

first stomach. The boa-constrictor has no teeth and no second stomach; it chews by crushing between its body and a tree the beast which it is to swallow. The chewing mouth of the boa has for one jaw the tree, for the other its own body; between those two jaws it reduces to a soft mass the carcass of the creature to be swallowed.

In considering the various personages in mythology, it is all important to discover, first of all, what they are, and, next, what they do. The office filled by a certain personage in a group of myths belonging to a given race or tribe may be filled by an entirely different kind of character in a similar set of myths of another tribe. This results sometimes from different geographic and climatic conditions, and sometimes from looking at the phenomenon or process of nature in another way. There is as much variety in the treatment of one subject by various tribes as there is variety in prehensile members and the use of them among grasping creatures, or as there is difference in the manner of reducing food to fineness among quadrupeds, birds, and boa-constrictors.

TULCHUHERRIS

TULCHUHERRIS resembles certain European tales more than any other in this collection. Apart from other merits, the value of such a tale in comparative mythology is evident.

The old woman, Nomhawena, is an earthworm now; the Indian tale-teller says that there is no doubt on that point. Pom Pokaila, her second name (Pom, earth; Pokalia, old woman) admits of two translations, — old woman of the earth, or old woman Earth. In the first case it would apply to Nomhawena, who digs the earth always, is a woman of the earth; in the second, it would mean the earth itself. The earth is, in fact, Tulchuherris's mother. Nomhawena is his grandmother, in a titular sense at least. In more countries of the world than one, grandmother is the title of a midwife; and the office of midwife was performed by Nomhawena at the birth of Tulchuherris.