

A LEGEND

The burning lodge fires smote the wav'ring air
With pleasant heat, and round from chief to chief,
The Micmac Peace Pipe passed; and then a tale
I heard of days now long since fleeted by,
Of deeds of mighty heroes of the past
When with the rod of Empire they held sway,
Ruling the seven nations of that land
Which, from the Anesaak, salmon haunted,
Spreads to that treach'rous race of wintry waters,
Cabot Strait, and named in Micmac language
Acadie—the land old chosen by their sires.
Their sturdy race, beloved by the gods,
Had ruled that Empire many years in peace
Till time had softened their hardy braves
With the fat plenty of those easy years.
Then came their troubles on them, for there brake
The fierce Abenakis upon them from
Out Maine, and, harried from their smoking towns,
Were forced to dwell as scattered tribes along
The rough coast, snatching a weary living from
The cold sea. It happened Keonik, hunting,
Did disturb the giant, Chigunipke,
Who did keep the place of watching on the
Mount, named in that language, Eskumunaak,
Where was laid that treasure of the first race
In that land — a race now passed save for this
Giant alone. And, as the watcher dozed
In the June sun, the hunter unaware
Had stole into the cave of treasure, and
Before his greedy eye was spread many
A rich wampum belt and beaver skin, and
There hung the precious sable and the fox
In shining fur, and, there too, was many
A spear and arrow with its bow wrought full
Curiously with flint and sparkling quartz,
And, as he touched the weapons, there arose
The noise of rending and the giant upwoke.
And strode with monstrous steps that shook the cave,
And the earth trembled and the heavens groaned
In fear. And then a voice in accents like
The sullen blast that rakes the trees in Fall,
Fell on the ear as falls the roar of waters,

When enraged the fierce gulf beats upon
The Northern bastions of green Abegweit.
Then the fear that turns strong men to weaklings
Assailed Keonik; like a bronze he stood,
The glittering axe down dropped from his hand,
His muscled hand that oft had smote the deer,
Or torn the scalp lock of some stoic foe,
And towering o'er him like the black plumed pine,
The monster with a mighty hand forth dragged
And hurled him headlong down upon the rocks
Where long he lay, as lies a broken trunk
Cast on the bank by the spring freshet.
Then raged throughout the land Chigunipke
Seeking each day a victim ne'er to be
Heard of more. And with the pass of Time, more
Fierce he grew. Each village fell in ruin,
Far to the secret forest fled the people,
But yet no peace. The still lurking monster
In deep dead of night with crash and clamour
Sought out their timid fires and they must fly
To scape his unsleeping wrath and vengeance,
The braves and old men oft cursed that hunter,
And the evil time wherein he touched the wampums—
But the women prayed: "O send us
Ye high gods a man, a chief, to save us
That we may live secure from this cruel terror."
And so each day for many weary months
Their lamentations filled the forest and
Still the old men smoked in silence dreading
Their last hour. At last the gods relented,
And, in the month of June at sunset from
The seaward where the lusty sun in his
Imperial garments sank down to rest on
Crimson cushions, came a wailing blending
With the lone loon laughing far off among
The islands of Malpeque's dusky bay. Then
Through the faint gloom filled with sweet
Soundless music slow urged by unseen hands
Came a canoe, while all around gleamed
A phosphorescence and o'er it hung
An hazy cloud of light, and the waves leaped
Aside to smooth the passage then to rest.
It came on the brown bosom of the shore.
The aged chieftain, majestic, straight and proud,

Advanced, and peering in the boat, found nought
 Save a small babe wrapped up in deerskin, and
 Then he raised the child and to the people
 Prophetic spoke: "He shall be chief and rule
 You after me." Then, turning to his wife,
 Long sorrow-laden years had bent the noble
 Beauty of her youth, gave the wailing child
 That it might glad the heart that mourned her six
 Tall sons fallen beneath the dreadful hand
 Of Chigunipke.

Who overcomes by force, has overcome but half his foe.
 —*Milton.*

A virtuous deed should never be delayed
 The impulse comes from heav'n and he who strives
 A moment to repress it, disobeys
 The God within his mind.

—*Dow.*

He strove among God's suffering poor
 One gleam of brotherhood to send;
 The dungeon oped its hungry door
 To give to truth one martyr more,
 Then shut, and here beheld the end.

—*Lowell*

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours;
 And ask them what report they bore to heaven:
 And how they might have borne more welcome news.
 —*Young.*

Our union is river, lake, ocean and sky:
 Man breaks not the metal when God cuts the die
 Though darkened with sulphur, though cloven with steel,
 The blue arch will brighten, the waters will heal!
 —*Holmes.*