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Amusement.

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy ! Given the proper environment, every animal, in his own peculiar and perhaps clumsy way, gambols and plays, and man must also play at times. In civilization however, it is only very small children who gambol and play naturally. At a very early age, class consciousness is forced on the child's attention; to gambol is infra dig, and thus children largely lose the ability to amuse themselves in a natural manner. They are forced along unnatural paths until they can no longer amuse themselves and eventually man, in 99 cases out of 100, a child still, has to be amused at a cost by unnatural and often unhealthy means during his leisure hours. When such cost gets too high for his pocket and man is forced back on his own resources, he finds himself almost completely helpless. Discontent and trouble, first in the individual, then in the mass, produce new problems as to how to amuse their increasing leisure - a vicious circle, that taxes the best brains to-day and which can cause considerable financial and economic strain.

The aboriginal Indians in their natural state know nothing of this outside curse, and their amusements are simple, and within the reach of all. In their machineless world, each unit - the family - faced with the problem of living by its own exertion and skill, has very little leisure in the endeavour to wring a livelihood from a non-too bountiful nature

when their every need, except a few articles of iron, must be provided by themselves. The daily hours of light are largely occupied with work of some kind, probably at not more than a fraction of the tempo of the outside world with its non-stop machinery, yet work of some kind, maybe just the foolish duty for an hour of spinning on the thigh a few yards of silk-grass twine to serve as fishing lines, that any respectable shop would sell for five cents - only the shop happens to be some hundreds of miles distant ! Just how hard the Indians work is realised by few. A visitor drops into a village and down go all tools. Here is a chance of amusement, barter and trade, the gossip of distant villages, the news of friends, the tales of adventures in the hunt, the quick flying shuttle of repartee and practical jokes, all of which you can get each morning from your penny newspaper in civ ilization. An important visitor means the closing down of all work except the production of food, for some days at least, and it is only when the white man's length of time and distance in the forests has reduced him to aboriginal levels in supplies and their mode of living, that he realises the amount of work to be undertaken. Certainly much of the work is light and with considerable variation. Rod fishing is sport to the outside world, often a hobby or pastime, but light as it may be physically, when success means the difference between an empty pot or a full stomach it assumes quite a different aspect. Every Indian has

so many calls on his time and energy that it is impossible for him to settle down steadily, and work day in and day out at any one particular task even if he wants to. This fact accounts to a very large extent for a reputation of shiftlessness and poor application, especially when there is a lack of a proper sense of time and co-operation. To-morrow is all right, but is elastic and elusive, and the scarcity of forest game and natural supplies forbid grouping on a larger scale than the family unit. Civilization is steadily encroaching on their preserves, when they must either sink their nationality, independence and traditional culture or move farther away into the forests and begin life anew by themselves.

Although the Indian often works long hours and, at times, undoubtedly hard, he never misses a chance to play. Much of his work takes on a feeling of competition and rivalry, and so work becomes more of a play or at least a popular and pleasant game, as much as golf or cricket with us. All Indians have a keen sense of ridicule which leads to much teasing and practical jokes coupled with hilarity and laughter or even loud encouraging yells when at work. Life in the forests at its best is hard, in food, comfort and amenties, in comparison with our standards, yet life to the average Indian, when in good health, is one long joke even on a minimum amount of food. He is haphazard, probably thoughtless, communistic in that he must, and voluntarily does

divide with others less fortunate; he is hospitable to a degree, cruel at times as any calvanistic fanatic, yet on the whole kind, thoughtful, courteous, and self denying, and above all, laughter loving and pleasant. Keep a crowd of them laughing and they will do anything !

One joy and source of amusement and pride is a little child. Every woman in the village is on tiptoe to see the latest arrival, and in a day or two, the proud mother is up and around showing off her baby. The father of course will in all probability be laid up for a period of a week to one moon (month) according to the law of different tribes in that curious custom of Couvade whereby he must rest, and abstain completely from every form of exercise unless absolutely necessary, as a single stroke of work may mean death or at least an ache or a pain to the newly born infant. The father is responsible for the soul or mental part; the mother for the body or physical part of the child, hence the mother has to be up and busy feeding the father and attending to his every want, as the least exertion on his part may cause the tender soul to leave its frail little casket to return whence it came. During couvade the father takes no interest in the child, or its mother, or even the communal life around him. He is generally on a strict diet, as eating any of the larger game may make him the unconscious medium between the death struggle of such game and his child's soul. Once couvade is over, his pride awakes, and soon

he is just as keen to tell of how his child has held a finger or smiled up at him as any father of fact or fiction. A first tooth is shown to everyone, the first word of speech is told and retold, and its various actions reacted to give food for daughter just as with families outside.

The first child is a great educator to the young parents, neither of whom will have more than twenty rainy seasons to their credit. The mother has in all probability arrived at puberty some years previously, and has become a shy, demure, little person hidden away in a quiet background behind her mother and various elderly relations, but the father has been a loud noisy yelling youth, having his own way in nearly everything, full of energy and careless of anyone's comfort, beyond his own whim for the moment. It is surprising how a little child can take the conceit and self-consciousness out of the average Indian. Probably he comes in tired and hungry after a hard day's work in the field or at the hunting, but as there is only the mother in the house he must tend the baby while she cuts up the game and prepares a meal. If he doesn't tend the baby properly, it becomes fretful and soon is crying. It is absolutely no use arguing with a baby a few months old. It can bawl louder and longer than he can, and father soon finds the best thing to do is to humour the baby somehow. He is faced with new responsibility and if he does not rise successfully to it, is the subject of much ridicule to everybody within reach. By the time the child is a year old, the father is

a changed man and from being a noisy animal, has become the shy reserved man of his type.

As soon as the child begins to toddle, the father is supposed to provide it with playthings. Generally he first brings in the young of some forest game - beast or bird - and these are given to the child. The child rarely handles these, but they belong to the baby and must be tended and fed against the day when such a pet may have some value as an article of barter. As the child grows, the father must make a miniature set of the various implements in daily use - a bow and arrows in the case of a boy; a small quake (a basket carried down the back suspended by a band from the head - like the fishergirls at home), a fan, or some woman's implement for a girl. The boy is taught to hold the bow and arrow in correct pose, and to shoot; the girl dons her quake and carries some light load, or fans up the fire with the plaited fan.

The first real, and practically the only toy of childhood is a puppy, which is lugged around everywhere, fondled and put to sleep as if it were a baby. The boys are not encouraged in this, but many of the girls continue to play with puppies at times until they are fully grown. Anything that is young and helpless seems to find a vein of sympathy in the heart of most Indian women. I once kept a number of English foxhounds for hunting deer and jaguar, and many a time I have seen a woman of quite 30 years of age put down her own child

and take up one of my puppies to fondle and give her breasts to it for the hour during which I would be doing business with her husband. They will also capture the young of almost any wild animal and often rear them successfully. I have repeatedly seen women suckling a young monkey, in other cases a helpless little deer or a wild hog, and I knew of one woman who reared a young jaguar.

The puppy has a short life as a pet however as he soon grows teeth large enough to bite with when squeezed too hard or annoyed. It is soon given more kicks than kindnesses and leads a life of misery, unfed and uncared for, until it shows some aptitude for hunting when it is taken charge of by the head of the house and carefully looked after and encouraged. Many Waiwai women keep a pet dog, invariably a sterilised male, tied up near their hammocks, well fed, fat as butter, going with them to the bath or the field, but never allowed to go near the men's dogs who would tear the pet to pieces if they got the chance. With the exception of these Waiwai women's pets, every dog has to work for its own living and largely that of its master. The puppy that shows no aptitude for hunting has no master, gets no food except such filth as it can find or what it can steal, and one or two such dogs are to be found wandering free round almost every Indian village, poor, thin, mangy objects which excite no pity, but are kicked and beaten by anyone and everyone, until they die.

die.

When a puppy begins to bite and grow troublesome, the girls often adopt a substitute, a roughly carved root or a bundle of cloth or leaves which forms a doll and is tended in a somewhat similar though cruder way as the doll of the outside world.

All the children, independent of sex, roll over one another, chase one another around and gambol naturally for some years. During this stage it is rare to see any exhibition of temper, they never fight or hurt each other intentionally. The one thing that raises a howl is when some other child takes away the bit of stick or whatever may be the toy of the moment. A child may be imitating some work he has seen going on, say underbushing a field with a piece of stick, and if another child gets a wallop it is a case of, "Keep out of my way when you see I am working", but I cannot recall witnessing a stand up fight.

By the time the average boy is five years old, he is supposed to be able to accompany the father and do some little thing towards the economy of living. Even before this age the girl has begun to assist in the household in various light fetch and carry tasks. Modern law says the child must go to school at five years of age to learn its letters and in a sense begin to work. Having no letters to learn or tables to memorise, the Indian child begins to pick up some of the elementary fundamental lessons in life and some knowledge of

the thousand of natural phenomena around him. Acquisitiveness is a trait in all children of every race, but no child can tamely submit to receiving information through the different senses. Their hands and feet must be kept busy and the Indian parent directs such energy in some small way as will help the family. There is no compulsion or force used, at least in the case of the boys. Every child loves to do something which it sees its elders doing. It is the first step towards manhood and this ambition goes much further than parental authority. The child works willingly and ambitiously, and gets a reward in having a few hills of some of their various vegetables. To carry home a pumpkin, a water-melon or a few ears of corn of his own growing means far more to the Indian child than a First Class Report for the term does to his civilized prototype, and by the time the home child has mastered the multiplication table and long division, the Indian boy has a good and varied knowledge on quite a number of subjects varying from practical chemistry to zoology, and considerable experience in agriculture. The Indian girl at the same age has had a good grounding in agriculture and an almost complete knowledge of household economy. I have in mind a case where a mother died after giving birth to a baby. The oldest daughter, not more than 10- 11 years of age, assumed full control of the household, together with a younger sister. I often used to pass that way and could

not but admire the two little sisters in their work, which was quite successful. In another case the father died leaving a young family, the eldest, a boy, could not have been more than ten. The boy assumed full responsibility, and I can remember the mother's vivid description of how he was just able to hold his father's gun to his shoulder, and with his first shot managed to kill a wild hog.

It is very rare that a child does not respond to the ambition to imitate what father does, but I remember one boy, the son of a sub-chief in the Wapichanna tribe, who declined to do anything, and who positively refused to do any work,. His brothers were smart boys and at.work under me, but this particular one would do nothing, not even in the field or in hunting. When he was just entering manhood he began to steal from other Indian fields and pretended he had a field of his own that no one had seen. The ruse worked for a while but he was found out, and he was generally thought to be a complete wastrel. His father sent him in to my station one day with some orders or goods to sell, and the young vagabond found an opportunity to steal something. He was caught red handed. My station happened to be crowded that day, so I called everybody up as witnesses, whilst I administered half a dozen of the best with a leather strap and packed him off home with the promise of a double dose if he ever put a foot back in my station. Three months afterwards the father called in to thank me for what I had done. The lad on arriving home had

been subject to so much ridicule that he had gone out in the forest and cut a field for himself. Within the year he came in to me with the first fruits of his own field, which I gladly purchased. He settled down and married but he never amounted to very much, as he had arrived at manhood without having done a stroke of work, and he had too much to learn. He was bitten by a deadly snake a year or two later, and unfortunately died.

From five years old and onward all children have to do some work, but they are rarely forced beyond their capacity and a child has only to say he is tired to be told to stop work. Naturally they still have considerable leisure as they have not yet begun anything in the various arts and crafts of the tribe, and they still play a lot. At this age many are very fond of a form of badminton as a game. The shuttlecock is made from a short cob of their Indian corn from which all corn has been removed. In the thick end of a three inch cob there is stuck a ring of feathers from various forest birds. No racket is used: the shuttle being struck with the open palm of either hand. Sides are never chosen to play, and the point in the game is to see how long they can keep tossing the shuttle without its falling to the ground. In some cases where one or other of the indigenous rubber trees are to be found, round balls about the size of an ordinary tennis ball are made from the resilient gum and used in a similar manner by the elder children (in their early teens). The game is noisy and full of movement and much laughter and ridicule is meted out to the butter-fingers who miss a strike. They vary this game with the ball

by throwing it to each other and catching it./

Practically all the youths of every tribe I know get a great deal of amusement out of string figures - the Cats' Cradles of the civilized child. Few children make many, but between the ages of 12 and 20 most youths spend many an idle hour with a bit of string. Both sexes make these figures, but it is generally the young men who are the adepts. The young maids do not have the time; the chores of the Indian household are even more unending and urgent than those of their civilized sisters. The numbers of these various string figures are endless; many are difficult to imitate owing to the intricacy and number of movements; several are very amusing, and some have a little trick, where some simple movement escapes the eye and throws the whole arrangement into an entangled knot to the uproarious laughter of the spectators who are in the "know". Practically every village and nearly every youth have their own pet figures. which they will make continuously for nearly an hour on end. Many of their various figures have a story behind them and most are supposed to represent some phase in human or animal life. I never made notes of these figures and many have completely escaped my memory but I have seen scores of different ones. I don't think any one person has ever mastered all the figures they produce, as from time to time they evolve new ones.

Hair cutting amongst the Wapichanna in my early days was quite commonly done with a sharp knife against the rim of

an inverted calabash placed over the patient's head - the result being a grotesque steps and chairs arrangement that was anything but pretty. They had a few scissors in the tribe but it was only when I introduced work on a large scale that they became general. Some inventive youth evolved a string figure which they called "Klitki" (scissors) and which was quite a good imitation of the article. Most figures have names and frequently a story. These names may be The Jumping Flea: the man who got lost in the woods, the Tie-up knot, a trick figure that tangles up most beginners; the Catch-me figure; the spectator having the choice of two loops neither of which when properly made will hold the inserted finger, and others. Many fishes, animals and some birds are represented in string, also various peculiarities and avocations of the Indians themselves, such as The Old Man's Apple or the Old Woman's Face.

Most Indians are fond of music, although few of them show much inclination or aptitude to the art in their early years beyond such as meets the test of official manhood. Music is an art confined entirely to the male population and no woman plays any instrument at any time. Women are however supposed to sing in accompaniment with the men at their dances, and all women sing in some sense to quiet fretful children. It is rare any youth plays any but the most elementary instrument - drum, or instrument requiring no skill - but when they marry

and assume the responsibility of a home and family most of them practise on the bamboo flute, and they soon develop some ability to enliven a dull hour between the hour that darkness demands the closing of the doors of the hut, and the time when they become sleepy. This is when they relate the adventures of the day, or their oral traditions or myths, but many men make a point of playing a little every night. On such nights as there is nothing interesting to relate, this flute playing may go on for an hour. The music is soft and not at all displeasing, although generally quite unintelligible to any but Indian ears. They develop a short series of notes which are played again and again for some moments, then they play a new set of notes for a while and so on until they exhaust their repertoire. At the last they invariably finish on a couple of high shrill notes which everyone understands as the conclusion of the performance. If another married man lives in the hut he may alternate in the playing or more probably wait till the Finish signal is given. In the large communal houses this would stretch out the programme too long and it is quite customary then to hear three, four, or even more flutists all playing at once and each playing his own tune or series of notes. It is anything but pleasant then, but fortunately most communal houses have a guest house some little distance away where strangers are housed, and even a little distance, although it may not add enchantment, at least tends to moderate the noise.

The apex of all amusement is the dance, and this they stage as often as is possible. A dance however means a pai-warri or drinking feast with much preparation and hard work beforehand. It is the rule that as many guests as possible must be invited and it is very rare that I have met a house-holder dancing with only his own family. Where a number of families live in one house, they can dance themselves, or stage a dance in honour of a single guest and his retinue. A large dance may mean a couple of hundred guests or more, and can be staged only when food is fairly plentiful and seldom more than once a year. After exceptional rains or droughts, when the food supplies may be nil, a dance may be an impossibility for long periods. They must wait until enough food is on hand to convert into beer on which to get a proper kick out of the dance, and I have known Indians at a critical stage in supplies, put on a big dance and then have to live for months afterwards on such forest products as could be found.

The actual dance varies little with the different tribes. The steps are confined to one or two short steps forward then backwards, followed by one short step to one side generally the right. The right foot is always put forward first with a stamp, a few inches to a foot in front, the left is brought forward to the same level and another stamp with the right foot given, but without any forward motion, so asto give movements in triplicate. The whole movement is made with a bending of the head and upper part of the body. The movement is then made to the rear, right

first again, and in the same order. These two (forward and backward) movements are repeated time and time again. One variation is a side step to the right, and the dancer moves round in a circle as a rule. If dancing is done in the house, they generally circle round the beer canoe. Variations are made in the side steps, in one of which a short quick run is made, but all this depends on the leader, or master of ceremonies.

Certain men acquire reputations as dancers, either for skill of performance, knowledge of variations or ability for singing. Leadership of the dances is seldom an ambition, as it is a most strenuous physical position. Few men care to act as master of ceremonies in their younger days, and it is generally men of 30 - 40 years who act and then only after much persuasion as I have often seen happen. Once chosen, the leader takes up his post at the head of the line of dancers and there he has to stay for the duration of the dance, which may run from a few hours only to as much as a thirty six hour performance. During this time, he has to set the tempo and rhythm; he has to excel not only in perfection of the steps, the force of his stamping, rattle-shaking, bowing, and distortions, but he has to lead the singing, keeping the highest note, and periodically changing the dance as also the song or chant. He must drink his share of beer, yet not become so drunk as to have to desert his post. He can only stop for short periods to relieve nature, and at such times - rarely more than a moment or two - the other dancers may follow his

example or the dance may stop altogether until he returns. I have known a leader sleep solidly for twenty four hours after a long dance due to almost complete physical exhaustion and scarcely be able to walk normally for some days afterwards. It may be a week or more before he recovers completely.

The men range themselves in a long line on the leader's left. The man with the next best reputation as a dancer is next him, the line tailing off in ability to an end where the boys are trying out their first awkward steps and even a wee toddler hopping about. The leader and a few of his immediate left hand dancers carry six feet long bamboo poles round which are wound long strings of jingling seeds. These are pounded noisily on the ground to suit either a step or a note in the music. Other dancers carry shak-shaks in their hands, or flutes, whistles, and other so-called musical instruments, all either shaken or blown to keep time with the rhythm of the dance.

Every Indian tribe has a variety of musical instruments, but none that I have met has developed tunes that are suitable for a dance, and invariably the music is provided by the human voice. The singing is done in a fairly loud tone and the song is changed every half hour or so. These songs are short little tunes set to words of little more than a couple of sentences, generally giving a description of some natural phenomenon such as the wind, the sun, the rain, or some bird or beast. These

songs are not extempore, but have been handed down from one generation to another. I have heard them trying out new words and ideas to the tunes but very few catch the fancy and I doubt if a new popular song is composed more than once in a life time. When all else fails the singers fall back on a simple interminable "Hei-ya-ha" treble note to fit the tune and which can be sung by all. Strange to say the Wapichanna tribe have never had a poet and they cannot go beyond this last form of song in their own language. The Macussi tribe however have had many poets who have composed songs of almost endless numbers, but then they are the hereditary enemies of the Wapichanna. However there is no alternative; so to avoid the endless monotony of Hei-ya-ha the Wapichanna must and do sing the Macussi songs. They begin on their own song, but as the drink circulates and they become merrier and more devil-may-care, they start off singing the enemy's songs.

The women in most tribes form a line about three feet to the rear of the men. Again a leader is chosen to head the line, generally for her voice and ability in song. She, however, as indeed the whole line of women, need not continue dancing for very long periods. On the women devolve the duties of keeping the fires going to provide light, preparing food if required, and above all keeping the calabashes of beer circulating all the time. It is very rare that all the women are dancing at the same time, and the line is constantly alternating and changing. They dance about a yard to the

rear of the men, the line dwindling in ability to a ragged end of young girls who merely stamp and walk aimlessly about. The women's leader is immediately behind the men's leader, keeping the same steps and tune. Their singing is kept on a high strident note which must be a considerable strain on the vocal chords. The women occasionally carry a shak-shak but never use any of the other musical instruments.

Amongst the Wapichanna the women outnumber the men to a considerable degree, and even with their system of polygamy, there are numbers of unappropriated females. As the dance progresses everyone becomes to some extent intoxicated and after hours of hard exertion many of the men become quite sodden and carry on almost mechanically. The free-lance woman may get exhilarated with drink but she does not by any means get drunk, as indeed few of the women with their multifarious duties can afford to do. When the free woman thinks the proper moment has arrived, she attaches herself to some selected male by placing her right hand on his left shoulder. The woman hints that the man appears tired and a rest would do him good. The man probably agrees and he is steered to the woman's hammock quite careless and oblivious to where he is going. In this way, many marriages are consummated, as the man wakes up to find himself with a strange woman, and if she is at all skilful or desperate, she publishes the fact with no uncertain voice.

Amongst such tribes as have had a fair contact with civilization, these dances and drinking festivals are frequently the scene of much promiscuous intercourse, and generally the more the tribe has become civilized, the greater is the degree of debauchery. Amongst the more remote tribes, however, with little or no contact with outside ideas, habits and customs, there is practically none of this. Generally at a very tender age, the boy or girl knows who his or her future mate is to be. The son of a brother finds his wife in the daughter of a sister, and vice versa the son of a woman takes as his bride the daughter of his mother's brother, in other words, they marry full cousins. The children of brothers cannot marry any more than the children of any sisters. Such children are considered full blooded brothers or sisters as the case may be. When however no sister's daughter is available for a brother's son, a marriage can easily be arranged by the boy's father simply calling some woman his sister. I have found it is the general habit of all the boys to be officially engaged at a very early age, sometimes as mere toddling tots. I have often heard a girl spoken of as the bride or wife of a certain boy and their standing is practically that of the engaged couple amongst ourselves, but actual marriage does not take place until the youth has passed his manhood tests. These engagements are binding and very rarely broken except by death.

Amongst every tribe there are always some men and women to whom marriage has been denied from some reason or other in which case the male almost invariably has to purchase the woman from whoever her guardians may be. The woman can make no move, especially in her younger days, and seems perfectly content, although when a woman gets to an age of between 25 and 30, she seems to throw all customs on one side and will probably approach some man of her choice, very often clandestinely. The unattached girl in her teens is rarely ever allowed to move without a companion, a mother or some elderly relative, and at the large dances, I have often seen mother and daughter hand in hand either dancing, handing out drink or food, or attending to various other duties. Of course I do not say that promiscuity does not occur in every tribe, at times, but I do maintain that there is little evidence of it to be seen amongst the more remote tribes even at big drinking festivals. After having won the complete confidence of the Waiwais I went to their villages with some twenty Wapichanna carriers, some two or three of whom, young and unattached, declared their intention of taking a Waiwai girl back with them as a help to their becoming recognised traders for the well known graters so urgently required by the Wapichanna. They stayed several weeks before I went deeper into the forests. There were several dances and drinks: my men were in good employment, and had wealth - clothes, beads, knives etc, - to satisfy and attract any

girl, but they returned as they came - unattached !

Amongst the Waiwai, strange to say, it is the women and not the men who are the principal dancers. A woman is chosen as the leader and takes her place at the head of the line; the men forming up behind and trying rather shamefacedly to keep up with the steps and the tune, and just the opposite to general custom. It is the only case I know of where women assume the leading role in any activity outside the household duties. Dancing would seem to be an art in which the Waiwai is deficient, and I found the women who were recognised as efficient leaders had all come from, or had some connection and practice with, other tribes away far to the South and deeper in the forests. Amongst the Wapichannay most recognised dance leaders were men who had had some connection with the Macussi, some distance to the North in this case, but the women leaders amongst the Waiwai won their diploma for ability in dancing, whereas the Wapichanna leader (male) was selected for his ability in singing.

The steps and movements of the Waiwai dances were much livelier and more varied than those in most tribes and they required much more room in which to perform. All dances took place out in the open in the area cleared in front of their houses and I have never seen a dance staged indoors, although their huge communal houses were much more suitable than the small houses of the Wapichanna who as a rule dance indoors. Many of the Waiwai dances are quite elaborate and intricate,

not only in the steps, but also in the figures attempted and it must require a fair amount of practice to become an expert. They have had their own poets and all songs are sung in their own language. The men sing less than amongst other tribes and join or drop out of the line of dancers as and when they please. The men invariably serve the beer to the dancers and spectators, and thus release the women from that duty, although some women and girls still have various household duties to see to. The women keep on dancing until the beer is finished but drink comparatively little. The drinking is done by the men to a great extent, andmwhile it appears necessary that all the men must dance now and again, they mostly line up as spectators at strategic points. The Waiwai dances are given during the day, and I have several times seen the woman leader give the signal to close the dance even when there was plenty of beer on hand. I have never seen a Waiwai dance continue longer than a few hours - say six at the most. Every other tribe dances day or night until the drink is completely finished or everyone is completely exhausted, and in this respect the Waiwai customs are interesting.

Each tribe has its own national dance in which they dress up in some peculiar form and each individual represents some animal or bird. The Wapichanna have their Paresharu Dance. The men tear off the single digits of various palm leaves and string them on to lengths of tough lianes or home made string. They wind one of these round the hips, the

waist, the shoulders and neck and a double or treble one is caught round the top of the head. With the exception of the toes no part of the body can be seen and the dancer appears as an animated bundle of palm leaves. Each dancer has previously made a trumpet about three feet long from a hollow Balsa sapling, at the lower end of which is attached a rudely carved animal or bird. The performer must imitate to the best of his ability such animal or bird as he has chosen as his emblem, in all its various actions and calls. This dance is generally done out of doors as there is neither the space in the small houses for the necessary movements, nor sufficient light to enable the spectators to see. The dance is never staged by everyone and there are generally plenty of critics and onlookers. When the dancers become weary of the running, prancing and jumping in imitation of their respective emblems, and definitely when the sun sinks and darkness falls, they all retire indoors when the usual Hoi-ya-ha dance is begun. Each performer must however carry his palm leaf away to some distance, and it is quite a common occurrence when travelling in the Wapichanna country to see a Parisharu Dress hung up in a low tree (the accepted place of disposal) at one side of the trail at a spot that may be miles from the nearest house or village.

The Waiwai have their own national dance on somewhat similar lines, but the necessary dress is far more elaborate

and takes some days to prepare, on which account, I had made several visits without having time to await a demonstration. However, I arrived off a survey trip in the early part of the year 1913 with only two Taruma attendants, who would by no means strain the food supplies of the tribe and I decided to stay till I saw the dance. After fixing things up, the men took their axes and cutlasses and disappeared in the forest. When they returned each man was laden with a bundle of bark about 6 to 8 feet in length. This was the bark of the Kakaralli tree, a peculiar laminated bark which when properly beaten divides into a number of thin sheets not any thicker than a sheet of fine paper. The men spent almost a day pounding and hammering this bark with wooden beaters and carefully pulling the thin sheets apart. A stout cord, some 4 to 5 feet long, was next spun on the thigh from silkgrass and tied between two upright poles placed in the ground. The thin bark sheets were now torn into ribbons about one inch wide, the two ends carefully placed together and each ribbon secured by a hitch at the exact centre round the prepared string. More and more ribbons were attached to the string as close as possible until the space between the poles was packed full, After combing these perfectly straight and perpendicular with the fingers, each man sat down in front and began winding other bark ribbons round and round certain portions of the hanging barks. There seemed no method in this winding or bandaging. A man

would take enough bark to make a core about as thick as the thumb and bandage it carefully for as much as two feet of its length, or he might bandage it merely for a couple of inches but the greater part of the whole thing was left unbandaged. This bandaging took up a whole day and already they had spent three days in preparation. The next day a hunt was arranged and "would I lend them" a new hoe I had with me. They carried the bandaged barks with them and we walked for a couple of miles through the forest away from the mountains until we came to a creek along whose banks was a deposit of clay. They began digging with the hoe and soon had a strip of clean exposed clay which they dug up and puddled well with their feet. When having added water this was reduced to liquid mud, the barks were carefully soused and completely covered with mud. They were trampled down till not a single point of bark appeared anywhere.

We then spread out in the forest for home, hunting as we went and saving the barks behind us. Early next morning, messengers were despatched to bring back the barks. They had been carefully washed free of all mud and were hung up in the sun to dry, but they had completely changed colour. When we trampled them in the mud yesterday the whole thing had been a slightly reddish light brown colour, to-day the whole affair was a dull matt black. The following morning, after making sure that the barks were completely dry, each man began

cutting and unwinding the bandages he had wound on. As these came off, I found the original colour had been preserved and gave quite a contrast against the black background of such parts as had been left unbound, but it was not until the last bandage had been removed and the bark shaken straight that I discovered the motive in the operations. Even Saik Tau, my interpreter, could not explain what the idea was, but I now found that the bandaging had been done to form some animal or bird. As each man shook out his bark, there was exposed a view of a turtle, a monkey, a dog, a wild hog, or some such animal. Some had chosen birds and one had designed a man. There was no doubt about each animal; they were of course geometrical in form as it was impossible for them to bind a curved limb but they were splendid figures of the animals selected and showed up to perfection in light brown against the matt black of the background.

In the dance at a later hour, the bark was worn round the shoulder with the motif exposed on the back of the wearer. Each man pranced around and gave as graphic an imitation of his emblem as he could, accompanied by much uproarious chaff and laughter from the spectators. The women were called out to dance in the usual manner and the men did much of their imitations and buffoonery behind them or round them, or through amongst them. The monkey had by far the greatest range of antics and repeatedly brought down the house with

his capers. The signal to stop dancing was given by the woman leader shortly before the sun sank behind the forest wall round the clearing, and after a feed everyone retired to bed, sober, but happy and full of laughter. I purchased these masks (?) next day for one butcher's knife each, and we carried out as many as we could. They now repose in some museum in the United States of America and are probably the only ones ever brought out of the forests.

A peculiar feature of the organized Waiwai dances was the presence of a couple of clowns. These were young lads not yet quite at manhood; generally gawky self-conscious adolescents in their early teens. Their duties seemed very vague, principally to caper around the different dancers and to give some rather crude imitations of their elders. They were supposed to keep up a running fire of witticisms but their repertoire was limited and seldom raised a laugh although all the spectators were keenly watching and very ready to applaud. They preferred to go away by themselves and give childish imitations of various animals or just chasing each other or any children within reach.

There are exceptions to every rule and on one occasion I saw a couple of these clowns at a Waiwai dance who were really amusing and funny especially the elder. These clowns are generally dressed up somewhat for the game: mostly with a few fronds from a young palm leaf tied round their head, neck, or waist, but on this occasion they were much

better dressed, not only with palm fronds but a fair amount also of feather ornaments. The elder had seemed very under-sized for his age - I should say 15-17 years - which might account for his superior performance and precocious wit.

He wore a mask which for all the world was practically a pair of motor goggles, although very definitely not a single man in the tribe had ever been within several hundred miles through the trackless forests of either the sight or sound of such a vehicle. The eye pieces of the goggles were two ends of the hard outer shell of the large pod in which are packed a score or so of ordinary commercial Brazil Nuts. At one end of this pod is a stem of vegetable matter which gradually shrivels up as the nuts mature and ripen until the pod drops to the ground with a small circular hole of roughly half an inch diameter which runs right through the hard shell.

Incidentally it is through this hole that a certain rare bluish lizard creeps to eat the enclosed nuts. I have seen this lizard only twice, both times in Brazil nuts which were slightly immature, but I have never seen this lizard on the forest floor or on the trees. It was well known to both the Taruma and Waiwai where large reefs of these trees exist. They spoke of the lizards as the "Brazil Nut Mama", but I could not learn anything of its other types of food or life history.

This boy had carefully cut off two circular ends of these pods which carried such holes. The two pieces were

a little over 2 inches in diameter with the holes as near the exact centre as possible. He had lashed these together, through tiny holes bored on one side, with silk grass, in such a manner that the centre holes were immediately in front of the pupils of his eyes. At the other side of these circles he had attached strings, which he tied behind his head to keep the mask in position. To hide the bridge of silkgrass over the nose he had attached the upper beak of a Harpy Eagle which hung down and completely concealed his own nose. The whole affair was decorated with a number of feathers and the paint lines on his brow and face added to the grotesque.

His companion was dressed only with a few palm leaf fronds. He was much younger and seemed to have been chosen as a foil to the antics of the elder. This fellow was extremely agile and witty and for some hours kept the whole company in roars of laughter with his capering and merry quips. His representation of a wild pig was the favourite. In this he kept rushing about: taking cover behind bushes and tree stumps and imitating perfectly the sounds emitted by a pig on the rampage, while feeding, or brought to bay by dogs. Whenever he got a chance he charged the dancers or spectators who promptly scuttled out of reach. The high light of the performance was when, head well down, he successfully charged between the legs of the less wary, especially if the victim was a woman, who, when sent sprawling on the ground, made frantic efforts

to cover up and regain her feet. This last invariably "brought the house down" for a good ten minutes.

This clown dancing is done by other tribes also - Wapichanna - but is of little amusement or interest. The dancers never dressed up and were generally only about 5 years old. I never could understand whether it was part of the ritual, or merely two proud mothers bringing their offspring into the limelight. Their dancing consisted only in jumping up or down in a very childish way and laughing loudly at themselves, but amongst the Waiwai the clown played a very active and entertaining part.

Amongst the adults of all tribes probably the most general of all amusements after darkness has fallen, is story telling in some form or other, as it can be carried out year in and year out, and, apart from a little flute playing, fills in such hours as lie between dusk and actual sleep. The subjects range from the doings of the day whether in the field or the forest to their folklore and mythology. Most of these stories are short, probably 5 to 15 moments duration, but in the case of some one who has made a journey of some weeks from home, the tale of advanture must run into serial form. This however is only told at length for the benefit of the travellers own family and is condensed to the amusing or spectacular when told to outsiders. These travel tales are of little interest to anyone, being simply a verbal diary of the trip: a list of breakfast and sleeping camps; details

of the game shot each day and a description of running this or that fall or the weather. Many of their animal and folk-lore stories are not only amusing but instructive as they frequently bring forward actual facts that are little known.

The casual visitor rarely hears the story telling. His arrival completely upsets the usual routine and conversation is more general. When however the white man has ceased to be the centre of curiosity, such as on a long journey scores of miles from any habitation, normal habits are resumed and story-telling at dusk comes into full play. It is however very difficult to follow these stories correctly as the language used is very different from that in daily use. They have developed many abbreviations and idioms in their oratory, especially in their mythology, that are never heard otherwise. In every tribe there are several men who are the recognised raconteurs, yet no two of them seem to use exactly the same idioms. You can learn to follow one man in his tale; then you listen to another who lives only 50 miles away and you are all at sea. The thread of the story remains the same, but many of the finer points cannot be followed owing to a complete new and unknown series of expressions being used. The language of any race if fluid and constantly being added to by new ideas , inventions and slangs, but due to denser population and speed of communication soon become general. Living long distances apart and with slow and little communication, various sections of the

same tribe can develop such expressions independently and on quite different lines, which accounts for the difficulty in understanding them, but these are only met in their tales. The language in use by day in any tribe is invariably the same except for an occasional newly coined word and can readily be understood by anyone, but a very different question with the language of the night.

The Story of the Creation is by far the finest of the tribal myths and also the longest. It has been published elsewhere but I include the original as written years ago now. All the tribes I know have a Creator and a Devil, and though the Story of Creation varies from tribe to tribe, the underlying ideas, beliefs and teaching are always the same. They are very shy of telling this myth before strangers - men of another race or tribe. It is only after some years residence amongst them and gaining their confidence that I was told the tale. Their other stories of animals, birds, the hunt, the stars, or the standard jokes of the tribe - will be told before anyone but not the Myth of Creation. That, at least around the opening years of the present century, was held too sacred to be mentioned before any person except the near relations of the raconteur. I have never heard it related in a camp for instance where I had a dozen or twenty men at work. Every other tribal joke and story would be related but never the Creation Myth.

I had certainly been some three or four years amongst

the Wapichanna before I heard this myth. I had to make arrangements for one of the recognised raconteurs - a man bordering on 70 years of age and one of the tribal sub-chiefs - to come in to my station and tell it. We had to be alone and each night we met in an upstairs room by ourselves at about 7 p.m. and he spun the tale until around 9 o'clock when we would retire to sleep. It took a full week before he had narrated the whole story: the reason being that he adopted me asa relative and as such had to give me the advise at appropriate points necessary for my education in the correct way of living generally and in the morals and precepts of the Tribe at full length. Had he not done this, I do not think he could have told the story properly. By adopting me he created the mental atmosphere of his own home so to speak and thus could tell me the story exactly as he would have done to his own sons or daughters.

The old man was terribly in earnest and the whole session was most impressive. No minister of our own class or religion could have been more serious, or have expounded any better the morals of a good spiritual life. There was no question in the old man's mind as to my conversion or of doubt as to there being a Deity or a future life; the points he tried to make was how best to live a life without blemish (sin) and to avoid the punishment - if only shame - of wrong doing.

Much of the recitation was tedious, but I sat through it to the end. In later years I was to hear it in condensed form

such as when some noted member of the tribe was on a visit from a distance and had been requested by the host to speak to the youth of the house. With possibly only one night in which to do this, as for instance the guide who was accompanying me on a tour, it had to be cut down and it is in this form that I eventually wrote out the Myth.

There is no doubt that the Creation of Myth played a very important part, at least among the Wapichanna and the more remote tribes, in tribal life right into the present century, and it is a great pity that such influence is rapidly disappearing if not completely gone. Religion from the outside world has been brought to them under the mistaken idea that the tribes were heathen and savages, and not a single thought given as to whether they had any ideas of their own on the subject which could have been gently and slowly modified into the teachings of Christ. The result is that the so-called Missions struck at the fundamentals of all that is best in Aboriginal Indian life and left them with a hodge-podge of ideas which they could not assimilate or put into practice. Missions as a rule expect, if not demand, speedy returns in baptisms, converts, marriages, and attendance at services to conform to their own pet laws and theology. This disrupts accepted tribal customs and rites which is fatal to the morals of a people who, so far, have had only the very slightest acquaintance with modern civilization, but does not satisfy the more pressing economic requirements of the tribe in any way.

The Indians with their desperate need of manufactured

goods are only too ready to acquiesce in and accept such of the white man's teaching and ways as pleases him, but he has no previous experience to guide him and therefore makes many mistakes in his selection of new lines of conduct and thought. He is extremely willing to be taught but all civilization has done for him in great measure so far is to disrupt all his cultural, social and tribal customs and habits on the one side and exploit him as cheap labour on the other. In dealing with the more unsophisticated tribes it would be far better and wiser to meet them on fair and sound commercial or economic lines and leave them to slowly evolve their own future code of ethics and morals to meet the material changes as they arose.

Indian Mythology.

Story telling amongst the Indians is quite an art, but is almost entirely confined to the men. Women have their stories, but these are recounted secretly in low, almost inaudible whispers to their fellow women, or the budding maidens, and never in the public manner of the men. Very few men in early life are adept storytellers. Up to the time of marriage - generally somewhere between 17 and 20 years of age - the young man takes little if any interest in the oral traditions and myths of his tribe. He will listen enthralled; he has probably heard them dozens of times and could have them letter perfect, but he is at an age when his powers of observation are being trained at high speed in other directions and it seems to me that his attention is more wrapped up in the practical than the theoretical. He is also too full of vitality and restlessness which must find an outlet in action and noise. Speech making and the ability to hold an audience comes slowly and with considerable experience as a rule, and he has not yet acquired the flow of speech or the necessary confidence to enter the lists as a storyteller. Within a year of marriage, the Indian is generally a father, and by the time a man reaches thirty, he will have his own house and some children sufficiently advanced to understand things and whom it is now his duty

to amuse and educate. Experience and practice improve his art, but few good raconteurs are met with before they are in their middle thirties.

The stories fall naturally into two kinds, those told in the evening and those in the early morning. The tales at night are invariably told in the house and deal with a great variety of subjects, such as the history of the tribe and the locality, tales of their hunting or fighting ancestors, amusing stories of beast and bird, or the long story of the Creation. Those in the morning are told in the clearing outside the house and are fewer in number and range. They are stories of the various stars or constellations as they appear in the Eastern horizon with the first streaks of coming dawn, and probably are told in an interesting form to assist in fixing them in the memory, as it is by such early morning stars that the tribes arrange the annual rotation of their agricultural procedure and know the times of the meeting or prevalence of forest fauna, and the ripening of various wild fruits.

All story-telling is spasmodic; any excitement, the chase, gossip or a stranger present, may mean they are not in the mood and the atmosphere is not right. During the rainy season when there is a lull to all except the most necessary activities, story-telling in the evening is pretty general. For many years it was just at this season, that I was forced to make long difficult rounds of inspection and sometimes I was held up by floods for days in a village; therefore I heard

many stories and tales, of which, alas, I made no notes, and now many have escaped my memory. Many stories also have so much sexual detail mixed up in them that they are scarcely worth remembering and if they were, cannot be written down on that account. Sex in Indian life is a natural function just as much as hunger or thirst, but when such intimate and frequently impossible details form a prominent part of a tale they lose their interest and usefulness to outsiders.

Under the dense and gloomy roof of the forest it is early dark. As the sun sinks under the horizon it is already dusk on the forest floor. With no artificial light at their command beyond a wood fire - the evening meal will have already been served if possible and all chores finished while the light lasted. The doors are closed, then comes the customary good-night litany, and a little flute playing, and except for some special reason everyone is in his or her hammock before 7 p.m. None are particularly tired or sleepy, gossip or general talk has languished until some remarks start a train of talk that will lead up to a story. If the man is a good raconteur everyone is at once silent and all attention. Silently, the women slip from their hammocks, blow up the fires, bring forward stools and begin to spin their cotton by the light; the men quietly turn in their hammocks so as to face the speaker. There isn't a sound from one, and all are breathlessly listening !

"A young male Bittern Bird, his plumage at its height,

and glittering, now blue or green or mauve in the bright sunlight, had left his parents and was slowly working his way up a forest creek by himself. By noon, he had shot a number of fish and having found a fine, clear, open pool, decided to rest during the excessive heat of the early afternoon. Sitting quietly in the shade, ona branch jutting out over the pool, he was surprised to see a beautiful Indian maiden approach the pool. As she stripped off her lap and ornaments and stepped into the pool to take a bath, the Bittern had ample opportunity to note the soft, rich, brown colour of her skin and the seductive contours and curves of a beautiful form. Never had he seen anything he so much desired ! As the maiden was donning her dress again, he flew down beside her and laying his string of fish at her feet asked if she would marry him. The maiden hesitated; the fish were nice, there were several she would love to eat, so she picked up the string, saying, "Let us talk with my father". The Indian hut was not far away and father was sitting outside the door repairing some damaged arrows. He had not been hunting that day. The fish were very tempting and such a son-in-law might be most useful, so his consent was readily given and the marriage consummated that same night. For some days, the newly married pair were left alone; they could wander hand in hand along the various forest paths or down to the creek to bathe, and the Bittern always shot a few fishes for supper while at the pool. Soon these fishes in the pool were all killed out, and there

were other tasks and other work to be done, but father-in-law found his son-in-law had no inclination for this, and he did not seem of much use after all. No appeal could get the Bittern to work. Father-in-law would say, "Come on, son-in-law, we must go to fell a new field to-day". The Bittern would solemnly croak out, "Ha-a-a", but instead of taking up an axe to join the others, he would only move over a little nearer his wife, and there he stayed. His wife's uncle would say, "Nephew, let us go hunting the wild hog to-day". Back came the answer, "Ha-a-a-a", but that was all. Another man would say, "Brother-in-law, let us go to pick the falling fruits in the forest for your wife". "Ha-a-a-a", was the answer but he made no movement. Should anyone however say, "Friend, let us go fishing to-day", the Bittern at once answered, "Ha-ha-ha", and was out of the house and down at the creek before the others had picked up their arrows".

The Bittern does have those two calls, and when travelling on the river by canoe, all the Indians ask questions in turn when they start a Bittern flipping slowly ahead of them, and he who gets the "Ha-ha-ha" to the appropriate question is exceedingly proud of his perspicacity. As the story finishes there are peals of laughter all round. Then begins a running fire of questions by everybody - women included - asking the Bittern to join in the most impossible tasks they can imagine and there are noisy "Ha-a-a-as" all over the hut, all accompanied by great

bursts of laughter. After some five or ten minutes they have more or less exhausted their battery of questions, then a quiet voice is heard.

"Listen to me, all you people. It was the season of the year when the fruit of the forest trees is ripe. Every tree had borne more fruit than could be eaten and the land turtle had grown fat and so lazy, that he could not go in search of a wife, yet a wife he must have. One day, he happened to look up a tree, where fruit was dropping close to where he was resting, and saw a wonderfully pretty bird hopping amongst the branches overhead, eating fruit and every now and again tossing one down that did not appeal to her taste. She would make a fine wife, so he shouted up an offer of marriage if she would come down. "Oh ! no!!", replied the bird, "I am perfectly willing to marry you, but you must come up here to me", and this time a coyly, well directed fruit landed full on his back. "You just wait a little", shouted the turtle, as he rushed to the foot of the tree up which he began to clamber. Round and round the tree went the turtle, but with no success. He would reach up as far as he could, but he was still far too short. Even when he balanced on the tip of his big toe, he could not reach high enough, and then he would lose his balance and roll over probably to find himself flat on his back. He would have to spend a long time kicking and struggling to regain his feet, and then he would

have to begin all over again. Meanwhile his lady love was shouting, "I am getting weary waiting. Are you not going to come up ?" He declared he was on the way and would again dash at the tree with no better results. Once when he toppled backwards, he rolled over and over several times and found himself in front of a wide broad ribbon like liano, which he saw led right up to the branch where his love was resting. This gave him an idea, so he grasped the liano and found he could poke his foot right through its thin weak centre. He tried his weight and the liano held, so he poked another foot through a little higher up. Soon he found himself clear of the ground, and shouted, "I will be with you very soon". Stolidly plodding on, foot over foot, he mounted higher and higher up the liano and at last was able to pull himself up on the branch, where his love had been resting. She was still there, crouching down low on the branch to receive his advances. Slowly he climbed on her back but he had to lean over on one side to get what he wanted, and then he slipped and rolled over, clutching desperately with hands and feet at the smooth silky feathers of the bird. His lady love, thoroughly frightened at such rude wooing, flew off with a scream out and over the tops of the forest and the unfortunate turtle, rolling over and over in the air, arrived "Kebla-a-am" on the ground".

Towards the close of the tale you could hear the agitated breathing and suppressed giggles amongst the audience until "Keble-am" gave the signal for uproarious laughter on all sides,

followed again by all sorts of modifications of the scene by everyone. This tale always evokes much badinage between the men and the women who respectively take the parts of the lover and mistress, and all sorts of variations are brought up. Shrieks of laughter greet either side as they score a point or worst the other in the argument. When the jokes and laughter die down another man may take up the tale.

"Oh yes ! everyone knows that liano, which ever since has carried the marks of the turtle's feet as he climbed, but, listen, my brothers, there is more to tell. The turtle was now very annoyed and terribly angry. No longer would he seek a bride on the tops of the tree, but as his urge for marriage had only been increased by the adventure, he set off on foot to search for a wife of his own kind. It was passing through amongst some rocks and as he walked, he peered over the side of one. To his great surprise, a lady turtle poked her head out from under the very rock on top of which he was perched and looked up at him. He pushed himself an inch or so further over the rock in order to get a better view, and strange to say, his new found lady moved out an almost equal amount to get a better look at him. Then he reached out a hand to see if he could touch his bride-to-be and coquettishly she put out a hand to touch him. He was now vastly excited, and must possess this wonderful lady, so he thoughtlessly pushed himself forward a few more inches when he promptly overbalanced and fell "tipo-o-om" in

the pool.of water where he had seen the shadow of himself "!

The word "Kebla-am" is in general use to indicate the fall of anything on the ground, the emphasis on the last syllable indicating the force with which the ground is struck. The word "tipo-a-om" or "plung-ng-ng", also general, always indicates the falling of something in water, the accent varying to indicate the force of the fall or the depth of the water. Such words which are phonetic expressions of the actual sound, can be very realistic and are in use amongst tribes living far apart from each other, with little or no connection. At the word "tipo-o-om" renewed laughter and jokes again commence, after which an old grey beard may add:-

"The turtle certainly met with misfortune when seatching for a bride, but they still do it every year. That is why, when we see the fruits of certain trees falling to the ground, we look carefully around and everyone knows how often we find a turtle under a fallen branch or a tangle of vines, where he is investigating the chances of getting into the tree tops, or, when the first rains of the season fill the swamps with water, we follow along the edges of the swamp at such a time with our hunting dogs, as it is almost certain we shall find one or two turtles hustling away from the rising water after an unsuccessful search for a wife".

Practically all the tribes have a story of a tribe or large village composed solely of women who live at some remote creek or corner of the forests. Except in small de-

tails the story is the same amongst all the tribes I know. This one told by the Wapichanna is typical.

"Once upon a time, a man built a large house by one of the rivers in the forests far away from anyone. He was the only man in the village, where he had many women living with him as his wives. He collected these women by magical means from the far distant tribes or such corials and wood-skins as passed up and down the river in front of his house. This man was capable of almost incessant sexual intercourse as his organ of generation was in the form of a long flexible tube which never slept, and which could go round the various hammocks and visit the women every night, even when the man himself was lying snoring loudly in his hammock. This treatment aroused intense anger and disgust amongst the women, and they tried many means and ways of killing him, all of which failed owing to the man's command of magic, by which he was able to frustrate all attempts. At length they struck on an idea that was harmless in appearance and might succeed, owing to the fact of its very simplicity. One half of the women organised a whole night's appearing of fish by torchlight at a series of rapids some miles below the village, to which the man - a very keen fisher - would be glad to accompany them. The rest of the women were to stay at home and prepare an amount of extra potent beer against the noon hour when the fishers would return tired out with their night's work, when they would welcome a dance and some good beer. Everything

went as arranged and when the hunters returned, the women, careful only to sip the beer, plied the man with so much drink, that before sunset, he was so drunk as to be incapable of further movement. He was put in his hammock where with luck it was almost certain he would sleep without waking until the sun was high next day. As soon as it was dusk, and the various animals who might have warned the man of their movements had gone to sleep, the women manned every woodskin the village possessed, and began paddling up river for dear life in an attempt to escape. The man could make little if any progress overland and with no woodskin available, pursuit by river was impossible. When daylight broke, the women were many miles upstream and as the sun began to rise, they begged all the birds flying downstream to help them and not to inform the man of their whereabouts. The man slept soundly all night, but woke towards noon to find his village deserted. As no woodskins lay at the landing, it was evident that the women had fled by river, so he called up some of the fishes and asked which way the women had gone. An old Haimara fish, who had been hunting all night, told him they had passed over him going upstream. He soon made a magis woodskin and went off in pursuit. The women kept in touch with his doings by questioning all the birds flying upstream past them. They were now becoming exhausted from paddling, and were busy hauling their woodskins over a bad rapid when a passing heron

told them the man was making great speed and was now only some hours behind them. They immediately began to pick up all the huge boulders that lay round, and threw them into every possible channel so as to impede or block the man's progress. He was now drawing near, so the women jumped into their woodskins and rushed ahead on the still waters, leaving one old lady who volunteered to stay and complete the blockade. The old lady was carrying an armful of huge boulders when the man arrived on the scene. As soon as he saw her, he fired an arrow and killed her, but in dying the old woman tottered forward and the rocks fell, to block completely the last possible channel. One boulder smashed the man's magic boat, and he was unable to proceed farther. The women all escaped and kept pushing further and further into the depths of the forest. Somewhere, in an almost inaccessible creek, they have built a flourishing village, but they will not on any account allow any man to live amongst them. The village is kept alive by other disgusted women arriving from the outside world.

Many of the Indian stories are connected with the history of the surrounding country, such as a particularly deep pool in which lives some beast of great strength or potential danger. Thus Dada Bowk (Macaw Pool) in the Wapichanna country, alongside of which the high rising ground clear of all flood tide is known as Dada Nawa (the knoll or knowe of the Macaw)

derives its name from the old time superstition that the lake was inhabited by a fabulous macaw which meant danger and even death to anyone who was foolish enough to bathe, fish, or even look on its waters. The monster was appeased by presenting it with a young maiden, but I can remember when it was held in considerable dread, as one never knew when the Macaw might again become dangerous. The Warimara - the mermaid of the Taruma - is another instance of a myth or story on similar lines, as also the Kaikusi of the Macussi tribe, where a fabulous jaguar inhabited a certain pool. Nearly every tribe know of a lake also - always outside their own territory - on whose surface all heavy articles such as stones or an axe will float, whereas the lightest articles such as a dried leaf or an arrow reed sink immediately.

In the Wapichanna country there are numerous hills, sheer sided and domed with practically bare rocks jutting up a few hundred feet in the air, most of which have some fable or myth of the days when the tribes were at war woven round them, and particularly of the times when the Carib Indians were induced to ascend the rivers to secure slaves to augment the workers demanded by the so-called pioneers of Western civilization along the coast. In these days the savannahs were purely Atarod country, long before the migration of the Wapichanna from Brazil. The fugitive Atarods fled before the Caribs, a more fierce and better armed tribe, and scaled these rocky

bluffs, in several cases by the help of the long pendant roots of trees or lianos hanging down the sides and which had found a foothold in the crannies on top. It was easy to club the most virile enemy as he clambered up hand over hand, and in one case when a liano was alive with climbing foes, it was cut from above and their enemies crashed to death on the rocks below.

Many single rocks harbour fabulous monsters, and the local tales of any district are as numerous as the history of the hills and dales of England. These stories are rarely of much interest; there is too much similarity in them and they are definitely pure superstition, but they form the nucleus of endless stories to the Indians who, however devil-may-care and reckless they may appear in the bright light of day, quiver with invidious apprehension when they are related in the eerie darkness of night. The one exception that is really interesting is that of the mountains and rocks that appear in their wonderful Story of Creation. This myth - far away their best - has been given elsewhere, but apart from the fate of Man and his association with God there are many little stories relative to the creation which are told separately. These are interesting as giving sidelights on Indian humour and their natural creative genius.

"God had been busy all day making the birds, which as they left the Creator's hands, gathered around some rocks to dry and preen their beautiful plumage, where there was a pool in which all could admire themselves. There was one poor unfortunate bird whose colours where so indistinct that everyone was

certain God had made a mistake and forgotten to add a little colour. They advised the bird to go back and point out the omission to God, and it was possible she could yet get some flecks of colour put on. When the bird went back, God was finishing work for the day and was busy washing up all the calabashes that had held the various paints and colours with a little water, eking out the small supply of water by pouring it from calabash to calabash in order to save a walk to the creek for a larger or new supply. As He worked, God listened to the complaint of the bird in silenve until He finished washing his last calabash, when He emptied all the dirty water over the bird, exclaiming, "You go away and don't you dare come again". The bird flew off back to join its companions but weary of his delay in returning, they had already set out in search of food in the forests. She then stepped forward to see her reflection in the water mirror and found she was, if anything, of a more drab and dingy colour than previously. Instantly she burst out crying "Poor me, one ! (beginning at the top of the scale and dropping a full note with each word), and you can hear the unfortunate little bird every day in the forest bewailing in these notes the fact that she alone in all bird life has not one speck of colour to relieve or redeem her drab appearance."

"Tuminkar (He who makes) - God - had been busy making the Birds. There are many birds, each with its difference in form, shape or size, so it meant much work, thus there was not enough time to finish them completely. They were told what foods they were to eat and were ordered to play around, or search for what food they could find until He was ready to give them their different colourings - the one thing that was still lacking. The sun was high in the heavens when the last bird was turned out, and Tuminkar, as soon as he had finished breakfast, began to make paints of every colour and variety: some from the barks or leaves; from fruits, juices and seeds and others again from various coloured clays.

When all was ready He gave the signal for the Birds to assemble before Him. There was quite a large clearing round Tuminkar's house, beyond which stretched the forests as far as the eye of a man could see, to which most of the Birds had retired for shade and in which many of them were flying around having a merry carefree time. In the clearing, however, were some high bare rocks, on one of which was perched the Cock of the Rock, and as he was so near, naturally he was the first to arrive before He-who-makes. Tuminkar picked up a brush made from the fine fibres of a Silkgrass leaf and dipping it into one of the Monkey-pot gourds of

paint standing near to hand, began painting Cock of the Rock the most beautiful shades of gold and yellow. Tuminkar looked at the effects produced and when satisfied, added a little thin, dark brown line of colour along the full length of Cock of the Rock's lovely crest near its outer edge as the mark of His handicraft, just as we still put a mark on our graters, or basketry when we make them to distinguish the work of each man of the tribe in case of any dispute arising at some time or other.

Cock of the Rock was then told to go away into the clearing and to spread out his wings in the rapidly declining sun to allow the paints to dry thoroughly before dark. By this time all the other birds had arrived and were standing impatiently around waiting to be painted and made lovely. Amongst these were the Macaws, the Parrots, Powis, Maams, Bush Turkeys, Marudis, Pigeons, Parroquettes, Duraquarras, Carapas, Lovebirds, Tropials, Ducks, Humming Birds - all pressing forward for their colour markings as soon as another bird got its coat - and amongst whom, Cock of the Rock fondly hoped his good wife was included, although he had not seen her since he had hurriedly flown in answer to the signal calling everyone to appear to receive their colourings.

Cock of the Rock regained his old position on a high rock and carefully spreading out his wings in the sun, spent a couple of agreeable hours watching the different

birds passing on each side of his perch in their varied coats of paint, none of whom to judge of the little he could see of himself, were any more lovely than himself.

Meanwhile Cock of the Rock's colouring had become perfectly dry: the sun was already low low down towards the forests and he was terribly thirsty, so he moved down to a pool,of water for a drink. As he did so he was surprised to see his gorgeous colourings reflected in the pool, and, almost forgetting his thirst, stayed for a long time admiring his appearance, as he turned first this side and then that to his mirror.

It was already sunset, but it was also the night of full moon so the sun had already sunk behind the forest bank when Cock of the Rock decided that of all the birds Tuminkar had painted none were half as lovely as he was. In his excitement and pride he began dancing around on the rocks by the pool and he kept capering and dancing in the bright moonlight until he fell down in sheer exhaustion.

Unfortunately Lady Cock of the Rock had, early in the morning, sought the cool shade of some bushes where she had dropped asleep and had not heard the call of Tuminkar. When she awoke it was late afternoon and she had remained hid below her bush watching in admiration the wonderful colourings of her husband. When Cock of the Rock began dancing, she coyly drew near in the shelter of a few straws to watch his

skill and flashing colourings in the moonlight, but she took no part in the dance. It was only when Cock of the Rock fainted from fatigue that she rushed out from her hiding place and began to do whatever she could towards restoring him to life again.

The sun was above the forest when Cock of the Rock recovered from the swoon into which he had fallen and he was aghast to find his wife at his side without a spot of colour. He ordered her to go along at once and ask Tuminkar to be painted. He was unable to go with her as he still had a vile headache: his legs were still stiff and weary after his long dance: he was too tired to move and must have a long sleep.

Lady Cock of the Rock arrived to find only Duid outside the house, who, as soon as she spoke, burst out angrily, "Can you not see I am busy? I have all this mess to clean up and have all the paints to scrape out of these gourds so do not bother me." "But I must see He-who-makes", said Lady Cock of the Rock. "Well, bellowed Duid "you won't see him. He is still asleep after his hard work painting all these birds, so go away. Go away, I say." Lady Cock of the Rock stood silently in terror watching Duid scraping paints from the different vessels until in sheer desperation she asked "Could you not paint me, Mr. Duid?" Duid had just finished his work and straightening himself up he looked at the very pathetic little figure in front of him. He did not say a word but seizing a stick began stirring the paints all lying in a

heap in a hole he had dug in the ground, then picking up one of the largest brushes lying around he dipped it in the paints and began work.

Cock of the Rock woke around noon to find his wife standing quite close to him with her wings stretched out for the paints to dry, and he nearly fainted again; this time in dismay at his dirty, drab coloured wife who had not a single fleck of any other colour to relieve the monotony. There was nothing they could do, however, as the colours had already dried completely and so she must remain for ever just as we see her to-day.

Cock of the Rock has always been ashamed of his wife's unattractive appearance, since, as we know, he shuns the forests except near high cliffs and rocks in which to hide when disturbed. We know how they make their home and nests on the faces of overhanging rocks where no other bird can find a resting place and how when they passover water, which is a mirror to all the beasts and birds and all the world can see his colourless timid wife, there resounds around the rocks and far away across the forests his shriek of dismay and distress - the wellknown call of "Aa - oo - uch."

(The story always finishes with the Cock of the Rock's call - which is somewhat like that of the Peacock at home - when every listener bursts into prolonged roars of laughter).

" "God had been busy making animals and they all walked down a path to a little open glade by the side of a small stream where they waited for the sun to harden up their limbs before starting off on the serious business of living on their own resources. The monkey was there, a few deer, adoori, rabbits, ant bears and many other animals, and they were busy examining each other and noting their various peculiarities. Suddenly, some one discovered the Greater Ant Bear had no anus. The older animals were very positive he could not live without one and he must go back at once to God to have one made. Back went the Ant Bear and found God still at work, and at the moment tending the fire underneath some of his pots. God listened to the Ant Beer's story and said, "Turn round till I see if what you say is true". The Ant Bear turned round and raised his tail well over his back and God saw the omission. Stooping down, He picked up a stout flaming dead branch of a tree from the fire and stuck it with force at the spot where the orifice should be, saying, "There, you are complete !". The Ant Bear jumped away in pain and rushed into the forest, complete to all appearance, but the faggot must have been too large, and that is the reason why the stool of the Ant Bear is so formless as to suggest someone has thrown down a calabashful of ant skeletons, and it also accounts for the Ant Bear always carrying his tail bent up and resting along his back."

"The animals in the glade were being added to every few moments and they were all joking and laughing when there appeared walking down from God's house, the largest animal they had as yet seen and they were filled with consternation as to what he might do to them. It proved to be the Tapir (by far the largest animal in the Amazon forest). They were suddenly all silent with fear, some sidled for shelter and safety behind some bushes and the monkey sprang aloft in the branches of a low tree, but he appeared harmless so someone plucked up courage to ask, "What do you eat ?" "Eat ?" replied the tapir, "what do you mean ?" At once everyone started saying, "You must eat something or you will die. Did God not tell you what your food was to be ?" "No, I was not told anything", he replied, whereupon they all advised him to go back to God to enquire. The monkey had been sitting silently listening to everything and now he had a proposal to make. The Tapir has just been made and his limbs are much too soft for him to climb up that steep path to where God is working. Now I was made early this morning. Look how strong and nimble I am, so just rest a little and I will run to ask". No sooner said than done, and the monkey was off his perch to disappear at top speed round some bushes. He reappeared in a few moments puffing and blowing with the speed at which he had been running and swung himself up on to his perch just over the heads of the other animals. "Your food has to be grass and fruit and leaves", he said, and at once the Tapir began to

nibble the succulent tops of some grass down by the edge of the creek. Meanwhile the monkey had closed both eyes tight and screwed his face into a grimace, with his mouth twisted away round almost under one ear. (The monkey is always supposed to shut both eyes and make a face when he is pretending to be innocent after some devilment and incidentally it is very rare that a primitive Indian can close one eye or in other words "wink". I have always found winking a source of great amusement and most Indians can only do it at first by carefully and laboriously closing one eye with the fingers while looking with the other.) The monkey sat motionless and silent until he heard the crash of the Tapir's feet in the distant forest, when he woke to bounce up and down on his branch in excitement and a fit of laughter. "Did I ask God what the Tapir was to eat ?" he asked, glaring round at the bewildered animals. "No fear, where would you silly stupid people have been if the Tapir had asked God what he was to eat, and he had been told to eat flesh ?"

"One day the Tamandua (the Greater Ant Bear) met the Jaguar in the forest. At once the Jaguar began growling and said, "I am going to kill and eat you". "But why should you do that ?" enquired the Tamandua. "Because I am bigger and stronger than anyone else in the forests", replied the Jaguar, "I have killed and eaten the Tapir, I have caught the running deer in his stride and I have cracked the shell

of the land turtle as the Macaw can crack a nut with powerful jaws. That is why !", and as he finished speaking he sprang at the back of the Tamundua and sank his teeth deep in his prey. To his complete astonishment and dismay, the Jaguar found himself sprawling amongst the leaves and broken branches on the ground, with only a tuft of long, irritating hair in his mouth. The Tamandua was standing a few feet away, apparently not the least bit injured or even afraid. The Jaguar did not know that the Tamandua possessed an enormous long and bushy tail, the hairs of which are as long as the forearm of a man, nor that ever since Tuminikar (God, the "Maker") had ordered him to lift his tail so that the Tamandua could be completed, he had carried this great tail along his back, the hairs of which just touched his body. It was the Tamandua's bushy tail on which the Jaguar had alighted, the hairs of which he had grasped in his mouth. "Listen to me", said the Tamandua as the Jaguar scrambled to his feet, "Why should you quarrel ? I touch none of the game in the forests such as you eat. My food is only the tiny ants under the ground, which are far beneath your notice". "That is all very well, said the Jaguar, "but I am hungry and intend to eat you". "If you do", retorted the Tamandua, "the ants that I eat will become so numerous that they will bite you night and day and you will never be able to lie down and sleep in peace. I quite agree you are the strongest in the forest, but there are many other

tests we could try since you are determined to quarrel, and I would suggest that we both sit down right now and see who can void the largest steel". The jaguar agreed to this so they selected their respective sites and sat down. A few moments later, the Jaguar asked, "Are you not finished yet ?" "I am just beginning", said the Tamandua. The jaguar then looked over his shoulder to see what was afoot, and to his horror saw a great heap of dung and the Tamandua moving off to a fresh place. The Jaguar then strained and strained and strained until he was beginning to grow weak and tired. When he could do no more he stood up to find the Tamandua had three great heaps of dung each of which was greater than his own effort. For a little while, the Jaguar stood gazing in admiration at the Tamandua's achievement, then snorting a gruff, "Goodbye", he stalked off into the forest, his black tufted tail lashing the branches on either side in anger at his defeat."

"In the far, far distant days when Tuminkar (God) and Duid (the Devil or worthless brother of God) still lived with the few children of the first man and woman, they all ate their food in a raw state. One family had however found some fire with which they cooked some food and their dishes were much more agreeable and tasty. There was one very old lady who was the guardian of this fire and who would neither give the others any nor allow them to even touch it. Duid had

tried several stratagens to secure some of the fire, but the old lady always outwitted him. Very often she would squat over the fire and draw it up into her vagina which was also the place she kept it when going to or from the fields or on any journey. At length Tuminkar and Duid made a strong solution from the poisonous Haiarri Liano and they forcibly held the old woman down while they gave her a thorough douching with the solution. At first, she only passed a quantity of bad fishes, the perais of various species and others that bite with no provocation, but eventually, she expelled a ball of fire which they carried away to God's house and carefully kept alight for cooking purposes. It was now Duid's special duty to guard the precious fire at all times, to see it never went out and that no one had a chance to steal it. Some extra work was in progress at a distant field which required the attendance of everyone and Duid was installed on the banks of a small lake to do the cooking and guard the fire while the others worked. One day when Tuminkar returned from work he found Duid lying sound asleep. Tuminkar roughly kicked him awake demanding, "Where is the fire you were left to guard ?" Duid jumped up and ran hither and thither, but had at last to admit it had been lost and most probably had been stolen. Everyone at once began to scatter out in the forest to search, but Tuminkar knew this was no ordinary thief so he called up all the little birds and asked if they knew who the culprit could have been. Soon a little

white headed bird came flitting from branch to branch along the margin of the lake and said, "I saw the Alligator steal it when Duid was asleep and he has carried it away to his house at the other end of the lake". They all rushed off through the forest to the alligator's house to demand the fire. They found him lying in pain with his mouth wide open but in answer to their demands, he was able to say, "The fire burned my tongue and I spat it out on the sandbank over yonder". Away they rushed to the sandbank, but there was no fire to be seen. Soon another little bird said, "I saw the Bush Turkey pick up something red which he probably thought was a fruit." Off they rushed again into the forest in search of the Bush Turkey whom they discovered sitting in a tall tree with his wife attending to his burned mouth, whilst on the ground at the foot of the tree lay the precious ball of fire, which was recovered and carefully guarded in the future."

The Indian then explains that that is the reason why the alligator has no tongue. It was burned out, as his punishment for stealing and it accounts why the Bush Turkey to this day has bright red cheeks, neck and wattles without a single feather growing on them.

I have often heard the elderly Indians warning the youths under their control. "My sons ! it is true when woman was douched with the Haiarri poison, many bad fierce biting fish were expelled, still there may have been some left as yo

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as we of experience know to be true, Go not therefore to the hammock of the women with the roving eye, or the stranger who wanders in amongst us from the tribes beyond our boundaries, alone and unattached and with the artificial smile and swing of the body, for you may be bitten and suffer much pain for many moons. Especially, beware of the bold woman of the gay appearance you will meet in the towns ye may visit from time to time."

"Tuminkar was giving lessons to the Birds in building nests. Duid was sitting idly under the shade of a tree some distance away lazily watching the Birds arriving, each carrying the materials for building a nest, such as twigs, leaves, moss, bits of grass or feathers or just plain mud as Cock of the Rock was bringing. It took a long time to teach each bird as every nest had to be different.

The demonstration had not long begun when Mrs. Carrion Crow, looking very pale and with her two hands pressed close to her sides, hobbled up to Duid saying: "I am in awful pain, Duid, you must help me. I am sure I am going to have a baby."
"A what." gasped Duid in surprise. "Why! Tuminkar has not yet taught you how to make a nest and until he does you cannot possibly think of such a thing. You disreputable old So and So, clear out of this and leave me alone."

Mrs. Carrion Crow had been forced to listen to this lecture because at that moment a dreadful pain shot through her whole body, but she replied: "I am in agony and help me you must,

Duid. What would He-who-makes say if I told him the truth and that you are probably the father --- ". Duid sprang up as if he had been stung with an electric eel and without waiting to hear any more, dashed off to a nearby bush and dropping on his knees began to push aside the dead leaves in its shade. "Come here, Mrs. Carrion Crow," he shouted. "I have scratched the leaves aside for you. Just sit down and the cool earth below will help your pain. Don't move at all and soon you'll find a couple of fine babies wriggling under you."

Duid left her and was walking quietly back to his house when he heard another small voice speaking to him. "I'm in awful pain, Duid, and you must help me." Turning round he saw a Lady Night Jar, very, very pale looking and also holding her sides with her hands. "What ! another ! ! " he shouted, "go over to these rocks. Search for a nice level spot and you can have your Baby there."

Duid dashed for his house at top speed and he was no sooner inside than he slammed the door, shut and put a large wooden bar behind it so that no one could possibly get in. He curled up in his hammock pretending to be asleep so that any one who came knocking got no answer. He remained in the house on the plea of a headache until he heard that the very last bird had gone away into the forests to make nests of their own.

That is why the Carrion Crow and the Rock Night Jar make no nests but rear their Babies still just as Duid taught them."

Of course these stories vary in detail in every village and also by the different raconteurs of any single village. Oral tradition is rarely verbatim and varies slightly from father to son according to the mood of the storyteller at a given moment, as also to modification of customs and outside knowledge from generation to generation, but I have given the stories as I remember them when I first made contact with the Indians years ago before civilization had affected their folklore to any great extent.

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A TARUMA MYTH.

We were a little party of six - a professor of anthropology, myself and four Aboriginal Indians. These latter had been selected from three different tribes, Atarod, Taruma and Wapichanna on account of their fidelity to myself, their personality, their prowess as hunters, and above all their ability to read the ever changing pages of the colossal Amazon forests on some 1,000 miles of a journey in country which is the blackest (least known) part of the world to-day. We had been wandering for weeks in the forest of Brazil, South of British Guiana, an enormous area completely uninhabited except for, at distances of hundred miles or more apart, a few unknown scattered tribes of Aboriginal Indians, whose language and customs no one knows and to whom the introduction of white men might, to put it mildly, be decidedly unwelcome.

At the moment we were laboriously trying to decipher an old Indian trail, the only known connecting link between the MAPURA WAU and the TROMBETAS Rivers in Brazil along the crest of a chain of high hills. The trail had not been used for some years by anyone, and only an Indian possessing the acutest powers of observation and deduction could have followed it, so progress was slow and tedious, and to make matters worse it had rained "cats and dogs" all day. We had slithered down

a particularly steep mountain side to find a noisy little creek which meant water - the absolute necessity of an overnight camp - but more useful still there was also a roof of wild plantains, and soon we had erected a dove-tailed benab - merely a sleeping triangular roof - to shelter us from the pelting rain. We cooked a scratch meal as we had no food of any kind except the little we shot along the route: hunting conditions had been the worst and we had no luck those days: we dug out dry clothes from our waterproof duffle bags; changed and hung up our hammocks in tiers under our miniature shelter, master and man irrespective of colour or creed, touching each other and were soon settled in for the night.

Under the 200 foot deep canopy of branch and leaf of the forest and the low dense cloud above it was pitch dark in camp by 6 o'clock: tired and weary we were all soon sound asleep slung in a triangle round a cheery central fire radiating heat to our chilled bodies and light by which to see our immediate surroundings, if necessary. I was awakened some hours later by the motion of my hammock. Someone was apparently moving: the fire had died down to invisibility and it was pitch dark. Presently I heard a grumble "Why on earth did I ever come on this trip? Here I am cold, hungry and tired whereas if I had stayed at home I would have been comfortable and warm and loved in my own home". The Indian swung out of his hammock and began blowing with his breath, the ash-covered embers of

our almost extinct fire until he had a bright cheery flame going again, when there came a voice from another hammock and "You wouldn't be one whit better if you were at home and well you know it". "Let me tell you" said the first speaker, "In the roof of my house hangs enough corn to last a whole year. I can eat when I like. I need not work unless I choose and I've a sweet little wife to love and warm me if I'm cold. Now here I am toiling up and down these beastly mountains and all for --- ". "Oh shut up", said the youngest and only unmarried member of the boys, "you are toiling, yes, and for jolly good wages everyday while you are away from home. At the rate we are going, by the time we get home, you will have such a lot of goods (payment being made in trade goods as money had no value to any of these men) that you will incite the love of every girl of your tribe, only it will be rather embarrassing in the case of an old sinner like you. Now I am young and attractive and instead of moping here like you I'm laughing all the time and looking ahead to the day when I get home and oh! boy !!!" "Speak for yourself, you young imp", came the reply, "but when you have learnt the tribal lore and classics as I, "an old sinner", have done and you can read the signs under your nose as now, you will find times when, even against your will, your thoughts will turn to comfort and love." "Not much sign of love up here", said the youngster, "and under my nose - hrrummp - just what?" "I am of the Tarum tribe," said the older man, "and as you are not, it is mine to

excuse your ignorance, but I tell you that with every sign so easily read we are camping in the love nest of MATATIJI and KAKANDAN." "And just who are they?" chimed in a low voice. "Ah! that is a long story" said the old man. "Tell it; tell it", said each in turn. "Let us all make a long cigarette first however.

The Taruma tribe, quickly dying out when I met them over 30 years ago, and now practically extinct, had had at no time any active connection with the white man and civilization except for a recognised trader or two of their tribe, who, once a year at the most, made the long 200-mile journey through the forest to barter with a neighbouring tribe such commodities as they could make in exchange for a few knives, fish hooks or other necessities. Thus they were completely unsophisticated; uninfluenced by so-called progressive ideas; each guided solely by his personal experience and observation to a large extent, although modified by the oral traditions of his tribe and the wisdom of his elders. To such people each phenome, the flora and fauna around him, and even the rocks and solid earth, has a personality of its own combined with a general language through which he knows their characters (to which he must accord fear, respect or ridicule), just as well as he knows the hates, the loves, and other idiocyncrasies of his intimate friends and fellow tribesmen.

Cigarettes had been made, each man now curled up com-

fortably in his hammock and after a short silence the Taruma began his story.

There was a great chief once who had a daughter. As she came to the age of marriage she developed the most lovely form, colour, eyes and such sweet ways in behavious as made her desirable to every man not only in her own tribe but also far beyond. Her name was MATATIJI and suitors were constantly making offers for her hand: so many of them that it was impossible for her father to decide who would make the best husband for his daughter. In his dilemma he set aside the customary tribal rules of marriage, and said he would leave the ultimate decision to MATATIJI herself, a very unusual proceeding but which gave no better results as none that came asking her consent got anything further than the ordinary civilities of the daughter of any house to a stranger. Her beauty got noised around till every one knew and many, from a long distance, started on the journey to MATATIJI's home, although most of them failed to reach it owing to the many guards and difficulties on the way.

One very determined suitor was a bachelor Turtle, who had made more than one attempt to reach the Lady's home, but who had received very severe handling from the guards and always found himself back at his starting point. He was bemoaning his fate one day when a voice near him said: "You always travel by day, but why not walk only in the dark of

night?" "Because I can see the dangers so much better in the day" replied the Turtle. "You stay here until it is completely dark and I will help you", said the voice. The Turtle withdrew into his shell where he stayed until he heard his name being called. On poking his head out he found KAKANDAN (the Light in the Dark) lying beside him.

"Pick me up and carry me in your hand", said KAKANDAN, "by my light you will see the way and many dangers will be asleep in the dark." So off they set and travelled far in safety. One night, however, the Turtle saw two bright lights ahead which filled him with dismay. "Here is the Jaguar who attacked me, the scar of whose teeth you can still see on my shell", he shouted. "Don't be afraid", said KAKANDAN, "the Jaguar has no friends except his own wife, and if you wave me about in the air, he will think it is some new enemy, and will turn aside and leave us alone." The Turtle did as he was told and to his surprise the Jaguar disappeared and they saw him no more.

Together they journeyed on many nights very successfully. They had noted various vines drawn tightly across their path which from experience Turtle knew were traps of kinds set by the orders of the Great Chief to protect his daughter. They always turned to one side and walked round these with no harm. One night however something fell with a thud on the ground quite close. Turtle stopped at once. "Now what was that"? he inquired. "It is only a ripe fruit that has dropped from a

wild cashew tree," said KAKANDAN. "Oh dear", said Turtle shaking with fear, "it was under such a tree that I met MAIPURI who kicked and trampled me so badly that I almost died." "It will be all right", said KAKANDAN, "put me down by the side of that old tacuba (fallen log) and we will stop here for you to eat a good meal. Just before daylight you go and start eating these fruits. You must shout loudly for the MAIPURI to come and join you. He will think how kind you are and wont hurt you."

The Turtle did as he was told and presently MAIPURI (Tapir) came crashing through the forest to see who was calling him. On hearing that Turtle had called him to share in a feed of nice ripe cashews he was very pleased and complimented Turtle on his hospitality. Together they ate fruit all morning until MAIPURI remembered it was time for his usual bath and he went off. Turtle returned to the tacuba and slept for the rest of the day in comfort.

Again they journeyed on by night a long distance, but they had only one fright. There was quite a noise overhead, branches were shaking and a number of shrill voices chattering. "Monkeys, monkeys," said Turtle, his face pale with fear, and he began to withdraw his head inside his shell. "They caught me before and tossed me to one another like a ball, when they finally flung me far into the forest every bone in my body ached and I couldn't walk for days." "Which monkey was it?"

asked KAKANDAN. "The black Spider Monkey", replied Turtle. "They don't move at night, silly", said KAKANDAN. "They are all curled up in a heap for warmth in some hole in a tree. Those above us are the KINKAJU (Night Monkey) and they harm no one."

They resumed their journey and after a long distance came to a large creek. "I have never been so far as this before", said the Turtle, "and the trouble is that I cannot swim." "That is all right", said KAKANDAN. "Put me down on the bank here, then take a long breath and walk across the bottom of the creek. If you let out a bubble of air now and again I can follow you". Turtle did as he was told and was soon out of sight in the water. Then KAKANDAN called to a passing Water Spider. "I want to cross this creek. Be a good chap, and give me a lift over: just follow that line of bubbles and set me down on the other bank".

Thus when Turtle came ashore on the other side he found KAKANDAN waiting, and picking him up in his hand again the pair continued on their way. It was not long before KAKANDAN spied a fine big house which they knew was the home of the Great Chief "We are almost there so let us stop a moment to comb our hair and put some paint markings on our faces", said KAKANDAN to Turtle. "Now listen good, when we get to the house and meet the Chief or his daughter MATATIJI, you don't speak one word: you must wave me about as much as possible to show ourselves to

them, but leave me to do all the talking".

They found MATATIJI sitting spinning by the fire outside the house but everyone else seemed asleep. KAKANDAN at once introduced himself and told the lady he had come to claim her as his bride. He told her how her father knew him very well but as the final choice lay with her, he had, having met her so unexpectedly not had time yet to pay his proper respects. He then told MATATIJI how the fame of her beauty had reached him; of the long, long journey he had done to reach her, and of all the dangers he had faced for her sake. MATATIJI's head began to droop in becoming modesty to hide her sparkling eyes at the recital until at last she whispered, "I will marry you but you must carry me away to your own country at once." KAKANDAN made Turtle move up close to her and she jumped on Turtle's back and took a firm seat on his slippery shell. Turtle did not require much urging to leave the house. He raced through the forest in high spirits and soon he arrived at the same large creek. He laid KAKANDAN on the bank and MATATIJI slithered down to join him.

Turtle of course knew what he was to do, so without a word to any one, he took a long breath and entered the water. He soon reached the other side but there was no sign of either KAKANDAN or MATATIJI so he waited some time then began shouting to attract their attention. Receiving no reply he re-entered the water to return to see what was wrong, but owing to the strong current in the creek he came out on the bank far below where he had left the pair. Thus even until now we have this Turtle

walking up and down and across every creek in vain right up to where the waters are lost in the hills and mountains.

Just as soon as KAKANDAN and MATATIJI saw Turtle disappear under the water of the creek they were in each others arms in their first embrance of love and they have been husband and wife ever since."

"Can you wonder", continued the Taruma, "when I look around our camp and see it all shining with couples with only thoughts of love in their minds that I regret ever having come on this trip and that my own thoughts are far away with my wife and her sweet ---- ". Hei - i - i !! came an interruption from every Indian and there followed a spell of rather ribald badinage. After this had died down I chimed in: "But just who or what are KAKANDAN and MATATIJI?" For a little Taruma looked at me across the twinkling fire, then he reached out for his knife. He cut a couple of points off the huge leaves of our shelter and laid them on the fire. At once we were in complete darkness, and he pointed to the phosphorescence that can be found fairly commonly in the forest floor where the decaying leaves of certain trees develop this phenomena. "That is KAKANDAN" I was told: "Yes, I know that quite well, but where is MATATIJI?" I asked. "You see that bright circle of light over there that looks like one of the shining ear-rings we make from the fresh water mussel. There is one big one and some smaller ones. The big one is MATATIJI; the smaller ones are her little children."

The rain had stopped and although I could see what was indicated I was no wiser, so I had my men blow up the fire and taking a burning faggot went to investigate. I found some form of fungus growing on the decaying trunk of a large prostrate tree. This took the form of a toad-stool whose rather jagged crown was about the size of a shilling in the case of the largest, and about the size of a shirt button in the smaller sizes. In the dark these toadstools were distinctly phosphorescent and could be easily seen at quite a distance, but on approaching them with a lighted stick they assumed a very ordinary appearance: that of a light brown rather ragged edged fungus of no very apparent charm and attached to the bark of the fallen tree by a thin, slender stem about half an inch long. Investigation in the broadlight the next morning confirmed these findings. This luminous toadstool seems rather rare in the forests as in the course of over 20 years wandering I doubt if I have seen it more than half a dozen times all told. Decaying leaf phosphorescence on the other hand is very common and can be seen at many places in the forest if the weather is wet or showery.

For some months I had been doing exploration work for an overseas concern in the forests around the sources of the Essequebo River, the least known part of the Colony, where the only inhabitants are the scattered remnants of the Taruma tribe. I had with me "Saik Tau" a full blooded Taruma, who spoke Wapichan and Waiwai equally well as also his own language. The only other person with me was a young Taruma also, a nephew of Saik Tau, known as Jargi (the Taruma word for nephew). One night across the flickering firelight of our camp I heard a long lecture by Saik Tau to the nephew, and when he was finished I asked him to tell me what it was all about in Wapichan. I forget now what is the Taruma word for Tuminkar, but their Duid is the same as the Wapichan. I shall use Tuminkar as the name of the "Maker".

"Once upon a time before there were any people there were only Tuminkar and Duid in the world - two brothers who lived together. Tuminkar, the elder, made everything in this world, the birds, the animals and everything. The younger was Duid who tended the fire, cooked the meals and did whatever the elder brother ordered him to do. Duid was most unreliable; seldom did anything right - a happy-go-lucky fellow - as even the Duid of the Tribe to-day - likeable and unstable.

In these days the brothers lived largely on fish, and there was one particular pool in which they caught most of their supplies. If Tuminkar was busy, Duid went alone, but if no work was on hand they would both take their rods and tackle and

go fishing.

One day both brothers were fishing when Duid got a strange bite on his line. Cautiously he drew up his hook to find, not a fish, but a strange implement which showed it had had constant and quite recent use. They scrutinised it carefully and took it home at night, when Tuminkar hung it up on the wall in his hut. Every day after that, when they went fishing, they brought up something new from the depths of the pool until Tuminkar decided they were articles that belonged to Woman. They varied the size of their hooks almost every day to suit different sizes of fish, as also the bait to attract them, and thus they got different articles, a fan to-day, a grater to-morrow, a comb the day after and so on. They kept on fishing and fishing each day, adding some new article to those on the wall of the hut already until they had everything that belongs to Woman such as every one uses to-day, even to her hammock; her beads; the paints which she uses to beautify herself with; the sweet smelling pigments so carefully hidden from us with which to make herself more seductive to us, and to ensure the love of any man they wish; even to those things she uses when she is sick according to her custom

Meanwhile Duid had been making a variety of new hooks and baits, and particularly one from the jawbone of an alligator to which he attached a long new stout line of silkgrass. When he got it finished and was itching to try it out, it so

happened Tuminkar was very busy that day and so he went off alone. He had scarcely seen his new hook disappear in the deep waters of the pool when he felt a mighty tug. This time he had hooked something big, heavy and strong, so he dug his heels in the sand by the pool and pulled with all his strength. Presently there appeared the head, the shoulders and finally the body of Woman. He drew her clear of the water and stared at her in surprise. Disentangling herself from the hook, the Woman soon stood up when the beautiful curves of her body and her modestly shy glances at her captor stirred some new unknown forces in Duid's mind and body.

Taking her by the hand, he led her by a round-of-way path to his own hut where he hid her behind a screen, and then lay down himself to rest. Towards evening Tuminkar, having finished his work, came out of his hut and called Duid to bring up their dinner. Duid answered that he had fished all day without success and that he was so tired that he had already lain down for the night.

Next morning Tuminkar shouted "Let us go fishing Duid", but Duid excused himself on some plea or other. That evening Duid again had a very valid excuse from not joining Tuminkar and so on for several days. He would be out and do various little jobs around the place, but on no account would he go out of sight of his hut.

Tuminkar began to suspect something behind all this, so

on the fourth day he marched straight into Duid's hut, saw the screen which he tore down and found the woman. "So you caught Woman and this is why you do nothing these days" shouted Tuminkar in anger as he aimed a cuff at Duid's head, but already Duid was through the door. Tuminkar gazed long on the lovely form before him, then taking her hand in his he led her out and installed her in his own hut on whose walls already hung her every article either for home or personal use.

Happily they lived together, they loved each other and had children. It is from their children and their children's children that we - the Taruma - are descended.

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WAPICHANNA MYTH OF CREATION

We were travelling up country by river in a native boat manned by some dozen Aboriginal Indians of the Wapichanna Tribe and captained by Dukeri, one of the few remaining (almost) pure blooded Atarods. It was still early afternoon when we reached a large sandbank immediately below a considerable cataract which meant several hours hard work in getting the boat and supplies over, so it was decided to go into camp as the place offered wide open space to move about in, clear sky overhead, and a pleasant contrast to the towering forests that edge and flank the river generally, in the gloom of which our camp had been pitched for the last ten days or so.

The Indians also "wanted a rest" from the monotony of steady paddling and hard work day after day, and the cataract above spelled recreation to them, as, with their bows and arrows they would get much fun and amusement, from their point of view, in shooting some choice fish that live around the rocks, while the adjacent high forest might yield some sort of game that would augment our rather depleted supplies of food.

In the "Bush" the evening meal or dinner is generally served about sundown to allow washing up and other duties to be got through with before darkness sets in. Having finished dinner I strolled out of camp in the rapidly falling dusk for a quiet smoke till I found a convenient rock on which I sat down with the river flowing along within a foot or two. It

was now delightfully cool after the tropical heat of the day penned in between the walls of a 200 feet high forest; a beautiful evening with an almost cloudless sky where a crescent moon shed a soft pale light over our camp and surroundings. A few last tints of a gorgeous sunset gave a little colour to the fast fading scene. Immediately in front ran the river, silent, calm, mysterious, almost ink-black in the deepening night, its surface broken now and again by the splash and play of fishes in pursuit of food and flecked with great patches of foam and spume from the cataract above us as they whirled and spun seaward, very much like the cakes of ice on a home river in winter. The opposite bank showed sombre and dark - a towering bank of forbidding forest. Just behind us rose that forest wall also, but lit by the pale moonlight, the weathered grey bark of the nearest trees showed up weird and spectral, the inky caverns between and beyond their trunks stabbed by the twinkling lights of innumerable fireflies. Up river the fall showed,up, a bar of white from bank to bank except where broken by rock and island. Down river our camp fires glowed in bright contrast to the sombre river and forest, around which could be seen the dusky forms of the Indians moving silently to and fro while attending to last remaining chores of the day.

Presently I saw two of the Indians slip noiselessly out of camp moving along towards me till they reached my rock

and sat down. It was old Dukeri and a young lad in his early teens making his first trip to the coast and back, and who was Dukeri's special attendant. At once they fell into conversation and I then realised that the old man had brought the youth out to tell over to him some of the oral traditions of the tribe in ideal environment and comparative quiet.

It is not necessary to follow Dukeri in detail through the peculiar, sometimes painfully slow process of leading up from the things of the moment, the doings of the day, to the subject at heart that is common to the Aboriginal Indian method and mind. He touched on this and on that, each remark one step onwards till he got into his stride on his story proper. I was near enough to hear all that was said, and here follows as good a rendering as I can give of the more important sayings and the story told.

"Ung Takan", began Dukeri, "my grandchild", your father handed you over as my special attendant on this your first trip to the"River Mouth" (Wanam), and in no one could he have better confidence. For three people and ten (70) times have I seen the seasons change and the fish, Dowbar and Paku, ascend the rivers to spawn in the Savannahs, and for more rains than you have I have sat in the councils of our Tribe to deal with the cases laid before the Chiefs and Headmen of Villages. I also know the River as I know my hand, its many cataracts and channels from its source till it is lost in the Parana Bowk

(the ocean). I know the pools that hide evil monsters: the rocks that will strike you blind if your tender eye should glimpse them without due precaution, and every other danger of our route. In safety have I brought you past all these and I have told you the story of rock, pool and mountain, so that when you come to hold the steersman's paddle in your turn, you may guide those under you in safety and tell such youths as make the journey for the first time of the many dangers that beset them. I am growing old now and may not be with you much longer; you are approaching manhood and I would not have you ignorant of our oral teaching of "Long Ago" (Wap - "Kuti ai Now Paradan" - Meaning "Long ago those have spoken"), so that you can also pass on our legends to your children and your children' children. - "Kaimen Pu Abat, Ung Takan" (Listen well, my grand child) tonight I shall repeat to you our "Story of the Beginning".

In the beginning as my father and his father's father have said there were two brothers, the one called Tuminkar, the other Duid. Tuminkar (Wap: - "Tum" verb to make, regular tenses -- Tuman, Tumini, Tumairun, Tumakakun, etc, etc) was the Maker. He, it was, who made everything we know, the world in general (Amarad), the beasts, the birds, the fishes and even these people, our first forefathers. Duid made nothing, he generally did what Tuminkar wished him to do, but even these orders he carried out in such a careless, haphazard and untrusty manner as to cause annoyance and shame to Tuminkar. He

was such an unreliable person, so really bad in many ways that as you know every really wicked boy in our Tribe whom no one seems able to control or to make conform to our general tribal rule and behaviour, is always called Duid. Tuminkar was altogether good. He created everything but never did anyone harm. Duid was just the opposite, made nothing and was always up to pranks that got people into trouble. It is Duid who leads you to do wrong, to lie, to steal, to deceive and many other things that lead to the cases that so often come before the Chiefs of our Tribe for remedy or adjustment, so walk very, very warily, Ung Takan. You may forget Tuminkar, but do not forget Duid, as in that moment of forgetfulness, he will trip you up and you will have to walk with the down cast eye and with shame on your face. Propitiate Duid; order him away but forget him not.

Out of nothing, Tuminkar made Man. He just made him, but finding Man was lonely and unhappy by himself, he formed Woman. He made her from the dung of an alligator, but she proved unpleasant to the Man. He objected to the sickly smell she gave off, so Tuminkar took a small bone from the left forearm of Man, which he formed into a new Woman and gave life to. She proved to be pleasant to Man's every sense; he loved her and soon they had a growing family.

To Duid was given the task of feeding these people. Every morning and evening he appeared with a large basket containing fruits, nuts, and edible tubers, just enough to satisfy

all. At that time the people did no work, they played with the children or the animals. They had a common language with all the beasts, the birds and other forms of life, such as a few privileged people to-day still have.

As the families increased in number they began to become curious as to where Duid got the daily supply of food from. They would question Duid often and long, but to none would he give any indication where he got these foods. Still they remained curious and this led to further enquiry and investigation.

One day two young maidens went for a stroll in the forests, and chanced to meet a very disconsolate flea who was crying bitterly. They stopped to comfort him and ask what the trouble was. The flea told them he always rode on a certain Agouti, but that morning he had lost his balance, had fallen off unknown to his steed, and being so small had got completely lost in the surrounding tangle of leaves, saplings and trees. The Agouti had a well worn road somewhere along which he always raced to a spot where he got an ample supply of food and nuts for himself and family, but in which direction, the flea was in doubt, so the girls hastened home to call assistance to help the poor creature out of his troubles.

They were not long in locating the Agouti's road along which everybody hastened in search of the lost steed. They went on and on till presently they came to an enormous tree on which they saw growing every form of fruit such as Duid brought them each morning and evening. Digging in the ground

revealed the yams, sweet potatoes, cassava, and other tubers they were eating daily.

Aha ! so this was the source of Duid's supplies. Now was their chance to eat just what each liked best, and as much as each wanted. After satisfying everyone's need, they left for home, each person carrying as much as possible of what they fancied for the evening meal.

At the customary hour that evening along came Duid with his usual basket of supplies, but everybody simply roared with laughter at him. After teasing him some time they showed Duid the foods they had already got, and told him he need not bring any more, as they could now procure their own just as each liked. Duid was astounded and flinging down his basket on the ground, strode off to inform Tuminkar of what had happened. Very soon Tuminkar appeared before his people saying "What is this you people have done ? I am very angry with you and I now go to cut down the tree you found. Every one of you must come now and select such seeds, nuts and roots that you like. These you must plant and so feed yourselves in future."

Tuminkar picked up an axe and set off through the forest to the tree with every person close behind. They quickly arrived and at once Tuminkar began to fell it. With a great crashing noise it fell to the ground. As you all know the axe falls with least effort at about waist height unless when a tree carries buttresses. Then we build a staging, it may even be to the height of two people and there we fell our tree,

and it was thus that Tuminkar felled that tree. Long, long ago, the trunk and branches have rotted away and been lost, but the stump remains intact and now forms, as every one knows, the mountain we all call Rorawim (Mt; Roraima).

No sooner had the tree fallen than an enormous stream of water gushed from its butt, sweeping nearly every one standing around away to almost certain death in its rushing fury. In fact all might have gone, but fortunately one man wore suspended round his neck the bill of a large Muscovi Duck, which at once he launched on the flood. Hurriedly he embarked his wife and children, grabbing such seeds and nuts as were within reach, he hurled them into his craft, and jumping in himself, pushed off on the waters just as the whole world was becoming submerged.

The little family floated off in safety in their tiny craft. For many days they drifted hither and thither with no knowledge as to where they were. At length their boat touched on something and feeling underneath they found they were resting on a rock. The water had begun to take off and soon they were able to get out on to solid land. Day by day as the floods crept slowly down, they found they were on a mountain top. They would pick up rocks to fling them as far as they could to learn from the sound - plung-ng-ng-ng when the stone fell in the waters just how deep it was, but to their dismay only deep waters were heard on every side.

At last a small patch of comparatively level land showed up carrying some good soil on which they at once began to plant the seeds and nuts and tubers they had with them. They also built a house as they had to tend the field carefully, as also to wait till the floods completely dried off. Later on the savannahs appeared, broad and undulating and they were able to come down and walk about, and eventually, to leave the mountain entirely to settle on the level plains below.

That mountain is known to all as Siriri (Plantain Mt:), and even today when our supplies of plantain suckers run short from drought or other cause, do not we climb to that first field high up on Siriri to obtain a new supply, as, there, they never die out completely. Around the mountain's foot do not we see the rocks lying scattered all about which these first people flung down to test the depth of the waters of the receding flood.

On your recent visit to the "River Mouth", Ung Takan, you have seen many new forms of foods that are strange. It may be that seeds were swept away to spring up elsewhere after the flood, it may be that other people were saved also, as, in recent years, strange peoples:- The Mikur (Negro), the Paranakarri (English), the Karaiwa (Portuguese) - have come amongst us, and all bring strange new foods. Still though strange to us they were not to those of long ago. Even the white flour (Prum) which tastes so good and made from some plant that even

I do not know, even that and every other you may see once grew on the tree of Rorawin.

UNG TAKAN. UNG SUMATINAIRUN.

(My Grandchild. I wish to smoke).

For over an hour I had lain prone in one position listening silently to the old man's story, and aching, almost to cramp, I welcomed a break in the narrative to move to a different position. As I did so the youth immediately scrambled to his knees and seizing a nearby dead branch of a tree, was on the defensive. Completely carried away by Dukeri's eloquence, the strain of following the tale, and the absorbing mental environment, the youth had become oblivious to everything around him, and my small movement, although full well he knew I was there, had brought him back somewhat rudely to this world of ordinary life and affairs, with its ever present need of vigilance so necessary to the Child of the Forest in evading actual and possible danger, especially that of Kenaima, seldom far from the mind of any Aboriginal Indian, and particularly so in a part of the country far from his home, where every mountain, rock and pool held fabulous monsters - imaginary in all probability but none the less real to his primitive and biased mind.

Instantly Dukeri stretched out a hand, grasped the youth's shoulder and pressed him back to the earth saying "Do not start or be frightened, it is our "Naubanna" (Patron,

Master; Boss), and already he has much knowledge. I have told him of many things and he does not become angry or ridicule, so sit still and be quiet."

The old man had a basket hung from one shoulder, - the inevitable peg-all (hold-all) of his tribe - opening which, he drew forth tobacco and cigarette leaves; the former grown by himself in his own native field; the latter a laminated bark of a certain forest tree and cut into lengths of some 8 to 9 inches. With the dexterity of much and long practice, he soon had three cigarettes made, a match was struck, and he lit all three passing one to me, one to his so-called grandson, while he kept the third for himself. Inhaling deeply and long the old man blew smoke up river, then down river and across murmuring "May Kenaima be far from us this night" before he again took up the thread of his interrupted narrative.

"Ung Takan" (My Grandson); When the waters had dried off and the savannahs appeared, gradually becoming clothed with grass and shrubs, the family came down from "Siriri", and built houses on the plains. Here they throve and multiplied and became many until in time, they spread over the whole savannahs and even some went to live in the surrounding forests.

Tuminkar lived with them still. Changed into stone, do not we know, that the cakes of bread he last used and his other possessions, lie due East of the mountain Katambor. He helped his people by example and precept in those days, yet complete happiness or security was not theirs. Various men of huge

form and armed with strange weapons came up against them to kill them off or carry them away, and they lived in almost constant dread of attack. Many great fights took place, but Tuminkar was there to assist and thus they were always successful.

At length however there came up one enormous giant called Baukur, of greater stature and strength than any hitherto. All the people were frightened at his very appearance and ran to hide, leaving Tuminkar alone to fight the ogre. Long and hard they fought: Tuminkar armed with the Shooting Stars; the Giant with the Lightning. For quite a time they were equally matched, but gradually Tuminkar grew tired and was beaten back from hill to hill until the Lightning flashing all over and round him, he was in grave danger of being killed. Tuminkar was now close to the forest behind the mountain of Katambor, and something must be done quickly; even the biggest and straightest Shooting Star seemed useless against the giant, so as a last resort he seized a huge rock from a nearby hill. Quickly he tore this rock in twain, enclosed his only Son in it and stuck it together again. Taking careful aim he hove the rock at the giant. The aim was true, it struck Baukur low down on his side with such force that he fell to earth in agony from a dislocated hip. Instantly Tuminkar was on him and bound him hand and foot. Picking up the securely bound giant Tuminkar flung him far into the sky, and who does not know the constellation Baukur which to the Paranakarri (English) from beyond the seas is called Orion.

Do not even we today see the ropes that bind, do not we see the drooping limb of Baukur that was smashed as he swings overhead at night. As Baukur rises over the rim of the world a bare hour ahead of the Sun, do not we, who are in the Councils of the Tribe and heads of families, know we have certain duties to attend to - the cutting or gathering of this or the planting of that.

Tuminkar now returned for the rock in which lay enclosed his only Son, but as he tore it open, he found him dead. He, who was the darling of the Tribe; He, whom every bird and animal worshipped, was dead. Oh! how we mourned: the long harrowing Hymn of Death was sung for many moons in every hut in the world.

So also mourned the birds and animals, and even today does not the Tukan (Toucan) Bird mourn, with his raeuous yelping every morning and evening. He was Tuminkar Dan's (Wap: dan meaning childs, therefore the Maker's Son) particular pet and he has never forgotten his Kind Master. Has not the grief of years and the river of tears which he has shed: dissolved some of the gaudy colours of orange and black, red and green, and left a ring of a faded blue round each eye the width of the nail of a small finger.

Tuminkar took his dead son away and buried him. His heart was heavy and sad so he turned away and went forth from amongst his people and spake no more with them as at the first, but, ere he went he told them that some day he would return and

bring with him his only son also.

Just where Tuminkar Dan lies buried we do not exactly know, but we do know that on the way from Katambor to the forest behind where the rock rings hollow to even the tread of the careless passerby and more so to the stamp of the bare foot of the man with knowledge. In my goings to and fro I have often passed that way and I, as every man amongst us, have stamped that rock and stopped to listen to the hollow boo-o-o-om below. Few, today, have passed so often as I, and I know a difference in the sound.

That crust of rock and earth that holds Tuminkar Dan in its grip is wearing thin, thinner and thinner with the passing of every season of planting and reaping. Soon, soon, it may be to-morrow or the day after, that rock will give way and Tuminkar Dan come forth to meet his father and to greet us his people.

Then assuredly shall we live in peace and contentment. Then the sun will no longer burn our crops, no more will the rivers rise in uncontrollable floods and rot our cassava; no more will the passing seasons cripple our limbs and dim our eyes and ears; no longer will Kenaima roam the country in stealth catching us unaware of his presence, when his arrows pierce our flesh and we are laid up in sickness or more often die. The Kenaima will be bound by Tuminkar even as he bound Baukur; and flung far into space also.

But - Kaimen Pu Irotan, Ung Takan - (Listen good and lay to heart, my Grandchild), only those who live good will be

absolutely happy: those who obey their parents: those who are kind to and properly care for their children: those who hearken to the voice of their elders; those who keep in their hearts the remembrance and words of Tuminkar as handed down in the Tribe from father to son; only those will live with Tuminkar and his Son in Peace.

Such as steal and tell the lie, such as go roaming from woman to woman, such as are "Malenyan" (greedy, miserly, one of the worst of tribal sins) such as are cruel to their children or beat their wives with no just cause and do those things that is the prompting of Duid; with all such will Tuminkar be angry and drive far from him when even worse than now will be their troubles, ailments and sorrow. Thus I warn you, my grandson, that you so live your life that whichever day Tuminkar may come back you may look him in the eye and not be ashamed with the sinking eye and down cast head, nor have the weak and trembling knee in fear of his anger.

And now, my Takan, we must to our hammocks. The moon is behind the forest and we must sleep. We shall suffer (Baiwep) from the cold, the mosquitoes will bite as also the sandflies and the fleas. We may dream of much that is bad or we may see those who have left us and are no more. The Waracabra Jaguar may growl at us and Kenaima pass close, but we must sleep as tomorrow we face the roaring waters of many cataracts and we must all be strong of arm and steady of foot to fight

its fury in getting our boat and supplies safely over into smooth water above.

NAAPSAFAI.
