

Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,  
A shadow on those features fair and  
thin;  
And softly, from that hushed and darkened  
room,  
Two angels issued, where but one went  
in.  
All is of God! If He but wave his hand,  
The mists collect, the rain falls thick and  
loud,

Till, with a smile of light on sea and land,  
Lo! He looks back from the departing  
cloud. 40

Angels of Life and Death alike are his;  
Without his leave they pass no threshold  
o'er;  
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing  
this,  
Against his messengers to shut the door?  
1853. (1858.)

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION<sup>2</sup>

SHOULD you ask me, whence these stories?  
Whence these legends and traditions,  
With the odors of the forest,  
With the dew and damp of meadows,  
With the curling smoke of wigwams,

<sup>1</sup> Those to whom 'Hiawatha' is familiar from their childhood, but who feel it to be hardly fit food for mature intellects, and those who are wearied by its repetitions, its simplicity, and the monotony of its rhythm, should reread at least the Introduction, and Cantos iii (Hiawatha's Childhood), vii (His Sailing), x (His Wooing), xx (The Famine), and xxii (Hiawatha's Departure). The whole poem, however, without omissions, is necessary to any real knowledge of Longfellow's work or of American poetry. The simplicity of his own character enabled him to reproduce the effects of primitive poetry and legend better than other modern poets have done, and to create what is at least our nearest approach to an American epic. It is greatly superior to all other attempts at epic treatment of the Indian legends. Bayard Taylor said of it: 'It will be parodied, perhaps ridiculed, in many quarters, but it will live after the Indian race has vanished from our Continent, and there will be no parodies then.' Emerson called it 'sweet and wholesome as maize.'

Longfellow wrote 'Hiawatha' with more enthusiasm than any other of his poems. Cf. the *Journal*, October 19, 1854: "'Hiawatha' occupies and delights me. Have I no misgivings about it? Yes, sometimes. Then the theme seizes me and hurries me away, and they vanish.' (*Life*, vol. ii, p. 277.) 'The hero,' he wrote to Freiligrath (who afterward translated 'Hiawatha' into German), 'is a kind of American Prometheus.' From the first he felt sure of his subject and his metre: 'I have at length hit upon a plan for a poem on the American Indians, which seems to me the right one, and the only. It is to weave together their beautiful traditions into a whole. I have hit upon a measure, too, which I think the right and only one for such a theme.' (*Journal*, June 22, 1854.)

The metre was avowedly taken from that of the Finnish epic *Kalevala*, which he had read with Freiligrath twelve years before. See Freiligrath's letter in the *London Athenæum*, December 22, 1855.

On the sources from which Longfellow drew his material, see his own notes given below.

Further, on 'Hiawatha,' see:—

*Life*, vol. ii, pp. 272-311.  
Longfellow (Alice M.), *A Visit to Hiawatha's People*.  
Schoolcraft (Henry R.), *The Myth of Hiawatha and*

With the rushing of great rivers,  
With their frequent repetitions,  
And their wild reverberations,  
As of thunder in the mountains?  
I should answer, I should tell you, 10  
'From the forests and the prairies,  
From the great lakes of the Northland,  
From the land of the Ojibways,  
From the land of the Dacotahs,  
From the mountains, moors, and fenlands  
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.

*Other Oral Legends, Mythologic and Allegoric, of the North American Indians.*

Broili (Otto), *Die Hauptquellen Longfellow's Song of Hiawatha*. Würzburg, 1898.

Lang (Andrew), *Letters on Literature*.  
Cracroft, *Essays*, vol. ii (on the translation of parts of 'Hiawatha' into Latin, for school use, by F. W. Newman).

Hale (E. E.), in the *North American Review*, January, 1856.

Chasles (Philarete), in the *Journal des Débats*, April 20, 1856.

Montégut (Émile), in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, June, 1857.

Hale (Henry), 'Hiawatha played by real Indians,' in the *Critic*, July, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> This Indian Edda — if I may so call it — is founded on a tradition, prevalent among the North American Indians, of a personage of miraculous birth, who was sent among them to clear their rivers, forests, and fishing-grounds, and to teach them the arts of peace. He was known among different tribes by the several names of Michabou, Chiabo, Manabozo, Tarenaya-wagon and Hiawatha. Mr. Schoolcraft gives an account of him in his *Algie Researches*, vol. i, p. 134, and in his *History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, part iii, p. 314, may be found the Iroquois form of the tradition, derived from the verbal narrations of an Onondaga chief.

Into this old tradition I have woven other curious Indian legends, drawn chiefly from the various and valuable writings of Mr. Schoolcraft, to whom the literary world is greatly indebted for his indefatigable zeal in rescuing from oblivion so much of the legendary lore of the Indians.

The scene of the poem is among the Ojibways on the southern shore of Lake Superior, in the region between the Pictured Rocks and the Grand Sable. (LONGFELLOW.)

I repeat them as I heard them  
From the lips of Nawadaha,  
The musician, the sweet singer.' 20  
Should you ask where Nawadaha  
Found these songs so wild and wayward,  
Found these legends and traditions,  
I should answer, I should tell you,  
'In the bird's-nests of the forest,  
In the lodges of the beaver,  
In the hoof-prints of the bison,  
In the eyry of the eagle!

'All the wild-fowl sang them to him,  
In the moorlands and the fen-lands, 30  
In the melancholy marshes;  
Chetowaik, the plover, sang them,  
Mahng, the loon, the wild-goose, Wawa,  
The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!'

If still further you should ask me,  
Saying, 'Who was Nawadaha?  
'Tell us of this Nawadaha,'  
I should answer your inquiries  
Straightway in such words as follow. 40

'In the vale of Tawasentha,<sup>1</sup>  
In the green and silent valley,  
By the pleasant water-courses,  
Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.  
Round about the Indian village  
Spread the meadows and the corn-fields,  
And beyond them stood the forest,  
Stood the groves of singing pine-trees,  
Green in Summer, white in Winter,  
Ever sighing, ever singing. 50

'And the pleasant water-courses,  
You could trace them through the valley,  
By the rushing in the Spring-time,  
By the alders in the Summer,  
By the white fog in the Autumn,  
By the black line in the Winter;  
And beside them dwelt the singer,  
In the vale of Tawasentha,  
In the green and silent valley.

'There he sang of Hiawatha, 60  
Sang the Song of Hiawatha,  
Sang his wondrous birth and being,  
How he prayed and how he fasted,  
How he lived, and toiled, and suffered,  
That the tribes of men might prosper,  
That he might advance his people!'

Ye who love the haunts of Nature,  
Love the sunshine of the meadow,  
Love the shadow of the forest,  
Love the wind among the branches, 70

<sup>1</sup> This valley, now called Norman's Kill, is in Albany County, New York. (LONGFELLOW.)

And the rain-shower and the snow-storm,  
And the rushing of great rivers  
Through their palisades of pine-trees,  
And the thunder in the mountains,  
Whose innumerable echoes  
Flap like eagles in their eyries; —  
Listen to these wild traditions,  
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye who love a nation's legends,  
Love the ballads of a people, 80  
That like voices from afar off  
Call to us to pause and listen,  
Speak in tones so plain and childlike,  
Scarcely can the ear distinguish  
Whether they are sung or spoken; —  
Listen to this Indian Legend,  
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,  
Who have faith in God and Nature,  
Who believe that in all ages 90  
Every human heart is human,  
That in even savage bosoms  
There are longings, yearnings, strivings  
For the good they comprehend not,  
That the feeble hands and helpless,  
Groping blindly in the darkness,  
Touch God's right hand in that darkness  
And are lifted up and strengthened; —  
Listen to this simple story,  
To this Song of Hiawatha! 100

Ye, who sometimes, in your rambles  
Through the green lanes of the country,  
Where the tangled barberry-bushes  
Hang their tufts of crimson berries  
Over stone walls gray with mosses,  
Pause by some neglected graveyard,  
For a while to muse, and ponder  
On a half-effaced inscription,  
Written with little skill of song-craft,  
Homely phrases, but each letter 110  
Full of hope and yet of heart-break,  
Full of all the tender pathos  
Of the Here and the Hereafter; —  
Stay and read this rude inscription,  
Read this Song of Hiawatha!

### I THE PEACE-PIPE<sup>2</sup>

ON the Mountains of the Prairie,  
ON the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry,

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Catlin, in his *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, vol. ii, p. 160, gives an interesting account of the

Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
He the Master of Life, descending,  
On the red crags of the quarry  
Stood erect, and called the nations,  
Called the tribes of men together.

From his footprints flowed a river,  
Leaped into the light of morning,  
O'er the precipice plunging downward  
Gleamed like Ishkoodah, the comet.  
And the Spirit, stooping earthward,  
With his finger on the meadow  
Traced a winding pathway for it,  
Saying to it, 'Run in this way!'

From the red stone of the quarry  
With his hand he broke a fragment,  
Moulded it into a pipe-head,  
Shaped and fashioned it with figures;  
From the margin of the river  
Took a long reed for a pipe-stem,  
With its dark green leaves upon it;  
Filled the pipe with bark of willow,  
With the bark of the red willow;  
Breathed upon the neighboring forest,  
Made its great boughs chafe together,  
Till in flame they burst and kindled;  
And erect upon the mountains,  
Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
Smoked the calumet, the Peace-Pipe,  
As a signal to the nations.

And the smoke rose slowly, slowly,  
Through the tranquil air of morning,  
First a single line of darkness,  
Then a denser, bluer vapor,

*Côteau des Prairies, and the Red Pipestone Quarry.*  
He says:—

'Here (according to their traditions) happened the mysterious birth of the red pipe, which has blown its fumes of peace and war to the remotest corners of the continent; which has visited every warrior, and passed through its reddened stem the irrevocable oath of war and desolation. And here, also, the peace-breathing calumet was born, and fringed with the eagle's quills, which has shed its thrilling fumes over the land, and soothed the fury of the relentless savage.

'The Great Spirit at an ancient period here called the Indian nations together, and, standing on the precipice of the red pipe-stone rock, broke from its wall a piece, and made a huge pipe by turning it in his hand, which he smoked over them, and to the North, the South, the East, and the West, and told them that this stone was red,—that it was their flesh,—that they must use it for their pipes of peace,—that it belonged to them all, and that the war-club and scalping-knife must not be raised on its ground. At the last whiff of his pipe his head went into a great cloud, and the whole surface of the rock for several miles was melted and glazed; two great ovens were opened beneath, and two women (guardian spirits of the place) entered in a blaze of fire; and they are heard there yet (Tso-mec-cos-tee and Tso-mec-te-won-dee), answering to the invocations of the high-priests or medicine-men, who consult them when they are visitors to this sacred place.' (LONGFELLOW.)

Then a snow-white cloud unfolding,  
Like the tree-tops of the forest,  
Ever rising, rising, rising,  
Till it touched the top of heaven,  
Till it broke against the heaven,  
And rolled outward all around it.

From the Vale of Tawasentha,  
From the Valley of Wyoming,  
From the groves of Tuscaloosa,  
From the far-off Rocky Mountains,  
From the Northern lakes and rivers  
All the tribes beheld the signal,  
Saw the distant smoke ascending,  
The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe.

And the Prophets of the nations  
Said: 'Behold it, the Pukwana!  
By this signal from afar off,  
Bending like a wand of willow,  
Waving like a hand that beckons,  
Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
Calls the tribes of men together,  
Calls the warriors to his council!'

Down the rivers, o'er the prairies,  
Came the warriors of the nations,  
Came the Delawares and Mohawks,  
Came the Choctaws and Camanches,  
Came the Shoshonies and Blackfeet,  
Came the Pawnees and Omahas,  
Came the Mandans and Dacotahs,  
Came the Hurons and Ojibways,  
All the warriors drawn together  
By the signal of the Peace-Pipe,  
To the Mountains of the Prairie,  
To the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry.

And they stood there on the meadow,  
With their weapons and their war-gear,  
Painted like the leaves of Autumn,  
Painted like the sky of morning,  
Wildly glaring at each other;  
In their faces stern defiance,  
In their hearts the feuds of ages,  
The hereditary hatred,  
The ancestral thirst of vengeance.

Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
The creator of the nations,  
Looked upon them with compassion,  
With paternal love and pity;  
Looked upon their wrath and wrangling  
But as quarrels among children,  
But as feuds and fights of children!

Over them he stretched his right hand,  
To subdue their stubborn natures,  
To allay their thirst and fever,  
By the shadow of his right hand;  
Spake to them with voice majestic

As the sound of far-off waters,  
Falling into deep abysses,  
Warning, chiding, spake in this wise:—  
'O my children! my poor children!  
Listen to the words of wisdom,  
Listen to the words of warning,  
From the lips of the Great Spirit,  
From the Master of Life, who made you!

'I have given you lands to hunt in,  
I have given you streams to fish in,  
I have given you bear and bison,  
I have given you roe and reindeer,  
I have given you brant and beaver,  
Filled the marshes full of wild-fowl,  
Filled the rivers full of fishes;  
Why then are you not contented?  
Why then will you hunt each other?

'I am weary of your quarrels,  
Weary of your wars and bloodshed,  
Weary of your prayers for vengeance,  
Of your wranglings and dissensions;  
All your strength is in your union,  
All your danger is in discord;  
Therefore be at peace henceforward,  
And as brothers live together.

'I will send a Prophet to you,  
A Deliverer of the nations,  
Who shall guide you and shall teach you,  
Who shall toil and suffer with you.  
If you listen to his counsels,  
You will multiply and prosper;  
If his warnings pass unheeded,  
You will fade away and perish!

'Bathe now in the stream before you,  
Wash the war-paint from your faces,  
Wash the blood-stains from your fingers,  
Bury your war-clubs and your weapons,  
Break the red stone from this quarry,  
Mould and make it into Peace-Pipes,  
Take the reeds that grow beside you,  
Deck them with your brightest feathers,  
Smoke the calumet together,  
And as brothers live henceforward!'

Then upon the ground the warriors  
Threw their cloaks and shirts of deer-skin,  
Threw their weapons and their war-gear,  
Leaped into the rushing river,  
Washed the war-paint from their faces.  
Clear above them flowed the water,  
Clear and limpid from the footprints  
Of the Master of Life descending;  
Dark below them flowed the water,  
Soiled and stained with streaks of crimson,  
As if blood were mingled with it!

From the river came the warriors,

Clean and washed from all their war-paint;  
On the banks their clubs they buried,  
Buried all their warlike weapons.  
Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
The Great Spirit, the creator,  
Smiled upon his helpless children!  
And in silence all the warriors  
Broke the red stone of the quarry,  
Smoothed and formed it into Peace-Pipes,  
Broke the long reeds by the river,  
Decked them with their brightest feathers,  
And departed each one homeward,  
While the Master of Life, ascending,  
Through the opening of cloud-curtains,  
Through the doorways of the heaven,  
Vanished from before their faces,  
In the smoke that rolled around him,  
The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe!

## II

## THE FOUR WINDS

'HONOR be to Mudjekeewis!  
Cried the warriors, cried the old men,  
When he came in triumph homeward  
With the sacred Belt of Wampum,  
From the regions of the North-Wind,  
From the kingdom of Wabasso,  
From the land of the White Rabbit.  
He had stolen the Belt of Wampum  
From the neck of Mishe-Mokwa,  
From the Great Bear of the mountains,  
From the terror of the nations,  
As he lay asleep and cumbrous  
On the summit of the mountains,  
Like a rock with mosses on it,  
Spotted brown and gray with mosses.

Silently he stole upon him  
Till the red nails of the monster  
Almost touched him, almost scared him,  
Till the hot breath of his nostrils  
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis,  
As he drew the Belt of Wampum  
Over the round ears, that heard not,  
Over the small eyes, that saw not,  
Over the long nose and nostrils,  
The black muffle of the nostrils,  
Out of which the heavy breathing  
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis.

Then he swung aloft his war-club,  
Shouted loud and long his war-cry,  
Smote the mighty Mishe-Mokwa  
In the middle of the forehead,  
Right between the eyes he smote him.

With the heavy blow bewildered,  
Rose the Great Bear of the mountains;  
But his knees beneath him trembled.  
And he whimpered like a woman,  
As he reeled and staggered forward,  
As he sat upon his haunches;  
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,  
Standing fearlessly before him, 40  
Taunted him in loud derision,  
Spake disdainfully in this wise:—  
'Hark you, Bear! you are a coward;<sup>1</sup>  
And no Brave, as you pretended;  
Else you would not cry and whimper  
Like a miserable woman!  
Bear! you know our tribes are hostile,  
Long have been at war together;  
Now you find that we are strongest,  
You go sneaking in the forest, 50  
You go hiding in the mountains!  
Had you conquered me in battle  
Not a groan would I have uttered;  
But you, Bear! sit here and whimper,  
And disgrace your tribe by crying,  
Like a wretched Shaugodaya,  
Like a cowardly old woman!  
Then again he raised his war-club,  
Smote again the Mishe-Mokwa  
In the middle of his forehead, 60  
Broke his skull, as ice is broken  
When one goes to fish in winter.  
Thus was slain the Mishe-Mokwa,  
He the Great Bear of the mountains,  
He the terror of the nations.  
'Honor be to Mudjekeewis!  
With a shout exclaimed the people,  
'Honor be to Mudjekeewis!  
Henceforth he shall be the West-Wind,  
And hereafter and forever 70  
Shall he hold supreme dominion  
Over all the winds of heaven.  
Call him no more Mudjekeewis,  
Call him Kabeyum, the West-Wind!  
Thus was Mudjekeewis chosen  
Father of the Winds of Heaven.  
For himself he kept the West-Wind,  
Gave the others to his children;

<sup>1</sup> This anecdote is from Heckewelder. In his account of the Indian Nations, he describes an Indian hunter as addressing a bear in nearly these words. 'I was present,' he says, 'at the delivery of this curious invective; when the hunter had despatched the bear, I asked him how he thought that poor animal could understand what he said to it. "Oh," said he in answer, "the bear understood me very well; did you not observe how ashamed he looked while I was upbraiding him?"'—*Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. i. p. 240. (LONGFELLOW.)

Unto Wabun gave the East-Wind,  
Gave the South to Shawondasee, 80  
And the North-Wind, wild and cruel,  
To the fierce Kabibonokka.  
Young and beautiful was Wabun;  
He it was who brought the morning,  
He it was whose silver arrows  
Chased the dark o'er hill and valley;  
He it was whose cheeks were painted  
With the brightest streaks of crimson,  
And whose voice awoke the village,  
Called the deer and called the hunter. 90  
Lonely in the sky was Wabun;  
Though the birds sang gayly to him,  
Though the wild-flowers of the meadow  
Filled the air with odors for him;  
Though the forests and the rivers  
Sang and shouted at his coming,  
Still his heart was sad within him,  
For he was alone in heaven.  
But one morning, gazing earthward,  
While the village still was sleeping, 100  
And the fog lay on the river,  
Like a ghost, that goes at sunrise,  
He beheld a maiden walking  
All alone upon a meadow,  
Gathering water-flags and rushes  
By a river in the meadow.  
Every morning, gazing earthward,  
Still the first thing he beheld there  
Was her blue eyes looking at him,  
Two blue lakes among the rushes. 110  
And he loved the lonely maiden,  
Who thus waited for his coming;  
For they both were solitary,  
She on earth and he in heaven.  
And he wooed her with caresses,  
Wooed her with his smile of sunshine,  
With his flattering words he wooed her,  
With his sighing and his singing,  
Gentlest whispers in the branches,  
Softest music, sweetest odors, 120  
Till he drew her to his bosom,  
Folded in his robes of crimson,  
Till into a star he changed her,  
Trembling still upon his bosom;  
And forever in the heavens  
They are seen together walking,  
Wabun and the Wabun-Annung,  
Wabun and the Star of Morning.  
But the fierce Kabibonokka  
Had his dwelling among icebergs, 130  
In the everlasting snow-drifts,  
In the kingdom of Wabasso,  
In the land of the White Rabbit.

He it was whose hand in Autumn  
Painted all the trees with scarlet,  
Stained the leaves with red and yellow;  
He it was who sent the snow-flakes,  
Sifting, hissing through the forest,  
Froze the ponds, the lakes, the rivers, 140  
Drove the loon and sea-gull southward,  
Drove the cormorant and curlew  
To their nests of sedge and sea-tang  
In the realms of Shawondasee.  
Once the fierce Kabibonokka  
Issued from his lodge of snow-drifts,  
From his home among the icebergs,  
And his hair, with snow besprinkled,  
Streamed behind him like a river,  
Like a black and wintry river, 150  
As he howled and hurried southward,  
Over frozen lakes and moorlands.  
There among the reeds and rushes  
Found he Shingebis, the diver,  
Trailing strings of fish behind him,  
O'er the frozen fens and moorlands,  
Lingering still among the moorlands,  
Though his tribe had long departed  
To the land of Shawondasee.  
Cried the fierce Kabibonokka,  
'Who is this that dares to brave me? 160  
Dares to stay in my dominions,  
When the Wawa has departed,  
When the wild-goose has gone southward,  
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Long ago departed southward?  
I will go into his wigwam,  
I will put his smouldering fire out!  
And at night Kabibonokka  
To the lodge came wild and wailing, 170  
Heaped the snow in drifts about it,  
Shouted down into the smoke-flue,  
Shook the lodge-poles in his fury,  
Flapped the curtain of the door-way.  
Shingebis, the diver, feared not,  
Shingebis, the diver, cared not;  
Four great logs had he for firewood,  
One for each moon of the winter,  
And for food the fishes served him.  
By his blazing fire he sat there, 180  
Warm and merry, eating, laughing,  
Singing, 'O Kabibonokka,  
You are but my fellow-mortal!  
Then Kabibonokka entered,  
And though Shingebis, the diver,  
Felt his presence by the coldness,  
Felt his icy breath upon him,  
Still he did not cease his singing,  
Still he did not leave his laughing,

Only turned the log a little,  
Only made the fire burn brighter, 190  
Made the sparks fly up the smoke-flue.  
From Kabibonokka's forehead,  
From his snow-besprinkled tresses,  
Drops of sweat fell fast and heavy,  
Making dints upon the ashes,  
As along the eaves of lodges,  
As from drooping boughs of hemlock,  
Drips the melting snow in spring-time,  
Making hollows in the snow-drifts.  
Till at last he rose defeated, 200  
Could not bear the heat and laughter,  
Could not bear the merry singing,  
But rushed headlong through the door-way,  
Stamped upon the crusted snow-drifts,  
Stamped upon the lakes and rivers,  
Made the snow upon them harder,  
Made the ice upon them thicker,  
Challenged Shingebis, the diver,  
To come forth and wrestle with him,  
To come forth and wrestle naked 210  
On the frozen fens and moorlands.  
Forth went Shingebis, the diver,  
Wrestled all night with the North-Wind,  
Wrestled naked on the moorlands  
With the fierce Kabibonokka,  
Till his panting breath grew fainter,  
Till his frozen grasp grew feebler,  
Till he reeled and staggered backward,  
And retreated, baffled, beaten, 220  
To the kingdom of Wabasso,  
To the land of the White Rabbit,  
Hearing still the gusty laughter,  
Hearing Shingebis, the diver,  
Singing, 'O Kabibonokka,  
You are but my fellow-mortal!  
Shawondasee, fat and lazy,  
Had his dwelling far to southward,  
In the drowsy, dreamy sunshine,  
In the never-ending Summer.  
He it was who sent the wood-birds, 230  
Sent the robin, the Opechee,  
Sent the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
Sent the Shawshaw, sent the swallow,  
Sent the wild-goose, Wawa, northward,  
Sent the melons and tobacco,  
And the grapes in purple clusters.  
From his pipe the smoke ascending  
Filled the sky with haze and vapor,  
Filled the air with dreamy softness,  
Gave a twinkle to the water, 240  
Touched the rugged hills with smooth-  
ness,  
Brought the tender Indian Summer

To the melancholy north-land,  
In the dreary Moon of Snow-shoes.  
Listless, careless Shawondasee!  
In his life he had one shadow,  
In his heart one sorrow had he.  
Once, as he was gazing northward,  
Far away upon a prairie  
He beheld a maiden standing, 250  
Saw a tall and slender maiden  
All alone upon a prairie;  
Brightest green were all her garments,  
And her hair was like the sunshine.  
Day by day he gazed upon her,  
Day by day he sighed with passion,  
Day by day his heart within him  
Grew more hot with love and longing  
For the maid with yellow tresses.  
But he was too fat and lazy 260  
To bestir himself and woo her.  
Yes, too indolent and easy  
To pursue her and persuade her;  
So he only gazed upon her,  
Only sat and sighed with passion  
For the maiden of the prairie.  
Till one morning, looking northward,  
He beheld her yellow tresses  
Changed and covered o'er with white-  
ness,  
Covered as with whitest snow-flakes. 270  
'Ah! my brother from the North-land,  
From the kingdom of Wabasso,  
From the land of the White Rabbit!  
You have stolen the maiden from me,  
You have laid your hand upon her,  
You have wooed and won my maiden,  
With your stories of the North-land!'  
Thus the wretched Shawondasee  
Breathed into the air his sorrow; 280  
And the South-Wind o'er the prairie  
Wandered warm with sighs of passion,  
With the sighs of Shawondasee,  
Till the air seemed full of snow-flakes,  
Full of thistle-down the prairie,  
And the maid with hair like sunshine  
Vanished from his sight forever;  
Never more did Shawondasee  
See the maid with yellow tresses!  
Poor, deluded Shawondasee!  
'T was no woman that you gazed at, 290  
'T was no maiden that you sighed for,  
'T was the prairie dandelion  
That through all the dreamy Summer  
You had gazed at with such longing,  
You had sighed for with such passion,  
And had puffed away forever,

Blown into the air with sighing.  
Ah! deluded Shawondasee!  
Thus the Four Winds were divided;  
Thus the sons of Mudjekeewis 300  
Had their stations in the heavens,  
At the corners of the heavens;  
For himself the West-Wind only  
Kept the mighty Mudjekeewis.

## III

## HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

DOWNWARD through the evening twilight,  
In the days that are forgotten,  
In the unremembered ages,  
From the full moon fell Nokomis,  
Fell the beautiful Nokomis,  
She a wife, but not a mother.  
She was sporting with her women,  
Swinging in a swing of grape-vines,  
When her rival the rejected, 10  
Full of jealousy and hatred,  
Cut the leafy swing asunder,  
Cut in twain the twisted grape-vines,  
And Nokomis fell affrighted  
Downward through the evening twilight,  
On the Muskoday, the meadow,  
On the prairie full of blossoms.  
'See! a star falls!' said the people;  
'From the sky a star is falling!'  
There among the ferns and mosses, 20  
There among the prairie lilies,  
On the Muskoday, the meadow,  
In the moonlight and the starlight,  
Fair Nokomis bore a daughter.  
And she called her name Wenonah,  
As the first-born of her daughters.  
And the daughter of Nokomis  
Grew up like the prairie lilies,  
Grew a tall and slender maiden,  
With the beauty of the moonlight,  
With the beauty of the starlight. 30  
And Nokomis warned her often,  
Saying oft, and oft repeating,  
'Oh, beware of Mudjekeewis,  
Of the West-Wind, Mudjekeewis;  
Listen not to what he tells you;  
Lie not down upon the meadow,  
Stoop not down among the lilies,  
Lest the West-Wind come and harm you!'  
But she heeded not the warning,  
Heeded not those words of wisdom, 40  
And the West-Wind came at evening,

Walking lightly o'er the prairie,  
Whispering to the leaves and blossoms,  
Bending low the flowers and grasses,  
Found the beautiful Wenonah,  
Lying there among the lilies,  
Wooed her with his words of sweetness,  
Wooed her with his soft caresses,  
Till she bore a son in sorrow, 50  
Bore a son of love and sorrow.  
Thus was born my Hiawatha,  
Thus was born the child of wonder;  
But the daughter of Nokomis,  
Hiawatha's gentle mother,  
In her anguish died deserted  
By the West-Wind, false and faithless,  
By the heartless Mudjekeewis.  
For her daughter long and loudly  
Wailed and wept the sad Nokomis; 60  
'Oh that I were dead!' she murmured,  
'Oh that I were dead, as thou art!  
No more work, and no more weeping,  
Wahonowin! Wahonowin!'  
By the shores of Gitche Gumee,  
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,  
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,  
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.  
Dark behind it rose the forest,  
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,  
Rose the firs with cones upon them; 70  
Bright before it beat the water,  
Beat the clear and sunny water,  
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.  
There the wrinkled old Nokomis  
Nursed the little Hiawatha,  
Rocked him in his linden cradle,  
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,  
Safely bound with reindeer sinews;  
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,  
'Hush! the Naked Bear will hear thee!' 80  
Lulled him into slumber, singing,  
'Ewa-yea! my little owl!  
Who is this, that lights the wigwam?  
With his great eyes lights the wigwam?  
Ewa-yea! my little owl!'  
Many things Nokomis taught him  
Of the stars that shine in heaven;  
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,  
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses;  
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits, 90  
Warriors with their plumes and war-  
clubs,  
Flaring far away to northward  
In the frosty nights of Winter;  
Showed the broad white road in heaven,  
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,

Running straight across the heavens,  
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.  
At the door on summer evenings  
Sat the little Hiawatha;  
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,  
Heard the lapping of the waters, 101  
Sounds of music, words of wonder;  
'Minne-wawa!' said the pine-trees,  
'Mudway-aushka!' said the water.  
Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee,  
Flitting through the dusk of evening,  
With the twinkle of its candle  
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,  
And he sang the song of children,  
Sang the song Nokomis taught him: 110  
'Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,  
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,  
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,  
Light me with your little candle,  
Ere upon my bed I lay me,  
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!'  
Saw the moon rise from the water  
Rippling, rounding from the water,  
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,  
Whispered, 'What is that, Nokomis?' 120  
And the good Nokomis answered:  
'Once a warrior, very angry,  
Seized his grandmother, and threw her  
Up into the sky at midnight;  
Right against the moon he threw her;  
'T is her body that you see there.'  
Saw the rainbow in the heaven,  
In the eastern sky, the rainbow,  
Whispered, 'What is that, Nokomis?'  
And the good Nokomis answered: 130  
'T is the heaven of flowers you see there;  
All the wild-flowers of the forest,  
All the lilies of the prairie,  
When on earth they fade and perish,  
Blossom in that heaven above us.'  
When he heard the owls at midnight,  
Hooting, laughing in the forest,  
'What is that?' he cried in terror,  
'What is that,' he said, 'Nokomis?'  
And the good Nokomis answered: 140  
'That is but the owl and owl,  
Talking in their native language,  
Talking, scolding at each other.'  
Then the little Hiawatha  
Learned of every bird its language,  
Learned their names and all their secrets,  
How they built their nests in Summer,  
Where they hid themselves in Winter,  
Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
Called them 'Hiawatha's Chickens.' 150

Of all beasts he learned the language,  
 Learned their names and all their secrets,  
 How the beavers built their lodges,  
 Where the squirrels hid their acorns,  
 How the reindeer ran so swiftly,  
 Why the rabbit was so timid,  
 Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
 Called them 'Hiawatha's Brothers.'

Then Iagoo, the great boaster,  
 He the marvellous story-teller, 160  
 He the traveller and the talker,  
 He the friend of old Nokomis,  
 Made a bow for Hiawatha;  
 From a branch of ash he made it,  
 From an oak-bough made the arrows,  
 Tipped with flint, and winged with feathers,  
 And the cord he made of deer-skin.

Then he said to Hiawatha:  
 'Go, my son, into the forest,  
 Where the red deer herd together, 170  
 Kill for us a famous roebuck,  
 Kill for us a deer with antlers!'

Forth into the forest straightway  
 All alone walked Hiawatha  
 Proudly, with his bow and arrows;  
 And the birds sang round him, o'er him,  
 'Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!'  
 Sang the robin, the Opechee,  
 Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
 'Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!' 180

Up the oak-tree, close beside him,  
 Sprang the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
 In and out among the branches,  
 Coughed and chattered from the oak-tree,  
 Laughed, and said between his laughing,  
 'Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!'

And the rabbit from his pathway  
 Leaped aside, and at a distance  
 Sat erect upon his haunches,  
 Half in fear and half in frolic, 190  
 Saying to the little hunter,  
 'Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!'

But he heeded not, nor heard them,  
 For his thoughts were with the red deer;  
 On their tracks his eyes were fastened,  
 Leading downward to the river,  
 To the ford across the river,  
 And as one in slumber walked he.

Hidden in the alder-bushes,  
 There he waited till the deer came, 200  
 Till he saw two antlers lifted,  
 Saw two eyes look from the thicket,  
 Saw two nostrils point to windward,  
 And a deer came down the pathway,  
 Flecked with leafy light and shadow.

And his heart within him fluttered,  
 Trembled like the leaves above him,  
 Like the birch-leaf palpitated,  
 As the deer came down the pathway.

Then, upon one knee uprising, 210  
 Hiawatha aimed an arrow;  
 Scarce a twig moved with his motion,  
 Scarce a leaf was stirred or rustled,  
 But the wary roebuck started,  
 Stamped with all his hoofs together,  
 Listened with one foot uplifted,  
 Leaped as if to meet the arrow;  
 Ah! the singing, fatal arrow,  
 Like a wasp it buzzed and stung him!

Dead he lay there in the forest, 220  
 By the ford across the river;  
 Beat his timid heart no longer,  
 But the heart of Hiawatha  
 Throbbled and shouted and exulted,  
 As he bore the red deer homeward,  
 And Iagoo and Nokomis  
 Hailed his coming with applauses.

From the red deer's hide Nokomis  
 Made a cloak for Hiawatha,  
 From the red deer's flesh Nokomis 230  
 Made a banquet to his honor.  
 All the village came and feasted,  
 All the guests praised Hiawatha,  
 Called him Strong-Heart, Soan-ge-taha!  
 Called him Loon-Heart, Mahn-go-taysee!

## IV

## HIAWATHA AND MUDJEKEEWIS

OUT of childhood into manhood  
 Now had grown my Hiawatha,  
 Skilled in all the craft of hunters,  
 Learned in all the lore of old men,  
 In all youthful sports and pastimes,  
 In all manly arts and labors.

Swift of foot was Hiawatha;  
 He could shoot an arrow from him,  
 And run forward with such fleetness,  
 That the arrow fell behind him! 10  
 Strong of arm was Hiawatha;  
 He could shoot ten arrows upward,  
 Shoot them with such strength and swift-  
 ness,

That the tenth had left the bow-string  
 Ere the first to earth had fallen!

He had mittens, Minjekahwun,  
 Magic mittens made of deer-skin;  
 When upon his hands he wore them,

He could smite the rocks asunder,  
 He could grind them into powder. 20  
 He had moccasins enchanted,  
 Like the birch-leaf palpitated,  
 Magic moccasins of deer-skin;  
 When he bound them round his ankles,  
 When upon his feet he tied them,  
 At each stride a mile he measured!

Much he questioned old Nokomis  
 Of his father Mudjekeewis;  
 Learned from her the fatal secret  
 Of the beauty of his mother, 30  
 Of the falsehood of his father;  
 And his heart was hot within him,  
 Like a living coal his heart was.  
 Then he said to old Nokomis,  
 'I will go to Mudjekeewis,  
 See how fares it with my father,  
 At the doorways of the West-Wind,  
 At the portals of the Sunset!'

From his lodge went Hiawatha,  
 Dressed for travel, armed for hunting;  
 Dressed in deer-skin shirt and leggings, 40  
 Richly wrought with quills and wampum;  
 On his head his eagle-feathers,  
 Round his waist his belt of wampum,  
 In his hand his bow of ash-wood,  
 Strung with sinews of the reindeer;  
 In his quiver oaken arrows,  
 Tipped with jasper, winged with feathers;  
 With his mittens, Minjekahwun,  
 With his moccasins enchanted.

Warning said the old Nokomis, 50  
 'Go not forth, O Hiawatha!  
 To the kingdom of the West-Wind,  
 To the realms of Mudjekeewis,  
 Lest he harm you with his magic,  
 Lest he kill you with his cunning!'

But the fearless Hiawatha  
 Heeded not her woman's warning;  
 Forth he strode into the forest,  
 At each stride a mile he measured;  
 Lurid seemed the sky above him, 60  
 Lurid seemed the earth beneath him,  
 Hot and close the air around him,  
 Filled with smoke and fiery vapors,  
 As of burning woods and prairies,  
 For his heart was hot within him,  
 Like a living coal his heart was.

So he journeyed westward, westward,  
 Left the fleetest deer behind him,  
 Left the antelope and bison, 70  
 Crossed the rushing Esconaba,  
 Crossed the mighty Mississippi,  
 Passed the Mountains of the Prairie,  
 Passed the land of Crows and Foxes,

Passed the dwellings of the Blackfeet,  
 Came unto the Rocky Mountains,  
 To the kingdom of the West-Wind,  
 Where upon the gusty summits  
 Sat the ancient Mudjekeewis,  
 Ruler of the winds of heaven.

Filled with awe was Hiawatha 80  
 At the aspect of his father.  
 On the air about him wildly  
 Tossed and streamed his cloudy tresses,  
 Gleamed like drifting snow his tresses,  
 Glared like Ishkoodah, the comet,  
 Like the star with fiery tresses.

Filled with joy was Mudjekeewis  
 When he looked on Hiawatha,  
 Saw his youth rise up before him  
 In the face of Hiawatha, 90  
 Saw the beauty of Wenonah  
 From the grave rise up before him.

'Welcome!' said he, 'Hiawatha,  
 To the kingdom of the West-Wind!  
 Long have I been waiting for you!  
 Youth is lovely, age is lonely,  
 Youth is fiery, age is frosty;  
 You bring back the days departed,  
 You bring back my youth of passion,  
 And the beautiful Wenonah!' 100

Many days they talked together,  
 Questioned, listened, waited, answered;  
 Much the mighty Mudjekeewis  
 Boasted of his ancient prowess,  
 Of his perilous adventures,  
 His indomitable courage,  
 His invulnerable body.

Patiently sat Hiawatha,  
 Listening to his father's boasting;  
 With a smile he sat and listened, 110  
 Uttered neither threat nor menace,  
 Neither word nor look betrayed him,  
 But his heart was hot within him,  
 Like a living coal his heart was.

Then he said, 'O Mudjekeewis,  
 Is there nothing that can harm you?  
 Nothing that you are afraid of?'  
 And the mighty Mudjekeewis,  
 Grand and gracious in his boasting,  
 Answered, saying, 'There is nothing, 120  
 Nothing but the black rock yonder,  
 Nothing but the fatal Wawbeek!'

And he looked at Hiawatha  
 With a wise look and benignant,  
 With a countenance paternal,  
 Looked with pride upon the beauty  
 Of his tall and graceful figure,  
 Saying, 'O my Hiawatha!

Is there anything can harm you?  
 Anything you are afraid of? 130  
 But the wary Hiawatha  
 Paused awhile, as if uncertain,  
 Held his peace, as if resolving,  
 And then answered, 'There is nothing,  
 Nothing but the bulrush yonder,  
 Nothing but the great Apukwa!  
 And as Mudjekeewis, rising,  
 Stretched his hand to pluck the bul-  
 rush,  
 Hiawatha cried in terror,  
 Cried in well-dissembled terror, 140  
 'Kago! kago! do not touch it!  
 'Ah, kaween!' said Mudjekeewis,  
 'No indeed, I will not touch it!  
 Then they talked of other matters;  
 First of Hiawatha's brothers,  
 First of Wabun, of the East-Wind,  
 Of the South-Wind, Shawondasee,  
 Of the North, Kabibonokka;  
 Then of Hiawatha's mother,  
 Of the beautiful Wenonah, 150  
 Of her birth upon the meadow,  
 Of her death, as old Nokomis  
 Had remembered and related.  
 And he cried, 'O Mudjekeewis,  
 It was you who killed Wenonah,  
 Took her young life and her beauty,  
 Broke the Lily of the Prairie,  
 Trampled it beneath your footsteps;  
 You confess it! you confess it!  
 And the mighty Mudjekeewis 160  
 Tossed upon the wind his tresses,  
 Bowed his hoary head in anguish,  
 With a silent nod assented.  
 Then up started Hiawatha,  
 And with threatening look and gesture  
 Laid his hand upon the black rock,  
 On the fatal Wawbeek laid it,  
 With his mittens, Minjekahwun,  
 Rent the jutting crag asunder,  
 Smote and crushed it into fragments, 170  
 Hurling them madly at his father,  
 The remorseful Mudjekeewis,  
 For his heart was hot within him,  
 Like a living coal his heart was.  
 But the ruler of the West-Wind  
 Blew the fragments backward from him,  
 With the breathing of his nostrils,  
 With the tempest of his anger,  
 Blew them back at his assailant;  
 Seized the bulrush, the Apukwa, 180  
 Dragged it with its roots and fibres  
 From the margin of the meadow,  
 From its ooze the giant bulrush;  
 Long and loud laughed Hiawatha!  
 Then began the deadly conflict,  
 Hand to hand among the mountains;  
 From his eyry screamed the eagle,  
 The Keneu, the great war-eagle,  
 Sat upon the crags around them,  
 Wheeling flapped his wings above them. 190  
 Like a tall tree in the tempest  
 Bent and lashed the giant bulrush;  
 And in masses huge and heavy  
 Crashing fell the fatal Wawbeek;  
 Till the earth shook with the tumult  
 And confusion of the battle,  
 And the air was full of shoutings,  
 And the thunder of the mountains,  
 Starting, answered, 'Baim-wawa!  
 Back retreated Mudjekeewis, 200  
 Rushing westward o'er the mountains,  
 Stumbling westward down the mountains,  
 Three whole days retreated fighting,  
 Still pursued by Hiawatha  
 To the doorways of the West-Wind,  
 To the portals of the Sunset,  
 To the earth's remotest border,  
 Where into the empty spaces  
 Sinks the sun, as a flamingo  
 Drops into her nest at nightfall 210  
 In the melancholy marshes.  
 'Hold!' at length cried Mudjekeewis,  
 'Hold, my son, my Hiawatha!  
 'T is impossible to kill me,  
 For you cannot kill the immortal. 160  
 I have put you to this trial,  
 But to know and prove your courage;  
 Now receive the prize of valor!  
 'Go back to your home and people,  
 Live among them, toil among them, 220  
 Cleanse the earth from all that harms it,  
 Clear the fishing-grounds and rivers,  
 Slay all monsters and magicians,  
 All the Wendigoes, the giants,  
 All the serpents, the Kenabeeks,  
 As I slew the Mishe-Mokwa,  
 Slew the Great Bear of the mountains.  
 'And at last when Death draws near you,  
 When the awful eyes of Pauguk  
 Glare upon you in the darkness, 230  
 I will share my kingdom with you,  
 Ruler shall you be thenceforward  
 Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin,  
 Of the home-wind, the Keewaydin.'  
 Thus was fought that famous battle  
 In the dreadful days of Shah-shah,  
 In the days long since departed,

In the kingdom of the West-Wind.  
 Still the hunter sees its traces  
 Scattered far o'er hill and valley; 240  
 Sees the giant bulrush growing  
 By the ponds and water-courses,  
 Sees the masses of the Wawbeek  
 Lying still in every valley.  
 Homeward now went Hiawatha;  
 Pleasant was the landscape round him,  
 Pleasant was the air above him,  
 For the bitterness of anger  
 Had departed wholly from him,  
 From his brain the thought of vengeance, 250  
 From his heart the burning fever.

Only once his pace he slackened,  
 Only once he paused or halted,  
 Paused to purchase heads of arrows  
 Of the ancient Arrow-maker,  
 In the land of the Dacotahs,  
 Where the Falls of Minnehaha  
 Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,  
 Laugh and leap into the valley.<sup>1</sup>  
 There the ancient Arrow-maker 260  
 Made his arrow-heads of sandstone,  
 Arrow-heads of chalcidony,  
 Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,  
 Smoothed and sharpened at the edges,  
 Hard and polished, keen and costly.

With him dwelt his dark-eyed daughter  
 Wayward as the Minnehaha,  
 With her moods of shade and sunshine,  
 Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate, 270  
 Feet as rapid as the river,  
 Tresses flowing like the water,  
 And as musical a laughter:  
 And he named her from the river,  
 From the water-fall he named her,  
 Minnehaha, Laughing Water.

Was it then for heads of arrows,  
 Arrow-heads of chalcidony,  
 Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,  
 That my Hiawatha halted  
 In the land of the Dacotahs? 280  
 Was it not to see the maiden,  
 See the face of Laughing Water  
 Peeping from behind the curtain,  
 Hear the rustling of her garments  
 From behind the waving curtain,

<sup>1</sup> The scenery about Fort Snelling is rich in beauty. The Falls of St. Anthony are familiar to travellers, and to readers of Indian sketches. Between the fort and these falls are the "Little Falls," forty feet in height, on a stream that empties into the Mississippi. The Indians called them *Mine-hah-hah*, or "laughing waters."—Mrs. Eastman's *Dacotah, or Legends of the Sioux*, Introd. p. ii. (LONGFELLOW.)

As one sees the Minnehaha  
 Gleaming, glancing through the branches,  
 As one hears the Laughing Water  
 From behind its screen of branches?  
 Who shall say what thoughts and visions  
 Fill the fiery brains of young men? 290  
 Who shall say what dreams of beauty  
 Filled the heart of Hiawatha?  
 All he told to old Nokomis,  
 When he reached the lodge at sunset,  
 Was the meeting with his father,  
 Was his fight with Mudjekeewis;  
 Not a word he said of arrows,  
 Not a word of Laughing Water.

## V

HIAWATHA'S FASTING<sup>2</sup>

YOU shall hear how Hiawatha  
 Prayed and fasted in the forest,  
 Not for greater skill in hunting,  
 Not for greater craft in fishing,  
 Not for triumphs in the battle,  
 And renown among the warriors,  
 But for profit of the people,  
 For advantage of the nations.  
 First he built a lodge for fasting, 10  
 Built a wigwam in the forest,  
 By the shining Big-Sea-Water,  
 In the blithe and pleasant Spring-time,  
 In the Moon of Leaves he built it,  
 And, with dreams and visions many,  
 Seven whole days and nights he fasted.  
 On the first day of his fasting  
 Through the leafy woods he wandered;  
 Saw the deer start from the thicket,  
 Saw the rabbit in his burrow,  
 Heard the pheasant, Bena, drumming, 20  
 Heard the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
 Rattling in his hoard of acorns,  
 Saw the pigeon, the Omeme,  
 Building nests among the pine-trees,  
 And in flocks the wild-goose, Wawa,  
 Flying to the fen-lands northward,  
 Whirring, waiving far above him.  
 'Master of Life!' he cried, desponding,  
 'Must our lives depend on these things?'  
 On the next day of his fasting 30  
 By the river's brink he wandered,  
 Through the Muskoday, the meadow,  
 Saw the wild rice, Mahnomonee,  
 Saw the blueberry, Meenahga,  
 And the strawberry, Odahmin,

<sup>2</sup> See Longfellow's note on section xiii, p. 188.

And the gooseberry, Shahbomin,  
 And the grape-vine, the Bemahgut,  
 Trailing o'er the alder-branches,  
 Filling all the air with fragrance!  
 'Master of Life!' he cried, desponding,  
 'Must our lives depend on these things?'  
 On the third day of his fasting  
 By the lake he sat and pondered,  
 By the still, transparent water;  
 Saw the sturgeon, Nahma, leaping,  
 Scattering drops like beads of wampum,  
 Saw the yellow perch, the Sahwa,  
 Like a sunbeam in the water,  
 Saw the pike, the Maskenozha,  
 And the herring, Okahahwis,  
 And the Shawgashee, the craw-fish!  
 'Master of Life!' he cried, desponding,  
 'Must our lives depend on these things?'  
 On the fourth day of his fasting  
 In his lodge he lay exhausted;  
 From his couch of leaves and branches  
 Gazing with half-open eyelids,  
 Full of shadowy dreams and visions,  
 On the dizzy, swimming landscape,  
 On the gleaming of the water,  
 On the splendor of the sunset.  
 And he saw a youth approaching,  
 Dressed in garments green and yellow,  
 Coming through the purple twilight,  
 Through the splendor of the sunset;  
 Plumes of green bent o'er his forehead,  
 And his hair was soft and golden.  
 Standing at the open doorway,  
 Long he looked at Hiawatha,  
 Looked with pity and compassion  
 On his wasted form and features,  
 And, in accents like the sighing  
 Of the South-Wind in the tree-tops,  
 Said he, 'O my Hiawatha!  
 All your prayers are heard in heaven,  
 For you pray not like the others;  
 Not for greater skill in hunting,  
 Not for greater craft in fishing,  
 Not for triumph in the battle,  
 Nor renown among the warriors,  
 But for profit of the people,  
 For advantage of the nations.  
 'From the Master of Life descending,  
 I, the friend of man, Mondamin,  
 Come to warn you and instruct you,  
 How by struggle and by labor  
 You shall gain what you have prayed for.  
 Rise up from your bed of branches,  
 Rise, O youth, and wrestle with me!  
 Faint with famine, Hiawatha

Started from his bed of branches,  
 From the twilight of his wigwam  
 Forth into the flush of sunset  
 Came, and wrestled with Mondamin;  
 At his touch he felt new courage  
 Throbbing in his brain and bosom,  
 Felt new life and hope and vigor  
 Run through every nerve and fibre.  
 So they wrestled there together  
 In the glory of the sunset,  
 And the more they strove and struggled,  
 Stronger still grew Hiawatha;  
 Till the darkness fell around them,  
 And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
 From her nest among the pine-trees,  
 Gave a cry of lamentation,  
 Gave a scream of pain and famine.  
 'T is enough!' then said Mondamin,  
 Smiling upon Hiawatha,  
 'But to-morrow, when the sun sets,  
 I will come again to try you.'  
 And he vanished, and was seen not;  
 Whether sinking as the rain sinks,  
 Whether rising as the mists rise,  
 Hiawatha saw not, knew not,  
 Only saw that he had vanished,  
 Leaving him alone and fainting,  
 With the misty lake below him,  
 And the reeling stars above him.  
 On the morrow and the next day,  
 When the sun through heaven descending,  
 Like a red and burning cinder  
 From the hearth of the Great Spirit,  
 Fell into the western waters,  
 Came Mondamin for the trial,  
 For the strife with Hiawatha;  
 Came as silent as the dew comes,  
 From the empty air appearing,  
 Into empty air returning,  
 Taking shape when earth it touches,  
 But invisible to all men  
 In its coming and its going.  
 Thrice they wrestled there together  
 In the glory of the sunset,  
 Till the darkness fell around them,  
 Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
 From her nest among the pine-trees,  
 Uttered her loud cry of famine,  
 And Mondamin paused to listen.  
 Tall and beautiful he stood there,  
 In his garments green and yellow;  
 To and fro his plumes above him  
 Waved and nodded with his breathing,  
 And the sweat of the encounter  
 Stood like drops of dew upon him.

And he cried, 'O Hiawatha!  
 Bravely have you wrestled with me,  
 Thrice have wrestled stoutly with me,  
 And the Master of Life, who sees us,  
 He will give to you the triumph!'  
 Then he smiled, and said: 'To-morrow  
 Is the last day of your conflict,  
 Is the last day of your fasting.  
 You will conquer and o'ercome me;  
 Make a bed for me to lie in,  
 Where the rain may fall upon me,  
 Where the sun may come and warm me;  
 Strip these garments, green and yellow,  
 Strip this nodding plumage from me,  
 Lay me in the earth, and make it  
 Soft and loose and light above me.  
 'Let no hand disturb my slumber,  
 Let no weed nor worm molest me,  
 Let not Kahgahgee, the raven,  
 Come to haunt me and molest me,  
 Only come yourself to watch me,  
 Till I wake, and start, and quicken,  
 Till I leap into the sunshine.'  
 And thus saying, he departed;  
 Peacefully slept Hiawatha,  
 But he heard the Wawonaissa,  
 Heard the whippoorwill complaining,  
 Perched upon his lonely wigwam;  
 Heard the rushing Sebowisha,  
 Heard the rivulet rippling near him,  
 Talking to the darksome forest;  
 Heard the sighing of the branches,  
 As they lifted and subsided  
 At the passing of the night-wind,  
 Heard them, as one hears in slumber  
 Far-off murmurs, dreamy whispers:  
 Peacefully slept Hiawatha.  
 On the morrow came Nokomis,  
 On the seventh day of his fasting,  
 Came with food for Hiawatha,  
 Came imploring and bewailing,  
 Lest his hunger should o'ercome him,  
 Lest his fasting should be fatal.  
 But he tasted not, and touched not,  
 Only said to her, 'Nokomis,  
 Wait until the sun is setting,  
 Till the darkness falls around us,  
 Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
 Crying from the desolate marshes,  
 Tells us that the day is ended.'  
 Homeward weeping went Nokomis,  
 Sorrowing for her Hiawatha,  
 Fearing lest his strength should fail him,  
 Lest his fasting should be fatal.  
 He meanwhile sat weary waiting

For the coming of Mondamin,  
 Till the shadows, pointing eastward,  
 Lengthened over field and forest,  
 Till the sun dropped from the heaven,  
 Floating on the waters westward,  
 As a red leaf in the Autumn  
 Falls and floats upon the water,  
 Falls and sinks into its bosom.  
 And behold! the young Mondamin,  
 With his soft and shining tresses,  
 With his garments green and yellow,  
 With his long and glossy plumage,  
 Stood and beckoned at the doorway.  
 And as one in slumber walking,  
 Pale and haggard, but undaunted,  
 From the wigwam Hiawatha  
 Came and wrestled with Mondamin.  
 Round about him spun the landscape,  
 Sky and forest reeled together,  
 And his strong heart leaped within him,  
 As the sturgeon leaps and struggles  
 In a net to break its meshes.  
 Like a ring of fire around him  
 Blazed and flared the red horizon,  
 And a hundred suns seemed looking  
 At the combat of the wrestlers.  
 Suddenly upon the greensward  
 All alone stood Hiawatha,  
 Panting with his wild exertion,  
 Palpitating with the struggle;  
 And before him breathless, lifeless,  
 Lay the youth, with hair dishevelled,  
 Plumage torn, and garments tattered,  
 Dead he lay there in the sunset.  
 And victorious Hiawatha  
 Made the grave as he commanded,  
 Stripped the garments from Mondamin,  
 Stripped his tattered plumage from him,  
 Laid him in the earth, and made it  
 Soft and loose and light above him;  
 And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
 From the melancholy moorlands,  
 Gave a cry of lamentation,  
 Gave a cry of pain and anguish!  
 Homeward then went Hiawatha  
 To the lodge of old Nokomis,  
 And the seven days of his fasting  
 Were accomplished and completed.  
 But the place was not forgotten  
 Where he wrestled with Mondamin;  
 Nor forgotten nor neglected  
 Was the grave where lay Mondamin,  
 Sleeping in the rain and sunshine,  
 Where his scattered plumes and garments  
 Faded in the rain and sunshine.

Day by day did Hiawatha  
Go to wait and watch beside it;  
Kept the dark mould soft above it,  
Kept it clean from weeds and insects,  
Drove away, with scoffs and shoutings, 260  
Kahgahgee, the king of ravens.  
Till at length a small green feather  
From the earth shot slowly upward,  
Then another and another,  
And before the Summer ended  
Stood the maize in all its beauty,  
With its shining robes about it,  
And its long, soft, yellow tresses;  
And in rapture Hiawatha  
Cried aloud, 'It is Mondamin!' 270  
Yes, the friend of man, Mondamin!  
Then he called to old Nokomis  
And Iagoo, the great boaster,  
Showed them where the maize was grow-  
ing,  
Told them of his wondrous vision,  
Of his wrestling and his triumph,  
Of this new gift to the nations,  
Which should be their food forever.  
And still later, when the Autumn  
Changed the long, green leaves to yellow, 280  
And the soft and juicy kernels  
Grew like wampum hard and yellow,  
Then the ripened ears he gathered,  
Stripped the withered husks from off  
them,  
As he once had stripped the wrestler,  
Gave the first Feast of Mondamin,  
And made known unto the people  
This new gift of the Great Spirit.

## VI

## HIAWATHA'S FRIENDS

Two good friends had Hiawatha,  
Singled out from all the others,  
Bound to him in closest union,  
And to whom he gave the right hand  
Of his heart, in joy and sorrow;  
Chibiabos, the musician,  
And the very strong man, Kwasind.  
Straight between them ran the pathway,  
Never grew the grass upon it;  
Singing birds, that utter falsehoods, 10  
Story-tellers, mischief-makers,  
Found no eager ear to listen,  
Could not breed ill-will between them,  
For they kept each other's counsel,

Spake with naked hearts together,  
Pondering much and much contriving  
How the tribes of men might prosper.  
Most beloved by Hiawatha  
Was the gentle Chibiabos, 20  
He the best of all musicians,  
He the sweetest of all singers.  
Beautiful and childlike was he,  
Brave as man is, soft as woman,  
Pliant as a wand of willow,  
Stately as a deer with antlers.  
When he sang, the village listened;  
All the warriors gathered round him,  
All the women came to hear him;  
Now he stirred their souls to passion,  
Now he melted them to pity. 30  
From the hollow reeds he fashioned  
Flutes so musical and mellow,  
That the brook, the Sebowisha,  
Ceased to murmur in the woodland,  
That the wood-birds ceased from singing,  
And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
Ceased his chatter in the oak-tree,  
And the rabbit, the Wabasso,  
Sat upright to look and listen.  
Yes, the brook, the Sebowisha, 40  
Pausing, said, 'O Chibiabos,  
Teach my waves to flow in music,  
Softly as your words in singing!'  
Yes, the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
Envious, said, 'O Chibiabos,  
Teach me tones as wild and wayward,  
Teach me songs as full of frenzy!'  
Yes, the robin, the Opechee,  
Joyous, said, 'O Chibiabos,  
Teach me tones as sweet and tender, 50  
Teach me songs as full of gladness!'  
And the whippoorwill, Wawonaissa,  
Sobbing, said, 'O Chibiabos,  
Teach me tones as melancholy,  
Teach me songs as full of sadness!'  
All the many sounds of nature  
Borrowed sweetness from his singing;  
All the hearts of men were softened  
By the pathos of his music;  
For he sang of peace and freedom, 60  
Sang of beauty, love, and longing;  
Sang of death, and life undying  
In the Islands of the Blessed,  
In the kingdom of Ponemah,  
In the land of the Hereafter.  
Very dear to Hiawatha  
Was the gentle Chibiabos,  
He the best of all musicians,  
He the sweetest of all singers;

For his gentleness he loved him, 70  
And the magic of his singing.  
Dear, too, unto Hiawatha  
Was the very strong man, Kwasind,  
He the strongest of all mortals,  
He the mightiest among many;  
For his very strength he loved him,  
For his strength allied to goodness.  
Idle in his youth was Kwasind,  
Very listless, dull, and dreamy, 80  
Never played with other children,  
Never fished and never hunted,  
Not like other children was he;  
But they saw that much he fasted,  
Much his Manito entreated,  
Much besought his Guardian Spirit.  
'Lazy Kwasind!' said his mother,  
'In my work you never help me!  
In the Summer you are roaming  
Idly in the fields and forests; 90  
In the Winter you are cowering  
O'er the firebrands in the wigwam!  
In the coldest days of Winter  
I must break the ice for fishing;  
With my nets you never help me!  
At the door my nets are hanging,  
Dripping, freezing with the water;  
Go and wring them, Yenadizze!  
Go and dry them in the sunshine!'  
Slowly, from the ashes, Kwasind  
Rose, but made no angry answer; 100  
From the lodge went forth in silence,  
Took the nets, that hung together,  
Dripping, freezing at the doorway;  
Like a wisp of straw he wrung them,  
Like a wisp of straw he broke them,  
Could not wring them without breaking,  
Such the strength was in his fingers.  
'Lazy Kwasind!' said his father,  
'In the hunt you never help me;  
Every bow you touch is broken, 110  
Snapped asunder every arrow;  
Yet come with me to the forest,  
You shall bring the hunting home-  
ward.'  
Down a narrow pass they wandered,  
Where a brooklet led them onward,  
Where the trail of deer and bison  
Marked the soft mud on the margin,  
Till they found all further passage  
Shut against them, barred securely  
By the trunks of trees uprooted, 120  
Lying lengthwise, lying crosswise,  
And forbidding further passage.  
'We must go back,' said the old man,

'O'er these logs we cannot clamber;  
Not a woodchuck could get through them,  
Not a squirrel clamber o'er them!'  
And straightway his pipe he lighted,  
And sat down to smoke and ponder.  
But before his pipe was finished,  
Lo! the path was cleared before him; 130  
All the trunks had Kwasind lifted,  
To the right hand, to the left hand,  
Shot the pine-trees swift as arrows,  
Hurled the cedars light as lances.  
'Lazy Kwasind!' said the young men,  
As they sported in the meadow:  
'Why stand idly looking at us,  
Leaning on the rock behind you?  
Come and wrestle with the others,  
Let us pitch the quoit together!' 140  
Lazy Kwasind made no answer,  
To their challenge made no answer,  
Only rose, and slowly turning,  
Seized the huge rock in his fingers,  
Tore it from its deep foundation,  
Poised it in the air a moment,  
Pitched it sheer into the river,  
Sheer into the swift Pauwating,  
Where it still is seen in Summer.  
Once as down that foaming river, 150  
Down the rapids of Pauwating,  
Kwasind sailed with his companions,  
In the stream he saw a beaver,  
Saw Ahmeek, the King of Beavers,  
Struggling with the rushing currents,  
Rising, sinking in the water.  
Without speaking, without pausing,  
Kwasind leaped into the river,  
Plunged beneath the bubbling surface,  
Through the whirlpools chased the beaver, 160  
Followed him among the islands,  
Stayed so long beneath the water,  
That his terrified companions  
Cried, 'Alas! good-by to Kwasind!  
We shall never more see Kwasind!'  
But he reappeared triumphant,  
And upon his shining shoulders  
Brought the beaver, dead and drip-  
ping,  
Brought the King of all the Beavers.  
And these two, as I have told you, 170  
Were the friends of Hiawatha,  
Chibiabos, the musician,  
And the very strong man, Kwasind.  
Long they lived in peace together.  
Spake with naked hearts together,  
Pondering much and much contriving  
How the tribes of men might prosper.