

## TALES OF A WIGWAM.

BOSH-KWA-DOSH, OR THE QUADRUPED WITH THE HAIR BLOWN OFF ITS SKIN.

There was once a man who found himself alone in the world. He knew not when he came nor who were his parents, and he wandered round from place to place, in search of something. At length he became wearied and fell asleep. He dreamed that he heard a voice saying, "Nosis," that is, my grandchild. When he awoke he actually heard the word repeated, and looking around, he saw a little animal hardly big enough to be seen on the plain. While doubting whether the voice could come from such a diminutive source, the little animal said to him, "My grandson, you will call me Bosh-kwa-dosh. Why are you so desolate. Listen to me, and you shall find friends and be happy. You must take me up and bind me to your body, and never put me aside, and success in life shall attend you." He obeyed the voice, sewing up the little animal in the folds of a string, or narrow belt, which he tied around his body, at his navel. He walked a long time in woods without seeing man or animal. He seemed all alone in the world. At length he came to a place where a stump was cut, and going over a hill he descried a large town in a plain. A wide road led through the middle of it; but what seemed strange was, that on one side there were no inhabitants in the lodges, while the other side was thickly inhabited. He walked boldly into the town.

The inhabitants came out and said: "Why this is the being we have heard so much of—here is Anish-in-a-ba. See his eyes, and his teeth in a half circle—see the Wyaukenawbe-daid! See his bowels, how they are formed;"—for it seems that they could look through him. The king's son, the Mudjekewis, was particularly kind to him, and calling him brother-in-law, commanded that he should be taken to his father's lodge and received with attention. The king gave him one of his daughters. These people, (who are supposed to be human, but whose rank in the scale of being is left equivocal.) passed much of their time in play and sports and trials of various kinds. When some time had passed, and he had become refreshed and rested, he was invited to join in these sports. The first trial which they put him to, was the trial of frost. At some distance was a large body of frozen water, and the trial consisted in lying down naked on the ice, and see who could endure the longest. He went out with two young men, who began by pulling off their garments, and lying down on their faces. He did likewise, only keeping on the narrow magic belt with the tiny little animal sewed in it; for he felt that in this alone was to be his reliance and preservation. His companions laughed and tittered during the early part of the night, and amused themselves by thoughts of his fate. Once they called out to him, but he made no reply. He felt a manifest warmth given out by his belt. About midnight finding they were still, he called out to them in return,—“What!” said he, “are you benumbed already, I am just beginning to feel a little cold.” All was silence.

He, however, kept his position until early day-break, when he got up and went to them. They were both quite dead, and froze so hard that the flesh had bursted out under their finger nails, and their teeth stood out. As he looked more closely, what was his surprise to find them both transformed into buffalo cows. He tied them together, and carried them towards the village. As he came in sight, those who had wished his death were disappointed, but the Mudjekewis, who was really his friend, rejoiced. “See!” said he, “but one person approaches,—it is my brother-in-law.” He then threw down the carcasses in triumph, but it was found that by their death he had restored two inhabitants to the before empty lodges, and he afterwards perceived, that every one of these beings whom he killed, had the like effect, so that the depopulated part of the village soon became filled with people.

The next test they put him to, was the trial of speed. He was challenged to the race ground, and began his career with one whom he thought to be a mah; but everything was enchanted here, for he soon discovered that his competitor was a large black bear. The animal outran him, tore up the ground, and sported before him, and put out its large claws as if to frighten him. He thought of his little guardian spirit in the belt, and wishing to have the swiftness of the Kakake, i. e., sparrow hawk, he found himself rising from the ground, and with the speed of this bird he outwent his rival, and won the race, while the bear came up exhausted and lolling out his tongue. His friend, the Mudjekewis stood ready, with his war-club at the gaol, and the moment the bear came up, dispatched him. He then turned to the assembly, who wished his friend and brother's death, and after reproaching them, he lifted up his club and began to slay them on every side. They fell in heaps on all sides; but it was plain to be seen the moment they fell, that they were not men, but animals,—foxes, wolves, tigers, lynxes, and other kinds, lay thick around the Mudjekewis.

Still the villagers were not satisfied. They thought the trial of frost had not been fairly accomplished, and wished it repeated. He agreed to repeat it, but being fatigued with the race, he undid his guardian belt, and laying it under his head, fell asleep. When he awoke, he felt refreshed, and feeling strong in his own strength, he went forward to renew the trial on the ice, but quite forgot the belt, nor did it at all occur to him when he awoke, or when he lay down to repeat the trial. At midnight his limbs became stiff, the blood ceased to circulate, and he was found in the morning a stiff corpse. The victors took him up and carried him to the village, where the loudest tumult of victorious joy was made, and they cut the body into a thousand pieces, that each one might eat a piece.

The Mudjekewis bemoaned his fate, but his wife was inconsolable. She lay in a state of partial distraction, in the lodge. As she lay here, she thought she heard some one groaning. It was repeated through the night, and in the morning, she carefully scanned the place, and running her fingers through the grass, she discovered the secret belt, on the spot where her husband had last reposed. “Aubishin!” cried she, “the belt—that is, untie me, or unloose me. Look-

ing carefully, she found the small seam which enclosed the tiny little animal. It cried out the more earnestly “Aubishin!” and when she had carefully ripped the seams, she beheld, to her surprise, a minute, naked little beast, smaller than the smallest new-born mouse, without any vestige of hair, except the tip of his tail, it could crawl a few inches, but reposed from fatigue. It then went forward again. At each movement it would *pupooce*, that is to say, shake itself, like a dog, and at each shake it became larger. This it continued until it acquired the strength and size of a middle-sized dog, when it ran away.

The mysterious dog ran to the lodges, about the village, looking for the bones of his friend, which he carried to a secret place, and as fast as he found them arranged all in their natural order. At length he had found all the skeleton complete, except the heel bone of one foot. It so happened that two sisters were out of the camp, according to custom, at the time the body was cut up, and the heel was sent out to them. The dog hunted every lodge, and being satisfied that it was not to be found in the camp, he sought it outside of it, and found the lodge of the two sisters. The younger sister was pleased to see him, and admired and patted the pretty dog, but the elder sat mumbling the very heel-bone he was seeking, and was surly and sour, and repelled the dog, although he looked most wistfully up in her face, while she sucked the bone from one side of her mouth to the other. At last she held it in such a manner that it made her cheek stick out, when the dog by a quick spring, seized the cheek, and tore cheek and bone away, and fled.

He now completed the skeleton, and placing himself before it, uttered a hollow, low, long-drawn-out-howl, when the bones came compactly together. He then modulated his howl, when the bones knit together and became tense. The third howl brought sinews upon them, and the fourth, flesh. He then turned his head upwards looking into the sky, and gave a howl, which caused every one in the village to startle, and the ground itself to tremble, at which the breath entered into his body, and he first breathed, and then arose. “Hy kow!” I have overslept myself, he exclaimed, “I will be too late for the trial.” “Trial!” said the dog, “I told you never to let me be separate from your body, you have neglected this. You were defeated, and your frozen body cut into a thousand pieces, and scattered over the village, but my skill has restored you. Now I will declare myself to you, and show who and what I am!”

He then began to *pupooce*, or shake himself, and at every shake he grew. His body became heavy and massy, his legs thick and long, with big clumsy ends, or feet. He still shook himself, and rose and swelled. A long snout grew from his head, and two great shining teeth out of his mouth. His skin remained as it was, naked, and only a tuft of hair grew on his tail. He rose up above the trees. He was enormous. “I should fill the earth,” said he, “were I to exert my utmost power, and all on the earth would not satisfy me to eat. Neither could it fatten me or do me good. I should want more. It were useless, therefore, and the gift I have, I will bestow on you. The animals henceforth shall be your food. They were not designed to feed on man, neither shall they hereafter do it, but shall hereafter feed him, and he only shall prey on beasts. But you will respect me, and eat my kind.