

I.—*Some Wabanaki Songs.**By* JOHN READE.

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Of the great families or groups of Canadian aborigines—the Hyberborean, the Athabaskan, the Columbian, the Dacotan, the Huron-Iroquois, and the Algonquin—the last named has the vastest range, and, in one respect at least, the greatest historical importance. Extending from Labrador to South Carolina, from Newfoundland to the Rocky Mountains, and comprising some forty dialects or varieties of allied speech, it presented to the first comers along the whole Atlantic coast those earliest specimens of the red man which have become typical in modern history and romance. To the Algonquin stock belonged, with one remarkable exception, all the Indians of Acadia, of Canada, of New England, of Pennsylvania, of Virginia, of the Carolines, with which the Europeans who touched the shores of North America came in contact. It included tribes as far apart as the Bethucks and the Blackfeet, the Crees and the Micmacs, the Mississaugas and the Delawares. The term *Algonquin*, as the name of a language which, in spite of manifold variations of form, was intelligible over so great an area, was at first applied to the dialect of the Indians of Lake Nipissing, who have long vanished, by gradual absorption or decay, as a separate tribe. The name survives, however, and the language is still spoken from the shores of the Atlantic far into the heart of the continent. A word which, in some shape, is common to all the dialects of that language is *wab*, signifying “white” or “bright.” In Ojibway, *waban* is “the twilight of the morning,” and by a natural extension of meaning, “the east.” From it the eastern Algonquins assumed the name of *Wabanaki*, which, in its modified form, *Abenaki*, some of them still bear.

“I call the tribe of which the Passamaquoddies are a division *Wabanaki*,” writes Mrs. W. Wallace Brown, “though the name is not accepted by all ethnologists, most of them preferring the term *Abenaki*. My reasons for my choice are (1) that the Passamaquoddies thus distinctly pronounce their tribal name (*Wabanaki*); (2) that etymology confirms the meaning which they assign to it—the word ‘*waba*’ signifying ‘light,’ and the words ‘*wabaso*’ (white), ‘*wabaock*’ (white cloth), ‘*waba-ban*’ (the ruler of the northern lights), and ‘*waba-eh*’ (a mythical white bird, to which is ascribed the origin of ‘*wabap*’ or white wampum) being all derived from it.” On the same question, Mr. Leland says: “Among the six chief divisions of the red Indians of North America, the most widely extended is the Algonquin . . . Belonging to this division are the Micmacs of Nova Scotia, and the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes of Maine, who, with the St. Francis Indians of Canada and some smaller clans, call themselves the *Wabanaki*, a word derived from a root signifying white or light, intimating that they live nearest to the rising sun or the east. In fact, the French-speaking St. Francis family, who are known *par éminence* as ‘the

Abenaki,' translate the term by *point du jour*." In Judge Charles Gill's "Notes sur de vieux manuscrits abénakis," occurs a passage which confirms, while adding to, that derivation. The late Father Vetromile, who had been a missionary to the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot Indians, claimed, Mr. Gill says, that the word *Abénaki* signified, in the dialects both of New England and Acadia, "our ancestors of the east," being derived from *wanb* (white, the dawn) and *naghi* (ancestors). In Abbé Cuoq's recently published "Lexique de la langue algonquine," *Wabanaki* is made to signify "la terre du levant." It seems fairly reasonable to conclude from such a consensus of evidence that *Wabanaki* is the correct form of the name.

As the *Missabos* or Giant Rabbit legends form an important portion of the Wabanaki folklore, it may not be out of place to mention that Dr. Brinton traces that cycle of stories to the resemblance between *wabos* (a rabbit) and *waban* (the dawn). "Here," he writes, "we are to look for the real meaning of the name *Missabos*. It originally meant the Great Light, the Mighty Seer, the Orient, the Dawn—which you please, as all distinctly refer to the one original idea, the Bringer of Light and Sight, of Knowledge and Life. In time, this meaning became obscured, and the rabbit, whose name was drawn probably from the same root, as in the northern winters its fur becomes white, was substituted and so the myth of light degenerated into an animal fable."

The Wabanaki comprise the Micmacs of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, the Abenakis of St. Francis and Becancour, and the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians of Maine. This north-eastern branch of the far-spreading Algonquin family is of great historic interest, not only for the part it has played in the post-Columbian annals of North America, but as having probably preserved in its legends and traditions the traces of intercourse with the Northmen who came to the New World many centuries before the time of Columbus. Attracted thither in 1882, in his search for myths and folklore, Mr. Charles G. Leland did not expect to make any notable discoveries in the Passamaquoddy district. But to his amazement, he found there a far grander mythology than any which had hitherto been recorded among the Indians of the north. He found that the number of their stories was virtually endless, and that most of them were of great antiquity. They had all originally been cast in poetic mould, and the strangest feature in connection with them was the evidence which they furnished of affinity, on the one hand, with the myths of the Eskimo, of the Finns, the Lapps and the Samoyeds, and on the other, with the Eddas and the Sagas of the Northmen.

Mr. Leland has published the result of his researches in a delightful and instructive volume, "The Algonquin Legends of New England; or, Myths and Folklore of the Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot tribes." In his preface, he mentions among those to whom he was largely indebted for assistance, Mrs. W. Wallace Brown, of Calais, Maine, from whom he received a great proportion of the most curious folklore of the Passamaquoddies, especially of such parts as are connected with the Edda. In his list of authorities we find, under the head of "Books, Manuscripts, etc.," "a manuscript collection of Passamaquoddy legends and folklore, by Mrs. W. Wallace Brown, all given with the greatest accuracy as narrated by Indians, some in broken Indian-English." Under the head of "persons" consulted in the preparation of the book we find the name of "Sapiel Selmo, keeper of the Wampum Record, formerly read every four years at the kindling of the great fire at Canawagha.¹"

¹ Caughnawaga, near Montreal.

It is from these same authorities that I have been able to obtain the two interesting productions which I have the honour to lay before our Section of the Royal Society.

In the letter accompanying the manuscripts, Mrs. Brown wrote to me as follows:—
 “I have been able to collect several songs, but only two could be properly called love-songs, and all but one have stories attached to them. The task of writing, or trying to express with English letters, the peculiar intonation of the Indian language is no trifling affair. It may print all right, but Chee-oo-nà-gamess himself,¹ could not read it.

“The two songs that I send are from Sapial Selmo, the wampum reader of the Wabanakis. He is the grandson of the last great chief of the tribe, and is captain at the council, not only of the Wabanaki, but of the Mohawks also. He still holds the wampum and keeps all the old traditions. I am always obliged to use great finesse and more presents to get anything from his family than from all the rest. But it is worth most . . . You would certainly have enjoyed the songs, could you have peeped into the dirty camps and seen the expressive faces in sympathy with the subject. People who do not understand the Indians, can never imagine what wonderfully susceptible natures they have.”

While agreeing with Mr. Leland, as to the clear indications of Norse influence in many of the Wabanaki legends, Mrs. Brown maintains that these Indians have quite a number of beautiful myths entirely their own. She looks forward with eagerness to the publication, by Mr. Leland, of a second volume wholly devoted to those purely native productions of the Wabanaki imagination. She takes the utmost interest in all that concerns the Passamaquoddy tribes, over whom she exercises exceptional influence—the fruit of insight and sympathy. Champlain, who is followed by Bancroft and others, designated the Passamaquoddies as the “Ethemins.” Mrs. Brown gives the preference to the name which she has assigned them for the reason that their totem is a rude picture of two Indians pursuing pollock (in which those waters once abounded) in a canoe. *Quoddy* is the native word for that species of fish, and some ascribe the same origin to Acadia—a name which was early applied to the whole region. The Passamaquoddies are partitioned into three reservations—one at Pleasant Point, on Passamaquoddy Bay; one at Calais, and the third at Peter Dana’s Point, Princeton. They are as nomadic as Arabs, and are not found for longer than a month at a time at any of the reservations. They almost all understand English, and a few of them speak it. Their own tongue differs from the Micmac, but resembles the Malicete and Penobscot. All these groups have the same legends, and honour the same mythical personages, Glooscap, Mikwum-wess, etc., though under different names. At the time of de Monts’ visit, the Passamaquoddy Indians numbered about twelve hundred men. Now they are reduced to less than five hundred, including women and children. This reduction may, in part, be attributed to intermarriage with the lowest of the whites, each succeeding generation of mixed blood becoming less and less able to endure the hardships of the primitive life of the Indians. Formerly they are said to have attained a great age, but centenarians have been exceptional in recent times. Nevertheless, four sisters died, not very long ago, whose combined ages were said to be four hundred and thirty-five years. They attributed their longevity to the use of an herb, the secret of which had been imparted to their grandmother by a wild (that is, western) Indian for the price of a bride’s dowry, with which to purchase a

¹ Legendary petroglyphic artist.

wife from among the Micmacs. The herb in question is described as having a long wiry stem, bearing seed-pods, and from three to five long undulating leaves, like corn. It answers perfectly to the description of an herb in vogue among the Wakayas of Arizona, who call it *z peck*. The Passamaquoddies call it *kaybasan*.

The usages of the Passamaquoddies do not differ materially from those of the other Algonquin tribes. Their courtship is of a matter-of-fact character in some respects, though their love-songs are marked by a sense of chivalrous devotion. The parents of the bride-groom furnish the bride's trousseau at the betrothal, or just before the marriage. The kindred of the bride supply the collation and amusements. The latter, which are often kept up for a fortnight, sometimes leave the entertainers drained of all their available wealth, as niggardliness on such an occasion would be esteemed a disgrace.

When a Passamaquoddy dies, his relatives go into mourning. In what it consists, only themselves are aware, as the only change visible on its discontinuance is a daub of red paint on cheek or forehead. Sometimes the period of sorrow is suddenly terminated as, when recently, a child happening to die just on the eve of an election, only a few hours were allowed to intervene between the funeral and the dispensing drum-beat. On hearing the summons, all the relations, except the parents, hurried to the pow-wow in their old clothes and their paint.

An election of officers, among the Passamaquoddies, looks very like a burlesque on "the ways that are dark, and the tricks that are vain" of their civilised white neighbours. It is amusing to see and hear the dusky children of the forest openly and innocently purchasing votes, or offering, for a round sum, to buy off the opposing candidate. The sachem is of the past—the line of governors having been broken. Mrs. Brown, who furnishes these particulars, attended the last election of a sachem in direct descent, and it was, from an aboriginal standpoint, quite an imposing affair. But however changed they may be in other respects, there is one gift of which time has not robbed them. They are still the true descendants of those joyous beings who, nearly three centuries ago, greeted Champlain and his companions with dance and song. To all the Wabanaki, Mr. Leland ascribes a large share of the poetic nature. Mrs. Brown thinks that her *protégés*, the Passamaquoddies, surpass all their kindred tribes in the strength and development of their poetic faculty. "Hill, dale and shady nook, and liquid lapse of murmuring stream" bear in their names, and the legends associated with them, the evidence of their imaginative creativeness. One such legend, connected with two rocks in Passamaquoddy Bay, Mrs. Brown has kindly sent me:—Many, many years ago, the story runs, a young man of the tribe fell in love with a maiden, between whose family and his own there was a lasting feud. She was forbidden to listen to his suit, but the lovers met by stealth. Having wooed the damsel, and won her consent to marry him, the young brave took courage to ask her parents to sanction their union. They refused, and his own family were alike indignant at his request. They still, however, met in secret, and the girl's parents saw that the only chance of keeping them apart was to place her where he could no longer visit her. They accordingly took her to Deer Island, about four miles from their village at Campobello. But the young couple loved each other too well to care for life apart. They vowed that they would die rather than submit to be severed.

When he saw the object of his affections placed in the canoe which was to carry her

out of his reach, he stood on the Point of Rocks, and watching the receding vessel, sang these words :—

“ My parents think they can separate me from the girl I love;
We have vowed to love each other while we live.
Their commands are vain : we shall see each other while the world lasts.
Yes! let them say or do what they like; we shall see each other while the rocks stand.”

When the parents of the girl arrived at Deer Island and pitched their wigwam by the beautiful shore, the twilight lay on the bay. The girl looked back at the village that she had left, and seeing her lover, she sang :—

“ Here I sit on this point, whence I can see the man that I love.
Our people think that they can sever us; but we shall see each other while
the world lasts.
Here shall I remain, in sight of the man that I love.”

And there the lovers remained in sight of each other.

Until about forty years ago they were both visible. One of the rocks—that which represented the young brave, called by the natives *W'skitages*—resembled a man with a hood over his head. The French christened it the “Friar's Head.” The opposite rock—called *Peelsquiss* by the natives—was not unlike a woman. Unfortunately for the loving pair, *Peelsquiss* was tumbled over into the bay by white men. *W'skitages*, however, remains a solid rock on Campobello Point to this day.

The two songs which follow—one of which is embedded in a tale—are, like the preceding legend, entirely apart from that class of Wabanaki compositions to which Mr. Leland has given so much prominence in his “Algonquin Legends.” They are in no wise connected with the traditions of the Northmen, nor are they indebted for their simple and touching beauty to either the French or the English settlers. “Belle,” as an attribute of the love-lorn maiden, rescued, after mysterious dream-warning, by her faithful lover, would seem to be borrowed from the former. But the substance and the style of both love ditties are distinctly aboriginal.

STORY, WITH SONG. No. 1.

In a Wabanaki village, on the shore of a beautiful lake, lived a young man who was very brave and very handsome. Many girls of the tribe had tried to win his heart but failed. For, when quite young, he had promised to marry Belle Arselik.

One day two girls visited him, and asked him if he would take one them for his wife. The young man refused them both, and told them he had already promised to marry Belle Arselik. These girls thought that, if they could dispose of her, they might win him yet. So they planned to take her to a distant island and leave her to starve. They pretended great friendship for her and invited her to have a sail, and they would visit the beautiful islands. Unsuspectingly she went with them. They told stories and sang songs, still paddling further away. After a time, Belle Arselik grew uneasy and begged them to go back home; but they did not listen to her, and landed on a lonely island, saying: “We will build a fire.” When Belle Arselik went to pick up some fire wood, the

two girls jumped into their canoe and paddled off. She called to them, but they would not come back. Then she knew their intention, and from a rock on the island she watched them disappear from view. After she could see them no more, she began to cry, and sang this song:—

Now I am left on this lonely island to die—
 No one to hear the sound of my voice.
 Who will bury me when I die?
 Who will sing my death-song for me?
 My false friends leave me here to die alone;
 Like a wild beast, I am left on this island to die.
 I wish the wind spirit would carry my cry to my love!
 My love is as swift as the deer; he would speed through the forest to find me;
 Now I am left on this lonely island to die.
 I wish the spirit of air would carry my breath to my love.
 My love's canoe, like the sunlight, would shoot through the water to my side;
 But I am left on this lonely island to die, with no one to pity me but the little birds.
 My love is brave and strong; but, when he hears my fate, his stout heart will break;
 And I am on this lonely island to die.
 Now the night comes on, and all is silent but the owl. He sings a mournful song to his
 mate, in pity for me.
 I will try to sleep. I wish the night spirit to hear my song; he will tell my love of my
 fate; and when I awake, I shall see the one I love.
 I am on this lonely island to die.

That same night, the young man dreamed of being on the back of Culloo (a mythical bird of huge proportions), and carried up to a height where he could see the whole world. On one of the islands he saw his love sleeping on a rock. The next morning he took his canoe and paddled to the island which he had seen in his dream, and there found the girl of his choice. They went back to the tribe, and were married as soon as the feast could be prepared. The two girls that carried her away, left the country and were never heard from.

SONG. No. 2.

Come, my *moo sarge*,¹ let us go up that shining mountain, and sit together on that shining
 mountain; there we will watch the beautiful sun go down from the shining mountain.
 There we will sit, till the beautiful night traveller² arises above the shining mountain;
 we will watch him, as he climbs to the beautiful skies.
 We will also watch the little stars following their chief.
 We will also watch the northern lights playing their game of ball in their cold, shiny
 country.
 There we will sit, on the beautiful mountain, and listen to the thunder (*Badankac*) beating
 his drum.
 We will see the lightning when she lights her pipe.
 We will see the great whirlwind running a race with *betchi-vesay* (squall).
 There we will sit, 'till every living creature feels like sleeping.

¹ "Loved one," tr.

² i. e., Evening star.

There we will hear the great owl sing his usual song, *teeg-lee-goo-wul-tique*,¹ and see all the animals obey his song.

There we will sit, on that beautiful mountain, and watch the little stars in their sleepless flight. They do not mind the song, *teeg-lee-goc-wul-tique*; neither will we mind it, but sit more closely together and think of nothing but ourselves, on the beautiful mountain.

Again, the *teeg-lee-goo-wul-tique* will be heard, and the night traveller will come closer to warn us that all are dreaming, except ourselves and the little stars. They and their chief are coursing along, and our minds go with them. Then the owl sleeps; no more is heard *teeg-lee-goo-wul-tique*; the lightning ceases smoking; the thunder ceases beating his drum; and though we feel inclined to sleep, yet will we sit on the beautiful, shining mountain.²

For the sake of comparison with the remaining Wabanaki dialects, as well as with the other branches of the great Algonquin linguistic stock, it has been thought well to append the originals of the foregoing songs. Notwithstanding numerous local peculiarities, it will be seen that many of the words in use on the shores of the Atlantic present little variation from forms that would be intelligible in Manitoba, or even in the region of the Saskatchewan.

SONG. No. 1.

N-t-ā pōo-ne-mok me-ne-cook 'n-t-l-ee mach-e-nūn
 Nes-tā-goo nes-tā-goo mee-l'-t'-gwo glōos-wā-gan
 Wēn-mach-ē-nun poo-'skin-et?
 Wen lal al-lē lint-wajan mach-ē-nun?
 Muks-kel-mōok ga-duk-in mach-e-nun
 Tā-ah-loo bes-we-wasees m'-a-cook na mach-e-nun.
 Na-bal-us a-ga-wāak much-up-t'-āk Che-ball-ock moo-sarge-ait!
 Moo-sarge to-gee wa-wa-ben t'-a lo-k'doch to-we-bes gueesun gā-loūet.
 N-tā poo-ne-mok me-n'-cook n-t-lee mach-e-nun.
 Na-bal Che-ball-ock much-up-t'-wait wā-gan moo-sarge-ait
 Moo-sarge wa-gan Acweeden n'-sā-to-gee la-sa-win we'l-e-bes sa tā àh-lo kesoes k'are-que-da
 la-l sa sa-sen
 L'n'ta poo-ne-mok me-ne-cook n't'lee mach-e-nun godāmer da-win ge-āk ma-da-win da-poos-
 Sipsēesoe.
 Moo-sarge sog-a-la-wu go-dāmar gāues-ne-kar-do-mo d'are-o-dagēe mēe-soon sur-ka-sin.
 N'lā poo-nē-mok me-nē-cook n't'le mach-e-nun.
 Bes-ke-arc dā-da-gaque no-da-mo da-pos-ko-ko-khus—ko ko-khus glint-oo-mis-kāin squosell.
 N'do-que gat'wun n'gāzin Getauchs-kn-ōo-do-man glint wāgon—P-all moo-sarge-wāgon-al—
 rōo-ke-inn ne-me-ah-moo-sarge
 N'lā poo-ne-mok mé-ne-cook n-t-lee mach-ē-nun.

SONG. No. 2.

Kel naga nie k'machee-aset'n kis-agwoo-n't bes a quett wootch-naga k'mis-ōo-finen n't
 bes a quett wootch-k'tet-lee sag yanen-wel-in-a gis-ett kisoos (sun) eel min kee gat.

¹ "Go to sleep all," tr.

² The Indians have such a way of mixing their tenses, that it is almost impossible to be literally correct.

You-wet ap-moot wat bes guett *wootch* (mountain) n'it-etch quen-fe-yego te-gee sak-ee-yatt
wel-i-git nippà-oo set wetchi sak-ke-yatt-gat bes-a-guett wootch.

N'it k'tes-à-gua-nen bem-i-spi quàtt àl àgek naga k'tes-àj-yonen beses-mosek-pemi-noos
ok-watit ome jou-ett mow-al naga nà-h.

K'tes-ag ga-nen-bach ko-wa-yunek e-jesken hudé-tit, nit-weli-poo-a-guek omut-kee-wà.

Moch té witt eppi yigu wat bes-a-guett wootch naga k'chik-sut menen Ba-dau-kac pug-ho-lit
N'aga k'nemt-to-nen e-li-pas-quiet mott.

N'aga n'a k'nem ya-nen k'chee App-lo-san-wes-itt naga fetchi we say-e-now.

N'tit-it mech-tie n'k'tepinen te gee m'gioo we-ge-sis win agusitt ketooksitt

N'it k'noos wanen k'chee ko-ko-khus (great owl) mek-en-tague tet-eeg-lee-goowul-tique nit
m-zéoo we-gis-is-ek mow-anga It lint wàgan

M'ech te nilan n'tep-e'nen wut bes-a-guett wootch n'tat-el saj-gamen Pa-sis-ock pemit'-wet-
litell gā-dà-mà achik-sit mo-wew-mia ko-ko-khus lint-wàjon t'eeg-lee-goo-wul-tique,
ñiloona gā-da-mà n'chik-sit mow-ow neu-in tejoockt ah-ha-chio n'tel mee we ch-wow-
hit-ow-tisn gō dà mà n'sep-itt-hod mo hen kegu teppo n'tippen wut tes-a-guett wootch

Op-ch n'ooot m'en lint wàgan téeg-lee-goo-wel-tique mutch tay-m'totel sag-wà-nen ni-poee-set
wech-ko-wat, Ha-hatch-ioo choke-wee wech-wow wim-agu soonit m'lioow wen pem-ow-
sétt ta k-etch wal guasso teppoo pesés ma-ik nag-naja am-jew-ett mo-wal pemi
quaskol-to-wok nilon na n'tel itt hus wàgonenal quas-ko-we-wul tà-hà-lo t'peses-wa-ock
n'te-mutch n'tepenen, otah met entaju t'eeg-lee-goo-wul tique

N'it m'lioow-wen-go-an netchi ti ko-ko-kus, net-ag-cheni-pek he-loo-cheni we-teme-na. Nil
oona n'pechi Badenkak-n'it et-tà-chi velusinsek jout bes a guett wootch n'ko-winen.