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LEGENDS OF SAN FRANCISCO

CALDWELL

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LEGENDS OF SAN FRANCISCO

OTHER BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR:

LEGENDS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

ORIENTAL RAMBLES.

RAINBOW STORIES.

THE WIZZYWAB.

Sincerely,
George W. Caldwell

LEGENDS

OF

SAN FRANCISCO

By

GEORGE W. CALDWELL, M. D.

Published by

PHILLIPS & VAN ORDEN CO.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

PS3505
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1919

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DEDICATION.

My San Francisco on her seven hills is smiling,
Beside an opalescent sunset sea;
There is a magic in her bracing air beguiling,
Yet filling all with tireless energy.
The tingling tang of open sea the breeze is giving;
The fog rolls in and drives heat languors out,
And thrills her loyal subjects with the joy of living,
And puts the love of idleness to rout.

When in the valleys, fervent summer heat oppresses,
And gives no respite night or day,
There is a City that the cooling fog caresses,
Upon the breezy San Francisco Bay.
When winter rains and sun have wrought in fragrant flowers
A multicolored carpet on the land,
A charm is in her circling hills and redwood bowers
That only those who see can understand.

She has a mystic charm in all the changing seasons—
A lure that brings the stranger to her door,
And in these pages I will give the Indian's reasons
For charms and lures, never told before.
The legends of the hills, the fog, the gulls, the waters
Idealize the beautiful and true;
Allow me, therefore, California's Native Daughters,
To dedicate this book of verse to you.

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THE MAID OF TAMALPAIS.

THE MAID OF TAMALPAIS.

THIS she told me in the firelight
As I sat beside her campfire,
In a grove of giant redwoods,
On the slope of Tamalpais.

Old she was, and bent and wrinkled,
Lone survivor of the Tamals,
Ancient tribe of Indian people,
Who have left their name and legend
On the mountain they held sacred.
On the ground she sat and brooded,
With a blanket wrapped around her—
Sat and gazed into the campfire.
On her bronze and furrowed features,
On her hair of snowy whiteness,
Played the shadows and the firelight.
Long she gazed into the embers,
And I feared I had offended

In the question I had asked her.
Then she spoke in measured accents,
Slowly, with a mournful cadence,
And long intervals of silence.

"You have asked me why my people
Will not climb Mount Tamalpais—
Why we hold the mountain sacred.
I am old, and when the Raven
Calls my spirit to the Father,
None will know the ancient story,
Sacred legend of the Tamals.
Therefore, I will tell the story,
I will tell and you shall write it,
Else it will be lost forever;
I will tell it that the paleface
May respect our sacred mountain."

"In the morning of creation
All the world was covered over
With the flood of troubled waters.
Only Beaver and the Turtle
Swam about upon the surface.
Beaver said, 'I'm very weary.'
Turtle said, 'Dive to the bottom.'

Beaver dove and brought up gravel,
Laid it on the back of Turtle;
Dove again and brought a pebble,
Then another and another.
Pebbles grew to rocks and boulders,
As a peak above the waters—
Thus was Mount Diablo fashioned.

Beaver sat upon the mountain,
Gazing out across the waters;
Saw a single feather floating;
Feather grew into an Eagle;
Eagle flew and sat by Beaver.
Long they talked about creation,
Counseled, planned, and reconsidered,
Then they moulded clay with tules;
Beaver placed his hair upon it,
Eagle breathed into its nostrils—
Thus Coyote was created.
Coyote barked and sat beside them.
Many creatures were created;
Some with hair, and some with feathers;
Some with scales, or shells, or bristles.

Other peaks and mountain ridges
Then appeared above the waters.
Walls of hills were then continued
North and south, to hold the waters
In a mammoth lake, that, filling
All the Sacramento Valley,
Found its outlet to the ocean
Through the Russian River Canyon.
Round the lake the blazing mountains
Spouted lava and hot ashes;
Casting on the troubled waters
Lurid gleams and purple shadows.

By the lake Coyote wandered—
Sat and howled, for he was lonely,
Lonely for a Man to tame him
Into Dog as a companion.
Then Coyote mixed dry tules
With wet clay and made a figure.
Sun God came and shone upon it;
Spirit came and blew upon it,
And a Man was thus created.
Sun God made the Moon to guard him,
And she stood before his tepee,
Watching while the Sun was sleeping;

But she loved the Sun and followed
Him into the starry heavens,
Always with her face turned to him.
Still she watched the lonely tepee,
And her heart was touched with pity
For the lonely man within it,
So she made a lovely woman,
Gave her constancy, and sent her
On a moonbeam to his tepee,
As his helpmate and companion.
Man then multiplied, and flourished,
Building villages and lording
Over all the other creatures.

On the sunny eastern margin
Of the Bay of San Francisco,
Grew the village of the Tamals;
Fisher folk they were, and gentle,
Seeking not for wars of conquest;
Fishing in the purple waters
From their boats of bark or rawhide;
Wading in the limpid shallows
Seeking oysters, clams and mussels.
In the course of generations
Piles of shells of many banquets,

With the ashes of their campfires,
Formed a mound upon the bay shore.
Shell Mound Park, the people call it,
And they gather in the shadows
Of the ancient oaks for pleasure,
Roasting clams as in the old days
When the Tamals lived upon it.
Gone are now the limpid shallows;
Gone the oysters and the mussels,
And no more are grassy meadows
Dappled with the spreading oak trees;
For great factories, grim and sordid,
Sprawl in squalid blocks around it,
And the smoke of forge and furnace
Rise from stacks into the heavens.

Paleface men with concave glasses,
Learned in lore of printed pages,
Dig into the mounds and gather
Spear and arrow heads and axes,
Broken weapons and utensils
Made of flint, or bone, or seashell.

To the northward, where great boulders
Lie in tumbled piles and masses,
And a Thousand Oaks are clustered,
And the crags upthrust their fingers
Through the meadows of the uplands,
Was another Indian village,
Ancient stronghold of the Tamals.

In the village on the hillside
Men were hunters, brave and fearless,
Skillful with the bow and arrow,
Artful with the snare and deadfall;
Hunting deer and elk and bison
In the open grassy meadows,
Tracking wolf and mountain lion
To their lairs among the redwoods;
Bearing on their backs the trophies
To their camp when night was falling.

In the village maids and matrons
Dressed the furs and tanned the buckskin,
Dried the venison, and traded
With the Shell Mound folks for salmon,
Mussels, clams and abalones,
Ornaments of bone or seashell,

Weapons chipped from flint or jasper.
From the oaks they gathered acorns,
And beneath the fragrant bay trees
And the heavy blooming buckeyes,
Ground the acorns into flour
To be baked upon the hot-stones.

To this day the smoke of campfires
May be traced in caves, and crannies
Where the overhanging cliffsides
Gives protection from the rainstorms.
If you search among the thickets
Of the low widespreading buckeyes
You will find their ancient mortars
In the bedrock still remaining—
Mortar holes ground deep, and polished
By the toil of many women
Pounding, grinding with a pestle
Fashioned from a stream-worn boulder.

Gone are all those ancient people,
Perished now for many ages.
Many oaks have grown and withered,
Many buckeyes bloomed and faded,
Many tribes have fought and conquered,

Lived for many generations,
Then were driven out by others.
Still the mortar holes will linger
As our monuments forever."

Fainter grew the voice, still fainter,
Sinking almost to a whisper,
With a hesitating quaver,
As the picture came before her
Of her disappearing people.
Then I rose and piled more branches
Of the redwood on the campfire,
And the flames and sparks leaped upward,
Lighting up the mournful forest,
Driving back the eerie shadows.

Long she bowed her head in silence,
Then resumed her rythmic speaking.
In the village lived a maiden,
Fairest of all comely maidens
Ever born among the Tamals;
Fair of face and pure of spirit,
Kind in thought and quick in service
To the young and old and helpless;
Ever eager for her duty,
Ever singing at her labor.

When she sat beneath the buckeyes
Grinding acorns in the mortar,
Humming birds came sipping honey
From the heavy scented blossoms;
Wild birds came and sang their sweetest
Music as they perched above her;
And the Fairies came to greet her
Dressed as Butterflies, and fluttered
Round her head and whispered secrets—
Secrets not revealed to others.

Little wonder that the Chieftain,
Young and brave and wise in counsel,
Loved the maid and wished to take her
As his wife to rule his people.
But she answered him with sadness,
For she loved the youth, 'Beloved,
This is not the time for lovers,
But for warriors to make ready,
For a danger comes upon us.
God has sent a warning message
By the Fairies, and they whispered
To me as I ground the acorns
In the mortar 'neath the buckeyes.

Rally all your braves around you,
Sieze your strong bows, fill your quivers
With the long flint-pointed arrows;
Guard the ridges to the eastward
Ere the foe shall fall upon us.'

To the eastward where Diablo
Rears its peak above the fog banks
Drifting landward from the ocean,
Lived a warlike tribe of people.
Fierce they were, and grim and cruel,
Worshiping the Fire Demon
Who is crouching in the mountain.

From their heights they saw the waters
Of the Bay of San Francisco
Lying crystal-clear and purple.
Then no Sacramento River
Poured its flood of silt into it,
For a range of hills continued,
All unbroken, from Diablo
To the distant smoking mountain
Which is now called Saint Helena.

Long they watched the bay and marveled
At its strange, alluring beauty;
Watched it in its changing colors—
In the gray of misty mornings,
In the blue of sunny mid-day,
In the glories of the sunset,
In the silver flood of moonlight—
It enticed and seemed to beckon,
Then, as ever, to the strangers.

Long their Wizards danced, and rattled
With their gourds, to rouse the Demon
Of the Mountain to assist them—
Danced until they fell in frenzy,
Prophesying wealth of plunder.
Warriors danced and chanted war songs,
Stamped and shouted, waved their war clubs,
With the war paint on their bodies,
Black and yellow and vermillion.
Hideous and terrifying
Were they when they took the warpath.

Oh, the terror of their coming!
Oh, the horror of the battle
On the meadows of the uplands!
Forward, by the strength of numbers,
Pressed the Devils of Diablo;
Slowly backward fell the Tamals
To the Stronghold of the Boulders.
When the darkness of the midnight
Fell as a protecting blanket,
Silently my tribe retreated,
Ere the ring should be completed
By the merciless invaders.
All the Tamals started northward—
Men and women, little children—
Through the open, grassy meadows,
Through the forest to the ridges
Circling round the Bay below them.
At the dawning of the morning
They were resting on a hilltop.
To the west the Bay was sleeping
Underneath its misty blanket;
To the east a lake was gleaming
In the rosy light of sunrise.

While they rested on the mountain,
Weary, footsore, and disheartened,
Came pursuing scouts to spy them.
Fierce and bloody was the combat,
All the rocks were stained with crimson.
Then the scouts, or those still living,
Fled to tell their wicked Chieftain
Where to find the fleeing Tamals.

Loud the wail of lamentation
When the Tamals saw their warriors
Who had fallen in the combat
Lying lifeless on the mountain.
Louder still, the cry of anguish
When they found their Maid of Mercy
Helpless now, and sorely wounded.
No more would her strong young shoulders
Bear the wounded braves to safety,
Nor would she withdraw the arrows,
Bind the wounds nor stanch the bleeding.

On the shoulder of the Chieftain
She was carried, for no other
Had such strength and gentle manner.
On his shoulder thus he bore her,

Fleeing northward on the ridges,
Bore her gladly, for he loved her.
All the women were exhausted,
All the children, tired and weeping;
Half the warriors, dead or wounded—
Slow and painful was the progress.

On they fled, but often turning,
Looking backward o'er their shoulders,
Fearful lest the foe o'ertake them
Ere they reached a place of safety.

Came a deadly fear upon them!
'We are lost,' they cried in terror,
For a league behind them, followed
Such a host of men or devils
That they could not hope to conquer.
'We are lost,' they moaned, 'Their number
Is the number of the needles
On the redwoods in the forest;
And they follow as the foxes
Follow rabbits in the open.'

'We shall die, oh, my beloved,'
Said the Chieftain to the maiden.
'And die gladly,' said the maiden,
'If our people may not perish.
As I sat beneath the buckeye
At my mortar, grinding acorns,
Fairy butterflies came to me,
Fluttered round my head and told me
That an enemy was coming;
And I warned you, oh, my lover.'
'Aye, you did, my best beloved.'
'And they promised, oh, my lover,
That our God would save our people
Should I offer up my spirit
As a sacrifice before Him.'

And the young Chief spoke, and answered,
'Life without you would be empty;
Let my spirit travel with you
Through the spaces of the heavens,
To the upper world of spirits.'

'It shall be as you have spoken,'
Said the maiden to her lover,
'And I know that God will answer

With a mighty sign from heaven.
Stoop, and bow your head, my lover,
That my face may turn to heaven.
Mighty Father, save my people,
Take my spirit and my lover's
To the spirit land of lovers;
Lift your hand and strike the mountain!
Cut a chasm wide, between us
And the wicked ones who follow;
Save my people, oh, my Father,
Strike the mountain! Strike the mountain!'

Came a rumble in the distance,
Nearer, louder, terrifying!
God had heard her prayer, and lifted
Up his hand to strike the mountain.
When the mighty blow descended
With the crash of many thunders,
All the mountains rocked and trembled,
Rose and fell, and swayed and shuddered;
And across the Coast Range Mountains
Yawned a chasm, hot and smoking;
Into it careened the hillsides;
Mountains swooned and fell into it.

Through it, as a giant sluiceway,
Rushed the roaring, boiling waters
Of the lake, in tumbling tumult,
Flooding all the bayside lowlands,
Racing through the Golden Gateway
In a cataract stupendous.
Saint Helena burst its crater
With a blast that leveled forests,
And the falling sand and cinders
Buried deep the fallen giants,
To be petrified to agate.
Through the steam and sulphurous vapors,
Flashed the lightning on the mountains,
And the din of quake and thunder
Beat the air until it quivered.

When God, his righteous wrath abating,
Ceased to shake and rend and deluge,
And the last reverberation
Died away into the distance,
And the trade winds from the ocean
Blew away the smoke and vapors,
Those remaining of the Tamals
Gazed with wonder at a mountain

That was standing, new, before them,
For upon it lay the maiden
With her face upturned to heaven,
As it was when she was praying
To her God to save her people.
On her youthful breast and body
Lay a forest, like a mantle,
New and green, and decked with flowers.
And her willing feet were resting
Near the bay and new-made river;
While the Chief, her faithful lover,
Bending 'neath his sacred burden,
Stretched his arms out to the valleys
Where his people would find shelter.

Here for countless generations
We have lived in peace and safety,
Roaming through the wooded valleys,
Hunting on the grassy meadows,
Fishing in the bays and rivers.

Now you know the sacred story
Of the Maid of Tamalpais—
Why no Tamal ever ventured
To the holy crest above us.

Would we tread upon the features
Of the martyred Maid who saved us?
Would we desecrate the rock-tomb
Of our Chief, her well beloved?

There she lies in all her beauty,
Sacred Maid of Tamalpais!
If her eyes should turn from heaven,
She would see across the waters
Piles of tumbled crags and boulders
In the Grove of Thousand Oak Trees,
Where the buckeye trees still blossom
Over mortar holes,, half hidden.
Children play with merry laughter
Hide and seek among the boulders.
Even now perhaps, the Fairies
Dressed as butterflies may whisper
Secrets in the ears of children,
If they listen to the voices.

If her eyes should trace the steamers
As they thread the curving channel
Opened by the ancient earthquake,
She would see them pass an island

On whose red and barren summit
She was wounded in the battle.
White men call it Red Rock Island,
Knowing not the crimson color
Is from blood, shed in the battle
Fought upon the lofty summit
Of a mountain that was swallowed
When the mighty chasm opened,
Leaving but its peak projecting
Through the surface of the waters.

There she lies in queenly beauty,
Martyred Maid of Tamalpais,
With her face upturned to heaven,
As when praying, 'Take me, Father;
Save my people; Save the Tamals.'
On her head the snows of winter
Lay a crown of shining crystals.
Fog banks twine their arms about her
To embrace her and caress her.
Passing rainclouds bathe her features
With their tear drops, shed in sorrow,
And the rainbow arches over
With the glories of a halo.

She is first to have the greeting
Of the rising sun, and latest
To receive his goodnight kisses.
On her sides the purple shadows
Linger longest in the twilight.
For her robe the fairest wildflowers
Bloom throughout the changing seasons—
Violets, and pink wild roses,
Blue forget-me-nots, and lilies
Vie to give their sweetest perfumes
To the Maid of Tamalpais.

Lovers climb the sacred mountain,
Roam the hillsides, tread the wildwoods,
Finding there new inspiration,
Hope and happiness, not knowing
That the Maid of Tamalpais
Gives her spirit to all lovers
Who approach her mystic presence.

I, the last of all the Tamals,
Soon will turn my face to heaven
Where my own, my best beloved,
Waits with outstretched arms, to greet me.

Write the story for all people;
It is finished; I have spoken."
Thus she spoke, that ancient woman,
Lone survivor of the Tamals,
By the campfire in the redwoods,
On the slopes of Tamalpais.

THE TWIN GUARDIANS OF THE GOLDEN GATE.

THE TWIN GUARDIANS OF THE GOLDEN GATE.

WOULD you know the mystic legend
Of the peaks of San Francisco—
Of the Twin Peaks standing Guardian
Of the gay and careless city,
Ever laughing by the gateway
Of our Golden California?

Would you know what brings the westwind,
With its cool and filmy vapors
Trailing like a scarf of chiffon
Through the narrow Golden Gateway,
Screening shore and hills and harbor,
While the country all around it
Bathes in floods of golden sunshine?

Would you know why great Sea Lions
Flounder on the rocky islands,
Standing by the Golden Gateway?
Why they fight in baffled fury,
Barking ever at the mainland?

Listen then, and I will tell you
As the legend was related
By an ancient Tamal woman,
As she sat beside the campfire
In a grove of giant redwoods
On the slopes of Tamalpais.

"It was long ago, my children,
Long ago, in mystic ages
When the Gods lived near the people,
Who, like infants newly mothered,
Needed care and help and guidance.
As the children call to parents
So the people called to Spirits.
Then the Gods were quick to listen,
Quick to teach them and protect them,
Quick to punish when they trespassed
On the rights of one another.

Near the place where Holy Fathers
Built the Mission of Dolores
Was a village of the Tamals,
Vanished now for many ages.
By it was a singing streamlet,
Where the willows waved their banners;
Round it giant redwoods clustered,
Redolent with forest odors;
Live oaks, bay trees, and madronas
Billowed over plains and hillsides.

Through the forest ranged the hunters,
Seeking game in glen and canyon,
Meat for food, and fur for raiment;
Vanquishing the forest creatures
With flint arrows and stone axes;
Seeking fish in bay and river
With the spear or net of sinew.
On the bay the warriors paddled
In canoes of bark or rawhide,
Or in mighty redwood dugouts
Dared the currents of the narrows
Training warriors to be ready
To defend their shores and harbor.

From the North the foemen threatened,
As an ever-present shadow.
O'er the water came the foemen,
In a mighty fleet of warboats;
Every summer came the foemen,
Came and fought and then retreated.

In his tepee sat the Chieftain
With the Old Men, wise in counsel;
All their hearts were solely troubled—
Every summer brought the foemen,
Those bronze men of fearless courage,
Waxing stronger every season—
Long they counseled with each other;
Would the foemen come and conquer?
Could the Tamals long withstand them?
Thus they questioned in the Council
While they planned their last defenses.

To the Council came the sisters,
Yana fair, and Tana fearless,
Twins, and daughters of the Chieftain,
Came and stood before the wise men,
Came and bowed their heads and waited.

Well the wise men knew the sisters,
Maidens blooming into women,
Loved them for their grace and beauty,
For the joy they radiated,
For the charm that emanated
From their chaste and gentle spirits,
As the perfume that is wafted
From the rose buds newly opened.

Yet the Wise Men gave no welcome,
Turned their eyes from Maids to Chieftain.
"Why, my Daughters, have you ventured
Into this, the warrior's council?
Well you know it is forbidden;
Neither man nor woman enters
When the warriors plan for battle."

"Let us speak," the Maidens answered,
"For we bring a warning message.
As we wandered on the ridges
Gathering the golden poppies
To adorn our Mother's tepee,
We were talking of the danger
From the foemen of the Northland,

When a Maiden stood before us,
Strangely fair, with golden tresses,
Eyes of deep blue like the lupins,
Dressed in garlands made of poppies.
Hand in hand we stood and wondered,
Till the lovely apparition
Smiled and caused our fears to vanish.
'I am the Spirit of the Country,'
Said the Maiden of the Poppies,
'And I choose you, my Twin Daughters,
For the beauty of your bodies,
And the worth of soul within you,
As the saviors of your people,
As the guardians of my harbor.
Take the message to your Chieftain,
That the foe comes from the Northland;
Yet they shall not harm your people
If you stand upon the hilltop
With the talisman I give you.
Take this Magic Iris with you,
Guard it well for every petal
Has a charm that brings an answer
To a prayer that is unselfish,

To a prayer for all the people
That will live around your harbor.
Never, while you guard the hilltop,
Shall a foe invade your country.
Petals three there are; three wishes
Shall be granted when you make them.'
Then the Poppy Maiden vanished,
And we hastened to our village.
Hand in hand, we ran so swiftly
That our feet but touched the flowers;
While above our heads the wild ducks
Flying southward clamored hoarsely,
'They are coming; They are coming!'
Sea gulls, winging from the ocean,
Shrieked their warning, 'They are coming!'
Then we dared to brave your Council
With the message of the Maiden,
And the warning of the seabirds.

'It is well,' the Chieftain answered,
'Daughters with the eyes of springtime
And the faces of the flowers,
It is well. The Gods have marked you

With their sign upon the forehead;
You have stood before a Goddess,
And her spirit is upon you.'

Long the Old Men sat and pondered.
Well they knew the ears of children
Are attuned to hear the voices
Of the Gods and Guardian Spirits.
Well they knew that all wild creatures
Speak to man if one is worthy
To receive their friendly warning;
Knew that seabirds, swift and cunning,
See the foemen while their war boats
Still are far beyond the sea-rim.
Thus they reasoned in their council,
Then they stood before the people
While the Chieftain gave his orders.

'Beat the war drums. Call the warriors.
Man the war canoes, and station
Sentinels upon the headlands
Up the coast-land to Bolinas.
Let them light the lurid war fires,
When they see the foemen coming.'

Swiftly northward raced the sentries
In their light canoes of deerskin—
Through the narrows to Bonita,
On the ocean to Bolinas.
All was tumult in the village;
To each warrior was given
Long bows, strong bows, wrapped with sinews,
Stores of arrows, eagle feathered,
Newly tipped with sharpest flint-heads;
Stone head war clubs, wrapped with rawhide;
Shields of oakwood, tough and heavy.
Women decked the braves with feathers,
Robes of fur, and charms of seashell;
Roused their courage with the stories
Of the prowess of their Fathers;
Cheered with songs of deeds of valor
Of the heroes of the Tamals;
While the children, heavy hearted,
Watched the scene in wide-eyed wonder.

Every day the Chieftain's daughters,
As twin sentinels were standing
On the hill between the valley
And the blue expanse of ocean.

Every day they watched the Morning
Reach his rosy fingers upward,
From behind the eastern mountains,
Painting with an elfin fancy,
Crimson edges on the cloudbanks;
Then erasing and repainting
Them with gold or mauve or amber;
Always changing, as his fancy
Swayed the child to blend the colors;
Till Old Father Sun uprising,
Drove his elfin son to shelter
From the dazzle of his presence.

All day long the faithful sisters
Stood upon the ridge and waited—
Waited while the Sun ascended,
Crossed the zenith, then descended
On his daily westward journey.
Watched him sink into the ocean
As a molten globe of metal;
While the fleecy clouds above him
Caught afire, and blazed in beauty,
Radiating flaming colors

Through the changing clouds, and lighting
O'er the purple sea a pathway
Glinting in a golden glory.

Evening came, and still they waited—
While the heavenly dome turned purple,
And the twinkling stars were lighted,
One by one, until the darkness
Scintillated with their sparkle;
And a milky way of star-dust
Arched across, to hold the heavens
High above the reach of mortals.

Through the night they watched and waited—
While the silver moon was racing
Through the silken clouds, and flooding
All the bay and hills and ocean
With a pale illumination,
Casting moving shadows earthward
When a dark cloud passed before her.
Wild Coyotes broke the silence
Of the midnight with their barking,
And the prowling Wolves crept nearer,
Till the patter of their footsteps
Could be heard in stealthy rushes.

Still the fearless Sisters waited,
Watched the north for signal fires,
And in eager alternation
Held the Magic Yellow Iris.

Came at last the welcome singing
Of the Meadow Lark and Robin,
And above the eastern mountains
Flushed the rose-light of the morning;
Then again the sky was tinted
By the Elf who plays with colors,
And the sleeping poppies wakened
When the sunbeams kissed their eyelids.

From the Heights of Point Bonita
Rose a thread of smoke that lengthened,
Broadened, flaunted like a banner,
Black and ominous of evil.
"They are coming!" Yana whispered,
"See, the signal fires are lighted!
They are coming. *Guardian Spirit*
Of our native country, save us!"
And she pressed the Yellow Iris
Closely to her throbbing bosom.

Over northern rim of ocean
Came the war canoes by hundreds,
Came until the waters darkened
With the number of the warboats.
Never could the Tamals conquer
Such a multitude of foemen.
Swiftly rose and fell their paddles,
Flashing in the brilliant sunshine,
Trailing scarfs of foam behind them,
As they raced toward the harbor.

Tana searched the far horizon,
Saw the signal fires blazing
On the mountain tops and headlands,
Heard the war drums in the village
Roll in constant wild alarum.

Yana held the Yellow Iris
With the Magic in its petals,
Held and gazed with adoration
On the velvet mystic markings.
Then she plucked a magic petal,
Held it high, and ere it fluttered
To the breeze this prayer was uttered:

'Spirit of our Native Country,
Goddess guarding home and harbor,
Roll the fog-banks o'er the headlands,
Hide the narrows from the foemen;
Bring the west-wind from the ocean,
Drive their boats to crash and shatter
On the rocky surf-bound islands.
Bring the west-wind! Bring the fog-banks!'

From the ocean came the west-wind,
Blowing stronger, growing cooler,
Bringing in protecting fog-banks,
Sweeping landward o'er gray waters,
Flooding through the Golden Gateway,
Rolling over shore and headlands.

Through the fog the boats were racing
For the entrance to the harbor,
When they plunged into the smother
Of the breakers round the islands—
Crashed upon the rocks and splintered.
From the surf the foemen struggled
To the rocks and scrambled on them.

Then the Maiden plucked another
Petal from the Magic Iris,
And she prayed again, *'Oh, Spirit*
Of our Native Country, hear us,
Change the foemen to Sea-creatures,
That they never more attack us.'

As the magic petal fluttered
To the ground the foe was changing.
Arms and paddles changed to flippers;
Legs were bound as in a bandage,
And their brown and hairy bodies
Wriggled on the rocks, and crowded,
Barking, fighting one another.

When the danger was averted,
When the enemy was helpless,
Sisters wept, embraced each other,
Thanked the Gods for their deliverance.

Still remained another petal
Of the Magic Yellow Iris.
'One more wish we have, one only.'
Said one sister to the other,

'Would we might remain forever,
As the guardians of the harbor,
To protect it from all foemen,
To invoke the fog and west-wind.'

Then, again The Poppy Maiden
Stood triumphantly before them.
'You have chosen well, my children,
Had you wished for wealth or beauty,
Robes or jewels for adornment,
Or for any selfish purpose,
Then the petals would have fallen
To the earth and lost their Magic.
My twin daughters. ever faithful,
All your thoughts are for your people;
Therefore, you shall be immortal,
Standing on the heights forever,
As the Guardians of the Harbor.
Draw your mantles around your shoulders,
Furs they are, but flowers they shall be.
As my garments are of flowers,
So shall yours be, golden poppies,
Lupins, blue, shall deck your mantle.
Blue and gold shall be your colors—

Blue, for purity of purpose;
Gold, for worth of soul and spirit.
While you stand above the harbor,
While you call the fog and west-wind,
While you wear your cloak of poppies,
Never shall a foeman enter
Through the Golden Gate with war-boats.
Pluck the petal, let it flutter
To the ground. Your wish is granted.
Stand forever, native daughters,
As Twin Peaks, to guard the harbor.'

That was long ago, my children,
When the earth was young, and people
Heard the voices of the Spirits—
Knew the language of the sea-birds.
To this day the ancient warriors
Flounder on the Sea Rock Islands,
Barking, roaring, crowding, fighting,
Near the gateway of the harbor.
Still the Sisters, as the Twin Peaks,
Guard the city and the harbor.
In the summer, at the season
When the ancient foes came southward,

They invoke the cooling west-wind
With its fog, to screen the harbor;
Yet, the sunlight seeks the valley
Where the ancient tepees clustered,
Beaming there in benediction,
While around it lie the shadows.'

That, my children, is the legend
Told beside the evening campfire
By the ancient Tamal woman,
In a grove of giant redwoods,
On the slopes of Tamalpais.

THE SEA GULLS.

THE SEA GULLS.

ROUND the boat the Sea Gulls hovered,
Soaring on their spreading pinions,
Floating on the air, but turning
Searching eyes upon the people;
Searching, searching, always searching,
Winging, swinging, darting, calling
In their plaintive tones, "Ah-we-a."

By my side my friend, the Tamal,
Stood and gazed upon the Sea Gulls.
Long he gazed in deep abstraction,
Then he said, "They still are searching,
Still are calling to Ah-we-a.
Would you know the Tamal legend
Of Ah-we-a and the Sea Gulls?

Know you, then, that these blue waters
Were not always calm and peaceful.
Once the Sea King, grim and moody,
Held his court within this harbor—
Held his carnivals of beauty,
And his wild and stormy revels.

In the cove of Sausalito,
Where the houses of the paleface
Terrace on the wooded hillside
And the sailboats ride at anchor,
Lived a tribe of fisher people,
Building homes among the crannies
Of the rocks upon the bayshore,
Fishing in the harbor waters
From their light canoes of redwood—
Fishing boldly in defiance
Of the Sea King's fitful anger
At the raiding of his Kingdom
And the slaughter of his subjects.

Oft the Sea King, in reprisal,
Lashed the harbor with his west wind
Till the breakers leaped in frenzy,
Overturning boats and claiming
Many fishermen as victims.

Those who clung in desperation
To their boats and reached the mainland
Told the tale of their encounter
With the Sea King in the tempest.
Through the smother of the surges,
Through the driving rain and fog-banks,
Came the Sea King's boat upon them,
Drawn by floundering sea horses
With their manes of seafoam curling
From the prow and backward trailing.
Through the mist they saw it faintly,
As a ghostly apparition,
Riding down upon the billows—
Phantom ship, at times transparent,
White or gray—to ride them over;
Racing nearer, nearer, nearer,
Then dissolving into vapor;

Or, at times, it darted past them
Giving glimpses through the fog-banks
Of the Furies at the paddles,
Bending, dipping, throwing surges
From their mighty magic paddles,
While the wake of foaming waters
Seethed and boiled in whrilpool currents.

Long the warfare had continued.
Fishermen must live by fishing,
And the Sea King claimed his victims
Through a strategy of cunning,
Seeking ever to beguile them
To the sea to work his vengeance.

When day dawned in rosy splendor
Calm and still the harbor waters
As a sea of purple satin,
Only wrinkled into ruffles,
Ever widening in a circle
Where the fishes leaped the surface.

Fishermen with song and laughter,
Waved farewell to wives and children,
Paddled off into the silence;
Then, without a sign of warning,
Gales arose and lashed the harbor
Till the waters writhed and tumbled,
Wave on wave, in thundering tumult;
And the Sea King, in his anger,
Dashed the boats, o'erturned and empty,
High upon the rocky seashore
At the feet of wailing women.

Queen Ah-we-a of the Fishers
Mourned the sorrows of her people;
Comforted the weeping widows;
Cared for all the little orphans.
Little wonder that her subjects
Loved the gentle Queen Ah-we-a.

Long the Queen in silence pondered
On the perils of her people.
Long she stood upon the headland
Where the wind-distorted cedars

Cling upon the rocky hillside.
Long she prayed to the Great Spirit
For his guidance and protection.
Long she prayed and watched and waited
Till the moon came up and silvered
All the sea, and cast the shadows
Of the cedars, weird and lonely.

From the harbor came the night winds
Robed in tinsel veils of vapors,
And they whispered in the branches
Of the cedar trees above her—
Whispered of the King, their master,
Whispered terms for ceasing warfare.

Ah-we-a heard the hard conditions,
Bowed her head as in submission.
On her face the resolution
For a sacrifice was graven—
For a sacrifice so noble
That the Spirit in the Heavens
Smiled and promised, in her absence,
To protect her Fisher people.

Morning dawned, with vapors brooding
On the silent glassy waters.
Queen Ah-we-a called her people
To the sandy shore, and standing
In her light canoe of deer skin,
Told them of her night-long vigil.
'Now I go,' she said in parting,
'To the great boat of the Sea King,
There to plead that storms be banished,
Banished from our bay forever.
The Great Spirit will protect you
Till I come again to lead you.'
Then her paddle dipped the water,
And her light canoe of deer skin
Went into the fog and faded,
Faded to a shadow outline,
Then was gone into the silence.

Long and watchfully the people
Waited for the Queen Ah-we-a.
Then a great fear came upon them.
'She is lost. The wicked Sea King
Holds her hostage on his war boat.'

Thus they mourned, and prayed the Father,
The Great Spirit, that he give them
Wings to fly above the waters
Where the Sea King could not reach them.
'Give us wings,' they prayed *'On pinions*
Would we fly to find Ah-we-a.
Change us, Father, into sea birds.
Let us search and find Ah-we-a,
And at last, when we have found her,
Change us back to Fisher People.

In the flicker of an eyelid,
All the fisher men and women
And their children changed to Sea Gulls.
And the Father, ever mindful
Of his promise to Ah-we-a,
Put into the hearts of mortals
Universal love for Sea Gulls.
Laws have even been enacted
To protect them from the hunters.

To this day the faithful Sea Gulls
Search the Bay, now free from tempests;
Search the ferry boats and steamers,
Soaring by on spreading pinions,
Peering into people's faces,
Searching for their Queen Ah-we-a.
Winging, swinging, darting, calling
In their plaintive tones, 'Ah-we-a;'
For they know that when they find her
They will change to human beings,
Subjects of the Queen Ah-we-a.

Thus was told the ancient legend
Of Ah-we-a and the Sea Gulls.

THE ISLANDS OF THE BAY.

THE ISLANDS OF THE BAY.

TAMALPAIS wrapped her mantle
Of the clouds about her shoulders.
Gray the day, and melancholy,
For December rains were falling,
Falling in a steady downpour.
Mournful branches of the redwoods,
Drooping, dripping, swayed above us;
Moaned above the lonely cabin
On the slope of Tamalpais.
Raindrops pattered on the shingles,
Beat against the eastern windows,
Flooding down the glass in torrents.

Through the veil of slanting rainfall
Could be seen the distant harbor,
With its flecks of fleecy vapors
Floating, merging, disappearing.

In the fireplace of the cabin,
Logs and knots of pine were blazing,
Snapping with the pitch imprisoned;
Flocks of sparks were flying upward;
Flags of flame were waving welcome,
Warming, cheering, exorcising
Ghosts of Gloom and eerie phantoms;
Bringing brightness and the odor
Of the burning pitch that lingers
As the incense of the forests.

By the fireplace sat the Tamal,
Lone survivor of her people—
Sat and listened to the patter
Of the raindrops on the shingles,
To the soughing of the west-wind
In the branches of the redwoods.
Long she gazed upon the harbor,
Lying leaden-gray below us.
Then, she told this ancient legend—
Legend of her tribe, the Tamals,
Legend of an ancient deluge.

"Do you see," she said, "the Islands
Of the Albatross and Beaver?
By another name you call them.
One is crested by a prison,
Grim and somber, melancholy;
One is gay with flags and bunting,
Ringing with the martial music
Of your sailor boys in training;
Yet, if you observe them closely,
You will see in one the profile
Of an Albatross, a giant
Sea bird, sleeping on the water;
While the other is a Beaver
Facing always to the eastward.
When the noon sun casts its shadows
You may see his stony features
From the deck of ferry steamers
Near the pier that wades the shallows
On the harbor's eastern border,
Tamals call them Sacred Islands
Of the Albatross and Beaver,
For upon their backs were carried
All the Tamals through the deluge.

Down the ages came the legend,
Told by Fathers to the children,
Told on rainy winter evenings
Round the campfires of the Tamals.

From the ocean rolled the rain-clouds,
Came unceasingly the rain-clouds.
Black and heavy were the rain-clouds,
Lighted only by the flashes
Of the lightning playing in them.
Fell the rain as falls the torrents
In the waterfalls of rivers,
Fell through days of murky darkness,
Fell through nights of inky blackness,
Fell for days and nights unnumbered.
Waters covered plains and valleys.
On the coast the sea was rising,
Flooding all the lower country,
Creeping up the mountain foothills;
Still the rains in floods descended.

Up the slopes of Tamalpais
Climbed the people of the Tamals,
While behind them crept the waters,
Covering the hills and mountains.
One by one the peaks were swallowed
In the flood of rising waters.
On the gray and sullen waters
Floated logs and trees uprooted;
On the trunks and in the branches
Cowered creatures of the forests,

Then the people prayed the Spirit—
Prayed the Father in the Heavens—
That he save his tribe, the Tamals,
Ere the waters rise above them;
And the Spirit heard their pleading,
Sent the Albatross and Beaver,
Giant messengers from Heaven,
As the Saviors of the Tamals.

Albatross came from the westward,
Through the lightning of the storm-clouds,
Growing larger, coming nearer,
Till the thunder of his pinions

Echoed from the cliffs above them,
Then he rested on the waters.

From the eastward came the Beaver,
Swimming through the turbid waters,
Growing, growing, ever growing,
Till he had become a Giant,
On whose back the tribe of Tamals
Could find refuge from the waters.

Then a voice spoke from the storm-clouds,
Spoke in mighty tones of thunder:
'I have heard your prayer, Oh Tamals;
You shall live, and shall re-people
All the world with men and women.
I will give to them the spirit
Of the Albatross who searches
Distant seas on tireless pinions.
I will give to them the wisdom
Of the Beaver who with patience
Labors, building and constructing.
On the Albatross and Beaver
You shall ride, until the waters
Shall return to their own borders.'

On the Albatross and Beaver
All the Tamals rode in safety,
While the swirling deluge covered
All the foothills and the mountains.
Then the northwind, dry and scorching,
Drove the rain-clouds to the ocean,
And the sun-rays, piercing through them,
Glinted on the troubled waters.
Came the peak of Tamalpais
As an island to the surface;
Down the slopes the flood receded
Baring forests to the sunlight,
Then the grass-lands of the valleys
And the old familiar coastline.

With rejoicing all the Tamals
Sought their homes along the bayshore,
Singing thanks to the Great Spirit,
Singing praises to their saviors,
Giant Albatross and Beaver,
Resting then, within the harbor.
Then again, in voice of thunder,
Spoke the Spirit from the Heavens;

'Let the Totem of the Tamals
Be the Albatross and Beaver;
Search and Labor, be their motto;
And, lest children of their children
May forget their mighty saviors,
Giant Albatross and Beaver
Shall be changed to rocky Islands—
Monuments to stand forever,
In the Harbor of the Tamals.'

Thus the ancient Tamal woman
Told the Legend of the Islands,
While December rains were falling,
And the fragrant pine was burning
In the fireplace of the cabin
On the slope of Tamalpais.

THE LAKE OF MERITA.

THE LAKE OF MERITA.

THE lengthening shadows of evening
Were creeping on Mount Tamalpais,
Painting with purple the valleys,
Gilding the ridges and summit.
Green were the groves of the redwoods,
Lacing their branches together;
Through them the last rays of sunlight
Pierced to the carpet of needles.
Only the tinkling of water,
Only the breeze in the branches,
Only the call of the blue jays
Broke the mysterious silence.

Far through the canyon I wandered,
Far to her camp in the redwoods—
The home of the Indian woman,
Wrinkled and old and decrepit,

Learned in the lore of the Tamals.
Nearing her camp-fire, I saw her,
And halted in fear, lest I trespass.

She sat like a Priestess of Forests,
Chanting with weird intonations,
Slowly, with strange repetitions,
Swaying in rythmical measure.
Round her the wild forest creatures
Gathered and sat at attention.
Birds ceased their anthems of evening,
Fluttered to branches above her,
Listened as if fascinated.

The singing was hushed when she saw me;
Away fled the wild things to cover.
"Welcome, my friend," said the Tamal.
"A seat at my camp-fire is waiting."
Her welcome was hearty and friendly,
But out of the shade of the forests
Came chattering, chirping and barking,
Resenting, reproaching, complaining.

I sat by the camp-fire and listened
In wonder. The scene was uncanny.
At last, when the plaints had subsided,
Or faded away in the distance,
I said , "Tell me, friend, by what magic
Are wild creatures called to your camp-fire.
Is it a secret you cherish?
May you reveal it to others?"

She gazed in the flickering embers,
Dreamily gazed in the embers,
Then she replied, "You have heard me
Singing the song of Merita,
The magical song of Merita,
Merita, the friend of wild creatures,
Wearers of fur or of feathers,
Creatures of forest and mountain,
Birds of the sea and the marshes.

I will tell you the tale of Merita,
Merita, the daughter of Yado,
Chief of the fishermen people
Who lived by the Lake of the Oak Trees,
Far to the east of the harbor.

Slender and tall was Merita,
Dark were her eyes, and her tresses
Glossy and black as the feathers
That gleam on the wings of the raven.
Gentle and kind was Merita,
Serving the young and the aged,
Nursing the sick and the wounded,
Cheering when sorrow was breaking
The heart of some one of her people.
The Gods taught Merita the language
Of birds that made nests in the oak trees,
Of water fowl thronging the tules,
Of all furry creatures that peopled
The hills and the valleys around them.
They came from afar when she called them,
Called with her song, and they hastened
To tell her their troubles and sorrows.
She bound up their wounds and caressed them,
And told them the wiles of the hunters.

Wandering one day to the northward,
She came to a creek where strawberries,
Ripe and delicious were growing
Beside a small stream that cascaded

Down from the Peak of the Grizzlies.
Refreshing herself with the berries
Se sat in the shade of the live oaks,
The ancient and wide-spreading live oaks,
And called to the wild forest creatures,
Singing the Song of Merita.

'Come, come, come, birds of the air,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, tell how you fare,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, wild creatures, know
That I love you.
Come, come, come, tell me your woe,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, you will I serve,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, you well deserve,
And I love you.
Come, come, come, I bring you aid,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, be not afraid,
For I love you.
Come, come, come—come—come—come.'

Before the monotonous chanting
Was finished, the Blue Jays and Robins,
Pigeons, and Bluebirds, and Blackbirds
Flew to the branches above her,
And tipping their heads to observe her
Opened their bills in complaining.
Down from the canyon a white fawn
Came with a shaft in her shoulder,
Fell at the feet of Merita,
Bleating her plea for protection.
Quickly the arrow was taken
Out of her quivering shoulder.
Then came the hunter, pursuing—
Halted, and gazed in amazement.
'I am Zarando, the Tamal,
Chief of the Thousand Oaks People.
Pardon me, if I have wounded
A pet of the beautiful stranger.'

Under the arm of Merita
The frightened fawn crept for protection.

'I am Merita, the daughter
Of Yado, the Chief of the Fishers
Who live by the Lake of the Oak Trees.

The Fawn is my friend, and she answers
My call to all wild forest creatures.'

'I have a call,' said Zarando,
'A call to decoy the wild creatures
Into the range of my arrows,
Yet few are deceived by the pretense.
Teach me your call, oh, Merita.

'Nay, nay, Zarando; love only
Will draw the wild creatures around you.
Love does not change—cannot injure—
The shaft is not aimed at a loved one.
If you would draw the wild creatures,
Love them, and guard them from danger.'

'I am a hunter, Merita,
And yet would I gladly abandon
The bow and the trap to secure
The charm that the Great Spirit gives you.
Tell me the secret, Merita,
Teach me to speak in the language
Of all the wild creatures around you;
Teach me to know and to love them.'

Then were the first lessons given,
Where now gather thousands of students,
Beneath the old wide-spreading live oaks
That stand by the stream in the Campus.
There the first Teacher and Pupil,
Merita and young Chief Zarando,
Met on the mornings that followed,
Met for the love of the study,
And then for the love of each other.

No more were the Tamals and Fishers
Rivals, at war with each other;
United they lived as one people—
One people around the great harbor.
Zarando, their chief ruled with justice;
Merita, their Queen ruled with mercy.
Their village grew up where the oak trees
Stand on a point in the Lakelet.
The water birds came at her calling,
And thronged on the Lake of Merita,
Holding conventions, and heeding
The judgments she gave in their quarrels.
No one disturbed them nor harmed them;
There was a refuge from danger.

It is said that souls of the lovers
Still live in the oak trees that border
The shore of the Lake of Merita;
And that water-birds come at their calling,
And throng, unafraid, on the waters,
Hearing the song of Merita:

'Come, come, come, birds of the air,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, tell how you fare,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, I bring you aid,
For I love you.
Come, come, come, be not afraid,
For I love you.'
Come, come, come,
Come,
Come,
Come."

[THE END]

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