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SEMINOLE FOLKTALES

*collected and edited by HEDVIG TETENS EVANS **

IN FLORIDA IN THE early 1950s when these stories were gathered, folktales were still being kept alive among some of the oldest Seminole Indians. All of the following tales were collected at the Brighton Reservation which is located in the center of the state northwest of Lake Okeechobee. It is one of three federal Indian reservations in Florida.¹ The Seminole words that are used are in the Muskogee (Cow Creek) dialect. This is different from the Hitchiti dialect used by the Miccosukees who live on the Tamiami Trail west of Miami.

The Reverend Billy Osceola, Billy Bowlegs, Frank Tiger, and the Reverend Daniel Beavers, a Muskogee from Oklahoma, recounted all of the stories to the editor. The Reverend Osceola related the tales "Hazolebah-Hlacunn," "The Man Who Ate Children," "How Indians Got Corn," and "The Hunt Dance." The next group of stories—"The Choctaw War," "How Lake Istokpoga Got Its Name," "The Long War," and "The Creation"—were remembered by Billy Bowlegs. Frank Tiger recounted the stories of "The Seminole School," "The Lion Hunt," "Rabbit and the Lion," "How Rabbit Got Married," and "Doctor Buzzard." "The Indian History" was related by the Reverend Daniel Beavers.

Mr. and Mrs. William D. Boehmer were white school teachers living at Brighton during the 1950s. In the search for folklore, the first contact was with the Boehmers who arranged a meeting with Billy Osceola, a Baptist minister who spoke English. The first meetings were at the school, but later in Osceola's home. The tales remembered by Billy Bowlegs were all in Muskogee and were translated by Billy Osceola. Billy Bowlegs was a very old man at the time, and he was living with his sister and her seven grandchildren. Frank Tiger in his youth had studied to become

* Mrs. Evans worked as a biological technician at the Entomological Research Center, Vero Beach, and is presently living in Fort Pierce. She collected the Seminole folktales during the 1950s from Billy Bowlegs, the Reverend Daniel Beaver, the Reverend Billy Osceola, and Frank Tiger.

1. Other federal Seminole reservations in Florida are the Hollywood Reservation, near Fort Lauderdale, and the Big Cypress Reservation south of Lake Okeechobee.

a *mahaya*, an Indian teacher, but his teacher died, and he was not able to complete his work.

HAZOLEBAH-HLACUNN

Once long, long ago seven men went on a bear hunt. They went far away from their village and were gone for many days. Early one morning they found a huge dead tree. It was very old and hollow all the way from the crown to the root. It was just the place where they might expect to find a bear, so they decided to smoke it out. They built a fire of dry pinewood and threw one small piece down the hole in the tree. Something came out, all right, but it was not a bear. It was an awful monster called Hazolebah-Hlacunn. He looked somewhat like a lizard but was ten feet long and so strong that he could easily carry a man on his back.

As soon as the men saw him, they started running, but they could not outrun Hazolebah-Hlacunn. He caught them all and carried them to his tree. The last one almost escaped, but the monster got hold of his leg, and he, too, was dragged to the hollow tree. But just as they reached the tree a big panther jumped down on Hazolebah-Hlacunn, and the two started fighting. They were so engrossed in their fight that they forgot the man who had been dragged back. He succeeded in crawling away, even though his leg was badly hurt. In those days people knew which herbs to use to heal a wound quickly. The man put some of these herbs on his leg, and in a few minutes he was able to walk again. But because he was still weak, he had to leave his weapons and game behind. So he hurried home the best he could.

When he arrived at his village, he immediately told his friends what had happened, and they sent a big hunting party out to kill the monster. When they came to the hollow tree they found that the panther had won the fight and had forced Hazolebah-Hlacunn down into the earth. He is still living there, and on the last day of the world he will return to catch every human being in the world.

THE MAN WHO ATE CHILDREN

Once long, long ago there lived a family consisting of a man, his wife, and their six children. Their home was near a river.

Once one of the boys was sitting on an overtuned tree, throwing his hook into the water, trying to catch some fish. He did not have any luck, and he sat there for nearly half a day without catching anything.

Suddenly he saw something large swimming towards him. It was a man who stuck his head out of the water and asked the boy if he would like to have some fish. "Yes," the boy said.

"Well, I am the lord of all the fish, so I can give you as many as you want. But I want something in return."

"What do you want?"

"One of your sisters!"

The boy thought for a while and decided to give the man one of his sisters. He had three or four so he thought he could spare one. The man disappeared as soon as he had the boy's answer, and the fish started biting. Soon the boy had caught enough, and he returned home. His mother cooked the fish. When they all sat down to eat, the boy said to one of his sisters: "Don't eat any of this fish!" His father asked him why, but the boy would not answer. He just repeated: "Don't eat any of this fish!"

His sister began to cry for she wanted some fish, but she did not get any, and finally she got up and left. She went down to the river and sat down. Soon a canoe came up the river, and it stopped near where the girl was sitting. There was a man in the canoe, and he had four beautiful puppies. The girl wanted one, and the man said that if she came down into the canoe she could choose the one she liked best. She became so absorbed in playing with the puppies that she did not realize that the man had started paddling away from shore. When at last she looked up, she saw that she was far away from home. "Let me go back," she cried, "I don't know you. I want to go home to my family."

"No," the man said, "you have to stay with me until you die." The poor girl started crying, but the man just paddled and paddled all day, and late at night they reached his home. "Come with me to my house," the man said.

"No, I want to go home," the girl cried, but the man picked her up and carried her ashore.

The next morning he told her to sit by the water and watch an acorn hanging on an oak tree to see if it would fall. She promised to do what he said, and the man went away for the day to hunt. There was an old woman who lived there also, and when

the man left, she told the girl about him. He was a great hunter but he was known to steal small girls and then kill and eat them. The girl began to cry, but the old woman said that she should not be afraid for she would help her. She told the girl to gather fifteen different items, including a bamboo stick the size of a match, a drop of water, and a sandspur, and to bring everything back to her. When the girl returned the old woman wrapped the objects in a piece of cloth, performed something mysterious, and gave them back to the girl. Then she said, "Don't be afraid, the man will not catch you. Go now, and once in a while throw one of the things you have in the bundle behind you. Don't think of food or water, for you will not need any even though you have a long way to go."

The girl left. She had not walked very far before she threw the first thing. It was the bamboo stick. As soon as she had thrown it, a dense forest of bamboo grew up. Then she threw the drop of water, and at once there was a big lake. In the meantime the old woman, who was clever, had caught a bullfrog, and she taught him to speak like the girl. She put him down by the water and went back to her work.

When the man came home he shouted: "Has the acorn fallen yet?" "No," answered the bullfrog, sounding just like the little girl. The man asked several times and still the answer was no. Finally he got so angry that he said: "You must be lying! I am coming down to see for myself." The bullfrog jumped into the water, and the man did not even see him. What he did see was that the girl was not there anymore. He ran back to his house to ask the old woman if she knew where the girl was. "No, I thought she was still by the river," she answered.

"She must have run home. I will go and get her," the man said, and he took a deermuscle and formed it into a ball. He threw it over the house several times in different directions. It fell straight down until he threw it in the direction the girl had gone. Then the deermuscle started rolling and rolling after her. The man had to run to keep up with it. Soon he came to the bamboo. They were so big and grew so close together that he nearly lost sight of the deermuscle. He followed it across the big lake, and through the sandspur field that was one mile wide and fifteen miles long. And all the time he sang a little song to make the muscle roll on: "Go on, go on, go on."

The girl was almost home when she threw the last thing she had in her bundle. She was so afraid that she cried, for she could hear the man coming behind her. She could now see her home; but it was on the other side of the river, and she had no way of crossing over. In her despair she sang: "I used to have brothers; but now I have none, and the man will kill me." She sang this song again and again. She was so afraid that she trembled all over for she could hear the man very near her now.

One of her brothers was sitting on the other side of the river, and he heard his sister's song. He ran home and cried: "Father, Father, I just heard my sister sing. She is on the other side of the river, and she cannot cross over. Somebody is following her and will kill her." But the father shook his head and said: "It is so many days since she left. She must be dead by now, all alone as she is."

The rest of the family heard this, but the boys said that they would go down to the river to see if it really could be she. They stood listening, and soon they heard their sister sing: "I used to have brothers"

"It is she!" they cried. The father came, and he also heard her. They cut down the largest tree they could find so that it fell across the river. The girl ran over the bridge and told her family about the man. "If you do not stop him-and he is very near-he will kill me and eat me," she exclaimed. "You, boys, go and get your weapons and mine, too, but hurry up," the father said.

He took an axe and ran out to the river where he chopped the tree bridge almost in two pieces. Then he and the boys hid themselves behind a bush to wait for the man. He came almost at once and walked out onto the bridge. When he reached the middle, it broke, and he fell in the water. The father and the brothers started shooting at him, but they could not kill him, though his body was nearly covered with their arrows.

They did not know what to do until the father told them to be quiet. Up in a tree, on a dead branch, a little bird was perched, and it sang: "If you want to kill him, shoot him in his ankle, and he will die." They followed the advice of the bird, and the man died at once.

HOW INDIANS GOT CORN

Many years ago there was an old woman who lived all by her-

self far away from her family. Her only company was her grandson whom she had taken care of since he was a little baby. At the time that this story begins he was fourteen years old. He was a good hunter, and with his bow and arrows killed birds for food. He went out early each morning, and sometimes he did not return until late in the afternoon. He was not a happy boy for he was very lonesome. He never talked about it, but his grandmother knew what was troubling him. Early one morning she said: "Now, you go out and get the most beautiful bird in the world and bring it to me. I want the whole bird, it must be alive and with all its feathers, legs, and wings on."

He went out and found the most beautiful bird in the world; it was red all over and was probably a cardinal. When he came home with it, his grandmother fashioned some beautiful clothes and a headdress from the bird's feathers. Then she gave these things to the boy and said: "Tonight I am going to die. Do not worry about me, but do as I tell you. When you wake up tomorrow remove the posts that hold my house so the roof will fall down over me and then build a *tufto* (barn). When you have finished put on the clothes that I have made for you and go to the big dance. If you meet anybody on your way who starts a conversation, push over a tree and sit down on it. After four months you shall return to the barn and bring two girls with you."

The following morning when the boy awoke he discovered that his grandmother had indeed died during the night. He did as she had instructed. He chopped down the posts that held up the roof of the house, and she was buried there. He then built a *tufto*, put on his fine clothes, and started out. On the way he met Rabbit. "Hello," said Rabbit.

The boy remembered his grandmother's words. He pushed over a tree and sat down on it. The rabbit tried to do the same thing, but he was not strong enough though he tried very hard. Instead he took a dead branch that was lying on the ground, and he sat down on it. "My, my, what beautiful clothes you have." Rabbit wanted the fine things for himself, and he said, "How about coming to the pond with me to catch some turtles?"

They went to the pond, and the boy took off his fine clothes and put them carefully on the bank. He then dived into the water with Rabbit. They were under the water for about one minute, and they did not catch anything. "Let us go down for a

real long time," Rabbit said. They dived again. But Rabbit came up at once and went to the place where the boy had put his fine clothes, and took them and ran away.

The boy stayed under the water for a long time, but finally he had to come up to get some air. He had not caught anything, and he swam around for a while waiting for Rabbit to come up also. When Rabbit did not, the boy thought that he would stay under the water forever. So the boy went up on the bank where he had put his fine clothes. He looked and looked for them, but they were gone. Oh, how sad he was when he discovered that!

When he came to the place where the big dance was being held he was ashamed because he did not have any clothes. He took some unripe *s-hoda* fruits (persimmons), and with the juice painted himself all black. The first home he came to he did not dare enter because he was naked. Instead, he hid behind the chicken coop. The daughter saw him, and told her mother that there was a boy out by the chicken coop. Her mother wanted her to ask him in, but the girl refused; he was so ugly, all black and without any clothes on.

When he heard that, the boy went away again. Soon he came to another house. But he still did not dare go in, so he hid behind a small bush. In this house lived a man and his wife and their daughter. The wife saw the boy and told her daughter to invite him in. The girl obeyed and fetched him. They asked him a lot of questions about who he was, where he came from, and what he was doing. He told them everything, and they gave him something to eat. While he was eating they made him some clothes and when they were finished, the man said to his daughter: "Go down to the pond and wash the boy and help him dress." The girl did as she was told. But when she washed the boy the juice from the *s-hoda* fruit poisoned the water and made the fish drunk so that they went up on shore. The whole village came down to the pond and picked up all the fish they wanted.

The boy stayed with this nice family four months, and the daughter liked him very much. One day when they went swimming, she combed her long hair and parted it in the middle and braided it. Then she took a very sharp knife and cut off her hair. Out of the two braids she made two girls which the boy took with him to his old home. When they came to the barn they saw that it was full of some strange yellow fruits. They had never seen

such fruits before, but they carried some of them back to the village. That was the grandmother's gift to her boy, and they called it *atzee* (corn).

THE HUNT DANCE

Late in November each year Seminoles from all over Florida meet at the Brighton Reservation in south central Florida to dance the hunt dance. They make camps around the dancing ground, and each clan has its own camp. A big fire is started in the middle of the dancing ground. Around it is spread clean sand in a circle about twenty-five feet in diameter. Four long poles are put down inside this circle, one facing east, one north, one west and one south.

At sunset, when everything is ready, two men carrying a deer's tail on a long pole go around to every camp and announce that the dance is about to begin. Everyone then gathers at the west corner of the dancing ground and lines up according to height, beginning with the tallest man, and continuing on down to the smallest child. Hand in hand they begin walking around the dancing ground, weaving in and out between the poles, singing all the time. This part is called the snake dance. With every new turn around the dancing ground, the dancers stop for a minute to catch their breath.

This dancing goes on for three days. Then on the fourth day the men go hunting. When they return the women take the meat and cut it into small round pieces and cook it without salt or shortening. On the sixth day of the feast the women bake cornbread, also without salt or shortening. Everybody sits down together, and two men carry all the prepared food around and distribute it to everyone. After the meal there is more dancing, and then the feast is over.

THE CHOCTAW WAR

Once two Choctaw men and some Seminoles went on a bear hunt. With the Seminoles was a small boy, an orphan who lived with his uncle. One morning they came to a swamp where they thought they would find a bear. The two Choctaws and the little boy went into the swamp to chase the bear while the Seminoles

waited outside with their bows and arrows ready to shoot when the animal came out.

The Seminoles waited for a long, long time, and nothing happened. Finally the Choctaws returned, but without the boy. When the Seminoles asked where he was, the Choctaws explained: "He is still in the swamp chasing the bear." Again the Seminoles waited, and when the boy did not come, they decided to go in and look for him. They followed the tracks in the mud until they came to a place where the mud was all disturbed as if there had been a fight, and there, half buried, they found the little boy who had been murdered by the Choctaws.

With sorrow in their hearts the Seminoles returned home and related what had happened. Everybody was very angry, and it was decided that the Choctaws needed to be punished. All this happened in a cold country where the Choctaws lived in small wooden houses. The Seminoles hid outside the doors to these houses, and when a Choctaw left his home they would swing their tomahawks and sticks or the heavy hiffippy fruit against his head. They also killed, of course, with bows and arrows. The Choctaws suffered heavy losses, so many in fact that even the women had to fight.

The war lasted a long time, and the white people, hoping to stop it, called the Indians together for a peace conference. The Choctaws were sitting on one side of the room, the Seminoles on the other, and the white people in the middle. The white men insisted that the war had to end, but the Choctaws were very angry and did not want peace. After much arguing one of them went over to the Seminoles and threw a tomahawk down in front of them. That nearly started the fighting again, but the white men prevailed upon the Indians to make peace, and after much trouble, an agreement was reached.

HOW LAKE ISTOKPOGA GOT ITS NAME

From the time the Spaniards first came to Florida, the Indians resented them very much. In one of the many conflicts between them the Indians killed a large group of invaders, and the rest were captured. The Indians took their prisoners south by boat until they reached a big lake. The Spaniards began to shout and scream, but the Indians could not understand what was the matter, so they continued to paddle out onto the lake in their canoes.

Suddenly they saw what the trouble was—a whirlpool. But it was too late for the first seven canoes, and they were overturned before they could do anything. The rest of the boats succeeded in turning away by throwing everything—weapons and blankets—into the water. The Indians returned to the shore where they divided into two groups and left the lake which they called Istokpoga-The-Lake-That-Drowns-People.

The first group went to a cypress swamp located somewhere between Moore Haven and La Belle. They cut down many trees and made boats out of them. They then sailed down the Caloosahatchee River until they came to the Gulf of Mexico. Although they were afraid that they would never see land again, they sailed out on the Gulf. Luck was not with them. A hurricane roared in, and many of the boats were destroyed. The survivors followed a westerly course and arrived safely ashore.

The other group moved southeast towards Miami, but as they approached the area where the sawgrass grew their Spanish prisoners managed to escape and to hide in the tall grass. A fight began. The Indians could not see where the Spanish were, and they shot at random into the grass. The Spaniards returned the fire from their hiding places.

The Seminoles had prophets with them, and when the fight had gone on for some time these prophets said: “You shall stop the fight now, for the Spaniards will make a big home out of our country. And some day they will start the war again.”

THE LONG WAR

In about 1820 there was a very small town north of where Orlando is now. One day a number of Indians attacked it. The white people put up a fight, but the Indians were too strong, and all were killed except one. He was lying among the dead people and was covered with blood, but he was not wounded. The Seminoles thought he was dead. When the Indians had all departed, the man got up and went to Tampa where he told what had happened. He answered many questions, and when he was asked whether the whites had tried to kill the Seminoles, he answered: “Yes.”

Several years later the man sent a message to the Indians warning them: “Now I am ready to fight you; and I am going to

send a lot of soldiers after you." At that time the Indians lived near Kissimmee where they had many hogs and cows and grew rice. Everything was peaceful and prosperous. Their only trouble was with birds that came and took their rice.

Then they received the message from the white man! They hurriedly bought guns to kill the annoying birds. A few soldiers came, and the Indians were able to hold them off; they killed most of them with the guns. But when the big army arrived, there was nothing for the Seminoles to do but run away, which they did. But they had to leave their hogs behind.

They travelled west until they came to a place which they called Zoliodee (big-place-with-lots-of-palms). Here they settled for a short while, but the soldiers followed them, and forced them to run away again. This time they had to leave most of the cattle behind.

Again they moved towards the west until they came to a big swamp. There they turned south to Lake Istokpoga, then east to the Kissimmee River. All the time the soldiers were right behind them. The river was so deep that they had to swim across with their remaining cattle. Now they moved east until they came to Fort Bassinger, and then they turned south towards Lake Okechobee. They divided themselves into two groups. Those who had horses went one way around the lake, those traveling on foot, the other. When the two parties joined up they were half starved and very tired. Nevertheless they had cause to celebrate that both parties had made the trip without mishap. They killed a cow and prepared for a party called "wacka-wilanua-defiskilan" which meant "to-kill-cattle-and-get-all-messed-up".

Just as everything was ready and the fun was about to start, the soldiers arrived! The hungry Seminoles had to leave their food untasted, and they ran until they reached a creek called Hotzadiho. Then they came to a big cypress swamp, and with their leader, Sam Jones, stopped to fight their pursuers. They killed many whites, but finally gave up the fight and fled to Lake Canyuchsaze where they found a place to make camp. But certain that the soldiers would come sooner or later, they sent a man back to watch the movements of the army.

It was in the middle of the night when the scout returned with the message that the soldiers were coming, and he urged the people to move out at once. They made torches of dead pine

trees (called colozoichloboditzcan), and with this light they ventured out into the swamp. They could not take the cattle and horses with them. On foot they walked until they arrived at Creek Lazohazee (Loxahatchee), which they crossed. It seemed as though they had finally evaded the soldiers, and for some time they lived in peace here.

One day a woman and her child went down to the creek and discovered there a canoe filled with white soldiers. They stopped and asked if the camp was a big one, but she told them: "No." She then hurried back to the camp and informed her people about the soldiers. Three brave men went down to meet the soldiers. When they arrived at the creek they made medicine with herbs, partly to enable them to fight the soldiers better and also to make the soldiers go away for good.

Then the shooting began. At first it looked as if the Seminoles were going to win, but then a huge number of soldiers appeared behind them. After a fierce battle the Indians succeeded in escaping. They went towards the east until they came out to the coast near West Palm Beach. The soldiers followed them and put up a white flag. To most of the Indians the flag seemed like the answer to their prayers for peace, but Sam Jones, leader of one of the two groups of Seminoles, was a very clever man. He warned them not to trust the soldiers. The leader of the other group pointed out that they were all exhausted from hunger and were tired of the long war, and believed that they should accept the peace that was being offered. Many people followed this leader to the white flag, and they were well received by the soldiers who gave them food. Then while they were all eating, the soldiers encircled them and took them as prisoners aboard a ship and sent them to Oklahoma.

Meanwhile Sam Jones and his flock had gone south until they reached a place near Fort Lauderdale. Here they settled themselves and built homes. They lived here in peace, until one day the soldiers returned, this time from the ocean. The Indians tried to hide in a nearby swamp, but their gunpowder was wet, and when the soldiers approached they could not defend themselves. The white men were surprised not to hear a single shot from the Seminoles. They sent an interpreter to the Indians to tell them that they were going to be sent to Oklahoma, and that those who earlier went to the white flag were already there. The interpreter was not happy about his mission, since he had to sleep among the

Indians. He was so afraid that he did not dare close his eyes the whole night.

The following day the Seminoles were taken aboard a ship together with a handful of soldiers. There were so few soldiers that many of the Seminoles thought that they had a good chance of killing the soldiers and forcing the crew to turn around and take them back to their home in Florida. But not everybody dared do that, and some said: "No, there have been too many wars already. Let us go where these soldiers will take us, and let us have peace." They finally all agreed, and eventually they reached Oklahoma.

Several years later, after a peace treaty had been signed with the United States government, some of the Seminoles returned to Florida where they tried to live in peace with the white people.

THE CREATION

In the beginning all was water. But one time Hissageda-Meshee (the creator of life-God) came down from Heaven and went to the water. He called the shrimp to Him and said: "You are the one of all my creatures that can stay under the water the longest, therefore, I command you to go down to the bottom and fetch me some sand on your flat tail." The shrimp did as he was told, and when he reached the surface of the water Hissageda-Meshee took the sand and made it grow and grow until you could not see the ends of it, and it was called the Earth.

It continued growing, and one day Hissageda-Meshee called two birds to Him and said: "I command you to fly out over the earth and find out for me how big it has grown." Titca-the bird that looked like a woodpecker but was much bigger and was black all over except for his white wingtips-flew towards the north. His fluttering wings beat up the still soft earth and thus made mountains. Solizopco-the buzzard-flew towards the south. He spread his wings and floated over the still soft earth and thus made it all flat.

They returned to Hissageda-Meshee and told Him about the soft earth, and He said: "I will make trees and plants, so their roots can make the earth stronger." First He made Dolan-trees (sweet bay), then cedar trees, then Loczizumba-trees (oak), and last of all the grass.

But the Tempter wanted to destroy what Hissageda-Meshee had made and sent Hodalee-hlacunn (big wind-hurricane) to destroy the earth and to stop its growing, for it was still growing towards the east. Therefore Hodalee-hlacunn came from the east over the ocean and submerged a great deal of land before Hissageda-Meshee could stop him. But He did not stop Hodalee-hlacunn altogether, for he still comes-and always from the east-to destroy the land Hissageda-Meshee has made.

THE SEMINOLE SCHOOL

The teaching of the Seminole children in the old days was divided between a professional teacher, the mahaya, and the grandfather. The grandfather's job was to teach the children good manners with special emphasis on being honest, good, and kind to their neighbors.

Not until the boys were between fifteen and twenty-five years old did they attend the mahaya's school where the children learned how to take care of themselves. The mahaya told the boys about the old hunts and wars, and taught them the best ways to fight. If the boys followed the mahaya's advice, they were certain to live long and become great men. The school generally had ten to fifteen pupils, and the teaching would last for eight days.

The boys and the mahaya would go far out in the woods where nobody could disturb them. When they had selected a good place they built a shelter of cypress, eight by fifteen feet in size. Here the boys stayed four days. The mahaya did not live with them, but arrived early each morning and awakened the students who went down to a creek or small lake to take a bath. They were not allowed to swim in the sunshine, but only where there was shadow on the water.

The teacher meanwhile took a medicine plant (barso, which looks somewhat like a potato) and mashed it in water. When the boys came back from their swim they each received a bowlful of this medicine. All of the bowls were alike, each with two handles. The medicine was very strong, and some of the boys could not eat it. The mahaya knew that these boys would never be able to learn anything. When the boys had finished the medicine, the teaching would begin, and it lasted until the medicine started working and made the boys vomit.

Before the teacher arrived in the morning the boys had prepared a dish called oso' ofki, which is made of grits and water cooked without salt and sugar. They were not allowed to eat it before nightfall. After the mahaya left, the boys could not leave the shelter until the stars were shining brightly. They then went swimming again. Afterwards they lit a fire to heat the oso' ofki, and each ate one bowlful.

After four days, the boys left their shelter and went hunting, especially for deer, but they killed other animals also. The boys were only allowed to carry their weapons across their folded arms. Each morning they hunted without eating breakfast. At night they built a fire and roasted meat without salt, but they could eat all they wanted.

The seventh day they returned to the neighborhood of the shelter and made camp. There the mahaya met them and asked what they had killed. If they had killed a deer, the answer was: "Wild animal." If they had not, the answer was: "No wild animal." They were not allowed to mention the deer by its name. After that the mahaya returned to his own home for the night. The next morning he returned bringing new clothes for the boys. After taking a bath and putting on their new clothes, the boys went home, leaving their old garments behind. There was feasting and happiness when the boys returned. They had usually killed many animals, and the meat was divided among the villagers.

The mahaya was generally an old man. He had gone to a special school where he learned to be a medicine man and a teacher. The medicine man had to study for eight years. It was necessary that the novice-medicine man be young, for if anything should happen to the old mahaya he would be able to carry on the work. If there was nobody to do that all the knowledge and wisdom of generations would disappear when the old mahaya died.

THE LION HUNT

Once eight men went on a hunting trip and were gone for several days. They found a place to camp. Each morning they went out, one by one, to hunt, and in the late afternoon they returned to the camp. One day one of them did not come back. The next morning when he was still missing, three of the hunters

started to search for him, for they feared that he had had an accident.

They followed his footprints, and suddenly they discovered the tracks of a lion. They hid behind a bush to wait for the animal to appear. The lion had killed the man and had fed him to the cubs. The cubs were still hungry, so the next morning she went out again and found the three men hiding behind the bush. She killed them and fed them to her cubs and also had a good meal herself.

Night came and the four remaining men sat around the fire, waiting and wondering about their friends. They decided that if they had not returned by morning, three of them would try to find out what had happened. The next morning they started out following the tracks, but the lion caught them also and fed them to her cubs. There was only one man left of the hunting party, and he said to himself: "The others must have met with some great disaster. I must go and see what it is and help them if I can."

He, too, followed the tracks, but when he saw the lion's footprints he climbed up into a high tree. The lion tried to climb up after him, but the hunter took his machete and killed her. He followed the lion's tracks to her den, and found her cubs and the bones of his friends. He killed the cubs, and returned to his village and told what had happened.

RABBIT AND THE LION

Once there was a lion in America, and he was not liked at all. Rabbit especially hated him, for he had killed many of his friends. Therefore he went to the lion, and pretending to be his friend, he said: "I know of such a beautiful place. Why don't we go there and spend the night."

The lion wanted very much to see this beautiful place, so early the next morning they started off. On the way Rabbit explained that the place was by the big lake Isofogo-gha-hatzee which means Burning-Ashes-Lake. "But," Rabbit continued, "don't be afraid to go there, for I am sure that you won't get burned." They walked and walked all day until they came to the ocean. "Here is the lake I was talking about," Rabbit said. They spent the rest of the day catching an island and tying it with a strong rope to a tree at the shore of America. Then they

built a fire and sat talking while Rabbit took a long pole and made it flat on one end. "What are you making?" the lion asked. "Oh, nothing special," was the answer. "But tell me, do you make any noise when you sleep?" "Yes, I say Hala-hlalalag. Do you make any noise?" "Yes, I say Zu-zu. I think it well be best if we sleep one on each side of the fire."

After a while they went to bed and when Rabbit heard the lion say: "Hala-hlalalag," he got up and took his pole and shovelled the hot ashes and sparks from the fire onto the lion until his fur caught on fire. Rabbit ran down to the ocean and cried: "Come on, come on, or you will get burned!" The lion woke up, ran down to the water and swam with Rabbit to the island they had caught earlier in the day. Exhausted the lion lay down; but Rabbit cut the rope that held the island to America and he swam ashore. But the island and the lion drifted over the ocean and were never seen again.

HOW RABBIT GOT MARRIED

Once there lived a huge alligator in a pool near a village. He was so big that nobody could kill him. The people from the village wanted to get rid of him, and they promised a wife to the man who could kill him.

One day Rabbit came to the village. He heard about the alligator, and since he wanted to get married, he promised to kill him. The people from the village laughed, but Rabbit went to his good friend Squirrel, and said: "Do me a favor. Go to Alligator and ask him to come up on dry land."

Squirrel went to the pond and said to Alligator: "There are some people from the village who want to see you. Would you mind coming up on dry land and walking over to those trees there?" Alligator said he would, but Rabbit was waiting for him. He had no bows and arrows but only a heavy stick.

When Alligator passed the place where Rabbit was waiting, Rabbit jumped out and hit him on the nose and head with the stick. That did not hurt Alligator very much, but just the same he ran back to the water. Rabbit did not know what to do now. He thought and thought, and a couple of days later he asked Squirrel to go to Alligator again and try to make him come up on dry land.

When Squirrel asked Alligator to come with him, Alligator answered: "Now, look here! A couple of days ago you came and told me that some people wanted to see me, and you led me straight into a trap, and I nearly got killed. I don't trust you anymore."

Squirrel changed the subject, and they talked for a while about this and that. Among other things Squirrel asked about the best way to kill alligators. "Hit them on the back, then they can't move," Alligator said. Squirrel talked about some beautiful things he wanted to show Alligator. Alligator could not resist the temptation, and he went ashore and followed Squirrel. Rabbit had heard their conversation. When Alligator came, Rabbit hit him on the back and killed him.

It was a happy Rabbit who returned to the village, for now he had earned his reward and was going to get a wife. The people in the village did not want to give him the girl, so they told him that if he wanted her he would have to kill a rattlesnake first.

So Rabbit took a stick that was four feet long with a very sharp point and went out to find a rattlesnake. He did not know where there were any, but after searching for a long time, he found a huge one in a palmetto shrub. "Oh, hello! I want to see you, do you mind?" Rabbit politely asked. "You see," he continued, "a friend of mine and I were talking about how big you are. My friend took this stick and said that you are not longer than that, but I said you were, so to get the question settled I came over here to see you. I took the stick with me so I could measure you with it."

The rattlesnake looked at the stick and said: "I am much longer than that. I will stretch myself just to show you. Put the stick down here on the ground and see for yourself. The snake uncoiled himself and stretched out on the ground, but suddenly Rabbit grabbed the stick and stabbed him in the back of his neck, killing him.

He carried the rattlesnake back to the village on the stick and said he wanted his reward. This time the people in the village could not think of any more animals they wanted killed, so they had to give him the girl. And thus Rabbit got married.

DOCTOR BUZZARD

Bear and Rabbit were very good friends, and once Rabbit was invited to Bear's home for dinner. When Rabbit came, Bear had a fire burning and a pot of beans was cooking merrily over the fire. He had spread a deerskin on the floor so Rabbit could sit on something soft. When the beans were done, Bear took a big butcher's knife, went out into the woods and cut a nice piece of fat out of himself. He went in again and cooked it, and the two friends had a good meal.

When Rabbit left he said: "It was a very good dinner you gave me. Now you must come and see me sometime." Bear promised to do so, and Rabbit went home. He went to all his friends and asked them for some beans so he could serve them to Bear.

When Bear came Rabbit started a nice fire and cooked the beans over it. When they were done he took a big butcher's knife, went out into the woods and cut himself wide open, so all his guts fell out. He cried in pain, and when Bear heard the screams he said to himself: "I think my friend must have hurt himself on that big knife." He ran out and found Rabbit lying on the ground. "Oh my, I must get a doctor as quick as I can," he exclaimed and ran off.

Nobody was able to help poor Rabbit. Finally Bear came to Buzzard and said: "Do you think you can help my friend Rabbit? He has cut himself with a knife and he is badly hurt."

"Well, if you do just as I say, I think I can help him," Buzzard said. "You must build a shelter around him. There must not be any roof on that shelter, so I can fly down to him, and then you must put some beans in beside Rabbit. You do that and I will come right away."

Bear hurried back to Rabbit and built a shelter like Buzzard had instructed, and put the pot with beans in beside his friend. Buzzard came and flew down to Rabbit. Once in a while Bear could hear Rabbit cry out, but Buzzard said: "Don't worry, It is just my medicine that burns when I put it on his stomach."

It took a long time, and Rabbit was silent now. Finally Buzzard came out and flew up into a dead tree and shouted something. Bear thought he said that Rabbit was well, and so he went into the shelter. But what did he find? Dry bones was all that was

left of his friend and beside the bones was the empty beanpot. And that was the end of Rabbit.

INDIAN HISTORY

God created America and took three persons with Him from Heaven. Out of the soil He created four more people, and from these seven people all Indians descend. Some white people think that the Indians came from another country and travelled over a narrow piece of water in boats, but that is all wrong, for God created the Indians just as He had created Adam and Eve.

He commanded the seven Indians to live in a fog until He gave them permission to leave. He gave them five things to help them. The first was the flintrock; the second, the tomahawk pipe; the third, the medicine herb, Wild King; the fourth, corn; and the fifth, the tobacco plant, although it was not the same kind that we know today.

When God had given the seven Indians these things, He said that He would show them how to use them. First, He took the flintrock and taught them how to strike fire with it. He then taught them how to build a fire. He gathered four logs and placed one towards the east, one towards the north, one towards the west, and the last one towards the south. He placed them so that the ends of the logs made a round place where the fire was lit. To light the fire He used a certain kind of tree called Tote. Next He told the Indians to sit down around the fire, and He showed them how to fill a pipe and to smoke it. They all drew smoke four times. When all had smoked God told them that it meant peace.

God took the corn and told the Indians to plant it during the middle of April to get the best crop. He gave them two kinds: flint corn and flour corn. The flint corn was very hard and was used to make grits and sofki. The flour corn was soft, and it was used for flour which God showed them how to make. First it should be cooked in ashes and water, for the ashes would make the shells come off easily. When it had been cooked for some time, the corn was washed very carefully until all of the ash was washed away. Then it was beaten to a fine powder with a stick in a hollow piece of wood. Sometimes the Indians stirred the flour with water and made a drink out of it or they baked bread with

it. These are the ways God told the Indians to fix their corn, but later they found many other ways of using it. Only, they never fed it to their animals; it was only meant for human consumption.

The next thing God talked about was the medicine herbs. They should be planted in early spring and should be used by everybody three times a year to prevent any kind of sickness—in early spring, in August, and in the late fall. If they did that they would live to be very old and healthy, and they would be able to see and hear as well as the wild animals.

God appointed one of the Indians as chief, another, floorspeaker, and a third as medicine man. The chief and the medicine man belonged to the bear-clan and the floorspeaker to the wind-clan. The rest of the Indians were members of the other clans. Everybody had a certain place to sit around the fire: the chief and the floorspeaker sat on the east side and the medicine man on the west. The clans sat along the north and south sides. The fireplace and the logs around where the men sat was called the square ground.

God then taught the medicine man how to use the medicine plants and which songs should be used with the different herbs. Then the fog lifted and God went up in the air and disappeared.

From then on and until Columbus came, America was a wonderful place to live. The weather was always just right. The rain would generally fall when it was needed, and if it did not come the Indians knew how to make it rain. There were never any surprises from the weather for there were many signs to tell the people how it was going to be. If, for example, the new moon was standing up, they knew they would not get any rain; if it was leaning a little, they would get some; and if it was lying down or full and very red and shiny, there would be plenty of rain. If it was unusually hot one day, the Indians knew that in a day or two they would have snow. By watching the different signs in the animal world they could predict how the seasons were going to be. But they never had any hurricanes or cyclones and things like that until after the white people discovered America.

In the winter months the men went hunting. They hunted alone and far away from their homes. The meat was dried and prepared in different ways. After four months of hunting each Indian would pack his meat in a buckskin and return home. The bundle of food was no bigger than a shoebox, but it contained so

much meat that it would last him and his family a whole year. The Indians knew how to pack in those early days, and they also knew how to cure their meat and made it shrink. When they returned to their village, they took medicine and spent the summer tending their homes.

Occasionally, they would have a fishfry to which everybody was invited. Hundreds of people would sometimes arrive for a fry. First they would collect a certain medicine plant and tie it together in bundles which were then pounded into a powder. This was placed on a stick so it would fall into the water. It would make the fish come to the surface, so the men could shoot them. The women had fires going, and they fried the fish as soon as they were caught.

There were two groups of Indians: the western and the eastern. The eastern Indians were peaceful, but they were often forced into wars with the western Indians who would cross over into their territory. But the eastern Indians always knew when they were coming. If they saw a shooting star they knew that it was time to gather their weapons and prepare for their enemies.

It seemed that it must be an awfully hard task to surprise an Indian—indeed, almost impossible. Even Columbus did not find them unprepared for his arrival. Once, some time before Columbus came, all seven tribes were gathered on the square ground. (There were only seven tribes; the white man wrongly assumed that there were many more. They gave every village a special name and called each a tribe.)

On this occasion an old man arose and told the seven tribes that some white people would come. He did not know when, but God had told him that there was going to be an earthquake just before the white people arrived. God furthermore told him to say that the Indians should scatter and follow the trails indicated by the four corners of the fire. They listened to the old man and they obeyed. When Columbus came they were all scattered, but nobody but the old man noticed the earthquake.