

## ALGONQUIN INDIAN TALES

" 'As our bodies are tougher than yours you must let me compete this time.'

"Nanahboozhoo would not let him do this. He said:

" 'I am not afraid of the cold water, and besides I have plenty of friends down there.'

"And, sure enough, the mud turtle came up and said, in words that only Nanahboozhoo could understand:

" 'My brother, I have come up at the request of your brother, the wolf, to aid you. Trust yourself in my care and no harm will come to you.'

"Nanahboozhoo was well pleased to hear this, for he knew that his spirit brother had sent his friend the mud turtle to help him in this trial.

"The competitors now stripped themselves, and when the signal was given they both dived into the water and disappeared. The Moose people had such confidence in their champion that they had all brought with them very heavy sticks with which they intended giving the Elks a great beating in return for the two previous defeats.

"The Elks, however, were not dismayed. They only said:

" 'Just wait until the contest is decided.'

"In the meantime the competitors under the water were so near together at first that the people on the land heard the Moose say, 'Elk, are you cold?' To which the mud turtle, who had covered the Elk competitor over with his shell, replied:

" 'No, Moose; but are you cold?'