

MONAHSETAH.

LEGEND OF THE LAKE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

Monahsetah, maiden more beautiful than all the Mohawks. Jetty were her flowing locks and glossy like the plumage of the merle. Black and bright were her soft eyes, and her cheeks, velvet and red like the cheeks of the rose. Round, brown arms had she, and dimpled hands, with wrists exquisite, run round with snowy shells.

Now, when the forest reaches were bright with lilies, and the mountain-lake grown blue again; when the wild-plum blossomed white by the water, and a golden light was on the willows; early in the morning, at the rising of the fiery, yellow sun, Monahsetah, fair child of an Indian Chief, stood beneath the shadow of a pine. The fragrant wind came rustling with a silvery sound through the thin, silky leaves of the forest, pausing with a faint sigh in the dark branches of the pines, and stirring the long, shining tresses of the Indian girl.

Here where she stood the hill began, and a narrow, shadowy path led down through the wood by vines and flowers for many a span, to the shore of a bay—the beautiful, sun-loved Bay of Quinté.

With one small hand shading her eyes, she gazed with a keen gaze eastward, out where the water gleamed, scarce ruffled by the coming in of the morning.

Presently, from the shadow of a green point, a light canoe came rippling out upon the yellow reach. Then another and another followed; and on they came until Monahsetah had counted nigh to three score. Tenderly she caressed Manitto, clasped again her bow and arrow, and turned into the wood. And glad was she, for in all the swift canoes she had looked for a tuft of snowy plumes, and had not seen it. Now, this spray of white plumes made bright the bow of the Black-Snake, Orono's canoe; and Orono was mad with love of Monahsetah, who loved another.

Alas! the one she loved was lying silent somewhere beneath the wind-swept grasses, and for Orono she had no care, nor was she happy when he was near.

By and by it happened, when the sun was high in the heaven, there came slowly along the left shore a solitary young Indian, weary and half-famished. Hunted and driven by brigands from the sunny islands of the blue Ladauanna, thus far had he paddled with scarce a morsel of food.

He was Gowanda, handsome and lithe, and swift with bended bow to hunt the wild deer through the forest. And now, safe at last from his pursuers, more slowly came he with a measured dip of his white-bladed paddle.

Then soon his brave craft touched the pebbly shore of an island, and Gowanda rested at last where soft shadows and golden flecks of light played hide-and-peek among the grasses, tall and waving and green.

Slowly the day waned. And at the time of the rising of the moon, the full, silvery moon of a perfect night, when the plaintive voice of the whip-poor-will echoed through the forest, and fire-flies glittered like diamonds through all the shadowy wood, near by the shore of the shining mountain-lake a huge pine-log, more than thirty spans long, and fretted with fern and flower, was rolled out on the green. And soon the dance was begun around this once stately tree of the wildwood, and one by one the Indians who had come with the rising sun took places with the maidens treading the enchanted circle.

Little by little the bright moon ascended, shining silver; the gray moth flew by, and the night-bird trilled its voice sweet and solemn on the still air. More festive waxed the night at each succeeding round, and the careless children of the forest grew not weary of the dance.

But later, when they were most lightsome, suddenly from out the dark hollow of the pine-log glided a slimy snake.

Monahsetah was near. Hissing, it darted toward her, but with a scream she sped away, and all the dancers fell aside. Then it happened that there came a stranger among them from the shadows of the wood with a rush and a blow, and the ugly reptile lay dead on the green.

"Gowanda!" fell from the lips of more than a dozen young braves.

"Gowanda!" Through the wood it echoed; and in groups the Indians gathered round him in the ruddy glow of the camp-fire, and Monahsetah, glad and comely, once again beheld her lover.

It was a long tale he had to tell. For many a moon she had thought him dead, and now it was sweeter far to see him than the coming of the flowers.

To the dance again they turned; but the trail of the serpent was on the grass; the circle slowly thinned, and one by one the dancers gathered in fantastic groups apart a little way from the fire.

Monahsetah, leaning against the bole of an elm, her sable locks half concealing the sweet smiles

Swift over the rippling mere she shot on, her white-bladed paddle flashing the moonlight, her canoe quivering and wild.

Then it happened, ere she had quite gained the centre of the Lake, the splash of a second paddle fell on the night. A swift glance backward told her some one followed, and she caught a gleam of the waving plumes white in the bow of the Black-Snake.

On it came, rapidly making up to her, the water swirling away in its trail—nearer, nearer, till only a little space remained.

Then a frantic rush.

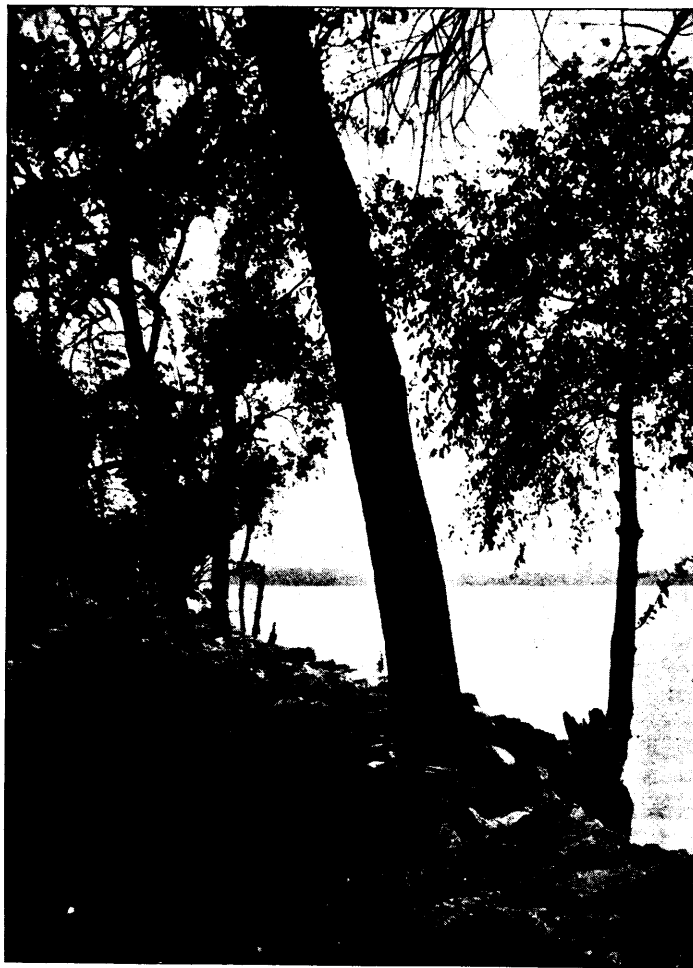
"Gowanda," she cried, and hardly had she touched the strand ere she leaped with a wild leap from the canoe to the outstretched arms of the eager Gowanda.

Then, sudden as the going down of the great northern diver, Orono turned and plunged into the shadowy Lake.

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Many summers of sunshine and lilies have come and gone; the sky is golden, and the leaves of the willows blow white again in the wind; but the children of the forest have passed forever from the lovely hills and valleys of Prince Edward. And now only the wraith of the sad Orono haunts at midnight the calm, silent waters of the beautiful Lake on the Mountain.

HELEN M. MERRILL.



THE LAKE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

that dimpled her cheeks, listened to Gowanda. But by and by he turned away and passed with a light step through the shadows of the forest. And soon only her father's people remained by the Lake, and then, noiselessly, she paddled out to cull some water-flowers blossoming a few spans from the shore. But scarcely had she glided a stone's throw by the bushes, when her eye caught the gleam of a strange canoe lying with one bow resting among the ferns on the bank.

Then there came a sudden stir in the cedars, a shadow in the moonlight, and Orono greeted her from a grassy knoll.

"Monahsetah, one, two, three times I have told you I love you. I am come for you."

Another shadow in the moonlight, and her father stood beside Orono.

"Monahsetah, I give you to him. Come in." Startled was Monahsetah, like a bird in the juniper bush when the hunter passes.

To the southern bosom of the Lake she would fly. The gleam of Gowanda's fire was shining there even now, and she had promised to wed with him on the morrow, and he would protect her from Orono.

THE LAKE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

In Prince Edward, a county famed for its rare natural wonders, situated about five miles from the picturesque town of Picton, lies a beautiful lake—The Lake on the Mountain.

The lake is about three miles in circumference; about three-quarters of a mile being the distance from shore to shore in the widest part. The water is limpid, and the lake being nearly always full, it is thought by some to be supplied by hidden springs. Others suppose that it is on a level with Lake Erie, and that there may be some communication between them. But this is an error, as Lake Erie is, according to the maps, about one hundred and thirty feet higher than the Lake on the Mountain; and the true source of supply still remains a mystery.

It is a delightful place in summer, and many visitors from Canada and the Northern States come to rest a while by its pleasant shore.

To the north of the lake a little way, the tourist has one of the finest views on the continent: a panorama of wave and woodland-island and bay, forest and grass-field lying away to the north and the east. But nothing is more beautiful than the coming in of a perfect summer day; to see the sun-road glittering and gold, far to the east where the rising wind ripples the water; or at day-set, the red sun sinking slowly, slowly, till lost to view beyond the high shore in the distance.

And here from this point of view a precipitous road-way leads down along the steep hillside, whose height is nearly two hundred feet, to the Bay of Quinté, a fitting terminus to so fair a mountain.

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THE LAKE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

A gleam of willows in a golden sheen;
A waft of balm from branches bending low
O'er shadowed way where silken grasses grow,
Tangles of thin leaves twining frail and green.

White cloud-flakes in the silent heaven seen
Like soft doves trailing where no rude winds blow;
Leaf-shadows, wraith-like, trembling to an fro
On wave, and sward, and the gray shore between.

A reach of ripples yellow in the sun,
Alike all destined on the sands to break;
Blue depths that in the soul strange fancies wake,
Reflections darkling ere the day be done—
Sweet twilight phantoms stealing one by one,
Dream-spirits drifting low along the Lake.

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