

## MYTHS AND SUPERSTITIONS OF THE OREGON INDIANS.

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As an introductory note to the sketch herewith presented, I may properly refer to the sources of my authority.

The chief scientific students of these Indians have been Mr. Albert S. Gatschet and Dr. Franz Boas, both of the Smithsonian Institution. They have done an invaluable work, the former especially among the Modocs, and the latter among the Clatsops and Chinooks.

For general information about Indian life and especially "Tomanowas," I am chiefly indebted to Hon. Edwin Eells of Tacoma, agent at the Puyallup Agency for many years, and to Rev. Myron Eells of Twana, Wash., a missionary to the Indians.

H. S. Lyman of Astoria, Oregon, my brother, and author of a history of Oregon, has given me the results of his research among the Clatsops and other tribes on the lower Columbia.

Another most excellent authority was Mr. Silas Smith, now deceased, whose mother was an Indian, the daughter of old Chief Cobiway, the chief of the Clatsops at the time of the Lewis and Clarke Expedition.

The fine story of the rearing of the three great mountains came from an old Klickitat Indian named Wyanoshot, with whom I was well acquainted when a boy.

The Klickitat stories came mainly to me from Dr. G. P. Kuykendall, now of Pomeroy, Wash., formerly physician on the Yakima Reservation, and he had them directly from Indians. I have gathered much interesting infor-

mation from several intelligent Indians that I have known, Henry Sicade of Puyallup and "Charley Pitt" of the Warm Springs Agency being the chief ones. Hon. E. L. Smith, of Hood River, Oregon, is one of the most intelligent students of Indian life. Lee Morehouse of Pendleton, Oregon, has become famous as a photographer of Indian life and is one of the best authorities.

E. S. Curtis, of Seattle, is a photographer of Indian life and has perhaps the finest collection of such matter in existence.

One curious feature of these Indian myths may be noted as the habit of making "continuing" stories of them. That is, at their tepee fires, the Indians will vie with each other in taking up some already familiar tale and adding to it. Thus the stories become modified, and those of one tribe reappear in mangled and curious forms in others. The Indian that can best entertain his hearers at these "Gleeman bouts" of imagination is esteemed the best fellow, and hence they draw heavily on the imagination, which, in spite of a reputation for taciturnity and stoicism, is tremendously developed among the Indians.

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It may be understood that the term Oregon Indians applies to the tribes of the original Oregon territory, which included Oregon, Washington and Idaho, with part of Montana.

There is much that is interesting, romantic and pathetic, as well as sometimes repulsive, in the history and characteristics of the native races of the Columbia valley. Despoiled of their ancestral domain, deprived of their inherited methods of livelihood, rudely flung into a hopeless competition with a civilization which they could neither comprehend nor acquire, these poor people illustrate that unavailing human struggle with fate, which is and perhaps always will be one of the unsolved problems of a universe ruled, as we are taught to believe, by a beneficent and all-powerful

Creator. With so much to excite pity, the Indians have usually excited only hatred and repulsion in the minds of their white neighbors. Their peculiar ideas, instead of being sympathetically drawn from them, have been ruthlessly and unappreciatively crushed by the superior knowledge and arrogance of the white race. It is therefore not an easy matter to elicit information from the Indians on the peculiar fancies of their mythology and legends. By reason of these conditions there has been little true scientific study of Indian myths. Moreover, on account of the reticent and taciturn nature of the Indians, even sympathetic questioners will rarely get any full narration. And yet again the common myths of the Indians have become more or less mixed with the preconceptions of such white men as have heard and related them. Hence it is not an easy matter at the present time to relate these Indian tales in their native purity. In the series of stories which we shall undertake to give, while endeavoring to preserve them in their native form, we are obliged to confess that there is a certain element of white men's ideas interwoven with those of the Indians.

In order to present the clearest possible view of this curious and fascinating subject we shall treat it in four natural divisions. The first of these will be the myths relating to the supposed superior powers and to the spiritual nature of men; the second will deal with myths of the creation of the Indian tribes and their acquisition of fire and other agencies of life; the third will consist of those stories that account for the peculiar and beautiful features of some portions of the country; in the fourth division we shall speak of Indian myths of the hereafter and their ideas of joys and punishments in another life. Some of our tales will be found to belong to more than one of these natural divisions, as fire myths and creation myths frequently involve the effort to account for the physical features of the country.

First, then, what can we tell of the Indian Pantheon and their conception of their own unseen life? To begin with, it may be said that the Indians have multitudes of their gods, rank upon rank and order upon order, to a degree which reminds us almost of Hindoo or Egyptian mythology. There is nothing perhaps so remarkable as the differences among different peoples, except their resemblances. But the differences are superficial while the resemblances are fundamental. Hence we find that the Indian ideas of the gods are after all very much like those of other people in all their essential peculiarities. The Oregon Indians have more or less distinctly the idea of one great deity, who orders the universe and never commits himself to the sight of human creatures. This great supreme deity is commonly known as Sáhale, or Sochláh, very often with the word Tyee, meaning chief, attached. Many of the Indians however use the word Nékáhnie, or sometimes Kalmie, to signify this supreme deity. They think of him as dwelling in the heavens or in the mists and clouds of the lofty mountains.

While thus having a monotheistic idea to a certain extent, the Indians, like most other people, are polytheists in their belief in a multitude of lesser divinities, by which they suppose that they are constantly surrounded and which very often appear to them. In this respect their ideas are very similar to those of Greeks or Hindoos or our own Teutonic ancestors. These lesser deities, moreover, are of both beneficent and evil character. Generally speaking the useful and attractive animals and birds are the personifications of the good divinities, while the forces of nature, storm and thunder and cold, represent the malevolent gods. There is a perpetual struggle between these two classes of deities for control of the Indians, and hence the poor subjects of the controversy are in almost constant solicitude as to whether the good or the bad will get them.

Intimately connected with the idea of the gods is that of the man's own spiritual or unseen nature. And pretty nearly the whole of this phase of Indian philosophy or fancy, whichever we may call it, is embraced in the word "tomanowas," a great and portentous word to the Oregon Indian. It is as hard for a white man to get the full significance of this sacred Indian word as it would be for an Indian to grasp the full meaning of the sacrament of baptism. In general terms we may say the tomanowas signifies, first, the soul or inner self, and secondly, a system of magic by which one animal or person can get possession of the tomanowas of another, or by which proper propitiation can be made to the gods, and suffering and disease and calamity averted. Now the first part of this idea is not so far different from that of many great philosophers, even Plato himself. The Indian thinks of his tomanowas as being a certain inner and invisible essence which is the outgrowth of ideas and the unseen force of life. He thinks of every animal and even plant as possessing this inner self. As a natural conclusion from this, Indians have a conception a good deal like our present conception of hypnotism and telepathy, or like that of witchcraft or demoniacal possession, by which they suppose that one man or animal can get possession of the tomanowas, that is, of the mind or will of another. A great object therefore of Indian existence is to avoid being controlled by the tomanowas of some evil person or thing and in turn to be able themselves to control others. This is what they signify, therefore, by a tomanowas, or medicine, man: that is, a man who, by fastings and incantations and solitary musings, often accompanied with self-torture, gets into such a state of mind that he can recognize and control the tomanowas of others. He employs all kinds of magical performances to attain this end. The whole Indian system of treating disease is based on this same tomanowas idea. They suppose a sickness to be some kind of a bad tomanowas

that has got possession of the victim. This tomanowas must be cast out. Therefore the Indian doctor either feels with his hands or runs his lips all over the body of the afflicted person until he gets hold of what he supposes to be the demon. Then if he is strong enough he pulls it out and throws it or blows it away from the sick person, who then recovers. Some one relates seeing a tomanowas man practising among the Chinooks and having a very sick woman in charge. The tomanowas was so strong that although the doctor succeeded in pulling it out it held his hands up stiff in the air and he could by no means regain a natural posture until some other medicine men came and worked over him and at last freed him from the persistent demon.

The Oregon Indians also suppose that their shadows are a manifestation of their own tomanowas. Hence they are very fearful of having their shadow go into the fire or water, as they suppose that such an experience portends death by burning or drowning. Allied naturally with this is their fear of being photographed. They look upon cameras with great aversion, thinking them a device for controlling their tomanowas or spirit. Some worthy camera fiends therefore, who have innocently endeavored to preserve and perpetuate the costumes and lineaments of some wild Indian, have found themselves in very dangerous predicament, for some of these Indians would kill a picture taker, if they could, sooner than any other species of evil being. It is well therefore for the ardent disciple of the kodak to use considerable discretion in exercising its magic.

We have already mentioned the fact that the good animals and birds are thought by the Indians to be the form which the benevolent deities assume. They believe in a kind of incarnation of deities much like those of the Hindoos. In fact it will be seen throughout that the Indian ideas are not essentially different from those of

more highly educated and civilized people. The Indian idea is that there was a period prior to the existence of men when all the common animals talked and performed acts of a superior intelligence and were enormously larger and more intelligent than at present. They style that age the age of the "Watetash." Every animal was during that time a greater or less divinity, and some were evil and some were good. The most common of all the good animals was the coyote. He has three chief names according to the locality, Tallapus on the lower Columbia, Speelyi among the Indians of the Klickitat and Walla Walla countries, and Sinchaleep among the Spokanes. Of his many good deeds we shall give some instances later on. Then there was Yelth the raven, Speow the owl, Whiama the eagle, Iguanat the salmon, Okuno the crow, Icayim the grizzly, Kasait the robin, Iquoaquac the crane, Iqueskes the bluejay, Wawa the mosquito, Iquatselak the cougar, Moosmoos the elk, Mowitch the deer and Iquonequone the gull. It is not to be supposed however that these divinities were confined to the animal whose name they bear. They appeared at will in many other forms. It is proper to say that the Indian pronunciation in many of these names can scarcely be preserved in English spelling, inasmuch as they contain gutturals and other Indian sounds beyond the capacity of phonic expression in English.

We pass on naturally from this department of our subject to that which deals with the creation myths of the Indians. These myths are many, but two of them, one of the Chinooks and one of the Klickitats, will illustrate their general character.

The Klickitat legend of the origin of the Indian tribes takes us back to the time of the Watetash and to a monstrous beaver called Wishpoosh, which lived in the lakes at the head of the Yakima River. Instead of being a cluster of small lakes as at present, there was at that time one great lake. Wishpoosh was of monstrous size and

covered with scales which glittered like gold, while his eyes were like balls of fire. He had the vicious habit of eating all the fish and other animals in and around the lake, and even in many cases would gnaw up the trees and even rocks. Speelyi, the coyote god, the Zeus of the Klickitat mythology, perceiving that all nature was subject to the ravages of Wishpoosh, attacked him with fire and spear in the lake, but failed to kill him. The beaver in a fury of rage began to lash the shores of the lake until he finally tore down its walls and allowed it to pour down and flood what is now the Kittitas Valley, thus forming the upper portion of the Yakima River. For a long time the beaver remained in this Kittitas Lake, and then went to work upon the southern border and tore the bank out so as to let the waters down into the central portion of the Yakima Valley, where it was checked by a high ridge just below the present city of Yakima, which separates the waters of the Atahnum from those of the Toppenish. After the lapse of much time the still infuriated monster attacked the lower margin of the walls of this lake also, and tore out the peculiar gap now seen just below the mouth of the Atahnum. This caused the water of the lake to spread over the vast area now occupied by the Sunnyside, Prosser, Kennewick and Pasco countries. Here an enormous lake was formed extending nearly to the present site of Walla Walla. This was restrained for a long time by the Umatilla highland immediately below the mouth of the Walla Walla River. But even this lofty barrier was insufficient to withstand the onslaughts of Wishpoosh, and when it gave way the whole vast area extending to the present vicinity of Hood River on the eastern edge of the Cascade Mountains was covered with an inland sea. And now the last and greatest of the exploits of Wishpoosh was performed, for he clove asunder the Cascade Mountains themselves, and the accumulated waters went onward to the sea. Thus the great gorge of



the Columbia was formed and the river itself began to flow in its present channel.

And now it would seem as though the beaver god, having the whole Pacific Ocean in which to disport himself, would have had room enough and might have become quiet. But his mad rage still continued and he fell upon the whales and the other denizens of the ocean until Speelyi saw plainly that he must either kill him or abandon the entire creation to him. Therefore Speelyi went into the sea and after a dreadful combat killed Wishpoosh. The huge carcass was washed up upon the shore of Clatsop and lay along the beach hundreds of feet in length. Speelyi now went to work to cut up the voluminous remains of Wishpoosh and from it framed the various Indian tribes. Of the feet he made the Klickitats, great in running. Of the hands he fashioned the Cayuses, skilled with the bow. From the head were created the Nez Percés, great in oratory and wisdom. Of the stomach and abdomen he made the Chinooks, greedy and gluttonous. At last, finding an indiscriminate mass of bones, hair, gore and pollution lying around, Speelyi gathered this up and flung it up the Snake River and from it sprang the Shoshones and other tribes of the upper Snake.

The story just narrated comes, as has been said, from the Klickitats of Eastern Washington, but the Chinooks themselves have a very fitting addition to this legend to explain the Clatsop plains lying betwixt the mouth of the Columbia and Tillamook head. They say that before there were any men upon the earth Tallapus, which is the Chinook word for the Coyote god, once walking along the margin of the sea conceived the idea that a beautiful stretch of country might be fashioned there, and accordingly he picked up a handful of sand and cast it into the surf. At the same time he commanded the surf to be transformed into land. This took place strictly according to his instructions and from that result the beautiful Clatsop

plains were formed as a home for the men that were to come.

The other Indians of the Columbia basin have creation legends quite similar in a general way to these, though attributed to different beings. Among the Puget Sound Indians Yelth and Speow are credited with deeds very similar to those of Tallapus and Speelyi.

Among the most interesting of all Indian myths are those pertaining to the acquisition of fire, and the creation of light by means of the sun, moon and stars. The mythologies of all men dwell with horror upon the time of darkness. The acquisition of fire and of light has been one of the greatest features of all human conceptions of the supernatural. Beyond any other natural force, fire has been an instrument in human progress. There have been fires of all kinds, all the way from the camp-fire or fire upon the hearth up to the sacred fires of the vestals and of the Parsees, or from the fires of outbursting volcanoes to the fire that cannot be quenched. Closely allied with fire upon the earth are the fires in the heavens, the sun and stars. Like other people the Indians exercised their imagination in efforts to account for the presence and use of these indispensable agencies of human life.

The Yakima account of the manner in which Speelyi secured fire for men goes back, as many of these stories do, to the times of the animal people. This legend is that in those times, before there was any fire, the animal people suffered so much from cold that Speelyi gathered them together and asked them to make suggestions as to the manner in which to obtain fire from the sky, for they were satisfied that it existed there. They determined to shoot an arrow into the sky in the hope that it would catch the fire and drop back to the earth with it. Speelyi shot first, but the arrow fell back without the fire, evidently having failed to stick into the sky. After various unsuccessful attempts by various birds and animal people, the

beaver took his turn. His arrow stuck into the sky. Then he shot again and the second arrow pierced the first, and so he kept on shooting time after time, each arrow sticking into its predecessor until there was a long line of arrows reaching from the earth to the sky. Speelyi then asked which one of the animals would be willing to climb the arrow rope into the sky and bring down fire. Most of them were afraid, but at last the dog offered to make the dangerous attempt. He said he would climb up into the sky and seize the fire in his mouth and so return.

It was a long, long climb for the adventurous dog. When he reached the sky he could not at first get through, but at last he cut a hole in the sky and climbed through into the sky country. He found the country so attractive that he abandoned his mission and did not return at all. After waiting a long time for his return the beaver volunteered to undertake the important mission. He thought that when he reached the sky the sky people would see what a curious kind of an animal he was, so smooth and fat, and would then prepare him for a meal. Then, as he explained to the rest, they must be all ready to rush up the arrow rope into the sky and attack the sky people. Then he, in the confusion, would get a coal of fire and hide it under his finger nail and so bring it back to the earth. The programme went on beautifully according to the plans of the beaver. When he entered into the sky country through the hole which the dog had made, the sky people were very much astonished at his appearance and soon seized him with a view to preparing him for a meal. Just as they were about ready to eat him the rest of the animals from the earth suddenly appeared, swarming up the rod, and attacked the banqueting-place of the people in the sky. In the excitement of the *mêlée* the beaver came to life again, seized the fire, and rushed for the arrow rod, followed by his companions. Some of them got down all right, but the great weight broke the rod and a number

of them were precipitated to the earth. Among others, Speelyi himself caught a bad fall and was mashed out into the form of an ordinary coyote. Some of the animals fell into the water and became fish, while some stopped in the air and became birds. The beaver himself reached the earth in safety with the precious fire, and ever after there was fire on earth.

Even more picturesque is the account by the Indians of Puget Sound of the acquisition of fire through the agency of Yelth, the raven. In those times the grey eagle was the keeper of fire and the sun, as well as the fresh water. This grey eagle hated men, and kept all these in such a manner that men could not obtain them.

Now the eagle had a beautiful daughter, and the raven, who seems at that time not to have been a raven but a noble young man, went to court the daughter. But by the magic of his enemies, Yelth was transformed into a snow-white bird. In spite of this his wisdom and nobility were so great that the girl loved him. Yelth now being in the lodge of the eagle, discovered the sun and stars and fire and water, all hanging up on the sides of the lodge. Watching his opportunity he stole them all and flew out with them through the smoke hole of the tent. Having got outside he hung the sun up in the sky, and this made so much light that he found no difficulty in flying to an island in the middle of the ocean. But when the sun had set and darkness had come on, he strewed the stars around and fastened up the moon, and this made a new light. And now, having gotten under way again by this new light, he took the fresh water and the fire and continued on his course. Having reached a point above the land, he dropped the water, which, falling to the ground, became the source of all rivers and lakes. As he journeyed on with the fire the stick was meanwhile burning up, and the streaming smoke transformed his feathers from white to black. For that reason ravens

are black to this day. His bill became burned by the heat of the fire until he had to drop the fire brand, which, striking the rocks, went into them, so that now if one strikes two rocks together fire will drop out.

Perhaps the most perfect and beautiful of all Indian fire myths of the Columbia is that connected with the famous "tomanowas bridge" at the Cascades. This myth not only treats of fire, but it also endeavors to account for the peculiar formation of the river and for the great snow peaks in the near vicinity. This myth has various forms, and in order that it may be the better understood, we shall say a word with respect to the peculiar physical features in that part of the Columbia. This mighty river, after having traversed over a thousand miles from its source in the heart of the great Rocky Mountains of Canada, has cleft the Cascade range asunder with a cañon three thousand feet in depth. While generally very swift, that portion of the river between the Dalles and the Cascades, of about fifty miles, is very deep and sluggish. There are moreover sunken forests on both sides of the river visible at low water, which seem plainly to indicate that at that point the river was dammed up by some great rock slide or volcanic convulsion. Some of the Indians affirm that their grandfathers have told them there was a time when the river at that point passed under an immense natural bridge and that there were no obstructions to the passage of boats under the bridge. At the present time there is a cascade of forty feet at that point. This is now overcome by government locks, constructed seven years ago. Among other evidences of some such actual occurrence as the Indians relate is the fact that the banks of the river at that point are gradually sliding into the river. The prodigious volume of the Columbia, which here rises from fifty to seventy-five feet during the summer flood and which, as shown by government engineers, carries as much water as the Mississippi at New Orleans, is here continually

eating into the banks. The railroad has slid several inches a year at this point toward the river and requires frequent readjustment. It is obvious at a slight inspection that this weird and sublime point in the course of this majestic river has been the scene of terrific volcanic and probably seismic action. One Indian legend, probably the best known of all their stories, is to the effect that the downfall of the great bridge and consequent damming of the river was due to a great battle between Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams, in which Mt. Hood hurled a great rock at his antagonist, but falling short of the mark the rock demolished the bridge instead. This event has been made use of by Frederick Balch in his beautiful story, "The Bridge of the Gods," the finest story yet produced in Oregon.

But the finer, though less known legend, which unites both the physical conformation of the Cascades and the three great snow mountains of Hood, Adams and St. Helens, with the origin of fire, is to this effect.

According to the Klickitats there was once a father and two sons who came from the east down the Columbia to the vicinity of where Dalles city is now located, and there the two sons quarreled as to who should possess the land. The father, to settle the dispute, shot two arrows, one to the north and one to the west. He told one son to find the arrow to the north and the other the one at the west and there to settle and bring up their families. The first son, going northward, over what was then a beautiful plain, became the progenitor of the Klickitat tribe, while the other son was the founder of the great Multnomah nation of the Willamette Valley. To separate the two tribes more effectively Sahale reared the chain of the Cascades, though without any great peaks, and for a long time all things went in harmony. But for convenience' sake Sahale had created the great tomanowas bridge under which the waters of the Columbia flowed, and on this bridge he had stationed a witch woman called Loowit, who

was to take charge of the fire. This was the only fire in the world. As time passed on Loowit observed the deplorable condition of the Indians, destitute of fire and the conveniences which it might bring. She therefore besought Sahale to allow her to bestow fire upon the Indians. Sahale, having been greatly pleased by the faithfulness and benevolence of Loowit, finally granted her request. The lot of the Indians was wonderfully improved by the acquisition of fire. They now began to make better lodges and clothes and had a variety of food and implements and, in short, were marvellously benefited by the bounteous gift.

But Sahale, in order to show his appreciation of the care with which Loowit had guarded the sacred fire, now determined to offer her any gift she might desire as a reward. Accordingly, in response to his offer, Loowit asked that she be transformed into a young and beautiful girl. This was accordingly effected and now, as might have been expected, all the Indian chiefs fell deeply in love with the beautiful guardian of the tomanowas bridge. Loowit paid little heed to any of them until finally there came two magnificent chiefs, one from the north called Klickitat and one from the south called Wiyeast. Loowit was uncertain which of these two she most desired, and as a result a bitter strife arose between the two, and this waxed hotter and hotter, until finally, with their respective warriors, they entered upon a desperate war. The land was ravaged, all the beautiful things which they had made were marred, and misery and wretchedness ensued. Sahale repented that he had allowed Loowit to bestow fire upon the Indians, and determined to undo all his work in so far as he could. Accordingly he broke down the tomanowas bridge, which dammed up the river with an impassable reef and put to death Loowit, Klickitat and Wiyeast. But, he said, inasmuch as they had been so grand and beautiful in life, he would give them a fitting commemoration after death. Therefore he reared over them as monuments

the great snow peaks; over Loowit what we now call Mt. St. Helens, over Wiyeast the modern Mt. Hood, and above Klickitat the stupendous dome of what we now call Mt. Adams.

Such are some of the most characteristic of the fire legends of our Pacific Northwest Indians, legends which have their counterparts more or less in those of all people.

Closely connected with these tales of fire are those which deal with the struggles of the good deities against the bad on behalf of suffering men. As already indicated, the chief protecting divinities were the Coyote, under his various names, Yelth the raven, Speow the owl, Iguanat the salmon, and the bluejay, which, like all these gods, is known by a variety of names, Kiki being that used on the Sound. Speelyi, the great coyote god of the Klickitats and Yakimas, is credited with more performances in behalf of Indians than is any other deity. His benevolence was manifested in rescuing the Indians from Skookums and Cheatcos, as well as from the destructive gods of thunder and storm and wind.

As we have seen, Skamson, the thunder bird, and Tootah the thunder were a source of great terror to the Indians. The Yakimas have a legend of another thunder god whom they call Enumtla. Enumtla lived upon the summit of Mt. Adams, and whenever he winked, fire dropped from the clouds. Then he would roar with such fury that the hapless people scarcely dared to show themselves for fear of being struck down. Speelyi, discovering their pitiable condition, promised that he would take the strength out of the storm god.

Now there was one very curious thing about Speelyi, and that was that he had two sisters living in his stomach. It might be supposed that there would be anatomical difficulties connected with such a condition of affairs, but this was accounted for by the supposition that the sisters were in the form of "shotolallies," the Yakima word for



huckleberries. Speelyi would consult these sisters upon all important occasions and the odd thing about it was that whenever they advised him to do anything he would always say, "That is just what I was planning to do already." The huckleberry sisters now gave him suggestions as to how to overcome the power of Enumtla.

In pursuance of their directions Speelyi transformed himself into a feather and floated in the air to the near vicinity of the thunder god. The god, viewing the feather somewhat suspiciously, poured down a torrent of rain, but the magic feather remained untouched. Now the feather suddenly arose into the sky, and began to pour down rain and to flash lightning and roar out thunder. Very much amazed by this unlooked for force, Enumtla gathered all his thunderbolts and roared all his rage, and there took place between the two a desperate battle in mid-heaven. The contending gods made the earth fairly tremble with their struggle, and at last dropped to the earth in a deadly grapple, Speelyi on top. Speelyi now began to pull up trees for clubs and pound the fallen thunder god until he surrendered. Then Speelyi pronounced sentence upon him by directing that henceforth he should only occasionally be allowed to send forth his lightnings, and even then not to destroy human life. As a result of this there are at the present time few thunder-storms in the Columbia basin.

Of the miscellaneous myths which pertain to the forces of nature one of the best is that accounting for the Chinook wind. All people who have lived long in Oregon or Washington have a conception of that marvellous warm wind which in January and February suddenly sends them almost summer heat amid snow banks and ice-locked streams and causes all nature to rejoice as with a resurrection of springtime. Scarcely anything can be imagined in nature more picturesque and dramatic than this Chinook wind. The thermometer may be down nearly to zero, a foot of snow may rest like a pall on the earth, or a deadly

fog may wrap the earth in its cold embrace, when suddenly, as if by the breath of inspiration, the fog parts, the peaks of the mountains may be seen half stripped of snow, and then, roaring and whistling, the warm south wind comes like an army. The snow begins to drip like a pressed sponge, the thermometer goes with a jump to sixty, and within two hours we find ourselves in the climate of southern California. No wonder the Indians personified this wind. We personify it ourselves.

The Yakima account of the Chinook wind was to the effect that it was caused by five brothers who lived on the Columbia River, not far from the town now called Columbus. Now there is at rare intervals in this country a cold northeast wind, which the Indians on the Columbia call the Walla Walla wind because it comes from the northeast. Both these sets of brothers had grandparents who lived near what is now Umatilla. The two sets of brothers were continually fighting each other, sweeping one way or the other over the country, alternately freezing or thawing it, blowing down trees and causing the dust to fly in clouds, and rendering the country generally very uncomfortable for the people. Finally the Walla Walla brothers sent a challenge to the Chinook brothers to undertake a wrestling match, the condition being that those who were defeated should forfeit their lives. It was agreed that Speelyi should act as umpire and should inflict the penalty by decapitating the losers.

Speelyi secretly advised the grandparents of the Chinook brothers to throw oil on the wrestling ground so that their sons might not fall. In like manner he secretly advised the grandparents of the Walla Walla brothers to throw ice on the ground. Between the ice and the oil it was so slippery that it would be hard for anyone to keep upright, but inasmuch as the Walla Walla grandfather got ice on the ground last, the Chinook brothers were all thrown and killed.

Now the elder Chinook had an infant baby at home, whose mother brought him up with one sole purpose in view, and that was that he must avenge the death of his father and uncles. By continual practice in pulling up trees he became prodigiously strong, insomuch that he could pull up the largest fir trees and throw them about like weeds. The young man finally reached such a degree of strength that he felt that the time had come for him to perform his great mission. Therefore he went up the Columbia, pulling up trees and tossing them around in different places, and finally passed over into the valley of the Yakima, where he lay down to rest by the creek called the Setas. There he rested for a day and a night, and the marks of where he lay are still plainly visible on the mountain side.

Now, turning back again to the Columbia, he sought the hut of his grandparents, which, when he had found, he found also that they were in a most deplorable condition. The Walla Walla brothers had been having it all their own way during these years and had imposed most shamefully upon the old people. When he learned this the young Chinook told his grandfather to go out into the Columbia to fish for sturgeon, while he in the meantime would lie down in the bottom of the boat and watch for the Walla Walla wind. It was the habit of these tormenting Walla Walla wind brothers to wait until the old man had got his boat filled with fish, and then they, issuing swiftly and silently from the shore, would beset him and rob him. This time they started out from the shore as usual, but to their great astonishment, just as they were about to catch him, the boat would shoot on at miraculous speed and leave them far behind. So the old man landed safely and brought his fish to the hut. The young Chinook then took his grandparents to a stream and washed from them the filth which had gathered upon them during all those years of suffering. Strange to say the filth became trans-

formed into trout, and this is the origin of all the trout along the Columbia.

As soon as the rews became known abroad that there was another Chinook champion in the field, the Walla Walla brothers began to demand a new wrestling match. Young Chinook very gladly accepted the challenge, though he had to meet all five. But now Speelyi secretly suggested to the Chinook grandfather that he should wait about throwing the oil on the ground until the ice had all been used up. By means of this change of practice, the Walla Walla brothers fell speedily, one after another, before the young Chinook. One after another was thrown and beheaded until only the youngest was left. His courage failing, he surrendered without a struggle. Speelyi then pronounced sentence upon him, telling him that he might live, but could henceforth only blow lightly, and never have power to freeze people to death. Speelyi also decreed that in order to keep Chinook within bounds he should blow the hardest at night time, and should blow upon the mountain ridges first in order to prepare people for his coming. Thus there came to be moderation in the winds, but Chinook was always a victor in the end. And thus at the present time in the perpetual flux and reflux of the oceans of the air, when the north wind sweeps down from the chilly zones of Canada upon the Columbia basin, his triumph is but transient. For within a few hours or days at most, while the cattle are threatened with destruction and while ranchers are gazing anxiously about, they will soon discern a blue black line in the southern horizon, in a short time the mountain ridges can be seen bare of snow, and deliverance is at hand. For the next morning, rushing and roaring from the south, comes the blessed Chinook, and the icy grip of the north melts as before a blast from a furnace. The struggle is short and Chinook's victory is sure.

Among the most interesting and beautiful of all Indian

stories, perhaps those connected with the great mountain peaks are first. As is fitting, the most striking are those whose scenes are laid in and around Mt. Rainier. (This great king-mountain, for all reasons of poetry and euphony, as well perhaps as history, ought to have the old Indian name of Tacoma, or Tahoma, but the plainer name of Rainier seems at the present time to be established geographically.)

By reason of the Indian superstitions in regard to the great peaks, the Indians can seldom be prevailed on to ascend their summits. Some people represent that this is simply a part of the general superstition which the red men have for any form of hard work, but I incline to the opinion that it is just a straight superstition. On account of this idea the first explorers of the great peaks have found it very difficult to reach the summit.

One of these legends, the scene of which is Mt. Tacoma (which in narrating Indian tales seems the most fitting name), may be styled the Indian legend of Rip van Winkle. According to this there was an old man living near the mountain who was very avaricious and desirous of getting much "hiaqua," by which they signify shell money, still common among the Indians of the Sound. This old Indian seems to have been on very intimate terms with Sahale and kept begging him to supply him with more money by magic. Sahale, however, was aware that this greed for money was liable to make the old Indian a victim of Kahatele, the chief of the demons, and therefore he always refused to grant him any magical power.

But once Moosmoos, the elk divinity, obtained a tomanowas power over the old man and whispered magic in his ear, telling him that upon the summit of Mt. Tacoma he might find much hiaqua and become the richest of all men. Accordingly, going back to his tent, he informed his wife that he was going on a long hunt, but in reality he was setting forth for the summit of Mt. Tacoma. He climbed almost to the summit on the first day, and the next morning,

at the rising of the sun, he stood upon the mighty summit. There he discovered that there was a great valley in the summit of the mountain, all filled with snow except one place in the middle. Here was a lake of black water and at one end of it were three large rocks. The old man was confident that these were tomanowas rocks, for one was shaped like a salmon's head, the next like a camas root, and the third like the head of his own totem or divinity, Moosmoos the elk.

Our hero, perceiving these symbolical rocks, immediately concluded that this must be the place where the hiaqua was secreted. At once therefore he began to dig with an elkhorn pick which he had brought along, at the foot of the rock which was shaped like the head of Moosmoos. At this a number of otters came out of the lake and gathered around in a circle watching him dig. When the man had struck the ground a number of times equal to the number of the otters, they began to pound the ground with their tails. Still he continued to dig, and about the time of the setting of the sun he turned over a great block of stone, underneath which he discovered a cavity filled with great strings of hiaqua, enough to make him the richest man in all the land of Tacoma.

But now the greedy adventurer made a great mistake. He loaded himself down with the strings of hiaqua, but left not a single shell as a votive offering to the tomanowas powers by whose magic he had made the discovery. Sahale was greatly displeased at such ungrateful conduct, and all the tomanowas powers combined to show their wrath. Skamson, the thunder-bird, Tootah, the thunder, and Colesnass, the snow god, all swooped down from the clouds, turned the sky black, and blew the old man with the strings of hiaqua about him across the rocks and buried him in the snow. Out of the darkness came the awful voice of Sahale denouncing his wickedness. Also the terrified old man began now to hear the mocking voice of Kakahete

and his attendant demons. The whole framework of nature seemed about to disrupt, for after the snow storm there came a burst of volcanic fire upon the mountain summit, the air became thick and hot, and streams of water poured down the mountain side.

In spite of all this confusion of nature the old man seems to have retained his consciousness and he began to think how he might propitiate the offended deities. He accordingly dropped one of his strings of hiaqua as an offering, but this seems to have been a mere mockery and the demons and the winds kept howling at him in derisive tones, "Hiaqua! hiaqua!" Then the old man laid down one string after another of the hiaqua until they were all gone. After this surrender of his treasure he fell upon the ground and entered into the sleep country. When he awoke he found himself at the very place where he had gone to sleep the night before he climbed to the summit of Mt. Tacoma. Being very hungry he gathered camas roots with which to refresh himself, and while eating he began to have many thoughts in regard to his life and doings. His "tum-tum," as the Indians would say (heart), was much softened as he contemplated his greed for hiaqua. He found that he no longer cared for hiaqua, and that his mind was calm and tranquil and benevolent. Moreover he went to look at himself in a pool, and discovered that he had marvellously changed. His hair had become long and white as snow. The mountain itself had changed its contour. The sun shone brightly, the trees glistened with new leaves, the mountain meadows were sweet with the perfume of flowers, the birds sung in the trees, the mighty Mt. Tacoma towered calm, tranquil and majestic into the deep blue sky, glistening with new fallen snow, all nature seemed to rejoice, and the old Indian found that he was in a new world. And now he seemed to remember where he was, and he made his way without difficulty to his old tent. There he found an old woman with white hair, whom he did

not at first recognize, but soon discovered to be his own "clutchman." She told him that he had been gone many suns and moons, and that in the meantime she had been digging camas and trading for hiaqua, of which she had accumulated much. The old man now perceived all the mistakes of his former avaricious life and settled down in his own home upon the banks of the Cowlitz in peace and contentment, becoming a great tomanowas man and a counsellor and advisor to the Indians in all times of trouble. He was worshipped by them for his wisdom and benevolence, as well as for his strange experience on the summit of Mt. Tacoma.

The prettiest and most poetical of all Indian legends in connection with Mt. Tacoma is that of Lawiswis, the queen of the fairies. According to this legend, Nekahni, which is another name for the great spirit, lived upon the slopes of Mt. Tacoma in the upper portion of what we now call Paradise Valley. There he kept his flocks of wild goats, and from that lofty height he watched and ruled the earth spread out before him. Now there lived in the lower part of the valley a lovely creature called Lawiswis. She was of the nature of both sea shells and roses, so that when she went to the shore the sea shells all worshipped her and caught the dew of the morning as a nectar for her to drink. When she was in paradise the roses made her like obeisance and served her with like nectar which they caught from the morning dew. She was also the queen of the fairies, and of everything beautiful, a sort of a Tacoma Titania, in fact. Nekahni loved this fairy queen and built her a bower in paradise, which was surrounded with masses of wild roses, and these roses at that time were pure white and had no thorns. Part of the time Nekahni dwelt high up on the mountain watching his wild goats or communing with Skamson and Tootah and Colesnass, and part of the time he would descend to dwell with Lawiswis in her fairy bower.



Now there was at that time dwelling in the dark and sullen gorge of the Nisqually River a famous skookum named Memelek. Memelek was a frightful looking creature. She was clothed in strips of cougar skins, fastened together with the fingers of slaughtered fairies. She had snakes around her neck and waist, and when she wished to kill anything she would send these snakes to bite them. Memelek hated Lawiswis on account of her beauty and innocence, and especially because Nekahni favored her so much more than herself. Accordingly one day when Nekahni was busily engaged with his goats high up on the rocks of what we now call Gibraltar, Memelek determined to wreak her wicked vengeance upon the helpless and innocent Lawiswis. She therefore stole up out of the gorge to the bower in paradise and letting loose her snakes bade them go and sting to death the fairy queen, who was lying innocently asleep. And now the roses around the bower saw the imminent danger of their adored mistress. What could they do? Nekahni was far away and could not come in person, but by a magical petition they let him know the danger, and instantly, just as the loathsome reptiles were crawling up upon them, the roses turned a bright red and were covered with sharp thorns which pierced the coils of the reptiles so that they turned back in dismay and fled to their hideous mistress. Thus Lawiswis was saved and the discomfited Memelek was forbidden ever to come up out of the deep gorge of the Nisqually, and there she has remained ever since.

Stories similar to those of Mt. Tacoma are told by Indians around all the great snow peaks. And, although it may seem strange at the present time when the whites have been so long in the country, it is true that the Indians even now believe more or less in those old superstitions. The writer was once going to Mt. Adams to take pictures, and on the way up the mountain met a party of white men descending in company with an old Indian guide.

The Indian had however refused to go to the summit of the mountain, though without assigning his reasons. But, when the two parties passed each other he noticed the camera, and as soon as we had passed he asked what it was. The man whom he addressed and who afterwards related this to the writer, explained the nature and object of the instrument. Whereupon the old guide shook his head very dubiously and muttered that this was a very bad tomanowas. On being pressed to give his reasons, he explained that in a cavity on the summit of the mountain at the head of the Klickitat glacier there lived a great thunder bird. Its wings extended hundreds of feet in length and were gilded so bright that when they flapped flashes of lightning followed, and the closing of these mighty wings produced the sound of thunder. Furthermore, he said that whenever any bad tomanowas or presumptuous deed of any kind was performed upon the mountain the thunder bird would issue forth and cause a great storm. The old Indian explained to the men he was with that he did not like the looks of the picture machine and he was satisfied that the thunder bird would be displeased and cause a storm that night. And sure enough, when we had got high up on the mountain, there came on a fearful thunder storm. The men in the other party, who afterward told me the incident, said that there was a look of "I told you so" upon the old Indian's face, which was indescribably satisfied and interesting.

It is not an easy matter to get Indians to refer to superstitions of this kind. They are afraid of ridicule, and more even than civilized people, they are sensitive to the slightest degree of ridicule. A person cannot obtain Indian stories except by a long acquaintance in which he has entirely gained their confidence. If a stranger tries to pump them prematurely they will look at him with that inscrutable expression which gives such strange pathos to an Indian

face, give one or two uncanny chuckles, and then relapse into a moody silence.

A view of any mythology would be incomplete without some inquiry into the ideas which it contains in regard to the supposed spiritual life and a future state. There is a mysterious unity between the gods or supernatural beings and the spiritual life and future existence of men. Hindoo mythology, with its multitudinous divinities and its metempsychosis; Greek mythology, with its sunny and artistic representations of the beautiful and the heroic; Norse mythology, with its rugged and sublime personifications of the stern northern winter,—these are all manifestations of the instinctive efforts of men to harmonize the immortal and the invisible with the temporal and the visible. In similar manner the rude and grotesque, yet often pathetic and sometimes even beautiful fancies of our poor native barbarians, illustrate the same kind of psychological processes and attempts to form a harmonious view of the seen and the unseen, the here and the hereafter.

Nearly all our native races have a more or less coherent idea of a future state of rewards and punishments. "The happy hunting grounds" of the Indians are often referred to in connection with the Indians of the older part of the United States. Our Indians have ideas in general quite similar. Some believe that there is a hell and a heaven. The Siskiyou Indians in southern Oregon have a curious idea similar to that of the ancient Egyptians, as well as of the Mohammedans. This is to the effect that the regions of the blessed are on the other side of an enormously deep chasm. To pass over this one must cross on a very narrow and slippery pole. The good can pass, but the bad fall off into empty space, whence they reappear again upon earth as beasts or birds.

There is a legend among the Yakima Indians which seems to have the same root in human nature as the beautiful Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, showing the

instinctive desire of people on earth to bring back the spirits of the dead and the impossibility of doing so. This myth sets forth how Speelyi and Whyama the eagle became at one time so grieved at the loss of their loved ones that they determined to go to the land of the spirits and bring them back. The two adventurers journeyed for a long distance over an unbroken plain, and came at last to a great lake, on the farther side of which they saw many houses. They called long and vainly for someone to come with a boat and ferry them over. But there was no sign of life and at last Whyama said that there could be no one there. Speelyi insisted, however, that the people were simply sleeping the sleep of the day and would come forth at night. Accordingly, when the sun went down and darkness began to come on Speelyi started to sing. In a few minutes they saw four spirit men come to the bank, enter a boat and cross the lake to meet them. It seemed not necessary for them to row the boat, for apparently it skimmed over the water of its own accord. The spirit men having landed, took Whyama and Speelyi with them in the boat and began their return to the island of the dead. The island seemed to be a very sacred place. There was a house of mats upon the shore, where music and dancing were in progress. Speelyi and Whyama begged leave to enter, and feeling hungry, they asked for food. The spirit land was so much less gross than the earth that they were satisfied by what was dipped with a feather out of a bottle. The spirit people now came to meet them dressed in most beautiful costumes, and so filled with joy that Speelyi and Whyama felt a great desire to share their happiness. By the time of the morning light, however, the festivities ceased and all the spirit people became wrapped in slumber for the day. Speelyi, observing that the moon was hung up inside the great banquet hall and seemed to be essential to the ongoings of the evening, stationed himself in such a place that he could seize it

during the next night's meeting. As soon as night came on the spirits gathered again for the music and dance. While their festivities were in progress as usual, Speelyi suddenly swallowed the moon, leaving the entire place in darkness. Then he and Whyama brought in a box, which they had previously provided, and Whyama, flying swiftly about the room, caught a number of the spirits and enclosed them in the box. Then the two proceeded to start for the earth, Speelyi carrying the box upon his back.

As the two adventurers went upon their long journey toward the earth with the precious box, the spirits, which at first were entirely imponderable, began to be transformed into men and to have weight. Soon they began to cry out on account of their crowded and uncomfortable position. Then they became so heavy that Speelyi could no longer carry them. In spite of the remonstrances of Whyama, he opened the box. They were then astonished and overwhelmed with grief to see the partially transformed spirits flit away like autumn leaves and disappear in the direction from which they had come. Whyama thought that perhaps even as the buds grow in the spring, so the dead would come back with the blooming of the next flowers. But Speelyi deemed it best after this that the dead should remain in the land of the dead. Had it not been for this, as the Indians think, the dead would indeed return every spring with the opening of the leaves.

The Klickitat Indians, living along the Dalles of the Columbia have another legend of the land of spirits. There was a young chief and a girl who were devoted to each other and seemed to be the happiest people in the tribe, but suddenly he sickened and died. The girl mourned for him almost to the point of death, and he, having reached the land of spirits, could find no happiness there on account of thinking of her.

And so it came to pass that a vision began to appear to the girl by night, telling her that she must herself go

into the land of the spirits in order to console her lover. Now there is near that place one of the most weird and funereal of all the various "memaloose" islands, or death islands, of the Columbia. The writer himself has been upon this island and its spectral and volcanic desolation makes it a fitting location for ghostly tales. It lies just below the "great chute," and even yet has many skeletons upon it. In accordance with the directions of the vision, the girl's father made ready a canoe, placed her in it, and rowed out into the great river by night to the memaloose island. As the father and his child rowed across the dark and forbidding waters, they began to hear the sound of singing and dancing and great joy. Upon the shore of the island they were met by four spirit people, who took the girl but bade the father return, as it was not for him to see into the spirit country. Accordingly the girl was conducted to the great dance house of the spirits, and there she met her lover, far stronger and more beautiful than when upon earth. That night they spent in unspeakable bliss, but when the light began to break in the east and the song of the robins began to be heard from the willows on the shore, the singers and the dancers began to fall asleep.

The girl, too, had gone to sleep, but not soundly like the spirits. When the sun had reached the meridian, she woke, and now, to her horror, she saw that instead of being in the midst of beautiful spirits, she was surrounded by hideous skeletons and loathsome, decaying bodies. Around her waist were the bony arms and skeleton fingers of her lover, and his grinning teeth and gaping eye-sockets seemed to be turned in mockery upon her. Screaming with horror she leaped up and ran to the edge of the island, where, after hunting a long time, she found a boat, in which she paddled across to the Indian village. Having presented herself to her astonished parents, they became fearful that some great calamity would visit the tribe on

account of her return, and accordingly her father took her the next night back to the memaloose island as before. There she met again the happy spirits of the blessed and there again her lover and she spent another night in ecstatic bliss.

In the course of time a child was born to the girl, beautiful beyond description, being half spirit and half human. The spirit bridegroom, being anxious that his mother should see the child, sent a spirit messenger to the village, desiring his mother to come by night to the memaloose island to visit them. She was told, however, that she must not look at the child until ten days had passed. But after the old woman had reached the island her desire to see the wonderful child was so intense that she took advantage of a moment's inattention on the part of the guard and, lifting the cloth from the baby board, she stole a look at the sleeping infant. And then, dreadful to relate, the baby died in consequence of this premature human look. Grieved and displeased by this foolish act, the spirit people decreed that the dead should never again return nor hold any communication with the living.

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