

by Dr. Moses Barbu

The Legend of the Slowly Rolling Circle

(Editor's Note: Dr Barbu is a well known authority on the legends and myths of the aboriginal Canadians. It has been his life ambition to visit the Blackfoot Indians of Sherridan, Manitoba. At the age of eighty-four [he was a slow starter], he finally realized this ambition. While among the Blackfeet [the name has nothing to do with skin pigmentation. They just don't wash them] he caught the spirit of the red men, some of their lice and a nasty disease. [He stayed fourteen minutes between trains. This is some kind of record].)

Many years ago in the far North, the great god Knee Cap sat carving a large piece of stone in the shape of a circle. When he had finished, he pierced a hole in the center and passing a stick through the hole, he picked up the thing and laying it on the forks of two trees, he started it rotating slowly. (You see, the Russians didn't really invent the wheel.)

After several seconds contemplating his masterpiece, his attention was diverted by a vagrant thought and he wandered away, leaving the Slowly Rolling Circle on the hill top where it rolled ever so slowly for waning moon after waning moon.

A great hunter of the Blackfoot tribe, wandering far afield in search of the elusive woodland caribou stumbled on the Slowly Rolling Circle rotating between the two trees.

Legend has it that he stared at the Slowly Rolling Circle in fascination for several seconds and as he stared the soul went entirely out of his body and entered the Slowly Rolling Circle, leaving the body and the mind of the hunter standing naked on the hill side.

His body and mind were unwilling to leave his soul which had become a part of the Slowly Rolling Circle. So he stood there naked amid the sun and rain and the snows of winter until some of the other hunters of the village, who had set out to find him, discovered the naked mind and body standing dumbly beside the Slowly Rolling Circle.

Not realizing what had happened, they stared intently at the strange scene. The slowly Rolling Circle fascinated them and their souls went entirely out of their bodies and entered the Slowly Rolling Circle and their naked minds and bodies formed a group around the great hunter. (These were the forerunners of the Sons of Freedom) And they stood ab-

sently staring at their souls revolving ever so slowly.

As they stood not doing anything, more people came to look for them and their lost souls in the Slowly Rolling Circle and their naked minds and bodies joined the others around the great hunter. Finally, when many moons had waxed and waned over the lonely hill, and the group had grown large, the great hunter, whose soul had first been seduced from his body by the Slowly Rolling Circle raised his voice and spoke haltingly, never taking his eyes off his soul as it revolved ever so slowly.

"Since we are all doomed to stand here for ever, we had better find some way of amusing ourselves while we watch our souls revolve ever so slowly on the Slowly Rolling Circle. Are there any suggestions?"

No one spoke. "Good," said the great hunter. "I have invented a wonderful game. Everyone must stare at the Slowly Rolling Circle

for as long as he can without blinking. Each moon there will be awards for those who are able to stare the longest, in descending order of merit, twenty clam shells, fifteen clam shells, ten clam shells and finally for the fourth, five clam shells. The four who stared at it for the shortest time would be given their souls back off the Slowly Rolling Circle and told to leave the group quietly. As there are always people coming along and being seduced into the group, there must be some restriction put on their being allowed to join. The group must not be allowed to become too large. Are there any questions?"

No one spoke. "Good," said the great hunter, as he continued to stare, fascinated at the sight of his soul revolving slowly. "We must think of some very clever question that they will have to answer before we allow them to see the Slowly Rolling Circle. Has anyone any suggestions?"

No one spoke (Does this remind you of some lectures?) "Good," said the great hunter. "The question will be 'What is it that every Blackfoot wants?' and the answer will of course be 'Wampum'. Is that clear?"

No one spoke. "That is not so good," said the great hunter. "You must always agree with what I say. That is one of the rules of the game, which we are playing." Everyone agreed, nodding their heads meaningfully.

But no one spoke. "Good," said the great hunter. "That is just the way it should be done. Now we must have a name for our group. Has anyone any suggestions?"

No one spoke. "Good," said the great hunter. "I have thought of a wonderful name. We will call ourselves the Beneficent Order of Contemplators of the Slowly Rolling Circle. Is that not a wonderful name? Everyone nodded meaningfully, but no one spoke.

And the Slowly Rolling Circle revolved ever so slowly for waxing moon after waxing moon and the Beneficent Order of Contemplators stood silently playing the wonderful game they had invented, while they watched their souls revolving on the Slowly Rolling Circle. And they stood naked there in their naked minds and bodies while the sun beat down and the frosts came and the winds blew on the shelterless hill.

But they were happy. They had achieved a perfect unity of ideals. There was no need for speech, and besides they were doing absolutely nothing in an organized manner. (This in itself should be sufficient). What more could any red blooded Blackfoot ask? (Sex hadn't been invented then).

But one day, after many moons of ecstatic happiness, a terrible thing happened.

There was in the Blackfoot tribe a crippled fellow who could not be a hunter because he could not run swiftly after the fleet hare and the elusive caribou. He felt a little left out and lonely. Everyone said he was mad and avoided him, but in reality the only thing different about him was that he thought sometimes. After giving due consideration to the problems he decided on joining the Benevolent Order. By devious means, for he had to depend on his wits for everything he wanted, he had found out the question which they would ask him before allowing him to see the Slowly Rolling Circle. But even his infinite wisdom could not give him the answer.

All one day he limped toward the hill. Finally as the day was drawing on to evening, he reached the hill and slowly began the laborious ascent, limping and stumbling all the way.

As he climbed, he meditated, head down, on the great problem at hand. Would his low animal cunning give him the proper answer when the time came?

Suddenly as he went, his lowered eyes happened to rest for a second on his navel. (Tch! Tch!) Strangely, it did not seem to move in relation to the rest of his body. "Why, it must be constant," he thought. If it is constant then it has merit, if it has merit, it ought to be worshipped for there are too few things of merit in this world. And immediately his navel took on an aura of holiness and seemed to him the perfect navel. Of course he rationalized, "It is now useless but there is great merit in being constant." So he blundered along, bumping into things still deeply engrossed in his perfect navel. The question which the Benevolent Order of Contemplators were going to ask him had gone entirely out of his mind. In that condition he at last came within hailing distance of the group.

The great hunter let him approach and then in a commanding voice asked, "What is it that every red blooded Blackfoot wants more than anything else in the world?" As he blundered past, the lame man answered, "A perfect navel," without raising his eyes.

At that instant, he stumbled into one of the trees that supported the Slowly Rolling Circle. The tree was very old as you can imagine, and it collapsed under the strain and the shock. The Slowly Rolling Circle went bounding down the hill and broke into a million pieces when it struck a huge boulder at the bottom. The

Blind Date

- 7.30 p.m. I wonder what he looks like?
- 8 p.m. I wonder if he'll be on time?
- 9 p.m. I wonder if he can talk about anything else besides football and hi-fi equipment?
- 10 p.m. Is he getting stoned so soon?
- 11 p.m. My feet are killing me.
- 1 a.m. Who is going to be taking whom home?
- 2 a.m. I wonder if he'll kiss me good-night?
- 2.30 a.m. Thank God for the curfew!

Campus Calendar

by Sheila Caughey

To prevent duplication of meeting times and places and to ensure a listing in THE BRUNSWICKAN, please report all campus events to SHEILA CAUGHEY, campus coordinator, at the Maggie Jean Chestnut House (Phone GRanite 5-9091).

THIS LIST COVERS TODAY THROUGH THURSDAY

PRE-MED AND DENTAL CLUB: meeting, Oak Room, Student Centre, 7 p.m., Tuesday. (Agenda: election of new officers; trip to Saint John.)

CHORAL SOCIETY: practice, Art Centre, 7 p.m., Tuesday.

STUDENT WIVES: meeting, New Lounge, Student Centre, 8 p.m., Tuesday.

BADMINTON (MIAU) TOURNAMENT: Fredericton Curling Club, all day and evening, Tuesday. (Observers welcome).

JUNIOR (CO-ED) DESSERT PARTY: given by the Alumnae, at the home of Mrs. C. W. Argue, 7 Elmcroft Place, 7 p.m., Wednesday.

SENIOR CLASS ELECTIONS: for Life Executive, Wednesday.

SCM: seminar, New Lounge, Student Centre, 1.30 p.m., Wednesday. ("The Young Churches" — a study of the Acts.)

SRC: meeting, Oak Room, Student Centre, 7 p.m., Wednesday.

BAND: practice, Memorial Hall, 7 p.m., Wednesday.

FOUNDERS' DAY EVENTS: (1) panel discussion, main lounge, Student Centre, 4.30 p.m., Thursday (2) Address (by David McCord of Harvard) and program (including selection by Choral Society) Mem Hall, 8.30 p.m., Thursday.

CO-ED BASKETBALL: UNB vs Acadia, L. B. Gym, 4.30 p.m., Thursday.

INTERCOLLEGIATE SWIMMING MEET: L. B. R. Pool, 2 p.m. and 7.15 p.m., Thursday.

souls that had entered the Slowly Rolling Circle were scattered to the four winds. In the ensuing confusion, while the group were retrieving their souls, the lame man walked over the hill into the sunset, oblivious of the confusion and disaster he had caused, muttering to himself, "a perfect navel, a perfect navel" and was never seen again. (Nor for that matter was the Slowly Rolling Circle.)

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