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"The Legend of Deganawidah"  
 I Am Deganawidah

DEGANAWIDAH is said to have been born at a Huron settlement, Tkahanye, on the north shore of Lake Ontario not far from the site of the modern Kingston, Ontario. Before his birth the name of the child was disclosed to his grandmother, as was the way among the Iroquois, in a dream. A messenger from the Great Spirit stood before the grandmother and said:

"It is the will of the Master of Life, the Holder of the Heavens, that thy daughter, a virgin, shall bear a child. He shall be called Deganawidah, the Master of Things, for he brings with him the Good News of Peace and Power. Care for him well, thou and thy daughter, for he has a great office to perform in the world."

"What is the child's office to be?" asked the grandmother.

"His office is to bring peace and life to the people on earth," replied the messenger. "After he is grown to manhood, see that thou place no obstacle in his way when he desires to leave home to spread the New Mind among the nations."

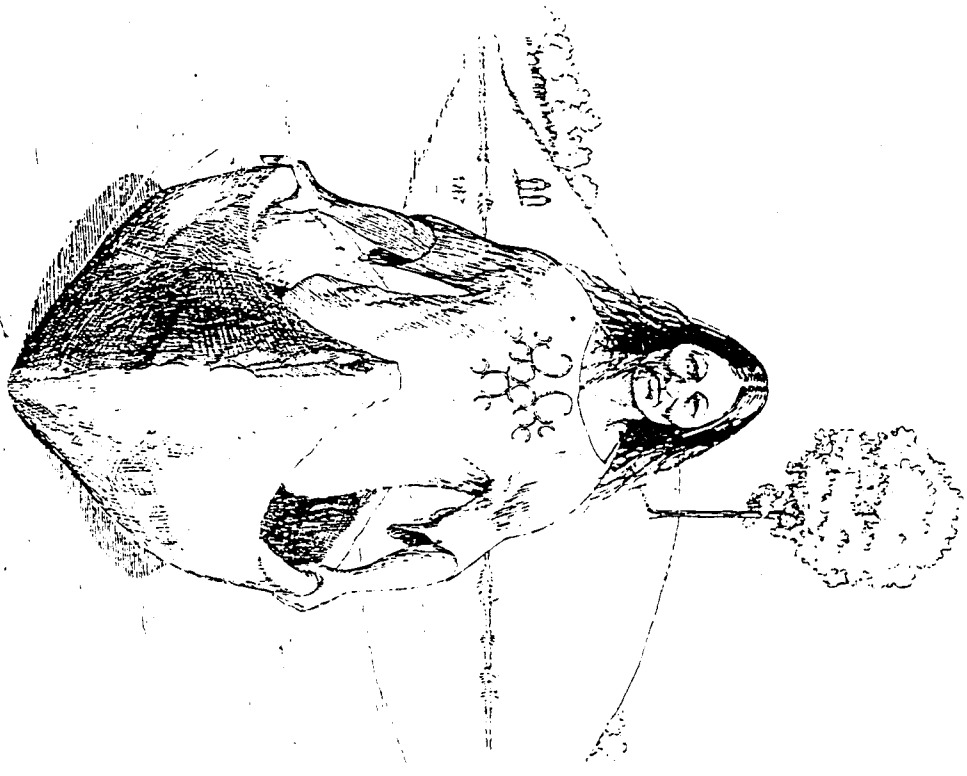
So when Deganawidah was become a man, he said one day to his mother and grandmother:

"I shall now build my canoe, for the time has come for me to set out on my mission in the world. Know that far away, on lakes and many rivers, I go seeking the council smoke of nations beyond this lake, holding my course toward the sunrise. It is my business to stop the shedding of blood among human beings."

When he had built his canoe and, with the help of his mother and grandmother, had brought it to the water, he bade them farewell.

"Do not look for me to return," he said, "for I shall not come again this way. Should you wish to know if all is well with me, go to the hilltop yonder where stands a single tree. Cut at the tree with your hatchets, and, if blood flows from the wound, you will know that I have perished and my work has failed. But if no blood flows, all is well, my mission is successful."

"But the canoe is made of stone," said his grandmother. "It will not float."



"But the canoe is made of stone . . . This shall be a sign that my words are true."

"We place thee upon those seats, spread soft with the feathery down of the globe thistle, there beneath the shade of the spreading branches of the Tree of Peace. There thou shalt sit and watch the Council Fire of the Confederacy of the Five Nations, and all the affairs of the Five Nations shall be transacted at this place before thee, Aotarho, and thy cousin Lords, by the Confederate Lords of the Five Nations."

The constitution of the Great Peace is not a defensive instrument dealing solely with safeguards against oppression and war. It is a positive thing, giving expression to the Five Nations' way of life.

"Our strength shall be in union," said Deganawidah, "and our way the way of reason, righteousness, and peace."

To begin with, it expresses the great principle of unity in diversity, a principle that gave its peculiar strength to the confederacy. Each separate nation, with its individual customs and local pride, knew that its chief assurance of essential independence lay in a union that guaranteed its way of life against all attack.

"The five Council Fires," said Deganawidah, "shall continue to burn as before and they are not quenched."

To the outside world the spirit of the League might seem to be expressed in the Latin motto, *E Pluribus Unum*. But to the nations within the League its spirit might have seemed better expressed in the words, *Ex Uno Plura*. The strength of the whole made safe the individual differences of the members.

If the Kanonsionni, the Longhouse, with its rafters of the Law, protected the five fires, it protected also the rights of the individuals who sat by them. The Iroquois cherished the Four Freedoms of our own day. Two of them received specific mention in the constitution: Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want.

The avowed purpose of the union was to provide the strength that casts out fear.

"We bind ourselves together," said Deganawidah, "by taking hold of each other's hands so firmly and forming a circle so strong that if a tree should fall upon it, it could not shake nor break it, so that our people and grandchildren shall remain in the circle in security, peace, and happiness."

Freedom from Want was taken care of in the provision that the hunting grounds should be open to all. There was to be common access to raw materials.

"We shall have one dish," said Deganawidah, "in which shall

be placed one beaver's tail, and we shall all have a co-equal right to it, and there shall be no knife in it, for if there be a knife in it there will be danger that it might cut someone and blood would thereby be shed."

Freedom of Religion was regarded among the Five Nations as so natural a right as to require no mention in the constitution except in the case of adopted nations, to whom it was specifically granted. The religion of the Iroquois themselves, which was not unlike Wordsworth's modified pantheism, was practised without hypocrisy or bigotry. Foreign peoples who joined them under the shelter of the Tree of Peace were allowed, and indeed encouraged, to worship in their own way. When in the eighteenth century the Iroquois adopted the tiny remnant of the Tutelo nation, they saw to it that the beautiful religious observances of this Siouan people should be preserved. Dr. Frank G. Speck, in his remarkable study, *The Tutelo Spirit Adoption Ceremony*, shows how today the Cayugas, under whose wing the Tuteloes were taken some two hundred years ago, have assumed responsibility for this rite now that there are no longer any Tutelo-speaking people to attend to it for themselves.

Freedom of Speech was a right so deeply embedded in the Iroquois way of life as to need no attention in the constitution. Fires burning all over the Five Nations territory symbolized the right of public discussion. Besides the Great Council at Onondaga (the Fire That Never Dies), there were local fires in each nation, each clan, each family; and the women had their fires as well as the men.

There was one freedom that the Five Nations denied themselves: "Freedom, free to slay herself," the liberty to destroy their own liberties. They knew that great freedom demands, for its preservation, great self-restraint. Being aware how unscrupulous agitators used the right of free speech to spread divisive propaganda, they surrounded public debate with safeguards against that danger.

For one thing, the constitution provided that discussion in the Great Council should not be prolonged after nightfall. The physical conditions that foster frayed tempers and hasty judgments were thus avoided.

For another, the public discussion of an important proposition was not allowed to take place the same day it was received in council. Time had to be allowed for study of the proposal. When,

"It will float," replied Deganawidah. "This shall be a sign that my words are true."

He entered the canoe, and it moved swiftly out into the Lake. Deganawidah crossed Lake Ontario (Sganadai-ya, the Beautiful Great Lake) and approached the land of the Iroquois. As the shore line took form to his eyes, he scanned it for signs of ascending smoke, but saw none; for indeed the settlements at that time were all back among the hills, whose steep sides offered protection to stockaded villages against their enemies. Those were evil days, for the five Iroquois peoples were all at war with one another, and made themselves an easy prey to their fierce Algonquin enemies, the Adirondacks, who came down on them from what is now northern New England, and the Wolves or Mahicans of Hudson's River who assailed them on the east.

As Deganawidah neared the land, he saw the figures of men, small in the distance, running along the shore; for some hunters had seen a sparkle of light from the white stone canoe and ran to see what it could be. Whereupon Deganawidah turned his canoe toward them, and, making hand swiftly, beached the canoe and climbed the bank and stood before them.

Looking about him, he saw that the region was bare of cornfields.

"Is there no settlement here?" he asked.

"No," they replied.

"Then what has brought you to this desolate place?"

"We are hunters," they said. "We have come away from our hill settlement because there is strife in it."

"Go back to your settlement," said Deganawidah. "Tell your chief that the Good News of Peace and Power has come, and that there will be no more strife in his village. If he asks whence peace is to come, say to him, 'It will come.'"

"Who art thou that speakest thus to us?"

"I am Deganawidah," he replied. "I come from the west and I go toward the sunrise. I am called Deganawidah in the world." When he turned and went down the bank to enter his canoe, the men wondered as they looked, for they saw that the canoe was made of white stone.

The hunters, returning to the settlement as Deganawidah had bidden them, went to their chief and said to him, "The Good News of Peace and Power has come."

"What is this you are saying?" said the chief.

"There will be no more strife in the settlement."

"Who told you this?"

They replied, "He is called Deganawidah in the world."

"Where did you see him?"

"On the Beautiful Great Lake. He came from the west and he goes toward the sunrise. His canoe is made of white stone and it moves swiftly."

Then the chief began to wonder at the news. His town was at war, and his people within the stockades were hungry and quarrelling among themselves.

"Whence can peace come?" he said.

They replied, "It will come."

Then said the chief: "Truly this is a wonderful thing. Such news of itself will bring peace to the settlement if once men believe it. All will be glad and at ease in their minds to know that this thing will be."

So Deganawidah passed from settlement to settlement, finding that men desired peace and would practise it if they knew for a certainty that others would practise it, too.

But first, after leaving the hunters, Deganawidah sought the house of a certain woman who lived by the warriors' path which passed between the east and the west.

When Deganawidah arrived, the woman placed food before him and, after he had eaten, asked him his message.

"I carry the Mind of the Master of Life," he replied, "and my message will bring an end to the wars between east and west."

"How will this be?" asked the woman, who wondered at his words, for it was her custom to feed the warriors passing before her door on their way between the east and the west.

"The Word that I bring," he said, "is that all peoples shall love one another and live together in peace. This message has three parts: Righteousness and Health and Power—Gaiwoh, Skénon, Gashadénsaha. And each part has two branches.

"Righteousness means justice practised between men and between nations; it means also a desire to see justice prevail.

"Health means soundness of mind and body; it also means peace, for that is what comes when minds are sane and bodies cared for.

"Power means authority, the authority of law and custom, backed by such force as is necessary to make justice prevail; it means also

thy hand. If then we straighten his mind, the Longhouse will be completed and our work accomplished."

Accordingly the two put their canoe into the lake and dipped their paddles.

As they neared the middle of the lake, they heard the voice of Atotarho, "Asonke-ne-e-e-eh! Is it not yet?"

"Truly," said Hiawatha, "the man is impatient."

The wind blew and the waves struck angrily against the canoe as again they heard Atotarho's cry rush out to meet them: "Asonke-ne-e-e-eh! It is not yet!" But Deganawidah put his strength into his paddle, and in a few moments they beached their canoe at what is now known as Hiawatha Point, on the east shore of the lake, climbed the bank, and stood before the wizard.

"Behold!" said Hiawatha. "We two are come."

"Who are you?" demanded Atotarho.

"Hast thou not heard," responded Hiawatha, "of two who were to come to thee?"

"I have heard," answered Atotarho, "that Hiawatha and Deganawidah were on their way."

"Yea, truly," said Hiawatha, "and now we two are here."

"I have waited a long time impatiently."

"Thy impatience has caused our delay," said Hiawatha.

Then, holding the strings of lake wampum in his hand, he continued:

"These are the Words of the Great Law. On these Words we shall build the House of Peace, the Longhouse with five fires that is yet one household. These are the Words of Righteousness and Health and Power."

"What is this foolishness about houses and righteousness and health?" said Atotarho.

Then Deganawidah spoke his message:

"The Words we bring constitute the New Mind, which is the will of Tarachiawagon, the Holder of the Heavens. There shall be Righteousness when men desire justice, Health when men obey reason, Power when men accept the Great Law. These things shall be given form in the Longhouse, Kanonsionni, where five nations shall live in quiet as one family. At this very place, Atotarho, where the chiefs of five nations will assemble, I shall plant the Great Tree of Peace, and its roots shall extend to far places of the earth so that all mankind may have the shelter of the Great Law."

Atotarho said, "What is that to me?"

"Thou thyself," said Deganawidah, "shalt tend the council fire of the Five Nations, the Fire That Never Dies. And the smoke of that fire shall reach the sky and be seen of all men."

"Who shall bring this about?" asked Atotarho.

"Thou shalt, if thou desirest it. Thou shalt be the Head Chief of the Five Nations."

"Of course I desire this thing," said Atotarho, "if there be anything in it. But thou art a dreamer. Where is power to bring it to pass? Asonke-ne-e-e-eh! It is not yet!"

At that Hiawatha and Deganawidah returned as they had come across the lake to where the chiefs were waiting for them on the far shore.

"Make haste," said Deganawidah. "This is the time!"

They all put their canoes into the lake and paddled across. As they neared the middle, they heard the voice of Atotarho rush out to meet them, crying, "Asonke-ne-e-e-eh! It is not yet!" The wind lifted the waves against the canoes, but they put their strength into their paddles and, before the voice had died away, they stood before Atotarho.

"Behold!" said Deganawidah. "Here is Power. These are the Five Nations. Their strength is greater than thy strength. But their voice shall be thy voice when thou speakest in council, and all men shall hear thee. This shall be thy strength in future: the will of a united people."

Then the mind of Atotarho was made straight, and Hiawatha combed the snakes out of his hair.

Deganawidah laid his hand on Atotarho's body and said: "The work is finished. Thy mind is made straight; thy head is now combed; the seven crooks have been taken from thy body. Now thou, too, hast a New Mind. Thou shalt henceforth preside over the Council, and thou shalt strive in all ways to make reason and the peaceful mind prevail. Thy voice shall be the voice of the Great Law. All men shall hear thee and find peace."

Then Deganawidah placed antlers on the heads of the chiefs in sign of their authority, and gave them the Words of the Law.

religion, for justice enforced is the will of the Holder of the Heavens and has his sanction."

"Thy message is good," said the woman; "but a word is nothing until it is given form and set to work in the world. What form shall this message take when it comes to dwell among men?"

"It will take the form of the Longhouse," replied Deganauidah, "in which there are many fires, one for each family, yet all live as one household under one chief mother. Hereabouts are five nations, each with its own council fire, yet they shall live together as one household in peace. They shall be the Kanonsianni, the Longhouse. They shall have one mind and live under one law. Thinking shall replace killing, and there shall be one commonwealth."

"That is indeed a good message," said the woman. "I take hold of it. I embrace it."

"Now it shall come to pass in that Longhouse," said Deganauidah, "that the women shall possess the titles of chiefship. They shall name the chiefs. That is because thou, my Mother, wert the first to accept the Good News of Peace and Power. Henceforth thou shalt be called Jigónhsasee, New Face, for thy countenance evinces the New Mind, and thou shalt be known as the Mother of Nations."

Then Jigónhsasee said: "I am a woman and do not make war. But the work I do is to feed the warriors passing my door on their way between east and west. They, too, must accept the New Mind or there will be no end to killing. Where wilt thou first take thy message?"

"I go toward the sunrise," replied Deganauidah.

"The direction thou takest is dangerous," said Jigónhsasee. "That way stands the house of a man who eats humans."

"That is the business I go about," said Deganauidah, "to bring such evils to an end, so that all men may go about from place to place without fear."

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## Hiawatha Sees Himself

WHEN Deganauidah came to the house of the "man who eats humans," he climbed to the roof and lay flat on his chest beside the smoke hole. There he waited until the man came home carrying a human body, which he put in his kettle on the fire. Deganauidah moved closer and looked straight down.

At that moment the man bent over the kettle. Seeing a face looking up at him, he was amazed. It was Deganauidah's face he saw reflected in the water, but the man thought it was his own. There was in it such wisdom and strength as he had never seen before nor ever dreamed that he possessed.

The man moved back into a corner of the house, and sat down and began to think.

"This is a most wonderful thing," he said. "Such a thing has never happened before as long as I have lived in this house. I did not know I was like that. It was a great man who looked at me out of the kettle. I shall look again and make sure that what I have seen is true."

He went over to the kettle, and there again was the face of a great man looking up at him.

"It is true," he said. "It is my own face in which I see wisdom and righteousness and strength. But it is not the face of a man who eats humans. I see that it is not like me to do that."

He took the kettle out of the house, and emptied it by the roots of an upturned tree.

"Now I have changed my habits," he said. "I no longer kill humans and eat their flesh. But that is not enough. The mind is more difficult to change. I cannot forget the suffering I have caused, and I am become miserable."

Then the man felt his loneliness and said, "Perhaps someone will come here, some stranger it may be, who will tell me what I must do to make amends for all the human beings I have made to suffer."

When he returned to the house, he met Deganauidah, who had climbed down from the roof, and they entered and sat down across the fire from each other.

## Combing The Snakes Out of Atotarho's Hair

ACCOMPANIED by chiefs of the Mohawk nation, Deganawidah and Hiawatha first approached the Oneidas, the People of the Standing Stone, whom they had little difficulty in persuading to accept the Great Peace sponsored by their powerful neighbors, the Mohawks.

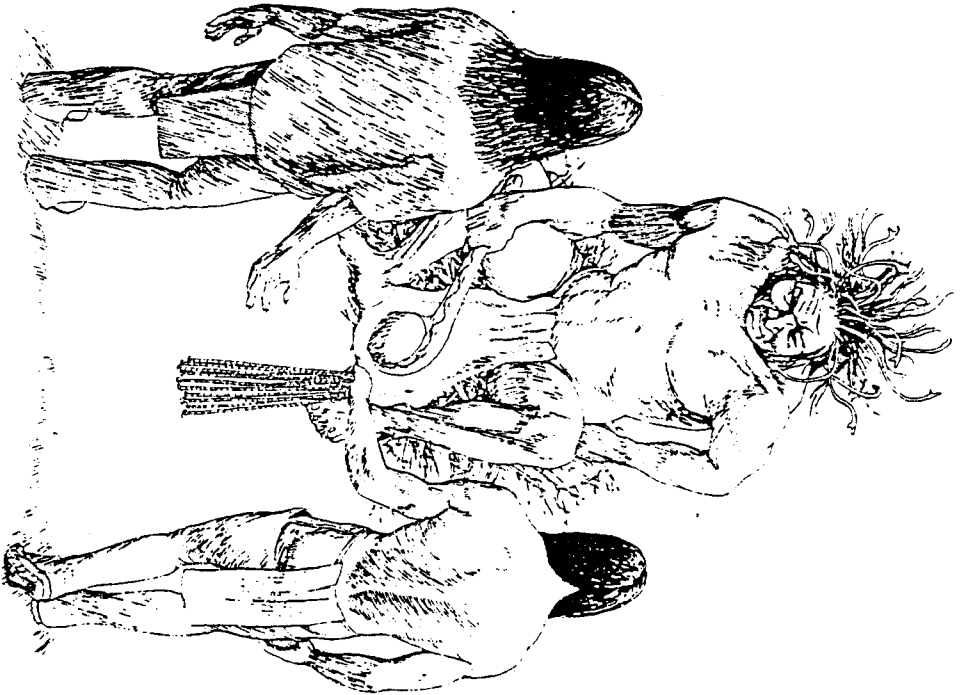
Beyond the Oneidas lay the Onondagas, but the paralyzing cry of Atotarho, "Iwe-do-ne-e-e-e-eh? When will this be?" forced them to leave the Onondagas, the People of the Hills, and pass on to the Great Pipe People, the Cayugas.

The mild-mannered Cayugas, always quick to help their fellow humans, and a little fearful at their own situation between such powerful peoples as the Onondagas and Senecas, were glad enough to take hold of the Great Peace. So now, with three nations at their back, Deganawidah and Hiawatha returned to the politically minded Onondagas, and were able to convince their chiefs (all but Atotarho) that it would be well to join. Then, accompanied by the chiefs of four nations, Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, and Cayugas, they carried the Peace Iymn to Canandaigua Lake, where they persuaded the two branches of the People of the Great Hill, the Senecas, warlike and independent though they were, to compose their rivalries and enter the Longhouse.

"Now," said Deganawidah, "we must seek the fire and look for the smoke of Atotarho. He alone stands across our path. His mind is twisted and there are seven crooks in his body. These must be straightened if the League is to endure."

So Deganawidah returned to Onondaga Lake and assembled the chiefs of five nations in the woods beside it.

"Come," said Deganawidah to Hiawatha, "thou and I alone shall go first to the Great Wizard. I shall sing the Peace Song and thou shalt explain the Words of the Law, holding the wampum in



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"His mind is twisted and there are seven crooks in his body."

"Today I have seen a strange thing," said the man. "I saw a face looking at me out of the kettle in this house where I live. It was my own face, but it was not the face of the man who has lived here. It was the face of a great man, but I am become miserable."

"Truly," said Deganawidah, "what has happened this day makes a wonderful story. Thou hast changed the very pattern of thy life. The New Mind has come to thee, namely Righteousness and Health and Power. And thou art miserable because the New Mind does not live at ease with old memories. Heal thy memories by working to make justice prevail. Bring peace to those places where thou hast done injury to man. Thou shalt work with me in advancing the Good News of Peace and Power."

"That is a good message," said the man. "I take hold, I grasp it. Now what work is there for us both to do?"

"First, let us eat together," said Deganawidah. "I will go into the woods for our food. Do thou go to the stream and fetch water for the kettle. But be careful. Dip with the current. One must never go against the forces of nature."

When Deganawidah came back from the woods, he bore on his shoulders a deer with large antlers.

"It is on the flesh of the deer," said Deganawidah, "that the Holder of the Heavens meant men to feed themselves; and the deer's antlers shall be placed on their heads. Great men shall wear the antlers of authority; and by these emblems all men shall know those who administer the new order of Peace and Power which I am come to establish."

"What will this new order be called?" asked the man.

"When it is completed," replied Deganawidah, "it will be called by these names: Kanonsioni, the Longhouse, the League; and Kayanerenhkowa, the Great Peace, or the Great Law. Men shall live together in one community, as in the longhouse, and they shall live in peace because they live under one law."

Now not far from that place there lived a chief of the Onondagas named Atotarho who was a great wizard and evil. He was so cruel that he killed and devoured all men who approached him uninvited, and so strong that the birds flying over his lodge fell dead at his feet if he waved his arms. He had a twisted body and a twisted mind, and his hair was a mass of tangled snakes. No man liked to see him, and the sound of his voice carried terror through the land; but

his power was mighty, and Deganawidah knew that the cause of peace could not be completed without him.

"Thou shalt visit this man Atotarho," said Deganawidah, "for he is of thy people, the Onondagas. He is ugly, but we need him. When he asks thee for thy message, say, 'It is Righteousness and Health, and when men take hold of it they will stop killing one another and live in peace.'"

"He will not listen to thee, but drive thee away. Yet thou shalt come to him again and at last prevail. Thou shalt be called Hiawatha, He Who Combs, for thou shalt comb the snakes out of Atotarho's hair."

I am. I would take these shell strings in my hand and console them. The strings would become words and lift away the darkness with which they are covered. Holding these in my hand, my words would be true."

Every night when he made his fire, he set up two crotched sticks, placed another across them, and from it he hung the three strings of shells. Then he sat down and repeated his saying:

"This would I do if I found anyone burdened with grief even as I am. I would take these shell strings in my hand and console them. The strings would become words and lift away the darkness with which they are covered. Holding these in my hand, my words would be true."

For many days Hiawatha was a wanderer, moving through the forest without direction, sometimes south and sometimes north and sometimes east.

"I can only rove about," he said, "since now I have cast myself away from my people."

When he came to settlements, the smoke from his fire at evening was seen at the wood's edge, but no one came to console him. Men knew that it was Hiawatha, for they had heard of his departure from Onondaga. They knew, too, that he was destined to go to the country of the Flint Nation; for a runner had come from the south, from a nation by the seashore, telling of a seer in that country who had dreamed that a man from the north should meet a man from the west in the country of the Kanienga, the Mohawks, and that together they should establish a Great Peace.

But no one took up the strings of wampum to condole with him. He built himself a canoe and paddled down the Mohawk River till, on the twenty-third day after his departure from the Onondagas, he came to the village by the Lower Falls, and built his fire at the wood's edge.

That night Deganawidah went to the place where the smoke from Hiawatha's fire was seen rising.

As he approached, he heard the voice of Hiawatha, saying:

"This would I do if I found anyone burdened with grief even as I am. I would take these shell strings in my hand and condole with them. The strings would become words and lift away the darkness with which they are covered. Holding these in my hand, my words would be true."

Then Deganawidah came forward and, taking the strings from

the horizontal pole and holding them, with others he had made, in his hand, he spoke, string by string, the several Words of the Requickening Address, used for all generations since in the Iroquois Condolence Ceremony.

"I wipe away the tears from thy face," said Deganawidah, "using the white fawn-skin of pity. . . . I make it daylight for thee. . . . I beautify the sky. Now shalt thou do thy thinking in peace when thine eyes rest on the sky, which the Perfector of our Faculties, the Master of All Things, intended should be a source of happiness to man."

Thus was Hiawatha's mind cleared of its grief.

"Now," said Deganawidah, "Reason has returned; thy judgment is firm again. Thou art ready to advance the New Mind. Let us together make the laws of the Great Peace, which shall abolish war."

So when the Great Law was completed, and for each item a string or belt of wampum had been provided to enable them to remember it the more easily, Hiawatha and Deganawidah carried the Words of the Great Peace to the nations of the west: the Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas.

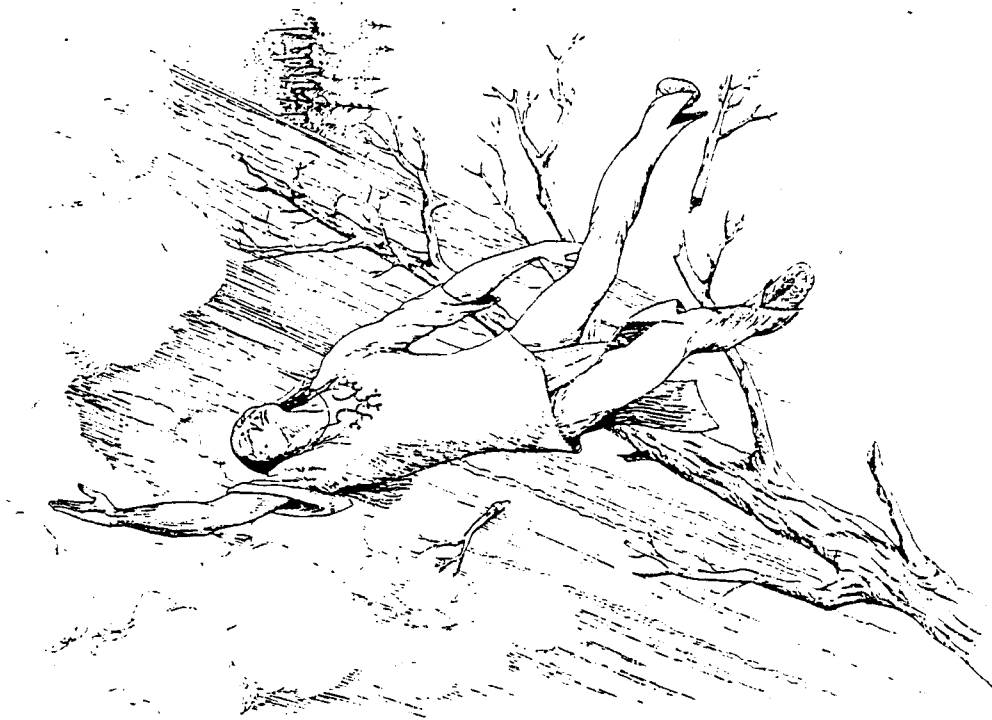
As they went, they sang the Peace Hymn, the *Hail Hail!*:

*Hail! Hail! Hail!*

To the Great Peace bring we greeting . . .

That song is still sung, modified by the nostalgia of later generations for the golden age of the League's birth, whenever the ancient ritual is invoked for the installation of chiefs in the Great Peace.

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“If he lives to see the sunrise, we shall accept his message.”

## The Mohawks Take Hold

BEFORE he continued his journey toward the sunrise, seeking the smoke of peoples, Deganawidah visited Atotarho to prepare his mind for Hiawatha's message. He found the wizard seated on a great rock in a glen.

“I am come to prepare thy mind,” said Deganawidah, “for the Good News of Peace and Power. When men accept it, they will stop killing, and bloodshed will cease from the land.”

Atotarho's head was covered with snakes and his body was crooked. He loved disorder and hated peace, but he did not say so, for his mind was twisted and his workings were evil and indirect.

“When will this be?” he cried: “Hwe-do-né-e-e-e-ch?”

He drew out the last sound in a howl that carried far through the forest, striking fear into all who heard it. It was the mocking cry of the doubter who killed men by destroying their faith.

“It will be,” replied Deganawidah. “I shall come again, with Hiawatha, who will comb the snakes out of thy hair.”

Thence Deganawidah took his course toward the sunrise, toward the land of the Kanienga, the Flint Nation, or Mohawks. By the Lower Falls of the Mohawk River (Cohoes, N. Y.), Deganawidah made camp, and in the evening sat beneath a tall tree and smoked his pipe.

A man of the Kanienga passing by saw him and asked, “Who art thou?”

“I am Deganawidah,” he replied. “The Great Creator from whom we are all descended sent me to establish the Great Peace among you.”

“There is no peace here,” said the man. “But I will take thee to my village, and thou shalt explain this message to the people.”

So Deganawidah presented the Good News of Peace and Power, of Reason and Law, to the Mohawks in that place, and the people were glad, for they found it a good message.

But their chiefs were cautious and held back.

The Chief Warrior said to Deganawidah: “Thou speakest well. Reason and law and peace are good things. But east and west of our

village are powerful tribes who are always at war with us. Whence can peace come?"

"It will come," said Deganawidah, "with the Words of the Law. The Great Binding Law—that is Peace."

Then said the Chief Warrior to the people: "What this man says is good, but is it true? Let him give us a sign. Let him climb to the top of a tall tree by the falls, and we shall cut it down over the cliff. If he live to see the sunrise, we shall accept his message."

So all moved to the place where the tree stood beside the falls.

"If thou livest to see tomorrow's sunrise," said the Chief Warrior, "we shall take hold of thy message."

Deganawidah climbed the tree to the topmost branch. Then the Mohawks cut the tree down so that it fell over the cliff into the water. The people watched to see if Deganawidah came up, but there was no sign of him.

"Let us return at sunrise," said the Chief Warrior, and the people went back to their village for the night.

Next morning, before sunrise, a man of the Kaniennga coming to the place by the falls where the tree had fallen, saw at a little distance across the cornfields a column of smoke rising, and going toward it he saw a man seated by his fire. It was Deganawidah.

When the man returned to the village and told what he had seen, the people came out and brought Deganawidah back to the place of council.

The Chief Warrior spoke. "Yesterday," he said, "I was in great doubt, for words, however good, do not always betoken the thing that is. Now I am in doubt no longer. This is a great man, who reveals to us the Mind of the Master of Life. Let us accept his message. Let us take hold of the Good News of Peace and Power."

Then said Deganawidah: "The day is early and young, and so also is the New Mind young and tender. And as the new sun rises and proceeds surely on its course in the sky, so also shall the Young Mind prevail and prosper among men. There shall be peace. Your children and your grandchildren and those whose faces are yet beneath the ground shall live under the sky without fear."

Thus the Mohawks were the first nation to take hold of the Great Peace. They were the founders of the League.

## Words of Wampum

MEANWHILE Hiawatha had met failure among the Onondagas. The people were with him; they accepted the New Mind and desired to take hold of the Peace. But Hiawatha could make no headway against their chief, Atotarho.

Three times Hiawatha called a council. Three times the councilors set out to visit Atotarho and straighten his twisted mind. But three times the wizard's evil power rushed out to meet them. Three times their councils were dissolved. Some of the Onondagas, approaching Atotarho in their canoes, were drowned by the waves. Others were set fighting among themselves. Blood was shed. Hiawatha was not injured in his body, but he was wounded in his mind by the obstructions placed in his path.

One day he heard Atotarho's voice crying out of the air, "Hiawatha-a-a-a-a-a!" and he was troubled, for he knew that mischief was hatching.

Soon Hiawatha's three daughters were taken ill, one after the other, and all died. Hiawatha's grief bowed him down.

"I shall be unable to perform the work of the Good Mind," he said, "because of this awful thing that has befallen me."

Seeing him thus depressed, the people came to comfort him, and they arranged a game of lacrosse to lift his mind. But when a mysterious bird dropped out of the sky, and the crowd, pursuing it, trampled his wife to death, his grief overcame him. He "split the sky" (struck south) and left the land of the Onondagas.

So began the journey that figures so prominently in Iroquois legend. Not far up among the mountains from Onondaga (Syra-cuse) Hiawatha came to the Tully Lakes, crossing one of them, it is said, with dry moccasins because the ducks at his request had lifted the water for him to pass.

Picking up shells from the lake bottom, he threaded them on three strings of jointed rushes as a mark of his grief. At night when he built his fire at that place, which he named Ohondogonwa, the Land of Rushes, he held the three strings in his hand and said:

"This would I do if I found anyone burdened with grief even as