


## ALBUM LITERATURE LINK: INDIAN BOYHOOD

### Album Description

This album and the associated learning activities included below were inspired by the discussion “S'a: Doctor, Author, Scout Master” about Hakadah/Ohíyesa/Dr. Charles A. Eastman posted by  Michelle Zupan. In it, Michelle included a link to the first book he wrote in 1902, *Indian Boyhood*, that she found on Project Gutenberg. Curious to learn more, I turned to Chronicling America as Michelle had. There I found the book—actually most, but not all, of the book—serialized in the Saturday section of *The Journal Junior* from *The Minnesota Journal* over the course of nearly four months in early 1903. This album includes links to the full series.

- Assign sections to individual students or have pairs read them aloud together.
- Encourage interested students to make recordings of the sections, then stitch them together to create an audio book version for the class or the school.
- During or after reading, have students complete one of the following graphic organizers: Event Happenings, Source Analysis KWL worksheet, Thinking Triangle.
- Have students use these question cubes to ask, and possibly answer, questions about the section.
- Have students make a single sketch that best represents the complete section.
- Have students storyboard their sections or create a comic book version of it.
- Encourage students to use the Native American History and Culture: Finding Pictures research guide to find primary source images from LOC.gov to illustrate their section.
- Have students create a frozen living picture that represents the section as a whole or one scene from the section.
- Have students act out a scene from the section.
- Have students write a paragraph or create a slide summarizing the section.
- Have students write a review of the section in 280 characters, spaces included, or less.
- Have students write a poem about the section or one inspired by it.
- Inform the students that the newspaper published most, but not all, of the text. A couple of sections were combined, a few were left out altogether, and several were slightly truncated. The *Journal Junior* editor said the book was too long to be printed in its entirety. Have students compare their sections with the Gutenberg text and consider the questions below.
  - Were any changes made? Was anything left out?
  - What was the effect of those choices?
  - Would you have made different editorial choices? Why or why not?
- Encourage students to read other sections of *Indian Boyhood*, including those not published in the newspaper series.
- Have students read the articles below to learn more about Ohíyesa/Dr. Charles A. Eastman, taking note of three things that they found particularly interesting, two things they found surprising or inspiring, and one thing they would like to investigate further.
  - “Just Between You and Me” *The Minneapolis Journal - The Journal Junior* (Minneapolis, Minn.), December 13, 1902
  - “Ohíyesa: ‘The Winner’” *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), November 24, 1903
  - “An Indian Returns Home” *The Redwood Gazette* (Redwood Falls, Minn.) October 1, 1930
  - Dr. Charles A. Eastman - Ohíyesa Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center
- Have students write a short narrative chronicling an event from their childhood.

Image not found

[https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps\\_logo-1.png](https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png)

- Encourage students to search *Chronicling America* or the Library's digital collections to conduct further investigations.
- Encourage students to read more stories about growing up at different points in history and from different cultural perspectives.

What other ideas do you have for using *Indian Boyhood* with students?

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY

# Indian Boyhood

By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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## HAKAHAN, "THE PITIFUL LAST."

THE FIRST that he would not see an Indian for a while when he thinks of the great life in the world? This life was mine. Every day there was a real hunt. There was real game. Occasionally I would see a medicine dance away off in the woods where no one could disturb us, in which the boys impersonated their elders, Brave Bull, Standing Elk, High Hawk, Medicine Bird, they pretended and imitated their elders, and accurately, too, because they had seen the real thing all their lives.

We were not only good mimics but we were close students of nature. We studied the habits of animals just as you study your books. We watched the men of our people and represented them in our play; then learned to emulate them in our lives.

No people have a better use of their five senses than the Che-u-en of the wilderness. We could smell as well as hear and see. We could feel and taste as well as we could see and hear. Nowhere has the memory been more fully developed than in the wild life, and I can still see wherein I owe much to my early training.

Of course I myself do not remember when I first saw the day, but my brothers often recalled the event with much mirth; for it was a custom of the Sioux that when a boy was born his brother must plunge into the water, or roll in the snow naked if it was winter time; and if he was not big enough to do either of these himself water was thrown on him. If the new-born had a sister, she must be immersed. The idea was that a warrior had come to camp and the other children must display some act of hardihood.

I was so unfortunate as to be the youngest of the children who, soon after I was born, were left motherless. I had to bear the humiliating name of "the pitiful last."

I should earn a more dignified and appropriate name. It was regarded as little more than a playing by the rest of

Sleep, sleep, my boy; prepare to meet

The day that may be by day or by night.

The clouds will not dare to fight

Till morning break—till morning break!

Sleep, sleep, my child, with still 'tis night.

Then bravely wake—till bravely wake!

The Indian women would cut across their trail

from the woods and, in fact, to perform most of the drudgery

of the camp. This of necessity fell to their lot, because the

men must follow the game during the day. Very often the

medicine carrier carried me with her on these excursions; and

while she worked it was her habit to carry me

in a wild grape vine or a springy bough, so that the least breeze

would swing the cradle to and fro.

She has told me that, when I had grown old enough to

take notice, I was apparently capable of holding extended

conversations in an unknown dialect with birds and red

squirrels. Once I fell asleep in my cradle, suspended five or

six feet from the ground, while Uncheedah was some dis-

tance away, uttering a hick bark for a canoe. A squirrel

had found it convenient to come upon the bow of my cradle

and nibble his hickory nut,

until he awoke me by dropping the crumbs of his meal.

My disapproval of his intrusion

was so decided that he had to take a sudden and

quick flight to another bough, and from there he

began to pour out his wrath

upon me, while I continued

my objections to his presence so audibly that Un-

cheedah soon came to my

rescue and compelled the

bold intruder to go away. It

was a common thing for

him to alight on my cradle

in the woods.

After I left my cradle, I

almost walked away from it,

she told me. She then be-

gan calling my attention to

natural objects. Whenever

she heard the song of a bird,

she would tell me what bird

it came from, something

after this fashion:

"Hakadah, listen to She-

choka (the robin) calling his

mate, for he has just found

something good 'to eat'.

"Or 'Listen to Oop-

chah (the whistling) he is

singing for his little wife.

He will sing his best."

When I started to sing with her

in the evening the whippoorwill

no further than a stone's throw from our tent in the woods.

### Teaching Notes:

[See Album Description](#)

**Reference Link:** <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-01-24/ed-1/?sp=27>

Image 27 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), January 24, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

### Corresponding Project Gutenberg links

- Hadakah, “The Pitiful Last”
- Early Hardships

## MY INDIAN GRANDMOTHER & AN INDIAN SUGAR CAMP

8 THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY,



**Indian Boyhood**  
By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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### MY INDIAN GRANDMOTHER.

8 A motherless child, I always regarded my good grandmother as the wisest of guides and the best of protectors. It was not long before I began to realize her superiority to most of her contemporaries. This idea was not gained entirely from my own observation, but also from a knowledge of the high regard in which she was held by other women. Aside from her native talent and ingenuity, she was endowed with a truly wonderful memory.

I distinctly recall one occasion when she took me with her into the woods in search of certain medicinal roots.

"Why do you not use all kinds of roots for medicines," said I.

"Because," she replied, in her quick, characteristic manner, "the Great Mystery does not will us to find things too easily. In that case everybody would be a medicine-giver, and Ohiyesa must learn that there are many secrets which the Great Mystery will disclose only to the most worthy. Only those who seek him fasting and in solitude will receive his signs."

With this and many similar explanations she wrought in my soul wonderful and lively conceptions of the "Great Mystery" and the effects of prayer and solitude. I continued my childish questioning.

"But why did you not dig those plants that we saw in the woods, of the same kind that you are digging now?"

"For the same reason that we do not like the berries we find in the shadow of the deep woods as well as the ones which grow in sunny places. The latter have more sweetness and flavor. Those herbs which have medicinal virtues should be sought in a place that is neither too wet nor too dry, and where they have a generous amount of sunshine to maintain their vigor."

"Some day Ohiyesa will be old enough to know the secrets of medicine; then I will tell him all. But if you should grow up to be a bad man, I must withhold these treasures from you and give them to your brother, for a medicine man must be a good and wise man. I hope Ohiyesa will be a great medicine man when he grows up. To be a great warrior is a noble ambition; but to be a mighty medicine man is nobler!"

She said these things so thoughtfully and impressively that I cannot but feel and remember them even to this day. In brevity she equaled any of the men.

This trait, together with her ingenuity and alertness of mind, more than once saved her and her people from destruction. Once, when we were roaming over a region occupied by other tribes, and on a day when most of the men were out upon the hunt, a party of hostile Indians suddenly appeared. Although there were a few men left at home, they were taken by surprise at first and scarcely knew what to do,



tomahawks of his fellow-warriors, and brought us to his home to know a noble and a brave woman.

"I shall never forget your many favors shown to us. But I must go. I belong to my tribe and I shall return to them. I will endeavor to be a true woman also, and to teach my boys to be generous warriors like your son."

Her sister chose to remain among the Sioux all her life, and she married one of our young men.

"I shall make the Sioux and the Ojibways," she said, "to be as brothers."

### AN INDIAN SUGAR CAMP.

UNTIL the first March [law the thoughts of the Indian women of my childhood turned promptly to the annual sugar-making. This industry was chiefly followed by the old men and women and the children. The rest of the tribe went out upon the spring fur-hunt at this season, leaving us at home to make the sugar.

The first and most important of the necessary utensils were the huge iron and brass kettles for boiling. Everything else could be made, but these must be bought, begged or borrowed. A maple tree was felled and a log canoe hollowed out, into which the sap was to be gathered. Little troughs of bass-wood and birchen basins were also made to receive the sweet drops as they trickled from the tree.

As soon as these labors were accomplished, we all proceeded to the bark sugar house, which stood in the midst of a fine grove of maples on the bank of the Minnesota river. We found this hut partially filled with the snows of winter and the withered leaves of the preceding autumn, and it must be cleared for our use. In the meantime a tent was pitched outside for a few days' occupancy. The snow was still deep in the woods, with a solid crust upon which we could easily walk; for we usually moved to the sugar house before the sap had actually started, the better to complete our preparations.

My grandmother worked like a beaver in these days for rather like a muskrat, as the Indians say; for this industrious little animal sometimes collects as many as six or eight bushels of edible roots for the winter, only to be robbed of his store by some of our people. If there was prospect of a good sugaring season, she now made a second and even a third canoe to contain the sap. These canoes were afterward utilized by the hunters for their proper purpose.

My grandmother did not confine herself to canoe making. She also collected a good supply of fuel for the fires, for she would not have much time to gather wood when the sap began to flow. Presently the weather moderated and the snow began to melt. The month of April brought showers which carried most of it off into the Minnesota river. Now the women began to test the trees—moving leisurely among them, ax in hand, and striking a quick blow, to see if the sap would appear. The trees, like people, have their individual

Teaching Notes:

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Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-01-31/ed-1/?sp=30>


Image 30 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), January 31, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg links

- My Indian Grandmother
- An Indian Sugar Camp

## AN INDIAN BOY'S TRAINING

8 THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY.



### Indian Boyhood

By Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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#### AN INDIAN BOY'S TRAINING.

It is commonly supposed that there is no systematic education of their children among the aborigines of this country. Nothing could be farther from the truth. All the customs of this primitive people were held to be divinely instituted, and those in connection with the training of children, were scrupulously adhered to and transmitted from one generation to another.

Very early the Indian boy assumed the task of preserving and transmitting the legends of his ancestors and his race. Almost every evening a myth, or a true story of some deed done in the past, was narrated by one of the parents or grandparents, while the boy listened with parted lips and glancing eyes. On the following evening he was usually required to repeat it. If he was not an apt scholar, he struggled long with his task; but, as a rule, the Indian boy is a good listener and has a good memory, so that the stories were tolerably well mastered. The household became his audience, by which he was alternately criticized and applauded.

This sort of teaching at once enlightened the boy's mind and stimulates his ambition. His conception of his own future career becomes a vivid and irresistible force. Whatever there is for him to learn must be learned; whatever qualifications are necessary to a truly great man he must seek at any expense of danger and hardship. Such was the feeling of the imaginative and brave young Indian. It became apparent to him in early life that he must accustom himself to rove alone and not to fear or dislike the impression of solitude.

It seems to be a popular idea that all the characteristic skill of the Indian is instinctive and hereditary. This is a mistake. All the stoicism and patience of the Indian are acquired traits, and continual practice alone makes him master of the art of woodcraft. Physical training and drilling were not neglected. I remember that I was not allowed to have beef soup or any warm drink. The soup was for the old men. General rules for the young were never to take their food very hot, nor to drink much water.

My uncle, who educated me up to the age of fifteen years, was a strict disciplinarian and a good teacher. When I left the teepee in the morning, he would say: "Hakadah, look closely to everything you see"; and at evening, on my return, he used often to catch me for an hour or so.

"On which side of the trees is the lighter-colored bark? On which side do they have most regular branches?"

It was his custom to let me name all the new birds that

cornered and already wounded. These fierce beasts are generally afraid of the common weapon of the larger animals—the horns, and if these are very long and sharp, they dare not risk an open fight.

"There is one exception to this rule—the gray wolf will attack fiercely when very hungry. But their courage depends upon their numbers. In this they are like white men. One wolf or two will never attack a man. They will stampede a herd of buffaloes in order to get at the calves; they will rush upon a herd of antelopes, for these are helpless; but they are always careful about attacking man."

Of this nature were the instructions of my uncle, who was widely known at that time as among the greatest hunters of his tribe.


All boys were expected to endure hardship without complaint. In savage warfare, a young man must, of course, be an athlete and used to undergoing all sorts of privations. He must be able to go without food and water for two or three days without displaying any weakness, or to run for a day and a night without any rest. He must be able to traverse a pathless and wild country without losing his way either in the day or night time. He cannot refuse to do any of these things if he aspires to be a warrior.

Sometimes my uncle would wake me very early in the morning and challenge me to fast with him all day. I had to accept the challenge. We blackened our faces with charcoal, so that every boy in the village would know that I was fasting for the day. Then the little tempters would make my life a misery until the merciful sun hid behind the western hills.

I can scarcely recall the time when my stern teacher began to give sudden war-whoops over my head in the morning while I was sound asleep. He expected me to leap up with perfect presence of mind, always ready to grasp a weapon of some sort and to give a shrill whoop in reply. If I was sleepy or startled and hardly knew what I was about he would ridicule me and say that I need never expect to sell my scalp dear. Often he would vary these tactics by shooting off his gun just outside of the lodge while I was yet asleep, at the same time giving blood-curdling yells.

After a time I became used to this.

When Indians went upon the warpath, it was their custom to try the new warriors thoroughly before coming to an engagement. For instance, when they were near a hostile camp, they would select the novices to go after water and make them do all sorts of things to prove their courage. In accordance with this idea, my uncle used to send me off after water when we camped after dark in a strange place. Perhaps the country was full of wild beasts, and, for aught



Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-02-07/ed-1?sp=30>

Image 30 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), February 7, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg link

- An Indian Boy's Training

## GAMES AND SPORTS

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY



### Indian Boyhood

By

Dr. Charles A. Eastman

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#### GAMES AND SPORTS.



THE Indian boy was a prince of the wilderness. He had but very little work to do during the period of his boyhood. His principal occupation was the practice of a few simple arts in warfare and the chase. Aside from this, he was master of his time.

Whatever was required of us boys was quickly performed; then the field was clear for our games and plays. There was always keen competition among us. We felt very much as our fathers did in hunting and war—each one strove to excel all the others.

It is true that our savage life was a precarious one, and full of dreadful catastrophes; however, this never prevented us from enjoying our sports to the fullest extent. As we left our teepees in the morning, we were never sure that our scalps would not dangle from a pole in the afternoon! It was an uncertain life, to be sure. Yet we observed that the fawns skipped and played happily while the gray wolves might be peeping forth from behind the hills, ready to tear them limb from limb.

Our sports were molded by the life and customs of our people; indeed, we played only what we expected to do when grown. Our games were feats with bow and arrow, foot and pony races, wrestling, swimming and imitation of the customs and habits of our fathers. We had sham fights with mud balls and willow wands; we played lacrosse, made war upon bees, shot winter arrows (which were used only in that season), and coasted upon the ribs of animals and buffalo robes.

No sooner did the boys get together than, as a usual thing, they divided into squads and chose sides; then a leading arrow was shot at random into the air. Before it fell to the ground a volley from the bows of the participants followed. Each player was quick to note the direction and speed of the leading arrow and he tried to lead

as to repulse and scatter our numbers in every direction. However, he evidently did not want to retreat without any honors; so he bravely jumped upon the nest and yelled: "O, the brave Little Wound, to-day kill the only fierce enemy!"

Scarcely were the last words uttered when he screamed as if stabbed to the heart. One of his older companions shouted: "Dive into the water! Run! Dive into the water!" for there was a lake near by. This advice he obeyed.

When we had reassembled and were indulging in our mimic dance, Little Wound was not allowed to dance. He was considered not to be in existence—he had been killed by our enemies, the bee tribe. Poor little fellow! His swollen face was sad and ashamed as he sat on a fallen log and watched the dance. Although he might well have styled himself one of the noble dead who had died for their country, yet he was not unmindful that he had screamed, and this weakness would be apt to recur to him many times in the future.

We had some quiet plays which we alternated with the more severe and warlike ones. Among them were throwing wands and snow-arrows. In the winter we coasted much. We had no "double-rippers" or toboggans, but six or seven of the long ribs of a buffalo, fastened together at the larger end, answered all practical purposes.

Sometimes a strip of basswood bark, four feet long and about six inches wide, was used with considerable skill. We stood on one end and held the other, using the slippery inside of the bark for the outside, and thus coasting down long hills with remarkable speed.

The spinning of tops was one of the all-absorbing winter sports. We made our tops heart-shaped of wood, horn or bone. We whipped them with a long thong of buckskin. The handle was a stick about a foot long and sometimes we whittled the stick to make it spoon-shaped at one end.

We played games with these tops—two to fifty boys at one time. Back when the tops were



Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-02-14/ed-1/?sp=31>


Image 31 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), February 14, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg link

- Games and Sports


## [MY PLAYMATES]

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY,



## Indian Boyhood

By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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CHATANNA was the brother with whom I passed much of my early childhood. From the time that I was old enough to play with boys, this brother was my close companion. He was a handsome boy, and an affectionate comrade. We played together, slept together and ate together; and as Chatanna was three years the older, I naturally looked up to him as a superior.

Oesedah was a beautiful little character. She was my cousin, and four years younger than myself. Perhaps none of my early playmates are more vividly remembered than is this little maiden.

The name given her by a noted medicine man was Makah-oesetoph-win. It means The-four-corners-of-the-earth. As she was rather small, the abbreviation with a diminutive termination was considered more appropriate, hence Oesedah became her common name.

Although she had a very good mother, Uncheedah was her efficient teacher and chaperon. Such knowledge as my grandmother deemed suitable to a maiden was duly impressed upon her susceptible mind. When I was not in the woods with Chatanna, Oesedah was my companion at home; and when I returned from my play at evening, she would have a hundred questions ready for me to answer. Some of these were questions concerning our every-day life, and others were more difficult problems which had suddenly dawned upon her active little mind. Whatever had occurred to interest her during the day was immediately repeated for my benefit.

There were certain questions upon which Oesedah held me to be authority, and asked with the hope of increasing her little store of knowledge. I have often heard her declare to her girl companions: "I know it is true; Ohlyesa said so!" Uncheedah was partly responsible for this, for when any questions came up which lay within the sphere of man's observation, she would say: "Ohlyesa ought to know this; he is a man—I am not! You had better ask him."

The truth was that she had herself explained to me many of the subjects under discussion.

I was occasionally referred to little Oesedah in the same manner, and I always accepted her childish elucidations of any matter upon which I had been advised to consult her, because I knew as source of her wisdom, in this simple way we were

cliff. It provides its young with an abundance of fresh meat. They have the freshest of air. They are brought up under the spell of the grandest scenes, and inspired with lofty feelings and braveries. They see that all other beings live beneath them, and that they are the children of the King of Birds. A young eagle shows the spirit of a warrior while still in the nest.

"Being exposed to the inclemency of the weather the young eaglets are hardy. They are accustomed to hear the mutterings of the Thunder Bird and the sighings of the Great Mystery. Why, the little eagles cannot help being as noble as they are, because their parents selected for them so lofty and inspiring a home! How happy they must be when they find themselves above the clouds, and behold the zig-zag flashes of lightning all about them! It must be nice to taste a piece of fresh meat up in their cool home, in the burning summer time! Then when they drop down the bones of the game they feed upon, wolves and vultures gather beneath them, feeding upon their refuse. That alone would show them their chieftainship over all the other birds. Isn't that so, grandmother?" Thus triumphantly he concluded his argument.


I was staggered at first by the noble speech of Chatanna, but I soon recovered from its effects. The little Oesedah came to my aid by saying: "Wait until Ohlyesa tells of the loveliness of the beautiful oriole's home!" This timely remark gave me courage and I began:

"My grandmother, who was it said that a mother who has a gentle and sweet voice will have children of a good disposition? I think the oriole is that kind of a parent. It provides both sunshine and shadow for its young. Its nest is suspended from the prettiest bough of the most graceful tree, where it is rocked by the gentle winds; and the one we found yesterday was beautifully lined with soft things, both deep and warm, so that the little featherless birdies cannot suffer from the cold and wet."

Here Chatanna interrupted me to exclaim: "That is just like the white people—who cares for them? The eagle teaches its young to be accustomed to hardships, like young warriors!"

Ohlyesa was provoked; he reproached his brother and appealed to the judge, saying that he had not finished yet.

"But you would not have lived, Chatanna, if you had been exposed like that when you were a baby! The oriole shows wisdom in providing for its children a good, comfortable home! A home upon a high rock would not be



Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-02-21/ed-1/?sp=31>Image 31 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), February 21, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg link

- My Playmates

## [THE BOY HUNTER]

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY



### Indian Boyhood

By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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It will be no exaggeration to say that the life of the Indian hunter was a life of fascination. From the moment that he lost sight of his rude home in the midst of the forest, his untutored mind lost itself in the myriad beauties and forces of nature. Yet he never forgot his personal danger from some lurking foe or savage beast, however absorbing was his passion for the chase.

The Indian youth was a born hunter. Every motion, every step expressed an inborn dignity and, at the same time, a depth of native caution. His moccasined foot fell like the velvet paw of a cat—noiselessly; his glittering black eyes scanned every object that appeared within their view. Not a bird, not even a chipmunk, escaped their piercing glance.

I was scarcely over three years old when I stood one morning just outside our buffalo-skin teepee, with my little bow and arrows in my hand, and gazed up among the trees. Suddenly the instinct to chase and kill seized me powerfully. Just then a bird flew over my head and then another caught my eyes, as it balanced itself upon a swaying bough. Everything else was forgotten and in that moment I had taken my first step as a hunter.

There was almost as much difference between the Indian boys who were brought up on the open prairies and those of the woods, as between city and country boys. The hunting of the prairie boys was limited and their knowledge of natural history imperfect.



They were, as a rule, good riders, but in all-round physical development much inferior to the red men of the forest. Our hunting varied with the season of the year, and the nature of the country which was for the time our home. Our chief weapon was the bow and arrows, and perhaps, if we were lucky, a knife was possessed by some one in the crowd. In the olden times, knives and hatchets were made from bone and sharp stones. For fire we used a flint with a spongy piece of dry wood and a stone to strike with. Another way of starting fire was for several of the boys to sit down in a circle and rub two pieces of dry, spongy wood together, one after another, until the wood took fire.

Soon we heard the patter of little feet on the hard snow; then we saw the chipmunks approaching from all directions. Some stopped and ran experimentally up a tree or a log, as if uncertain of the exact direction of the call; others chased one another about.

In a few minutes the chipmunk caller was besieged with them. Some ran all over his person, others under him and still others ran up the tree against which he was sitting. Each boy remained immovable until their leader gave the signal; then a great shout arose, and the chipmunks in their flight all ran up the different trees.

Now the shooting match began. The little creatures seemed to realize their hopeless position; they would try again and again to come down the trees and flee away from the deadly aim of the youthful hunters. But they were shot down very fast; and whenever several of them rushed toward the ground the little redskin hugged the tree and yelled frantically to scare them up again.

Each boy shoots always against the trunk of the tree, so that the arrow may bound back to him every time; otherwise, when he had shot away all of them, he would be helpless, and another, who had cleared his own tree, would come and take away his game, so there was warm competition. Sometimes a desperate chipmunk would jump from the top of the tree in order to escape, which was considered a joke on the boy who lost it and a triumph for the brave little animal. At last all were killed or gone, and then we went on to another place, keeping up the sport until the sun came out and the chipmunks refused to answer the call.

When we went out on the prairies we had a different and less lively kind of sport. We used to snare with horse-hair and bow-strings all the small ground animals, including the prairie-dog. We both snared and shot them. Once a little boy set a snare for one, and lay flat on the ground, a little way from the hole, holding the end of the string. Presently he felt something move and pulled in a huge rattlesnake; and to this day, his name is "Caught-the-Rattle-snake." Very often a boy got a new name in some such manner. At another time, we were playing in the woods and found a fawn's tracks. We followed and caught it while asleep, but in the struggle to get away, it kicked one boy, who is still called "Kicked-by-the-Fawn."

It became a necessary part of our education to learn to prepare a meal while out hunting. It is a fact that most Indians will eat the liver and some other portions of large animals raw, but they do not eat fish or birds uncooked. Neither will they eat a frog, or an eel. On our boyish hunts, we often went on until we found ourselves a long way from our home, when we would take a rest.

Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-02-28/ed-1/?sp=31>

Image 31 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), February 28, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg link

- The Boy Hunter



## HAKADAH'S FIRST OFFERING

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, M



### HAKADAH'S FIRST OFFERING.



HAKADAH, "cowah!" was the sonorous call that came from a large teepee in the midst of the Indian encampment. In answer to the summons there emerged from the woods, which were only a few steps away, a boy, accompanied by a splendid black dog.

There was little in the appearance of the little fellow to distinguish him from the other Sioux boys.

He hastened to the tent from which he had been summoned, carrying in his hands a bow and arrows gorgeously painted, while the small birds and squirrels that he had killed with these weapons dangled from his belt.

Within the tent sat two old women, one on each side of the fire. Uncheedah was the boy's grandmother, who had brought up the motherless child. Wahchewin was only a caller, but she had been invited to remain and assist in the first personal offering of Hakadah to the "Great Mystery."

This was a matter which had, for several days, pretty much monopolized Uncheedah's mind. It was her custom to see to it when each of her children attained the age of eight summers. They had all been celebrated as warriors and hunters among their tribe, and she had not hesitated to claim for herself a good share of the honors they had achieved, because she had brought them early to the notice of the "Great Mystery."

She believed that her influence had helped to regulate and develop the characters of her sons to the height of savage nobility and strength of manhood.

The boy came rushing into the lodge, followed by his dog Ohitika who was wagging his tail prominently, as if to say: "Master and I are really hunters!"

Hakadah breathlessly gave a descriptive narrative of the killing of each bird and squirrel as he pulled them off his belt and threw them before his grandmother.

"This blunt-headed arrow," said he, "actually had eyes this morning. Before the squirrel can dodge around the tree it strikes him in the head, and, as he falls to the ground, my Ohitika is upon him."

He knelt upon one knee as he talked, his black eyes shining like evening stars.

be a great warrior and hunter. I am not prepared to see my Hakadah show any cowardice, for the love of possessions is a woman's trait and not a brave's."

During this speech, the boy had been completely aroused to the spirit of manliness, and in his excitement was willing to give up anything he had—even his pony! But he was unmindful of his friend and companion, Ohitika, the dog! So, scarcely had Uncheedah finished speaking, when he almost shouted:

"Grandmother, I will give up any of my possessions for the offering of the Great Mystery! You may select what you think will be most pleasant to him."

It was hard for Uncheedah to tell the boy that he must part with his dog, but she was equal to the situation.

"Hakadah," she proceeded cautiously, "you are a young brave. I know, though young, your heart is strong and your courage is great. You will be pleased to give up the dearest thing you have for your first offering. You must give up Ohitika. He is brave; and you, too, are brave. He will not fear death; you will bear his loss bravely. Come—here are four bundles of paints and a filled pipe—let us go to the place."

When the last words were uttered, Hakadah did not seem to hear them. He was simply unable to speak. To a civilized eye he would have appeared at that moment like a little copper statue. His bright black eyes were fast melting in floods of tears, when he caught his grandmother's eye and recollected her oft-repeated adage: "Tears for women and the war-whoop for man to drown sorrow!"

He swallowed two or three big mouthfuls of heart-ache and the little warrior was master of the situation.

"Grandmother, my Brave will have to die! Let me tie together two of the prettiest tails of the squirrels that he and I killed this morning, to show to the Great Mystery what a hunter he has been. Let me paint him myself!"

This request Uncheedah could not refuse and she left the pair alone for a few minutes, while she went to ask Wacoota to execute Ohitika.

Every Indian boy knows that when a warrior is about to meet death, he must sing a death dirge. Hakadah thought of his Ohitika as a person who would meet his death without a struggle, so he began to sing a dirge for him, at the same time hugging him tight to himself. As if he were a human being, he whispered in his ear:

"Be brave, Ohitika! I shall remember you the first



OHITIKA IN HIS DEATH PAINT.

Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-03-07/ed-1/?sp=29>

Image 29 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), March 7, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

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- Hakadah's First Offering

## A VISIT TO SMOKY DAY & [THE STONE BOY]

8 THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, M.



### Indian Boyhood

By Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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#### A VISIT TO SMOKY DAY.

SMOKY DAY was widely known among us as a preserver of history and legend. He was a living book of the traditions and history of his people. Among his effects were bundles of small sticks, notched and painted. One bundle contained the number of his own years. Another was composed of sticks representing the important events of history, each of which was marked with the number of years since that particular event occurred. For instance, there was the year when so many stars fell from the sky, with the number of years since it happened cut into the wood. Another recorded the appearance of a comet, and from these heavenly wonders the great national catastrophes and victories were reckoned.

But I will try to repeat some of his favorite narratives as I heard them from his own lips. I went to him one day with a piece of tobacco and an eagle-feather; not to buy his Mes., but hoping for the privilege of hearing him tell of some of the brave deeds of our people in remote times.

The tall and large old man greeted me with his usual courtesy and thanked me for my present. As I recall the meeting, I well remember his unusual stature, his slow speech and gracious manner.

"Ho, mita koda!" (welcome, friend!) was Smoky Day's greeting, as I entered his lodge.

"To-day I will tell you one of the kind we call myths or fairy stories. They are about men and women who do wonderful things—things that ordinary people cannot do at all. Sometimes they are not exactly human beings, for they partake of the nature of men and beasts, or of men and gods. I tell you this beforehand, so that you may not ask any questions, or be puzzled by the inconsistency of the actors in these old stories."

"Once there were ten brothers who lived with their only sister, a young maiden of sixteen summers. She was very skilful at her embroidery, and her brothers all had beautifully worked quivers and bows embellished with porcupine quills. They loved and were kind to her, and the maiden in her turn loved her brothers dearly, and was content with her position as their housekeeper. They were great hunters, and scarcely ever remained at home during the day, but when they returned at evening they would relate to her all their adventures."

"One night they came home one by one with their game, as usual, all but the eldest, who did not return. It was supposed by the other brothers that he had married a deer, for he



"Was it you who answered my call, you long-face?" he exclaimed.

"Upon this the latter growled and said:

"You had better be careful how you address me, or you may be sorry for what you say!"

"Who cares for you, you red-eyes, you ugly thing!" the boy replied; whereupon the grizzly immediately set upon him.

"But the boy's flesh became as hard as stone, and the bear's great teeth and claws made no impression upon it. Then he was so dreadfully heavy, and he kept laughing all the time as if he were being tickled, which greatly aggravated the bear. Finally Stone Boy pushed him aside and sent an arrow to his heart."

"He walked on for some distance until he came to a huge fallen pine tree, which had evidently been killed by lightning. The ground near by bore marks of a struggle, and Stone Boy picked up several arrows exactly like those of his uncles, which he himself carried."

"While he was examining these things, he heard a sound like that of a whirlwind, far up in the heavens. He looked up and saw a black speck, which grew rapidly larger until it became a dense cloud. Out of it came a flash and then a thunderbolt. The boy was obliged to wink, and when he opened his eyes, behold! a stately man stood before him and challenged him to single combat."

"Stone Boy accepted the challenge and they grappled with one another. The man from the clouds was gigantic in stature and very powerful. But Stone Boy was both strong and unusually heavy and hard to hold. The great warrior from the sky sweated from his exertions, and there came a heavy shower. Again and again the lightnings flashed about them as the two struggled there. At last Stone Boy threw his opponent, who lay motionless. There was a murmuring sound throughout the heavens and the clouds rolled swiftly away."

"Now," thought the hero, "this man must have slain all my uncles. I shall go to his home and find out what has become of them." With this he unfastened from the dead man's scalplock a beautiful bit of scarlet down. He breathed gently upon it, and as it floated upward he followed into the blue heavens.

"Away went Stone Boy to the country of the Thunder Birds. It was a beautiful land, with lakes, rivers, plains and mountains. The young adventurer found himself looking down from the top of a high mountain, and the country appeared to be very populous, for he saw lodges all about him as far as his eye could reach. He particularly noticed a majestic tree which towered above all the others, and in its bushy top bore an enormous nest. Stone Boy descended from the mountain and soon arrived at the foot of the tree; but there were no limbs except those at the top and it was so tall that he did not attempt to climb it. He simply took out his bit of down, breathed upon it and floated gently upward."

"When he was able to look into the nest he saw there innumerable eggs of various sizes, and all of a remarkable red color. He was nothing but a boy after all, and had all a boy's curiosity and recklessness. As he was handling the eggs carelessly, his notice was attracted to a sudden confusion in the nest which hid him. At the same moment he

Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-03-14/ed-1/?sp=33>

Image 33 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), March 14, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg links

- A Visit to Smoky Day
- The Stone Boy

## EVENING IN THE LODGE

8 THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, MAR 21, 1903



### Indian Boyhood

By Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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**EVENING IN THE LODGE.**



HAD been skating on that part of the lake where there was an overflow, and came home somewhat cold. I cannot say just how cold it was, but it must have been intensely cold, for the trees were cracking all about me like pistol shots. I did not mind, because I was wrapped up in my buffalo robe with the hair inside, and a wide leather belt held it about my loins. My skates were nothing more than strips of basswood bark bound upon my feet.

I had taken off my frozen moccasins and put on dry ones in their place.

"Where have you been and what have you been doing?" Uncheedah asked as she placed before me some roast venison in a wooden bowl. "Did you see any tracks of moose or bear?"

"No, grandmother. I have only been playing at the lower end of the lake. I have something to ask you," I said, eating my dinner and supper together with all the relish of a hungry boy who has been skating in the cold for half a day.

"I found this feather, grandmother, and I could not make out what tribe wear feathers in that shape."

"Ugh, I am not a man; you had better ask your uncle. Besides, you should know it yourself by this time. You are now old enough to think about eagle feathers."

I felt mortified by this reminder of my ignorance. It seemed a reflection on me that I was not ambitious enough to have found all such matters out before.

"Uncle, you will tell me, won't you?" I said, in an appealing tone.

"I am surprised, my boy, that you should fail to recognize this feather. It is a Cree medicine feather, and not a warrior's."

"Then," I said, with much embarrassment, "you had better tell me again, uncle, the language of the feathers, I have really forgotten it all."

The day was now gone; the moon had risen; but the cold had not lessened, for the trunks of the trees were still snapping all around our teepees, which were lighted and warmed by the immense logs which Uncheedah's industry had provided. My uncle, White Foot-print, now undertook to explain to me the significance of the eagle's bones in his mouth. Apparently he did not care to risk those



**THE CLOSE OF DAY.**

Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-03-21/ed-1/?sp=34>

Image 34 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), March 21, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

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- Evening in the Lodge

## ADVENTURES OF MY UNCLE

8

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, MAR



### Indian Boyhood

By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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#### ADVENTURES OF MY UNCLE.



**WHITE** FOOTPRINT, my uncle, who was father to me for ten years of my life, was almost a giant in his proportions, very symmetrical and "straight as an arrow." His face was not at all handsome. He had very quiet and reserved manners and was a man of action rather than of unnecessary words. Behind the veil of Indian reticence he had an inexhaustible fund of wit and humor; but this part of his character only appeared before his family and very intimate friends. Few men knew nature more thoroughly than he. Nothing irritated him more than to hear some natural fact misrepresented. I have often thought that with education he might have made a Darwin or an Agassiz.

He was always modest and unconscious of self in relating his adventures. "I have often been forced to realize my danger," he used to say, "but not in such a way as to overwhelm me. Only twice in my life have I been really frightened, and for an instant lost my presence of mind."

"Once I was in pursuit of a large buck deer that I had wounded. It was winter, and there was a heavy fall of fresh snow upon the ground. All at once I came upon the body of the deer lying dead on the snow. I began to make a hasty examination, but before I had made any discoveries, I spied the tips of two ears peeping just above the surface of the snow about twenty feet from me. I made a feint of not seeing anything at all, but moved quickly in the direction of my gun, which was leaning against a tree. Feeling, somehow, that I was about to be taken advantage of, I snatched at the same moment my knife from my belt.

"The panther, for such it was, made a sudden and desperate spring. I tried to dodge, but he was too quick for me. He caught me by the shoulder with his great paw, and threw me down. Somehow, he did not retain his hold, but made another leap and again concealed himself in the snow. Evidently he was preparing to make a fresh attack.

heard another sound, which was like the screaming of a small child. This was a porcupine, which had doubtless smelled the meat.

"I watched until a coyote appeared upon a flat rock fifty yards away. He sniffed the air in every direction; then, sitting partly upon his haunches, swung round in a circle with his hind legs sawing the air, and howled and barked in many different keys. It was a great feat! I could not help wondering whether I should be able to imitate him. What had seemed to be the voices of many coyotes was in reality only one animal. His mate soon appeared and then they both seemed satisfied, and showed no signs of a wish to invite another to join them. Presently they both suddenly and quietly disappeared.

"At this moment a slight noise attracted my attention and I saw that the porcupine had arrived. He had climbed up to the piece of meat nearest me, and was helping himself without ceremony. I thought it was fortunate that he came, for he would make a good watch dog for me. Very soon, in fact, he interrupted his meal, and caused all his quills to stand out in defiance. I glanced about me and saw the two coyotes slyly approaching my open camp from two different directions.

"I took the part of the porcupine! I rose in a sitting posture, and sent a swift arrow to each of my unwelcome visitors. They both ran away with howls of surprise and pain.

"The porcupine saw the whole from his perch, but his meal was not at all finished, for he began eating again with apparent relish. Indeed, I was soon furnished with another of these unconscious protectors. This one came from the opposite direction to a point where I had hung a splendid ham of venison. He cared to go no further, but seated himself at once in a convenient branch and began his supper.

"The canyon above me was full of rocks and trees. From this direction came a startling noise, which caused me more concern than anything I had thus far heard. It sounded much like a huge animal stretching himself, and giving a great yawn which ended in a scream. I knew this for the voice of a mountain lion, and it decided me to perch upon a limb for the rest of the night.

#### Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

**Reference Link:** <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-03-28/ed-1/?sp=38>

Image 38 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), March 28, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg link

- Adventures of My Uncle

## THE END OF THE BEAR DANCE

8

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, APR.



### Indian Boyhood

By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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#### THE END OF THE BEAR DANCE.



It was one of the superstitions of the Santee Sioux to treat disease from the standpoint of some animal or inanimate thing. That person who, according to their belief, had been commissioned to become a medicine man or a war chief, must not disobey the bear or other creature or thing which gave him his commission. If he ever ventured to do so, the offender must pay for his insubordination with his life, or that of his own child or dearest friend. It was supposed to be necessary that the supernatural orders be carried into effect at a particular age and a certain season of the year. Occasionally a very young man, who excused himself on the ground of youth and modesty, might be forgiven.

One of my intimate friends had been a sufferer from what, I suppose, must have been consumption. He, like myself, had a grandmother in whom he had unlimited faith. But she was a very ambitious and pretentious woman. Among her many claims was that of being a great "medicine woman," and many were deceived by it; but really she was a fraud, for she did not give any medicine, but "conjured" the sick exclusively.

At this time my little friend was fast losing ground, in spite of his grandmother's great pretensions. At last I hinted to him that my grandmother was a herbalist, and a skillful one. But he hinted back to me that "most any old woman who could dig roots could be a herbalist, and that without a supernatural commission there was no power that could cope with disease. I defended my ideal on the ground that there are supernatural powers in the herbs themselves; hence those who understand them have these powers at their command."

"But," insisted my friend, "one must get his knowledge from the Great Mystery."

This completely silenced my argument, but did not shake my faith in my grandmother's ability.

Redhorn was a good boy, and I loved him. I visited him often, and found him growing weaker day by day.

"Oh, yes," he said to me one day, "my grandmother has discovered the cause of my sickness."

ported themselves over its surface, and the birds of passage overhead noisily expressed their surprise at the excitement and confusion in our midst.

The herald, with his hoarse voice, again went the rounds, announcing the day's event and the tardy fulfillment of the boy's commission. Then came the bustle of preparation. The out-door toilet of the people was performed with care. I cannot describe just how I was attired or painted, but I am under the impression that there was but little of my brown skin that was not uncovered. The others were similarly dressed in feathers, paint and tinkling ornaments.

I soon heard the tom-tom's doleful sound from the direction of the bear's den, and a few war-whoops from the throats of the youthful warriors. As I joined the motley assembly, I noticed that the bear man's drum was going in earnest, and soon after he began to sing. This was the invitation to the dance.

An old warrior gave the signal and we all started for the den, very much like a group of dogs attacking a stranger. Frantically we yelled and whooped, running around the sheltering arbor in a hop, skip and jump fashion. In spite of the apparent confusion, however, every participant was on the alert for the slightest movement of the bear man.

All of a sudden, a brave gave the warning, and we scattered in an instant over the little plain between the den and our village. Everybody seemed to be running for dear life, and I soon found myself some yards behind the rest. I had gone in boldly, partly because of conversations with certain boys who proposed to participate, and whom I usually outdistanced in foot races. But it seemed that they had not carried out their intentions and I was left alone. I looked back once or twice, although I was pretty busy with my legs, and I imagined that my pursuer, the bear man, looked twice as fearful as a real bear. He was dressed and painted up with a view to terrify the crowd. I did not want the others to guess that I was at all dismayed, so I tried to give the war-whoop, but my throat was so dry at the moment that I am sure I must have given it very poorly.

Just as it seemed that I was about to be overtaken, the dancers who had deserted me suddenly slackened their speed, and entered upon the amusement of tormenting the bear man with gunpowder and switches, with which they touched him far from



Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-04-04/ed-1/?sp=36>

Image 36 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), April 4, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg link

- The End of the Bear Dance

## A LEGEND OF DEVIL'S LAKE

8

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, APR.



### Indian Boyhood

By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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#### A LEGEND OF DEVILS LAKE.



AFTER the death of Smoky Day, old Weyuha was regarded as the greatest story-teller among the Wahpeton Sioux. "Tell me, good Weyuha, a legend of your father's country," I said to him one evening, for I knew the country which is now known as North Dakota and Southern Manitoba, was their ancient hunting ground. I was prompted by Uncheedah to make this request, after the old man had eaten in our lodge.

"Many years ago," he began, as he passed the pipe to uncle, "we traveled from the Otter-tail to Minnewakan (Devils Lake.) At that time the mound was very distinct where Chotanka lies buried. The people of his immediate band had taken care to preserve it.

"This mound under which lies the great medicine man is upon the summit of Minnewakan Chantay, the highest hill in all that region. It is shaped like an animal's head placed on its base, with the apex upward.

"The reason why this hill is called Minnewakan Chantay, or the Heart of the Mysterious Land, I will now tell you. It has been handed down from generation to generation far beyond the memory of our great-grandparents. It was in Chotanka's line of descent that these legends were originally kept, but when he died the stories became everybody's, and then no one believed in them. It was told in this way."

I sat facing him, wholly wrapped in the words of the storyteller, and now I took a deep breath and settled myself so that I might not disturb him by the slightest movement while he was reciting his tale. We were taught this courtesy to our elders, but I was impulsive and sometimes forgot.

"A long time ago," resumed Weyuha, "the red people were many in number, and they inhabited all the land from the coldest place to the region of perpetual summer time. It seemed that they were all of one tongue, and all were friends.

"All the animals were considered people in those days. The buffalo, the elk, the antelope, were tribes of considerable importance. The bears were a smaller band, but they obeyed the mandates of the Great Mystery and were his favorites,

crouched down under the grass, and I did the same. We saw some of those queer beings that we called "two legs," riding upon big-tail deer (ponies). They yelled as they rode toward us. Mother growled terribly and rushed upon them. She caught one, but many more came with their dogs and drove us into a thicket. They sent the red willows singing after us, and two of them stuck in mother's side. When we got away at last she tried to pull them out, but they hurt her terribly. She pulled them both out at last, but soon after she lay down and died.

"I stayed in the woods alone for two days; then I went around the Minnewakan Chantay on the south side and there made my lonely den. There I found plenty of hazel nuts,

acorns and wild plums. Upon the plains the teepsinna were abundant, and I saw nothing of my enemies.

"One day I found a footprint not unlike my own. I followed it to see who the stranger might be. Upon the bluffs among the oak groves I discovered a beautiful young female gathering acorns. She was of a different band from mine, for she wore a jet black dress.

"At first she was disposed to resent my intrusion; but when I told her of my lonely life she agreed to share it with me. We came back to my home on the south side of the hill. There we lived happy for a whole year. When the autumn came again Woshepee, for this was her name, said that she must make a warm nest for the winter, and I was left alone again."

"Now," said Weyuha, "I have come to a part of my story that few people understand. All the long winter Chotanka slept in his den, and with the early spring there came a great thunder storm. He was aroused by a frightful crash that seemed to shake the hills; and lo! a handsome young man stood at his door. He looked, but was not afraid, for he saw that the stranger carried none of those red willows with feathered tips. He was unarmed and smiling.

"I come," said he, "with a challenge to run a race. Whoever wins will be the hero of his kind, and the defeated must do as the winner says thereafter. This is a rare honor that I have brought you. The whole world will see the race. The animal world will shout for you, and the spirits will cheer me on. You are not a coward, and therefore you will not refuse my challenge."

Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-04-11/ed-1/?sp=32>

Image 32 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), April 11, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

Corresponding Project Gutenberg link

- A Legend of Devil's Lake

## THE LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER

8

THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, APR.



### Indian Boyhood

By  
Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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#### THE LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER.



HERE is scarcely anything so exasperating to me as the idea that the natives of this country have no sense of humor and no faculty for mirth. This phase of their character is well understood by those whose fortune or misfortune it has been to live among them day in and day out at their homes. I don't believe I ever heard a real hearty laugh away from the Indians' fireside. I have often spent an entire evening in laughing with them until I could laugh no more. There are evenings when the recognized wit or story-teller of the village gives a free entertainment which keeps the rest of the community in a convulsive state until he leaves them. However, Indian humor consists as much in the gestures and inflections of the voice as in words, and is really untranslatable.

Matogee (Yellow Bear) was a natural humorous speaker, and a very diffident man at other times. He usually said little but when he was in the mood he could keep a large company in a roar. This was especially the case whenever he met his brother-in-law, Tamedokah.

It was a custom with us Indians to joke more particularly with our brothers- and sisters-in-law. But no one ever complained, or resented any of these jokes, however personal they might be. That would be an unpardonable breach of etiquette.

"Tamedokah, I heard that you tried to capture a buck by holding on to his tail," said Matogee, laughing. "I believe that feat cannot be performed any more; at least, it never has been since the pale-face brought us the knife, the 'mysterious iron,' and the pulverized coal that makes bullets fly. Since our ancestors hunted with stone knives and hatchets, I say, that has never been done."

The fact was that Tamedokah had stunned a buck that day while hunting, and as he was about to dress him the animal got up and attempted to run, whereupon the Indian launched forth to secure his game. He only succeeded in grasping the tail of the deer, and was pulled about all over the meadows and the adjacent woods until the tail came off in his hands. Matogee thought this too good a joke to be lost.

was smoking contentedly. At last he silently returned the pipe to Matogee, with whom it had begun its rounds. Deliberately he tightened his robe around him, saying as he did so:

"Ho (Yes). I was with him. It was by a very little that he saved his life. I will tell you how it happened."

"I was hunting with these two men, Nageedah and Chadozee. We came to some wild cherry bushes. I began to eat of the fruit when I saw a large silver-tip crawling toward us. 'Look out! there is a grizzly here!' I shouted, and I ran my pony out on to the prairie; but the others had already dismounted."

"Nageedah had just time to jump upon his pony and get out of the way, but the bear seized hold of his robe and pulled it off. Chadozee stood upon the verge of a steep bank, below which there ran a deep and swift-flowing stream. The bear rushed upon him so suddenly that when he took a step backward, they both fell into the creek together. It was a fall of about twice the height of a man."

"Did they go out of sight?" someone inquired.

"Yes, both fell headlong. In his excitement Chadozee laid hold of the bear in the water, and I never saw a bear try so hard to get away from a man as this one did."

"Ha, ha, ha! ha, ha, ha!" they all laughed.

"When they came to the surface again they were both so eager to get to the shore that each let go, and they swam as quickly as they could to opposite sides. Chadozee could not get any further, so he clung to a stray root, still keeping a close watch of the bear, who was forced to do the same. There they both hung, regarding each other with looks of contempt and defiance."

"Ha, ha, ha! ha, ha, ha!" they all laughed again.

"At last the bear swam along the edge to a lower place, and we pulled Chadozee up by means of our lariats. All this time he had been groaning so loud that we supposed he was badly torn; but when I looked for his wound I found a mere scratch."

Again the chorus of appreciation from his hearers.

"The strangest thing about this affair of mine," spoke up Tamedokah, "is that I dreamed the whole thing the night before."

"There are some dreams come true, and I am a believer in dreams," one remarked.

"Yes, certainly, so are we all. You know Hachah almost

Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-04-18/ed-1/?sp=37>

Image 37 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), April 18, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

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- The Laughing Philosopher

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF CIVILIZATION

8 THE JOURNAL JUNIOR, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1903

**Indian Boyhood**  
By Dr. Charles A. Eastman  
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**FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF CIVILIZATION.**

WAS scarcely old enough to know anything definite about the "Big Knives," as we called the white men, when the terrible Minnecada massacre broke up our home and I was carried into exile. I have already told how I was adopted into the family of my father's younger brother, when my father was betrayed and imprisoned. We all supposed that he had shared the fate of those who were executed at Mankato, Minnesota.

Now the savage philosophers looked upon vengeance in the field of battle as a lofty virtue. To avenge the death of a relative or of a dear friend was considered a great deed. My uncle, accordingly, had spared no pains to instill into my young mind the obligation to avenge the death of my father and my older brothers. Already I looked eagerly forward to the day when I should find an opportunity to carry out his teachings. Meanwhile, he himself went upon the warpath and returned with scalps every summer. So it may be imagined how I felt toward the Big Knives! On the other hand, I had heard marvelous things of this people. In some things we despised them; in others we regarded them as wakan (mysterious), a race whose power bordered upon the supernatural. I learned that they had made a "fireboat." I could not understand how they could unite two elements which cannot exist together. I thought the water would put out the fire, and the fire would consume the boat if it had the shadow of a chance. This was to me a preposterous thing! But when I was told that the Big Knives had created a "fire-boat" which walked on mountains (a locomotive), it was too much to believe.

"Why," declared my informant, "these who saw this monster move said that it flew from mountain to mountain when it seemed to be excited. They said also that they believed it carried a thunder-bird, for they frequently heard his usual war-whoop as the creature sped along."

Several warriors had observed from a distance one of the first trains on

(This was his idea of taxation.) "I am sure we could not live under such a law."

"When the outbreak occurred, we thought that our opportunity had come, for we had learned that the Big Knives were fighting among themselves, on account of a dispute over their slaves. It was said that the Great Chief had allowed slaves in one part of the country and not in another, so there was jealousy, and they had to fight it out. We don't know how true this was."

"In war they have leaders and war-chiefs of different grades. The common warriors are driven forward like a herd of antelopes to face the foe. It is on account of this manner of fighting—from compulsion and not from personal bravery—that we count no coup on them. A lone warrior can do much harm to a large army of them in a bad country."

It was this talk with my uncle that gave me my first idea of the white man.

I was almost fifteen years old when my uncle presented me with a first-lock gun. The possession of the "mysterious iron," and the explosive dirt, or "poisoned coal," as it is called, did me with new thoughts. All the war-songs that I had ever heard from childhood came back to me with their heroes. It seemed as if I were an entirely new being—the boy had become a man!

"I am now old enough," said I to myself, "and I must beg my uncle to take me with him on his next warpath. I shall soon be able to go among the whites whenever I wish, and to avenge the blood of my father and brothers."

One day, when I was away on the daily hunt, two strangers from the United States visited our camp. They had boldly ventured across the northern border. They were Indians, but clad in the white man's garments. It was as well that I was absent with my gun.

My father, accompanied by an Indian guide, after many days' searching, had found us at last. He had been imprisoned at Davenport, Iowa, with those who took part in the massacre or in the battles following, and he was taught in prison and converted by the pioneer missionaries, Drs. Williamson and Riggs. He was under sentence of death, but was among the number against whom no direct evidence was found, and who were finally pardoned by President Lincoln.



Teaching Notes:

See Album Description

Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045366/1903-04-25/ed-1/?sp=32>

Image 32 of *The Minneapolis Journal* (Minneapolis, Minn.), April 25, 1903, (*The Journal Junior*)

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- First Impressions of Civilization



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### Teaching Notes:

Thank you for turning your discovery into an album with lots of lesson plan ideas. Dr. Charles Eastman had such an interesting life story and, as you indicate, he wrote about a snapshot in history.