

pleased the publisher that he suggested the collection of several similar—enough to make a book if possible. He remarked that no one had done this work for children; all the other writers of Indian lore having collected tales for scientific purposes.

In this way, the path was pointed, not a long and dreary trail, but one hung with the fairy magic of old. Following the path led far afield—in interviews with a great many people whose information although valuable and appreciated, resulted in the garnering of amazingly few legends. It seemed to the seeker as though fur-traders, H. B. factors and even missionaries had shown little interest in the camp-fire story for which she was so eager and which they must have heard when an old Chief handed down the legends of the tribe to his own children.

She planned a trip to an Indian camp but had to abandon it on learning that the object of her visit would not tell his stories in the presence of a white woman, much less to Miss Bemister!

In spite of set-backs, however, the collection grew. A priest, a scientist, a fire-ranger, an old newspaper discovered in the Provincial Library, all yielding something of use and interest. Then an old Okanagan chief gave, in broken English, the main incidents of two legends.

"His grave dignity," said Miss Bemister, "made me realize that a great honour was being conferred upon me when he graciously answered my persistent questions, and unconsciously, I must have returned the compliment when I offered him my hand at part-

ing; for his keen eyes brightened suddenly and he gave a pleasant grunt as he took it and said good-bye."

From the *Anthropological Bulletins* of the Smithsonian Institute, Miss Bemister collected sufficient material to make up her book. But reading and making selections was tedious work, requiring concentration and endurance. The contemplation of tackling *Anthropological Bulletins* would be enough to sap the courage of most of us! The volume won instant approval and was brought out under the title of "Thirty Indian Legends". Later, when its success was assured, the Macmillan Company, of New York, asked the author to prepare a book for them, as their handling of the first one more than justified it. This volume bears the name "Indian Legends".

Miss Bemister feels that she is standing but on the edge of a limitless field and that what she had gathered of Indian lore is like taking a few berries from a heavily-laden bush. There are so many types of stories that there is fruit for all—fairy tales for the lover of beauty, facts that can be found nowhere else concerning the customs, manners, and mode of life of the primitive red man, for the student of history pictures of the Indian as he is, his feelings, his viewpoint, his convictions of right and wrong—pictures painted by himself and not by a white man, for the student of human nature. And for the ordinary common garden reader who simply wants to shut the doors of everyday things and venture into romance and mystery, Miss Bemister has given us a rarely beautiful composite of all three.

