people of the tribe, who the Spider thought he had destroyed, were brought back to life.