

INDIAN FOLKLORE

1. A DEEP love of the beautiful in nature lies in the heart of the Canadian savage. From the earliest times we are told they took the explorers with pride to view their favourite scenes. Indeed, it is not unlikely that the genuine delight of the French in the picturesque scenery of Canada had something to do with winning for them the friendship of the natives.

2. The language is well fitted for expressing beautiful ideas. The words are made up of many liquid syllables, almost every second letter being a vowel. The well-chosen names of a thousand places show love of beauty and harmony. Caugh-na-wa-ga, means Near the rapids; Ontario, Beautiful prospect of rocks, hills, and waters; Toronto, Trees in the water; and so on.

3. The tribes believed in one Great Spirit, Manitou, who ruled over all things, and looked with a loving eye from the clouds upon his red children. There were many lesser deities, however. Every spot in the land which inspired awe or reverence, the Indian believed to be the abode of a god. Every mountain, lake, and waterfall was guarded by an invisible spirit. The murmuring of the breeze, the rush of water, every flash of lightning and roll of thunder was the message of a god.

4. The name of Hiawatha has long been familiar to the white man. Hiawatha taught all the useful arts to the Five Nations and their fellows of the west. He showed them how to raise corn and beans, cleared the fishing grounds and streams of rocks, and destroyed great and evil monsters. He loved peace, and wished all men to be brothers. He was more skilful with the bow than the bravest hunter, and more eloquent than the greatest orator. His adventures and miracles were endless.