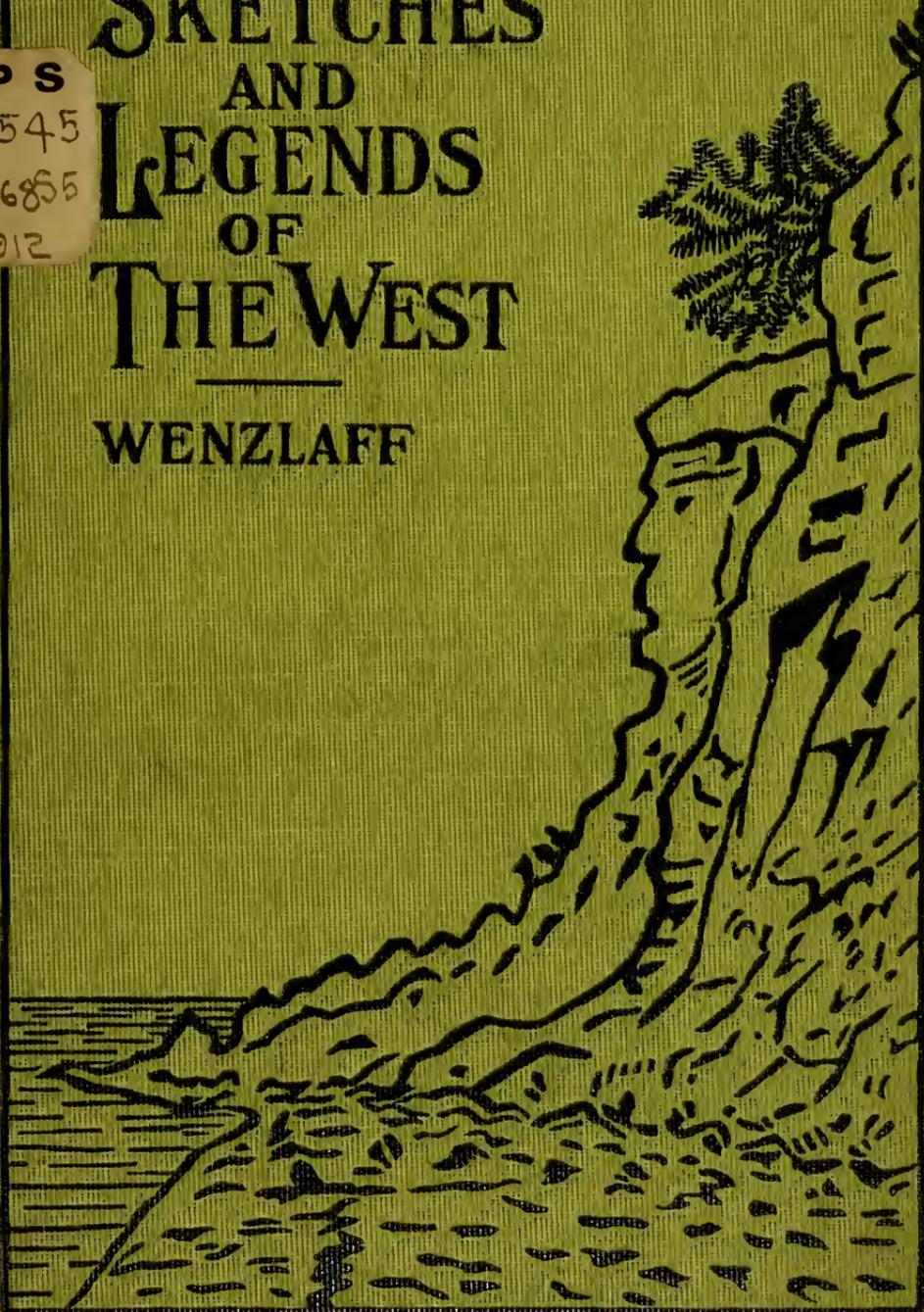


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SKETCHES AND LEGENDS OF THE WEST

WENZLAFF





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1860

THIS MONUMENT WAS
ERECTED AT THIS
PLACE, WAS ERECTED
THE FIRST SCHOOL HOUSE
ON THE TERRITORY NOW
COMPRISING THE STATES
OF SOUTH DAKOTA,
NORTH DAKOTA, IOWA,
WYOMING AND MONTANA

GEORGE W. WARD
LEAH WARD
MARY WARD
MELBA WARD
JULIA WARD

SKETCHES AND LEGENDS
OF THE WEST

SKETCHES AND LEGENDS
OF THE WEST

BY

GUSTAV GOTTLIEB WENZLAFF

CAPITAL SUPPLY COMPANY
PIERRE, S. DAKOTA

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. The Green Prairies.....	11
II. The Boy on the Farm.....	19
III. Where-the-Lights-Go-Out.....	29
IV. Spirit Mound.....	37
V. Old Scattergold.....	45
VI. The Home of Waziya.....	55
VII. Legend of the Good Man.....	67
VIII. The Great Sentinel.....	77
IX. Legend of an Old Oak.....	85
X. Fort Randall.....	93
XI. The City of the Skies.....	103

**To My
Children**

*these Sketches and Legends
are affectionately
dedicated*

THE GREEN PRAIRIES

The Green Prairies

IN the very heart of our continent lies a vast stretch of level land. When the white man first saw it, it was treeless and comparatively bare. Yet on it fed antelopes and great herds of buffalos, and over it roamed bands of Indians, who hunted the game. On these prairies are now found many groves and homes, and great red barns, corn fields, herds of sleek cattle and horses, and a populous race of toilers.

But the great plains of the West did not always blossom even as they did when the first savage beheld them. Where now these great stretches of land lie, there was a vast sea, which became shallower and shallower until it disappeared altogether.

THE GREEN PRAIRIES

To the north and west of this new country—so the story goes—among the cragged rocks of the mountains, lived men of huge size and strength. They knew how to hunt game, which roamed through the mountains and woods. Their weapons were long poles and large rocks, which they hurled with accuracy and force.

It happened one day that some of these men were out hunting, and they came together at a spring. Big-Grizzly arrived first, and stooping over the cool water as it bubbled up, drank freely. Then he sat by it and gazed lazily down the valley. Then came One-Eye, tall as a pine and stronger than the shaggy buffalo. He stooped down on the other side of the spring, drank, and then sat down also.

Presently Strong-Arm and Stoop happened to come, and seeing the clear water,

THE GREEN PRAIRIES

Strong-Arm said, "Give us a chance at the spring!"

But Big-Grizzly asked jestingly, "How long can you wait?"

"Wait?" exclaimed Stoop, flushing with anger. "Just long enough for you to remove your lazy forms."

"You flare up like a boy," said One-Eye, coolly. "Calm yourself; you'll get to the water soon enough."

"So you refuse to move?" cried Stoop, and bending over, he took hold of a crag and tore it up. In an instant the great bodies beside the spring were up and a Titan battle was on that shook the earth. The giants were grappling the projecting crags of the mountain, and they rent huge masses from their mooring, and hurled them at each other. Strong-Arm was the first to be hit, and he fell with a thud and a groan.

THE GREEN PRAIRIES

Then Big-Grizzly was struck on the head with such force that the sound of the blow echoed among the cliffs, and with a cry that shook the mountains, he, too, fell.

Stoop and One-Eye now faced each other. Stoop hurled a sharp-edged rock so swiftly that it sang on its course. But One-Eye dodged the vicious missile, which then buried itself in the ground.

Now One-Eye once more pulled and shook the rocks until a huge piece was broken away. This he threw, and it shrieked through the air. The aim had been true, and Stoop fell, never to rise again.

The surviving Titan now viewed the desolation that had been wrought in a few moments. Great boulders lay strewn about and the ground was crimson with blood. And what was it all for?

Terror seized One-Eye. He felt that he

THE GREEN PRAIRIES

could not remain here longer. The sight of the mountains and rocks made him faint. But where go?

The sun hung pale above the mountain peaks. Weary from the battle, and sick of heart, One-Eye picked up his robe and slowly descended. Far to the south and east he descried a vast brown sea without billows and without gleam. When finally he reached it, he saw it was not a sea at all, but a level land, brown, grassless, and desolate, for this had been the bottom of an ocean.

Like a boy who, coming to a sunny beach, is drawn by the glistening sand, so One-Eye, the Titan, was charmed by the vast level, and, unfolding his great robe, he stretched himself out on the fur. He looked up into the deep sky, and its blue seemed to be endless. Not a bird, not an insect—

THE GREEN PRAIRIES

no, not even a cloud—crossed his field of vision. He fell asleep, and he slept, how long no man can tell; it might have been a century or it might have been a thousand years. Yet when he awoke, he found himself not upon a fur robe, but upon a velvety field of buffalo grass. He slowly raised himself, and towering high above the grass at his feet, he shaded his eye and peered out over the field. As far as he could see there was grass,—a sea of green.

One-Eye stood long, and looked and looked. Then, turning his face toward the mountains, he said, “My heart is satisfied. I will go.”

And he went, but his robe he left as the soft covering of the plains.

THE BOY ON THE FARM

The Boy on the Farm

WHILE the windmill at the well now and then starts with a creak and a clatter, the boy on the farm lies in the shade and watches in a half-listless manner its whims and movements in the summer air. Finally he says, "Lonesome! Not much doing here! Shep, let's go to the lake."

No sooner said than we find Tom and the intelligent shepherd dog walking down the dusty road. Field-sparrows are flitting about everywhere, and occasionally a song-sparrow sings his best from some dry branch. The meadow-lark, too, pipes its choppy tune from post or pole. It is a simple tune, yet the boy likes it because

THE BOY ON THE FARM

he has heard it so often in season and out of season. Now a gopher or a quail runs across their pathway. Shep starts to run after it.

“Here, Shep!” commands the boy.

Now they enter a meadow fragrant and soft. A jack-rabbit comes bounding along and after him two dogs. These evidently are experienced rabbit-hunters, for they keep a good distance between themselves. But the jack-rabbit is a strong runner, and as the three disappear over the hill, the dogs have not gained on the rabbit. Then the rabbit comes to a hole in the midst of some bunch-grass and into it he darts, while the dogs in their excitement speed on.

When Tom and Shep come along that way later, whom should they see but Master Jack-Rabbit sitting at the foot of a fence-post, his eyes and ears turned intently on

THE BOY ON THE FARM

a meadow-lark perched on the post and piping the usual little tune! The whole attitude of the rabbit shows how thoroughly he is absorbed in the singing. No siren of old could have charmed men more completely than this meadow-lark charms the fleet runner of the fields.

And over yonder on the little knoll they see a small mound of yellow clay. By it is the den of a coyote, and in it are a couple of baby coyotes. But you would not know it unless you watched very carefully. The mother keeps away during the day, and the babies remain very still in the hole. But when evening comes and gray shadows, then the mother returns quietly to her home and babies.

Down at the other end of the meadow they come to the lake, which is a wonderfully lively place, especially at dusk. A

THE BOY ON THE FARM

bittern gravely stands in the shallow water, while a pair of kingfishers are busily looking for delicacies. Killdeers stalk about the muddy shore, and now and then give their cry, "Killdee, killdee!" Wild ducks and mud-hens are sporting about the deeper portions of the lake. Now a muskrat quietly swims from her island home through the dark water in among the reeds and there is lost to view.

Tom, standing under a willow tree, casts a searching look over the lake. "Muskrats, Shep," says the boy. "This is where we'll set out traps next winter. Not now, Shep. The fur is not good now."

Both boy and dog seat themselves in the shade and watch the life on the lake.

"Fine ducks, Shep," says the boy.

Shep responds with a sharp bark. The killdeers fly up with a cry, while the bittern,

THE BOY ON THE FARM

with measured beat of wing, rises into the air and is gone.

The faint sound of the farm bell is now wafted over the hill.

“Shep, we must be off!” and the boy and the dog turn back whence they came.

Tom does not keep all the varied impressions that he gets from the great school of nature, but he talks about them at home.

The schoolmaster, who during the summer months helps plow corn and make hay, listens with great interest to the young naturalist.

The next day, as the young man rides up and down the long, straight rows of tender corn, he mutters away at something that the horses cannot understand. But not many days after, the editor of the *Prairie Journal* opens a letter and finds in it, for

THE BOY ON THE FARM

print; some verses that were hammered out on the cultivator. They ran thus:

THE BOY ON THE FARM

It's the boy on the farm and the dog at his
side
That know where the coyote and little ones
hide;
They know where the duck her wee babes
fondly feeds,
And the muskrats their house finely build
in the reeds.

It's the boy on the farm and the dog, ever
near,
That can tell just how stalks the long-
legged killdeer,
And how the kingfisher deep dives for the
fish,

THE BOY ON THE FARM

And what is the field-sparrow's daintiest
dish.

They know, too, what tune the song-
sparrow e'er sings—

“Oh, maidens, hang out your tea-kettles!”
it rings;

And how, when pursued, the fleet rabbit
can bound

Over field, over stones, quite as fast as a
hound.

While others are sweating and grubbing all
day,

The boy and his dog—oh, they just play.

Yet mark! when it comes to devouring a
meal,

There's none that can beat them in such a
square deal.

THE BOY ON THE FARM

Oh, the boy on the farm, as well as his dog,
They're certainly needed to keep things
ajog;

While the one can holler, the other can
bark,

And both keep things going from morning
till dark.

WHERE-THE-LIGHTS-GO-OUT

Where-the-Lights-Go-Out

THE rivers and small lakes of the prairie lands of the Northwest are many. The Big Sioux winds in and out for many weary miles until it dashes over the rocks at Sioux Falls, and then it continues in its southward course until it joins the Missouri. The James, the longest unnavigable river in the world, sluggishly creeps on through two states, and likewise empties into the Missouri. The Missouri, rising in the mountains of the Far West, hastens east and south into the sea.

Rivers have always taken an important part in the history of a country. In ancient times, the Tigris and Euphrates were the life to Mesopotamia. The Nile was the

WHERE-THE-LIGHTS-GO-OUT

bread-giver to Egypt. The Tiber is inseparable from the history of Rome. The Rhine is sacred in German song and legend. And the history of the West is not complete without the Missouri. Lewis and Clark made their historic expedition through the West up the Missouri, and the early fur-traders journeyed by the way of this stream. Later, when the country was being settled, a flotilla of steamboats plied the Big Muddy, carrying freight and passengers.

To those living near, the Missouri has become endeared. It is so forceful and wild. It demands wide elbow-room for its meanderings. The hills bordering the river in places suggest miniature mountains, and in the distance wear wonderful hues of purple and blue. Those parts of the river-bottom that have not been torn up and

WHERE-THE-LIGHTS-GO-OUT

rebuilt by the angry tide for some time grow woods of luxuriant growth.

If the Missouri would but take us into his confidence, what a tale would we hear of his childhood up in the Rocky Mountains; of his turbulent boyhood and youth among the foothills; of his manhood as he rushed, still uncontrollable, through vast plains along the low-lying coteaus, past cities and towns! Before he throws himself into the arms of the Father of Waters, how many acres of fertile land has he not torn up and scattered to the winds; how many deep-rooted trees of gigantic stature has he not toppled over and carried on his mighty back toward the sea; how many careless bathers has he not pulled down to gloomy depths! And what skies and clouds and groves has he not mirrored in his eyes!

WHERE-THE-LIGHTS-GO-OUT

But Master Missouri says nothing; perhaps he hasn't time for words.

However, even though the ancient river remains speechless, there are those who possess traditions reaching into the dim past.

A beautiful grove of stately elms and cottonwoods looms up on the south bank of the river opposite the dreamy chalk cliffs above old Yankton. Here and there the branches are trellised with the wild grapevine, and in the shade of the trees grow the sumac and the dogwood.

"That's the place where the lights go out," the traveler passing by on a steamboat is informed. "Every light on this boat would go out, were we to come along here after dark."

Many years ago the Spirit of the Shade lived in a forest to the east. So large and

WHERE-THE-LIGHTS-GO-OUT

dense were the trees that not a ray of sunlight ever penetrated the leafy branches to the ground below. This was to the liking of the Spirit. Just as warm sunshine gladdens our hearts, so the shady twilight of the forest seemed to give satisfaction to the Spirit of the Shade. In his dusky home he watched the timid hare and roe, and listened to the twitter of birds and the hoot of owls in the branches above.

But finally he heard other sounds—voices of men and the ring of the axe. The great trees of the forest fell, one after another, until finally bright sunlight beat upon the cool, mossy ground, where the Spirit of the Shade had lived so long. Then he fled westward to other forests. But men followed, and everywhere they chopped and stripped and burned.

Finally the Spirit of the Shade crossed

WHERE-THE-LIGHTS-GO-OUT

the Father of Waters and the bare plains. He looked upon the trees of the Big Sioux, the Vermillion and the James rivers, but passed on until he came to a village of Yankton Indians, and there across from Smutty Bear's thickly wooded bottom lands, on the other side of the Missouri, he found a wood, the trees of which raised their heads high to the sky, and by it flowed the wild, lawless river.

"Here," said the Spirit of the Shade, "I'll abide until the river topples my shady house into its flood, and bears the ground upon which it was reared into the great sea. But if man comes along with his detested lights and fires, I'll blow and smother them out."

And to this day the spot is called Where-the-lights-go-out.

SPIRIT MOUND

Spirit Mound

NOT far from the banks of the Vermilion, near its mouth, rises a symmetrical mound, which from time immemorial is reported to be the abode of imps. These imps, or little devils, are described as about eighteen inches in height, having large heads, and provided with bows and arrows, which they use against the unsuspecting passer-by.

The malicious little spirits—so the story runs—were once full-sized Indians and lived upon the plains like others, except that they shirked doing their part in providing food and furs for the tribe. When others were out on the chase, the shirkers sneaked off and lay in the shade of the

SPIRIT MOUND

trees by some creek or river, and slept or talked in the manner of idlers. And when it was remonstrated, they used bad words and in other ways made themselves disagreeable.

Now, in the tribe there was a medicine man, or magician, who knew the secrets of nature.

“Go!” said the good men of the tribe to the magician, “go and use your power for the good of the tribe.”

“What shall I do?” asked he.

“What you will,” they answered, “only do not take the lives of the lazy.”

So the magician went out by himself to the top of a hill and remained there two days and two nights. When he came back, he called the people together, and they formed a large circle. Standing in the center, he said, “Beat the drums!”

SPIRIT MOUND

The sound of the drums weirdly rolled over the prairies.

“Bring me my bag!” he continued.

His buckskin bag, beautifully worked in beads and dyed porcupine quills, was brought.

Then he called into the circular space the men who did not live for the good of the tribe. Thereupon he reached into the bag and pulled out a little animal.

“Look! What is it?” cried the magician.

“A prairie dog!” they answered.

“Open the circle!” continued the magician. “The prairie dog is of no good to us, and hence it may go!”

With that the little animal was put on the ground, and as it ran out it changed into a prairie wolf.

Then the magician reached into the bag once more and pulled out a little bird.

SPIRIT MOUND

“What is this?” asked he.

“A ground owl!” they all answered.

“The owl is no good to the tribe; therefore it may fly.”

And as it flew up, it changed into a great eagle.

The magician left the circle, but some of the shirkers said, “I am going to do my share hereafter,” while others said, “Wait; we can still hit a mark, even though not larger than a magician.”

The magician went off alone and prepared himself to use his power over the bad men. Then he wandered about the creek and river-bottoms, and when he found any of the bad ones, he changed their form into that of imps and banned them to live ever after like gophers in the ground.

When Lewis and Clark came to the Vermillion, the natives told them of Spirit

SPIRIT MOUND

Mound and its inhabitants, but the white men found nothing except the mound overgrown with prairie grass.

OLD SCATTERGOLD

Old Scattergold

THE Black Hills may be counted among the most beautiful mountains in the West. They rise high and rugged into the air. Dark evergreens cover mountain-side and valley, except where the ruthless axe or fire has felled or consumed the ancient trees. Bright mountain streams rush through valleys and canyons. Perpendicular crags pierce the sky, and around their heads clouds lower and gleam in the evening light.

But the Black Hills are chiefly valued for the gold that they conceal. Here gold in abundance has been found in valleys and stream-beds; and gold is still found in abundance in the rocks of the mountains.

OLD SCATTERGOLD

According to the story, there was once a time when the Black Hills existed in all their beauty, but without gold.

It was in the days when the radiant rainbow spanning the mountain peaks was prized above the luster of silver and gold, that a fair maiden lived with her people in these mountains. She helped her mother in grinding the corn, preparing the food, and tanning the skins. Although thus occupied, and not getting far from her home, she nevertheless knew much of these mountains, which she loved. It was to her a joy to watch the morning light upon the lofty peaks, or the storm-clouds dashing against the rocks and pines, and the lightning crashing hither and thither, or the timid deer grazing in the glen.

This maiden had a lover, and he loved not only the maiden, but also the things

OLD SCATTERGOLD

that she loved of nature. He was good and brave.

“Maiden,” said he, “how rich I am and happy in these Hills. The sky, the cliffs, the pines, the birds, and the flowers are all ours.”

“Young man,” said she, “all this is not only ours, but also belongs to whosoever looks. The brooks and birds sing for all who listen. The trees murmur for all ears.”

Now, it happened that a stranger came among these people, and he saw the maiden, and was pleased with her looks.

“I must win her for myself,” said he. Yet the maiden would not look at him. But the strange young man had gold without limit. This he now brought in large leather bags and poured it on robes spread on the ground.

“This is valuable,” he said. “In the dis-

OLD SCATTERGOLD

tant world this metal will procure whatever the heart desires.”

The people looked and marveled at the gleaming gold. The pile grew bigger and bigger, until it was a mountain itself.

“How rich and powerful the stranger is!” they exclaimed. “Maiden, listen to his voice!”

“I am rich without gold,” she quietly replied.

“What have you?” asked some.

“I have yonder rainbow bending over these beautiful Hills.”

They laughed at the girl, because they had so long looked at the mountain of gold, and listened to the stories of its power, that the rainbow had lost its beauty for them.

“Then I have the sky gleaming each morning and each evening in the purest yel-

OLD SCATTERGOLD

low, red, and purple," she continued. "And I have you, my friends."

They laughed scornfully, and said, "Fool of a girl! What can you do with rainbows and bright skies? Choose the young man with the mountain of gold, and we all shall be rich and happy for all time to come. Choose him or we'll drive you out!"

"Give me until the new sun comes," answered the maiden.

To this they consented.

Now the maiden quietly went up the forest where twilight reigned even when the sun was highest.

"Must I renounce my beautiful Hills and my people, and be untrue to my heart?" she cried. "My rainbow spanning these peaks is dearer to me than a mountain of gold higher than the rainbow's arch. I shall remain true to my heart and my love."

OLD SCATTERGOLD

She heard a moan and a roar among the ancient pines; then they creaked and crashed. It became so dark that she could not see the trunks of the trees. She groped her way to a huge granite block with overhanging side. Then lightning flashed and roared, and a flood of water rushed through the forest.

Below, the mountain of gold was washed and scattered and driven and melted into the imperishable rocks. The people themselves were terrorized, and they crept away in whatever sheltered places they could find. In their fright, above the din of the storm and the roar of thunder, which re-echoed and multiplied between the mountain walls, they believed that they heard something shout, "I'm Scattergold! I'm Scattergold, the friend of the faithful maiden!"

After the storm and the agitation had

OLD SCATTERGOLD

subsided, the people came out of their hiding-places, and said, "Let the maiden love the rainbow and the colored sky over these Hills, and we shall love with her. But the stranger may take his gold and go."

When they looked for the stranger, they failed to find him—he was gone, as was the heap of gold.

In later years, whenever a child found a nugget of gold in a pebbly brook, he said, "Old Scattergold left it here."

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

The Home of Waziya

IT is again a story of days long past, when things were not as they are today. Of the dark side, nothing is said. That the mountain torrent raged and growled, is a matter of course. That the thorns grew to lacerate and scratch, can also be assumed. Yet no wind blew, and that is why plants and flowers of the most delicate texture grew up unmarred and unrent, and why trees reached up to fabulous heights.

One day there came to the people in the Hills an old man who aroused the curiosity of all. He was bent in form; his face was furrowed with deep lines, and the bushy eyebrows, which shaded his squinting eyes,

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

were gray, as was also his matted hair, which hung over his stooped shoulders.

“I return to my people,” he drawled out.

“We do not know you,” replied one of the elderly persons in the crowd that had gathered around the stranger, “although your tongue indicates that you know something of us.”

“Indeed, I know something of you,” continued the old man. “Was I not one of your chiefs many years ago, when you were but a young man? Did we not call you Bold-Wolf? And is not that woman Winona, and that old man over there Buffalo-Foot?”

“Indeed, he speaks the truth!” several exclaimed.

“But I myself was called Walkaway, because there came to me at times wonderful visions that led me away into wild and

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

lonely places. At first I remained away but a few days at a time, but finally I did not return at all until this day. But," he added, looking around in all directions, "have you something for me to eat?"

"Surely!" replied the people, and they brought out their choicest food—venison, corn-cake, and fruit. Old Walkaway was very hungry, and immediately began to eat. It was not long before the entire village was engaged in a feast in honor of the return of their long-lost chief. But no one ate as much and as long as Walkaway.

"Ah, good, very good!" he exclaimed. "I have room for more."

He was given more, and again he exclaimed, "Ah, good, very good! Still there is room."

"Ah, good, very good!" said one of the boys that was called Warm-Face, who

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

stood off at a distance with some of the other young people, mimicking and holding his stomach. Then all the youngsters snickered.

Although the jest was not intended for the guest's ears, he nevertheless understood that he was the object of their laughter.

"Ah, you laugh at me! You poke fun at me!" cried old Walkaway. "You treat me rudely!"

"They are but children, and laugh easily," said one of the chief men.

Old Walkaway was not satisfied with this explanation, but suggested that a club be applied to the backs of these young mockers.

"I say they are but young boys and girls," replied the chief. "Yet I'll see that our long-lost brother will not be laughed at again by the young."

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

Old Walkaway grumbled something, and walked off among the trees.

Later in the day he returned. He seemed to have forgotten his ill humor. He talked about this and that. Finally he said, "My visions drew me into the wilderness and solitude. It was necessary for me to do so, as the lonely rocks and trees cried for me to watch them. I visited them all. Now they again cry angrily for some one to look after them. They threaten to destroy us all, if their demand is not complied with. I myself am old, but I see a vision, which means that one of you must go."

A long pause followed. Finally some one asked, "Who is it?"

"Warm-Face!" replied Walkaway, standing as erect as he could, looking fiercely at the young man, and pointing a bony finger at him.

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

Many believed in Walkaway's visions; a few privately said that he was led by insane ideas; while Warm-Face himself felt that the old chief was both crazy and vengeful.

There was a long silence, but finally Bold - Wolf stepped forth and asked, "Warm-Face, will you go?"

"Since you ask me, I will," replied the young man, bitterly. But being full of humor, he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "And I will see to it that the rocks and the jack-pines in the wilderness will soon close their mouths. I will save you all from their anger. Shall I greet them for you?"

Then the young man left, and old Walkaway said that it was right. But Warm-Face did not feel it was right that he should be compelled to leave and wander about in the wilderness. However, he did not com-

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

plain, but was determined to make the most of the exile.

One day, in mid-summer, he was hunting in a barren region. The soil was scant. Only here and there sage-brush or a stunted jack-pine grew. The sun was beating down hotly.

“I shall perish of heat,” thought he. “Would that I were down at Hot Springs in the cool shade.”

As he looked out more sharply, he noticed a boy wrapped in a buffalo robe and leaning over a fire to warm himself. This youth proved to be the Imp of Contrariness.

“Cold?” asked Warm-Face, as he approached the little fellow.

“Sometimes,” replied the Imp.

“I am almost dead with heat,” continued Warm-Face. “Can’t you give me some of

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

the cold that you seem to have about you?"

"Come," said the Imp.

The Imp took Warm-Face to a place where grew some bushes, in the midst of which lay a large stone.

"Help me to move this," said the Imp.

Then both the Imp and Warm-Face pushed with all their might against the stone, but it would not budge.

They tried again and again, until suddenly it rolled over, and a cool wind blew out of the ground where the rock had lain.

"Ah!" exclaimed Warm-Face with delight, as he felt the refreshing wind.

"Wind Cave," said the Imp. "The home of Waziya, the spirit of the whirlwind, the blizzard, as well as of the cool breezes. We have freed him."

The Imp then laughed and walked off, but Warm-Face stood for a time as if

THE HOME OF WAZIYA

rooted to the spot, while the wind out of the cave grew stronger and stronger. Such a thing he had never before experienced. Finally Waziya himself came up out of the hole in the earth, and he loomed up like a great tree.

Warm-Face quickly slipped behind a great rock, where he lay in hiding until the big wind-spirit had disappeared beyond the horizon.

In the home country of Warm-Face, the tender plants became tattered, and the tall trees were stripped and snapped, and the huts of men were picked up and strewn over the fields. But the people did not learn for a long time where the winds had come from.

Since that time Waziya has roamed about unchecked, ever bent on mischief, but his former prison place is now one of the great wonders of the Black Hills.

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

Legend of the Good Man

IF the traveler approaches Bon Homme from the west, he may look down upon a fair plain dotted with farm buildings in the midst of clustering trees. To the northeast a white church-spire catches the eye, and farther to the south a group of buildings rather too large to be a collection of farmhouses. A little cemetery, well kept after a fashion, enclosed by a weather-beaten fence, overlooks the Bon Homme valley and the wide stretches of the wild Missouri. Granite blocks and marble shafts rise above the stubble of the prairie grass. Yes, he reads some of the inscribed names, and possibly remembers those who years ago responded to them.

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

A well-traveled road leads to where long ago stood the fair little town of Bon Homme, and where at the Four Corners now rises a formidable granite shaft erected to commemorate the building of the first schoolhouse in the territory. At one place a few buildings are on either side of the road, once a street of the town, and a little farther on the white schoolhouse, once the village school, the successor of the first schoolhouse in the Territory of Dakota.

Down the road—or should it be said, on one side of the street?—stands an old house. Out of it comes an old man and leans on the gate that once opened upon a busy street.

The traveler halts. “I suppose you have lived here a long time?” he queries, while glancing about.

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

"I'm the oldest settler here," answers the old man.

"Are any others here that came to Bon Homme about the time you did?"

"I am the last one."

It would be interesting to know what stream of reminiscences courses through this living landmark, and what emotions stir his breast. He seems entirely unmoved. Would that the oldest settler of old Bon Homme might "unbutton" a little and talk—talk freely. But he says nothing.

"Doubtless your children are living in this neighborhood?" the traveler continues.

"I have no children."

"Oh, then just you and your wife are living here in the old home?"

"I am all alone. My wife died long ago."

A little farther down-stream one may

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

look upon Bon Homme Island. It, too, may speak of a past full of interest for the historian. But one would not know it to look over to its low banks rising out of the water and its wooded acres, through which now roam the stockman's cattle and the skulking coyote. Even before Lewis and Clark came along on their noted trip of exploration the island was known and named by white men.

Bon Homme is a French name and means Good Man. One may well wonder how it happened that an island, a town, and a county were named Good Man.

Many years ago, when there was no white settlement far and wide, fur-traders came up the river on flatboats. The boats had to be towed up-stream, which process was called cordelling. Cordelling was a slow, tedious way of moving a boat, and was

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

connected with all kinds of hardships and dangers.

Now, on one of these boats was a man who in appearance did not differ much from the others—a rough, brawny, weather-beaten fellow. Strenuous as was the task of moving a flatboat laden with provisions and merchandise against the swift current of the river, over shallows and around sand-bars, this man was never found to complain or to shirk. His companions soon discovered that he was ready to do not only his share of the work, but also to be helpful, in various ways, to the others. With his great strength and endurance were coupled rare kindness and thoughtfulness.

When any particularly unpleasant or difficult work was to be done, this man was ever ready to do it, though it properly fell to the lot of another. In case of sickness

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

especially was the thoughtfulness of this man felt.

It thus came about that he was dubbed by his companions, who were all French, *le bon homme*—the good man. Of course this was only in jest, for these rough toilers were not given to complimenting each other; but the jest became the man's name.

Now, it happened that on this trip, after leaving the mouth of the James River, they encountered frequent cold rains. Cordelling was attended with unusual difficulties. Several men fell sick. Bon Homme furnished extra cheer as well as extra brawn.

As the season was quite advanced, it seemed necessary to the captain of the party to move on without much delay so as to reach the territory of the best fur trade as early as possible.

“In any case,” said the captain, “let us

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

get to the island not far up. If we must stop for a time, that will be a good halting point.”

So they moved on, the well men doing more work than ever, and Bon Homme accomplishing almost as much as two men, besides giving some of his time in the night for the comfort of the sick.

Finally the party reached the looked-for island. The boat was tied up. Tents were put up among the tall trees.

All of the men agreed that it was a fine place to camp; only Bon Homme had little to say.

“Bon Homme, old boy,” said the captain, “why so mum?”

“I am glad we are here,” replied Bon Homme, “for I am somewhat tired and sore.”

The next morning found Bon Homme in

LEGEND OF THE GOOD MAN

his blankets, a sick man, and on the third day his good heart beat no more.

On a knoll of the island, not far from the bank, a grave was dug under an ancient oak, and Bon Homme's brawny body laid to rest, without word or without song. On the oak, at the head of the grave, was nailed a board with these words roughly marked on it: "Bon Homme."

The procession of fur-traders, explorers, and soldiers that sailed by the island during many years following read the inscription, but without knowing of the plain tragedy and heroism of a plain man that it was intended to preserve from oblivion.

THE GREAT SENTINEL

The Great Sentinel

DOWN by the river, a few miles from the village of Running Water, the very last station on a certain railroad division, rises up a great stone face, carved out of the solid chalk cliffs by natural agencies. How long it has stood there, we cannot tell, except that it must have been there for generations. Not far from its base swirl the yellow waters of the Missouri. On beyond rise the green hills of Nebraska, out of which emerges with great haste the Running Water, and mingles its tide with that of the Great Muddy.

The great stone face seems to occupy a strategic position, for the eyes that never close with sleep keep watch, at one and the

THE GREAT SENTINEL

same time, of two mighty waterways and of two gateways leading to a country to the west. It almost seems that nature had stationed the great stone face here as a sentinel to guard her rich domains. At any rate, the massive face is a wonderful sight as it calmly stands there through the glare of the cloudless day and through the inky blackness of the starless night, through storm and through calm, in summer and in winter.

“Tell me, *kota*,” said the visitor to a native living in the neighboring hills, “tell me what your forefathers said of the great stone face.”

“Big stone face is very, very old,” said the aged Indian, as his eyes assumed a far-away look, “very old, indeed!”

He paused a while, as if going back in his mind to a time in the dim past. Then

THE GREAT SENTINEL

he resumed, and related the legend of the Great Sentinel.

It was many generations ago that the earth to the west was young and very beautiful. The grasses grew over the hills and plains like soft fur, and large, fragrant flowers, of the colors of the rainbow, made the land bright. Trees of many kinds with long branches shaded the flowing waters. Vines bore large, sweet clusters of grapes. The plum and cherry and apple trees also blossomed and bore sweet fruit. Buffalos and deer and antelopes roamed to the very shadow of the tepee. Want and suffering in this young land were as unknown as warfare and bloodshed.

But one day a troop of dark horsemen appeared on the horizon. The eagle feathers fastened to their hair fluttered in the wind, as they peered over the wide valley to the

THE GREAT SENTINEL

west. Then they galloped down the hillside, swam the Running Water, and began to spread destruction around them. They slaughtered whole herds of fearless buffalos and deer. They broke and stripped the fruit-bearing trees, and tore the laden vines from their moorings. They even sent their poisoned arrows into the people of this land, who knew not fight and bloodshed.

Great trouble and anxiety came upon the good people on account of the rude, wicked intruders. What was to be done?

“Let us talk up to the Great Mystery,” said one old man, who knew how to think.

So the people came together on a certain day, and upon Stony Butte, where they were near the gleaming sky, they all turned their faces, young and old, toward the face of the Great Mystery and shouted loudly, “Good Spirit, forget us not!”

THE GREAT SENTINEL

On the next day they called again, "Good Spirit, help us! Help us!"

And on the third day they beat their drums and cried, "Great Mystery, free this land from the wicked warriors, who kill and ruin what is good and beautiful!"

As they were about to leave their place of meeting, they saw coming over the western horizon a man of great size. He came straight to them and said, "Dakotas, I have come to guard and protect your country. Be true and do not forget this day of trouble."

Saying nothing more, he walked on until he came to where now is found the big stone face. Here on the cliffs, overlooking the land which he intended to guard, he took his stand.

For many years the bad men from the east came not near, fearing the Great Sentinel on the cliffs.

THE GREAT SENTINEL

But after a great while the people began to forget who had placed the Great Sentinel at their boundary, and they began even to do some of the wicked things that the men with eagle feathers in their hair had done long ago and from whom they had asked to be freed. Finally they forgot altogether why they had assembled on Stony Butte and had cried to the sky.

Then said the Great Sentinel, "Why should I guard the land against wicked men, when those who live in it are no better? I will close my eyes and sleep."

And so the Great Sentinel fell asleep, but the form in which he had appeared to men remained as a lifeless figure of stone. The feet sank into the sands of the river, but the head remains as a reminder of better days.

LEGEND OF AN OLD OAK

Legend of an Old Oak*

ABOUT a mile west of the village of Struck-by-the-Ree, near the present city of Yankton, on the high bluffs overlooking the densely wooded Missouri valley, stood an old oak tree. Its roots reached out and down into the chalk rock below. Its sturdy trunk supported wide-reaching, gnarled branches. In their shade the young people often rested, and as, according to report, an Indian body had been buried in the tree, they looked for and found weathered beads in the dust below.

The path that led to the oak was made by an Indian maid as lovely as the clear day. Often she came to the tree and there lin-

*Based on the verses "An Old Oak," by Dr. B. W. Burleigh.

LEGEND OF AN OLD OAK

gered, plucking the sweet flowers that blossomed on the prairie. Sometimes as she wended her way over the hill, she sang softly and clearly as the rippling rill in yonder ravine.

“Oh, had I the wings of yon eagle,
I'd take my flight afar,
To a land I have seen in my dreaming,
As fair as the evening star.
My soul is weary with waiting,
I would that a message might come
And say to me, ‘Maiden come quickly
And silently fly away home.’”

Sometimes, too, her lover, a strong, brave Dakota chief, would come and sit by her while the sinking sun enkindled the distant hills with a supernal glow. Here they talked of life and of death, and, beneath their breath, of love. These children of na-

LEGEND OF AN OLD OAK

ture drank deeply from life's pure stream, which was mingled with the woods, the flowers, the birds, and the skies.

But one night as the stars were dimly gleaming, the north wind carried on his breath a defiant cry that made even the heart of the old oak tree quiver. The Rees, a tribe warlike and cruel, rushed through ravine and plain upon the Dakotas. Quickly the young lover-chief mounted his horse and rode to the fight, and with his band put the enemy to flight.

The young chief and the maid decided to marry in a month.

“But one more moon,” he said,
“One moon, and thou shalt be
My heart, my soul, my bride,
For all eternity.”
And she, “I'll follow thee

LEGEND OF AN OLD OAK

To earth's remotest shore;
I'll leave thee not again,
No never, nevermore."

But war came again between the Rees and the Dakotas. In battle, not far from the young chief, the maiden hovered. At daybreak his horse was killed and he fought on foot. Then an arrow from a thicket was sent at the chief's heart. But the maiden, from beneath a bending tree, sprang up quickly and was pierced by the arrow of the Ree, and thus saved her lover.

The battle raged on. The chief also was wounded but rallied again. From this time on he was called Struck-by-the-Ree. Finally the remaining Rees were driven from the field.

The stricken form of the maiden was arrayed in her festive garments rich in many

LEGEND OF AN OLD OAK

colored beads. Then it was wrapped in cloth and bound to a scaffold in the branches of the old oak tree on the bluffs, and the mourners departed.

Each year the chief returned to linger by the tree and the form that once held the spirit of the loved one, until his hair whitened with age. From the woods below came the hoot of an owl and the song of a lone whip-poor-will, but the old warrior wept like a child. Then he sang the dear old song of long ago:

“Oh, had I the wings of yon eagle
I'd take my flight afar,
To a land I have seen in my dreaming,
As fair as the evening star.
My soul is weary with waiting,
I would that a message might come
And say to me, ‘Brother come quickly
And silently fly away home.’ ”

LEGEND OF AN OLD OAK

Then he said farewell, and silently went away never to return to the old oak. The seasons came and went. The path became overgrown. Even the wrapped form in the tree disappeared. And now only the tree-stump remains and possibly a few bleached beads in the dust.

FORT RANDALL

Fort Randall

MANY years ago, when the wide prairies of the West were still largely in their original state, the government established military posts at various convenient points to guard the white settlements against the Indian. Most of these forts have outlived their usefulness. Fort Meade, at the foot of the Black Hills, and in plain sight of Bear Butte, still shelters soldiers in its beautiful stone barracks. But Fort Randall, once an important army post, has been abandoned, just as Fort Pierre had been before.

After several months of careful search, the site for Fort Randall was selected by General Harney, and the post was estab-

FORT RANDALL

lished. This was over half a century ago. The spot is a beautiful one, nestling by the Missouri and shut in by high hills to the south and by high hills on the other side of the river.

It was some years ago that we were on our way to Fort Randall in a prairie schooner. Late in the afternoon we reached the hills that invariably are found extending back for some miles from the river. We followed the old trail, which wound downward. As it was too late in the day to be ferried across the river, we halted and pitched our tent part way down the hills in a suitable spot. The horses were picketed in the tall grass. Not a house and not a cultivated field were in sight. All but the road and a path cutting it diagonally near our camping place, was as primeval as on the day of creation. Just as the sun was

FORT RANDALL

disappearing behind the western hills, the deep silence was broken by a cannon's boom, which, as a continuous reverberation, crept up and down the river valley between the hills. The river was not in view, but we knew it was there, and we knew the boom was the sunset gun at the fort.

Then came the bright camp fire, the welcome supper, bed with boots as pillows, sleep, and the dismal howling of coyotes through the night. At sunrise next day, the gun again sent its echoes rolling up and down the hills.

Not long after that we were descending the high hills to White Swan on the river. A little Welshman, who had charge of the army flatboat, agreed to ferry us across to the military reservation for a consideration. This meant that the boat had to be pulled up stream some distance by members of our

FORT RANDALL

party. Then we all jumped into the barge. The little Welsh navigator stood at the helm, calmly smoking a pipe.

“Now pull like fury!” he shouted to us. And we worked the long, heavy sweeps until the sweat ran off our foreheads. The swift stream and our efforts carried us down to a point of a sandbar, and from there we crossed the remaining part of the river.

The buildings of the post, such as the officers' houses, the hospital, and the barracks, were stationed around a spacious quadrangle, over which fluttered the flag. The inner portion of the quadrangle was the parade grounds. About these was a beautiful lawn, shaded by spreading elms planted nearly half a century ago, possibly at the direction of General Harney himself. Outside of the quadrangle stood the canteen, or little army store. Then came the pretty

FORT RANDALL

chalkstone chapel. Farther up the gentle hill were the rifle pits and targets, the cemetery, and beyond a prairie dog village, the steep, green hills, and over all the blue sky.

Here we lingered for a day or two, watching the ordered life of the little isolated post in the wilderness. Down by the river we washed our clothes and swam in the swift-moving water. It was all like a pleasant dream in the golden days of late August.

Outside of the post, on the same side of the river, there was not a human being far and wide. The hills, the prairie, and the river formed an impressive panorama, majestic in its solitude.

After having rested and dreamed and filled our souls with the picture here presented, we moved on.

Beyond the borders of the military reser-

FORT RANDALL

vation, a storm and night overtook us, and we sought shelter in the modest shanty of an old squatter on the hill. In his younger days he had been a soldier at the fort.

The storm grew more violent. The rain beat down with increasing force. The thunder kept up a continuous growl. The little lamp in the living room sent out its feeble gleam. In the farther end the former Indian fighter sat and played on the guitar, now lightly and joyously, now slowly and sadly, and then he hummed to the accompaniment of the responsive chords and the reverberations of the storm without, while the little daughter cuddled close:

THE SQUATTER'S SONG

My little cuddling Molly,
Sweetheart of later days,
Fear not the tempest's volley

FORT RANDALL

And not its boist'rous ways.

Bye oh, high oh,

My daughter Molly wee!

The coyotes are in hiding,

They're driven from the door,

The eagles can't be gliding

Where rests my lamb secure.

Bye oh, high oh,

My daughter Molly wee!

Soft prairie winds are blowing

Beyond night's gloomy wall,

And thousand blossoms glowing

Amidst the grasses tall.

Bye oh, high oh,

My daughter Molly wee!

Then trust your soldier daddy

And fear no danger here.

He knows that Heaven gladly

Will keep his children dear.



FORT RANDALL

Bye oh, high oh,
My daughter Molly wee!

The storm came to an end like other storms. Of the military post and squatter's little shanty, only the sites remain. But the strains sung by the father to his little daughter Molly still reverberate in the memory of those who heard them years ago.

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

The City of the Skies

EAST of the Black Hills there lies a region known as the Badlands. It would be hard to find a country in the whole world more wonderful and interesting than that lying between the Cheyenne and White rivers. The larger portion of this land is level and fertile, and grows not only trees and grasses, but also the crops of the settler. Yet out of these level stretches of land rise the most singularly shaped and most delicately colored formations. The air is clear and dry, and the eye can see far into the distance. However, what one sees is hard to describe adequately. Out of the grassy plains, level as the unruffled sea, rise innumerable hummocks and raised flats

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

with perpendicular edges. In some places, and especially in the so-called Great Wall, may be seen what in some respects resembles cragged mountain peaks, in other respects, a long line of castles, towers, battlements, pinnacles, and domes, all in a more or less advanced state of ruin. Some are in material of a delicate shade of pink, some of buff, and others of green or cream.

The effect that these wonders of nature make upon the spectator is that of a great ruined city in the midst of a great solitude. And when he rides about among the Badland formations, the feeling does not diminish; for on every hand are found fossil remnants of a varied life that once existed here. From them we know that great reptiles waded about the shallow waters; beautiful shellfish slowly moved about the mud of the bays; turtles and crocodiles stirred

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

the water of the streams. Then appeared the rhinoceros, the three-toed horse, the dog, the tiger-cat, and the bulky Titanothere. Their bleaching bones or shells are strewn all about the Badlands and surmount nearly every eminence.

The sights of the Badlands tend to stimulate human imagination mightily. It is not strange, therefore, to find that there have grown up legends of the Badlands.

It was way back in the fresh dawn of time when a powerful people lived in the Black Hills. They hunted in the forests of the hills; they fished in the mountain streams; and they cultivated the rich soil in the valleys. This was sufficient for their welfare and happiness.

But in the course of time they discovered gold in great quantities in the gulches and stream-beds. They even dug down into the

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

mountains and there took out large masses of the shining metal, and to this very day we have one of their old mines leading miles and miles down into the rocks.

These people were strong and well, as they lived out of doors, for the most part, breathing the mountain air, fragrant and healthful with the balsam of the evergreen forests that darkened the hillsides and valleys below. And when occasionally one of their number became sick, they bathed him in the healing waters of Hot Springs. All of these things taken together made these people not only strong but also rich.

But they, like many other people, were not long satisfied in their prosperity.

“Why forever live in the Hills,” said someone, “where the sunlight strikes us late in the morning, and leaves us early in the afternoon?”

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

“Yes, why?” soon said others.

“Below and toward the morning sun,” said another, “lie stretched out the plains, which are as level as a floor. There we can build us a city and live in the sunshine.”

So they went down on the sunny plains, there to build for themselves a magnificent city, the like of which the world had never seen.

They chose a master-builder to direct the work. Plans for the structures and grounds were made, and then building materials were brought from the quarries and forests of the Hills by great bands of brawny men. Great stone walls were reared, and hewn and carved timbers were put in place. Everybody, young and old, helped in the building of this city. It was a busy, joyful time, and each month saw the work progressing. They worked on

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

through summer and winter, through spring and fall, each doing the part he was directed to do and could do best, never impatient over slowness of construction.

“Not in one season,” said the master-builder, “nor in one year, but we must work on for many years before the undertaking will be finished.”

And so they toiled on with pleasure, looking forward to the time when they could see the completed work.

Finally the last stone was put into place, and the last touch given to the gilded spire, and the master-builder was able to say, “It is finished!”

As the people looked upon the thousand stately castles rising out of the green plain, and the ten thousand towers, domes, and minarets glistening in the golden sunlight, they could not restrain their joy, and they

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

cried loud and long, "City of the Skies!"
"City of the Skies!"

Then they moved into the City of the Skies with the tune of reed and thud of drum. On one of the highest of stone towers a fire was kindled that should forever send out its smoke by day and light by night.

"We have toiled enough," these people said, "now let us enjoy our city and our gold."

So they gave themselves up to enjoyment. Sports and idleness filled their days, and feasts and festivities graced, and sometimes disgraced, their nights.

Of their city they were exceedingly proud.

"It is a magnificent city," they said.

"All praise is due to the master-builder," said someone.

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

“I did something toward the building of it myself,” said another.

“As far as that is concerned, I did more than you,” remarked a man noted for his size and strength.

And so they went on to make comparisons. By degrees they fell into the habit of thinking and speaking of the part each had in the great work. Each wished to appear important. This led to bragging, and bragging turned to discord, and discord called up strife. Strife was first of words, but later of thrusts and blows.

When men are living in strife, sooner or later some must go. To many the beautiful city soon became unbearable. Rather than endure it longer, a large number of the inhabitants of the City of the Skies collected their belongings, and with many tears moved out into the wide world.

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

Yet discord did not cease. More of the inhabitants of the city chose to seek a home elsewhere; and again others followed their example, until there was room in the city itself for the wolves and bears, which were not long absent.

“We cannot live with wolves and bears,” said still others in the city. “Besides many of our friends are gone; let us go too!”

Then came into the city the great monsters of the wilderness. And finally a great army of huge turtles and lizards crept in and took possession of the castles and grounds.

When the Great Mystery happened by, he saw a wide, level plain, green as the willow-tree by the side of the brook. Streets ran through it in pleasing curves. Here was an avenue shaded by graceful elms, and there one by stately cottonwoods, which

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

rustled sweet music in every breath that blew. Here was a copse of the ever green spruces and cedars, and there bloomed in profusion flowers of brilliancy and fragrance. He beheld the thousand castles rising from this garden, and ten thousand domes, towers, and minarets glistening in the golden sunlight, and in and around and about were the beasts of the wilderness and countless ugly turtles and lizards.

“Man was not given intelligence and skill to build such grand edifices in the midst of such beauty for the very lizards and turtles,” said the Great Mystery. “I shall smite and annihilate!”

Then there shot a thousand-forked flash upon the City of the Skies, and a deafening roar shook the earth to the deepest foundations. There, where had stood the thousand castles rising from a green, fragrant plain,

THE CITY OF THE SKIES

and ten thousand towers, domes, and minarets had glistened in the golden sunlight, now hung a gray cloud of smoke. When this was lifted and carried away by the gentle prairie wind, there stood upon a blasted plain the charred and melted and shattered ruins of the City of the Skies.

And now after ten thousand years, there graze upon these ruins the wild mountain sheep in the golden sunlight of old—in the Badlands of the West.

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