

KINNEHO: A LEGEND OF MOOSEHEAD LAKE. 175

BY E. OAKES SMITH.

VISIT TO MOOSEHEAD—LINES TO THE LAKE—OUR
CAIRN BUILT.

In the interior of the State of Maine is a large lake, which, from its supposed resemblance in shape to the head of a moose, has received that appellation. Moosehead Lake, at the time we made a pilgrimage thereto, some few years since, was in the midst of an entire wilderness, the merge covered with a dense forest, and the broad, beautiful waters alive with innumerable wild fowl. We remember the moon was large, and the atmosphere at midnight had that clear deepening blue, away into the lessening stars, that always fills the soul with a sense of the Infinite.

How lovely seemed this bowl of crystal beauty amid the hills! how solemn the shadow of those ancient trees, tall, motionless, and stretching away into the unknown desert! We listened to the lonely cry of the loon and the solitary call of the moose, the voices of huge unsocial denizens of this remote and soul-stirring region, till the heart throbbled wildly at its oppressive grandeur.

In front was the bald head of Kinneho, a high bluff rising from the centre of the lake; far to the left appeared what is quaintly called Squaw Mountains; fifty miles to the right, Katahdin stands beneath his canopy of clouds alone and regal. Islands of rare beauty, inlets bordered with white sand, "like fringe upon a petticoat," rested in the moonlight, and beckoned the fancy away to delicious dreams of wild devoted love and a lodge in the wilderness. At our feet lay a Newfoundland dog, whose eyes wandered over the lake with such a look of superhuman intelligence and content, that we were sure he shared not our enthusiasm, but had an enthusiasm of his own: not dog enthusiasm for wild goose or duck; but the scene suggested the fairest dreams of poetry and romance to his heart—the doctrines of Pythagoras assumed a new truth—we were sure some faithful and devoted soul was struggling up to its best form in the shape of that dog; hereafter he would emerge as a lover worthy of a Sappho or a Heloise. Alas! that we shall have passed on to another sphere before that day shall arrive!

We visited the top of Kinneho, the first white woman (Heaven save the mark) that ever touched the summit. Reader, your pardon; we have a mind to tell a fact in connection with this journey. The chances for fame are precarious, you know. Women who write now are not a few stately, odd, withered-looking bugbears; they make a little array

of nice, dashing, elegant females, who are capable of anything that arrests their attention; from the darning of a pair of hose to the writing of an ode, the tending of the baby, compounding of a pudding, writing an epic, or breaking a heart, each and all they do with perfect facility, address, and comfort, both to themselves and others. Each lady writer understands the power of her sister author, and so far from disparaging her or it, and being eaten up with envy, as the uninitiated suppose, she is joyous and appreciating, and foresees great good to her kind from the accumulating power of womanhood; but she does see that the chances for her own selfish individual distinction are lessened by the numbers in the field, and she begins to repeat—

"Just what you hear you have, and what's unknown
The same—if Tully's, or your own."

Well, we confess our exordium is something long; but we shall come to our story, our little trumpet-peak of our own corner of fame, in the process of time. What was a wilderness five years ago is now a thrifty hamlet. A steamer plies upon Moosehead; an hotel, radiant in white and green, exults over Kinneho. Poets, artists, millwrights and schoolmasters have made the desert to blossom "like the rose"—oh no! like a vigorous and expanding cabbage—its lonely romance is over. Thrift and enterprise rejoice the spirit of the worldling, and even we rejoice; although the covert of Pan are desecrated, genial hearthstones and household voices bring gladness wherever they appear; but not the less do we roll the sweet morsel of content under our tongue, inasmuch as Moosehead was ours in her primal loveliness, wild, heroic, and most beautiful; queen-like did she sit amid the hills, unsung and unvisited, and then we ventured a stop in her praise—

TO MOOSEHEAD LAKE.

Lake of the beautiful! solemn and still,
How art thou sleeping by mountain and rill!

Welcome to thee,
Primal and free!

Rarely a footstep thy silence hath broken,
Poet-lip never thy beauty hath spoken;
Screened in the wilderness lonely and far,
As we see in the north sky one only star.

Lake of the cold clime, buried in wild-wood,
Ages of solitude o'er thee brood;

The plunge of the bird
In the distance is heard;
Softly away and away dies the sound,
Lost in the glens that encircle thee round:

Thou art a creature delighting to reign
Where the light-footed snow wakes no echo again.

Lake of the dark pine ! imp of the north land !
Calmly in winter thou foldest thy white hand :
The Frost-spirit here,

With glittering spear,
Sits at thy feet with his pale bannered host ;
Lover of thine long he clings to his post.
Sound the loud blast of his bugle by night,
The breast of the "Thaw King" to fill with affright.

Lake of the mountain home ! baring his brow,
Up from his flinty bed springs Kinneho ;
Lo ! antlered and tall,
'Gainst the heaven's blue wall,
Capping the bold cliff, the stately moose stands,
Snuffing the wind that from ice-covered lands
Tells where the moss and the fir-tree are growing—
Tells where the stream from the iceberg is flowing.

Lake of the eyrie ! befitting thy pride,
Springs the bald eagle the tempest to ride :
White-headed storm bird,
Wild is thy scream heard,
Waking the desolate rocks at thy call,
Feels the gray rain and the snow javelins fall,
Nor tazes thy strong wing aside from its flight,
The tumult is gladness to thee and delight.

Lake of the wilderness, joy of the heart,
Chainless and curbless, how graceful thou art !
Cap of the hills,
Millions of rills

Bring unto thee, from forest and mountain,
Tributes of crystal from cavern-hid fountain ;
Rejoiced at thy beauty, as all things delight,
When a gleam of the beautiful gladdens the sight.

We say nothing of the poetry—Heaven forefend that we should sit in judgment upon our own offspring. We are no Brutus : we have ever considered the virtue of the old Roman as questionable. We record the lines only as an existing fact, preparatory to another fact which we desire to set forth with becoming modesty. It became known that we had worshipped at Kinneho, had sung the praises of Moosehead, and a monument was raised by our guide to commemorate the event. The monument was raised in honor of *ourselves*. Gentle reader, do not smile ; do not look in scorn upon our notation. In the hereafter, there may be none to raise a monument to our ashes ; be it so, our cairn is built. In that wild, solitary region our pillar of stones is set up, and men who know little of us, except that we once stood upon that spot, keep the incident alive. Others have followed us, other heaps of stones are piled upon the mountain ; but the stout lumbermen are tensors of our glory, and they gather together and keep our columns the tallest, and point it out as something in which they feel an interest. We are content. This simple proof of remembrance amid the hills of our own State has touched our heart most nearly, and we are willing to leave to others the marble monument and noisy plaudits, while our cairn is built upon Kinneho.

And now we will to our story.

KINNEHO.

MAQUASO DEVOTED TO HER CHILD—FLIES FROM HIS
CRUELTY—ORIGIN OF THE INDIAN PIPE—DISAP-
PEARANCE OF KINNEHO.

Squaw Mountain, of which we have before spoken, rises at the distance of perhaps five miles from Kinneho. The Indian appellation is lost, and the name it now bears, uncouth as it sounds, was given it by the whites in the first settlement of the country. When the story is known which gave rise to the name, we trust Squaw Mountain will sound neither uncouth nor unlovely.

At the time that Raleigh Gilbert, half brother to Sir Walter Raleigh, made a settlement at the mouth of Kennebec River, in 1606, that region was inhabited by a powerful tribe of Indians called the Norridgewocks, a tribe second perhaps only to the Mohawks of New York. They were enterprising, hardy, and courageous in a remarkable degree, and had long held all the other clans, from the St. Croix to the Narragansets (the last only being able to defy them), in complete subjection. Their villages were scattered along the whole course of the river, from its mouth even to the upper sources, and along its many tributaries. In the hunting seasons, the shores of Moosehead, and the many lakes contiguous, afforded abundance of game, and gratified that love for the wild and mysterious which always forms an ingredient in the savage mind. Indeed, to this day, when the encroachments of the whites have done so much to change the character of the Indian, he still seeks his game in these ancient hunting-grounds, and may often be encountered in some lonely glen intent upon a luckless moose, or spearing salmon in the midst of rapids. Travelers delight in their escort ; and at night, when the camp fires are lighted and the hemlock boughs spread for the night, when the pipe goes round and the wildwood feast is over, the Indian loses his taciturnity and repeats with pride, not unmingled with sadness, the stories of his people. He never pronounces the name Katabdu, which has a mysterious and forbidden import ; the mountain itself being supposed the habitation of the great Spirit of Evil, who there dwells amid its lonely caverns enveloped in an eternal canopy of clouds, for the top of Katabdu is rarely disincumbered of these. It was on an occasion such as we have described that we gathered the legend we are about to relate.

Though the season was August, a sharp northerly wind was biting cold, and made the camp fire not only cheery, but absolutely essential to comfort. This fire was built of an immense pile of logs placed transversely across two, which had been so laid down as to supply the place of andirons. Our oiled tent was pretty and picturesque, and when the pale was ornamented with our pistols, caps, gloves, and the numerous paraphernalia of a gipsy-party, who went from pure woodland enthusiasm into the desert, it will at once be perceived that not

a touch of cockneyism existed amongst us, but all was true, earnest, and picturesque, not only in the members, but the appendages of each.

The light glowed warmly upon the faces of our group; Morman examined the lock of his rifle, and then placed it within the shelter of the tent; Nannie reclined upon one elbow with an attitude worthy of a gipsy queen; the rest were cooily dispersed in various positions, while we, dreading repose, lest thought should become too painful for endurance, had lingered without watching the sparks as they ascended amid the trees, the blaze of the fire casting a white light upon the huge trunks. The stars were clear and tranquil, the scene so lovely, so remote and solitary; we, a handful of human beings, away from our fellows, and impelled hither neither by the hope of fame nor desire of gain, but simply because our hearts yearned for the primal in nature. An intense loneliness, such as we sometimes feel in a crowd, caused me to sigh heavily. Our Indian guide took the pipe from his mouth, and, for the first time, I saw he was near me, his bright eye, with its half-closed lid, fixed upon my face.

"The white woman has an Indian soul," he murmured; "she can close her face over her heart."

So, then, the best touch of refinement to the civilized and the savage are the same—concealment. Not the callous hardness of the vulgar or depraved, but the Spartan, gathering his robe over his pangs and looking tranquilly abroad.

I pointed to Katahdu, behind which the slender thread of the moon was just sinking—

"Tell me of that mysterious pile," I said.

The Indian shook his head. He had now resumed his pipe, and the voice of Nannie from the tent admonished me that the air was chill, and our walk had been long and painful. Gathering my feet beneath me, I now sat watching the faces of those about me. Our Indian had settled himself near, and I could catch an occasional glance of his eye drawn to my face, as if impelled by an unwonted sympathy.

"We are in the pathway of Kinneho, when he used to visit yonder," he at length said, pointing in the direction of Katahdu.

He saw we were all eager for the story, and he went on; but I must give it in my own words.

The whole way from Moosehead Lake to the base of Katahdu is threaded by a chain of lakes, through which the Indian paddles his canoe, and at the several portages shoulders his light burden till a tramp of a mile, it may be less or more, enables him to launch it once more upon one of these lovely sheets of water. It will be seen that the great promontory which rises out of the centre of Moosehead takes its name from the principal personage of our story.

More than two hundred years ago, an old chief, who had taken a young wife late in life, became the father of a very beautiful girl, of rare wisdom, likewise, whom he called Maquaso, or the robin, because her cheek showed the red through the olive

hue, like the feathers upon the breast of this bird. Now this chief, besides being old, was nearly blind. It was believed his young wife had rubbed his eyes while he slept with the leaves of the poisonous hemlock, in revenge for some wrong she had suffered. Be that as it may, Maquaso, as she came to womanhood, was known to esteem her mother but lightly, while her whole soul seemed devoted to the comfort of her infirm parent.

It could not be otherwise but the graces of Maquaso would win the admiration of her people, and we find skins and venison, trophies of the chase and river, were often laid at the door of the wigwam as testimonies of love; but the presents of Muckaë (black heart) far outshone all others. Moreover, whenever the morning showed a heap at the lodge of the old chief, bearing the totem or mark of the young donor, Muckaë spurred it aside with his foot and placed his own offering within the entrance, in a manner that showed it must not be rejected. Maquaso shuddered as she saw this; for Muckaë was a bad man, whom the tribe feared; but he was at the head, and no one dared resist him.

When, at length, Muckaë asked her of her father, she made no resistance, but became his wife. Shortly after this event, her father died, and Maquaso, out of dread of her husband, dissolved her grief for him just as she did her aversion to Muckaë. But, as moons wore on, she grew more stately in manner, and more firm and violent in speech, till the bad chief in time grew half fearful in his turn. She was diligent, patient, and thrifty; his wigwam the best provided amongst the tribe; but Muckaë was morose and cruel of heart, and never a smile beamed from his face. Maquaso spread the skins and cooked his venison, but she was silent; and when the women of the tribe assembled at their feasts of the hunt and ripening corn, she was not among them.

At length, she became the mother of a boy, whom she called Kinneho. Now her whole nature was roused into action. She bathed his limbs, she trained him to courage, to hardihood, and virtue. She taught him to bend the bow, for she had often brought down game for her infirm father. With her own hand she prepared him for the chase or the battle-field, and was never happy away from his side. Kinneho was, in truth, so beautiful, that he seemed worthy of her care. Stately in height and swift of foot, with his mother's clear and vigorous intellect, he soon became first in the war party, as he had always been first in the chase. At the council fire, too, Maquaso, seated with the women, saw with delight that old men listened to his voice with deference, and often followed his suggestions.

She was still beautiful; for, rejecting the servile life that uncultured woman submits to, she had dwelt in the midst of her own great thoughts while her hands labored in the wigwam, therefore care and age had found no place upon which to leave their traces. Her husband had long since given himself up to a morose and solitary life, under pro-

tence of having become a great medicine-man, leaving the whole care of providing for the boy to his mother.

Now whether there is that in human nature that makes it ungrateful to tenderness, regardless of what is lavishly bestowed, and covetous of that which is denied it, or whether there is a depth beyond human requital, we will not take upon ourselves to determine; it may be that moral qualities are transmissible to a greater degree than we comprehend. Whatever might be the cause, Maquaso was stung to the soul to find, as years grew upon the boy, he was morose, cruel, and sullen of heart as his father had been, rewarding her tenderness with scorn or indifference. She was far too wise and too proud to complain at this; but the women, who are always observant of each other, became aware of the fact, and it was much talked about amongst the people. At length, one morning beside the stones of the council fire was found a pair of worn moccasins, a decayed robe, and a braid of hair, which were known to have belonged to Maquaso.

These tokens were designed to indicate that the owner was dead to the tribe; and when it was found that Maquaso had disappeared, terrible thoughts grew upon the minds of the people. It was in vain that Kinneho joined in the search, and declared he was ignorant of her fate; his former bad repute fixed suspicion upon him, and a council was held, before which he was cited to appear. Prior to this, the young men had refused to join him in the hunt, and he was forbidden to sit amongst the chiefs who deliberated upon a war path about to be taken against a party of their enemies who had encamped upon the river Androscoggin.

When Kinneho appeared before the council, the chiefs, one and all, arose and turned their backs upon him. The oldest man amongst them approached him, and taking the war-club from his hand tossed it into the midst of the flames, then seizing his bow, he broke it asunder. Kinneho uttered a cry of rage and defiance, and plunged into the forest.

The chiefs now started on their war-path; but they missed the courage and zeal of Kinneho. The way was long and toilsome, their enemies fierce. As they approached the vicinity, the scouts came in, declaring the numbers of their foe to be many as leaves of the trees, for they counted as many as a dozen smokes. Cautiously did the party come on, watching each the planting of his foot, lest the crackling of a twig or the stirring of a branch should betray their proximity. As they neared, a single voice arose, clear and strong, singing the chant that betokens victory. They uttered the yell of the savage and sprang forward upon the foe. There was a dead silence, and every man stood in the glare of the flame arrested and silent.

The ground was strewn with the dead, and the reeking blood bubbled amid the ashes. Standing above the field of carnage was Kinneho, stringing

the scalps to his girdle. He had kindled fires around the foe, which deceived and bewildered them, and then rushing upon them while they slept, had made them his prey. The young warriors set up a shout of approval, but Kinneho stalked forth in silence, leaving them to the feast of the dead.

At length, he fixed his lodge upon the top of the mountain in the centre of Moosehead Lake, which still bears his name. Here the tribe, in their hunts, saw all night the light against the sky, and a long streak of red across the water; but no one dared to approach him. If by chance a party met him in the forest, they fled before him; for he was known to be implacable in his rage, and the wildest stories were told of his single-handed valor.

Soon after Kinneho had established himself upon Moosehead, he observed a faint gleam of fire upon what is now called Squaw Mountain. At first, he thought this might be a tree blasted by lightning slowly consuming itself; but as night after night presented the same appearance, he resolved to learn the mystery. Perhaps he hoped to surprise a party of his people. He crossed the lake in his canoe, and drawing it up under the bank, followed the direction in which he had seen the light. He ascended the mountain with covert step; as he neared the top, he saw beside a small spring that bubbled from the rocks a rude lodge. As he stood gazing upon the scene, a woman came from the door bearing a birchen bowl, which she filled at the fountain. It was the once beautiful Maquaso, bent, emaciated, and her hair bleached to the color of the hoar frost. Kinneho rushed forward and clasped her in his arms. She looked in his face; but her eyes were wild and streaming with tears. Kinneho smoothed the white hair from her brow and strove to comfort her; but she seemed not to know him, only weeping and wringing her hands. He brought down a partridge with his bow and spread it upon the coals, in the hope it might restore her; but she only wept the more, with her eyes fixed piteously upon his face. At length they closed slowly—Maquaso was dead.

Kinneho made her grave beside the fountain, and came piously day by day with fruits and venison to comfort her in the long journey to the spirit-land. It was to the tears of Maquaso that we owe one of the most beautiful of our August plants. Whenever these fell, the Indian pipe appeared, white and pure, like congealed sorrow. The Great Spirit caused this to spring up as a memorial of her grief.

Kinneho lived more than a hundred suns in this desolate spot. His people tried to conciliate him; but he would never return to their favor. Once a year, when the Gat-gwah-da-ah, or Watchers, as the Indians beautifully term the Pleiades, hung at evening in the west, he went across the chain of lakes to the Great Mountain, or Katahdu. Why he did so, how he dared to do so, no one knew; but old men believed he had made a compact with the evil powers there; but for what purpose is now lost.

At length, his fire appeared no more upon the top of the mountain. Hunters, as they peered through

the trees at the marge of the lake, could no more see him, as they often had done, moving to and fro upon the bold cliff. They told how Kinneho never bent with age, how his white hair and eagle eye looked venerable yet terrible as he stood taller than other chiefs, and striking terror into their hearts. When they had watched night after night, and were sure he was not there, they ventured to cross the lake, thinking to find him dead in his lodge.

But neither chief, nor lodge, nor vestige of any kind rewarded their search. There is a fountain welling from the side of the rock (out of which you yourselves drank, Sophia and Nannie, and where the party crowned ourself Queen of Kinneho); here they thought at least to find a pipe, a bowl, or some-

thing to show that human life had been passed in so wild a spot; but the redberries clustered then as now above the clear water, and all was solitary and tokenless.

Men remembered the visits of Kinneho to the Great Mountain, and shook their heads bodingly; and when it was found that the top of the cliff was covered with flinty rocks, as if they had been melted in the fire, that neither grass nor moss grew where the footsteps of the man passed, they were confirmed in their worst suspicions. They believed the stones were burned and melted under the feet of the necromancer, Kinneho, who is now confined in the bowels of the mountain.

TO MY ABSENT LITTLE BOY.—MIDNIGHT.

BY ION.

My child, my bright, my darling boy,
Thy father's hope, thy mother's joy,
Mine eye may not thy face behold,
My arms may not thy form enfold,
Mine ear must miss that soft sweet voice
That bids my inmost heart rejoice,
For land and wave, a weary space,
Divide me from thy dwelling-place.

And thou, my beauteous boy, art sleeping—
Bland rest thy healthful senses steeping;
No ugly dream thy spirit scares—
No haunting ghost of unkind cares—
But visions of thy primal home
To glad thee, sweet one, smiling come;
And cherub forms, a tiny band,
Throng eager round to clasp thy hand;
And thou art loud in baby mirth
With these young visitants of earth,
And lisping tales of sight and sound,
That in thy mortal home are found,
Of fathers' dandlings, mothers' kisses,
And all thy thousand little blisses,
And urging them to come and prove
How gladsome earth and parents' love!

And I in lonely musing sit,
And Fancy's shapes around me flit;
And thou, my darling boy, art here—
Thy frolic shout rings in mine ear;
Thy tiny form, in unsusht grace,
Sweeps to and fro before my face:
I see the big blue eyes that speak,
The rosy mouth, the smooth plump cheek,
The face so spiritually bright—
All, all are present to my sight!

Another form is at thy side,
The archetype of thee, my pride!
The same bright face and eye of blue,
The same the rosy "wee bit mou,"

The same light shape in beauty moving,
The same quick soul attuned to loving,
The frolic laugh outringing clear—
Behold thy mother, baby dear!

I look abroad, but all is dumb,
Save that the distant city's hum
Steals softened up; and the low roar
Of waters dashing on the shore;
And the faint rustle 'mid the leaves
Of a vine trailing from the eaves,
And whispering coy a glad reply
To the "sweet South's" enamored sigh,
Blend in a strain of soothing power,
Fit concert for a musing hour.

The clear meek moon is forth above,
And troops of clouds around him move,
That, from her chaste eye catching light,
Show bright o'er as herself is bright!
So gullit, from its own nature won,
Grows pure when purely shone upon!

Beautiful boy! be 't mine to see
In yon fair moon a type of thee!
Thy spirit's light be caught alone
From the Creator's central Sun;
And fall from thee a guiding ray
On earth's night-wanderers' dubious way;
And though life's ills, cloud piled on cloud,
Come thronging round thy soul to shroud,
The faithful heart hath still the power,
Its own inalienable dower,
To bid these forms of gloom and wrath
Be heaven-bright shapes along thy path

And when, dear boy, thy course is o'er,
And mortal sights thou greet'st no more,
Blended be then thy spirit's flame
With the pure orb, whence first it came,
E'en as yon moon, ser circuit run,
Waxes, fades, and dies in the bright sun!