

THE MYTH
OF
H I A W A T H A,
AND
OTHER ORAL LEGENDS,
MYTHOLOGIC AND ALLEGORIC,
OF THE
NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS.

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THE AK UK O JEESH,

OR

THE GROUNDHOG FAMILY.

AN ODJIBWA FABLE.

A FEMALE akukojeesh, or groundhog, with a numerous family of young ones, was burrowing in her wauzh, or hole in the ground, one long winter, in the north, when the young ones became impatient for spring. Every day the mother would go out and get roots and other things, which she brought in to them to eat; and she always told them to lie close and keep warm, and never to venture towards the mouth of the wauzh. But they became very impatient at last to see the light and the green woods. "Mother," said they, "is it not almost spring?" "No! no!" said she, in a cross humor, "keep still and wait patiently; it hails, it snows, it is cold—it is windy. Why should you wish to go out?" This she told them so often, and said it in such a bad temper, that they at last suspected some deception. One day she came in, after having been a long while absent, and fell asleep, with her mouth open. The little ones peeped in sily, and saw on her teeth the remains of the nice white bulbous roots of the mo-na-wing, or adder's

tongue violet. They at once knew it was spring, and without disturbing the old one, who only wanted to keep them in till they were full grown, away they scampered, out of the hole, and dispersed themselves about the forest, and so the family were all scattered.