

and three toes on each foot. Thus far the work went the first day, as the Demiurge was weary. "Let us wait awhile," said the Old One, "I will finish to-morrow." He then fell asleep, dreamed of his work and saw how he should finish it. Next morning he resumed operations. He caught hold of the woman's ears and clipped them short; he completed the number of fingers and toes. He changed the position of the eyes and mouth, he gave her a nose and added the teeth which were wanting, and he saw that all was good.

After a lapse of four days the woman gave birth to a child. Then she and the Old One held a council during four other days. In this deliberation the Old One proposed: "Children shall be able to run when they are but four days old." "No," said the woman, "it shall not be so, but newly born children shall be enveloped in swaddling clothes, and the old men shall carry them about." The Old One was not satisfied with this, but, however, he consented. "If this dried buffalo's dung," he said, "floats and goes freely with the current, man shall not definitively die, but at the end of four days he shall rise again." Here he flung the dung into the river, saying: "No, man shall not definitively die, if this cow-dung goes with the current." But the woman spoke and said: "No, man shall definitively die; they shall weep for the dead, if this stone sinks man shall definitively die," saying so she threw the stone into the water. Seeing that it went to the bottom, she said: "Yes, when any one dies he shall be mourned and wept for." "Let it be so," said the Old One. Now, it happened that the woman's child died, and she said to the Old One: "Hold! we will make a new decree." But the Old One said to her: "No, go and weep."

The Old One spoke again, saying: "Man shall eat the bark of trees and the pellicle which contains the sap. He shall not swallow his food, and if this be observed, food shall not be definitively consumed. The buffalo, kids, and all birds and animals, that walk upon the earth, shall come to life at the end of four days." "All animals," said the woman, "shall die for ever, so shall the buffalo, kids and all birds, and man shall eat buffalo." The Old One: "There shall be wild fruit even in winter." The woman: "No, all the

fruit shall have fallen then." The Old One: "Men shall not tan the buffalos' skin." The woman: "Yes they shall tan it." The Old One: "Only one provision of wood shall be required for fire, for the wood shall not be consumed." The woman: "No, they shall go every day to look for wood." Thus, by the ill will of the woman, things are so bad in the world. Such is the Black-foot tradition of the Creation.

The celebrated Abbé Petitot, at one time missionary in the Mackenzie District, was himself mistaken as to the significance of this tradition, which he referred, like many others, to the Deluge. For the Montagnais also have a tradition almost the same as that of the Black-feet, and it is this one he relates in his essay. But he stopped at the second point. If he had continued he would have discovered that there was no question of the Deluge. He also makes an allusion to the crow and the dove, which certain other authors speak of; but, for my part, I have no hesitation in saying that this has nothing to do with the original tradition of the Montagnais.

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A few notes will serve better to illustrate and bring into prominence the eminent value of this Indian tradition.

Notwithstanding the first impression that might be received from the perusal of the commencement of his paper, Father Legal has already shown that this tradition does not at all refer to the Noachian Deluge.

Consequently the tribe of Black-feet, and probably the other Indian nations of the same family, have no traditions whatever of the Deluge. We have here a revelation of the highest importance, in the present controversy concerning the universality of the Deluge. It would be indeed difficult to conceive how the remembrance of a like cataclysm could have become totally obliterated from the minds of a primitive people.

The Old One is the name given, in Indian simplicity, to the Demiurge. At first one would be tempted to smile; but this word, to those who reflect, will be a subject of deep thought. God, the Creator, for the Indians, is the Old One, that is to say the Eternal. Have we a concept more precise with regard to this Unnameable Being, we who, in compari-