

them, learned of them the arts of peace, and have ever since dwelt near them.

From the descriptions of their life previous to rising from the lake, it would seem as if their tradition originally mentioned an insular home or a home beyond some great body of water. The story of their coming up out of the lake, and of the breaking of the tree by which they rose, resembles so much the Mandan tradition as to lead us to believe that one nation borrowed its legend of the other, or that the two legends sprung, at no very remote time, from a common source. Some of the modern story-tellers say that the Minnewakan, or Devil's Lake, in Northern Dakota is the natal lake of the tribe. The Hidatsa call it *Midihopa*, which, like the Dakota name, signifies *sacred*, or *mysterious water*.

This account of their origin they tell usually as one story; but they have, besides, a voluminous account of what happened to them during their long wanderings on the prairie, from the time they left the lake until they reached the Mandan village, which account is embodied in a separate tale—the almost interminable legend of *Itamapisa*, the proper recital whereof, by an old story-teller, occupies three or four long winter-evenings. In this tale, it is said that they were often on the eve of death by starvation, but were rescued by a miraculous supply of buffalo-meat. Stones, they say, were strewn upon the prairie obedient to a divine order, and from them sprang to life the buffalo which they slaughtered. It was during these years of wandering, as the legend relates, that the spirit of the sun took a woman of this tribe up into the sky. In the course of time, she had a son, who descended to the earth, and, under the name of *Itamapisa*, or *Grandchild*, became the great prophet of his mother's people.

It might be more proper to introduce such tales elsewhere than under the head of history, but, perhaps, a scrap of historical truth may be picked from them, which is, that the Hidatsa were once a tribe of nomadic hunters, alternately starving and feasting as game was scarce or abundant, and that, since a comparatively recent date, they have settled in the neighborhood of the Missouri and become farmers by in-