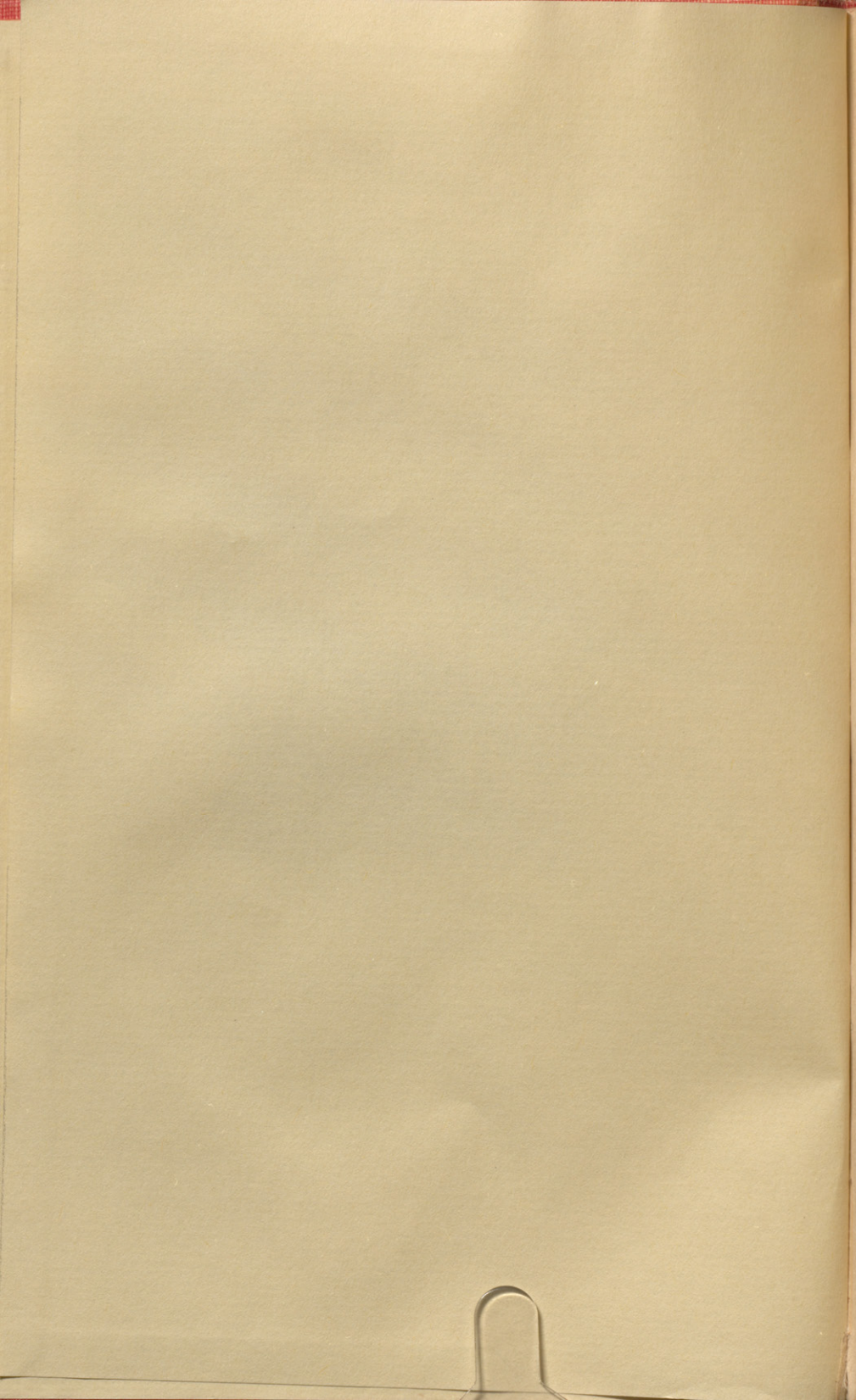
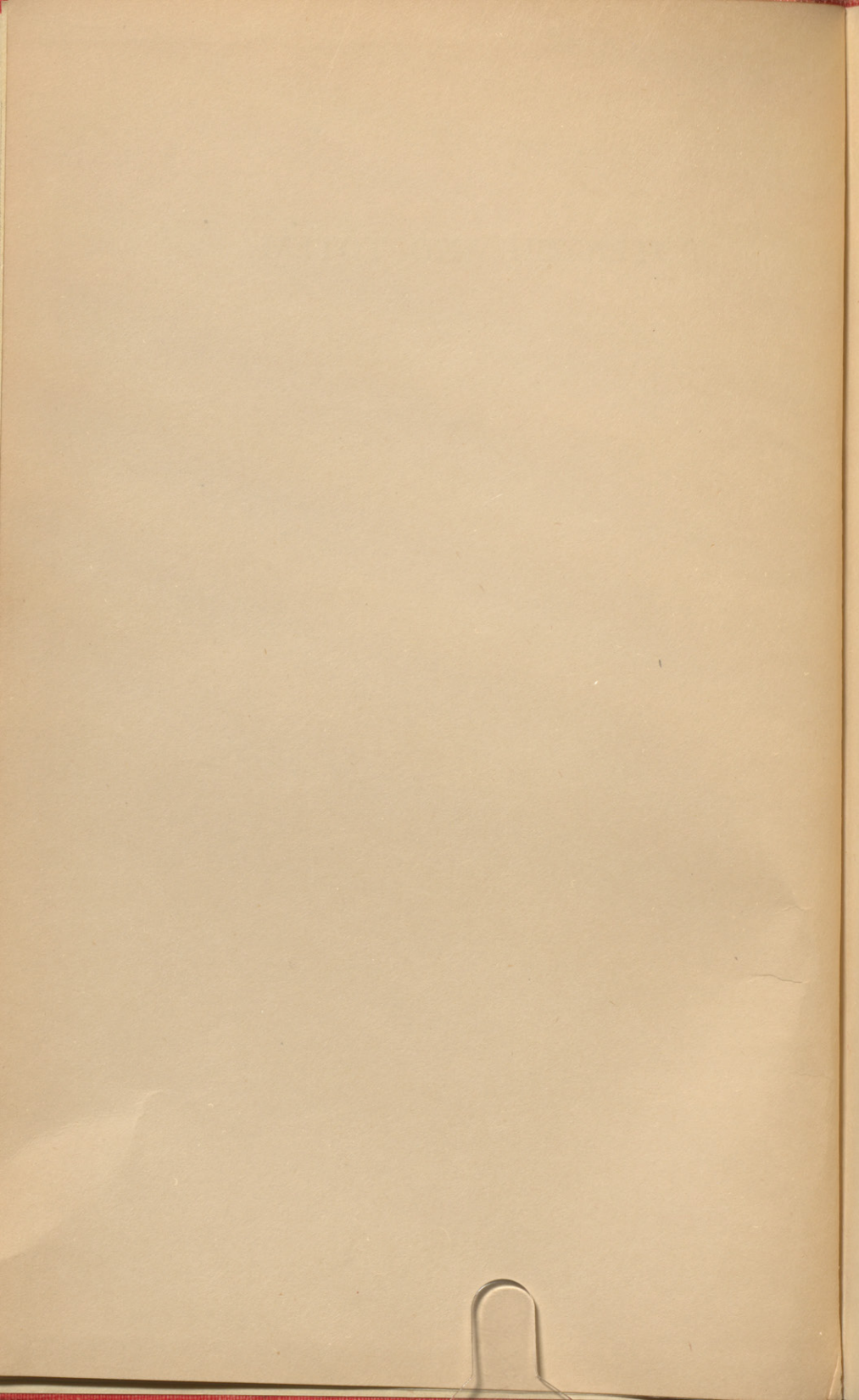
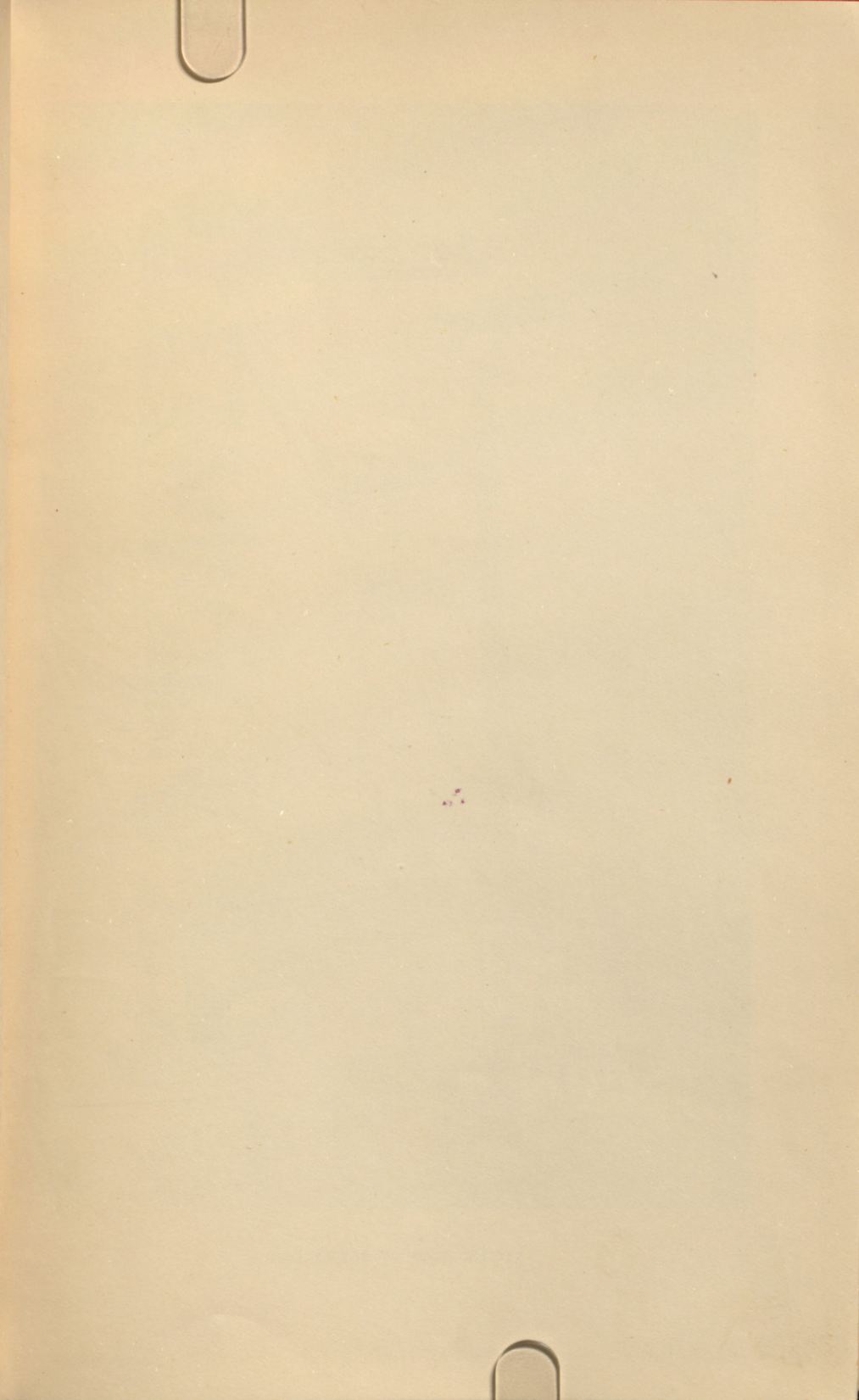


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POTLATCH AND TOTEM







TOTEM ROW AT ALERT BAY

POTLATCH AND TOTEM

AND THE RECOLLECTIONS
OF AN INDIAN AGENT

by

W. M. HALLIDAY

*A teacher in an Indian Residential School for seven years,
and for upwards of twenty-six years Indian Agent in and
for the Kwakwewlth Indian Agency under the Jurisdiction
of the Department of Indian Affairs, Canada*

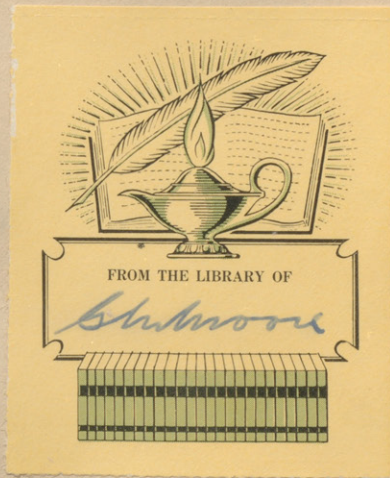
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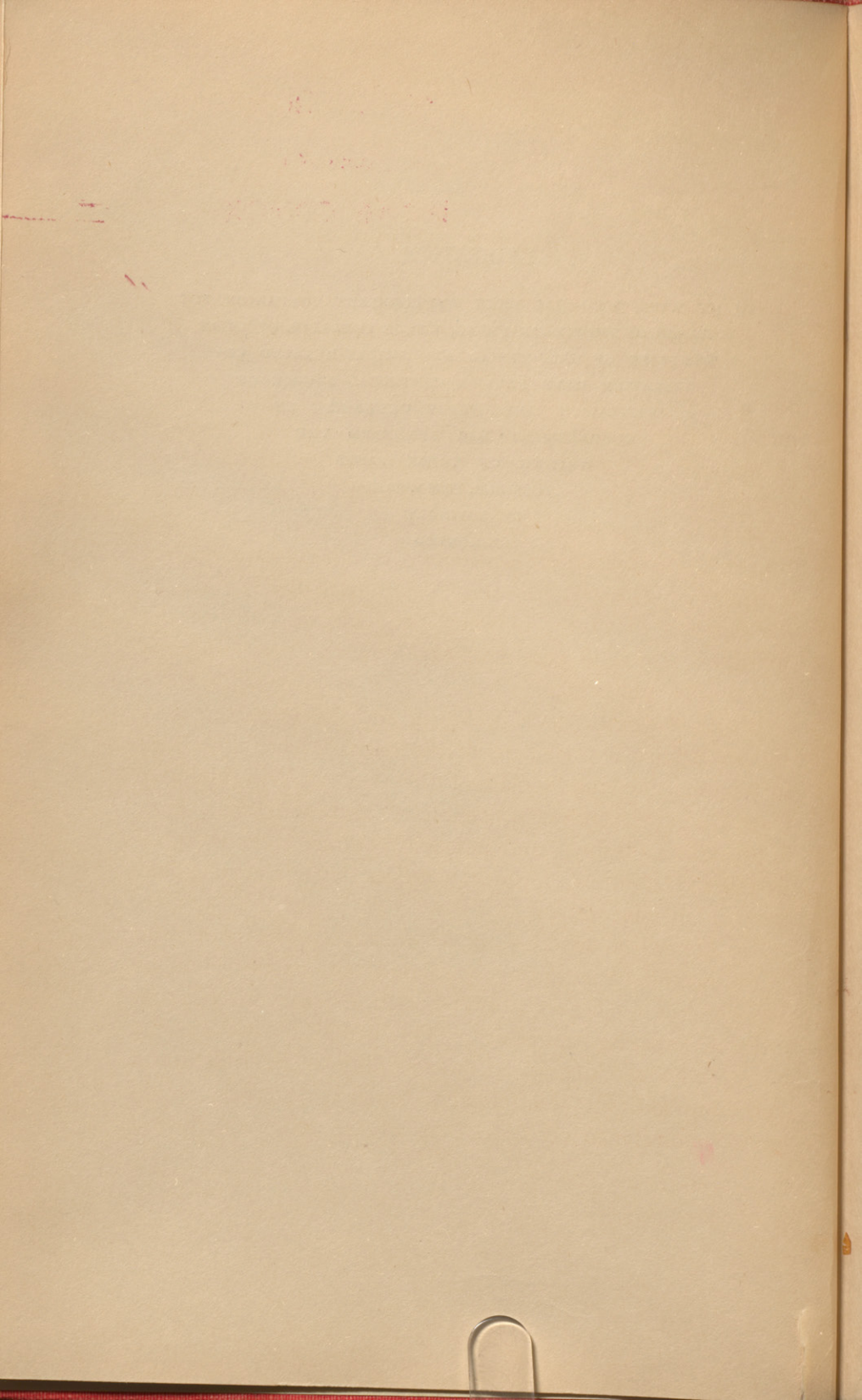
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DEDICATION

TO MY WIFE, WHO HAS BEEN MY CONSTANT COMPANION FOR
UPWARDS OF THIRTY-SIX YEARS, WHOSE CHEERFUL OPTIMISM
AND LIFE OF SELF-DENIAL AND WHOLE-HEARTED CO-
OPERATION HAVE BEEN A CONTINUAL SOURCE OF
INSPIRATION, AND WHOSE UNVARYING EN-
COURAGEMENT HAS RENDERED THE
WRITING OF THESE PAGES
POSSIBLE, THIS WORK
IS LOVINGLY
DEDICATED



FOREWORD

LONG years before I first met W. M. 'Will' Halliday in 1903, he had been identified with the task of civilizing the proud Kwawkewlth people. Since the commencement of our acquaintanceship he has continued to act as friend and mentor to the Indian nation, whose reserves and hunting-grounds are scattered over a land and water area as large as many a European state. He has also served his white brothers as magistrate and coroner in a rugged portion of British Columbia where settlement is difficult and widely separated. Thus he has often been compelled to assume the position of buffer between two cultures, that of the aborigine which is passing away, and the raw fringe of that of the white man.

British Columbia as a province, and the Department of Indian Affairs as guardians of the natives, have alike been fortunate in having a man of the type of Will Halliday placed where firmness of character, common sense, high appreciation of duty, and personal courage were essential to the preservation of peace. A less capable man would have failed miserably.

In his work he has made enemies. No man who honestly and conscientiously carried out his duties as he has done could hope to occupy such a hazardous position without creating animosity. The pedlar of whisky, the scamp who would prey on the credulity of the Indian and rob him, and the wastrel who, too lazy to work, would seek an existence off the labour of the red man, do not

like him. They found that the stocky man with the reddish, pointed beard and laughing blue eyes was no weakling. Indian scallywags, too, have had occasion to know that he will stand for no rascality. Some of the old medicine cult, the sorcerers and necromancers who held sway over the superstitions of their people, resented his enforcement of the laws laid down by the Big White Chiefs at Ottawa, but they learned that while he represented the power of government and intended to enforce what has been written into the Indian Act, he did so impersonally.

I have come into close contact with the work of Will Halliday, and, as I write, several memories take shape before me.

I see the departmental launch *Gi-kumi II* headed across Queen Charlotte Sound in the teeth of a nor'-wester towards a remote reserve where some matter required adjustment. Great waves, grey-green and foam-crested, are piled high in front of the heaving craft. They hurl themselves over the boat, flooding the pilot-house and cataracting down the companion-way, wetting the bedding and setting afloat the unfastened furnishings. And braced against the wheel, his jaw squared and his trim, pointed beard thrust defiantly forward, is Will Halliday, on his way to iron out some little trouble that is worrying three or four of his charges.

Again I see that same little boat, with her ensign flying, slowing down at a cannery landing. There is a piercing shriek from the big plant. An Indian child has been fatally injured. And almost upon the echo of that anguished cry there bursts from half a hundred dusky

throats: 'Mr. Halliday! Get Mr. Halliday!' Like children in trouble calling for their parents, a dozen men and women come running and screaming that plaintive call: 'Mr. Halliday! Mr. Halliday!' He is already hastening to meet them. Now I see him gathering that tortured fragment of humanity to his bosom, and watch him, with a tenderness that no woman could exceed, apply with skilled fingers medicants and dressings. All through the long night he stayed in a lowly Indian hut, gently nursing and soothing the little one until death came at dawn.

Of a different character was he when he heard that a foreign settlement had hoisted the red flag of Communism. Alone, he went to the place. Up the beach he strode, to where the foreigners had gathered about their revolutionary standard. There was no laughter in his blue eyes. They were cold points of steel. Like a whip-lash his words struck. When he was through, down came the red emblem and up to the mast-head went the Union Jack. As he turned back towards his boat, he snapped: 'Never let me hear of you raising any other flag above that of the Empire.'

Now I see him in a camp of rough men, standing uncovered at the head of an open grave, reading the burial service of the Church of England over a rough-hewn casket. A man had died, and his hardened companions intended to bury him as they would the carcass of a wild animal. That was not good enough for Will Halliday. Forty miles he travelled by boat when he heard of their intention. Some mother's boy had died, and must be given a decent burial. It was done, and shame was written on the faces of some of those who had previously

sneered. And when, later, the effects of the dead man were examined, it was found that as a boy he had been a sweet-voiced singer in one of England's great cathedrals.

Now Will Halliday has written a book. No man could do it better, for he is giving of his experiences. Perhaps, judged as a piece of literature, it may be faulty, lacking in finished style and diction, but as a human document and as a valuable contribution to the knowledge of a passing race, it commands a very important place among Canadian writings. The very simplicity of style, the lack of pretensions in composition, and the plain manner of narrative, to my mind, add immensely to what is an absolute essential of such a work—they create atmosphere.

Moreover, the book is unique, for it is written by a man who has been privileged to see those things of which he has written; who knows the Indian mind—not from the reading of records, but through years and years of close association with the native. In writing it, Will Halliday has made a further contribution to Canada.

B. A. McKELVIE.

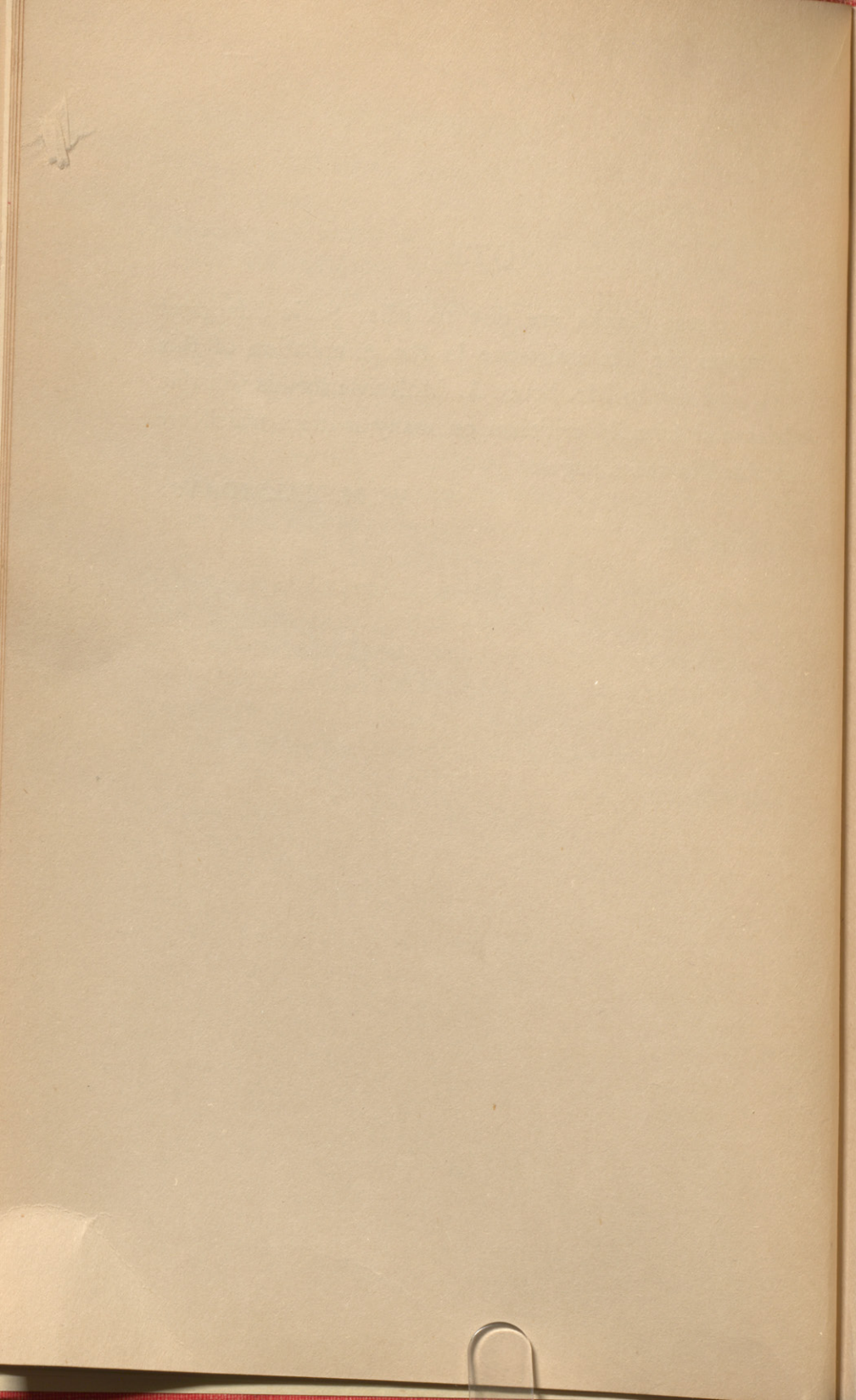
VICTORIA, B.C.

NOTE

My sincerest thanks are due to Miss Sadie Margaret Thompson for her assistance in the compilation of this work, and also to Mr. Bruce A. McKelvie for his valuable advice and friendly criticism on many matters which are contained in these pages.

W. M. HALLIDAY.

VICTORIA, B.C.



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A NOTE ON THE KWAWKEWLTH NATION

THE aboriginal population of North America is derived from numerous racial and linguistic stocks, many of which differ very widely in manners and customs, as well as in language, from others living in neighbouring districts. Within the existing boundaries of the Dominion of Canada there were, at the time of Columbus's arrival in America, at least fifty tribes, each of which spoke a separate language or dialect and possessed its own peculiar manners and customs. There was no common designation for the whole country, and no single name for all its inhabitants.

The Indians in British Columbia, though of several different races and languages, are for the most part of short stature, with round heads (i.e. brachycephalic). Many of the tribes resemble others in physical characteristics even when their languages contain no points of similarity; whereas tribes having linguistic affinities are found frequently to differ greatly in racial characteristics.

The material culture of the British Columbia coastal tribes hinges on the shoals of salmon which annually ascend the creeks and rivers, and on the abundant stands of free-grained cedar trees. The salmon provides them with an assured supply of food throughout the year, and the cedars with timber for dwellings, canoes, and household utensils, and with bark for clothing and mats.

Variations in economic circumstances are, on the whole, less noticeable than differences in social organization, religious beliefs, and tribal ceremonies and rituals.

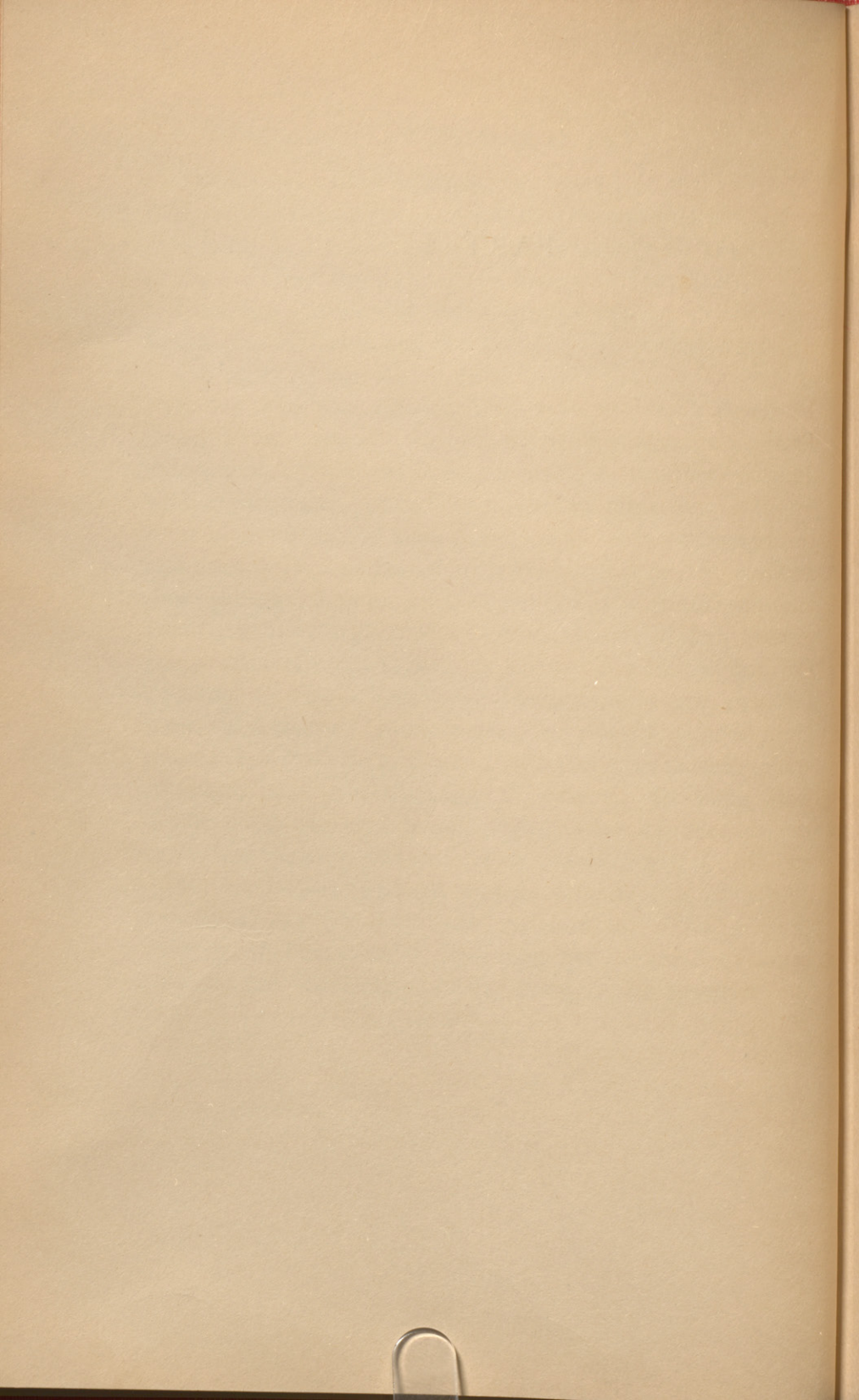
The Kwawkewlth ('beach on the other side of the river') tribe occupy the northern corner of Vancouver Island from Johnstone Strait to Cape Cook, and nearly all the coast of the mainland from Douglas Channel to Bute Inlet.

Linguists distinguish three groups among them: the Haisla, the Heiltsuk, and the Kwawkewlth proper, resident to the south of the Rivers Inlet.

In many of the villages, properties and rank descend through the mother. Secret societies are numerous, and the *potlatch* system, until its suppression, was maintained with more rivalry between the heads of clans than among some other tribes and consequently with more extravagance and wanton destruction of both food and property, for no other purpose than to enhance the prestige of the *potlatch* giver. Every recipient of a 'gift,' unless of definitely lower status than the giver, had to return it later in double quantity, or else acknowledge his inferiority and submit to scornful taunts. Nevertheless, the *potlatch* consolidated members of the clan and was a powerful spur to ambition, especially after the abolition of slavery. In 1924 the Kwawkewlth population was slightly over two thousand, as against between five and six thousand in 1750.

As the Indians had no written language, a phonetic system of spelling has been resorted to. The official spelling of Kwawkewlth has been used instead of that used on the continent, namely, Kwagiutl or Kwakiutl.

PART I



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

IN very many things the customs of the Indians on the Pacific Coast are directly opposite to those of the whites. They have had one peculiar custom, which was common to all the aboriginal inhabitants of British Columbia, but reached its zenith amongst the Indians of the Kwawkewlth Indian Agency, which district for years has been the cradle and nursing-ground of that system commonly called the *potlatch*. The Indian Act, which is the Dominion law governing all Indian affairs, makes it a criminal offence for any person or Indian to take part in one of these gatherings, and many people who do not know any better, are governed by sentiment in the matter, and not having fully gone into the merits or demerits of the Act, feel that a wrong has been done the Indians in passing this statute.

The white man of the present age considers too much the acquisition of property as being the essential sign of success. The Indian in his native state considered that the more he gave away, and impoverished himself, the better off he was. The custom arose away back in distant times when slavery prevailed. The slave was forced to work for the welfare of the community which had him in charge, and more particularly for the family in whose custody he was placed, and occasionally, as circumstances

demanded, the fruit of his labours was divided amongst the members of the tribe and a certain amount of éclat was given to the distributor. This custom continued and grew into such proportions that finally it became the ambition of every Indian to be a chief so that he could give away, and thus add to his prestige by so doing. It was looked upon by the natives themselves as a sort of banking system whereby they loaned out their property to others at ruinous rates of interest, as the recipient of the bounty might be called on at any time for the full amount of the gift with accrued interest often of two hundred per cent. Gradually the privilege of giving began to be abused and distorted until it resembled a huge octopus, which held all customs and habits of the Indians in its embrace. It was a particularly wasteful and destructive custom, and created ill-feeling, jealousy, and in most cases great poverty, and it was only after having considered the matter from every angle, and for a long time, that the Government of Canada passed the statute forbidding it, but unfortunately, in passing the legislation, they did not publish with it the reasons for its enactment. Hence the strong criticisms made by the public with reference to this particular section of the Indian Act.

Having been a resident amongst the Indians for thirty-eight years, the writer has had many opportunities to thoroughly examine all phases of the *potlatch*, and the conclusions arrived at after intensive study have been that the good obtained from it was so small, and the evils associated with it were so great, that the Department of Indian Affairs was well advised in revising the statute until it reached its present form. One redeeming feature connected with the

custom was that during the times of these gatherings the aged, infirm, and destitute were fed by those engaged in the giving away.

The word *potlatch* is a Chinook word, and signifies 'a gift.' The real Indian word used in this connection is not *potlatch* but *passapa*, and while it means a gift, it also means a gift with an elastic string attached to it, so that it will come back with interest. To state the matter briefly, the *potlatch* was to a certain extent the law and regulations of the Indians. All matters of business were settled at these gatherings, and as they had no written records, all transactions were made in public, so that the common people were witnesses of the business done, or arrangements made or provided for. The negotiations were often commenced secretly, but before the conclusion it was necessary for the principals who were participating to give something away to the rest of the people who were present, in order that they might witness the sealing of the contract. The gifts might be large or small, according to the means of the people or the magnitude of the question involved, but the more they gave away, the more they rose in their own estimation and also they hoped to rise accordingly in the estimation of the general public.

The Indians of each tribe were divided into clans, each clan having a crest of its own. These crests were inherited, occasionally through the mother, but usually through the father. In order to obtain and be the possessor of more crests, marriages would be arranged, and here was one of the worst evils of the *potlatch* custom. The marriage was not binding, there were no vows entered upon by either of the parties, and the marriage was merely one of

convenience, the passing of property being the great feature. Occasionally the people who were married were both young, and generally speaking, in these cases, no great exception could be taken to the arrangement. The intended groom, or his parents or guardians, or the head of his clan as the case might be, gave to the parents or guardians of the intended bride certain properties which were to be returned later with interest at from one hundred to five hundred per cent. Sometimes these marriages were very happy, and the couple continued to live together until parted by death, but the guardians of the woman always had the right to demand more payment for her, and very often did so, and kept demanding more and more until finally the man was unable to keep up any more payments, and was obliged to let the woman go to somebody else, leaving him only a memory of her. The woman was thus made a subject of barter.

To the white onlooker, the peculiar part of the marriage custom was the fact that although the woman was very seldom consulted in the matter, she never refused to conform to the wishes of her parents in so far as the so-called marriage was concerned, but she always reserved the right to leave the husband when she felt so disposed, or to take or cohabit with any other man she desired when she felt so disposed. In connection with these marriages, I know of one instance where a man sold his own mother four years in succession to different husbands (if one may use that term), taking her away each time to sell to another.

In another instance a woman, who lived about fifteen miles away, left her home and her husband for a few days to visit friends at Alert Bay, and while there, was storm-

bound for a fortnight. On her return to her own village she was met by her brother, who commenced immediately to carry the things which she had with her in the canoe to another house. When she asked him the reason, she was informed that during her absence she had been married to another man! She went to the other man, apparently without compunctions of any kind.

In many cases the people that were married according to this custom would be an old man and a very young woman. In only two instances during my tenure of office amongst them was there any exception taken to these marriages by the woman concerned. On one occasion I was aroused at three o'clock in the morning by the ringing of the office bell, and on going to see the cause of the alarm a young girl of twelve accompanied by an aunt, a woman of considerable years, entered the room. The girl stated that she had been given by her parents in marriage to a man old enough to be her grandfather, and when she realized what was expected from her as a wife she rebelled, and came to the Indian agent for protection. This protection was immediately given, and the parents accordingly returned to the would-be groom all the property which he had given for the girl. She remained a spinster for several years, and at the end of that time came personally to obtain a marriage licence, as she had found a man whom she thought was suitable for her, and although this was ten or twelve years ago, they are still living together quite happily.

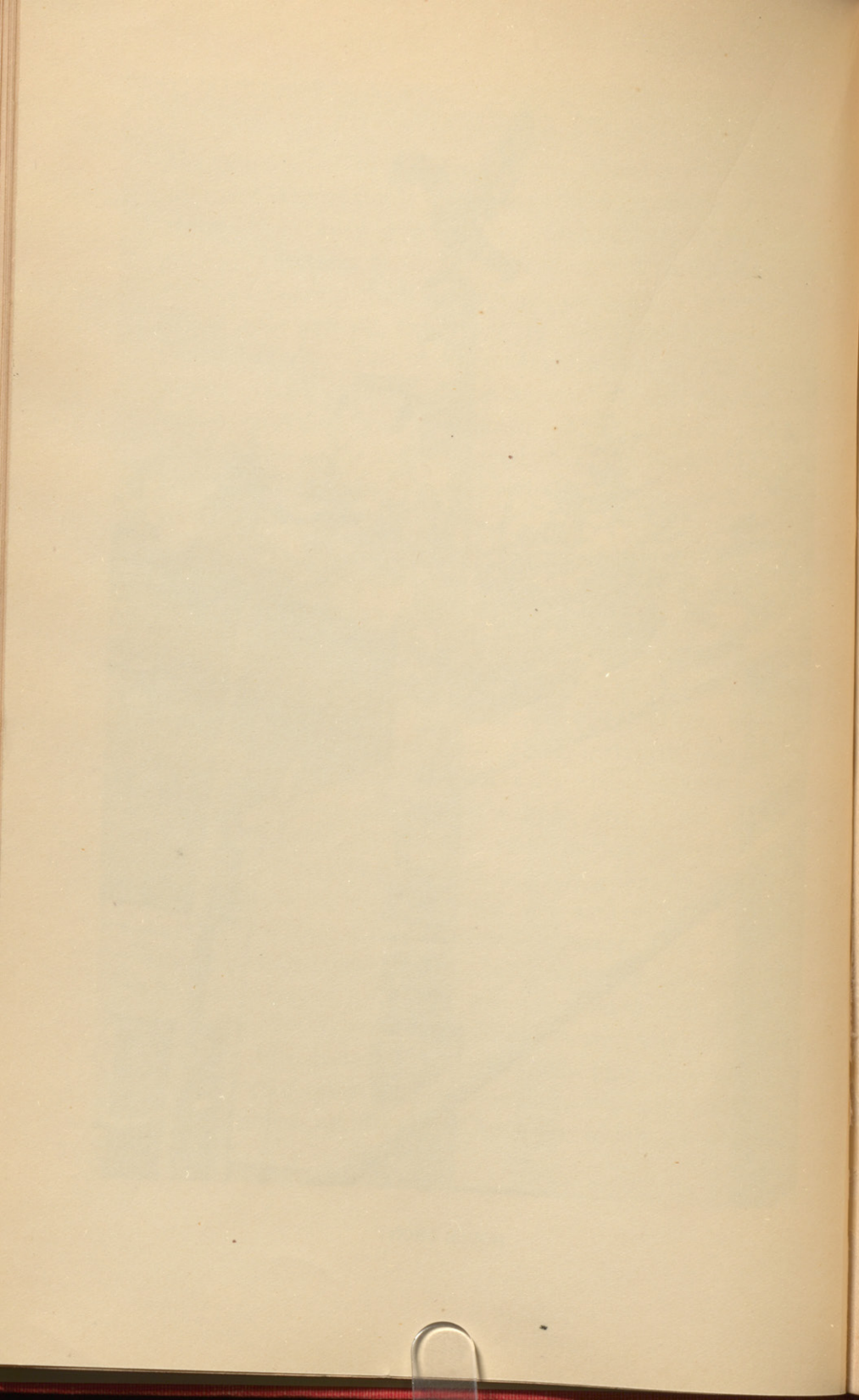
In order to obtain money for these *potlatches*, the natives resorted to very many ways and means. Money was borrowed at enormous rates of interest, and unfortunately

the prostitution of women was one of the great means in the collecting of funds for these gatherings, which of themselves were very spectacular. One other of the very serious objections to the whole system was that during the times of holding these gatherings, particularly when other tribes were present, their sanitary conditions became very unsatisfactory. The children, even infants in arms, were present at all or most of the assemblies, and the rate of infant mortality was enormous. The blankets used as part of the gifts were dragged through dust, dirt, and filth of all kinds, thus breeding disease, particularly tuberculosis.

It might be of interest for the reader to briefly picture to himself the large houses in which the gatherings were held, although much of the giving away was done out of doors. They were frame buildings, of which the main timbers were hewn logs, often sixty or seventy feet long and up to three feet or more in diameter. These formed the beams for the roof. In most instances the walls and roof were filled in with split cedar boards. The houses were each warmed by a huge fire on the ground in the middle of the room, around which the occupants all gathered, wrapped in their brightly coloured blankets. The property to be given away was arranged in piles to show to the best advantage, and in many cases the preliminaries took thirty or forty days before the actual giving away was begun. Orators were appointed and paid to sing the greatness and glory of the man who was giving the *potlatch*. His greatness was so much that he could not resist the temptation to pour out his wealth and riches on the assembled multitude. The gifts which were to be



HOUSE FRONT



given had, in many cases, been borrowed at ruinous rates of interest, and were sometimes given back to the very people from whom they had been borrowed, but even when this was done it was still incumbent on the borrower to repay the loan either in cash or kind, with interest. In addition to the giving away, feasts, songs, and dances formed an important part of the proceedings; each family having its own dance which no one outside of that family could be allowed to perform. Their dances were unique because of the fact that those taking part gyrated at the same time singly, no two people dancing together. If there were two or more participants, they never touched one another as we do in our dances. Each time a dance was given it required payments of sums of money; these payments, unlike our custom, were not made to those who gave the dance, but were made to the spectators. In other words, the dancers paid people to watch them dance, thus magnifying their own greatness.

In connection with the feast which accompanied the giving away, more particularly during the winter months, they had what was known as the *hamatsa* or the 'wild man.' This seemed to be a sort of secret society, each family or clan having representation, and part of their ritual consisted of dancing, and the initiation consisted in the candidate keeping himself hidden away in the woods for at least thirty days without shelter, food, or clothing; the only nourishment allowed being what he could pick up for himself in the woods, such as roots of trees or the inside of the bark of some of the trees. When the time came for him to make his appearance he usually came through the roof at night, during the performance of

a certain dance, and immediately, as he was a wild man, would dart around here and there and bite pieces out of the spectators of the dance. The wild-man dance became toned down considerably in later years, but the majority of the older Indians bear scars as the result of the bites of the *hamatsa* during these proceedings. The sign of the *hamatsa* was the red cedar bark, and all those attending wore girdles and head-dresses made from cedar bark tanned a dull red. In the earlier days, during the initiation, the candidate was expected to take several bites from a dead human body which would be brought in for that purpose, and eat them. On one occasion, about fifty years ago, there was one of these *hamatsa* dances, at which there were fifteen young men initiated. The corpse which was brought in was that of a man who apparently had died from poisoning of some kind, as most of the candidates died from eating the flesh of it; from that date this proved a very strong deterrent to the heathenism and cannibalism involved in the dance, so instead of taking any more chances of being poisoned, they began to substitute pieces of venison for human bodies.

In 1897 or 1898 a man was committed for trial at the Vancouver assizes for cannibalism, and although there was no doubt of his guilt, the jury acquitted him on the ground that they thought it was impossible for the evidence to be true. They could not credit the things that were told regarding it, and for the man's own sake it may be said that since that time he has avoided being present at any more of these *hamatsa* feasts.

At the larger gatherings, the tribes assembled from all over the district, often coming more than fifty miles. They

brought their families with them, together with enough of their household effects to provide them with the ordinary essentials of life such as clothing, bedding, and a certain amount of food. The major portion of the food used was donated by the tribe or clan who had called them together.

These gatherings often lasted from the end of December until the following April, with the result that no money was earned during that time; trap-lines were neglected, and no attempt made to prepare for the coming season, and all the stores of food which had been provided in the autumn of the year were eaten.

The following sketch is typical of these gatherings, and although this particular *potlatch* never took place, it is in every other way as correct a record as I have been able to obtain after intensive study. The names are those in common use, and the events recorded here occurred to a greater or less extent at every big *potlatch* gathering on the coast until the enforcement of the Act made it impossible to continue with them.

CHAPTER II

ANTICIPATION

IT was a bright, clear December morning in one of the closing years of the nineteenth century, and to Awalaskinis in particular everything seemed particularly bright. For many years he had been patiently working, saving, scheming, and contriving to gain the position as chief of the whale clan to which he hereditarily belonged, and also to attain membership as one of the eagle clan. The latter dominates all the affairs of the Indians in connection with their *potlatches* and totems. Within the next few weeks his ambition was to be realized. Messengers had been sent to all the neighbouring tribes, calling them together for the purpose of attending the ceremonies which would give him the honours that he felt would be dearer to him than life itself.

Why should he not feel bright and happy? Would not his paid orators fully descant on his generosity and his greatness? He was already a great chief in his own Nimpkish tribe, and when he had finished he would be a great chief in all the tribes. What difference did it make to him that when his ambition became fully realized, it would necessitate his being saddled with a great burden of debt that would take years to repay, and with the possibility amounting to a probability that his heirs and successors for two or more generations would be obliged to complete

the payment or they would lose the position he expected to gain?

To-day the guests would begin to arrive, and he, with the assistance of his clan, would provide for their maintenance and comfort during their stay at his picturesque village of Yeleese. All was prepared, and he had sufficient food to give them plenty. The steamboat from Vancouver had brought him an abundant supply of biscuits (pilot bread), sugar, tea, and over one hundred boxes of apples with which to regale his guests. Fifteen hundred sacks of flour would be distributed and given away at his *potlatch*, besides blankets, tools, and many other articles dear to the heart of every Indian. In addition to this, Kaakstalas, his *kunum* (wife), had provided plenty of dishes, crockery, glassware, enamelled saucepans, and that newer and more expensive ware called aluminium which would also be given away with a bountiful hand. She had informed her lord and master that she intended at the gathering to redeem herself by repaying her dowry with two hundred per cent interest. All those who were his debtors had been notified of his intention to collect from them all that they owed him, either in money or kind, so he felt that no such feast, or no such *potlatch*, had ever been given by any other Indian. His supplies were so abundant that it would take weeks of feasting to exhaust them, and the new name he would assume would transcend all other names, particularly in his own estimation and in that of his family.

Was it any wonder that he felt particularly bright and cheerful? Even the weather was in harmony with his own feelings! And also he must remember that when it was all completed, he would be able to lord it over his enemies,

for no Indian ever arrives at his position without making many of them.

He had decided that during the course of the gathering now about to ensue, he would make announcement of his will and testament to all the tribes. Although not an old man, he had certain intuitions that he would not live many years, and it was necessary that his worldly affairs should be announced to the people at the gathering. This had been the custom of his people from time immemorial, as they had no written language and the records could only be kept in the minds of the people, and he felt a sense of great self-satisfaction arising from the fact that no one in his time had ever been able to make such a great announcement or bequeath so many ranks and crests as he had to bequeath. He had had seven wives all well connected, and all having important crests which he had managed to secure and claim by right of marriage. Only two of these he had been justly entitled to possess, as only two of his wives had borne him any children, but his force of character had been so great that he had managed to make a new ruling by which the crests were transferred to himself. This, of course, made him more enemies. What did it matter to him that all but one of these former wives were now the wives of other men who in most instances were now his rivals! The old customs must be maintained, except where they interfered with himself. It was the duty of a great chief such as he to maintain all these old customs, so he had been informed by the other tribes at other *potlatches*.

This particular morning he had been up and around very early, and when he saw the sun was shining so brightly

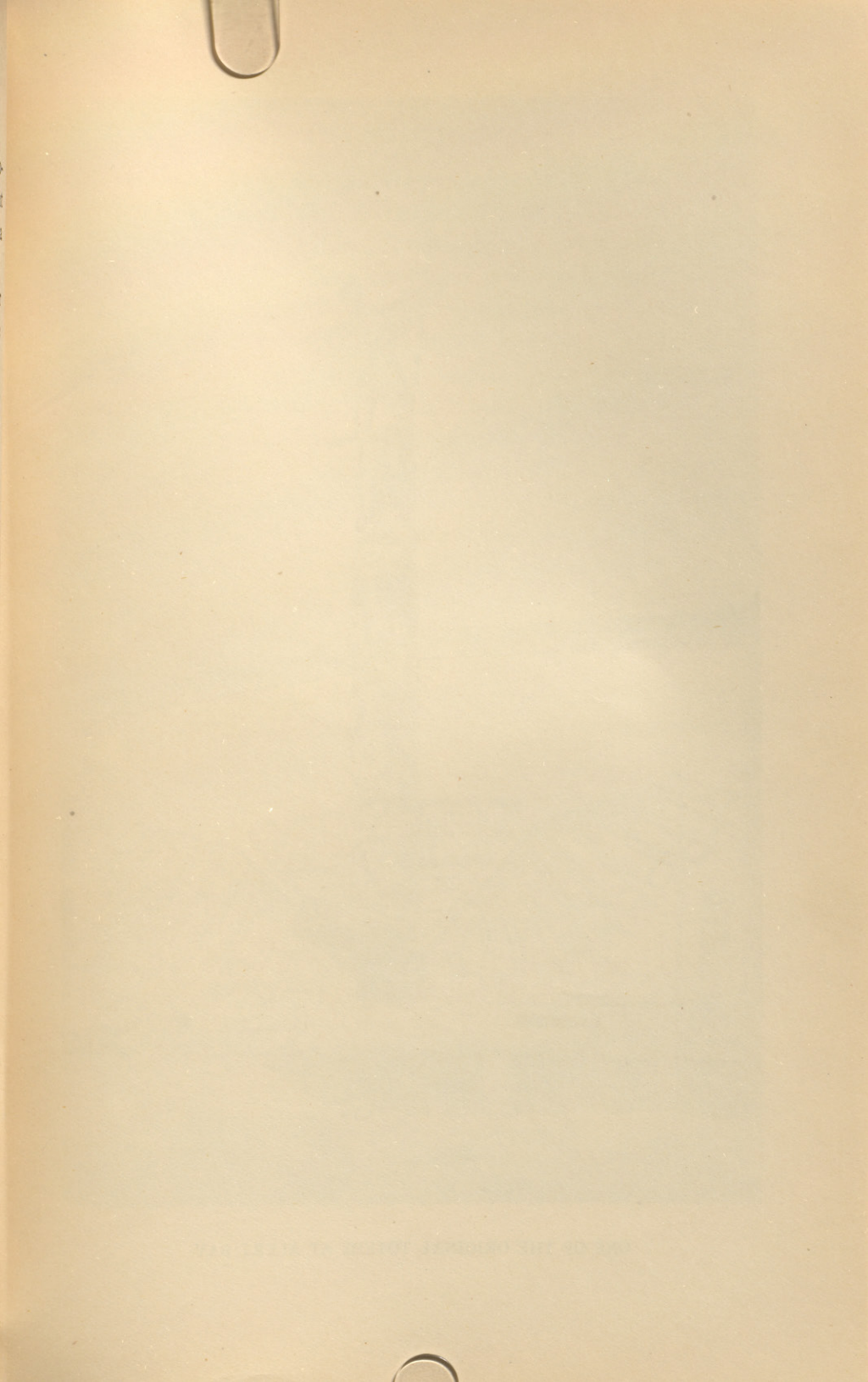
on this great occasion, he took it as a particularly good omen. While he was thinking over these things, his son Klalis came and called him to breakfast, to which he found himself ready to do full justice. On his entry into the house he found his family and relations sitting encircling the fire, waiting for him to come in. He looked proudly round them all and sat down beside his wife. He looked, too, with pride upon his habitation, and he had reason for that pride. The house was a huge structure, built entirely of cedar, about seventy feet long and forty-five feet wide. Some eight feet inside each end of the house stood two pairs of huge carved posts about three feet in diameter, set about twenty feet apart and well planted in the ground. Each of the four posts was carved with the various crests of the owner, consisting of the bear, the whale, the wolf, and the raven, grouped gracefully together. All four were alike. Each of these posts had cost him great gifts as payment at a former *potlatch*, and were the everlasting souvenirs of his wealth and position. They would soon be supplemented by the addition of the eagle, which would be the crowning ornament and the sign of the position which he would assume.

Across the top of each pair of posts lay a thick beam, which had been trimmed and made as round as possible with the tools at command. Near each end of the cross-timber and running fore and aft of the whole building, were two huge cedar logs, full seventy feet long and over three feet in diameter. These longitudinal beams were without support save for the cross-beams already mentioned, and their tops stood about twenty feet from the ground. These great timbers had been erected in the

days before the wire rope and the capstan had been introduced or known amongst the Indians and had been put into place by a simple use of the lever and fulcrum by a comparatively small number of men.

Along the sides of the building ran long timbers similar to those in the centre, but smaller in size, and they were supported, every ten feet or so, by posts set in the ground. Huge rafters reached from the side plates across the centre timbers, and met in the centre of the roof. Fore and aft, poles lay on top of the rafters, and the whole was then covered by split cedar boards laid in place and kept there by their own weight. The walls on the two sides and the back were covered with similar boards placed vertically, but the front was covered with dressed siding called 'rustic,' which had been purchased at the new sawmill at Alert Bay that had been erected and was being operated by the missionaries for the assistance and encouragement of the Indians. A large totem pole, beautifully carved, painted with bright colours, stood in front of the house, which completed the harmonious whole.

In the centre of the earthen floor a place for the fire had been made. The smoke escaped through a long slit in the centre of the roof. Across each end of the building, and just behind the carved posts which supported the main beams, were small rooms partitioned off from the main edifice. At the front end the portion between the posts was taken up with the entrance and a sleeping-room on each side, while at the far end there were three sleeping-rooms slightly elevated above the ground. Along the walls inside the building ran a low platform, about five feet wide and raised a few inches above the ground. Among





ONE OF THE ORIGINAL TOTEMS AT ALERT BAY

the main timbers and from the roof hung festoons of spider-webs, heavy with accumulated smoke and dust.

In this room, therefore, Awalaskinis was seated, eating his morning meal. This consisted principally of *khamass* and *kleena*, otherwise known as dried salmon and oolachan grease, finished off with pilot bread and tea without any milk, but with abundance of sugar. The salmon was cooked as it was wanted by Kaakstalas, who took half or the whole of a dried salmon as required, placed it between the arms of a pair of wooden tongs and held it downwards until the skin sizzled. Then she peeled the flesh off with her fingers and broke it up into small pieces, which she threw into the basin from which each person helped himself. Each one rolled his morsel of fish between his fingers and dipped it into the one vessel of grease which was within the reach of all.

They were not quite finished when Klalis, who had been running in and out, came in in a great state of excitement and cried: 'The Kwawkewlths are coming!'

CHAPTER III

THE GATHERING OF THE TRIBES

AMONGST the coast Indians, the laws of precedence are very strict, and very rigorously observed. In each tribe the various clans have their own order, and in each clan this right is always very carefully regulated. The tribes themselves have their own order and precedence, and in the Kwawkewlth Agency the Kwawkewlth tribe always took the first place. They always arrived first at a *potlatch*, and were always served before the others.

When the announcement was made therefore to Awalaskinis, great excitement prevailed. The remainder of the food was hastily put away, and the men in the house who were feasting with him pulled their blankets over their shoulders and hurried outside. It may be stated that the blankets during these gatherings formed the chief clothing of all present, and were as indispensable at a *potlatch* gathering as a regalia at a lodge meeting. The blankets used for covering their persons were usually either red or blue, and were of good quality. At some of the ceremonial dances they were decorated with designs or crests in other colours, and plentifully covered with buttons. On arrival outside the house, a long line of canoes was seen paddling slowly but gaily towards the house of Awalaskinis, and the crews and other occupants in these vessels were singing a *potlatch* song. Each canoe was

decorated with a flag. Most of the flags were the red ensign with the Union Jack in the upper left-hand corner, but as the flag itself had no particular significance, the red ensigns were interspersed with all manner of other flags as might have pleased the fancy of the individual, or as he might have had opportunity to acquire. The ensign of the Royal Family floated gaily over one canoe, the lion of Scotland and the harp of Erin waved side by side on a second, while the white ensign of the navy decorated a third. It may be remarked, however, that of all the flags waving so gaily in the breeze, none were of any foreign country, not even the Stars and Stripes.

As the canoes approached the shore, they closed in together and formed a solid mass. On the bow of each stood the owner, dressed in his blanket, and to give him height, on a box or platform, with a staff in his hand. A shout of welcome went up from Awalaskinis and his tribesmen, who were all gathered on a platform close to the shore in order to meet and welcome these first visitors. They were all dressed in fancy-coloured blankets and head-dresses. The chief orator, who was also the head chief of the Nimpkish Indians, was known by the name of Tlagoglas. He stepped out from the front ranks of the Nimpkish, and thus addressed the visitors:

‘Chiefs and nobles of the Kwawkewlths! You have come. You have come at the invitation of Awalaskinis, who will give you a *potlatch*. This *potlatch* will be given in the same way that his father gave them to you people. It will be done as his grandfather did. This *potlatch*, however, will be much greater than any that his father or grandfather ever made. Now I am very glad that you have

come at his invitation, and our Nimpkish people will treat you in the same way that our fathers and our grandfathers treated you and your fathers and grandfathers. Your fathers, your grandfathers, and yourselves have been good to all the tribes, and especially to our tribe. We will very shortly call you into the house of Awalaskinis to have your first meal. In the meantime, our homes are thrown open to you. Your chief, Negadsi, and his family will stay in my house; Klakwagila will stay with Awalaskinis,'—and so on, he enumerated them all until each guest had been assigned a stopping-place or habitation during the stay at Yeleese. When Tlagoglas had finished, he stepped back and loud cries of assent arose from the throats of the Nimpkish.

Negadsi, the chief of the Kwawkewlths, then answered: 'We have come. We have come at the invitations which you have given us. The invitations have been given in the same manner that your forefathers gave them. You have neglected nothing, and we have come very willingly to your *potlatch*. We do not like to refuse any invitations to a *potlatch*, as when we invite any persons to our *potlatches* we want them to come. Some day our people will call you to some of these gatherings, and we want you to come when we do call you. We have come to your village, travelling in the same way our fathers and grandfathers travelled when they accepted an invitation. Our chief, Kukwakeeluk, who is with us, intends to give a dance to your people, to show that we were glad when you called us to your *potlatch*, and when we get into the house of your chief, we will dance that dance for you.'

The canoes were then paddled ashore, and, following the usual custom, were landed stern foremost on the beach,

and as the Nimpkish people were all ready to assist, they were quickly unloaded, and the contents carried into the various houses designated for their reception. About an hour afterwards, two messengers were dispatched by Awalaskinis to call the visitors to his house for their noon meal. This consisted of the usual Indian dishes, *khamass* and *kleena*, but in this instance with the addition of potatoes and bread, as Awalaskinis had been able to make a purchase of a large quantity of fresh bread.

In the afternoon Indians from other villages arrived: the Mamilillikullas, the Matilpis, the Klowitsis, the Tanakteuks, and finally, late in the evening, the Tsawataineuks. Ample preparations had been made for their reception, and the same process was gone through as at the reception of the Kwawkewlths. Each family was assigned a habitation to be used while they remained at the village, which was now crowded to such an extreme that many of the people were obliged to erect their tents in order to get sleeping-room, but as many hands made light work, it was speedily completed.

Amongst the natives there were a few who had broader vision than the rest and who inwardly saw the folly of the custom, as it was generally called, and who had spoken against it on one or two occasions but met with such a storm of remonstrance that they were afraid to express themselves openly, but in the privacy of their own homes or in the presence of a select few did not hesitate to speak of the inherent weakness of the system and to express the opinion that financial disaster awaited them all. One of this type was quartered at the house of Amalageuse. All the inmates of the place were squatted or reclined round a

cheerful fire which was sending wreaths of smoke through the roof. During a lull in the general conversation this man, Kiakkiklala, as he was called, turned to the man sitting next him and said:

‘Did you ever stop to reason why we persist in keeping up such a foolish custom as we have? Do you not think it would be much better for us all if we put our heads together and evolved a system of business that would be simpler and not so foolish?’

‘Why do you say our custom is foolish? We have had it and followed it from time immemorial. We know of no other system, and what was good enough for our forefathers ought to be all right for us. It seems a good system to me.’

‘Your logic is not very convincing—that because our forefathers were foolish and unprogressive that we should remain so too. You might as well say that because our forefathers ran round nearly or entirely naked that we should do so too. I notice that all of us are wearing some clothing, and we are all wearing blankets which we did not make and which formed no part of the old custom.’

‘That is an entirely different matter. This clothing and these blankets add materially to our comfort and convenience, and should be adopted into the custom on that account.’

‘If we could only get away from this folly, just think of the extra money we should have to supply ourselves with these things which add to our comfort.’

‘If we were willing to quit, who would feed and care for our old people? Why, you know they would starve. They are not able to work, or, if they can do a little, they

must have some help. Some more or less according to their circumstances.'

'In my opinion they would be far better off. You know that nearly all of us who have come to this gathering have come not because we want to, but because we have not the moral courage to stay away. If I had stayed away I should have lost my position. My crests would have been taken away and many of the rights which I had gained by attending in time past. It seems to me we have all made ourselves like a snowball on a steep hill. Our custom was small at first, but as we go further and further down the hill it gets bigger and bigger, and presently will come against something solid and there will be a tremendous smash. We shall all be left stranded without position, without wealth, with nothing worth while left us; and, worst of all, we are not acquiring habits that will enable us to salvage anything from the wreck.'

'Have you let the talk of the white man so influence you that your judgment is getting warped?'

'The white man is very clever, but we owe very little to him. Nor do I see very much to admire in his methods. He is taking away all our rights. We can only go where he is willing we should go! We can only cut timber where we are allowed by him to cut it, and if we cannot manage to get into a better method of doing things and looking after our own affairs, I can see disaster ahead. We are not creating new wealth, but squandering what we have. We pay ruinous rates of interest, which cannot go on for ever. Awalaskinis, in calling us together, has done so for his own benefit and not for ours. Just let us reason this out a little. How much do you owe him?'

'Three hundred blankets.'

'How did you come to get into his debt to that amount?'

'My brother died and I had to give a feast, and as I had no money he lent me one hundred and fifty blankets, and I must pay him back double what I got from him.'

'How long ago was that?'

'About half a year.'

'That seems pretty good interest, does it not? But how or where did you get the three hundred blankets to pay him?'

'I cleared over a hundred dollars fishing at the cannery and I bought two hundred blankets, and then I had to borrow another hundred to add to them and make my payment complete.'

'When will you return this second loan?'

'After the fishing is over in August, if I make enough. I shall have to give back two hundred to repay the second loan.'

'This means that you originally borrowed one hundred and fifty, and you are really repaying five hundred if you are lucky enough to make any money next fishing season. Do you call this good business?'

'It is our custom, and if it was good for our fathers it is good for me.'

Turning to another visitor present, Kiakkiklala said to him: 'How much do you owe Awalaskinis?'

'I owe him nothing, but I owe Kwiksisalasma five hundred blankets and he owes a lot to Awalaskinis, so he has sent me word that I must pay him to help him out.'

'How did you come to owe Kwiksisalasma that amount, as I never heard of it?'

'I got drunk one day and the policeman caught me, and the judge fined me ten dollars, or if I had not paid I should have had to go to jail. A friend of mine lent it to me, and a month later he needed the money; so I had to borrow twenty dollars from another friend, for which I had to repay forty dollars. Then when I went up the river to dry fish, I borrowed a canoe from him. We had an accident and the canoe was damaged, and as the canoe was valued at sixty dollars, I owed him one hundred dollars or two hundred blankets. His wife gave birth to a son shortly after, and in order to give a good feast in honour of the occasion, he demanded payment from me; and as I did not have it Kwiksisalasma loaned me the two hundred blankets, and now demands five hundred although it is only four months ago; but I have them ready for him.'

'Where did you get them?'

'I mortgaged my sister for one thousand blankets. I will pay back Kwiksisalasma his five hundred, and the other five hundred I am lending to Ekiawigilakw so that he can pay Awalaskinis.'

'Can you not see that this is not good business?'

'It is our custom and the custom must be kept; but how about yourself?'

Kiakkiklala gave a sheepish grin. 'I know it is our custom and, like the rest of you, I have kept it inviolate and I must pay Awalaskinis. I dare not refuse to pay or I should be a social outcast, and all I can do is to try and persuade the rest of you on the quiet. If there were only a number of us who had the courage to get up and refuse, as it is rumoured that Tsutsais intends to do, it would be better for us all.'

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CHAPTER IV

THE PRELIMINARIES

BEFORE all the tribes had got comfortably settled, it was well after dark, but in order that no lack of interest might be shown in the welfare of his guests, Awalaskinis called them all to his house. Here, when they were fully assembled, he staged one of his crest dances, which in this instance was the dance of the grizzly bear. As mentioned before, he had four crests, but as the grizzly bear was the principal one, he produced and showed it first.

One of his relatives had a mask made after the fashion of the head of the grizzly bear, which fitted on his own head, while covering his body and laced tightly thereto was the skin of a huge grizzly. In this costume he was supposed to impersonate the animal he represented, and to dance as the bear would. He came in and, accompanied by the singing of a song which was peculiar to that dance, paraded and shuffled round the assemblage four times, and then disappeared into the back of the hall.

After this was done a number of other songs were sung, referring to the *hamatsa* which was to be produced a few days later. The dance which was given that night required a certain amount of giving away to each guest who watched it, but as it was the intention of Awalaskinis to give a very great deal away, as soon as the preparations were completed, he contented himself on this night by bringing out

food, and giving a feast of apples, oranges, and candies. About ten o'clock the assembly dispersed and everybody went to rest.

The next morning, shortly after daylight, two heralds dressed in red blankets, white head-dresses, and carrying long staffs in their hands, were sent round to all the houses and the people were notified as follows:

'Oyez! Oyez! All you people who owe anything to Awalaskinis, come forward to-day and make payment, as Awalaskinis requires all his debt money to be collected, so that he can give it away!'

This call was repeated twice at each house, once by each of the heralds. Accordingly, at the assemblage during the following days, various individuals who owed money to Awalaskinis brought in their payment, either in blankets, dishes, sewing-machines, camphorwood boxes, cedar chests, dancing dresses, masks, silver bracelets, or other material which they had on hand, all of which were carefully counted publicly and credit given to the person in question, and intimation given that it was all to be given away when the exchequer was fully replenished and all debts received. The operation of collecting debts usually took about three days, but in this instance, because of the greatness of Awalaskinis and because of the number of chiefs assembled and the amount that was collected, it took several weeks instead of three days.

Each evening during this time when the repaying and collecting was being done, a dance was given, either by Awalaskinis or some of his friends of the Nimpkish tribe, but on the night that the payment was completed Kukwakeeluk of the Kwawkewlths gave his dance, which was

the dance of the *tseetsiulth*, or double-headed snake, and on this occasion, instead of Awalaskinis giving something to eat or small gifts, Kukwakeeluk not only provided a small feast of tea, biscuits, apples, and oranges, but presented each of the guests present with a silver fifty-cent piece.

The next day was beautifully fine, and as Awalaskinis still lacked what he considered sufficient funds for a very great *potlatch*, he produced his copper, which was known by the name of Nunkamala, and which had a long history attached to it. To be the possessor of this was a very great and coveted honour amongst all the Indians. Through his speaker, or paid orator, he informed the people present that he was willing to sell this copper to anybody who was important enough a chief and who had sufficient funds to buy it, and the proceeds would be all given away, as he wanted to make his *potlatch* the greatest that had ever been given, and one that would live in history, as it would be referred to in all big gatherings of this kind for generations.

There was present, amongst others, Klakwagila of the Tsawataineuk tribe, who was anxious to obtain this copper, which would confirm him in the name of Klakwagila, that he had assumed without having a right to it. The word *klakwagila* amongst the Indians means 'owner of a copper,' and he had assumed this name without owning any copper to substantiate his claim, and as this copper, Nunkamala, was one of the greatest and most historic coppers in the possession of all the tribes, it was his aim and object to obtain the possession of it.

One feature of the Indian custom is that if a man buys a copper, it must be with the assistance and co-operation

of his wife's father, so that when the copper is bought it may be presented by the father-in-law, through the wife, to the purchaser of the copper, as part of the dower of the wife. In this instance, Kwocksistala, the father-in-law of Klakwagila, had considerable money owing to him through the *potlatch*, for another of the peculiarities of the system is that everybody is in debt to everybody else, and in order to make the purchase of this copper as impressive and important as possible, they were determined to give a good price for the copper. On this account, it took six or seven days to get their debts collected. As all the collections were made in public, with the usual feasting and dancing each night, a great amount of time was consumed. Finally Klakwagila and Kwocksistala had amassed together blankets and other property estimated at fifteen thousand dollars. They accordingly called all the people together by special messengers in the manner already described.

When they were all assembled, Awalaskinis had the copper, Nunkamala, brought out in great state and laid at his feet. His orator, Tlagoglas, then stood up and addressed the assembly:

'Chiefs and nobles of the assembled tribes!' mentioning each by name. 'Awalaskinis has called you together that you may witness the sale of Nunkamala. You all know how valuable a copper this is. It cost very many dollars and it has a very unique position in our custom. Whoever buys this copper will have a much coveted seat at all the feasts, and his greatness will be sung at all festivals where coppers are displayed.

'We are informed that Kwocksistala has been making

preparations to purchase this great copper, and we are prepared to receive any offers made. Awalaskinis, for whom I am speaking, is a great chief, and has given a great many *potlatches*, and is a man well known to everybody. He has always been ready to help those in trouble, and is known for his generosity and kindness both to friends and enemies, but as this is an extremely valuable copper, he naturally expects to receive a good offer for it. If the offer is sufficient, and payment is made, Nunkamala with all its privileges will be given over to Kwocksistala, and Awalaskinis will be ready to do as all his forefathers have done, and be generous to you all, and will see that his generosity and goodness will provide for the needs of every one, as all the proceeds will be added to the already huge pile that he is about to distribute.'

Then the orator for Kwocksistala and Klakwagila got up and said:

'Chiefs and friends! We are come together to-day for a double purpose. We have come here at the invitation of Awalaskinis, that we may partake of his hospitality, and we are also come together that I may show to you how great and how generous and how noble are the parties that I represent, Kwocksistala and Klakwagila. They have been weighed and never found wanting in the balance; they have always shown that they are generous, even to their enemies. The word *kwocksistala*, as you know, means "smoke from a big fire," and as the smoke comes out from the fire and covers all the country round, so do gifts proceed from Kwocksistala and cover all the country round about. He is a great man, and he wishes to show how great he is by making a purchase of this copper,

Nunkamala, so that his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren coming after him can point with pride to what he has done. He is only carrying out the old custom amongst the Indians, and it is our duty to see that things are carried out in accordance with the old custom, so they can never be changed. You see before you on my right a great pile of property. It is worth two thousand blankets, and we offer Awalaskinis these two thousand blankets so that he may give them away, but the people will all know that it comes from us in the first place.'

The orator then sat down, and the orator for Awalaskinis got up and said:

'I am calling on Negadsi, the great chief of the Kwawkewlths, to state that the sum of two thousand blankets offered for this copper is not enough, and following the custom, he must ask for more.'

Accordingly, Negadsi got up and said: 'Chiefs and friends! By hereditary right I appear before you on behalf of Awalaskinis, who is selling this great copper, Nunkamala, a copper that is exceeded by very few coppers in value, and I am surprised and disappointed that Kwock-sistala is not making a greater offer than two thousand blankets for this copper. We all know his wealth, we all know his position, and we all know how much he expects to benefit by this copper, and we are all surprised that he should make such a small initial bid. I call on him, therefore, to add at least one thousand blankets to the price of this copper.' He sat down.

Three other chiefs in succession belonging to the Kwawkewlths got up in turn and made a similar demand, until when the Kwawkewlths had finished the price of the

copper had increased from two thousand blankets to four thousand five hundred. The orator for Awalaskinis still kept importuning and calling the chiefs of the other tribes according to their precedence to get up, and each one asked that more be added to it, till at the close of the day, when the negotiations were considered complete, they had decided that the copper for which two thousand blankets originally had been offered, was sold for fifteen thousand blankets, or its equivalent of seven thousand five hundred dollars.

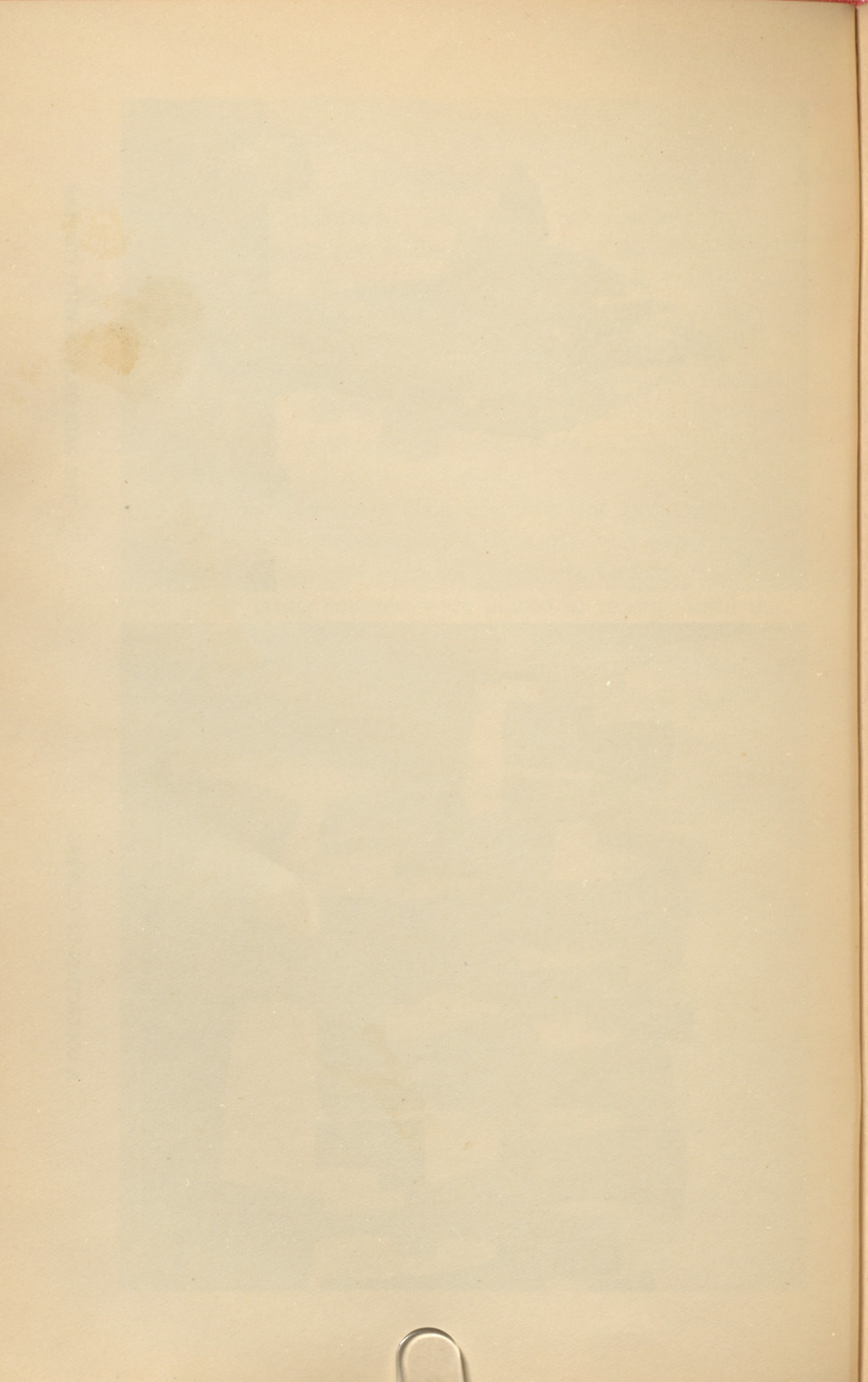
These blankets were then counted out and paid over publicly by Kwocksistala and Klakwagila and were carried away by young men, the followers of Awalaskinis, and after again being counted were placed in storage until the completion of the ceremonies and the final giving away, which, owing to the number of collections which had to be made by various chiefs in order to complete payment to Awalaskinis and to the delay consequent thereto, would not take place for several weeks yet.



THE PAID ORATOR WITH COPPERS



A COLLECTION OF COPPERS



CHAPTER V

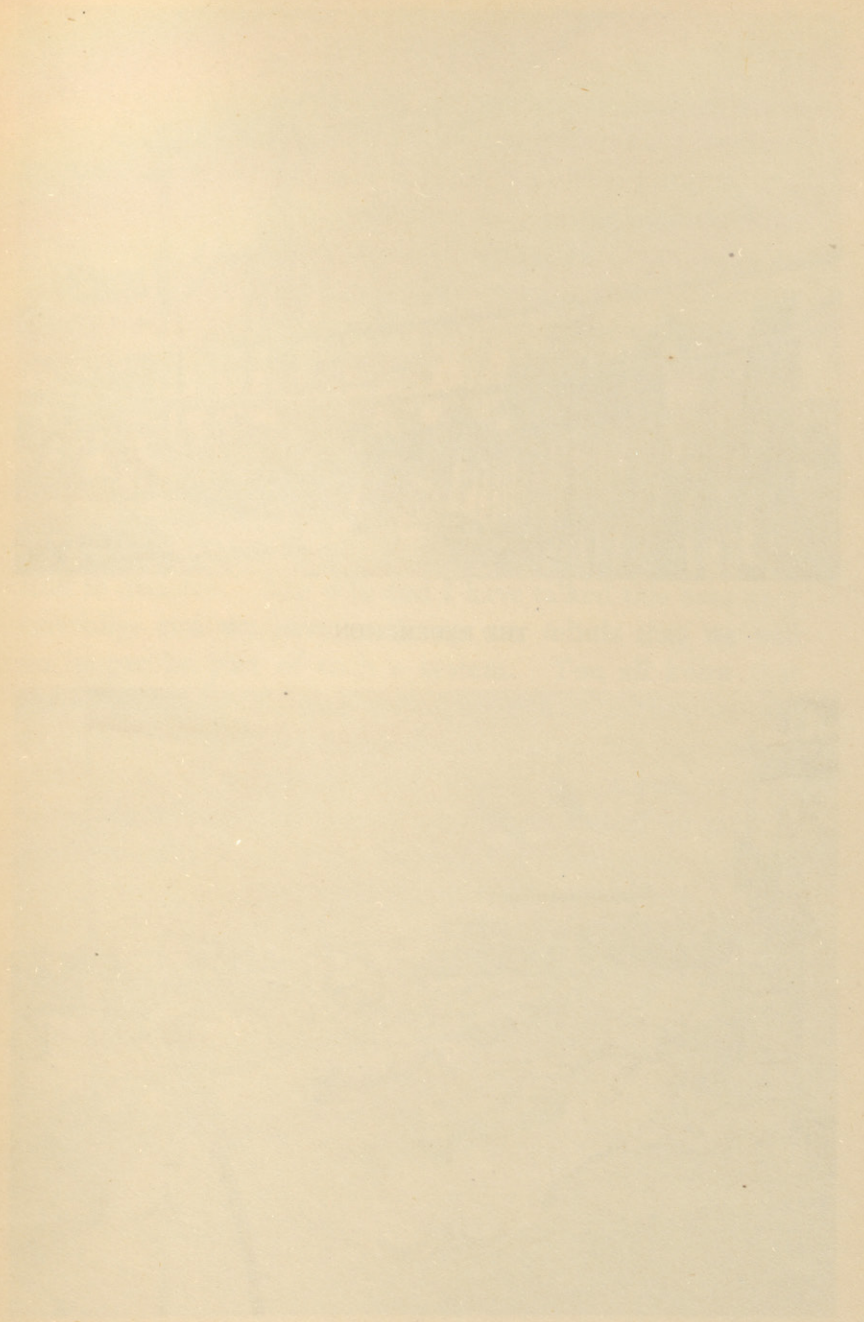
THE OUTCASTS

TSUTSAIS, and Lalaksa his wife, had both received an elementary education at a mission school, but had also acquired the art of thinking for themselves. They each occupied positions of importance in the *potlatch* customs and consequently had considerable sums of money and quite large amounts of other property due to them by those to whom in times past they (following the custom) had given of their wealth. They owed Awalaskinis several items of furniture, blankets, and moneys, and were called on to pay, so that their payment would be added to the total to be distributed by that worthy gentleman.

The repayment was asked for publicly by the herald of Awalaskinis, at a time when all the people were assembled at a feast, and the custom was that Tsutsais should get up publicly when the payment was demanded and acknowledge the indebtedness, and if he had not the amount on hand he would have the privilege to state that he had certain debts owing him, and when they were paid would make repayment to Awalaskinis and then in his turn would demand payment from his creditors. The latter also had the privilege of calling in their debts, so that it might be a matter of considerable time before Awalaskinis would be able to get what he required, as, owing to interest being

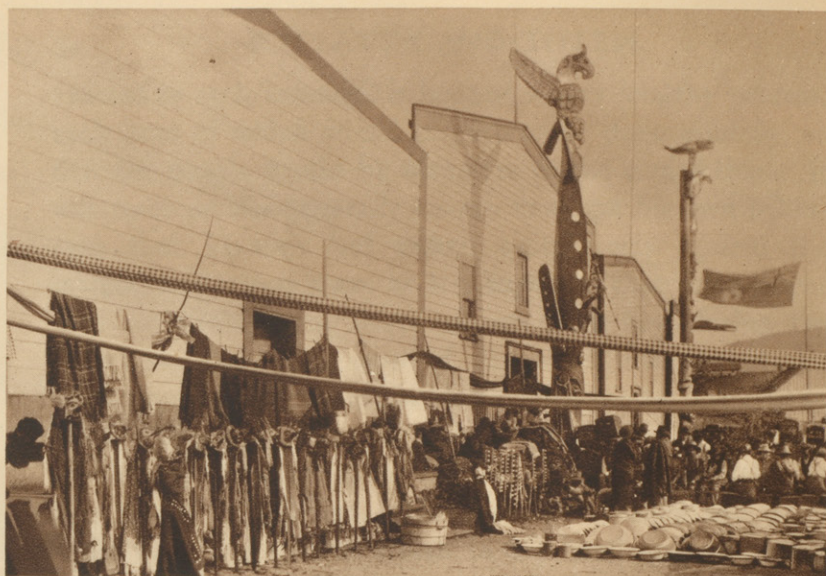
exacted in each instance, it became a very lengthy process, each item of which would require to be done publicly, so that the people would be witnesses to the transaction. It was more or less generally known amongst his own tribesmen that Tsutsais had talked quite freely against the system, and it was more or less expected that there might arise some interesting developments from him during the festivities, but none even of his most intimate friends quite expected him to throw down the gauntlet and openly rebel. When he was thus openly called upon to keep up his payments he sat mute for some time, then finally he rose slowly to his feet. He gave his blanket the usual hitch, took the speaker's staff in his hand and addressed the assembly. At first his voice was low and weak, but as he progressed further he became very vigorous and powerful in his language.

'Chiefs, nobles, and friends! You all know me. You have known my father and father's father. You know that I am by hereditary right a great chief. My clan is the bear clan, and you know that anything that comes into the clutches of a bear is very hard to take away from him. I have been considered an authority on all that pertains to the old custom. I myself have composed many of the songs you sing. I have given many feasts to you and have had many *potlatches*, at each of which I have given away vast amounts of property. Many of you have repaid what you owed me, but many of you have not. I am called on to-day to make payment to Awalaskinis for things that he has previously given me together with the usual interest of one hundred per cent. You have heard the demand and I know that you all expect me to comply



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with it, and if I do not have the amount on hand to make payment, that I will call on any of you who are my creditors to make payment to me. This is our usual custom.

'I have a surprise in store for you. I have been thinking very carefully over the whole situation, and I am satisfied that our custom is wrong, both morally and financially. What right have we as men, or the heads of a clan, to sell our women—the mothers that bore us—the sisters who assisted in our upbringing—the daughters of our own bodies? What right, I say, have we thus to prostitute them for our aggrandisement? What right have we either to pay or expect to pay one hundred per cent interest on our debts? Our system is unsound, unmoral, and will lead to disaster. My wife and I have talked this over very carefully, and we have made up our minds that we will no longer be part of such a system. You all know that there is considerably more owing to each of us than we owe to others. We have no desire to escape our just debts, and neither of us wishes harm to any one of you, and we are quite willing that money owing to us shall be paid to those to whom we owe money, but absolutely without interest! It is not without great thought that I thus speak to you. I should like to see you all think of this matter as I think of it myself. I realize that we are going against our traditions and institutions, but I believe that we are doing what is right. We have certain crests and privileges in our clan, and we know that unless the rest of you agree with us in our views we are endangering them. These privileges are dear to us, but we feel that we must be true to ourselves first of all. Financially we turn over what is owing to us to satisfy the debts that

should be paid, and we commence life afresh with practically little more than we had when we came into the new life. I have finished.'

It would have been a great breach of etiquette for any one to have interrupted Tsutsais when he was speaking, and at first amazement overtook them all, which was followed by a certain amount of admiration for the courage thus shown in openly defying a long-established custom. This was followed by a feeling of resentment which arose amongst those who were looking for their pound of flesh in the way of one hundred per cent. Several chiefs jumped to their feet at once and demanded a hearing. All shouted at once, and it seemed as if pandemonium had broken loose.

Finally Negadsi managed to restore order, and, raising his speaker's staff high in the air and thumping three times as loudly as he could on a board at his feet, he commenced a reply to Tsutsais.

'Chiefs, nobles, and friends! Can I believe my own ears? Can I trust my own eyes, or do I dream that Tsutsais has said that our customs are no good and that he intends to follow them no more? When the sun rises in the mountains, we know that later on in the day it will sink to rest in the great sea. When the rains come down in torrents on the mountain-tops, we know that the waters thereof will run down in the streams and reach again the great ocean. When the wind blows we know that the waters become rough, and when it dies away we know for a certainty that the waters will become quiet. We have become accustomed so much to these things that we take them for granted and pay them little attention. These

things have existed from time immemorial. Can you imagine any one being foolish enough to get up and say that these things I have spoken of are foolish and ought to be made better? Can you imagine any one having so little regard for himself as to say that he could make things better in that way? It is true that at times we should appreciate life better if it did not rain quite so much, but no one would be foolish enough to think that there should be no more rain. We may think sometimes that we should be better off and more comfortable without any winter, until we begin to think and realize that winter is absolutely indispensable, and that when we have no snow or cold weather at the time it should come, our people suffer with many sicknesses. The furs we catch are not so good and we get a smaller price for them. All these affairs are regulated by laws which we but dimly understand. Their origin is veiled in mystery, but we know they have been from time immemorial.

'So is it with our custom. We do not know when it originated nor how ancient it is, and it goes away back beyond anything we are able to remember even in the stories told us by our fathers. We know that there are peoples who have not the customs we have, and we believe that they are always grasping and selfish and have no consideration for others. Our custom takes care of all, from the youngest infant to the oldest man or woman who has got so near the end of life as to be a burden to friends.

'Therefore, I am of the opinion that Tsutsais must have been out of his mind when he spoke as he did about our customs. Let us not be too hasty in our judgment. He states

that Lalaksa, his wife, is with him in this matter. How do we know that he is speaking the truth in this matter? Even though he did get her for a wife by means of purchase through our custom, we all know that she has a tongue long enough and sharp enough to speak for herself. Also her father is here. He is the head of his clan, and even though he disposed of her to Tsutsais he still has dominion over her as she has not yet redeemed herself. We will call on him first. I have spoken.'

Numookmalis, the father of Lalaksa, now stood up and spoke:

'Chiefs, nobles, and friends! I have heard what has been said, and my head is bowed with shame. This shame has been so great that at as early a date as possible I will call you all together and wipe out the shame and disgrace with generous gifts, as has been our custom. My daughter, Lalaksa, was at one time the joy of my life. I allowed her to go to school with pride in my heart to think that she would be able to get ahead of the other girls of our people. When she was of marriageable age I was greatly pleased to arrange her marriage and more particularly with Tsutsais. He also had been to school, and I felt that though I myself had never made anything of myself in life, here was an opportunity through her. Twice since I gave her to Tsutsais have I had opportunity to bestow her hand on another man. Each of these men would have made her an excellent husband after our custom, but my pride in her would not allow me to do so. In conversation with me lately she has told me that she is not satisfied with our ways and customs. I told her a few days ago that she was a disappointment to me the way

she was talking, and that I would not turn down the next offer that was made for her if I thought it would be to her advantage or to mine, and she told me that she was satisfied with her husband, and that even if she had not redeemed herself she would remain with him, so that I could save myself the trouble of trying to get her another husband. However, she is here and can speak for herself.'

Lalaksa, who was a handsome young woman of about twenty-five years of age, was then called upon by Negadsi to get up and speak for herself.

'Since I can remember, O you chiefs and head men! the custom of which you speak so much has done all it could to crush out my very soul. I have not been allowed my own way in anything except that I was allowed to go to school for a while. I was not consulted about whom I was to marry. Three times have I been disposed of in marriage, as you all know, and three times have I done my duty to my husband and tried to help him. The first man was cruel to me, and I rejoiced when I was taken away from him and given to the next one. He was a little better, but never treated me as anything more than a chattel. He never regarded me as his equal or as his partner in life. Then I was taken away from him and sold to Tsutsais, with whom I have lived for about six years. He has been good to me. He has treated me as his equal and partner in life. Together we have decided to face you all. What we owe to any one we will pay without interest; better still, we will ask those who are in our debt to pay our debts to the others, and we will step out of this custom. We do not want to go away and leave you all. You are our friends and neighbours, and we wish to remain at

peace and on friendly relationship with you all. We wish it to be firmly understood, however, that we intend living our own lives as we may think best for ourselves. What we earn for our labours will be our own, and will be disposed of or used as we think fit. We feel that we have a right to choose for ourselves and not be tied down by any custom. My husband and I love one another and we both refuse to abide by the custom which would make both, or either of us, a slave. We have carefully considered what we are doing, and all we ask is to be left alone. I have spoken.'

Kukwakeeluk rose to his feet and, receiving the speaker's staff in his hand, thus addressed the meeting:

'Chiefs, nobles, and friends! You all know me. You have all many times partaken of my hospitality, and you all know that there are certain unwritten regulations regarding hospitality. One of these is courtesy and consideration for your host. I have heard that in some far-off countries, if you partake of a man's salt you are a favoured person as long as you remain with him, and you must not do anything against his rules as long as you are his guest. This seems to me a good rule and I am glad that other people besides ourselves have it. Here before us we have two people who have partaken of the hospitality of Awalaskinis. They have been his guests, and, as such, should obey all the customs and regulations, and yet they have got up deliberately and defied all our customs. In the old days this would have meant immediate death for the two of them, and a death by violence. We are not in a position to go so far as that, but I think we should deal very drastically with them. We should make them complete out-

casts from our society. We should take away their names, their rights, their crests, and all that pertains to the custom which they have so set at defiance. If we do not deal severely with them, how can we foresee how far their rebellion may go? It means the repudiation of all debts, amongst other things. We are bound by honour in these matters, and we never refuse to pay the obligations we have incurred. I hope you will all agree with me and decide that we must severely discipline these two and debar them from all their rights. I have spoken.'

When Kukwakeeluk sat down there was a bedlam of sound. Heated arguments arose in small groups where opinion seemed to be divided, but for some time no one rose to his feet to speak. Finally Awilkwolath, a very old chief, arose and, receiving the staff in his hands, addressed the assembly:

'Chiefs, nobles, and clansmen! I am now a very old man, I think possibly the oldest amongst you. I have often advised you on many matters, and you know that my advice has always been good. The snows of many winters have fallen on my head. I have seen many things, and now in my old age I address you possibly for the last time. You have before you a case of rebellion against our old customs. This man and this woman have told us plainly that they do not think our custom a good one. I have seen many young men disagree with the opinions of their elders, and we have found that if they are left alone they learn in time and come back again. There is not one of us who has not made many mistakes. In the old days some of these mistakes would have led to death. Kukwakeeluk has stated that Tsutsais and Lalaksa have repudiated their

debts and should be severely punished on that score. Although I am old and my eyes are getting dim so that I cannot see very well, yet my ears are still good, and I did not hear any words that would lead me to think that they had so lost their sense of honour that they refused to make payment of their debts. They stated quite distinctly that all the debts owing to them should be used to pay all the debts which they owe, and if we stop to consider, we shall see that they are giving away far more than they would get if they collected all that was owing before they made payment.

'I think that if we take no action it will be much better. If we turn them out we must shut the door, and I ask you, do you not think they will be far more likely to come back if we leave them an open door than if they have to break in? I feel sure that as time passes they will see that our custom is good. They will see how prosperous we all are and will want to come back. Our custom is hospitable and kind, and we cannot act in any other way and remain prosperous. Amongst the white men we can learn much. I will tell you one little incident to show you what I mean. I went to see a white man one day. He had a cow that had run away and had got wild. It came near her old home that day and the white man saw it. He did not run out and try to chase it in. If he had, the cow would have run away and he might never have got it again. You know cows like carrots and turnips. The man went to his garden and pulled some and cut them up and left them in a row. The cow smelled them and kept on going along, picking them up and eating them, till finally she got inside his strong fence and he had her

again. So let it be with these two. Let us leave them alone and not try to drive them in, but leave the door open, so that when they tire of their new ways they may find their way back, and they will not be likely to stray again. In the meantime they have made outcasts of themselves, and that is better than our doing it. My words are finished.'

No one else took any part in the discussion, and the whole subject was dropped so far as the public was concerned. However, many of the individual tribesmen, and more particularly the women, did their best to ridicule the pair, and talked so much not directly to, as at them, that they went away to their own village and did not take any further part in the proceedings. For years efforts were made by a few of their old friends to bring them back, but they persisted in remaining outcasts.

CHAPTER VI

THE REDEMPTION

KAAKSTALAS (literally interpreted, 'breakfast-giver') was the wife of Awalaskinis. She was a comely matron of possibly forty years of age, with one child, Klalis, to whom we have already referred. She had been considered amongst the rest of the Indian women a very proud and haughty person, and on that account had been often snubbed by the rest of them. Her father, known by the name of Weetsikok ('higher than the highest'), had been saving and working with her for some time, in order to carry out the ceremony known as the *howanaka*, which put into plain English means 'redemption.'

According to the old custom of the people, if a wife wished to do honour to her husband, she redeemed herself, which was done by her parents, or the one who was her guardian, giving back the dower which was given for her, with many per cent interest; in some cases fifty per cent, some one hundred, some two hundred per cent. On the following day the heralds were sent out in the morning just at breakfast time, calling all the people to come together as soon as they had finished their breakfast, to witness the *howanaka*.

As they arrived they sat round in a large circle, but an opening was left in the front of the door of the house of Weetsikok. When the crowd had all assembled, Weet-

sikok came out to the centre of this ring, leading his daughter Kaakstalas by the hand. In his left hand he held a long carved staff, which is commonly spoken of as the 'speaker's wand' or 'staff.' When he had gained the attention of the assembled Indians, he spoke as follows:

'Chiefs, nobles, and friends!' repeating each tribe in succession. 'You all know who I am. My name is Weet-sikok, and, as you know, my name means "higher than the highest," and you all know I am a great chief. In chieftainship there is none to surpass me. Years ago, when Awalaskinis wanted a wife, he did me the honour to pay the equivalent of two thousand dollars for my daughter, who stands here beside me. He did himself a great honour by taking my daughter, because she is a chief's daughter, and to marry a chief's daughter brings great honour on the man himself. To-day you are going to see another honour conferred on Awalaskinis, by my repaying him with two hundred per cent interest the dowry which he gave me for my daughter. She is no common person, and being a chief's daughter, is going to redeem herself like a chief's daughter should. I have spoken.'

During the time he had been speaking he still retained the hand of his daughter, and on the conclusion of his remarks he held up her right hand as a sign that she had something to say, and then transferred his speaker's staff to her right hand. She then commenced to orate, but her speech was given more to the women assembled than it was to the men, although they were included in it. She commenced by addressing them all:

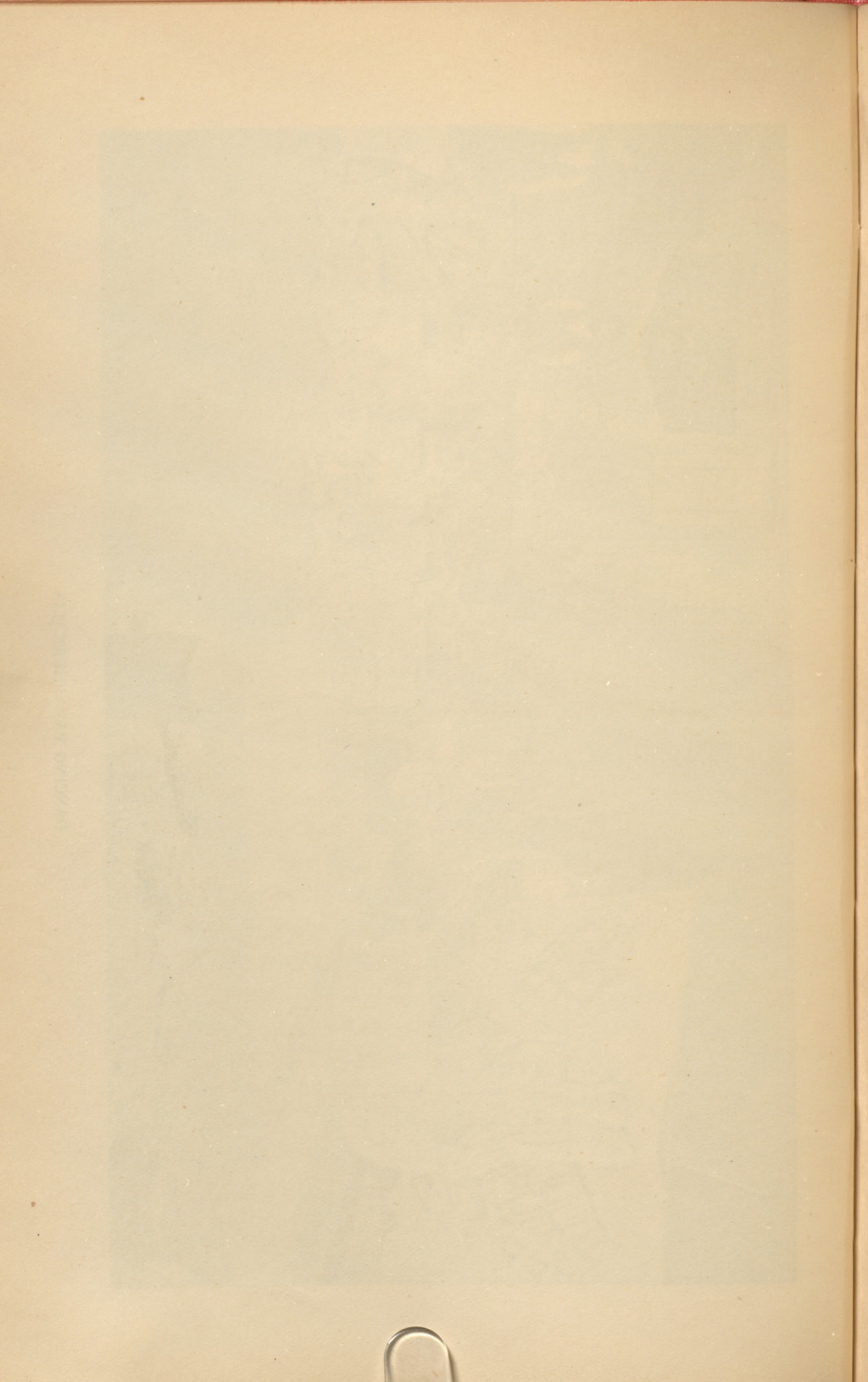
'Chiefs, nobles, and friends of the various tribes! You see me here to-day, and I am going to tell you that I have

come to do honour to my husband, Awalaskinis, to myself, Kaakstalas, and to my father, Weetsikok. You have heard me say in jest on several occasions that I was going to leave my husband, but I was only fooling you. You are all of very common stock; you have been living with your husbands many of you for years, and have never done anything to do them honour or credit. You have thought sometimes that I have been proud and haughty; you have made very uncomplimentary remarks about me at various times; now I throw them back to you in your teeth, and I wish to show you that you are all nobodies, just given to vain talk and vain boasting and to gossip, to slander, and to all the other evils in which women so freely indulge, and from which the men are not exempt at times. I am showing you what a woman ought to do. I have lived peaceably with one husband for a number of years; I have borne him a son; I have listened to your adverse criticisms, sneers, etc., when you thought I did not hear. Now I am giving them back to you. This is the man that I am honouring, and in honouring him I am honouring myself; I am honouring my father, Weetsikok, so that he towers still higher. See all this array of worldly goods which I have placed out here. There are:

- 3 coppers, worth \$2,000
- 30 sewing-machines
- 350 oak trunks
- 50 bureaus, or chests of drawers
- 50 canvas-covered trunks
- 150 button blankets
- 200 new Hudson Bay blankets
- 150 silk neckerchiefs



DANCING PARAPHERNALIA



- 100 silk dresses
- 100 woollen shawls
- 75 pairs of gold ear-rings
- 50 pairs of gold bracelets
- 100 pairs of silver bracelets
- 200 enamelled pails and basins
- 300 cups and saucers
- 3,000 pieces of glassware
- 20 dancing costumes
- 40 canoes
- 200 yards of gingham

all of which I am handing over to Awalaskinis and thus redeeming myself. None of you could do this.'

When she had finished speaking, the Nanemoot, or the clan of Awalaskinis, gathered themselves together in one place, and Weetsikok stood up and drew special attention to the three coppers, which were amongst the rest of the goods being transferred to Awalaskinis, and, pointing to the biggest one, which was called Kawee, said:

'This copper is the anchor of the *howanaka*. I bought it myself, and I paid for it; I owe nothing on it, and I can do with it what I like, and I choose to give it over with my daughter. No one but a big chief could give away coppers that way.'

Then pointing to the second copper, he said:

'Kwayimkin, or "the whale," is also my copper, which I bought from one of the chiefs present, and for which I paid him entirely, and I owe nothing on it. It is only great chiefs like I am who can own so many coppers and have them paid for and be able to give away. The third copper is also bought and paid for and I am giving it away

with my daughter. You can see how great and how big a chief I am, and how much I am to be commended for what I do. Now I ask Awalaskinis to send some great chief to come to me and get the copper. No one but a great chief can come, or no one who has not a hereditary right can come and get this copper. No one but a great chief, whose fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers have taken part in a *howanaka*, can come, but I know that amongst the friends of Awalaskinis there are several who by right of former times and by right of being chiefs can come and get this copper.'

Awalaskinis then called Klakoglas, a chief of his clan, to go and get the copper, so Klakoglas got up. He sent one of his young men to the rear of the building, who soon returned with an old spear in his hand which Klakoglas took from him and, standing up with the weapon in his hand, thus addressed the crowd:

'I stand before you as the head of this clan. I am a real man; I am a real chief; my fathers and grandfathers before me were chiefs. They were accustomed to use this spear and used it to spear coppers. I want you to understand the only correct way to spear a copper, the same as my fathers and grandfathers did, and that when I spear a copper, it stays speared, as I will show you now.'

He raised the spear and struck the copper several times sharply with it, and then stooping over, picked the copper up in his left hand, and waved it on high three times, and then slowly walked back and laid it at the feet of Awalaskinis.

When this ceremony was completed, the orator for Weet-sikok got up and called out the list of property which has

been given above, and asked that one man be sent as a representative to bring and receive each of the different articles on the list. The first man who came forward was given one sewing-machine. He in his turn made a speech, saying that he and his fathers and grandfathers, etc., had been accustomed to this sort of thing from time immemorial, and that he was carrying out the old custom in the manner he had been taught by them. The next man, when he received an oak trunk, replied in the same way, and so on down the line until they came to the last man, who was given one unbroken bolt of gingham. Each one made a speech after exactly the same manner as above, with which it would be too wearisome to burden the reader further.

One sample of the various payments in the pile having been made, a sister of Awalaskinis came forward with the copper Kawee in her hand, with which she danced round the centre of the circle and sang a song of welcome, rejoicing over the reception of it. Before she had finished her dance, a man was seen coming out of Awalaskinis's house, belonging to Weetsikok's clan. He had a box in his hand, covered with a blanket, and his face had been blackened. He carried the box very carefully, and very slowly, towards the assembled multitude. When Weetsikok saw this man coming, he called on his speaker to get up and address the audience. The speaker rose and addressed them in a very low tone and very slowly and deliberately:

'This box which you see being brought in represents all the crests of Weetsikok, and is very important. It represents all that he has worked for and saved for, during many years, and now he willingly turns it over to

Awalaskinis; our forefathers have done this for countless generations, and we are doing the same. This is our *dzeedzeeekla*' (custom).

The speaker of Awalaskinis then instructed two of his youths to go forward and get the box. It was seen that they had their faces also blackened, and they came forward very slowly. They were dressed in blue blankets, as no other would do for this occasion. The blankets were both caught up around the throats of the two men, and each fastened with a huge safety-pin. In earlier days they would have been fastened by sharp bone skewers. They walked slowly toward the lone individual who was carrying the box, and each took hold of one end of it. Then Awalaskinis's speaker spoke:

'We have received from Weetsikok something that is very important, and we will let you know later on what it is all about. You are all invited now to the house of Awalaskinis for supper, when he will have sung for you four songs for each of his clans, and certain other revelations will be made to you.'

The general public then adjourned, and wended their way as they felt so disposed to the house of Awalaskinis, and while they were doing so, the younger members gathered up the remainder of the gifts of the *howanaka* which were still on display in the main street, and carried them to the house of Awalaskinis, where they were put away with the rest of the gifts which he was intending to give away within the next few weeks. When they were all gathered in the house, they sat down, arranged in clans; all of the eagle clan sat in one place, the whale clan in another, the grizzly bear in another, the wolf clan in

another, and so on. When they had had something to eat, which consisted of biscuits, tea, and apples, each clan in turn sang four songs. These were songs peculiar to the *howanaka*, which had just been completed.

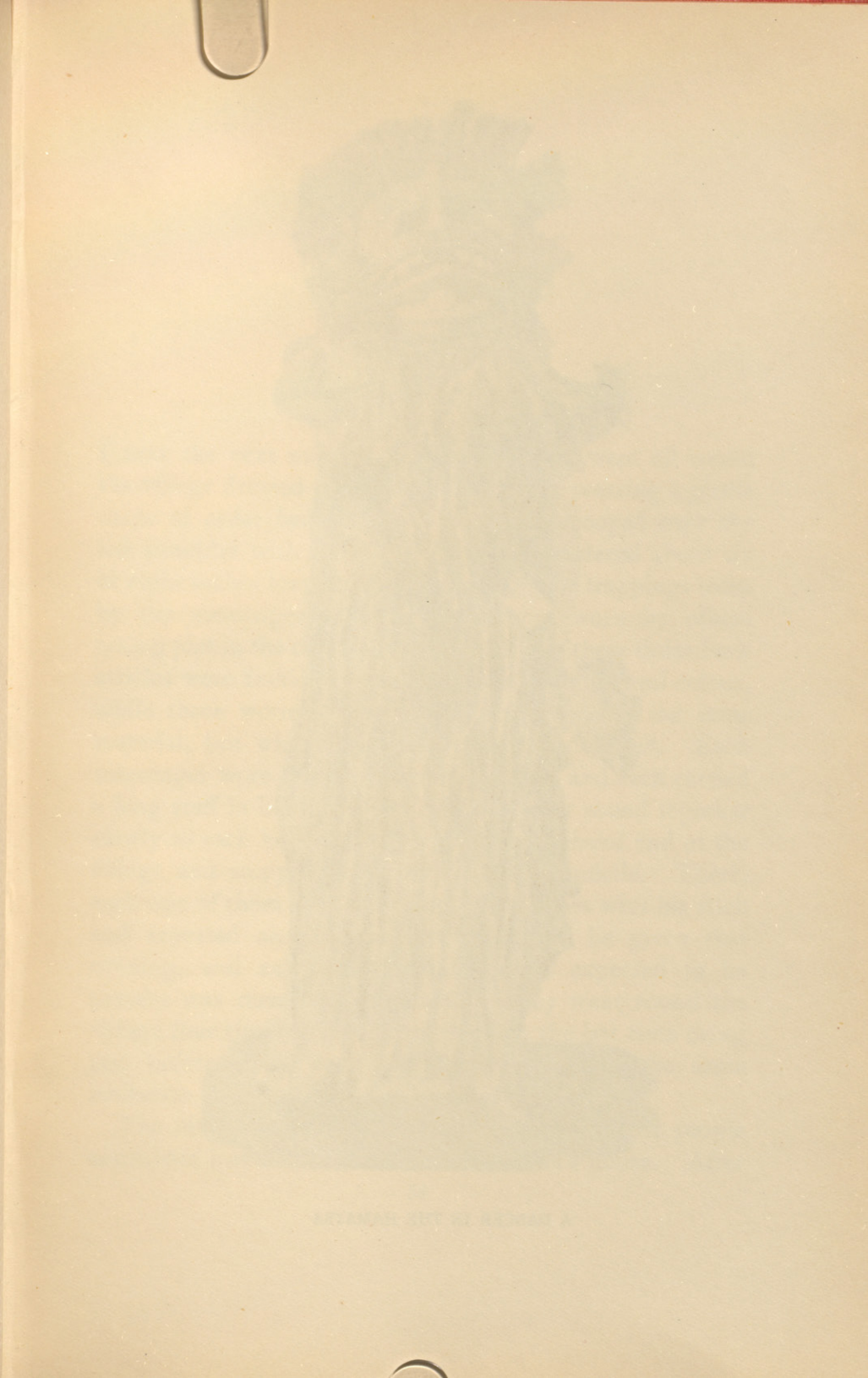
While the last song was being sung a great noise was heard at the side of the building, which sounded as though someone had taken a sledge-hammer and struck against the boards. As soon as the knock occurred, horns were blown by concealed musicians at the back of the building, and when the song was completed, one of the other chiefs arose and ordered everybody to the back of the hall. On arrival there, they sang four more songs, and while the singing was being done a long board was laid on the ground and six young women belonging to *Awalaskinis's* friends were led in and stood on the board. Their long black tresses were combed over their faces, so that their features could not be distinguished. They kept time to the music by waving their hands and swaying their bodies, but they made no sound whatever. As the song progressed, each of them disappeared in turn, till when the fourth song was entirely completed, no women were left on the board. Then one of the chiefs got up and made a speech and said:

'We noticed at the beginning of these songs that there were six women standing here in front of us, but they have all been carried away one by one by the *nawilak*, which is a spirit of mischief. However, there are left quite a number of the family of *Awalaskinis*, which the spirit could not take away, and they are present here amongst us and are going to give us a feast.'

Apples were then passed round freely to everybody, and

while they were eating them, the peculiar sound of a *hamatsa* whistle was heard moving swiftly towards the building. Every one present sat in apparently awed silence waiting for what was to follow. Presently there were three knocks heard, increasing in volume until the third sounded almost like the noise of a cannon. Klalis, the son of Awalaskinis, was sitting in front of the people near the fire, and at the first knock he started up, but when the third knock was heard, he fell forward on the ground, and shrieked as if in the greatest of agony, and rolled over and over and over again, shrieking and twisting himself as though suffering the greatest torture, until finally he rolled out of the building.

The speaker of Awalaskinis rose, and warned the people that the spirits were abroad, and they must be very careful as to what they said and how they comported themselves, and that none of them were to go away from the house until each of them had received a piece of silver in his hand, which would pacify the evil spirit and would preserve them from trouble. The audience then rose and went quietly to their places of abode, each one as he passed out of the outer door being presented with a silver twenty-five cent piece, which was a charm against the evil spirits.





A DANCER IN THE HAMATSA

CHAPTER VII

THE 'HAMATSA'

EARLY the next morning four messengers went all round the village dressed in button blankets and wearing a girdle made of cedar bark, a cedar-bark ring drooped over the left shoulder with a fringe of the same material about six or eight inches long hanging from it. The trappings worn by the messengers differed from those worn by others taking part in the ceremony, insomuch that these cedar-bark articles were fashioned from the bark in its natural colour, while those worn by the others were made of the same material, but which had been tanned a dull red. Each messenger wore eagle feathers in his hair, and each carried a long staff in his right hand. They went round together slowly to each house, starting at the right-hand end of the village and stopping in front of each domicile. There, each one of them in turn knocked four times with his stick and repeated an invitation to a feast to be given that evening, and each individual who was expected to be present was mentioned by name. They went round the village four times in all during the day, the last time being just before dusk, each messenger delivering the same invitation at every house at each circuit.

The invitations included everybody, and all the people assembled just before dusk in Awalaskinis's house. After

waiting a few moments until all had got their places and everything was quiet, the orator for Awalaskinis rose, and with his staff in his hand, made a speech of welcome to the people. Then he turned towards the clan of his head or principal, who were standing near the door, and calling them by name, told them to get the person or spirit who owned the cedar bark which had been dyed. The clan went out quietly, and returned in a few moments with a large pile of cedar bark, which had been formed into a big circle. This was composed of a number of smaller girdles and head-dresses fashioned in such a way that by cutting the strings which bound them together they would fall apart. The one who was supposed to own this pile of bark stood near the back of the building, and the others circled slowly round him four times. Then a woman came out and put a mat on the floor. After circling the room four times, the clan who were carrying this cedar bark stood over the mat, holding the ring just above it. The orator then called for the one whose right it was to come forward and cut the cords of the cedar-bark circle. This individual, who had his face painted a bright red, and his hair ornamented with long eagle feathers, got up, took off his shoes, put on a blue blanket, gathered it round the throat in the same manner as the others had done, and with a knife in his hand, went to the fire. First he picked up some black coal which lay at the outside of the fire, and over the top of the red, rubbed the black charcoal well into his face. He went round the room four times, the first time slowly, the second time a little faster, gaining speed on each round, until at the end of the fourth round he was going as hard as he could tear. He stopped when he came to

where the cedar-bark circle was, and after flourishing his knife, made several attempts before he succeeded in cutting the binding, and when he finally accomplished it, the bark girdles fell apart. As he was doing this he called out the name of the clans from which he was descended, and those who had been holding the large circle grabbed hold of him, as apparently from his actions he was going wild.

The orator then got up and made another speech and called on a representative of all the clans to get their old *hamatsa*. These men were those who had been initiated at some former ceremony, and who were known as the *hamatsas* of their particular clans. The grizzly bear *hamatsa* headed the procession, followed by the wolf, the whale, and others in order of precedence, and they all marched round the room. As they passed round, they distributed feathers to each and every one in the room; some of the feathers were very fine, some were coarse, others were almost like down. The clan which had been gathering at the far end each had a small stick in his right hand, and they beat time in unison on a plank of wood which lay on the floor, and sang four songs. During the fourth song, the old *hamatsas* present all commenced to get excited, and all blew their whistles. The chiefs present who owned the *hamatsa* got up and each made a speech, promising to give a small *potlatch* or feast in the immediate future. The speeches were all of a similar nature to those which have been expressed, all lauding themselves and talking to their own self-glorification. One of the chiefs present, Dzuneukwamalas, promised to give the largest feast, and his father-in-law, Ekiawigilakw, also rose and lauded his son-in-law, and presented him with fifty dollars

to give away to the people present as payment for watching his dance, which was the next item on the programme. He was thanked for his kindness by many of the chiefs present, and the dance closed for the evening.

This sort of thing continued night after night for six or seven nights, different chiefs officiating each night, each going through the usual rigmarole of expressing his own greatness and how much he delighted in feeding everybody, but the feasts given on different nights varied considerably. One night they used *nawhaskin* or soap-berries. These berries were dried in cakes, and a portion was put into a pail of perfectly clean water and well beaten with the hand, when it looked more or less like ice-cream which had been slightly coloured by berry juice. It was sweet to the taste, and very pleasant, and had the advantage that if the hands which were used in the beating were not perfectly clean, it would not foam. Another night oranges were given; cakes on a third, and so on.

One morning during the time of these festivities, Awalaskinis sent two messengers to call all the principal men, or *gi-gikumi*, to a meeting in the woods. They repeated their message in a whisper, and only to those who were considered to be great enough chiefs to be worthy of such an invitation. These chiefs all gathered at the appointed time, in a quiet spot in the woods behind the village, and held a whispered conference to complete arrangements about the wild man or *hamatsa* who was about to be initiated. Awalaskinis was anxious that this should be a success, and told each of the other chiefs in a whisper to bring his crests along with him. One man in speaking said:

'We will advise our children to be ready and rejoice. We all know what to do, it is all in the old custom; we will take our crests with us. All our *hamatsas* will be there, and our young men with their faces blackened.'

In the evening the whole community assembled together again in the large hall of Awalaskinis, and had supper. When this was finished they adjourned and went to their own abode, but shortly afterwards the same four messengers went round to each of the houses, dressed in cedar bark and button blankets, and made a circuit of the village twice, recalling them, and as quickly as possible all assembled once more.

Awalaskinis, like all other chiefs, had a native-made box which was used for a drum. It was decorated by being painted with the crest or crests of the owner, and was more or less in the form of a cube, about three feet each way. When all were assembled, the ceremony began by carrying the box four times around the room. The actors of the different clans were missing, but soon came in dressed to represent various crests. The sea-lions entered first. A doorkeeper was standing to give them entrance or to refuse, and as they came in, he shook his rattle violently a number of times, and the sea-lions marched round the room four times and took their places at the far end of the hall. They were all dressed in their very best suits, but had sea-lion masks covering their heads and faces. When they had all taken their places the seal clan followed, also dressed in their best button blankets and wearing seal masks and red cedar bark. Then followed various other representatives of animals, such as geese, ducks, etc. They were followed by some of the women,

who came in and gave some of the spectacular dances peculiar to the west coast of Vancouver Island. In all, they gave four of these dances, and in doing so, danced round the floor. Just before the conclusion of their fourth dance, the *hamatsa* whistles were heard, and a great noise at the door. Everybody rushed to his seat. The old *hamatsas* came in, and walked round the fire four times, then went behind the curtain, and Awalaskinis's orator got up and welcomed them. They sang two songs, and then the curtain dropped; and the spectators could see masks of different kinds. The curtain only remained down for a minute and rose again, when they sang a third song, and the curtain dropped again. This time all the performers made the noise of the various animals they represented.

When all this was finished, Awalaskinis got twelve children to dance round, the whole dance lasting about four hours, and during all the time various songs were sung. All these twelve children were given a new name, a *potlatch* name. As the night wore on, they went home without any feasting whatever.

Next day all slept until after noon, when Awalaskinis gave another invitation for everybody to come to his house to have something to eat, and while there they were warned by a special messenger that no one must go out at night. They must stay in their houses after dark, for fear the wild man should get them, and they must think about the wonderful things that were to come, and have themselves in good preparation for them.

The next morning they were again called to a feast, which lasted about two hours, and another dance was held

in Awalaskinis's house in the evening. The day following, Kukwakeeluk, who had been impatiently waiting his chance, called all the people together to give another feast, consisting of clams which were steamed on the fire, fish boiled in a big iron pot, biscuits, and tea. This was followed by a dance, and while the dance was going on, the whistles of the *hamatsa* were heard outside, and Awalaskinis gave them all warning that he would do his very best to try and get his *hamatsa* to be present next night for fear he should catch cold running out in the woods naked, and he advised them all to have a bath and get their best clothes ready for the great event which was to take place the next night.

The next afternoon shortly before dark, four heralds were sent again to call all the chiefs to another secret meeting in the forest behind the village, which was well attended. This meeting, like the other, was conducted in a very low tone, much of it in whispers, and the speaker, who knew of certain jealousies and rivalries which were beginning to take definite shape, asked all the chiefs to use their greatest influence to avoid bickering and quarrelling while the *hamatsa* dance and feast were on, as they did not want the peace and harmony of the affair to be spoiled by any untoward event.

Negadsi, chief of the Kwawkewlths, spoke first: 'On account of the greatness of Awalaskinis and because he is doing so much for the people and will give away so much, I will advise my people, as I have always done on similar occasions, to behave with the greatest decorum. I will exercise my authority as head chief, and also as head of my own clan, to see that nothing occurs to mar the initiation of the young *hamatsa*.'

Negai of the Mamilillikullas spoke next: 'Although I have not a very happy feeling at the present time, I will keep my feelings under control until this feast is over, but then I shall have something to say. I will advise my young people accordingly.'

The other chiefs answered in a similar strain, until it came to the chief of the Tsawataineuks, which was the lowest in rank in the order of precedence. After expressing his acquiescence to the request, he turned to Awalaskinis and said: 'How many are to disappear?'

'Twenty, and each one with his crest.'

Arrangements were then made both for the singing of old songs and also for new ones, for the new *hamatsa*. The dance was to commence about seven o'clock, and last until three in the morning. The chiefs then dispersed and wended their way by different routes back to the village, so that no two of them would be seen together.

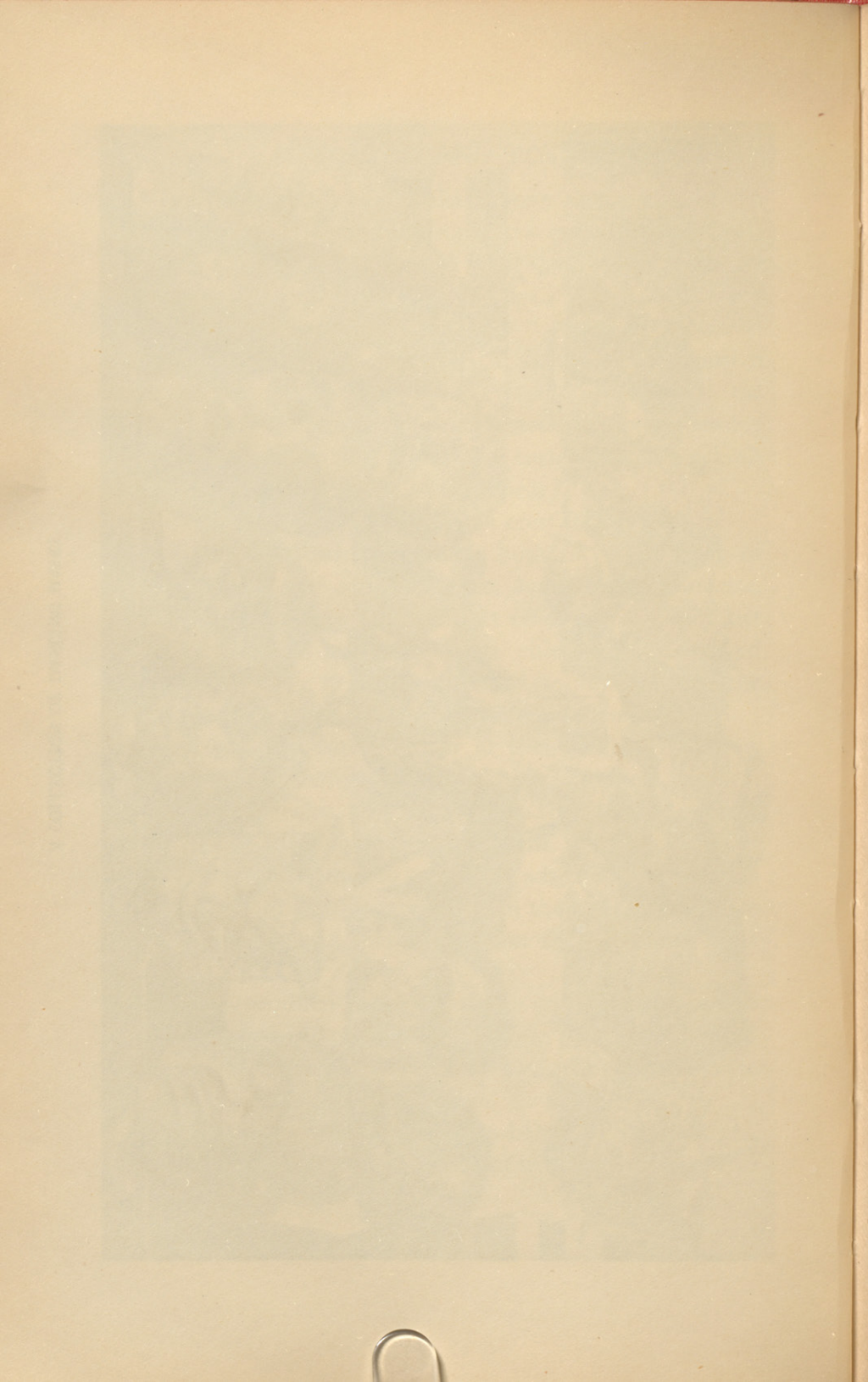
After they had eaten supper at their different houses, and had arrayed themselves in their best blankets, clothes, and red cedar girdles, they awaited the summons to present themselves at the house of Awalaskinis. The usual four heralds were sent round to call the heads of all the families to come and bring their families with them, and they were told that as it was a special occasion they must all wear their best outfits.

As they assembled at the house the doorkeeper assigned them each to a seat, according to clans, in two circles around the fire. When they were all seated the speaker rose and said:

'Chiefs, nobles, and friends! On behalf of Awalaskinis, I welcome you once more. To-night will be a very eventful



A COLLECTION OF DANCING MASKS



night; I hope all the dances will be good, and that you will enjoy them to the utmost, and have a real good time. You must all try and do your best, and we hope to get the new *hamatsa* to-night.'

Negadsi, the head chief of the Kwawkewlths, and by virtue of this, the head chief of all assembled, rose and replied:

'By virtue of my position as chief of the Kwawkewlths, I will act as master of ceremonies. I hope that everything will be done in order, as our fathers and forefathers have done in past years from time immemorial. I will put on one of my own dances first.'

The singers were all gathered together at the far end of the building, sitting in two lines facing each other, with a board on the ground between them, on which they each beat time with two sticks, while the musician at the end used a big box as a drum. They then commenced one of the old songs of the Kwawkewlth chief's *hamatsa*. A woman dressed in a blanket, decorated with the crest of their chief, came in from behind the screen and danced the dance for which the music was played. She practically stood still, but swayed in rhythm to the music, with her knees slightly bent, but with her arms bent at the elbows to allow her hands to keep time.

When she had finished, Kwol-sil-as, the head chief of the Mamililikullas, followed with his song and dance, and so on until each tribe represented had exhibited his chief's dance. Each dance was repeated four times, and as seven tribes were present, it took a long time to get through this part of the ceremony. When it was finally completed, the master of ceremonies called for the grizzly-bear dance.

Each chief of every clan, claiming the bear as his crest, made a speech, the substance of each being that he was only doing as his fathers and forefathers had done, only he was doing it in a better way.

The raven clan was next called on to give their dance. Four dancers dressed as ravens came out from behind the curtain and danced. One of the beliefs connected with the *hamatsa* custom is that when the *hamatsa* heard the raven croak or sing he got wild; and as the song got wilder and quicker, the old *hamatsas* rushed out from behind the curtain, dressed only in cedar-bark decorations. They raced round the room four times, uttering hideous cries, and then grabbed four people from the audience, and ran away with them, in spite of their shrieks and yells. A few seconds later a messenger entered the house, carrying with him the clothes of the victims, which he claimed he had found at the doorstep, but that the spirits had run off with the owners.

The master of ceremonies then made a speech and warned every one, particularly the singers, that they were not to make any unseemly noise which would disturb the *hamatsa* or a fearful doom would await them. He then called for the *hokok* dance.

The *hokok* is an imaginary creature, a combination of fish, bird, and beast, and his song was a very plaintive one. The singers started the song of the *hokok*, but it seemed to infuriate the *hamatsas* still more, for they tore in again and carried off five more victims. During the next dance, the dancing woman caught her foot in a forked stick lying on the floor, and stumbled. Before she could recover herself she was seized by the *hamatsas* and carried away. During

these dances no one was allowed to walk around while the dancers were coming in, during their performances, or as they went out, without violation of the custom. One small boy wishing to get to the other side of the room, crossed near the door and sat down by his mother; two of the grizzly bears circled the room, grabbed him up, and disappeared.

Another boy was carrying in a pail of water to satisfy the thirst of some of the dancers, and he too disappeared. Shortly after, a messenger entered with the pail and sweater of the water-boy, and clothes of the others.

The master of ceremonies again stood up and made another speech. He said the *hamatsa* had got all these victims, and warned the people to be more careful while the ghost dance was put on.

This dance was done by four performers, each dressed in a white sheet. Their faces were concealed, and as they danced round the fire they extended and waved their arms alternately. Four songs were sung during this dance, but during the third song the *hamatsas*, who had hitherto been reasonably quiet, now made a great noise, and ran hither and thither through the building, blowing their weird whistles.

Above the noise in the room, a strange whistle, unlike the others, was heard outside, travelling quickly towards the building. Footsteps were heard running on the roof, while the same wild whistle continued. One board in the ceiling was lifted, and a head appeared in the opening and uttered at the same time a blood-curdling yell. In former times the new *hamatsa* would drop into the fire, but on this occasion he first inserted one leg through the hole, and then withdrew it, then one arm, and withdrew it, finally lowering himself until he was hanging by his hands.

The old *hamatsas* down below ran for a strip of canvas, and held it above the ground, into which the new *hamatsa* dropped. He was dressed entirely in hemlock boughs tied round his person, but when he reached the ground, after uttering an unearthly scream and blowing his whistle, he ran towards the back of the building, shedding the boughs as he went, until when he reached the outdoors he was entirely naked.

The ceremony up to this point had taken six hours, and the master of ceremonies advised the people to return to their homes and rest. They left the house of Awalaskinis and dispersed to their houses, but found rest almost impossible. Whistles were blowing continuously, the old *hamatsas* were racing up and down through the village, and the peaceful little village of Yeleese was transformed into a scene of wild disorder.

Next morning the heralds were sent round at an early hour, and every one was invited to the house of Awalaskinis for breakfast. Each person present was then given a girdle of cedar bark by the speaker, and when he had received it he went behind the curtain or screen which was stretched across one corner of the room, where the girdle was put on him by attendants before he returned to his seat. This curtain was a new one, taking the place of the one which had been used for the previous dances; it was in plain white, with the exception that the raven crest had been painted on it in black.

The four heralds were sent out together, and returned, each carrying a large basin full of feathers, which they distributed to all the assembly, so that each person's head was decorated with them. Each chief was presented with





A TEMPORARY TOTEM

a rattle, with which he kept time while the musicians were singing, during which time the old *hamatsas* left the room to look for the new *hamatsa*. They proceeded to the extreme right of the village, where they found Klalis hidden under a tree shivering with the cold. He was there taught to dance the old dances, and reviewed the new one which he was to perform before the assembly when the proper moment arrived; he also rehearsed the necessary eight songs, some old and some new, and among them a new one specially set apart and dedicated to himself.

When the old *hamatsas* were satisfied that the initiate knew his performance perfectly, they formed themselves into a small procession and started back to the assembly-room, where they found the tribesmen still patiently waiting. The old *hamatsas* entered first, and as they were going in, all those persons who had disappeared joined in the parade and were escorted by two grizzly bears, one raven, and one *hokok*. The ghosts followed, and the new *hamatsa* brought up the rear. As the procession entered, the speaker, who stood just outside the door, warned everybody to be careful. The parade continued round the room before they took their places, and when they were seated the new *hamatsa* raced round the fire four times, and dodged behind the curtain. From this position he raised the centre of the screen, thrust his arm out, and waved it, then yelled four times at the top of his voice, emitting a sound that would have curdled the blood of any one not used to it. A scene of confusion followed. He apparently lost all control of himself, and raced round and round the fire, continuing to emit fearful yells and biting at every one who stood near. In all, eight persons were bitten, either on the

arm, neck, or shoulder, and blood flowed freely from the wounds.

Awalaskinis then rose, and shouting to the attendants to grab the *hamatsa* and hold him still, spoke to the people:

'My forefathers on occasions like this were accustomed to eat human corpses, but I know a better way than that; I will give him a copper to eat. I have here my biggest and most valuable copper. It is worth at least ten thousand blankets. See him eat it!'

He passed the copper to the *hamatsa*, who grabbed it wolfishly with both hands, jammed a corner in his mouth, and chewed at it while he ran four times round the room. Just before he came to the rear door on the last round he threw the copper on the ground, and with an ear-splitting yell disappeared, not to be seen again until night. The room was filled with excited voices. The people who had been bitten were angry and clamoured for some recognition. Awalaskinis, the sly old fox that he was, was prepared for this. He rose to his feet, and with a majestic wave of his hand commanded silence. He then asked one of the young men to bring the copper back to him, and to bring him also a small axe and a hammer. He then addressed the assembly:

'My father and his forefathers before him have been great chiefs, and I am continuing in the way they have done. They owned coppers, and when they had enemies, they were accustomed to put them to shame by the way of the people. This is to break a copper on their account, and put them to shame. I am going to break this copper for my enemies, and I want some assistance. I will call first on the head chief of the Kwawkewlths, he is a man skilled

in these matters, and also I will call on three other great chiefs and have them cut this copper.'

As he was speaking, the four chiefs laid the copper carefully on a block of wood lying on the ground, and using the axe and hammer, cut two pieces off two of the corners.

'I am saving these two pieces which I will deliver later, and you can all wait with fear and trembling to see on whom my vengeance falls. In the meantime, I wish to show you my generosity, my benevolence, and fair-mindedness. Some of you have been bitten by my new *hamatsa*. I will recompense you to a greater degree than any one else has ever done. Amalageuse has been bitten in the neck; I will give him three hundred blankets. Kasalas has been bitten on the arm; I will give him a canoe,' and so he continued until he had made an award to each of the victims. To the spectators he also gave away canoes, more clothing, gingham, and other articles, accompanied by the usual speeches. The meeting then adjourned, awaiting the call of the messengers.

When night came the people assembled again, and watched some of the new dances which were performed in honour of the initiate. He appeared for a short time, and danced one of his own new dances. This programme was repeated for three nights, the days being occupied with sundry feasting, collecting of debts, and making future arrangements for dancing, which required a lot of thought and consideration.

On the third day, Klalis appeared early in the morning just before the crowd dispersed, dressed in his own new mask, and performed his dances.

Every one was now informed that the last or fourth ceremonial was to be a great occasion, and that the festivities were to be held on the evening of the following day.

Accordingly everybody stayed in bed until very late in the morning, and it was well on toward noon before they had breakfast. The messengers were sent round again to call the chiefs and dancers together to practise the mask dance of the new *hamatsa*. As this was a secret session, when they were assembled, Weetsikok rose to his feet and spoke in a voice which was almost inaudible:

'You know that I am the owner of a number of masks. These are mine by right. I have got these in the usual way of our forefathers by right of having two *hamatsas* of my own. One of each of these I will give to the new *hamatsa*; one of them is one that I got when I was *hamatsa* for my father. I will also give new names to some of those who disappeared during the last dances. The new *hamatsa* must dress in a bearskin with a girdle of cedar bark round his head and neck. When the dances are completed I will make a speech. I leave it to you, Awalaskinis, to see that the dancing is properly done, and that the dancers deserve the great gifts I am willing to give.'

The speaker then rose and said: 'On behalf of Awalaskinis, I thank you for your generous offer, and we will see that everything is done properly and in order, and I suggest that we try out the best dancers and only choose those who will perform the dances with the greatest skill. In the meantime, we will have something to eat.'

Candy and fruit were then passed round to those assembled, and while this was being eaten, the new *hamatsa* retired and dressed himself for the occasion. When he

entered the room, the people sang one of his new songs. During the singing, he ran out of the room behind the curtain four times in all, and after his fourth disappearance his masks appeared one by one with a dancer inside, who each danced round the room four times. These dancers were then given six dollars each in cash, and they promised to be on hand and do their very best for the last dance to be held that evening, after which they adjourned until the messengers should call them for the great event of the season.

After their evening meal the four heralds or messengers were sent round to each house, and each in turn invited every one to the last dance. As this was being done, the clan and followers of Awalaskinis were very busy carrying in clothing, pails, and other articles which had been paid him by Kaakstalas in the redemption or *howanaka*. The clothing was hung up round the walls of the building, but the other things were arranged in order on the ground.

Very shortly after, the people began to assemble, and as they came into the building they were all arranged according to their clans. When all apparently were present, the speaker rose and addressed them:

'On behalf of Awalaskinis, I welcome you to this gathering, which is being held in the same way that our fathers and forefathers held them. You have all been very good to be present, and it is the intention of Awalaskinis to give away part of what he received in the *howanaka*, and in order to expedite matters, I will call on the public caller of each clan to assist me, and we will distribute.'

The first to receive were the lads who had been holding back or guiding the new *hamatsa*, and they were each given

two silk handkerchiefs. Those who had cut and supplied the wood for the fires received baskets or other things amounting in value to about four dollars for each person. Messengers received blankets, the poets who had composed the songs were given about two dollars for each song, and so on, until every one who had done even the most trivial work had received something.

When payments for services were completed, the distributors, who had been previously advised by Awalaskinis, gave away something to each person present, commencing at the right hand end of the village, and each one received one or more gifts according to rank. Among the articles given away were sweater coats, underwear, blankets, dishes, pails, baskets, and other things of similar value. When each had received his share of the distribution, there was an intermission in the proceedings to allow the people to take their gifts home, after which they once more assembled to view the final dance.

When they were all gathered again in the building, the new *hamatsa* appeared and danced in his bearskin robe and cedar-bark girdles, as rehearsed in the afternoon. Three of his new songs were sung by the musicians, and he danced the new dances for each of them in turn, then disappeared behind the curtain. Other dancers came out in turn, dressed in masks, while the singers chanted the melody peculiar to each mask in turn. The time had now come for Awalaskinis to address the public personally. During most of the time of the festivities his paid orator did all the talking, but now he spoke to the assembly:

'Friends and nobles! You have witnessed the dance of the *hamatsa*, which has been done as our fathers did it.

The dancers have all done their best, and I wish to compliment them on their efforts. The dance of Weetsikok now belongs to me, and I wish you to remember this. I now own more dances and crests than any one else, and when all the giving away has been completed, you must all admit that I shall take first rank as chief.'

The crowd then joined in singing the fourth song of the *hamatsa*, and while they were singing, twelve young lads escorted the new *hamatsa* while he danced in his bearskin robe and mask. When the song was completed the old *hamatsas* blew their whistles, and the new *hamatsa* and his followers walked slowly round twice, and then went behind the curtain.

This was followed by a series of dances given by the owners of the various crests, such as the raven, bear, fish, etc., which lasted till about four o'clock in the morning, when the spectators left the building and went home, leaving only the performers and younger men of the clan of Awalaskinis. They cleaned up the room and burned all the rubbish. When the place was tidy, a big mat was spread on the floor, on which the new *hamatsa* and the twenty people who had disappeared all squatted in two rows facing one another. While they were in this position, they were thus addressed by the orator of Awalaskinis:

'We have followed out a very old custom of our fathers and forefathers, and we have almost finished what we had to do, but before we finish, I want to explain certain matters to you. We have been using the red bark in our dance. That signified struggle and war in which the red blood in men became stirred up until it had to get busy and show itself. That made the *hamatsa* bite and tear at

other people. You saw how, near the end of the dance, feathers were used, more particularly the down off the eagle. This was done to purify all the people, as the white down is the emblem of purity, and it was necessary to take away from all present this desire on the part of red blood to do something evil. You who are left have done a great deal in the performance, and the knowledge I have just imparted to you is for your future guidance, and you in turn will pass it on to others at the proper time, so that all our old customs may never die out or become altered. These customs are old and well-tried, and should never be changed.

'However, there is one thing more to be done. You have had the purification by the feathers, but now it is further necessary to purify you by water, as you are more in need of this cleansing because you were so active in carrying out your duties, and may you always be ready to do your part in these ceremonies and teach others to do so too.'

One of the attendants passed along each row and poured water on the head of each. He was followed by another attendant, who combed each head of hair thoroughly with a big comb. When this ceremony was completed, Awalaskinis came out and gave each of them an additional gift, and they went home as dawn was breaking.

CHAPTER VIII

THE 'POTLATCH'

AFTER the strenuous days and nights taken up by the *hamatsa* festivities there was a rest of three days, during which nothing of any importance was done. The time was spent chiefly in resting, with the exception of the usual wood-cutting by the men, and the washing and house-keeping by the women.

On the fourth day, however, things began to move. The clan of Awalaskinis got very busy and carried the remainder of the property received in the *howanaka*, or redemption, and had it all nicely arranged and spread out in full view. This was done for two reasons. First, in order that all might see what a tremendous amount of property was to be given away and what a great chief Awalaskinis must be to give it away; and second, it was an unwritten law that everything, even to the smallest trifle that was paid and received in the *howanaka*, should be thus dealt with, and accordingly it must be all there for inspection.

When arrangements were all completed, two messengers were sent round bidding all the people to come, and as every one present knew that there was an unusual amount to be given away, and that each share would therefore be large accordingly, but would also entail a corresponding

liability on the part of the receivers, no one could willingly be absent, so that the crowd was exceptionally large.

When they were all assembled, Awalaskinis himself took the floor and addressed the people. 'Friends, chiefs, and nobles of the various tribes gathered here! I want you all to know that I am now about to give away to all of you so much that no other chief has ever eclipsed me in the matter of giving. You all know that my generosity is very great towards you all. I have feasted and fed you now for some weeks, as becomes a great chief, but that sinks into insignificance beside what I am about to do. You will all remember my benevolence as long as you live, and you will also remember the great value of all that I am now about to give. To-day, according to the custom of our fathers and forefathers, I am about to distribute a portion of the *howanaka*, and had I not been such a great chief, and allied with such a great chief as Weetsikok, I could never have hoped to accomplish what I am now about to do.'

The young men then came forward and gifts of button blankets, silk handkerchiefs, and clothing were distributed to each and every person present, according to clan. The first to receive were the eagle clan of the Kwawkewlths, then the whale clan, next the wolf, last the grizzly bear. These constituted the clans of that tribe in order of precedence. The Mamlillikullas followed according to clans, and so on down the line until each individual had received his portion. The chief of each clan made a short speech on behalf of himself and his clan, all in turn stating what a great chief Awalaskinis was, and how pleased they were to partake of his hospitality. For each speech made by a chief

an extra blanket was given him. All the speeches, however, were not eulogistic. Kakanus, of the Mamtagu branch of one of the tribes, was very angry.

'I came here at the invitation of Awalaskinis. It had been told me that he was a great chief and a very generous one. I came willingly, that I might partake of his hospitality, and at the same time receive payment from him for what I gave him at my *potlatch*. Instead of his giving me five blankets with interest thereon, he has only given me three, and I fail to see why he should be called great or generous. I call him only a third-rater.'

This complaint and several others of a similar nature were, however, amicably adjusted by extra gifts being given to the grumblers, but the harmony of the gathering was considerably disturbed, and it grew worse as the days went on.

When three of the tribes had received their portions, there was a brief pause, and Awalaskinis stood up before the whole crowd with his speaker's staff in his hand, and rapped four times to draw the attention of the people to himself.

'I want you all to know that while I am still strong, and still able to do my business, I intend to make my will. You know that I have a great many crests, which I am going to divide into three portions. The eagle crest and all that belongs to it, together with the coppers and the debts both owing to me and by me on account of it, I give to my eldest son. Heretofore you have known him by the name of Kwa-yim-gal-eese, but from now on, in all matters pertaining to our Indian customs, he will be known by the name of Kwa-yim. He will assume all responsibility for the debts which I have contracted for this portion of

my *potlatch*, and any other people or chiefs giving a *potlatch* will give him the portion that would come to me at any of these gatherings. Of course, so long as I live this portion will be mine, but if anything happens to me, it is to go to Kwa-yim. To-morrow I intend giving away the pails, dishes, crockery, etc., and I hope you will all be able to be present to receive what is coming to you. At the second meeting I will dispose of more of my property, and make more of my will in public.'

The next day, owing to the multitudinous number of articles to be given away, the clan got busy very early and carried out the pails, dishes, and glassware which were to be distributed, and laid them out in rows ready for distribution when the time should come. Two messengers were sent out, and the people were called together again. Before anything else was done, Awalaskinis stood up and addressed them again:

'I have to thank you all for coming at my request, to partake of my gifts and of my hospitality, but I feel that I must give credit and thanks to Weetsikok for what he has done. Many years ago I bargained with him through *kadzakla* for Kaakstalas, who has been my wife, and the property which I gave to Weetsikok for her has through his careful management more than trebled itself, and he has given it to me in the redemption of his daughter, and I in my turn am passing it on to you. You can see how we are keeping up with the customs of the people, and we have made ourselves unsurpassable as chiefs. I thank you all, but before sitting down I want the caller of each clan to call out the people of his own clan to come forward and receive his portion.'

The chief of each clan in turn got up and praised Awalaskinis and Weetsikok, and thanked them for their generosity and for their honesty, and the more fulsome the flattery, and the more flowery the speeches were, the larger was the gift the speaker received. Each of these speakers was given not less than ten dollars' worth of the materials which were ready to be given away. One chief of the Tanakteuks waxed so eloquent in his thanks that he was given about twenty-five dollars' worth. When the giving away of this material was completed Awalaskinis again rose, and told the people that his nephew was now taking the second ranks in all that belonged to him by rights.

'You have known him heretofore as Ho-sum-tas, but from now on his name will be Kul-teet-sum. You all know that these possessions are mine to give away, and as I told you yesterday, I want to know that when I die and am gone, there will be no quarrelling or wrangling or disputes over my property. I want you all to know that these second ranks will all belong to Ho-sum-tas.'

When all the giving away for the day had been completed, the announcement was made that the next day trunks, bureaus, dancing costumes, sewing-machines, and camphorwood boxes and things of that ilk would be distributed.

Accordingly, after the people had assembled the next day and had received their portions in a similar way to that of the previous day, Awalaskinis completed the making of his will, and announced that the rest of the ranks, crests, and debts would be given to Klalis, his son, the one who had just been initiated into the *Hamatsa*. They were further reminded that a day's rest would be given before

any more giving away, after which they would be invited to the biggest feast that they had ever seen in all their lives.

The day of rest was spent by the clan of Awalaskinis in the rehearsing of a new song for the great feast, which was about to be given. This song was to tell the life-history of Awalaskinis and his family from time immemorial. It would remind the listeners that this family had been accustomed to giving feasts and selling coppers in order to feed the people, and putting coppers on the fire to feed the people, and doing various other things to help everybody else along. The song was composed by Negaik-silokw, who was the poet of the tribe, and he received in payment for it cash amounting to twenty dollars, and a pair of new blankets. The song was rehearsed several times, till the soloists were word-perfect, and they all adjourned.

The next morning fifteen hundred bags of flour were stacked, forming an arch over the roadway, and messengers were sent out calling all the people. They came in great excitement, as they knew that a lot of decisions, some of them very vexatious, would be arrived at that day, and a lot of new arrangements for future gatherings would be made. Each clan of every tribe present had had a private meeting to talk things over, and to know just what they were prepared to do in all future gatherings. The people seated themselves outside in a huge circle, and Awalaskinis's speaker stood up and called on the Kwawkewlth people to sing the song of Owhawalagaleese. The singing commenced, and while it was going on, Owhawalagaleese himself got up and started to speak:

'My father and grandfather and his forefathers before him were great chiefs. We were so great and our fires so big that our smoke would go out and cover all the country round about. This smoke going out was typical of the great gifts that we were always giving out to the people round about. I have the right to stand here before you; I have been waiting for a long time and I am intending to call for my copper as soon as the fishing season for salmon is over. You all know how much I paid for that copper—fourteen thousand blankets. Is there anybody here who is wealthy and important enough to buy my copper so that with the proceeds of it I can give a great feast and feed all the people? It is no use any little chief standing up, because, as you know, my copper is now worth a great deal more than fourteen thousand blankets.'

There being no answer for some considerable time, Negadsi, head chief of the Kwawkewlths, rose and said how pleased he was that Owhawalagaleese had made such a great speech and promised to give such a big feast that they need never be ashamed to appear either before their friends or their enemies in the future.

'This copper of Owhawalagaleese seems to be beyond the reach of any one to buy at the present time, but I want to remind you that Wanook has in his possession my copper known as Kwayimkim, and he must pay for it as soon as the fishing is over, so that I can give a big feast.'

Wanook stood up, and said he would be ready to make payment as soon as the fishing was over, and nothing would give him more pleasure or more delight, so that it would be his own, and bring great honour on him and his family, and the price of it would be a mere nothing in

their estimation. He also reminded them that, as Wanook, he was the owner of a river, and that as the supplies of everything in a river were always very abundant, so supplies in his house would be very abundant, and he would be glad to call all the people together to extend his hospitality, and to share his wealth with them.

The next song which was sung was the song of the Mamilillikullas, and while it was being sung, Negai, one of the chiefs, stood up and ordered one of his clan to go to his house and bring his copper Kweechanum. When this was done, he stood up and said:

'This is my copper. It was bought and paid for, but I want a partner in with me on this deal, and I will ask Mawhalagaleese. Mawhalagaleese, will you stand up and offer it for sale? I want a quick sale, and cash payment for it.'

Mawhalagaleese stood up and in true auctioneering style waved the copper round, and after thanking Negai for the honour done him in taking him in as a partner, said:

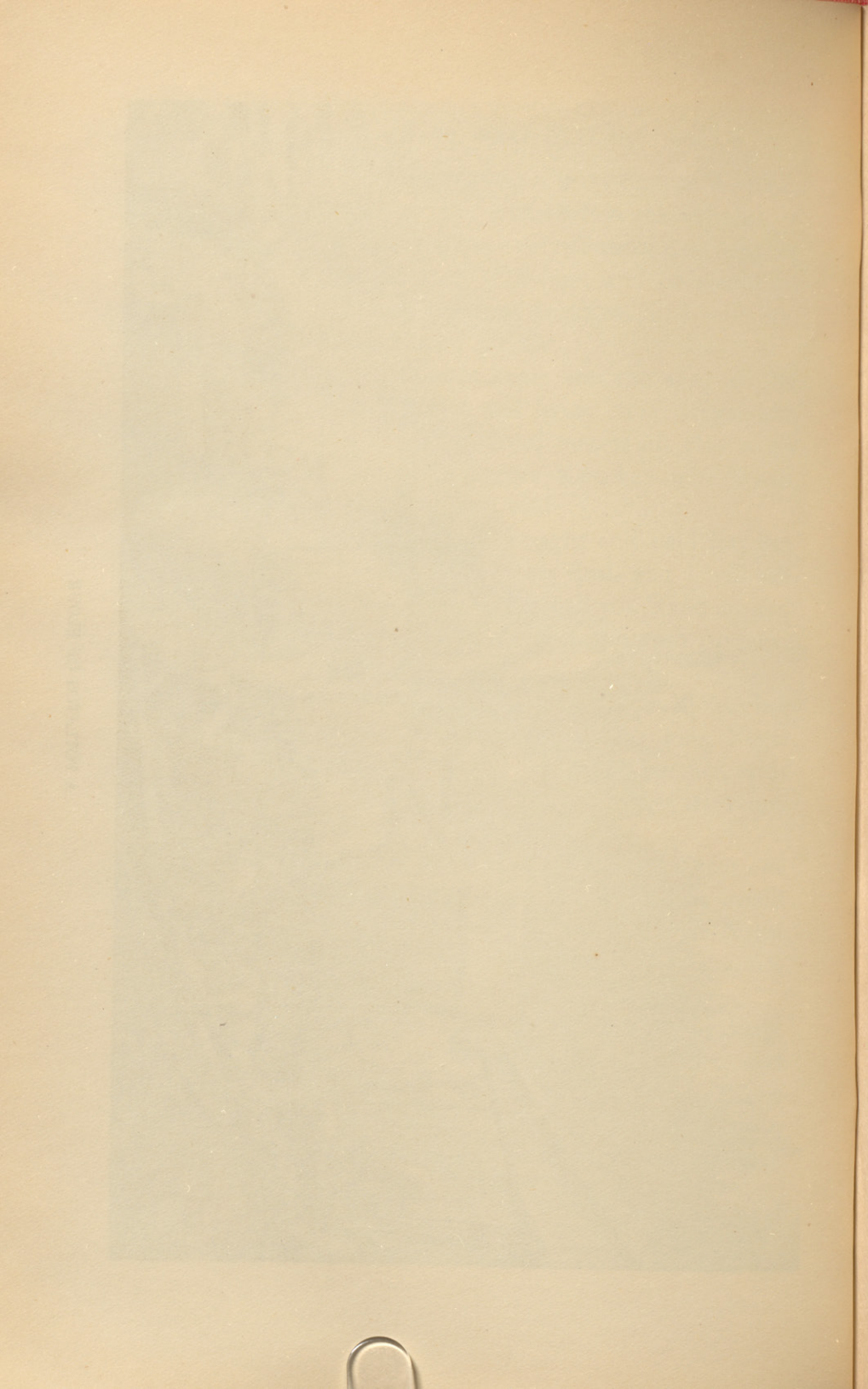
'You all know this copper. You all know its value. How much am I offered?'

Yakoglasimi, the chief of the Tanakteuk tribe, sent one of his clan to go and get the copper, and he said he would buy it at fifty per cent advance on the price that Negai had given for it, and would make payment within a few days, which offer was accepted.

Each tribe in turn then sang their own peculiar song, and made a promise to do something in the future, and would give either a feast or a dance or a *potlatch*. When all these arrangements had been made to the satisfaction of every one, the flour was given away according to clans



A POTLATCH OF FLOUR



and precedence, the amount to each person varying from five to twenty sacks. When the flour was all distributed, the singers stood up and sang the new song, and while they were singing, two large wooden feeding-dishes of Awalaskinis's were brought out, and exhibited to the people full of grease. They consisted of two huge basins, one made like a whale, and the other resembled a full-grown wolf. They were hollowed in the centre, and each had a capacity of possibly twenty-five gallons. While the song was being sung, all the family of Awalaskinis stood up and danced. One sack of flour remained where the pile had been, and had not been given away, and as soon as the song was completed, one of the clan brought in the two broken pieces of the copper, which he handed to Awalaskinis. With one piece of the copper in each hand, Awalaskinis stood up and said:

'No such feast has ever been given as I have given you to-day. Fifteen hundred sacks of flour is a very great pile, but I am a very great chief, and I would be ashamed to do anything for you that was not great. You noticed while the *hamatsa* feast was on, that I cut up my copper, and I told you that I had two pieces reserved, which I intended to use later on. Now I am going to show you what will become of one of these pieces. I will put it on the fire, with this sack of flour which remains and the grease from my feeding-dishes. It is being put on the fire so that no use can ever be made of it again, and the flour is being put on the fire to show how great my smoke is. To-morrow I complete my giving away with all the blankets which I received for the sale of my copper, which you witnessed, but I want you to remember that this other

piece of copper which I hold in my hand I will also give away, and you know what that means.'

The people who were present were somewhat relieved to know that there could only be one victim left for the vengeance of Awalaskinis, which was referred to in his speech, and they commenced to think each one to himself: 'Is it I?'

In the evening, the clan and singers of Awalaskinis gathered together and had a little practice of the songs which were to be sung the next day. There were to be two songs, one an old one, giving the life-history of Awalaskinis's ancestors from away back before his great-grandfather was born, showing what great chiefs they had been, and how much they had given away. The new song was one which had just been composed by the poet and would show how much greater Awalaskinis was than any of his forefathers had been, as the feast and *potlatch* which he had just given far surpassed any that had ever been given before.

In the morning, messengers were sent out again to call the people. They all came into the house of Awalaskinis, and when all were assembled and the place quiet, the singers sang the old song. Awalaskinis stood up with a new staff in his hand, the top of which was carved into a miniature totem, and spoke as follows:

'You see in my hand this new staff. You see on the top of it a new totem.' He held the staff up for all to see. 'Whenever you see this totem in use you will all remember this great *potlatch*. This is the first time that this staff has been used, but it will be used always after this at all great gatherings and *potlatches*. I am now going to give you a

short history of the song which has just been sung. It told you how my great-grandfather was a chief and how he gave away to all the people, and he bought two coppers. Then his son, who was my grandfather, succeeded him, and he was even greater than his father; he also bought coppers and sold them, and gave away to the people. My father followed, and he was even greater than his father had been. Now I come next, and my greatness is far beyond that of my own father. You see beside me my son Klalis. I want him to stand up.'

Klalis stood up, and an attendant came in from one of the rooms at the back, carrying in his hands the mask of a giant, which he placed on the head of Klalis. Awalaskinis continued:

'This is the greatest honour that can be done to any young man, to have on this new mask; and while Klalis is standing with this on, I am going to call on the singers to sing my new song. While it is being sung, Klalis will hold this little piece of copper in his hand.'

The singers accordingly sang the new song, which was similar to the old one, only that more additions had been made, citing in succession all the numerous gifts which had been given away at the present *potlatch*. The song lasted about half an hour, and when it was completed, each singer was paid ten dollars in cash for his efforts, while the poet who had composed it received twenty dollars. Awalaskinis then spoke again:

'In addition to the other honours which I own, I am now going to join the eagle clan. I am doing this because I have given this great *potlatch*, and as you are aware, yesterday I made Klalis heir to all the honours excepting

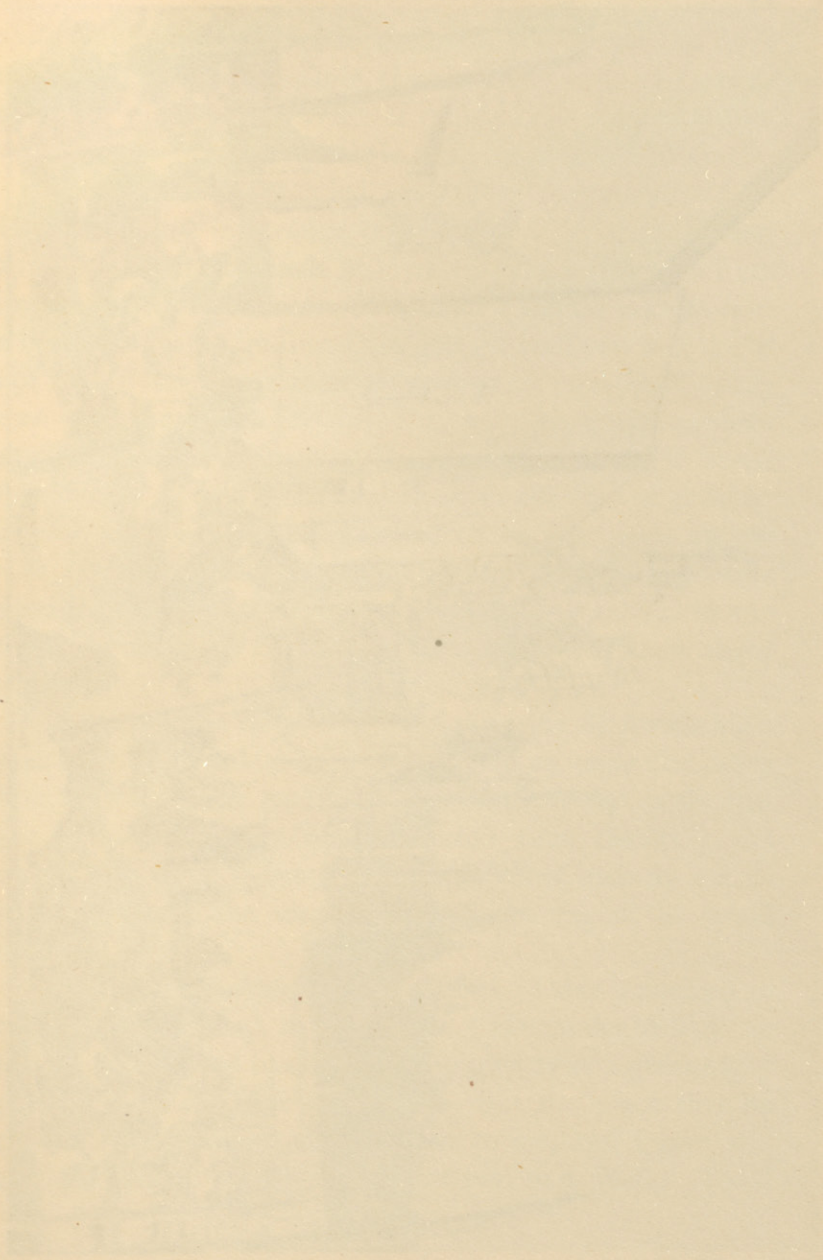
those which were given to Kwa-yim and Kul-teet-sum. My boy Klalis hereafter at all *potlatches* will be called Negadsi. You all know what that means—"higher than the highest mountain"—and I know that because of the generous gifts which I have given to you, you will accept him. This piece of copper I have in my hand, as you all know, is a piece I broke out of another copper a few days ago. This is one of the privileges that all chiefs have, to break a copper and to give a piece of it to an enemy. My father broke four coppers, Nunkamala, Kawee, Kweehanum, and Adamkwalee, which were all paid for. My grandfather and his father broke five coppers, and my family fully understands this business of breaking coppers for our enemies. Now there is present here one man who has been my enemy for years. He has pretended to be my friend, but all the time he has been working against me, and now I am going to give him this piece of copper. I know that he is unable to do as well as I have done, but if he does, we will fight it out in the old way. I am going to give this piece of copper to Negai of the Mamilillikullas!

Awalaskinis carried the piece of copper to Negai, who accepted it without speaking.

There was silence for some considerable time, then the speaker of Awalaskinis's clan got up and said:

'You have heard what has been said, and I need not repeat it, but I will call on the caller of the clan now to give away the blankets which were received from the sale of the copper.'

The giving away was done in the usual way, first the eagle clan of the Kwawkewlths, then the other clans, one by





A POTLATCH OF FLOUR

one. The Mamilillikullas occupied the next rank as a tribe, and having an eagle clan in their tribe the eagles got their share first. When it came to the turn of Negai, who was the head of the eagle clan, he got up and spoke:

'Awalaskinis has singled me out as being his enemy. He is under the impression that because I have been having a struggle with Komaxala in my own village therefore I am impoverished, and consequently that I should have to take a back seat from him, but I am going to tell you that this is not so. I am going to send my young men back to my own village, and in a few days they will return with coppers worth far more than this one, and I am going to break these and I am going to hurl them in the face of Awalaskinis! I accept the blankets which he has given me, as it is my right and privilege to accept them. He owes a goodly portion of them to me, and I don't intend to use them as part of my defiance to him. You will know about this later.'

The next tribe to receive were the tribe of Awalaskinis himself, the Nimpkish, and as they had an eagle clan, they first received their portion. The head of the eagle clan got his without any remarks other than thanking the donor, but when it came to the next chief, named Tatanseet, who held the second rank in the eagles, he stood up and said:

'You all heard Awalaskinis say that he was intending to take the second rank in the eagles. He thinks because he is a great chief and has been able to give away a great many gifts that others have no rights. But the place that he claims he is going to take belongs to me, and I give you all notice that I am going to fight him to a finish. I will

join forces with Negai, who is also an eagle, though not of my tribe, and we will show Awalaskinis that he is only a third-rate chief, and not a great chief; that he is not so great as he thinks he is.'

The rest of the tribes received their portions without very much comment, but everybody was looking forward to a right royal fight according to the Indian custom between Awalaskinis and the two men who had hurled their defiance at him. The general comment was that no matter who got hurt, the rest of them would all receive more or less benefit, as a great deal of property would of necessity be given away in connection with it.

Before the crowd dispersed, Awalaskinis through his speaker informed them that on the following day he would erect his totem in commemoration of the greatest feast that had ever been given by any chief.

Next morning the usual messengers were sent out and called the people together as before. This time Awalaskinis himself took his speaker's staff in his hand and addressed the assembled tribes:

'I have given the greatest feast and the greatest *potlatch* that has ever been given. I have been brought up to do it. All my previous generations have had the desire to give away, and they all have done it, but none of them nor any one else has been able to do as much as I have done. I have had the best carvers obtainable at work for some time, and I have had the best painters obtainable to finish their work, and I will erect my totem to remind you all how great a chief I am and how much I have given away. In earlier days when my father and my grandfather erected their totems, they put two living slaves in the bottom of

the hole and dropped the pole in on top of them. These slaves were worth a great deal of money, and only great chiefs and wealthy men could use slaves for that purpose. When my grandfather put up his totem, one of the slaves jumped out of the hole and tried to run away, but he was promptly clubbed to death, and because he tried to shirk his duty his son was forced to take his place as a live offering, while the other's body was thrown out for the dogs to eat. To-day we do not have slaves but we have other possessions which are just as valuable, and I am going to put some of my possessions in the hole. I have here a valuable copper for which I paid more than I should have paid for four slaves, and I am going to put it in the hole, and erect my totem over it. It is through owning so many coppers that I have arrived at the position I now hold. I have paid four hundred blankets for my totem, and I intend paying one dollar each to all of you who are present and help me to raise it.'

Many willing hands then carried the totem to the place where it was to stand. It lay along the ground face downwards and covered with the sails of several canoes. Awalaskinis then carefully placed his copper in the bottom of the hole, and by lifting until about the height of a man's head and then by pushing with short poles the totem was erected and the hole carefully filled and well trampled down. The top stood about thirty feet above the ground, and to most of those present it was a thing of great beauty. On the top was a huge eagle, with wings extended to signify that finally the position as an eagle had been obtained by the owner. This was the most honourable place. Below that was a large whale, with its tail upwards, and the head

of a grizzly bear in its mouth, while the grizzly bear was hugging a wolf, which was held upside down. In the teeth of the wolf was the head of a man from which extended in both directions the double-headed snake. Next the ground was the figure of a huge man, with one hand holding to his breast the representation of a copper, which was so large that one corner was close to his mouth, while the other hand reached upwards as if to try and support the *tseetsiulth*, or double-headed snake, which rested on top of his own head. Awalaskinis thus had all his crests combined in this totem, which had been painted in suitable colours. His Raven crest did not appear, as the eagle signified that he was now entitled to the top-most rank. The whale, being upside down, showed his descent through the maternal side of the house. The grizzly bear with his head inside the whale's mouth showed equality of rank through the father, who again had his position equally through the wolf on the mother's side, and the double-headed snake on the father's side. The giant or man who supported it was himself, and he was so wealthy that he could afford to eat coppers.

When the totem was duly inspected, several speeches were made congratulating Awalaskinis on what he had done, and how everybody when they saw the huge pole in front of his house would remember how great a man he was, and how much he had given away.

Tatanseet, however, and Negai, each reminded him that his triumph would be short-lived, and that when they had finished with him he would be singing an entirely different kind of song.

CHAPTER IX

THE RIVALS

Now it so happened that there were present two chiefs from the Mamilillikulla tribes, known as Negai, who has been mentioned several times, and Komaxala. They were approximately the same age, being slightly past middle life, but they had been rivals from their boyhood, and as both were chiefs of the same tribe, although belonging to different clans, their rivalry increased more and more as the years went on. Each of them desired a certain position in the *potlatch* which would give to him the inestimable privilege of having served to him at a seal feast the right-hand flipper of the seal; it would also give to him the privilege at a *potlatch* of having his portion served before the other one, and in addition to that, it would give him the right to be the first speaker at any function which was held. This rivalry had been fanned into flame by some of the younger men, who also had the desire to be chiefs, with the idea that if they could make sufficient trouble between the two, they themselves might have an opportunity for advancement.

It was a very cold, wet night in late December, two years before the date of the events being chronicled, when a feast or banquet was held at a large house in the village of Mimkimish. Of course everybody was there, including

Negai and Komaxala. The object of the feast was to name a new-born child of the host. An unintentional slight had been given to Negai by a careless messenger, who was passing round the food, as the portion which should have been given to him was accidentally dropped on the floor, and was thought unfit for use, but as Negai earlier in the evening had seen the messenger talking to Komaxala, he thought it was a deliberate insult inspired by the latter. When they had finished the repast, which consisted of rice which had been boiled in a very large iron pot, pilot bread of the real old type, which required good teeth to break, and tea which consisted of a large quantity of water, a large quantity of sugar, and a very minimum amount of tea, Negai got up to give what might be termed a vote of thanks to the host, and to wish good luck to the newly named child. Then in the usual Indian fashion, he commenced to praise himself and to decry his great antagonist, Komaxala. He said to some of the young men of his clan:

‘Young men, you go out and bring in what will make my fire bright. My fire will be so bright that it will eclipse all other fires that have ever burned in this village, and as they see the sparks going out from my fire, people will know that I stand ready at all times to pour out my wealth to all with whom I come in contact. I am the great Negai! I am the mountain which is always in eruption, and as the volcano belches forth its thunder, its smoke, and its rocks, so I pour out my gifts upon all with whom I come in contact. Komaxala, my rival, has tried to outdo me, but he is unable to do so. He has been striving to take my position away from me, but he is unable to do so. I am the great Negai, the unbeatable,

the one who always leads, the one who always gives away the most!’

This caused more or less of an uproar, and Komaxala jumped to his feet and made a very similar speech, saying:

‘Since Negai has so far forgotten the rules of common courtesy as to create a disturbance in a friendly meeting of this nature, I feel that I shall be pardoned if I reply to him. Negai has said he is the one who always gives away gifts, and says that his place has been taken from him by fraud by me, but to his face I tell him he is a liar and the father of lies. Negai is the one who by fraud has attempted to steal my position from me, and I warn you all that I intend to regain my rights.’

About the time he had finished his speech several young men came in through the door, dragging with them a huge war canoe, the property of Negai, who had it taken to one side of the room. He then rose majestically to his feet and said: ‘I am going to show you my fire, which will be greater than any fire which has ever burned in this village.’

Thereupon he took an axe and struck the first blow on the canoe and ordered the young men to smash it to pieces and pile them on the fire. This was done, and quantities of *kleena*, which is the Indian word for oolachan grease, was poured on top of the flames, which rose to the ceiling, and as the flames rose higher and higher, so did Negai’s voice rise higher and higher, chanting his own praises and showing how great he was.

While Negai’s fire was still burning brightly Komaxala held a hurried and whispered conversation with two young men of his clan, and they in turn whispered to several others and all disappeared. Presently they returned with a

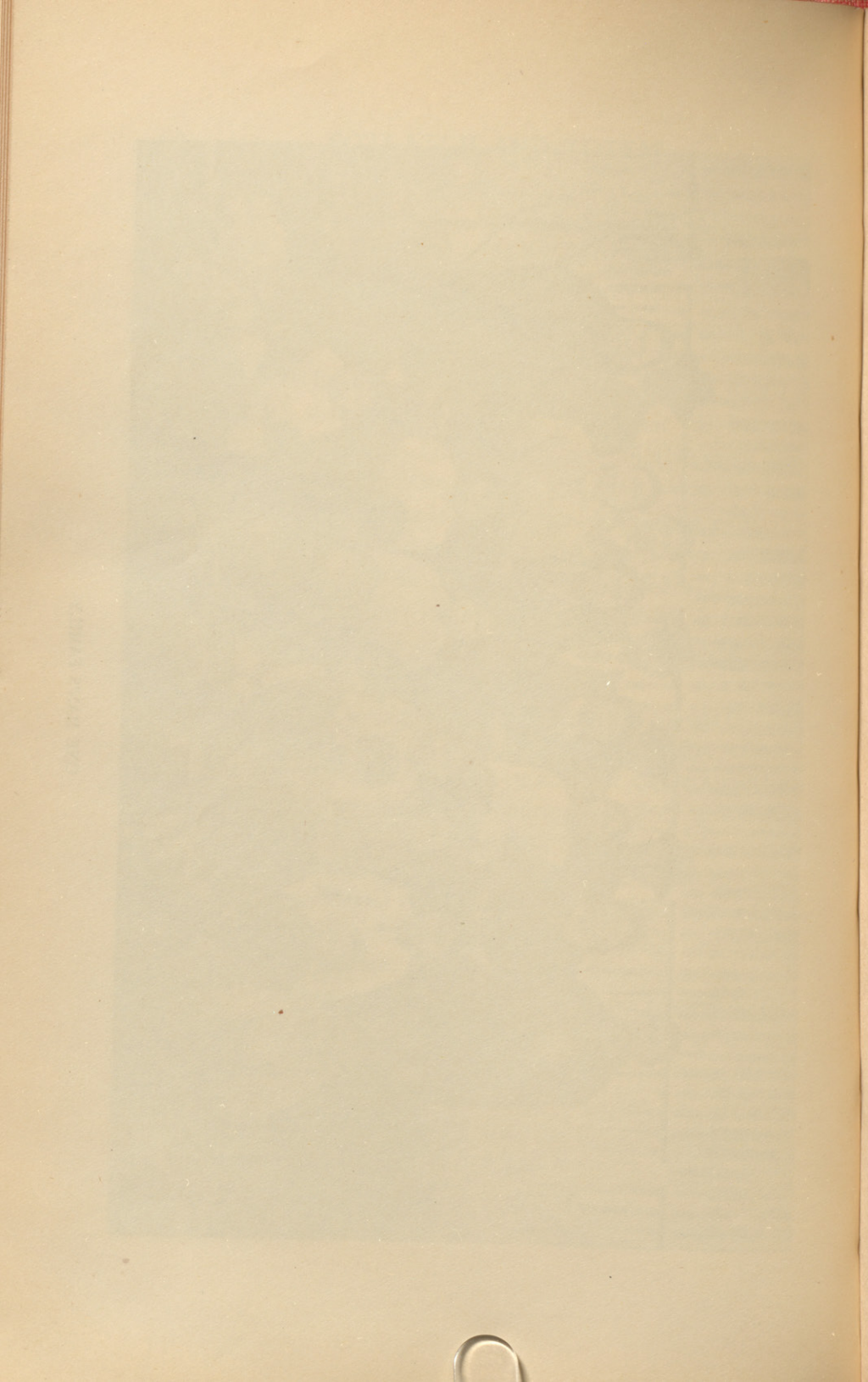
canoe which was even better and larger than the one which had just been destroyed, and which was the property of Komaxala. When they had dragged it into the house as far as its size allowed, Komaxala rose to his feet and, seizing his speaker's staff, commenced an oration somewhat in the following style:

'You have heard what Negai has said, that his fires are the greatest that have ever been seen; that his heart is big towards his people, and that no one can give away gifts like he can, but I am going to tell you, and I now tell him again to his face, that he is a liar; that he does not know the truth, that he never did speak the truth, and that he never could speak the truth on any possible occasion. He tells you his fire is big; I am going to show you a fire that is bigger; I am going to show you that I can give away more gifts than he can. Watch my smoke!'

While he was speaking, the young men had taken axes and had smashed up the canoe and built a big fire with it, and as it was burning, brought in another canoe almost as large, which after a few preliminaries was duly and truly smashed and thrown on to the fire, together with a large quantity of oolachan grease and three sacks of flour. The sacks were opened and the flour spread over the top. One of the young followers of Komaxala had the inspiration that sugar would blaze, and he added a fifty-pound sack of sugar to the flames. Komaxala then sat down triumphantly, with an evil smile at Negai. But Negai was not to be outdone. He sent his young men out, and they brought in three more canoes which they had purchased at Negai's request from the owners, and they in turn were smashed to pieces, thrown on to the fire and burned. With each



ONE MAN'S FAMILY



canoe there was an accompanying speech exalting himself and deriding his opponent. More oolachan grease was burned, and more feasting was done, then Komaxala sent his young men out and they brought in more canoes than Negai had done, and so the battle continued until far, far into the night. In the morning, when stock was taken, they found that in the whole village there was only one small canoe left, which in calm weather would carry one man, and which they had not located the evening before, or it would have gone the same way as the others.

The tribesmen, who were the arbitrators in this matter, after consideration and feasts and gifts given them by both sides, decided it was a dead-heat, and that neither party had advanced one bit more towards obtaining the position which he wanted. The decision on the part of the tribesmen only fanned the flames of rivalry to a much greater extent, and now each one was waiting an opportunity to outdo the other, and apparently here was the chance.

Weetsikok was a man whose influence was very desirable, and his daughter Kaakstalas had redeemed herself and, by the custom, was free to marry again. Each of them, unknown to the other, had been secretly negotiating for Kaakstalas, as they were both widowers, their respective wives having died the year before. Weetsikok, being now almost beggared through the redemption of his daughter, wished to realize on her, as she was his most valuable liquid asset. When, therefore, he found that both these great chiefs were after the same woman, and the woman was entirely under his dominion and could be disposed of by him at any moment, regardless of her own personal

feelings in the matter, he realized that here was his opportunity. During the brief rests between the various parts of Awalaskinis's gathering, after Kaakstalas had redeemed herself, and contrary to the usual custom, he had been secretly and quietly playing one against the other without either Negai or Komaxala knowing anything about the intentions of the other. The usual custom of the Indians was that all negotiations should be carried on through the speaker of the clan to which the intending bridegroom belonged on the one side, and the guardian of the woman on the other.

Negai had made an offer amounting to one thousand blankets; Komaxala had offered eleven hundred blankets. Negotiations then began to drag, when one day, apparently accidentally, Weetsikok told Negai that Komaxala wanted Kaakstalas, and had made him a better offer.

'Why did you not tell my messenger before?'

'He did not ask me, and I did not think it necessary.'

'I will increase my offer by another hundred blankets.'

'Not enough.'

'Another hundred, making it twelve hundred.'

'I will think it over and let you know later. You know it would not be right to give you an answer too soon. I, like you, am a chief, and I can therefore take my time to deliberate.'

Weetsikok afterwards sent for Komaxala, and on his arrival took him quietly on one side and said: 'I am now about to slightly deviate from our usual custom, and will talk with you direct. You are a chief; so am I. You say you want my daughter. So does Negai. Personally I think you are a better man than Negai, and I would

rather see you get her, but Negai has offered me more than you have.'

'How much has he offered?'

'I don't think it would be right to tell you, but it is considerably more than you have done.'

'I will increase my offer by two hundred blankets.'

'I will tell you later, but remember that, all things being equal, I would rather let you have her than Negai.'

Next day, Weetsikok sent for Negai, who came when he conveniently could. Too much haste would show lack of deliberation, and would be unseemly. On his arrival, however, Weetsikok took him away by himself and said quietly: 'You have been negotiating for my daughter in the usual way, and have made an offer. Komaxala has gone one better. If you want Kaakstalas, you will have to raise your offer. Between ourselves, I think you would make the better husband, but you know by the custom I must accept the best offer.'

'How much does he offer?'

'That I am not free to tell you.'

'I will raise my offer.'

'By how much?'

'One hundred blankets.'

'Not enough, I can do better.'

'Another two hundred on top of that, making it fifteen hundred blankets.'

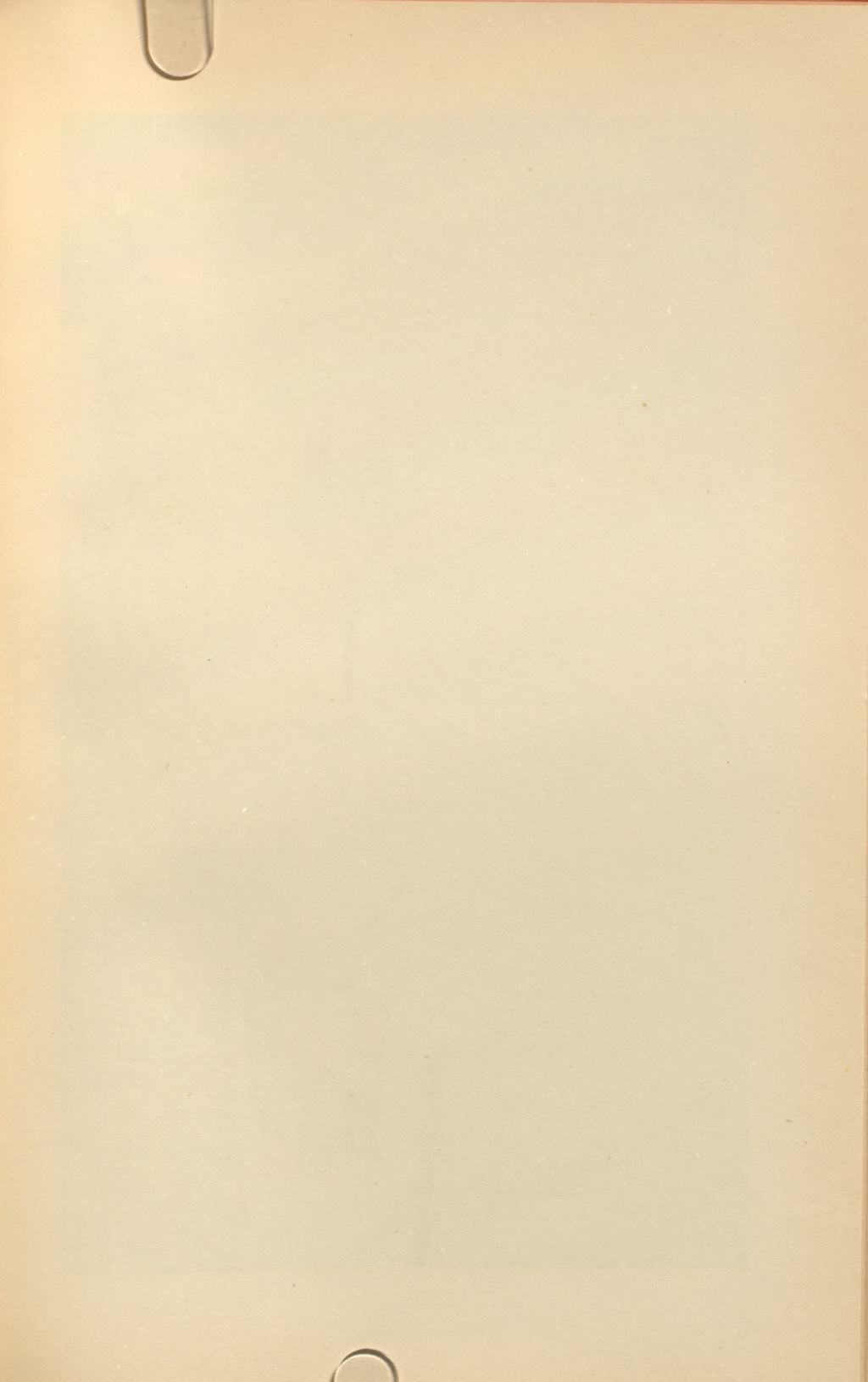
'I will let you know later. Nothing can be done until Awalaskinis finishes, which will not be for more than a week yet.'

Next evening Komaxala was sent for, and was informed that Negai had outbid him. He increased his offer to

eighteen hundred blankets, which in a few days was added to by Negai until the offer amounted to two thousand blankets. Komaxala was now thoroughly aroused. He saw that Negai was trying to get the best of him, and he knew that some of the public were aware of what was going on; in fact the only persons who seemed to be absolutely in ignorance of the negotiations were Kaakstalas and Awalaskinis.

Thinking that if he made a very rapid advance in his bidding he would shut out his rival, he increased his offer to three thousand blankets, which was at that time an unheard-of price for any woman. A woman of ordinary stock, not the daughter of a chief, would realize in some cases as low as one hundred blankets, and at the most not over four hundred. Chiefs' daughters had been known to bring two thousand, but here was an offer of three thousand, and by a man who could pay it, too, as he was the head of a powerful clan and they would be ready to help him. There would be no need to worry about payments in future, if he should call on Komaxala to increase his price.

This was the condition of affairs when Awalaskinis upset all their arrangements and calculations by singling out Negai as the object of his vengeance and forcing him not only to destroy his own three coppers but also to pledge himself to give a bigger feast next year than Awalaskinis had done. It left him staggered from the shock, and he was not able to continue any further negotiations with Weetsikok, and his hated rival, Komaxala, was now in a position to openly make his offer to Weetsikok, which he arranged to do at the very earliest opportunity.





A BLANKET POTLATCH

During a lull in the warfare between Negai and Awalaskinis, at one of the gatherings, when every one was present, the speaker of the clan of Komaxala stood up and said:

'Chiefs and nobles! I am glad to see you all here, and I want you to listen to me for a few moments, as I have something to say to you. You all know that Komaxala is a great chief, and that he has always done what he should do in the matter of giving away. His fathers and forefathers have done the same thing for generations, but they have only done their duty. You all know that Komaxala's wife died a few months ago, and that it is the duty of every chief to have a wife that will do honour to him and to his family. There is amongst you one woman, the daughter of a chief, who is now free to accept an offer of marriage, and it has been arranged with her father that Kaakstalas from now on will be mistress of the home of Komaxala, and will do honour to his clan and to his people. It is not without great deliberation and much thought that it has been decided this way on behalf of Komaxala, and I am now prepared to pay to Weetsikok the sum of three thousand blankets for the privilege of taking his daughter as *kunum* (wife or sewer) for Komaxala.'

Had a bombshell exploded in their midst, the surprise and consternation of Kaakstalas and Awalaskinis could not have been more complete. She had been absolutely kept in the dark about all the arrangements, but according to the custom of the people she could say nothing, and nothing would be left her to do but go with Komaxala. Although she had rejoiced in the welfare of Awalaskinis, and had done everything she could do to help him along, still she

could not forget that she was only a chattel in the hand of her father or whoever might be the head of the clan, and that on three former occasions she had been dealt with in the same way. Was that not what every Indian woman was brought up to expect? On the other hand, Komaxala had the reputation of being a very kind-hearted man, apart from his ambitions. Another thing that pleased her was that no niggardly sum was being paid for her, or to be more exact, she was being given as security for a pledge far exceeding that of any other woman of her acquaintance, and her vanity was thus appealed to. It was more or less the ambition of all her womenkind to be considered worthy to be mated often; in fact, the more often, the more honour to herself and her guardians.

Awalaskinis had been fully aware that at any time such an event could be expected. He had had several wives, only one of whom had died, the others had all redeemed themselves in the same way as Kaakstalas had done. He could only have kindly feelings towards Kaakstalas, as she had made it possible for him to pay out so much at his *potlatch*. This would all have to be repaid by the recipients at a future date, and if he lived, it would be a competence for him even though he was suffering with the burden of debt. If he died, his heirs whom he had just nominated would divide amongst the three of them not only his debts, but also the future receipts. Still it came to him with a terrific shock, and as he would not be allowed to make any interference even if he so desired, as soon as he could get control of himself he set his face to be as impassive as a graven image, and save for the angry glint that came in his eye, none knew that he was sorely wounded. It

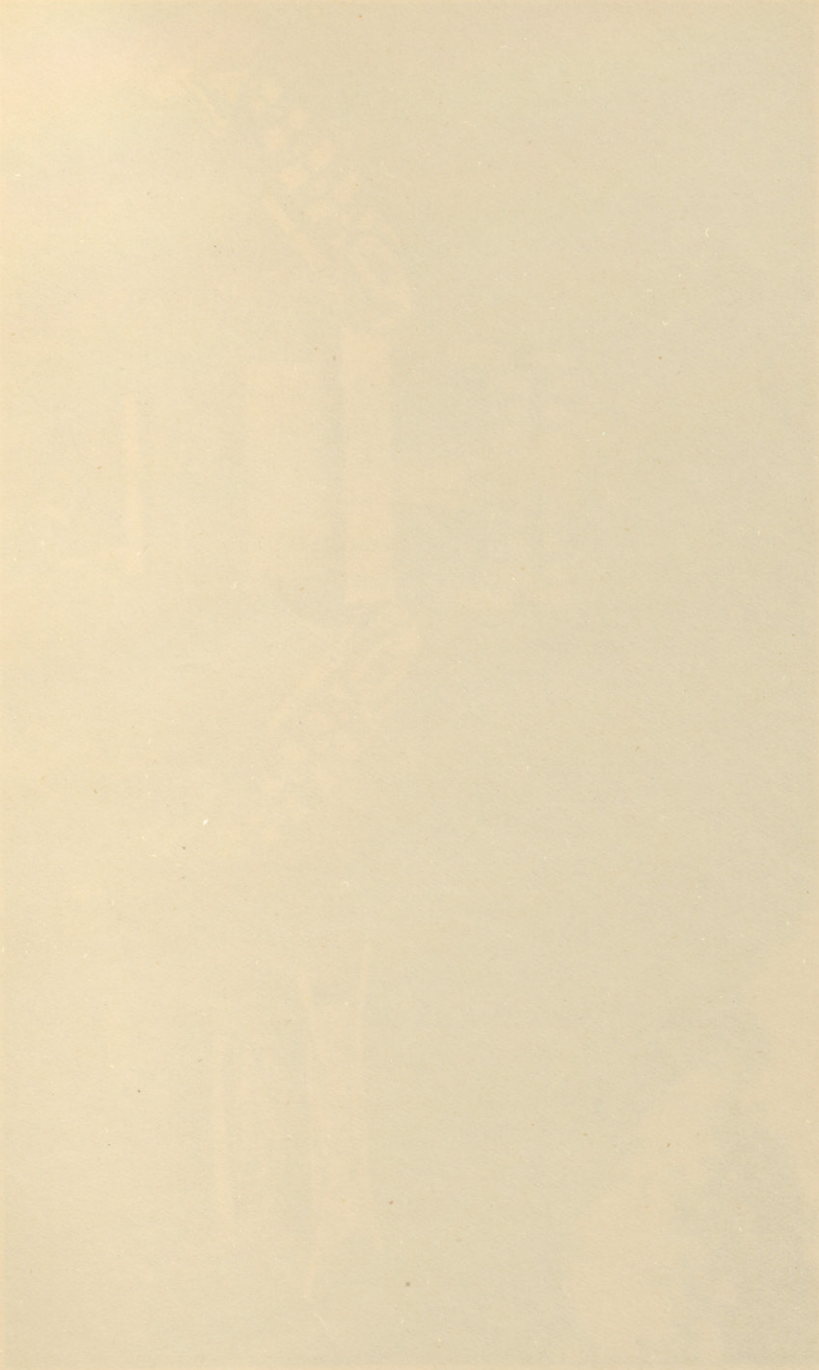
was the custom of the people, and he had been preaching to the people, particularly during the last few weeks, that the old customs must be observed, and must be observed in the same old way.

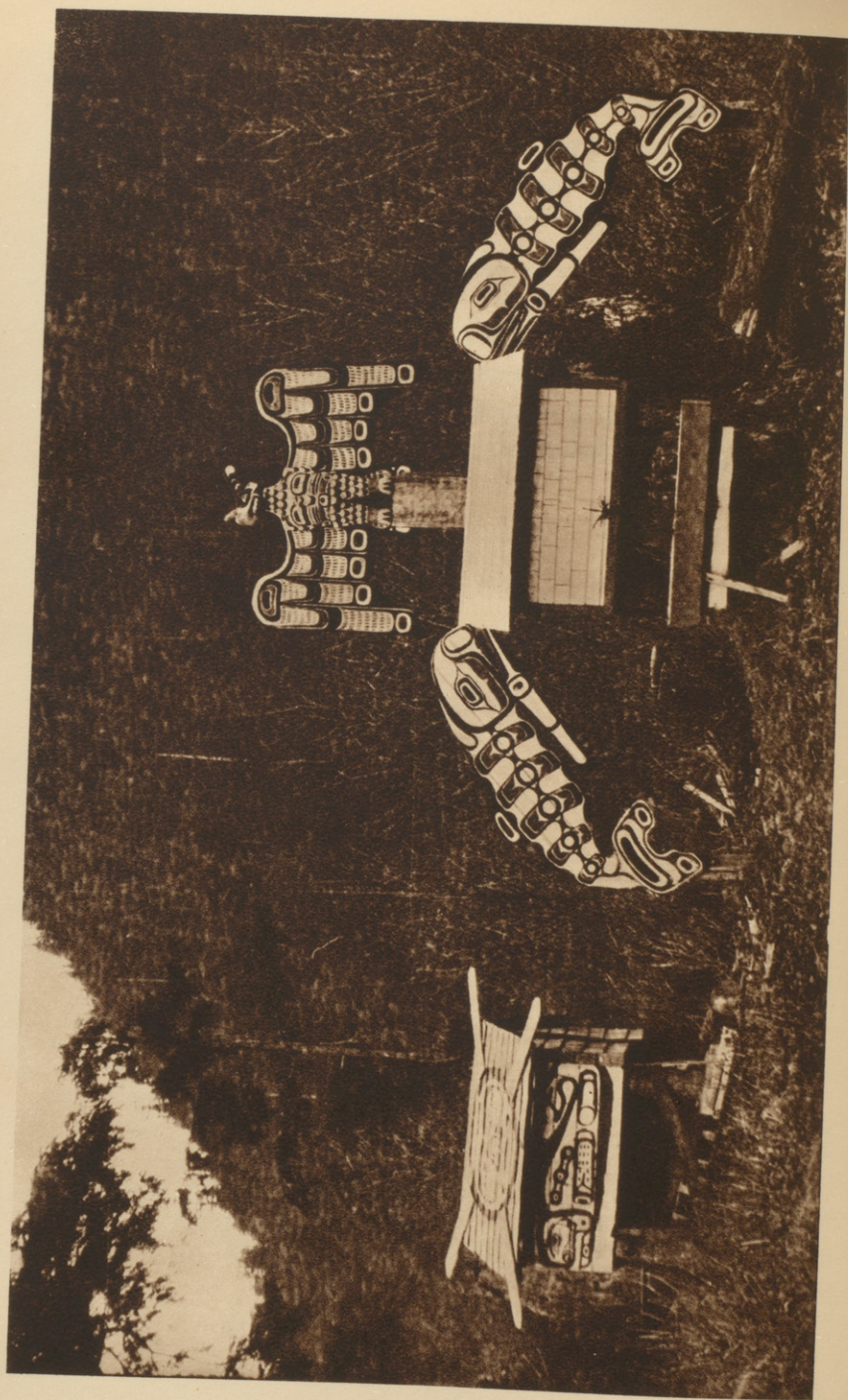
If only Weetsikok had not been so mercenary, Kaakstalas might have been willing to remain with him of her own free will and accord. Other women at times had remained with their men even after they had redeemed themselves, and by doing so had given their husbands increased honour. It would have flattered his vanity had she done so, but he must submit.

Weetsikok then rose and said: 'You are all witnesses of what is being done. You all saw how Kaakstalas as a chief's daughter redeemed herself, and is now free from Awalaskinis. This has been our custom for generations, and it is a good custom. It gives a woman a chance at any time to redeem herself from a husband who proves unworthy of her, and it gives her parents or guardians an opportunity to make a new selection for her. This is what women have been taught and it is what is intended for them. I have heard that the white people allow their daughters to choose their own husbands, and their sons to choose their own wives. We do not want our sons and our daughters to be taught any such foolishness. Each of our women has always been taught from the cradle up to the time she dies that her mission in life is to marry with the husband chosen for her and to keep personal likes and dislikes absolutely out of her mind, but to do in all matters as her *ge* (lord or master) tells her. If we allow our girls to go to school and learn the ways of the white men, how can we hope to keep them in the old

custom, which we have practised for so many generations, and which we have found so serviceable?

'I consider that Komaxala has done me an honour in wanting my daughter, and I know that my daughter would be doing him an honour to go with him as mistress of his home, and I feel that she would be a mother to the young men of his clan. You are all witnesses that I am here receiving an offer of three thousand blankets for Kaakstalas from Komaxala, and at the present I am disposed to accept the offer, but I will consider the matter overnight.'





INDIAN GRAVE ON TOP OF A TREE STUMP

CHAPTER X

THE 'KADZAKLA'

EARLY the next morning, Komaxala called a meeting of the members of his clan and discussed the matter of his approaching marriage—if that term may be used—with Kaakstalas. They all agreed that as he was a great chief, and that as Weetsikok was also a great chief, every ceremony that they knew was to be used on this occasion. Accordingly, about ten o'clock in the morning a delegation consisting of five members of his clan, all dressed in gala attire, with crests on their heads, started a parade through the village. As they left the house where Komaxala was staying, one of the heralds who was decorated with a crane's head for a mask started to orate:

'We are all clansmen of Komaxala. He is a great chief and he hopes to marry the daughter of a great chief. As you all know, there are only certain people who are entitled to speak or take any part in the *kadzakla* (marriage negotiations), and as you know, I am the official orator for the clan of Komaxala. As you all know, the crane is a wonderful bird for fishing, and every time he searches with his beak he gets a fish in it. So I am going fishing for a new *kunum* for Komaxala. No one but the daughter of a great chief is fitted to be his *kunum*.'

The next speaker took up the song. He had a miniature

whale on his head, and as he went along he continued to address the tribesmen:

'As you see, I am a whale. The whale is the greatest fish in the world, and I am the official speaker for one of the greatest chiefs in the world. I, with the rest of those accompanying me in the parade, am in search of a suitable *kunum* for Komaxala, and I have reason to believe that there is a very important woman who can be persuaded to assume that position. When the whale opens his mouth and closes it again, it is full of the fishes which he has caught, so you will find that I shall be successful in my expedition to-day in obtaining a *kunum* for Komaxala.'

The next speaker had a miniature wolf on his head. He continued the speech:

'I represent the wolf. The wolf is the fleetest of all animals, and when he pursues his prey there is very little chance of its escape, because the wolf is so fleet of foot. In my character as a wolf, I go with these others that we may capture a bride for Komaxala, and I have reason to believe that in this village there is a woman worthy of him. All you people join in the procession and watch us continue this chase.'

The next in the parade had the head of a grizzly bear for a mask, and he continued the oration:

'You all know that the grizzly bear is the strongest of all the animals, and what he captures he is able to hold. I with my friends am on the way to capture a suitable bride for Komaxala.'

The fifth speaker had a mask representing a raven on his head, and he continued:

'You know the raven is the wisest of all birds. He will

sit on a tree and put his head first one way, and then another, all of which gives him wisdom. My friends who are with me have desired me to come along with them so that I might give them the necessary wisdom, so that, all combined, we may be able to get a suitable wife for Komaxala.'

The people who were assembled at the village joined in the procession, which by this time had almost reached the house of Weetsikok. On their arrival there, one of the heralds went up and knocked at the door, and demanded that Weetsikok should come out into the open and enter into conference with them. He came outside and held a quiet parley with the five heralds, so that the rest of the people could not hear, the substance of which was that they were the messengers from Komaxala, that Komaxala needed a wife, Komaxala was a great chief, and had been known for his generosity at all these gatherings, and they knew that Weetsikok was a great chief, he was the father of a woman who was free to marry, and they had come on behalf of Komaxala to demand her hand in marriage. They also informed him that he publicly had accepted an offer made by Komaxala for three thousand blankets, which were to be paid as the dower portion for Kaakstalas. Weetsikok informed them that he would take the matter into very careful consideration, and if they would all come together the next morning at ten o'clock he would be prepared to give his answer.

That evening the followers of Komaxala had an informal meeting, at which they all gave donations of various articles of wearing apparel, such as pullover sweaters, silk

handkerchiefs, silk shawls, button blankets, and other articles of clothing.

The next morning at ten o'clock the people all assembled and went in a body to the house of Weetsikok, and told him through the chief orator of Komaxala that they had come to demand Kaakstalas as a wife for Komaxala. Weetsikok stood in front of his house and addressed the people:

'Friends and nobles! You are assembled here in order that you may do honour to the *kadzakla* of my daughter with Komaxala. As you are all aware, I am a great chief, and that it has always been considered a great honour to be united in any way with my family, and I know that Komaxala will be a good husband to my daughter, and that she will be a good wife to him, and before evening time I shall be ready to surrender her to you. In the meantime, I want you to call all your young men together. You will see here on the ground in front of my house a large stone, which has been carried up from the beach. You will notice that the action of the water has rounded all the corners off it. You will notice also that alongside of it is a pail containing a quantity of grease, and that this stone has been well greased and will be kept that way all day long. Now is the chance for your young men to come forward and show their strength by raising this stone from the ground.'

The stone, by the way, weighed about three hundred pounds, and would require a fairly strong man to lift it even under ordinary conditions, but as the condition was that it must be kept greased all the time, it made it practically impossible for anybody to raise it. However, all the young men in the village were determined to make a trial

at it, because they knew that anybody who did would be well rewarded and a song would be composed in his honour for the great strength which he had displayed. Attempts were made by one young man after another, but they all failed to move the stone. Various other games of a similar nature were engaged in, until about four o'clock in the afternoon, when one young man who previously had taken no part in the games and had not made an attempt at the stone thought that he would try it. He walked quietly up to the stone and put his hands first into his pockets, where he had a quantity of pitch mixed with very dry sand. He rubbed his hands together and with a great effort managed to raise the stone to the height of his knees, amid great cheering from the assembled crowd. When Weetsikok saw this successful attempt, he walked to where the young man was, and said:

'Young man, I admire your strength. The glory of every young man is his strength. In addition to your strength I admire also the wisdom with which you put pitch and sand on your hands before attempting to raise the stone. I wish I had another daughter so that I could let you have her in marriage, but now I am going to reward you for your ingenuity and your strength, and I am going to give you ten dollars.'

He accordingly handed the young man the prize-money, amid the cheers of the crowd.

Weetsikok then went back to his house and appeared again with his daughter Kaakstalas, whom he led by the hand. He turned and addressed her: 'You are the only daughter I have left. You are a lineal descendant of a long line of chiefs. I am giving you in this *kadzakla* to

Komaxala, and I want you always to remember your duty towards him, and also your duty towards your clan. You must be kind to him, you must be good to him, you must be true to him.'

Turning to Komaxala, he said: 'Komaxala, in giving you my daughter, I realize that a double honour is being done. There is an honour being conferred on you by giving you the daughter of a long line of chiefs. You also are doing an honour to me, as you yourself are a great chief. I want you to remember that as her *tlawinum* (provider) it will be your duty to take good care of her.'

Other chiefs present spoke in the same manner. Then to bring the whole to a conclusion, Weetsikok took Kaakstalas into his house again, and when he brought her out by the hand the second time she had on a huge button blanket, on the outside of which were stitched twenty-five ten-dollar bills. He then addressed the crowd:

'You were all witnesses that this day Komaxala has promised to give to me three thousand blankets. Of these three thousand blankets, two thousand of them belong to me, the other thousand to my uncle. He, by his age and experience, is the extreme head of our clan, and the two of us together have the absolute control of the destiny of Kaakstalas, and we are the only ones who can say to whom she shall be given in marriage. In witness, however, of my generosity and also to show that my daughter is not going to be given naked, you see that I have dressed her in a blanket, which has the chief crest of our clan, and attached to it are two hundred and fifty dollars in cash, being the equivalent of five hundred blankets, which I am giving as a marriage dower with her to her husband.'

He then stepped down from the steps, leading her still by the hand, and led her up to Komaxala and said: 'Take your wife along with you, and may all that you do be prosperous. May you ever keep up the good name of the Indians, and may you ever keep up the good old custom as we have done this day.'

CHAPTER XI

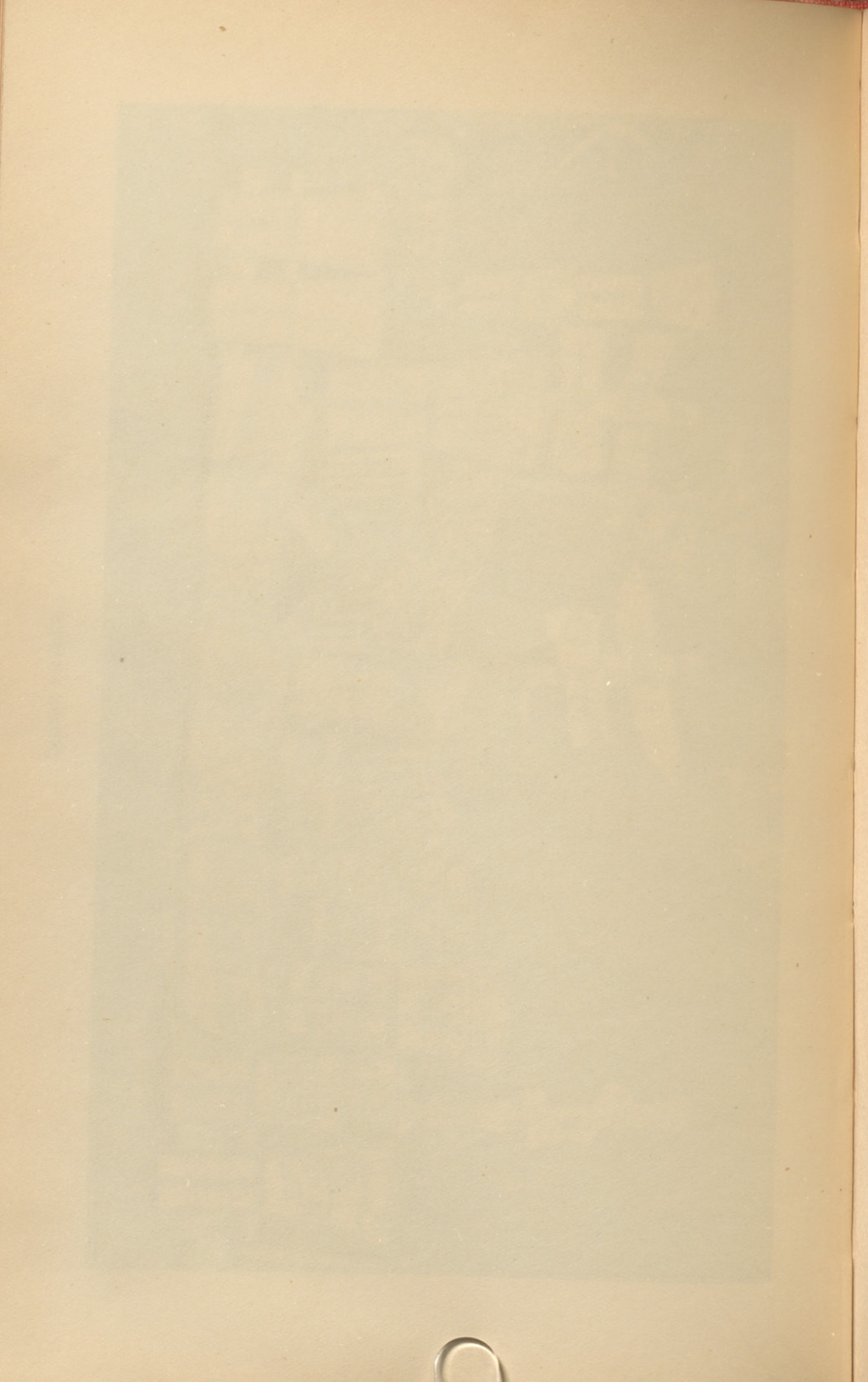
THE AFTERMATH

THE day after the marriage or *kadzakla* between Komaxala and Kaakstalas had been completed, the young men returned from the village of the Mamilillikullas, bringing with them a large wooden box. This box was almost cubical, being about three feet in each of its dimensions, and was beautifully painted with the crests of the owner. Negai then held a conference with Tatanseet, who was the second chief of the eagles, and they decided on a plan of campaign. Each of them now knew just how far the other was prepared to go, so that they might humble Awalaskinis to the dust. They knew that with all the giving away he had done, his credit was strained to the utmost, and they knew from the lavish gifts he had given that he could have very little left, so they did not anticipate any great trouble in humiliating him, so that for years he would not be able to lift up his head again in honour at any of the *potlatch* gatherings.

When all their arrangements were complete, they sent messengers round again calling the people to a gathering out of doors. It was getting well on to the spring and the days were balmy and pleasant, and it allowed more room for a large crowd so that they might stage their reprisals against Awalaskinis. Everybody came, and Negai



INDIAN GRAVES



being the head chief of the eagles in his own clan, had the first opportunity to speak. He had his staff in his hand and called the meeting to order. He then spoke:

'I have called you together here to show you that Awalaskinis is not the great chief he says he is. You all know that he and I were rivals at a previous gathering, and in this rivalry I came out first. I may now inform you that this has rankled in his heart until it has become a festering sore. You know that our custom is that in these reprisals the one who can destroy the most, wins out.'

He then opened the box and took out a copper, and continued his speech:

'You know this copper; you know what I paid for it. The copper which Awalaskinis broke, and of which he gave me a piece, was not in the same class with this one. This copper, as you know, is worth three times the amount of money that the copper broken by Awalaskinis was worth. I am going to show you in what small esteem I hold Awalaskinis. I am now going to call on three of the great chiefs amongst our people to come and cut this copper.'

Accordingly, the head chief of the Kwawkewlths and two other great chiefs who were versed in the method of chopping up coppers came, and with an axe and hammer proceeded to destroy the copper which Negai had in his hand. After they had cut two small pieces out of it, Negai called his messenger and said:

'Give this piece to Awalaskinis, and tell him that I am only just beginning. I think he is a coward; I think he is afraid to accept this piece, because he knows that he is not able to get other coppers in value equal to this. But now I am going to show you that I have more coppers.'

He took two other coppers out of his box, which he had the same chiefs cut up, and the same messenger was sent with pieces to Awalaskinis, who under the custom was forced to accept them. Then he took a fourth copper, which was also cut up, and this fourth copper he threw into the fire.

'The idea of Awalaskinis thinking he could outdo me! Why, I have coppers to burn; I have given him three coppers which he must either pay for or sit back and do nothing, and acknowledge that he is beaten, and in addition to that I am able to throw one in the fire and burn it. No other chief has ever been able to do that before. I claim that I occupy a far higher position than Awalaskinis can ever hope to do, and I hope that he will realize how futile his efforts are if he thinks for one moment that he can outdo me.'

Tatanset, whose rank had been usurped by Awalaskinis, then got up and addressed the crowd:

'My father and his forefathers before him have always been very generous. They have given away wealth beyond what one is able to count. They have always been honest people. They have always been straight in their dealings. What they had they got by their own merits. Now comes along this upstart who calls himself Awalaskinis, and simply because he has been able to give away a few blankets and a few other things, thinks he can step into my shoes and take my rank away from me in the eagle clan. I never heard of such presumption in my life, and I have joined forces with Negai to show Awalaskinis that he is only an upstart and that all the wealth he ever had he got by fraud, and had it not been for the generosity of Weetsikok in

the redemption of his daughter, he would never have been able to give away the amount that he did, and the glory that he gets from that is only second-hand, it is due to the generosity of Weetsikok. Now I own three coppers which are bought and paid for; I don't owe a cent on them; I am going to destroy these coppers and hurl them with my defiance at the head of Awalaskinis.'

The same three chiefs who had cut up the other coppers for Negai then proceeded to cut up the three coppers of Tatanseet who, instead of acting in the usual way by sending a messenger to Awalaskinis with the broken pieces, walked over to where Awalaskinis sat and threw the pieces straight in his face, saying: 'You have my defiance now. Do your worst!'

Awalaskinis rose to his feet, took his speaker's staff, and was so enraged over what had been done that he started a very impassioned speech. He hurled abuse at Negai; he hurled abuse at Tatanseet; he called them both cowards, liars, thieves, and other vile names, finally working himself into such a rage that he was foaming at the mouth. Suddenly he put his hand up to his head and fell to the ground in a state of collapse. He was carried away by some of his young men to his own house, and put into his bed, while the meeting without his presence fell very flat; but the custom demanded that the usual giving away must not be overlooked, the people expected it and that was what they had come for. Negai called the speaker of his clan to him and instructed him to see that every person present received one dollar in silver; he was a great chief and it was necessary that he should be very generous.

Tatanseet then distributed in the usual way fifty cents

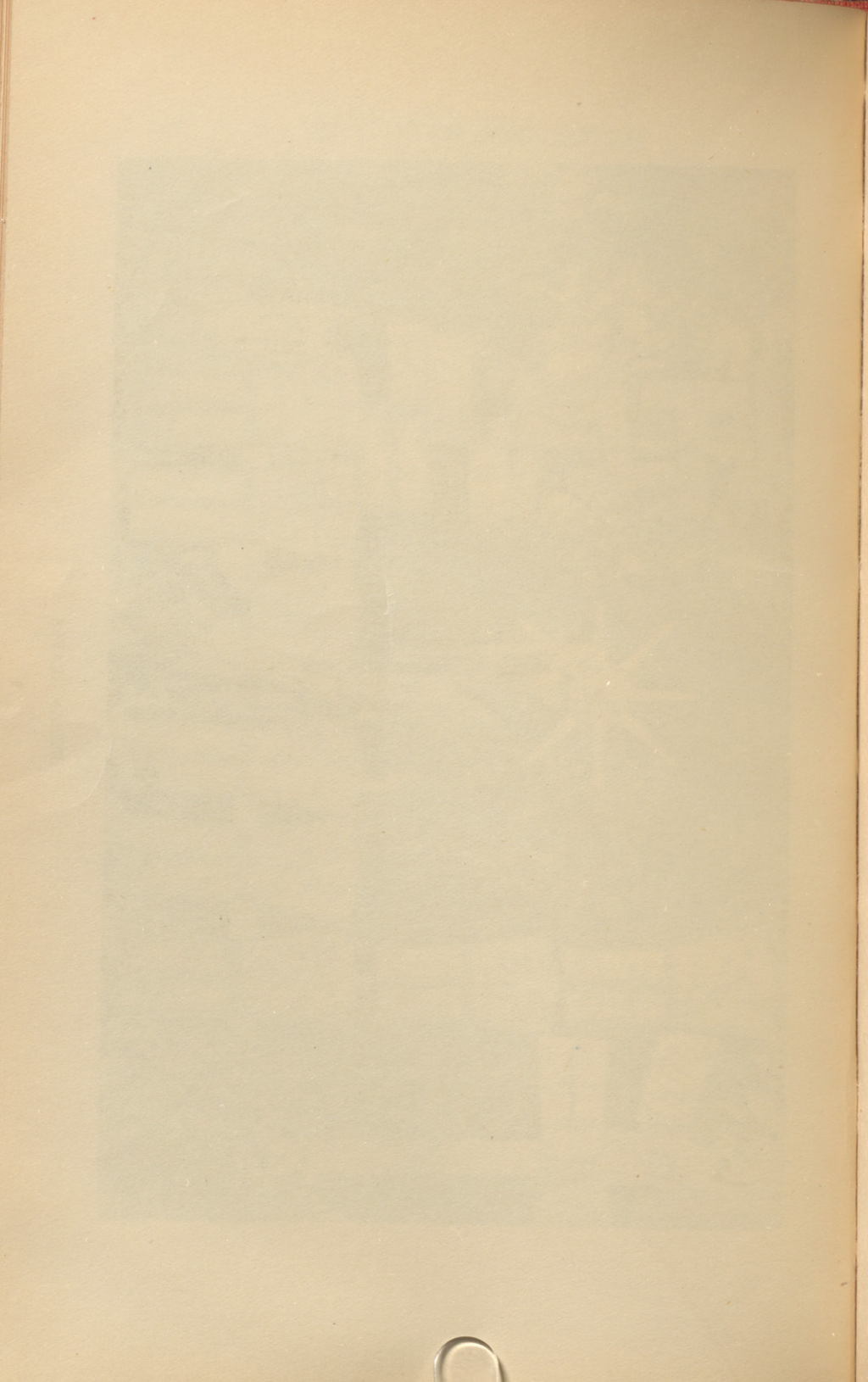
in silver to each person present, and they all dispersed for the day and would be prepared to be called on when Awalaskinis recovered from what they thought was only a passing faintness. They did not realize at the time that the shock together with the terrible rage into which Awalaskinis had thrown himself would have a serious after-effect.

Awalaskinis had no wife to care for him, but he had one sister left, and she sat by him; but before midnight the call came for him, and he breathed his last, and went to render his account to his Creator. As soon as the breath was out of his body, the sister commenced to cry and wail, and scratched her face with both hands till the blood poured down her cheeks. When the wail was heard by those in the near vicinity, the members of his clan took it up, till the sound could be heard for miles. One of the young men said: 'We must prepare him for burial,' so a large trunk with leather straps was brought in, and the body of Awalaskinis was doubled up to fit it. As the body was rather large, the lid of the trunk did not close properly, so one of the young men stood on the shoulders of the corpse and forced it into such a position that the lid could be shut. The trunk was then securely locked and fastened. The wailing continued all night, and early the next morning all the people were notified by messenger to prepare to lay the body away.

When breakfast was over, the people in the village gathered in front of the house of Awalaskinis to show sympathy for the living relatives and also to show their respect for the dead chief. When all were assembled, Negadsi, the head chief for the whole assembly, stood up and addressed the people:



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'Friends, chiefs, and nobles! We are all gathered together here to-day to lay away to his last rest one who has been with us for so many years. The shock of his sudden death is very great to us all. We had thought that he would be with us for many more years, and that he would be able to continue to add to the many laurels which he has already gathered, but this was not to be. We want to show our sympathy for the sister and the sons of Awalaskinis, and try to strengthen them in their sorrow. We know that the great chief who has just died has given one of the greatest *potlatches* that have ever been given amongst our people. This must be a matter of great rejoicing to his friends and relatives. Now to these friends and relatives I would say that it is your duty to uphold the ranks which you have inherited. Never forget that you are a great family; you must pull yourselves together and show yourselves as great as your father was. We shall all expect you to continue the same old customs and to be generous in the gifts you give away to your friends. We shall all mourn for the great chief, but we must remember that your forefathers all passed away and the people mourned for them; and so do we for Awalaskinis. I hope all the people present will encourage the rest of his family and help them along on their way.'

The rest of the chiefs followed according to rank and precedence; soon it came to Negai's turn to speak, and he said:

'Awalaskinis has passed and gone, and it would be out of place for me to-day to say anything against him. However, it is impossible for me to forget that amongst his last acts he hurled defiance at me and at my friends. I in my

turn have hurled my defiance at him, but knowing the old custom is not yet completed, I will await their good pleasure to have everything completed at a later date.'

When all the chiefs had finished speaking, the speaker of Awalaskinis's clan got up and said: 'I, with all the rest of his friends, am mourning for the great chief who has gone away. We will take him away and lay his body very carefully in the place that has been prepared for it, and I am very glad to see you all here. Kwa-yim, you will remember, was made heir to the first of his crests, and he will give away to-day five hundred dollars in cash; and I would ask all the singers to get their mourning songs ready, and we will get new ones specially prepared for our great chief who has passed away. At the present time we are not thinking of what Negai and Tatanseet have done, but we will take that up later. The great name of Awalaskinis will never fail; the name of his clan will never fail; we are great at doing everything and we are very hard to fight against.'

When the speaking was over, the trunk containing the body was carried away to some distance, where the stump of a huge tree which had been sawed off remained standing, and the trunk containing the body was laid on the top of the stump and covered over temporarily with huge button blankets. The following morning a wooden house was erected over the top of the box, and the figure of a great whale, which was the principal crest the right to which had not been disputed, was painted on the side of the house, and all the other crests belonging to him were shown on the various walls of the house. Each artist who had assisted in the work received liberal payment for his efforts.

The morning after the funeral the clan cleaned up the house of the late chief, and burned all his clothing, blankets, beds, mattresses, besides the furniture which had been in common use. Then the singers came into the house and rehearsed four new songs which they intended to sing on the following day about the greatness of Awalaskinis from the time of his forefathers up to the present. Apparently the songs pleased the speaker of the clan, and they were thanked for their trouble, but they replied that it would take four days to complete the rehearsals, but in that time they expected to be ready to sing the praises publicly. The rehearsals were continued for the four days, after each one of the singers was fed by the sister of Awalaskinis on the usual Indian food of dried salmon and oolachan grease.

On the fourth day Kwa-yim called every one together by means of the heralds, and when they had all assembled, he informed them through the speaker that the sister intended giving away first to all the women; accordingly they were all presented with various articles of clothing: jerseys, silk shawls, shoes, and other things which she had been able to accumulate.

Then Kwa-yim paid everybody who had taken any part in the funeral; those who had assisted in the composing of or singing the songs were given ten dollars in cash, and the others who had taken part in other ways received five dollars each in cash and a blanket. When this was done, the singers were called on to sing the new songs. The men in the assembly were all at one end near the back of the house, and the women stood side by side in the room in a double line. Kwa-yim selected four of the closest

family relatives of Awalaskinis to be the chief mourners at this gathering, and they stood on a bench in front near the fire. While the songs were being sung, these four swayed their bodies backward and forward, keeping time to the music, keeping up a low wail, and continued scratching their faces till the blood ran down and dropped on their shoulders. When the fourth song was completed, the sound of a horn was heard at the rear of the building, and when the horn stopped they heard a *hamatsa* whistle. The speaker of Awalaskinis's clan got up and told the people that their great chief's spirit had come back, and asked the other chiefs present to go out and bring it in, as it was waiting outside. Obedient to the request, the men went outside and returned, bringing with them a masked figure dressed as a *hamatsa*, but instead of having the bearskin robe, there was a button blanket wrapped round him, and a huge false face to hide his own features. This false face had a very large open mouth, and was painted a bright red. One of the chiefs spoke and said: 'We have brought back your chief with his great crests as you have often seen him.' Blankets were spread all round, and the masked figure walked round the room, very slowly, on top of the blankets, and as he went out at the back door he threw off the red cedar-bark girdle and head-dress which he had worn, along with the mask, and they heard one faint *hamatsa* whistle, which seemed to come a long distance.

The speaker then rose again, and said: 'I am very glad that we have been able to see our great chief once more, and I will now take this cedar bark which he left behind him as a memento and I will put it away carefully amongst his other effects. Every time there is a *potlatch* given by



INDIAN GRAVES—EACH FIGURE OF A CANOE ON THE TREE REPRESENTS A POTLATCH

Kwa-yim or Klalis, when they are able to give away, this memento will be brought out so that we can realize that the spirit of Awalaskinis is still with us.'

Kwa-yim then got up and said: 'My father, when he was alive, broke a copper; but you will notice that in the breaking of it he left the cross, which is the heart of the copper, intact. I want you all to bear witness that as soon as I am old enough I will do as my father did, and will give away to all the people. In the meantime I am giving the heart of this copper to Negai. You all know what this means: that I will carry on the enmity which my father and Negai engendered during their lives. My father was called away before he had an opportunity to fight this matter to a finish, but I intend to carry on the same as he has done.'

According to the Indian custom, it was compulsory for Negai to accept the heart of the copper or he would be for ever disgraced, so he made the best of the situation and accepted it, and thanked Kwa-yim for what he had done, because it showed that he had the old custom still at heart, but he must remember that for the time being he (that is, Negai) was the master of the situation.

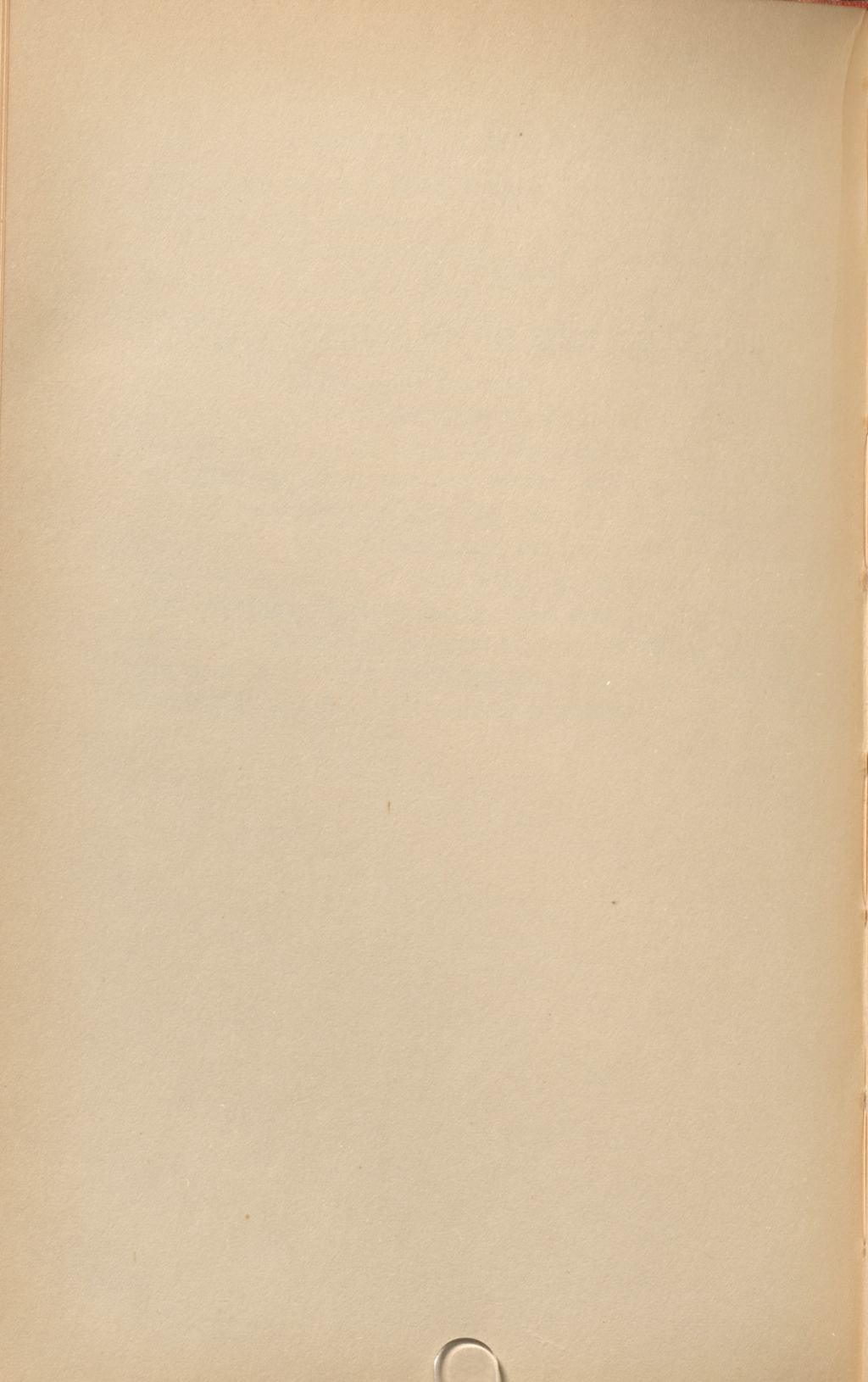
Kwa-yim then replied: 'We will now for ever put away the name of Awalaskinis; our hearts are all very sore. Still I am his son, and as you will remember, a few days ago he changed my name of Kwa-yim-gal-eese, by which you have known me since I was a boy, to Kwa-yim, and in future I will refuse to acknowledge any other name.'

The chiefs who were present in turn spoke, congratulating Kwa-yim on the stand he had taken, and before they left the building every one present had received money,

two dollars for each chief, a dollar for each man, and fifty cents for each woman.

Thus ended the great *potlatch* of Awalaskinis. He had started out to make a name for himself, and he accomplished it, but at what a price! The cost financially had been so great that he had given away all his possessions, and had borrowed until his credit could stand no more; he had left behind him when he died a heritage of hate and bitterness on all sides, and the position which he had struggled to attain was not secure, but was envied and coveted by many. Finally, the loss of his own life ended his efforts. Unfortunately also his heirs were obliged to carry all the burden of debts which he had made, together with enormous interest charges, and only by others emulating the example of Awalaskinis and surpassing him in the mad race, could the heirs get even with the world financially, and then only at a loss in prestige and position.

PART II
RECOLLECTIONS OF AN INDIAN AGENT



CHAPTER I

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

My many friends and acquaintances in British Columbia for years past have been urging me to record some of the incidents concerning the Indians of British Columbia which have fallen under my notice. They claim, and perhaps justly, that my opportunities have been unique to obtain that information on account of having been so intimately associated with the Indians for so many years. I may say in self-defence, that I never considered for a moment being an author, and I know that throughout all this publication there will be many things which may offend the fastidious ear, as the continued writing of official reports gradually takes away from the imagination and gives one too exacting a view of everything, and hence makes the matter written or dictated less attractive to a reader. At their solicitation, however, I have endeavoured in the following pages to record some of the impressions left on my memory since my coming to British Columbia.

My father brought the family to British Columbia in 1873. Our road was a devious one. We had to cross the American boundary at Detroit, and I can remember quite well changing cars again at Omaha, finally arriving in San Francisco, from whence we took passage in the steamship *Prince Alfred*, arriving in Victoria on the first day of July 1873, since which time, with the exception of a few

months, my life has been spent continuously in the province of British Columbia, and on account of my length of residence I have been favoured by the Native Sons with having been made an honorary member of the Native Sons of British Columbia; which honour I deeply appreciate, as it requires more than length of residence to obtain that privilege. We took passage from Victoria a few days after arrival, crossed to New Westminster, and thence took passage on a river steamer which, if my memory serves me rightly, was called the *Reliance*, and which carried us up the Fraser River to Yale.

My father was a school-teacher, and taught very successfully in the province of British Columbia for many years, and was engaged in school-teaching in Yale at the time of our advent to British Columbia. Yale at that time was a very important little village. It was the head of navigation on the Fraser River, and the foot of navigation, if I may use the term, of the pack trains going into the Cariboo country to the gold-mines. I can well remember seeing great wagons, sometimes three or four in number trailing one behind the other, drawn by a long string of horses and mules, coming in for supplies, and the great excitement there would be amongst the inhabitants. Sometimes there would be pack trains coming in, and occasionally a number of both pack trains and wagons would be in at the same time, when business would be very brisk, particularly in the saloons. These trains would be two or three days loading before starting on the return journey. The whole load would be drawn where conditions would warrant, and when a hill was reached the wagons would be taken up one by one and then coupled again.

My recollections of Indians in British Columbia commenced with our arrival in Yale. They lived in what were called *kweekwillie* houses. The word *kweekwillie* is a Chinook word and signifies 'underneath.' These houses were more like huge pits which were dug into the earth at the foot of the mountains, near Yale canyon, and were covered over with timbers, and must have been very damp and wet, but I am not positive on that point. I can remember one old chief who, on account of my flaxen hair and blue eyes, took a great fancy to me, and often took me to his residence; and we had to climb down a ladder from the top to get to it, and my impression is that it was very smoky, very black, and inclined to be odoriferous. This old chief used to take me up the mountains and show me all the pools where the mountain trout used to lurk, and he had a way of snaring them so that on several occasions I was able to bring home a nice basket of trout as a result of these expeditions.

We only remained in Yale until May 1874, when my father was offered a position as principal of the school in the city of New Westminster, which he accepted. During our stay in New Westminster I had very little to do with the Indians, and saw very little of them, although there were a few living close by.

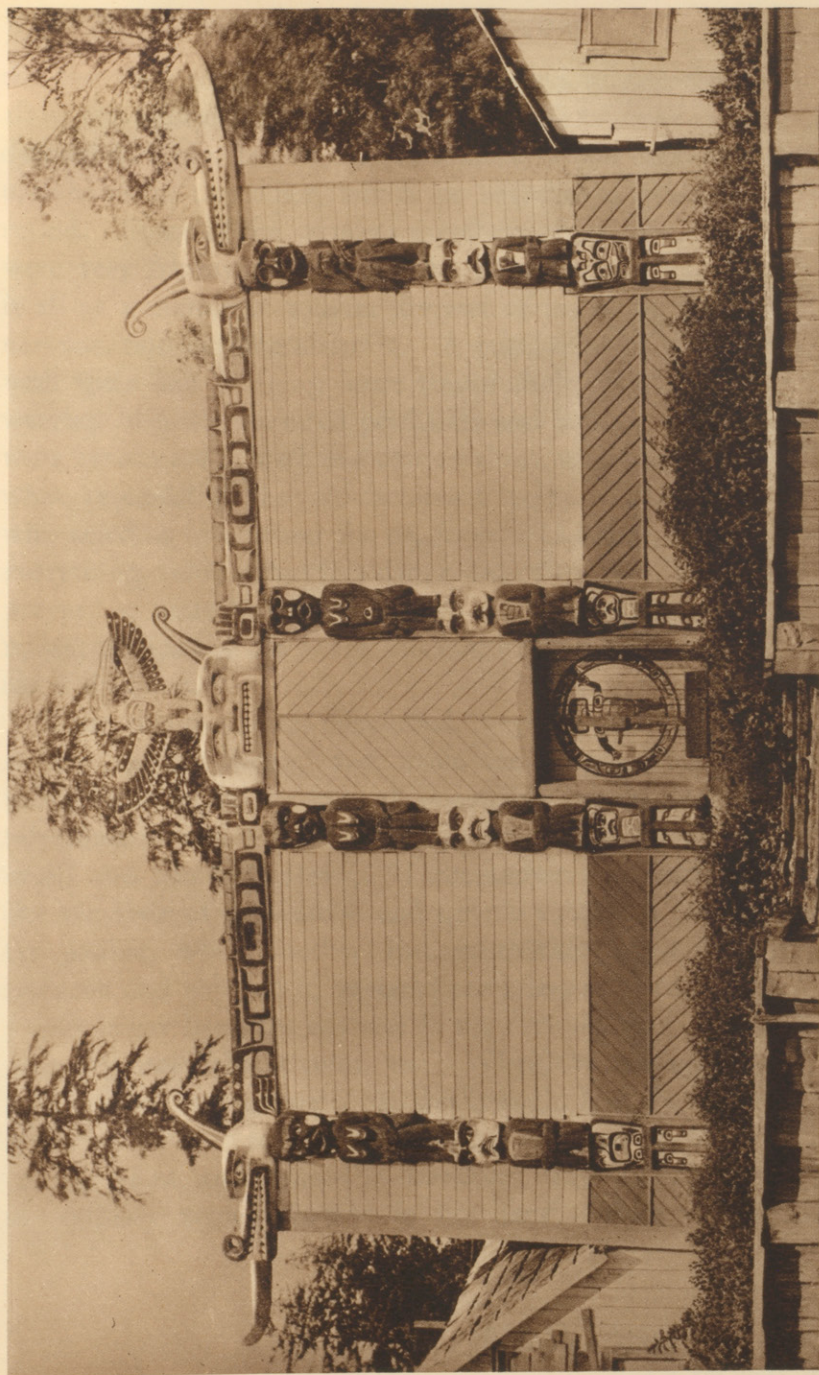
My most impressive memory of Indians at this time is of one occasion when my mother had an Indian woman washing for her, and in the middle of the morning the woman disappeared. She came back within half an hour with a new-born baby, which she had rolled in a shawl, and went on with her work as if nothing had happened. I can remember my mother was so shocked that she

refused to let the woman continue with the washing, but sent her off home.

In 1880 we transferred from New Westminster to Victoria, and while living in Victoria, the same as at New Westminster, I saw very little of the Indians. In 1883 my father bought a farm in Comox district, which is still kept by my two brothers, and the whole family, with the exception of himself, went to Comox to live. There were a number of Indians at Comox, and the first time I ever heard or saw anything of a *potlatch* was at the Indian village at Comox.

We had heard that there was some great festival at the Indian village, and we made up a sleighing party and went to view what was going on. It so happened that Mr. W. H. Lomas, who was at that time Indian agent for the Cowichan Indian Agency, whose bailiwick included the Comox Indians, was present, and had it not been so, I very much fear that we all would have been badly frightened by some of the events that occurred at this Indian gathering. Many of the things that were done on that occasion I regarded then, and still regard, as being very wonderful.

There were about two hundred Indians present, and they commenced the performance by giving away about fifty pairs of blankets, a few shawls, and other similar articles. When this was finished a loud noise of yelling was heard outside, and we all knew the real performance was about to begin. Presently the door opened and in came about a dozen members dressed in costumes representing different animals. As each one who entered was well inside the door, he spun round on one foot and made a bow towards the new chief who was being installed, then danced round



A HOUSE FRONT AT TSATSISNUKONI

1875



the fire four times, after which he stood to one side to allow the next one to enter. The last one to come in was dressed as a pig, but he carried a knife in one hand and a tomahawk in the other, which he brandished round and round. Some of the younger members of our white party were very frightened, but as Mr. Lomas seemed to take it all as a matter of course, the rest of us, if we did feel nervous, said nothing about it. A number of girls danced with their hair hanging loose round their shoulders and wearing brightly coloured petticoats and jackets, but they were barefooted. Each one danced alone, with a step somewhat resembling the old-fashioned polka. The Indian who acted as interpreter for us, to explain the meaning of everything, told us that this dance was called the 'maidens' prayer,' as none but maidens were allowed to take part in it, and the idea of the dance was that each one was praying for a husband.

When this dance was concluded, they had what is known as the 'feather dance,' and while the preparations were being made for it, we were all hospitably entertained with refreshments which were passed round, consisting of pilot bread and smoked salmon. I remember that I did not like the taste of the salmon and quietly tucked it away in my pocket, when another Indian, thinking that I had eaten all and enjoyed it, brought me a larger piece, which I held in my hand for the rest of the evening, so as not to have any more thrust upon me. When the refreshments were finished, a huge wash-tub was brought into the middle of the room near to the fire. About a dozen Indians in full war-paint, and dressed in bearskins, came in, each with an ordinary eagle's feather in his hand. They danced

round and round the tub, then, at a signal, each one threw his feather into the air, when to our intense surprise they remained in mid-air, each feather keeping above the chief who had thrown it. At a motion of the finger from the owner, his feather would dart hither and thither through the room; sometimes going thirty or forty feet away from the owner. This feather dance was kept up for some little time, and presently all the chiefs who had been standing round the wash-tub walked backwards, and all the feathers fell into the tub. Immediately the Indians standing round dashed buckets of water on them, and thoroughly soaked them. At another signal the feathers rose from the water and went sailing all round the room, shooting hither and thither. The chiefs retired one by one, and as each went his feather would dart from the other end of the room into his hand, to be carried out with him. It was one of the most puzzling sights I have ever seen, and we tried with all our might to discover how it was done, but did not succeed.

Shortly after the feather dance the *hamatsa* or wild man made his appearance, but unlike the *hamatsa* of the more northern parts, he came in absolutely naked, and dropped from the middle of the roof right into the fire. It is true that he jumped out immediately, but he was apparently unharmed. He raced round and round the room and bit several people before he was finally captured and taken away by his attendants.

The entertainment closed with a sham battle. A real war-whoop was given, and apparently the whole affair was conducted on more or less military lines, for if any one of either party allowed himself to be put in a position where he

might have been killed, he was ruled off by the chief who acted as umpire, and had to retire from the field.

In 1893 my brother Ernest wished to go farming on his own account, and was recommended by Mr. R. H. Pidcock, who was at that time Indian agent for the Kwawkwalth Agency, to go to Kingcome Inlet, in which valley he considered there was to be found the finest land in British Columbia available for settlement. Accordingly he went and had a look at it, and was satisfied, but he said he did not care to go unless I would join him and become one of the pioneers of Kingcome valley. I went and had a look at it, and was satisfied with the possibilities of the valley, and was delighted with the wonderful soil which was to be found there, and concluded that I would cast my lot in with him. We took the matter up with the government of the province of British Columbia, and they made things as easy for us as they could, and allowed us to go in and take possession first and then record the land after we were living on it, and when the land eventually became surveyed, the surveyors who were sent to do the work were instructed that unless our claims were inordinately large, to allow our stakes to remain permanently. Accordingly, we both received slightly more than the usual hundred and sixty acres, as we had not been able to make our first measurements exact. In those days transportation was a very difficult problem. There were very few steamboats plying up and down the coast, gasoline boats or other motor-boats had not been invented, and practically the only way of getting round was by row-boats and canoe. This mode of travel, while slow, has one great advantage, and that is that one thoroughly learns all the tidal currents and

other natural phenomena, which when travelling in later years by motor power has been of very great assistance.

We moved to Kingcome Inlet in April 1894. At that time the Parliament buildings in Victoria were being constructed, and there were two or three steamers engaged in carrying the stone from the quarry at Haddington Island to Victoria, and we made arrangements with the owners of the fast and commodious steamship *Coquitlam*, one of the fleet engaged in the work, to call at Comox and take us with our belongings to Kingcome Inlet. We made a safe passage, had our cattle, implements, and household effects safely landed, and my brother has resided there ever since.

The first year we cut a good crop of hay, wild hay from the grass flats, and made a stack close to the river bank. Some of the Indians, of which there were a large number living on the reserve about two miles above us on the Kingcome River, had shown a friendly spirit, but a number of them were not inclined to welcome us, as they felt they did not want any white people in that section of the country. They were a wild lot. They had had a little missionary training for about two years by Mr. A. W. Corker, who after that time was made principal of the Indian Residential School at Alert Bay; in addition to this they had a little training through their visits to Alert Bay, but otherwise they were very wild and very savage. During the warm weather in the summer it was not at all an uncommon thing to see all the men parading round the village absolutely naked, and the common dress used at any time was a suit of underwear and a blanket. In all my experience with the Indians, I have never yet seen an Indian woman expose her body the same as the men did, as they were always

fairly well covered, but the men seemed to think that Nature's garb was sufficient when the weather was warm enough.

In 1894 the Rev. A. J. Hall, accompanied by his wife, made a visit to Kingcome Inlet, and my brother and I assisted them to make a camp on the bank of the river above the Indian village, and as the missionary work in which they were engaged was entirely amongst the Indians, their efforts were supported by the Church Missionary Society of London, England.

The following day my brother and I decided we would go up and pay a little visit to see how Mr. and Mrs. Hall were getting on. When we came to the haystack already referred to on the bank of the river, we saw approximately a dozen young boys turning somersaults on the summit of the stack, and they had knocked nearly the whole top off. When they saw us coming they immediately took to their canoes and started for their village. We had a canoe which we used on the river, but at that time neither of us was very expert in the handling of it with poles, although we were both fairly expert paddlers. At the bend of the river, about half a mile above where we embarked, there is a very strong current, and the usual procedure in coming up the river is to follow the shore in the comparatively still water till the curve is reached, then shoot across the rapid water and follow the eddy on the opposite shore. This was done by the boys, and they stopped to laugh at our efforts as we continued up the rapid water on the same side on which we had been travelling. We did this until we got up to what we considered a reasonable distance, and then apparently we lost control of our canoe, and before we got

control of it again we were right in amongst the boys. Each of these wore no clothing except a shirt, and I had armed myself with a good switch. I grabbed one canoe, Ernest grabbed the other, and I laid about on the bare legs of those boys until they jumped overboard and swam ashore. The boy who received the worst of the caning happened to be the biggest one, and the son of the head chief of the tribe. They left their canoes in our possession and travelled through the woods until they were near the village, when they called for help, and were taken across to the village, which was on the other side of the river. We tied their canoes safely, and left them there, and then went on and paid our visit to Mr. and Mrs. Hall.

On the way back we stopped at the village, as I had loaned a froe to one of the Indians, and I wanted it back again. I walked up to his house to get it, and when I came out the natives were all in a tremendous state of excitement. The boys had just got back, and reported the treatment they had received from us, and reprisals were threatened immediately. I may say, before going any further, that I had a very intimate knowledge of Chinook, and consequently I was able to understand what was being said to me, as the whole conversation that took place was in Chinook. I came out of Jack's house with the froe in my hand, and was immediately surrounded by a large number of male Indians. The chief, the father of the boy, asked me through an interpreter why I had caned his boy. I told him that the boy had been doing mischief on our place, and that he deserved it. I was informed by the Indians that it was against their will that any white people should come there to live, and that if we did not behave

ourselves they would drive us out again. I laughed at him, and said: 'You ought to welcome the white man's coming, instead of taking this antagonistic attitude; but so far as driving us out is concerned, that is a joke. We have not come here to be driven out, we have come to make a home; we have come to live peaceably with the Indians; we are prepared to do anything that lies in our power to help them, but our rights must be respected, and we shall respect the rights of the Indians.'

The chief again informed me that they had made up their minds that they were going to drive us out from the place, and he was again informed that it was impossible for them to do so. 'Why,' I said, 'the whole of you could not drive one mosquito away, let alone a number of white men who have come here to settle, so there is no use talking like that.'

The man who was acting as interpreter and who was one of the minor chiefs, lost his head. He considered that a great lack of respect had been shown in talking to the head chief of the Tsawataineuks in that manner, and he commenced a very impassioned speech, partly in his own native language and partly in Chinook, but his gestures were so emphatic that there was no danger of any misunderstanding. He came racing towards me, flinging his arms about, and looked as if he was going to strike. An idea crossed my mind that the first blow sometimes decides a battle, but I must admit that at the same time my knees were beginning to tremble, and I felt I should be very thankful if I got out of the situation alive. However, I watched until Mahwha, for such was the Indian name of the interpreter, got about four or five feet away

from me, when I jumped toward him and landed him one on the point of the jaw, sufficiently hard that he went backwards about twenty feet and then fell on his back, with his hands and feet up in the air. In spite of the gravity of the situation I could not help but laugh, and as soon as I commenced to laugh I thought I would laugh hard and see if that would turn the tables, and I laughed so hard that the Indians could not help but join in with me, and the incident closed with that; but I may say that I never had more reason to be thankful in my life than on this occasion, as it would have been a very easy matter for them to have done away with me entirely or possibly crippled me for life. This chief, Mahwha, afterwards became very friendly, and even up to the time of his death he would point to his jaw, and compliment me on my great strength and skill in having knocked him down.

This was the only time in which I ever came into active opposition to the Indians until many years later, when I was instructed by the Department of Indian Affairs to enforce that section of the Indian Act which deals with their Indian custom of the *potlatch*. This has been dealt with fully in another part of this book, and I need not touch upon it again, but for several years while the machinery of the law suppressing the *potlatch* was being put in operation, I may say frankly that I was a much-hated man by the Indians of this agency, so much so that several petitions asking for my removal from the office of Indian agent were sent to the Department of Indian Affairs at Ottawa, and on two occasions allegations were laid which caused an investigation to be made, and it was shown to the

satisfaction of Mr. W. E. Ditchburn, who was the inspector in charge of the investigation, that the animosity arose because I was carrying out the instructions given me from that department. Mr. Ditchburn was afterwards promoted to the position of Indian Commissioner for British Columbia, which position he has honourably filled for many years.

CHAPTER II

INDIAN RIGHTS

FOR many years past a controversy has been carried on regarding the ancient rights of the Indians. This was finally settled by a parliamentary commission in 1927, which decided that the Indian title did not exist, but as a compensation to appease the Indians of British Columbia, the Parliament of Canada decided that an additional sum of money, amounting to \$100,000 a year, was to be spent in educational and hospital endowments for the benefit of the Indians. The subject of the controversy was as to whether or not the aboriginal title of the Indians had ever become extinct, and there were many people who were of the opinion that the Indians had been very wrongly dealt with by the white people, as the white people had come into British Columbia and had absorbed the country and only made provision for the Indians by the allowance of reserves. In the course of time the Indians, who, like most people, are on the sharp look out to obtain something for nothing, became very much stirred up, and demanded that the whole question be referred to the Privy Council of Great Britain, but a parliamentary committee at Ottawa decided against this, and recommended the additional grant referred to. This question, however, originally was not brought up by the Indians themselves, but by the white people who either expected to gain financially or achieve notoriety, and the feelings of the Indians were stirred up

until they fancied that the Government of British Columbia had stolen their lands, their rights, and their privileges. A few of the leaders of the movement may be given a certain amount of credit for their intentions, who probably thought that only good could accrue to the Indians, but in my opinion, selfishness was at the bottom of the whole movement. This controversy started about the time I was made Indian agent, and in this agency there were a number of very old Indians still living, and I obtained from them their views on the question.

One old man from Quatsino Sound told me that he was a full-grown man before the first white man came to British Columbia, and he considered the greatest blessing that had ever happened to the Indians was the advent of the white man. He described to me very graphically how amongst themselves they were always living in a state of warfare, one tribe or one band against another; they never knew at what moment an attack was coming on them, either from their hereditary enemies or enemies more newly acquired. He told me how difficult it was for them at times even to obtain their food for fear of being killed or captured and taken into slavery, and how easy their lives were now, since all these difficulties and fears had been removed.

From conversations with this old man and many others, I formed a very fair idea of the condition under which the aboriginal Indians had lived in the province of British Columbia. Along the coast there scarcely ever was a shortage of food, as they could always dig clams, and fish was very plentiful, providing their enemies would allow them to obtain it. For weapons they used bows and arrows, and in some cases a stone on which they had

stretched a green hide, which was allowed to shrink on it, was a very common weapon. This was whirled round the head several times, and thrown from the hand by means of the thong attached to it, and I was told that it was fairly accurate up to thirty or forty yards.

Fire was greatly treasured, and at the villages there was always one person delegated to the duty of keeping a fire burning all night, as matches were unknown and they had not learned the use of flint and steel, which was a matter of no wonder as they had no steel, though flints were plentiful. In the event of the fire being allowed to go out, the process of making a new one was to take a piece of dry cedar and a small spindle of wood. Around the point of this spindle, which rested on the bit of cedar, they used as tinder the dust of very dry cedar bark. By spinning the spindle, back and forth very rapidly, sometimes for half an hour, sometimes for two hours, they would manage to ignite the tinder and thus obtain fire, but the process was so slow that it made it almost compulsory for them to keep a fire going day and night.

Their canoes in those days were what we know as dug-outs, but as they had neither axes nor saws, their construction was a difficult and lengthy operation. In order to cut a tree down, they had a flint-like stone which was worn down by rubbing on another stone till it finally achieved something like a chisel shape. Cedar roots were taken and steeped in water and beaten with a stick till they were soft and pliable, then while still wet and soft they were lashed round the stone chisel, which was placed on a straight handle, notched to receive it. They used a stone mallet, and after selecting a suitable tree, my informant

told me that in many cases it would be a matter of a month's work to fell it. They would commence by cutting a little notch with the chisel and hammer where the bottom of the kerf was to be, then another incision would be made about eight or ten inches above this, and the part in between would be split off with the chisel. The same process was repeated until in time the tree came down. Fire was used in shaping the outside of the tree; burning brands would be held at the right place till gradually the canoe assumed shape, and could be finished with their stone chisels. When the outside had been burned to proper shape and trimmed, the inside was hollowed out also by fire. Stones were heated red hot and thrown with tongs made from two sticks into the desired place, and by careful watching, the canoe or dugout gradually assumed shape. It was necessarily clumsy and thicker than need be, as there was always the danger of burning a hole right through. All fastenings needed were made from cedar roots or small cedar limbs, which were beaten in water and softened, and put in place. When these dried they would hold the articles to be joined together very tightly indeed.

On inquiry as to the length of time it would take, I found that as a general rule the whole tribe could not manufacture more than one or two of these dugouts in a year. They were very clumsy and slow.

As my informant told me, this was all changed when the white man came. They got his axes, and what was the work of a whole village for a year could be done by one man in a month or two, besides making a much more shapely and serviceable article.

The same could be said regarding clothing. The clothing used by the Indians before this time was obtained either from the hair of the wild mountain goat, or in some places from a breed of dogs which had long, white, woolly hair; which breed, to the best of my knowledge, is now extinct, although in my early days amongst the Indians I saw a number of them. This wool was spun and woven into blankets and other articles of apparel. In addition to this the bark of the cedar tree was made into ordinary wearing apparel. The inside bark was stripped from the outer bark and put into water, and when properly worked, torn off into pieces of the desired width, about one-sixteenth of an inch thick. The native women were very skilful in the braiding or weaving of these bark strips, and made clothing, mats, sails, and other articles. Of course the condition of the Indians was bettered in this regard with the advent of the white man, as blankets and what is commonly known as 'European clothing' superseded the native clothing, thus making their toil very much easier; but the great feature to which all the old men alluded was the safety to themselves in the prohibition and prevention of their tribal wars.

These wars were very fierce and the aboriginals of those days were all head-hunters, so that after one of the tribal raids the heads of their dead enemies were stuck on poles and used as trimming or ornamentation for their canoes when they were returning home. Generally speaking, all the defeated people were killed, but in some instances the women and children would be taken prisoner and used as slaves. These slaves became the property of the winning tribe, and were obliged to labour incessantly for

the welfare of the community which owned them, and their lot was indeed a very hard one.

I had many conversations with one man who was commonly known as 'Cariboo Jack,' who had been taken prisoner while a child by the Indians of Bella Coola, who attacked his village, known as Gwayasdums, which is on the south-west end of Gilford Island. Jack was about eight years old when he was taken prisoner, and was carried to Bella Coola. He said he was treated with extreme cruelty, was beaten frequently, and often the beatings were for imaginary offences or for offences committed by the children of his captors; sometimes the beatings were so severe that the blood would run down his back and legs and he could only move with difficulty. His taskmasters were always more severe when he was less able to perform his duties. Part of his work was to provide food for the family who had the care of him, and he was only served with the remnants of what he obtained for them. If he had been seen to touch any of the food while it was in preparation, his death would have been instantaneous.

In addition to all these trials and troubles, a slave never knew at what moment he would be called upon to die as a sacrifice for the benefit of his captors. Jack told me that on one occasion a young daughter of one of the chiefs at Bella Coola, while playing round the village, slipped and fell, and made a cut on her foot which bled rather freely. The father of the girl happened to be away from home and did not return until the next day, and when he arrived he called his family together, and with a huge stone sling killed a slave in order to wipe out the disgrace of his

daughter having fallen and cut her foot. Jack later on managed to escape, went over the pass from Bella Coola into Chilcoten, and from there to Cariboo, returning to his own people when he was a man well advanced in years.

The Indians, on the whole, were very cruel in their treatment both of their families and of other peoples with whom they came in contact. When their parents or elderly relatives got helpless, they were turned out to die; but my early informants told me that this idea changed very much with the advent of the white man.

Without exception, these old men who gave me my earliest information were decidedly of the opinion that the greatest boon and the greatest blessing that had come to them was the advent of the white man, and they were unable to understand why the younger men were making so much disturbance about their ancient rights.

CHAPTER III

MORALITY

ALL who have worked amongst the Indians, either as missionaries, as medical officers, or as workers in other fields, have been extremely struck by what might be called, for want of a better definition, their lack of moral sensibility. They seem to utterly lack that fine feeling which we commonly call sentiment, and their ideas are very gross. A few examples will illustrate this.

In visiting an Indian village on one occasion, I was met at my landing by an Indian known by the name of Joe. Although he was commonly known as a long-faced man, he usually had a pleasant smile any time when I went to the village, but on this occasion Joe's face was stretched out to an unusual length, and he looked as if he had no friends alive in the world. The following conversation took place between us, which I will put into plain English, although it took place partly in Kwakwala, which is the language of this agency, partly in Chinook, and partly in English. The reason for the mixed conversation was that I only partly understand Kwakwala, the Indian only partially understood English, and Chinook was a very difficult jargon in which to carry on any extended conversation.

'Well, Joe, what 's the matter to-day? You look very sad.'

'I feel very bad, Mr. Halliday. I cry all night and all day.'

'Why are you crying?'

'Well, my wife, he die.'

'When did that happen?'

'Three days ago, my wife, he die.'

'Was she sick very long, Joe?'

'No, just three or four days. He die very quick. He die because he have no more wind.'

'I am very sorry, Joe, that you have lost her, but remember that you have lived happily together for many years, and her memory should be very pleasant to you.'

'Yes, he very good woman; I never forget him.'

Our conversation then turned to some difficulty he had been having over a trap line, which I promised to get adjusted satisfactorily for him, and as I turned away he said to me: 'Mr. Halliday, what do you think if I marry Queen?'

I looked at him in amazement, and said: 'Why do you ask me that question? Queen has a husband already.'

A smile broke over his face, and he said: 'But that is no matter, he like me better.'

On another occasion a young woman who had been trained and educated by the Anglican Mission School at Alert Bay had been married and her husband died after they had lived together for about eighteen months or two years. Three days after his death she appeared in my office, accompanied by a young man; and when she came in I said to her: 'Well, Bessie, what is the trouble to-day?'

'Did you hear that Joe was dead?' Joe was her husband.

'No,' I said. 'When did he die?'

'He died on Monday.' The day of the conversation was Thursday.

'Oh,' I said. 'Had he been sick long?'

'He died of T.B., and he had been pretty sick for two months before he died.'

'That is too bad, Bessie. What do you intend to do?'

'I have come to ask you how long I need to wait before I can marry again.'

'Well,' I said, 'that is a matter for you to choose yourself. So far as the law is concerned, you are free to marry as soon as the breath is out of the other fellow, but it seems to me that you could not have very much feeling for Joe or very much respect for public feeling to be in such a hurry. Whom do you want to marry?'

'This fellow with me.'

'You surely don't want to marry this fellow!'

'Yes. Why not?'

'Why, you would be crazy if you married him. He is lazy, won't work, and has been a leech on his mother ever since he was a child; he is a drinker and a gambler, and altogether useless.'

'Well, that makes no difference; I want to marry him, anyway. I want to get a licence right now.'

'Are you going to pay for the licence or is he?'

'Oh, I am. I have the money.'

Of course under the circumstances there was nothing else to do but to issue the marriage licence, and they were married the next day. I did not see Bessie again for about a year, but when I saw her I said: 'Well, Bessie, how are you and Johnnie getting along?'

'Oh, Johnnie is no good. He won't give me anything;

he hasn't given me even a pocket-handkerchief since we have been married, and as for food, what money I earned in working at the cannery in the summer has kept the two of us.'

'Well, Bessie, I warned you before you took him, but you promised that you took him for better or for worse, so it's up to you to stick to your promise. In the meantime I am going to have a good talk to him and try to waken him up to a sense of his responsibility.'

Johnnie was called in, and was talked to, warned, scolded, threatened, and everything else that lay in my power was done, and Johnnie promised to do better. The next time I saw Bessie was six months later. She came to me for advice; told me her story. Johnnie had been sick, she ran short of food, and in order to provide food for herself and Johnnie, she had listened to the wiles of some designing white man, and had accepted money from him for prostituting herself. Johnnie had found this out, and had given her all kinds of abuse, and threatened to sue her for divorce. She was in great distress over it.

'Well,' I said, 'that will be a very good move for you. Let him go ahead and get the divorce, then you will be free from him. You know he never will be any good, anyway.'

Divorce proceedings never took place. Bessie left him, another man living near by left his wife and took Bessie, and apparently they are living happily together.

Their marriage customs are entirely matters of convenience, and are all arranged by the relatives. In the majority of instances the woman herself is not consulted, but is given to the husband as a pledge for property

which is given to her people for her. Children have been mortgaged for *potlatch* debts before they were five years of age, and the mortgagee claims his wife when she is probably thirteen to fifteen years of age. The inevitable result of these practices follows, for these young women have their own ideas about men, and they are not faithful to their husbands, but live promiscuously with other men according to circumstances. They do not seem to realize for a minute the sacredness of the marriage vow; in fact, they seem to treat with contempt vows of any kind.

On one occasion, while discussing the Indians generally with an Indian woman of unusual intelligence, I happened to say to her that it was a pity they were not more moral, as they allowed all desires, of no matter what nature, to rule and govern them.

'You believe in God and that He created everything?'

'Certainly.'

'When He created people He gave them various appetites?'

'Yes.'

'If you are hungry you satisfy your appetite by eating, and think you are doing right; if you are thirsty, you again satisfy your appetite by drinking; and why should you not satisfy any other appetite or desire, either physical or sexual?'

'Society and the moral law lay down certain rules and regulations beyond which we cannot go without offence.'

'The Indians have their moral law, and it lets them know that all desires are made to be satisfied.'

A young girl came into my office one day and wanted a marriage licence. 'How old are you?'

'Fourteen.'

'I am unable to let you have a licence, as you are under the legal age. My advice to you is to wait until you are at least twenty-one and able to choose for yourself.'

'Do you think I am going to wait till I am twenty-one to get married, and by that time have half a dozen fatherless children running after me? If you don't give me a licence I will live with him anyway, so it's up to you to decide.'

Later on I found it best to obtain an order from one of our Supreme Court judges authorizing me to issue a marriage licence to a girl under legal age, so that her child should not be born out of wedlock.

An Indian is naturally tricky and cunning. Under the Indian Act it is an offence for any one to supply an Indian with intoxicants. Under the Provincial Government Liquor Act it is an offence for any person other than a Government vendor to sell liquor at all, either to an Indian or any one else. At most of the canneries the Chinese do the actual canning by contract, and the company for whom they are operating have a clause in the agreement penalizing the Chinamen if they traffic in liquor with the Indians or any one else. This is in addition to the Indian Act regulations and the Provincial Liquor Act regulations. At one cannery a few years ago, just at the close of the season, when the vigilance of the cannery people was somewhat relaxed, in fact the Chinese were packing up to go away on the boat which was expected that night, a Chinaman sold an Indian two bottles of liquor for ten dollars. These bottles were in straw wrappers, and contained one-twelfth of a gallon each. The Indian took them to his camp, two or three hundred yards away, and he and

his friends consumed the contents of one bottle. On the table in his house was a bottle of ketchup which he happened to notice, when a bright idea came into his mind. He took the ketchup bottle, put it in the straw wrapper, went back to the Chinaman, and said: 'I thought you sold me whisky.'

'So I did.'

'Well, you didn't. I gave you five dollars a bottle for two bottles and this is what you sold me,' and he produced the bottle of ketchup. 'If you don't make that right, I'm going straight to the policeman; we're expecting one in here to-day, and I'll tell him as soon as he comes.'

The Chinaman took away the bottle of ketchup from him, returned him his ten dollars, and gave him another bottle of liquor to keep him quiet, and the Indian went on his way chuckling about how he had hoodwinked the Chinaman.

Many people are inclined to say, 'Lo, the poor Indian,' but in a matter of business the Indian has proved himself very shrewd and well able to take care of himself, but unfortunately has not proved himself at all shrewd in his expenditure, as he buys things that he has absolutely no use for, and if he wants anything and has the money, he never hesitates to buy it. If he can buy it on credit, so much the better—the other man can wait for his money until he is ready to pay!

His ideas run back very largely to the old days when the man who gave away the most was the biggest chief, and it has created a spirit of prodigality and intemperance which seems to be very hard to drive out of his system.

The old people had no chance to go to school; could

neither read nor write, and their methods of counting were very simple. If they had any business to do, they would talk the matter over quietly, spend lots of time over it, and usually had a little pile of pebbles in front of them, each of which would represent a blanket or fifty cents or a dollar, as the case might be. They would all be very carefully counted out time and time again, then the business would be transacted when they had checked and rechecked by means of these pebbles. They seemed to be able to perform small problems of addition where the numbers did not amount to more than seven or eight, but when it came to subtraction they had to use the pebbles.

Indians are all, or nearly all, great gamblers. One favourite old-time game they had was played with two little sticks, each about the size of an ordinary lead pencil, and about four inches long. One stick was plain, and the other one carved in the middle, sometimes by one, two, or three concentric rings. The idea of the game was to take sides, and put up the stakes in a big pile, the stakes often consisting of blankets, beads, clothing, and sometimes food; an adjustment as to value being made as each person put in his contribution to the pile. They sat in two rows facing each other, and the centre man on one side had the two sticks, one in each hand. He had a blanket across his knees, and his party would start to sing a little verse of a song, and while the singing was going on, the one holding the sticks would pass his hands rapidly back and forth under his blanket until one of the other side would make an exclamation and the singing would immediately stop. Both hands of the centre man would be then held up with the backs to the opposing side, and

those in the opposing side would guess which hand held the carved stick. I omitted to mention that for every player there was a counter consisting either of a pebble or some other little article, and these were placed in a pile in front of the leaders of each side. If the guess was successful, one counter was taken away and added to the opponents' pile; but if the guess was wrong, one counter was taken from the other pile. In every case when the guess was right, the two play-sticks were passed over to the other side, and the game was continued until finally one side would win all the counters and take the pot.

The gambling spirit found other means of expression after they learned to play cards, and a game of cards commonly known as Black Jack became very popular. On one occasion we had a friend from Vancouver visiting us, and a neighbour living a mile or so away was ill, and it was necessary for someone to sit up with her at night, so our friend volunteered to go one night, and I escorted her to the neighbour's house.

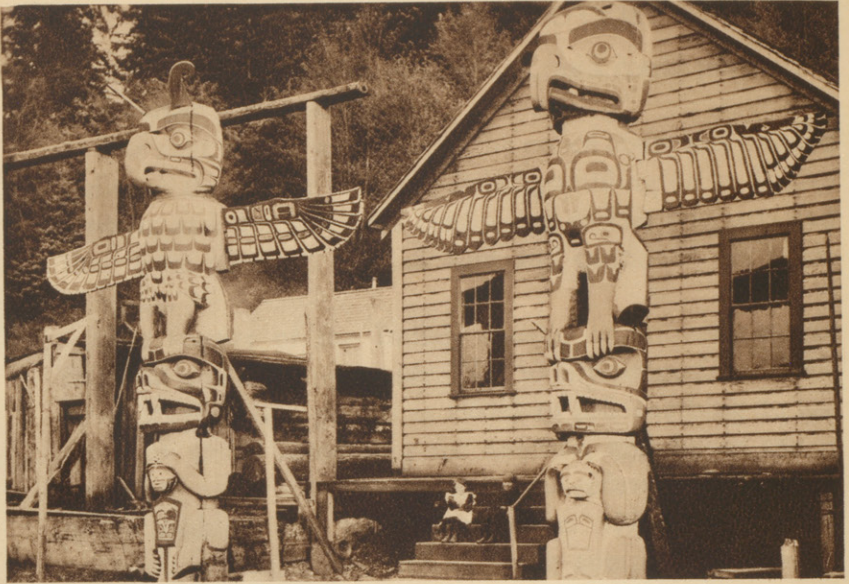
On the way we passed through the Indian village at Alert Bay, and as we got near the centre of the village, I noticed a lantern on the ground and a crowd gathered round. As we drew near I could hear: 'Hit it, hit it again, broke; hit, broke!' Then I heard: 'I'll pay twenty-one!' They were so intent on the game that they did not see us approach, and I excused myself from the lady and cautiously got in among them and said: 'I think I'll take a hand in the pot.' I reached out and grabbed all the money I could get, amounting to about thirty dollars; and I never saw such a scattering in my life. Some rolled down the bank in front of us, some ran. My

friend was absolutely dumbfounded, and could not understand what it was all about.

The next day all appeared in the police court and pleaded guilty to the charge of being found gambling on an Indian reserve, and the 'pot' was confiscated to His Majesty, and they were all fined a small sum and cautioned not to do it again.

One feature of the Indian custom or etiquette is the fact that one must never say 'No' to any proposition made by another. If a person is asked to sell anything to another or to do something for another, and he or she is unwilling to do so, the only way that refusal can be made is by making the price prohibitive. Nothing is ever expected or asked for without some compensation being given in return. It is thus easily seen that adultery and prostitution become merely a matter of price and not of principle.

On one occasion a woman laid an information on a charge of rape against a man who happened to be in the village at the time. When the case came up for hearing I was obliged to dismiss it, as the informant in giving her evidence admitted that no force had been used, but that the man refused to pay the sum which he had agreed to pay.



DOUBLE EAGLES



BUTTON BLANKETS AND CARVINGS

CHAPTER IV

ANCIENT CUSTOMS, ARTS, AND CRAFTS

IN the struggle for existence in this transitory life there is no phase of it more important than the food-supply. Amongst the Indians of the British Columbia coast, from time immemorial the principal source of food has been fish in one form or other. In the Kwawkewlth Agency, the first fish obtained in the early spring are halibut. The ancient method of catching the halibut was by means of lines or ropes made from cedar bark with a wooden hook; this hook being baited very often with parts of the devil fish, which seems to be a very tempting bait for all flat fish. The hooks were so made that the fish, instead of swallowing the bait, sucked it, and drew part of the hook into its mouth, from which it was impossible to be extricated again by the fish itself. In the canoe each fisherman carried a wooden club, somewhat resembling the old-fashioned potato-masher, and when the fish was drawn to the top it was immediately clubbed to death and thrown into the canoe.

The actual fishing and taking to the village is performed by the men; the rest of the work is done entirely by women. In the old days they used knives made from clam-shells or deep-sea oysters, and the halibut fish was cut into strips lengthwise of the fish. Each strip when taken off would possibly be two inches in diameter. This was then laid on a flat rock or a log and was pared round and round, almost

like taking shavings from a turning lathe, the flesh being taken off about one-eighth of an inch thick, which would make a flat sheet when completed of, roughly speaking, a foot square. This was then spread out on rocks or frames to dry, and was cured without smoke and without any salt.

The halibut could not be found in all coastal waters, so after being dried it became the object of barter between the Indians living in the vicinity of Queen Charlotte Sound and those from other parts along the coast.

The next fish of importance in chronological order is the oolachan, sometimes known as the 'candle fish.' The oolachan comes in great shoals or schools, beginning approximately about the first week in April, and ending about 20th May. In early days very primitive methods had to be used for catching these fish. They drove stakes in the river bottom where the water was not too deep, and formed a fence by tying to them brush with strips of bark. This trap would be shaped like a funnel, wide at the upper end and narrow downstream. The fish would go up the river on the tide, and then when the stream turned they slowly drifted downstream with it, and those who went in the mouth of the funnel came out at the small end, where they were caught in baskets and thrown into the canoe. By this primitive method, I have seen as many as twenty tons taken in twenty-four hours from one of these traps.

Later on someone discovered that the ordinary stinging nettle makes a good fibre, and as the stinging nettle is found around all Indian reserves, the material was fairly plentiful. These nettles were cut off close to the ground

or pulled out by the roots, at the proper season, and were beaten with sticks in water till the fibre could be split. The fibre was then formed into twine, and nets were made from this. These nets also were made funnel-shaped, with a coarse mesh near the intake, but with a long bag, probably twenty or thirty feet long, at the small end of the funnel. At the entrance the diameter would be possibly ten or twelve feet, but at the small end only about sixteen inches. The small end of the net was tied to keep the fish from escaping, and it was used in the same way as the trap above referred to. This was a much more profitable method of fishing than the other, as practically no fish ever escaped once they got into the bag. The fish were carried in baskets and put in great piles on the shore, the piles or heaps being, roughly speaking, twenty feet square and about sixteen inches deep; some fishermen having as many as twenty or thirty of these piles. These were allowed to lie until well putrefied, by which means the oil in the fish was released. Wooden boxes were then brought and partially filled with water, and by heating stones and dropping them into the boxes, this water was brought to a boil, when the putrefied mass of decayed fish was ladled into the boxes and stirred round with a stick. The oil all floated to the top, and after being allowed to stand for possibly half an hour, was skimmed off and put into containers. The smell, one can easily imagine, was somewhat terrible. The operation was repeated again and again, until all the fish caught had been turned into grease. This grease was known amongst our Indians as *kleena* and was a very common source of food. The usual method at a meal was that a small dish of *kleena* was set in the

middle of the crowd, who usually sat on the floor to eat, and dried fish would be passed round, when each one would take his morsel of fish, dip it into the dish of *kleena*, and eat it with much gusto, licking his fingers after each bite.

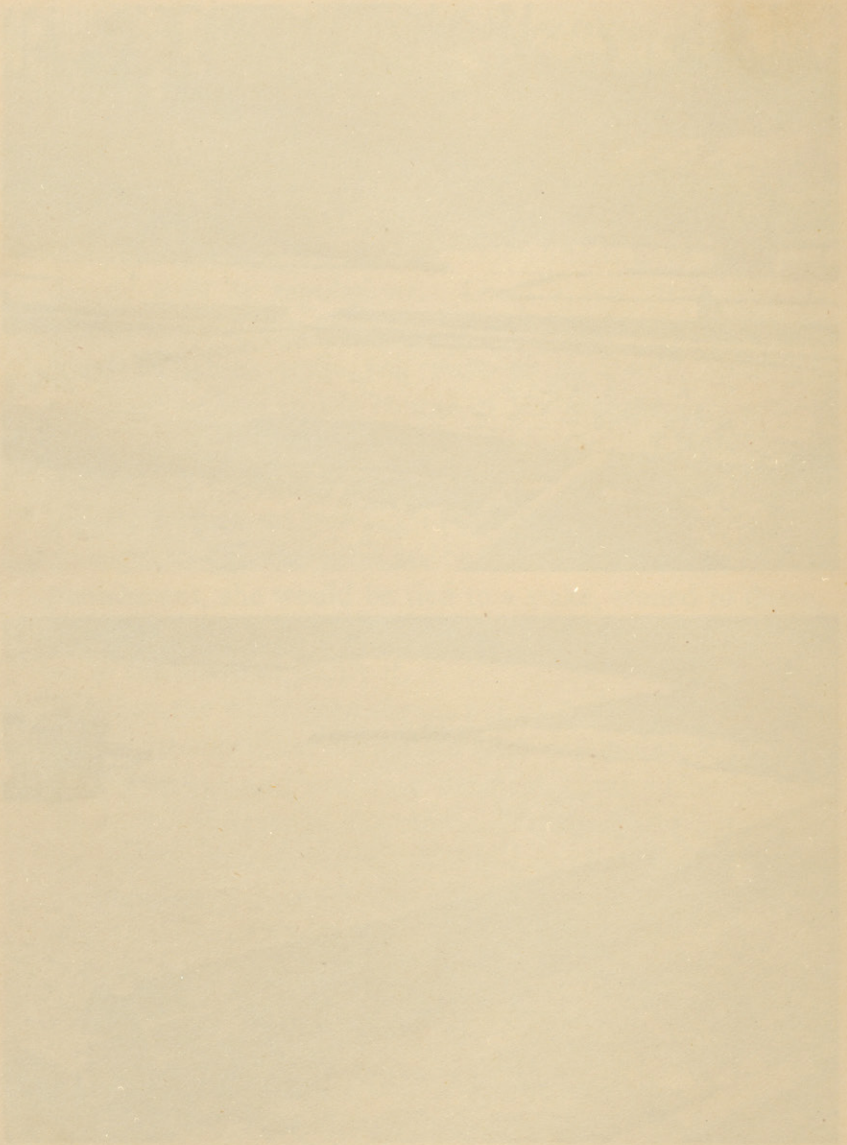
The oolachan is practically the only fish used by the Indians regarding which their superstitions have made any drastic laws or regulations. Until a few years ago no Indian woman would think of travelling up any of the rivers in which these fish were to be found, who was pregnant or was in the course of her menses. If such a thing occurred, their theory was that the fish would turn round and go away. This made a good excuse for a jealous woman to get rid of a rival, if she could only manage to get the rival to be seen on the river. For punishment, she would be tied to a stake, stoned to death, and her body burned to ashes, the ashes being thrown on to the water to purify it.

When the white men commenced logging operations on some of these rivers, deputation after deputation of Indians waited on me and said that the fishing would be ruined. There would never be any more oolachans, and what would the poor Indian do then? Would I not intercede with the whites and get them to suspend operations during the parts of the months of April and May when the fish were running?

It so happened that the Powell River Company was operating a big camp on Kingcome River, and although the logging superintendent could not close down, he made the Indians a promise that if the run failed on account of their operations, the company would try and help the Indians in some other way.



OOLACHANS READY TO BE MADE INTO OIL



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LIBRARY



That year, strange to say, there was a record run of these fish, and when the Indians thus received ocular demonstration that the logging did not affect the river, they commenced testing out some of their other superstitions regarding the fish, until now they have practically no regulations except to get the fish when they come, and in the years when the run is small, use something else for food.

Shortly after the close of the oolachan fishing, the salmon fishing began. The sockeye salmon were the earliest salmon to make their appearance, and they were caught in traps of various kinds and used fresh or partially fresh, as the natives used no salt or preservative of any kind other than smoke. The salmon were split down the back and spread out, and fastened between little stocks to hold them in place, and roasted or broiled before an open fire. The fish cooked in this manner were usually eaten immediately, or within a few days, as they would not keep.

After the close of the sockeye season, what are commonly known as humpback salmon were caught; these are the fish which are now canned under the technical name of 'pinks.' They were treated the same way as the sockeye.

Late in the season the dog salmon, now canned as 'chums,' commenced to run, and they have formed the staple article of food for all the Indians. They were used as they were caught for a time but later in the season after actual spawning had taken place the fish were split down the back, all the bones taken out, and the remainder dried and smoked. They were dried and smoked to such an extent that when finished they were only about a quarter of an inch thick.

These were then tied in great bundles and formed their principal article of diet.

A diet of this kind naturally would require some corrective, and the Indians were wise enough to use correctives in the form of other types of food. In the spring of the year they ate very liberally of the sprouts of salmon-berry bushes. They also stripped the bark from young spruce trees, and scraped out the soft matter immediately between the bark and the wood, and ate it. For spring vegetables they used what was commonly known as *tuksoos*, which were the roots of a species of wild clover that grew in all flat tide lands, and this was eaten very freely with curative effect. The roots were about the size of a small slate pencil, and when thoroughly washed and boiled, somewhat resembled potatoes in flavour though not in appearance. There was always a plentiful crop of wild berries, and these were eaten fresh during their season, and were dried in cakes and put away for winter use; they also dried seaweed of certain varieties, and when this was boiled and used as food, some of it was really very palatable.

In addition to the various fruits and fish, the Indians early learned the use of deadfalls for catching game. They would find the pathway where the game was in the habit of going, and by having a log with a weight on top of it over the path, the deer or other animal going through sprung the trap and was crushed to death. At that time game was plentiful and abundant. For weapon they used the bow and arrow, but prior to that the principal weapon was a kind of slingshot made by shrinking green hide on a round stone, leaving a thong of about three or four feet

attached to it. This, when whirled round the head, could be thrown with great force, and was very successful in killing game.

Possibly the next most serious problem that faces all mankind in the struggle of life is the housing problem. There is so much rain along the coast of British Columbia that this problem becomes more acute than in drier climates. Before the advent of the white men's tools, the building of a house was a long and tedious operation. Stone chisels and mallets were used to fell cedar trees, and they were split into boards by the same primitive methods. The Indian is very nomadic in his habits, as he goes where the food is, according to the various seasons. Consequently, he either required a large number of houses, or he needed a portable one. Both of these ideas were in use. When going from place to place, if he had no house at the end of his journey, the house in which he lived would be carefully taken apart, and all the boards carried in the canoe along with the rest of the household effects, and the house set up again when he reached his destination. Time was no object in the mind of the Indian, and no such thing was known as the accumulation of a reserve. Everybody lived just for the day. However, adequate provision of dried fish and flesh was always laid by to tide over the winter months. Clams, of course, were always available right on the sea-coast, and this formed another article of barter amongst other tribes. The clams were taken from their shells and woven into a sort of mat by means of small splints being put through them, and were then dried and partially smoked, and when in that condition they would keep a considerable time. These were bartered in exchange

for furs and other natural supplies with Indians from the interior of the province.

Some of the Indians, so far as houses were concerned, had a sort of tent made from cedar bark. The cedar bark was taken from living trees, and the inner bark peeled off and made into strips from three-eighths to half an inch wide, which were woven into large mats, and while not actually watertight, would turn a great deal of water, and this was the early tent used by the Indians in their migration from one place to another.

While in primitive times it was not very easy to obtain much ornamentation, the native was not without his ideas of art, and on the beach at Fort Rupert there used to be a number of carvings on the sandstone. These of late years have become almost obliterated through the continual erosion of the water, but thirty-five years ago, when I first saw them, they were very clear. Their ideas all seemed to run more or less in the same groove or channel. An Indian boy at school who is away from his friends and surroundings for the greater part of the year, and is given paper and pencil and asked to draw something, immediately commences on some of the peculiar ideas in the way of art that the Indians have. Their pictures all bear a strong resemblance to one another, and to our minds have no resemblance to anything else. As they got the white men's tools and the white men's paints, they commenced the erection of larger and better houses, and many of them had beautifully carved pillars separating the main frame of their house. Each of these large houses had four posts, set in pairs at each end of the building, with a short cross-beam across both pairs, and then one stick of timber

running lengthways, making the ridge of the house. In the better class of houses, these pillars were beautifully carved with the crests or totems of the owner, and were painted according to the ideas of the artist who was erecting them. On some of the houses a great deal of carving and painting was put on the outside, but only on the front of the house. After they were able to purchase lumber from the sawmills, the front of the house was always built of manufactured lumber, instead of the split boards which were used in the construction of the rest of the house, and a certain amount of ornamentation was quite prevalent.

All these houses were heated by means of a fire built on the ground in the centre of the building, the smoke escaping through crevices both in the roof and in the walls; but the Indians lived so much in this smoke, that until a few years ago almost all the old people were more or less blind through its evil effects. Since better ventilation and better construction of dwellings are in common use, blindness is becoming more or less rare.

On all or practically all of the Indian graves are to be found specimens of their paintings and carvings, for it seems that there was nothing too good to ornament the graves, and no clothing was too good to be used on preparing the body for burial. The primitive method of burial, owing to the fact of many places being rocky with no soil available, was to put the body in a small container which was tied to the branches of a tree, as high up as possible, or close to the top of a rocky bluff or in a niche in the rock; but no matter where it was put, there were always some signs of the Indian art to be found to mark

the spot. As they got more proficient in the use of the white men's tools, they commenced making the totems which are the visible signs of their heraldry. As stated before, all these totems have a meaning, as the marriages and inter-marriages of the forefathers of the owner of the totem are delineated on the pole, and no one dare use any crest on his totem to which he is not entitled, as he would be laughed to scorn by the other Indians. Of late years there has been considerable business done amongst the Indians by the manufacture and sale of miniature totems; but with regard to these miniatures, the sad part of it is that many of them have no history of any kind attached to them, but are made simply to sell. There is no story attached to them as there is attached to a proper totem.

Then, too, as the use of better tools prevailed, the dancing-masks were much improved. Cedar was the principal wood used in all these masks, as it is easy to work, is light to carry, and very durable. The dancing-masks represent some portion of the history of the individual who owns them, and no Indian will produce a mask to which he is not entitled, nor one without a story attached to it. He may make a mask commercially and sell it, but he would not dream of using it at any of his own gatherings; as if he should try to use it, it would have no significance to the rest of his people, and consequently there would be no glory come to him from exhibiting it. At many of the large feasts they had huge feeding-dishes, some of them ten or twelve feet long, beautifully carved, and in which the food would be placed for distribution. These were not only beautifully carved, but were painted

with all the skill of the Indian artist, and even amongst the Indians themselves were very costly.

A few of them excelled in the working of silver and gold. They made bracelets, brooches, pins, earrings, and other articles of that kind, all beaten out with small hammers on little iron anvils, and when hammered to shape were carved by steel graving tools, many of them being real works of art. These silver and gold ornaments were so much appreciated that to-day in many of the retail stores which deal in Indian curios they have factory-made ones which are being sold as of actual Indian manufacture, and this has largely tended to decrease the trade in these articles amongst the Indians themselves, as to the uninitiated these imitations are sold as originals; thus the market becomes flooded, as they can be sold more cheaply than the Indian can manufacture them. There are totem poles imported from Japan which are sold as original Indian totems.

In early days the Indians believed in early marriages, and, as mentioned elsewhere, a woman was a subject of barter, and was used to swell the assets of the father, uncle, or guardian, as the case might be. She was supposed to be married between her first and second menses, and it was made a public matter, so that all men who were eligible for marriage could make an offer for her. Often some old man would be the purchaser, for it cannot be called by any other name, and there would be no other ceremony than the paying over of the property and receiving the girl in exchange as a pledge or security.

Occasionally, however, the groom-to-be was young and had never been married before. In these cases, particularly if they were people of note, there would be a big

feast and celebration. At one stage of the proceedings the hand of the girl would be demanded by the friends of the youth, and the guardian of the girl would refuse. 'We will take her by force.'

'If you can take her by force, you can have her.' A rush would then be made to the house near by where the girl would be hidden. The friends of the youth would attack the house, which would be defended by the friends of the girl, until they tired of the play, when peace would be made on condition that the girl was delivered as a hostage. She was brought out in all her finery and surrendered to the attackers, who carried her off to the house occupied by the groom, where again they would be feasted. The old men admonished the groom and the women the bride, and the ceremony was over. Neither of the contracting parties took any part, but were just cogs in the machine.

At any time the girl could redeem herself, or her people could redeem her, and both parties would be free to contract another alliance.

In matters of duties each one looked after his or her own. The man was supposed to provide the food, and the woman was to do the cooking and the serving of it, but it was not incumbent on him to provide clothing or any other necessities, though he often did so, but his property was his own, and her property was hers.

Amongst white people the mother-in-law joke has been prevalent for centuries, and the same difficulties arise amongst the Indians. They marry without having a home ready, and it is either a case that she goes with him to his people and lives in their house, or as is equally often the

case, he goes with her to her people, and they have the same quarrels as their white friends have.

When a child is born, as soon as the mother is able to be around, a feast is given. Presents are given away by the clan, and the first name is given to the child. Later on at some *potlatch* a new name is given, which is only used at *potlatches*, and the giving of the new name is a matter of more giving away of considerable property in order that the witnesses may not forget.

When a death occurred a feast would always be given by the friends of the deceased, at which mourning songs would be sung, singing the praises of the departed one, and also comforting the sorrowing ones. Each one who attended the ceremony would receive a gift, while the singers always would receive an extra portion for themselves as payment for their services as singers, in addition to what was given them as their regular share.

CHAPTER V

THE DERELICT

IF you are in search of true hospitality or true kindness, leave the crowded cities and travel to the outlying districts. Get as far as possible from so-called 'civilization,' and go where each individual mind is more or less free to develop along its own lines, untrammelled by conventions. Go where a man is considered for what he is, and not for what he is worth; and even if he should be weighed in the balance and found wanting, he will meet with more kindness and more hospitality the farther he gets away from the larger centres. It is unknown for any one to die of starvation in the outlying places, provided that any of his neighbours has even a crust to share with him, unless it may be in chance instances that his wants and needs are absolutely concealed.

The Indian is like others in this respect, but to even a more marked degree; when there is food, all share it, and when there is a scarcity, all suffer alike. If a case of real distress occurs amongst others than his own family, he is always ready to assist. Any person, regardless of creed or colour, is always sure of getting the same food as the host or hostess. It is perfectly true that if occasion arises, repayment in kind is expected, but there is no compulsion and no hard feelings in case of failure to reciprocate.

In a new country like the province of British Columbia, owing to its physical difficulties, many small districts are more or less isolated, and until recently communication has been difficult. Consequently, it was a comparatively easy matter for any one desiring to do so, to practically lose himself and his identity, except to a very limited few. This fact was often taken advantage of by men who wished their friends or enemies to lose complete record of them. In many of these instances they were men of good families, and well educated, but the principles of atavism, or in some cases the love of strong drink, made them degenerate until apparently they were past redemption.

Jim Jones, as I will call him for want of a better name, was one of these moral degenerates. He lived with one of the most disreputable-looking Indian women that it has ever been my lot to see. She rejoiced in the name of Polly, and her record showed that she had been a common-law wife to several Indians and several white men before taking up with Jones. They lived part of the time on one of the Indian reserves, and part of the time in a cabin on one of the numerous bays amongst the islands. He never owed anybody anything, but no one ever knew of his doing any work. About once a year he and Polly took a trip to Vancouver or Victoria, and possibly his finances were replenished there.

One afternoon many years ago, he and Polly came to the agency office. I knew Polly, but had never seen Jones before, although I had heard of him. To my great surprise he spoke to me in a rich, well-modulated, educated southern voice.

'I have just come back from Victoria, and I have with

me a document which I would like you to read over carefully, and if it would not be too much trouble, I would like you to put it on file in your office for future reference.'

I took the document and read it, and found it to be a medical certificate made out by Dr. O. M. Jones of the city of Victoria. The document stated that Jim Jones had come to him for medical examination, and he found that he had a most pronounced aneurism, and was liable to die at any moment. It warned him to avoid going to any place where he might get any excitement, as a shock would be immediately fatal.

'Why do you bring this document to me?'

'You know the life I have been living. Dr. Jones says I am liable to pass out any time without notice. Polly and her Indian friends have befriended me, fed me, and cared for me, and I intend to stay with them until the end comes. My object in telling you this, and leaving the document in your possession, is that when I do pass out my death may not be laid at the hands of Polly or any of her people. You know we are far from the beaten path. There are only a very few white people near, and they have no use for me. I do openly what they do secretly, and I am no hypocrite. I have been everything that is evil, but I can say: "Thank God, I never stole from any one and I am no hypocrite."''

'Have you any home?'

'Yes, a cabin on the island.'

'Will you be living there all the time?'

'Yes, until the end comes, and the sooner it comes, the better.'

'Have you any effects of any kind, any papers or documents, or any estate?'

'There is a small black tin cash-box with a few things in it, which is always in my valise. I have given Polly instructions to look after it, and she is to have the contents after I am gone.'

'I would advise you to put this document in the cash-box with the rest of your papers. It might happen that I might be away on one of my long trips when your end came, and if it was with the rest of your papers of course it would be available.'

'I believe you are right; but I have one favour to ask of you. I want to be buried in front of my cabin, and be buried by the Indians. The storekeeper up there is very selfish and grasping, and if he has anything to do with my burial, there will be nothing left for Polly. The Indians have been good to me. I found myself amongst them half-crazed through drink and other follies for which no one is to blame but myself. They took me in without asking any questions. Polly nursed me back to health, and has adopted me. None of them has ever asked me for a cent of money. I have never been able to do any work, but have never had that cast up at me. Fortunately I have been able to draw a little money occasionally from the bank, and in a very small way I have helped them out, but for every cent that I have expended I have had at least a dollar from them.'

'All right; if I have anything to do with it, I will remember your request.'

'There is another thing I want to tell you. I got a little money when I was in town. I have given it to Polly.'

She will keep it and make any disbursements necessary and if I pass out of this life suddenly it will be hers unconditionally.'

After he had gone away, I could not help thinking that a man who was so careful for those who had befriended him was not such a degenerate as he appeared to be, and it reminded me of the words of the poet:

There is in every human heart
Some not completely barren part.

One day, a few weeks later, an Indian who acted as special constable on his reserve came to the office. He informed me that Jim Jones was dead, and said: 'What are we to do with the body?'

'How long ago since he died?'

'Five days. Polly sent me off at once to let you know, but it has been so stormy that I have been five days on the way.'

'Did you tell any one up there?'

'Yes, I told the storekeeper.'

'What did he say or do?'

'He only said: "I won't do anything to help you. Jones was only a squaw-man and was no good, anyway. Why should I do anything? He is better out of the way."'

'Have you made a coffin for him?'

'Not yet; we left the body lying just where he died. The storekeeper would not let us have anything to make a coffin or fix it up.'

'All right, Tom; the policeman is away just now, and will not be back for a few days. You have a fair wind home. I will get you some lumber and black cloth to make a coffin. You go back and bury the body in front

of his cabin, and as soon as the policeman comes back I will come up with him. In the meantime, don't move any of his effects until we come.'

Tom went back, and the Indians buried the remains of Jones, and on the return of the constable we went together to the scene of the death. I may say that at this time the nearest coroner was at Vancouver; there was no wireless, and only one mail every two weeks, and it would have necessitated keeping the body for over two weeks had we waited for the arrival of a coroner.

We found that the Indians had dug a grave in front of the cabin, and had decently interred the body, and had made a rude cross which was put at the head of the grave. We searched the papers to find out if Jones had any property of any kind, or had left any will. We opened the cash-box and found the medical certificate referred to, and a few letters, but no will or anything of any importance. We discovered, however, that he was living under an assumed name, and that he belonged to one of the best Virginia families. From the letters we could more or less trace his life's history.

Jones, for so I will continue to call him, had come from a good family, but had committed some indiscretion while at the university, for which he was expelled. He left home and wandered far afield, and had never settled down to any fixed occupation. Apparently he had taken to drink, and had gradually sunk lower and lower, until at the last he was only recognized as a squaw-man and flotsam on the sea of life.

Amongst the letters in his box there was one from a brother, who reminded him that their mother was still

living, and that she still loved him and was longing for his return. She never could forget that he was her first-born, and no matter where he was or what he had done, she did so hope that she might see him again and bless him before she passed to the great beyond. Her eyes had failed her so much that she was unable to write, and Jones's brother had written for her.

The brother added to the letter on his own account, and reminded him that so many years had passed since his indiscretion at the university that it was all forgotten, and no one would ever cast it up at him if he should return. The brother also reminded him that there was plenty for them all, as Jones's share in the estate would more than provide for all his needs.

The constable duly reported the death and all particulars to the proper authorities, and also sent formal notice, without any particulars, to the brother.

The incident was practically forgotten, until one day some weeks later I received a letter from the Honourable W. J. Bowser, who was at that time Attorney-General for the province of British Columbia. This letter enclosed a copy of one written to him by the storekeeper, already referred to, giving a most garbled account of the whole matter, and stating that he and the other two whites in the vicinity had wanted to do all in their power to pay their last respects to the dead, and they could not understand how under a civilized and enlightened government such as we had in British Columbia, that any Indian agent or any other person could tell a bunch of savages to bury a white man like a dead dog, without even informing any one of it and without any inquiry having been made.

What peculiar kink is it in the minds of men that when their own conscience accuses them, they try to make trouble for the other fellow, as was the case here? Both the provincial constable and myself had interviewed the storekeeper, and had tried to show him where he had failed in his duty as a citizen, with the result that his awakened conscience had to get relief in laying charges against someone else.

However, no great attention was paid to his complaint, and this phase of the matter is only referred to with the object of showing that the life and work of an Indian agent is not all a bed of roses, and he is at all times the target for criticism.

CHAPTER VI

MATTERS JUDICIAL

REFERENCE has been made previously to the settlement at Kingcome Inlet. When the Provincial Government was acquainted with the fact that a new settlement was being made in that lonely valley, the intending settlers received every consideration. We were advised that, as we were out of the beaten path, one of our party should be constituted a Justice of the Peace, not only to have a certain authority to maintain law and order in the district, but also to be able to attest the various legal forms in connection with any new settlers desiring to locate, so that it would not entail extra hardships on them in having to travel possibly one hundred and fifty miles to have their signatures witnessed.

As I happened to be the oldest member of the party, and the best known, the honour was conferred on me. My commission was issued in May 1894, and since that time I have held the commission of the peace continuously. Twice during these years the whole commission has been recalled, but my new certificate always reached me before the expiration of the cancelled one, so that at the date of writing I can be reasonably sure of being, if not the senior magistrate for the province, at any rate can be numbered one of the seniors, and many cases have come to my attention, some humorous, some tragic, some extremely sordid, but all interesting.

In the early days of the province of British Columbia there was no tax on dogs of any kind, and dogs were very plentiful and very often a nuisance and a menace to one's neighbours, particularly in outlying places. This situation got to be so acute that in 1897 the province of British Columbia passed legislation to the effect that any person finding any dog molesting or worrying any domestic animal in any place other than the premises of the owner of the dog, could destroy the dog.

Early in 1898 the settlers at Kingcome Inlet appealed to me, as the only magistrate in the district, for advice as to what was the best thing to do with regard to the Indian dogs, which were a menace to their cattle; in fact some of the animals had been killed by these dogs, which were as large and nearly as savage as wolves. In reply they were sent a copy of the new statute, which had been less than a year in operation. At this time I was connected with the Alert Bay Indian Residential School, having left Kingcome Inlet early the previous year.

The white settlement at Kingcome Inlet at that time consisted of Baron Granville Lansdowne, a young Englishman from Bristol, who afterwards served with distinction overseas, and died a year or so after his return from injuries received while serving his king and country; Tom Burk, who was lost in the Klondike Rush between '98 and '99; William Clifford Smith, who afterwards died in north Vancouver; Harry Kirby, my brother Ernest, both of whom still live at Kingcome Inlet; and one other, whose name for the moment cannot be recalled.

Early one morning, Lansdowne, who incidentally was a crack shot with a rifle, heard a number of dogs barking

near his place, and on going out, found five dogs worrying some young cattle. He immediately opened fire, and three of the dogs dropped in their tracks; one got away, and the fifth one, the biggest of them all, being badly wounded, died while attempting to swim across the river. It so happened that the owner of this dog had been down the river and was returning in his canoe, when he saw the body of the dead dog floating in the water. He landed at Lansdowne's, and on making inquiry was informed by Lansdowne that he had shot the dogs, and was only sorry that he had missed one and let him get away. Charlie Casey, the Indian in question, told him that there was going to be trouble over the dogs, as they were all valuable bear dogs, and the Indians were going to chase him out of the valley, and that as soon as he could communicate with the Indians up the river they would return in a crowd and make it hot for Lansdowne. Casey left immediately for the Indian village.

A message was sent to all the white settlers, and they forgathered in Smith's house, which was close to Lansdowne's. In a very short time two canoes appeared, loaded with Indian braves, who landed where the whites were waiting for them. Two Indians named Giakalas and Khanus said they were Indian policemen, and showed their badges as special police, and produced their handcuffs and said they were going to take Lansdowne to jail. The white men told them they had another think coming, as they would not allow Lansdowne to go.

Nobody seems to know exactly what happened for a few minutes, but there was a miniature Donnybrook fair. One Indian had his nose badly smashed, another one was

thrown over a fence, one white man had his clothing torn completely off him, and things began to look very serious. The Indians raced back to their canoes to get their guns, which up to the present had not been in evidence. Lansdowne said: 'Well, boys, there is no use anybody being killed over this. I think they won't kill me; I will go along with them.'

So they put him in irons, with one pair of handcuffs on his wrists and another round his ankles, carried him to one of their canoes and took him up to the Indian village. On arrival there they released his ankles and paraded him up and down as an example to the younger generation. They locked him up in a smoke-house for about two hours while they were making preparations to take him off to jail at Alert Bay.

After a long pow-wow at the village they set off, five men in the canoe besides Lansdowne, who was still handcuffed; they even refused to allow him the opportunity of getting a change of clothing when they passed his house, for fear he might have a chance to escape; but after they were well clear of the mouth of the river and the inlet they took the handcuffs off, as they thought there was no opportunity for him to get away.

His captors and escort took good care of him until he arrived at Alert Bay. They immediately reported at the police station and brought in their prisoner. The following conversation took place with Mr. Philip Woollacott, who was the constable at Alert Bay at the time, and who incidentally was one of the early pioneers of British Columbia, a man of good education and of good family from England.

'Where 's your warrant?'

'I have none.'

'Who told you to arrest this man?'

'He was a bad man, so we brought him in.'

'What has he done?'

'Shot our dogs.'

'What were your dogs doing?'

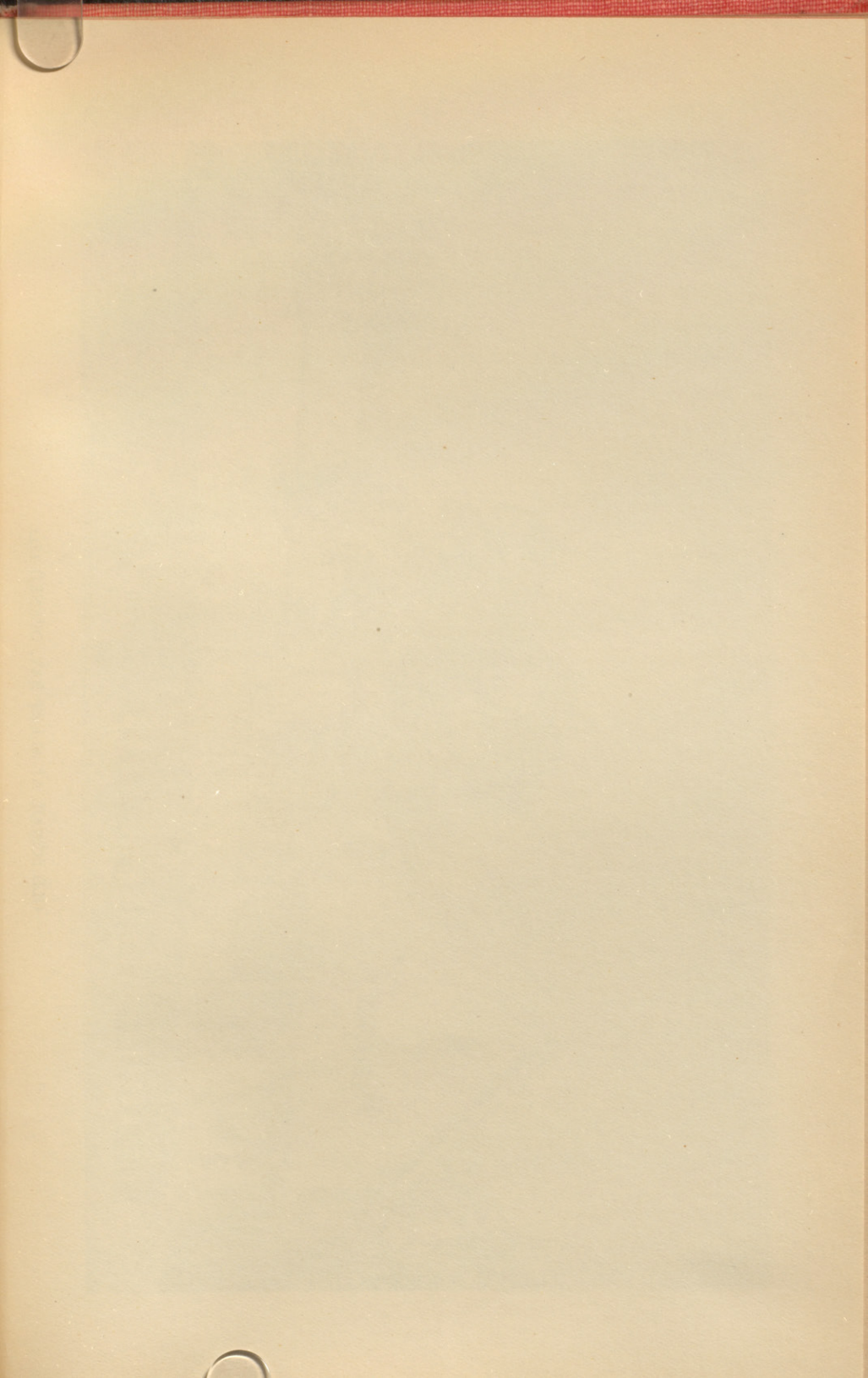
'Nothing.'

The constable turned to Lansdowne, and said to him:
'I thought you were an Englishman.'

'Well, I have that honour.'

'You, an Englishman, allow yourself to be brought in here in this manner by untamed savages! I consider you a disgrace to the name of Englishman! Under the circumstances, as your captors have neither a warrant nor anything else in the shape of documents, I refuse to accept you as a prisoner, and I am absolutely ashamed that you, an Englishman of good family, should allow yourself to be brought in in such a humiliating condition. You had better go and see the magistrate.'

Lansdowne came and reported the matter to me, as Mr. R. H. Pidcock, who at that time was Indian agent, was absent, and would not likely be back for some months. I issued warrants against the two so-called policemen, and they were put under arrest, and to their intense surprise and chagrin, instead of their being the informants and plaintiffs, they became the defendants in the case. They were brought up for preliminary hearing on the charges of illegal arrest and abduction, and remanded for a week. At the end of the week they were again remanded for another week. Meantime I had discussed the matter with





OLD SCHOOL AT ALERT BAY, OPENED 1842

Lansdowne and with Woollacott, and decided on a course of action. The Indian constables had acted in good faith all the way through, were absolutely sure that they were right, and nothing would convince them that they deserved punishment. On the other hand, the interests and safety of the public had to be maintained, so accordingly, when the second remand had expired they were brought up again for hearing, and it was pointed out to them that they had committed a very grave offence in having arrested anybody without a warrant, but as the white people wanted to live peaceably and amicably with the Indians, Lansdowne had concluded not to press the charge against them, but would be satisfied if they were deposed from office as special constables and on the further condition that they would return him safely to Kingcome Inlet.

The Indian constables had been two weeks in close confinement, but were still convinced that they were in the right over the whole affair. However, they submitted with a very bad grace. They stated that the sight of Lansdowne was an annoyance to them, and they absolutely refused to take him back with them to Kingcome Inlet in their canoe, but were willing to provide another canoe properly equipped in which he could have the privilege of rowing himself back again, which was assented to by Lansdowne.

Some months later the Indian agent returned to Alert Bay and he immediately removed the two Indians from office as special Indian constables, and the incident closed. It had, however, a very wholesome effect in keeping the Indians in Kingcome Inlet in check, as they were a very wild lot and required a great deal of discipline.

While on the whole, particularly of later years, the

Indians of the Kwawkewlth Agency have been fairly law-abiding and reasonably easy to control judicially, it has been found necessary by the authorities to teach them several rather severe lessons.

On one occasion there were two boys by the name of Nelson who had been pupils at the Residential School for some years, and who therefore had acquired a fair smattering of English, and they each had forged an endorsement on a cheque. Warrants were issued for their arrest, and as Mr. Woollacott by this time was getting somewhat advanced in years and somewhat stout, he had two special constables appointed to go to Kingcome Inlet to effect the arrest of these two lads. They found the boys without any trouble, and put them under arrest, but when the rest of the Indians found out what had been done, serious trouble arose. The father of these boys was one of the big chiefs amongst them and had great influence, and, acting under his suggestion, they attacked the constables, beat them, and released the prisoners. There was nothing else for the special constables to do but to return to Alert Bay.

A full report of these proceedings was immediately sent to Victoria, but as there was only a fortnightly mail and no wireless service as prevails at the present time, communication necessarily was slow. Mr. F. S. Hussey was at that time superintendent of provincial police, and he acted very promptly and very much to the point. The Canadian Government ship *Quadra* was engaged, and about a dozen constables under the direction and charge of Mr. Hussey started immediately for Kingcome Inlet. They had warrants made out, and as Captain J. T. Walbran of the *Quadra* was a magistrate, the case could be dealt with

without further delay. On their arrival at Kingcome Inlet they rearrested the two Nelson boys, and started to round up the ringleaders of those who had been concerned in the obstruction of the police and the releasing of the prisoners. They were able to obtain all of them with the exception of four or five, and a court was held aboard the *Quadra*, and sentence given to all the offenders, varying in length from one month's to six months' imprisonment with hard labour, and in one instance to twelve months' hard labour. Warrants for the remainder of the miscreants were left with my brother, and as they returned to the village one by one he put them under formal arrest, and they were brought to Alert Bay and dealt with in a similar manner to the others.

This case created a great deal of interest amongst the Indians all over the coast district, and did a very great deal towards making the administration easy for those who followed after. In fact, for a number of years past it has not been even necessary to issue a summons for the appearance of any Indian at court, but so long as he receives a formal notification that his presence is requested, he is always there to answer either as a defendant or as a witness. This has aided very materially in the preserving of law and order throughout the agency.

One other case that required to be severely dealt with occurred at Alert Bay itself. One Sunday afternoon a report reached Mr. Woollacott that there were some Indians drunk on the reserve, and he went, accompanied by one other man. He knocked at the door of the house where they were supposed to be, and somebody called out, 'Come in.' When they got inside, the inmates saw

immediately that they were officers of the law, and they ordered them out of the house; but having once got in, the police saw no reason why they should go out without having effected the capture of the two Indians whom they went to arrest. As they were noisy and inclined to be violent, they were put under arrest and handcuffed together, on viewing which a miniature riot occurred. One Indian by the name of Koma grabbed a loose door-knob and attacked the assistant constable with it and knocked him down and stunned him. Mr. Woollacott himself was picked up bodily and thrown through the window, without any trouble being taken to first open the window; the result being that he received several nasty cuts about his hands and face.

There were some eight or ten Indians concerned in this, but the matter was soon settled, as there were plenty of white men available who were sworn in as special constables, and all the party were arrested with the exception of one man who made his escape. They were all dealt with summarily, and received various terms of imprisonment.

Some ten years after this incident, after I had been some years Indian agent, I was in Victoria, and in going along the street I met an Indian from Kingcome Inlet, who for his size was known by the name of Jumbo, and whom I knew very well, but had not seen for a long time. He came up and spoke to me and asked me if it was safe for him to come back to Alert Bay. Then I remembered that Jumbo was the one for whom a warrant had been issued but had never been executed. I told him it would depend entirely on himself whether he was allowed to come back to our

vicinity or not, as there still was a warrant out for him, and the warrant was good for all time, but if he wanted to come back and behave himself, I would recommend to the constables that they leave the warrant in abeyance. He had married an Indian woman on the west coast and brought her back with him, but she did not live very long. Then he married a woman of his own tribe, and has been a good law-abiding citizen ever since.

An Indian when he appears in court is, generally speaking, very unsophisticated, and except where experience has made him wise, is very easily trapped. On one occasion at Quatsino Sound, information had been laid by the provincial constable that an Indian and his wife, known as Mr. and Mrs. Monkey, had been making home-brewed wine, and had been trafficking in it. Accordingly, the case was gone into very fully, and at the cannery near Malatte River a room was set aside by the cannery manager in which a court could be held. There was difficulty in the case with regard to getting a qualified interpreter, as all evidence must be given in English. One man was found who could speak Kwakwala and Chinook, and another was found who could speak Chinook and English, so all the evidence required double interpretation. While I understand a certain amount of the native tongue of the Indians I do not profess to speak it, nor under the circumstances could I allow any of the evidence to be given except in the way outlined above.

The charge was read; Mrs. Monkey pleaded 'Guilty,' Mr. Monkey pleaded 'Not guilty,' and it was necessary to hear the evidence. The informant, an Indian named Tom, after being duly sworn, stated as follows:

'I was going home one evening from my work at the cannery, and passed by the house of Mr. and Mrs. Monkey. I didn't see Mrs. Monkey at the time, but Monkey was outside the door and he asked me if I would like a drink of wine. I said I would like a drink of wine, but where should I be able to get it? He said: "I can give you some." "How much will it cost?" "Fifty cents a bottle." "All right, I will take two bottles." Monkey then said: "You go in the house and talk to my wife, and I will go and get the wine." I went into the house and sat down and talked to Mrs. Monkey, and about two minutes afterwards Monkey came in with the two bottles, which I got from him and for which I paid him.'

He stuck to his story in spite of cross-examination, but before releasing him from the witness-stand I said to him: 'How did you pay for this wine?'

'I don't know what you mean.'

'Did you give a dollar bill for the two bottles, or did you give two fifty-cent pieces, or one fifty-cent piece and two quarters, or how did you pay for it?'

'I gave him two fifty-cent pieces.'

Monkey jumped up very excitedly in the court, and cried out to him in his own language: 'You're a dirty liar! You didn't give me two fifty-cent pieces; you gave me two blankets each worth fifty cents.'

I knew sufficient of the language to thoroughly understand what Monkey had said, but it took a long time to drag it from the two interpreters, that the court must be told exactly what Monkey had said to him, and of course, under the circumstances, there was no need of proceeding any further with the case, as Monkey then owned up that

he had been paid, and that he was guilty, and they were both penalized accordingly.

During my twenty-five years as Indian agent there have been very few what might be called 'serious' crimes. There was one case where an Indian known by the name of Glathpi committed a criminal offence on a white woman who happened to be passing through the village. He attacked her, and choked her practically into insensibility; but it so happened that the provincial constable at the time passed, and heard a moaning on the side of the road. He went to investigate and found Glathpi with the woman, and proceeded to put him under arrest. Glathpi was drunk, and seemed to have the strength of ten men, though he was only a very small, slight man, weighing about one hundred and twenty pounds. The constable called on several young men who were near to come to his assistance, but the head chief of the agency, Owawhalagaleese, heard the young men being summoned, and stood up and told them to mind their own business; that they must not help the police, that if they had anything at all to do with it they should help the Indian to get away.

Glathpi was committed for trial and was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. After serving four years he was let out on parole, subject to the condition that he behaved himself and reported once a month to myself, and that I should forward a report on him to the Secretary of State monthly. He commenced drinking again. I warned him that if it occurred a second time I should be obliged to write to the Secretary of State to cancel his parole, but it did him no good. He ran amuck on one of the passenger steamers and had to be arrested by the crew of the boat,

and was turned over to me for sentence. When I notified the Secretary of State of this, his parole was recalled and he served out his full term.

Even this did not cure him of his evil habits, for he had not been home more than six months when he started drinking again, and one night shot his brother's wife as she lay in her bed asleep, and then blew out his own brains.

For the part that Owawhalagaleese had taken in resisting the arrest of Glathpi, the Department of Indian Affairs suspended him from his office as chief for three years, which to him was a tremendous disgrace and he has never recovered his prestige.

One other case of murder and suicide occurred. An Indian of the Nuwitti tribe, known as Paddy George, had been living on the west coast of Vancouver Island at the village of the Koskemos. He fell in love with the wife of the chief of the Koskemos, and managed to take her away from her husband. He was an expert at the making of 'home-brewed wine,' as they called it, and he and his paramour got drunk one night and had a quarrel, during which he seized an axe and tried to cut her head off. He grabbed her by the hair and scalped her, and left her, as he thought, dead on the floor. Then he went outside the house and hanged himself, and was not discovered for some hours after he was dead. The chief found his wife almost dead, took her back to his home where he nursed her very carefully and tenderly, and seemed to forgive all the evil that she had caused him. They both died together as victims of influenza in 1918.

There was one other case which attracted a great deal

of attention, the case of *Rex v. Tom Williams*, on a charge of murder.

Ernest Jack and Tom Williams were partners in a hand-logging venture on Dickson Island at the entrance to Wells Pass. Tom Williams came to Alert Bay and reported to me that Ernest, the night before, had gone out to shift a log at high water, as it was an unusually big tide, and never came back again. They found that the log had been rolled into the water, and thought possibly Ernest Jack had been injured and knocked into the water and had been drowned. He had searched a half-day for him before coming to report. An immediate search was ordered, and the water for a distance round dragged, but the body did not turn up. Williams was closely questioned, and his statement filed away.

About seven years afterwards, while Mr. (afterwards Corporal) Matthews was constable at Alert Bay, and Sergeant Angerman of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and his detachment were also stationed at Alert Bay, certain circumstances occurred which drew suspicion against Tom Williams that he had murdered his partner.

Two white men had been cruising on a small island in McKenzie Sound, about nine or ten miles from Dickson Island, and they wanted to make a fire to boil a kettle to get a cup of tea. It was raining very hard at the time, and they saw a big hollow cedar tree about twenty-five or thirty feet from the water's edge. They thought they would be able to get something dry inside the tree to make a fire, and they found that a lot of dry stuff was scattered about in the hollow. While they were pulling it out to get enough to make a fire, they found what they

discovered to be a cedar mat. They investigated a little further, pulled the mat away, and found a skeleton. The clothing was all rotted away, but the joints were fairly well stuck together. In the forehead, about an inch above the eyebrows, was a small hole which looked like a bullet-hole. They took the skull out of the tree and examined it thoroughly, and left it lying on the log, and intended to report the whole matter to the police, but went away to their camp for the night, and next morning when they passed they found that the fire which they had lit had spread and had burned all the skeleton which was in the tree; but the skull, being some distance away, had survived. The matter was reported to the police and the skull brought to Alert Bay. Somebody who had known Ernest Jack said that he recognized one tooth, owing to some peculiar gold filling, and he believed that this was the skull of Ernest Jack.

A long investigation followed; evidence was gathered here and there, and finally Tom Williams was put under arrest and charged with murder. He asked me if I would procure counsel for him, and I asked the Hon. R. C. Maitland, at the present time minister without portfolio in the Cabinet of the Government of British Columbia, and he undertook the defence. Williams's brother and another man swore positively that they had been present and had seen Williams shoot Ernest Jack with a revolver, and that the body fell into the water off the float on which they were standing at the time. Various other very incriminating evidence was brought forward, but Mr. Justice Gregory, who was the judge on the occasion of the trial, would not allow the woman who was Tom's common-law wife at the time to be put

on the witness-stand. The result was that the jury disagreed at the first trial, and at the second trial acquitted him.

Tom Williams returned to Alert Bay, and I sent for him to come to the office. I had a long talk with him, and I said to him: 'Now, Tom, you have had a very narrow escape for your life. You know yourself that you killed Ernest Jack, and you know that I know you killed Ernest Jack, but the jury acquitted you. You had a very clever lawyer who handled the case for you, and now when you go away from here I want you to remember all these things and try to lead such a life in the future that people will forget all the evil you have done and look up to you as a respected citizen instead of an escaped murderer.'

He replied: 'I thank you for the words that you have said to me to-day. I know that I was very nearly hanged, but I am going to try and be a good man after this and give you no more trouble; and I am glad you got me such a smart lawyer. I am going to have that man for my lawyer whenever I get into trouble again.'

CHAPTER VII

MATTERS JUDICIAL (*continued*)

THE greater part of the serious offences that have occurred within the boundaries of this agency have been enumerated, but possibly the most interesting cases of offences against any statutory enactments would come under the prosecutions that arose from infringements of that portion of the Indian Act which deals with the *potlatch*. The Act had been on the statute-book for many years without being enforced. It was thought that education and missionary training amongst the Indians would so open their minds to the folly of the custom that the custom itself would die a natural death without any legal proceedings having to be taken to compel it to die.

However, things gradually got worse and worse; the *potlatch* was assuming greater and greater proportions, and instructions were received from the Department of Indian Affairs to enforce the regulations and see that this custom was done away with entirely. Notice was given to all the Indians both by letter and personally, as I made it my business to call on every Indian village in the agency, and when the people were all assembled together, to tell them that the Department was being compelled to put into force the legislation against the *potlatch*, and they were warned to govern themselves by what they were being told. It was a matter that so far as the agent

was concerned admitted of no argument, as instructions had come direct from headquarters. At that time the Act made it an indictable offence to engage in these ceremonies, and the first prosecutions were entered by the provincial police against two Indians living at Alert Bay, both of whom were particularly good fellows in other ways.

I committed them for trial, and they went to Vancouver and were let out on bail, pending a meeting of the assize court. When they appeared in the assize court before Mr. Justice Gregory, they pleaded 'Guilty.' I was present at the court, and Mr. Justice Gregory asked me as to the character of these two men, and I told him that they were good fellows, law-abiding in every other way. Consequently, they were given a reprimand and told to warn the other Indians, and were allowed their liberty on suspended sentence.

It seemed apparent that to operate this section of the Act properly, the Act itself should be amended, as that was the only section of the Indian Act which did not admit of some jurisdiction by the Indian agent or two justices of the peace, and accordingly the Act was amended, making it a summary conviction.

Four Indians from Kingcome Inlet were brought up for summary trial. They had been having a big feast and had broken a copper as a sort of spite against some enemy they had, and in conjunction with the breaking of the copper they were compelled by custom to give away some considerable quantity both of money and goods, which brought it under the category of an offence against Section 149 of the Indian Act, as it was at that time. Mr. E. K. De Beck of Vancouver, whose father had at one time been

Indian agent of this agency, defended them, but they were convicted and sent to Okalla prison for two months. An appeal was made against my decision, but the appeal was dismissed by Chief Justice Hunter.

Several more Indians were arrested by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who at that time were sent here to assist in the maintenance of law and order and to carry out certain other work in connection with the government of the Dominion of Canada. Mr. Frank Lyons of Vancouver undertook their defence, and Mr. H. C. Senkler, K.C., of Vancouver was instructed by the Department to attend and prosecute. The trial lasted all day, and was adjourned until the next morning. Mr. Lyons was very desirous that his clients should not be imprisoned (the Act allows no other penalty), and after talking the matter over with the Indians themselves in court, he made the proposition that the Indians should refrain from this custom for all time, as it never was the desire of the Department that the Indians should be punished unnecessarily, their sole aim and object being to better their conditions by having them give up the *potlatch* custom. This was assented to, and an agreement was drawn up and signed by the Indians in question, also assented to by the counsel for the Crown and the counsel for the Indians, and countersigned by the Indian agent. The Indians in this agreement not only pledged themselves to refrain from potlatching any more, but to use their influence to prevent any other Indians from holding any of these prohibited ceremonies. In order that the court should be made more impressive, both counsel wore their gowns during the proceedings, and by so doing added a certain dignity

and impressiveness to the court, which afterwards bore good fruit. Suspended sentence was given to all these Indians subject to their good behaviour in the future. It was explained to them that this did not take away their right to make what efforts they could to have the law amended, but no hope was held out that they would be successful in these efforts.

For some considerable time the Indians obeyed the law, and it was thought that in a very short time they would have forgotten all about this ancient custom. Some two years later a big gathering was held at Village Island at the home of the Mamilillikulla tribe, and not only was the ancient custom of the redemption carried out, whereby one man was enabled to give a very big *potlatch*, but in addition an unusually large amount of property had been collected and was given away in due and ancient form. Sergeant Angerman of the mounted police acted very promptly in the matter, and about eighty Indians were summoned to appear to answer to the charge of the violation of this section of the Indian Act.

Sergeant Angerman was an old hand at conducting prosecutions and was as efficient as the average counsel, and he had such strong evidence that he did not think it necessary for the Crown to engage a counsel to prosecute as he was quite competent to do the prosecuting himself, and an array of legal talent came to Alert Bay for the defence.

Mr. Findlay, who is now the assistant police magistrate in the city of Vancouver, a Mr. Ellis, Mr. Campbell, and one or two others, all appeared for various members of those who were charged with potlatching. The trial lasted some considerable time, and then their counsel made

another proposal to the Indians to the effect that as the first agreement had only been signed by a limited number of Indians, none of whom was concerned in the present offence, an additional opportunity would be given them to escape from punishment. The conditions attached to it were that they were not only to promise that for all time they would refrain from potlatching, but that they were also to use their influence to see that nobody else took part in any of these proceedings; and in addition to this, they agreed to surrender all their *potlatch* paraphernalia, such as dancing-masks, head-dresses, coppers, and various other things, which would be sold to the various museums by the Department of Indian Affairs and the proceeds given over to the Indians. Those who had been most active in the carrying on of this *potlatch* were the most active in trying to persuade their friends to join with them in signing the agreement or in assenting to it, and thirty days was given them to collect the paraphernalia in question. At the expiration of the thirty days it was found that practically all the Indians with the exception of those at Kingcome Inlet had signed the agreement and surrendered the paraphernalia. This was all carefully tabulated and shipped to Ottawa, and, later on, cheques were received reimbursing the owners.

The sum realized the Indians considered entirely inadequate, but this is a matter on which opinions differed very much. Some of the things for which good prices were paid, the ordinary individual would not consider worth anything at all, while some of the things were more or less new and though in many instances were much better looking, they only brought fair to low prices, as to those



INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL AT ALERT BAY, OPENED NOVEMBER 1929

learned in the antiquities of the Indians they had little historic value. When all had been completed, the whole of the offenders, numbering sixty-four, were collected together for sentence. Those who had refused to accept the conditions as laid down were sent to prison for two months, and the rest were given suspended sentence.

It so happened that there were two amongst the defendants to whom suspended sentence could not be given, as theirs was a second offence, but as the part taken by them had been very minor, their sentence was delayed and a recommendation sent through the Department of Indian Affairs to the Department of Justice, asking for special authority to allow suspended sentence to these two.

Later on another prosecution was entered by the mounted police against some Indians of the Nakwakto band, whose headquarters were at Blunden Harbour, and they were sent to jail for two months.

It may be noted here that these prosecutions and the sentences imposed made the Indian agent extremely unpopular amongst the Indians, and extremely unpopular with a certain number of outsiders who were not interested in the matter at all, and who, not realizing the reasons which lay behind the whole thing, were inclined to think the proceedings very arbitrary, and that the personal liberties of the Indians were being taken away from them. I received two anonymous letters, which were treated with the contempt they deserved. One of these referred to certain actions done by the Ku-Klux-Klan, and they stated that people of my type should be treated in the same manner as the Ku-Klux-Klan had done, and should either be put out of the way or tarred and feathered.

Since that time the *potlatch* has been gradually dying away, and in no instance has it been done openly. Under the statute it has to be proved that it is an Indian festival, dance, or ceremony, and also it must be proved that at this Indian festival, dance, or ceremony the giving away of money, goods, or articles of any sort formed a part or was a feature. There have been a number of instances where people who felt they must give away have done it surreptitiously. They would travel in a boat to the village where they felt it was incumbent on them to give something away, and, while there, call the people individually to the boat and give them what they intended. This method, of course, freed them from any prosecution, as there was neither ceremony, dance, nor festival in connection with it; but on the other hand, there was no *éclat* attached to the one who gave it, and the affair would fall very flat.

This *potlatch* custom has tended very materially to retard progress amongst the Indians. It has set up false ideas amongst them, and has been a great waste of time, a great waste of energy, and a great waste of substance. However, apparently it will take some time before the idea of the *potlatch* will be entirely eliminated, and when that is done progress will be extremely rapid, as the Indian of to-day, apart from these ideas, is inclined to be progressive.

As matters have turned out, these prosecutions came at the right moment for many of the tribes. Some of the younger men were fully conscious of the evils of the system, and wanted to break away from it. The older ones, who were wedded to the custom, were very much concerned over these young and thinking men trying to get free from their laws and regulations, and had even

gone so far as to warn them that if they carried out their intention they would be obliged to sever all connection with the Indians living on the reserves. When the Act was enforced, it strengthened the hands of the young men and weakened the influence of the older ones, with the result that in those villages there has been a very rapid improvement and advancement.

CHAPTER VIII

CREEDS AND SUPERSTITIONS

IT has been repeated so often that it has come to be considered a maxim, that there are no people of any nationality or any colour who have not an underlying belief in the existence of a Supreme Being. Sometimes their conception of a Supreme Being is very crude, but generally speaking, there is some sort of a conception that there is a Great Spirit over all which rules and governs all things. In the case of the Indians of the west coast of British Columbia it may be said that this maxim proves a fallacy.

I made very careful investigations amongst the older people while missionary work was in its first inception, and I have yet to find amongst any of them any idea of a Supreme Being, call it by whatever name you may, who was the author and giver of everything. Their ideas of creation were very hazy; they had legends pointing to the fact that they were descendants of the various animals which compose their crest, such as the raven, bear, wolf, blackfish, eagle, etc., but there has never been, so far as I can learn, any idea of the supremacy of any spirit.

Like most aborigines, however, the Indians are extremely superstitious, and these superstitions take many weird and, to us, unaccountable forms. They believe in witchcraft, they are positively certain that there are evil spirits, but one great fundamental fact is that they seem to have

absolutely no belief in any hereafter; consequently they never seem to have any fear of death. Another of their peculiarities is that they seem to be able to die at will. This seems a strange assertion to make, but several instances will be quoted to show the truth of the statement.

About 1910, during the fishing season for sockeye, a number of Indians were camped on a small island near the mouth of Rivers Inlet. Each Sunday night they were towed out with their fishing-gear and boat to whatever station they had selected to carry on the fishing operations for the next few days. Amongst others was a member of the Koskemo band, whose habitat is Quatsino Sound, and who was commonly called Clare. One day, while he was out fishing, he tried to haul in his net as usual, but found that apparently something had caught in it, and it was so heavy he was obliged to call for help, as he was unable by his own exertions to haul it into his boat. Several other Indians who were fishing near by came to his assistance. Clare, by the way, was a man of very small stature, and very slight in build, so when the others came, they told him they would haul the net up, and he could keep watch. Accordingly, they got into his fishing skiff, and he got into the one in which his friends had come, and he leaned over the edge to see what was coming up in his net. His friends commenced to pull in, and were making very slow headway, when all at once Clare drew a sheath-knife from his belt, and with one stroke cut his own net in two, and it immediately sank. He said to those who were helping him: 'I have seen the devil, and I know I am going to die.' They laughed at him, and tried to get the idea out of his head, but nothing would

convince him to the contrary, and, getting into his own skiff, he pulled as hard as he could to the camp where he had been staying. On arrival there, he shouted to his wife, who was in the tent near the shore, and asked her to tie up the boat for him. He told her he had seen the devil and he knew he was going to die. He went to the tent and she walked down and tied up his skiff, after which she went quietly to the tent to see how he was. When she got there she found him lying on the ground, dead. None of the other Indians knew what had got into the net or what the old man had seen to frighten him so, but they were quite concerned about it, and they told me all the facts of the case, and there was no reason whatever to doubt their statements or to doubt the fact that his own superstitious mind had conjured up the idea that there was some apparition in his net and consequently his life was forfeited.

In 1898 an Indian was living at Kingcome Inlet who had for many years been half-crippled. He had the use of his arms, but only partial use of his legs, being able only to walk by means of crutches. One day he got a lad to take him by canoe to the house of one of the white settlers. The lady of this house had been very kind to him on several occasions, and he told the lad that he wanted to go and talk to Mrs. McKay. When he arrived there, it was seen that he had brought with him a small parcel, which on opening proved to be a piece of flannel.

He asked Mrs. McKay if she would be kind enough to undertake to make him a shirt from this material which he had brought, and he added: 'You know, Mrs. McKay, I am going to die in four days, and I want to have a nice new clean shirt to be buried in.' Mrs. McKay asked him

how he got the idea in his head that he was going to die. 'Oh,' he said, 'I know I am going to die in four days, and you will hear all about it and know that what I told you was true.' Mrs. McKay promised to make the shirt for him, and told him that if he would call the next afternoon she would have it ready. He came and found it ready for him, and told Mrs. McKay: 'Now it is only three days more, and you will hear that I am dead.'

On the day appointed, sure enough he died. It is quite possible that had a searching examination been made into everything and all the facts known, he might have been assisted out of this life by some of his friends, but so far as is known, he died simply because he had made up his mind that the time was set for him, and he must take his departure into the next world.

These superstitious fears of the Indians were often taken advantage of by their medicine men or *shamans*, and if the medicine man made a suggestion to any one that a certain person was going to die at a certain time, it usually happened that he or she died at approximately that time. Occasionally, however, these prognostications on the part of the medicine man proved to be a boomerang. One elderly man told me that he knew positively of the following case.

At Fort Rupert one day a young Indian was out hunting. In his travels he came across a small waterfall in a creek, and he noticed that something was moving in the waterfall. His curiosity being aroused, he examined it carefully to see what it was, and he saw an object which looked like two small sticks fastened together with a piece of string. One end of the string was tied to a small twig near by, and

the movement of the water in the little fall kept it revolving and dancing up and down. Not thinking the matter was of any importance, but just as a matter of curiosity he lifted out the two sticks and put them in his pocket and took them to the Fort Rupert village. He called two or three of his friends and showed them what he had found, and one of them said: 'Somebody is being bewitched.' It so happened that at the time a number of Indians were gathered together having a feast, at which one of the participants was a medicine man. This medicine man was told quietly of what had been found, and his advice was asked. He got up and made a speech and told the people what the hunter had found, and now he was going to open it up before them and see what it contained. He cut the string, pulled the two pieces of wood apart, and in the hollow inside was found the head of a small snake with a lock of human hair in its mouth; also a piece of woollen goods, which they imagined to be a portion of a woman's petticoat. The medicine man who was opening the little parcel was himself reputed to have tried to put a spell on several of those present, and a heated discussion arose at the meeting. Several persons accused him of having been the instigator of the evil, but the medicine man denied that he had had anything to do with it. However, he said that before twenty-four hours had passed somebody present was going to die. He would give no information as to the identity of the one who was thus to be annihilated, and all those present who had any idea that they might be the subject of enmity were in a great state of trepidation.

That evening a messenger arrived from another Indian village, now known by the name of Alert Bay, but at the

time called by the Indian name of Yeleese. This messenger had been sent to invite all the Indians from Fort Rupert to a feast which was to be held the next day at Alert Bay. Fort Rupert is only about twenty nautical miles from Alert Bay, and early the next day the greater number of Indians, including the medicine man, started out in answer to the invitation.

They had a fair wind and a fair tide, and sailed along gaily, but when they were about to land on the beach at Alert Bay, the medicine man, who was just stepping out of his canoe, gave a cry and dropped over dead.

At this time there was very little oversight over the Indians, as there were very few white people in the country, and law and order had not been well established. Consequently no one knows exactly what was the cause of his death, but they all believed that the spell that he had been trying to cast on someone else had come back to him, and they said that almost to a minute it was twenty-four hours after he had made the announcement that within that time someone was going to die.

Although for many years the Indians have been instructed in school, in the church, and, I may add, in the law courts, they still believe in the power of witchcraft; but they say that there are only a very few now who are able to exercise the power of witchcraft, and the rest of the people know who they are, and keep them always under observation. Apparently they exercise considerable skill in the form in which they weave the spell.

One informant told me that many years ago, while he was quite a young man, he had been walking on a trail near Fort Rupert. In passing by a hollow cedar tree, he

was startled to find the figure of a man showing up in this hollow tree. He looked in, and saw that the man was tied with ropes to keep him from falling, and he recognized the corpse as that of a man who had died about a month previously. Not being himself a believer in witchcraft, and having had considerable experience in acting as undertaker and thus being more or less accustomed to the handling of dead bodies, he had lost the fear that many people have of them, and he examined the corpse to see in what condition it was.

He found that the abdomen had been carefully cut open and sewn up again, and the seam or opening had been plastered over with pitch. Knowing the Indian customs and their superstitions, he went back to the village at Fort Rupert and reported the matter. All the men of the village together went in a body to where the corpse was, and carried it back. They called a general meeting, and in the presence of the assembly the pitch was taken away, the cord which had been used to do the stitching was cut, and they discovered that the entrails had been taken out of the body and the cavity filled with various articles. Amongst others present was a woman who had been told by the medicine man that she had only two or three days more to live, and she was getting ready for death; but when she looked in this cavity she said: 'That is my brooch in there!'

Another woman recognized a lock of hair which had been surreptitiously cut from her head while she slept, and it had been wrapped round a piece of stick. She also had been told that her time was come, but she had been given over a month to live. When she found these remains, she

considered that the spell was broken and immediately felt better, and only died two years ago.

There were articles of various kinds encased in the corpse, and all of them were recognized by one or other of the Indians present as being their personal property, and there was great rejoicing amongst them that the spell was now broken. The next thing was to find out who had exercised the spell. Suspicion fell on one man who was more or less crippled, and he was closely questioned about it, but he denied it. The next day, however, he went away fishing and was never seen or heard of again. It is possible that he may have fallen overboard and been drowned, as they found his canoe upside down a few days later, but the Indians quite firmly believed that he had fallen a victim to his own spell, which, as in the other case cited, had acted as a boomerang. The police had the idea that he had been done away with, but were not able to establish the guilt of any particular person.

At Alert Bay an Indian boy had been ill for some little time, but was improving rapidly, and was well on the way to recovery. The doctor who was attending him had stated that he was out of danger, but that it would be some little time before he would be able to walk around as usual. One day it was reported that a witch-doctor, a woman, had cured him instantly. She had gone to see him and had made certain passes with her hands over him, and uttered certain incantations. Then she put her mouth over his bare chest and sucked hard. When she took her mouth away she produced some black-looking object which she said was the evil in the boy, and that now he was going to get better immediately. The boy apparently was better

for a few hours, when he had a relapse, and in about twenty-four hours he died. He seemed to expect that he would be able to get up immediately, as she told him he was all right, but the reaction was so great and the disappointment so keen that he could not stand it in the weakened condition in which he was at the time.

There are many places scattered about here and there where no Indian willingly passes at night if he is alone. Even in the daytime, if it is possible, he will go a long way round in order to avoid one of these places, but if it is necessary for him to go close by, he sings at the top of his voice in order to exorcise the evil spirits which he believes are associated with that place. Most of the places of this nature have had some tragedy attached to them or have been ancient burial-places. In a country that is mountainous, in many places the rocks rise straight up from the sea, and under such conditions burial, as we call it, is a very difficult matter, as there is very little, if any, earth on top of the rocks. This originated the custom of placing the dead bodies of the Indians in caves or in niches in the rock or in other such places. The bodies were usually squashed into wooden boxes, carried up a tree, and lashed there with cedar-bark rope; and the limbs of the tree were cut off to prevent any one else climbing up.

At what is known as the 'Narrows' at Quatsino Sound there is a cave of some considerable depth, and on the occasion of my first visit to that district, out of curiosity I went to the cave to have a look at it, and I found it full of portions of the skeletons of dead Indians. In other places the dead are buried, if one may use the term, by placing the box containing the corpse in a small house on

top of the ground. In many of these houses the boxes are piled four or five deep on top of one another. In other places they may be placed on the top of a stump and a small house erected over it. The burial custom is to roll the body round and round with blankets and put it in a box. Formerly they did not trouble with blankets, but a small trunk or chest was used, and while the body of the deceased was still warm, and probably in many instances while the body still had life in it, it was doubled up and squashed into one of these chests ready for burial. It was always a matter of superstition that they should see that the body was properly put away after death. Later on, when the coffins or caskets as used by the white men came to be known, great importance was placed on having a good casket in which to bury the dead, and they now spare no expense in this matter.

On one occasion an old man by the name of Jackson died. He had been helpless for several years and had been a pensioner of the Government, receiving a monthly ration for his subsistence. He told me one day that he felt his end was very near, and wanted me to assure him that when he died he would be buried, and that he would like to have his coffin made now, so that it would be ready. I assured him of the fact that he would be buried, but told him I could not have the coffin made for him until after he was ready to use it. About two weeks later he died, and was buried in a plain black casket which, however, had a set of handles on it which looked like nickel. One of his friends, who, by the way, was an accomplished woman for an Indian, told me that it was a great pity that Jackson had not been able to see the box, because it would

have been such a comfort to him to know that he had such a nice-looking coffin ready, and he would have died very happy had he seen it.

This peculiarity regarding burial seems to be very general amongst the natives of the coast, and time and again I have had to refuse to give an order for material for burial for a destitute Indian until after death actually had occurred. The usual custom is that when any one is getting old, or when they think that death is very near, his friends say: 'Well, this man or this woman is soon going to die; we will have the box ready, so there will be no time lost.'

There was a young woman belonging to a Kingcome Inlet tribe who was brought by her father to Alert Bay for medical examination. She remained there for some two or three months under treatment, but as her complaint was tuberculosis in an advanced stage, the doctor could give absolutely no hope of recovery. Her father came to me one day in the office and said that in his opinion there was no use keeping Annie at Alert Bay any longer. She was getting weaker every day, and he thought the best thing for him to do would be to take her back to Kingcome Inlet, as she had expressed the desire to die in her own *illahie*. He had sent to town and had got a nice coffin, and, strange as it may seem to us, the girl lay in the coffin and slept in it for two nights on the way home to her own village, perfectly happy, perfectly reconciled, and very proud that when she died she was going to have such a nice coffin in which to be buried.

To return again to the question of witchcraft, one or two other instances will be cited. An Indian found the head of a man lying close to a log beside a footpath

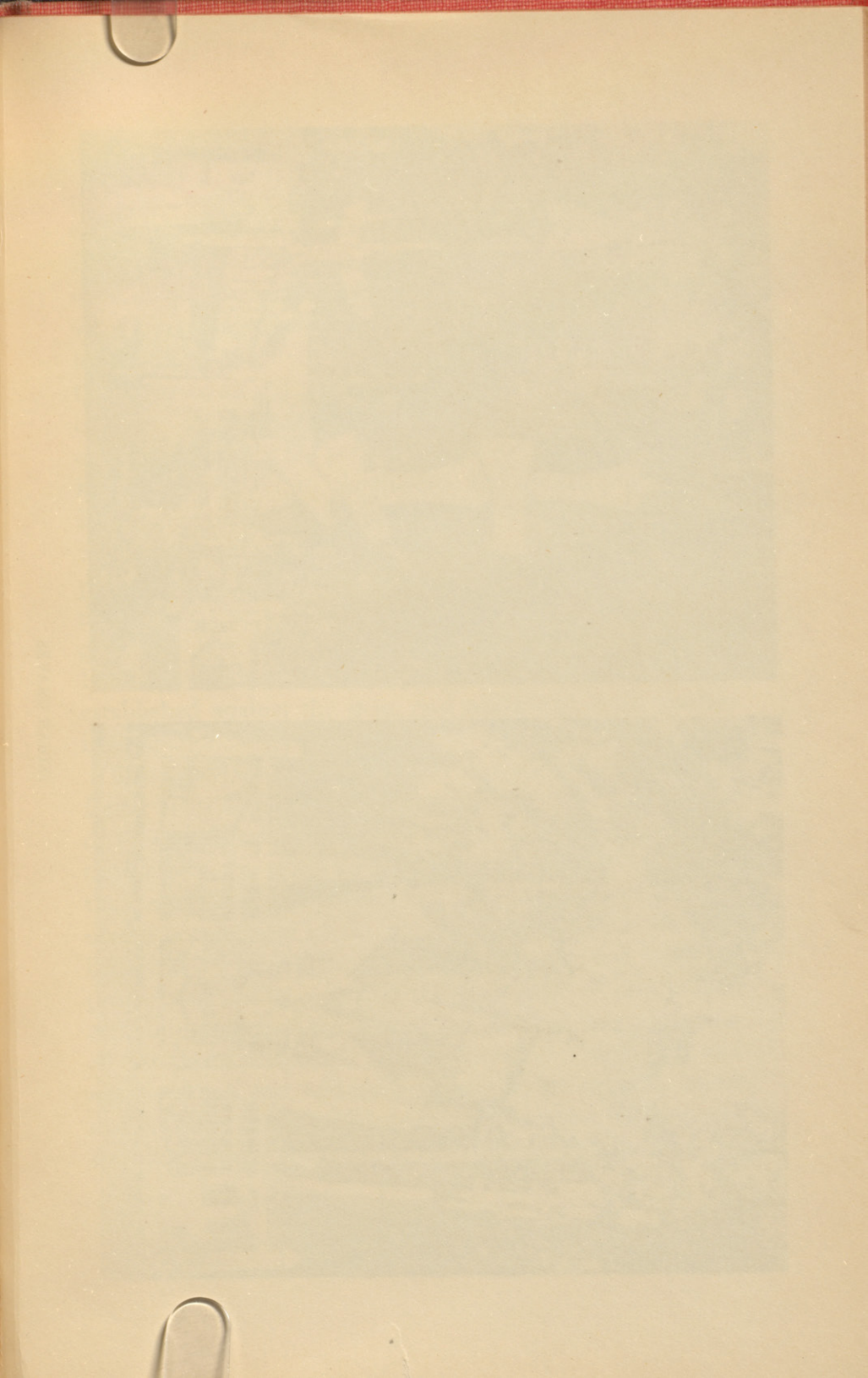
on which he was walking. He did not recognize the features, but found that the head had been very carefully cut off, and the neck covered with pitch. He ran home and told his fellow-tribesmen, and they sent out a party to bring the head in to their village. They examined it very closely and found that the skin of the scalp had been partly removed, the back of the head cut open, the brain taken out, and the brain cavity filled with various odds and ends, but no one recognized the head of the corpse nor did they recognize any of the contents. This got to be common knowledge amongst the other villages, and a deputation was sent from each village to examine the find, and see if any of the articles could be identified. One man who came identified two or three of the articles as having come from his village, and they gave him the head and all the contents; these were returned to the various owners, and then the head destroyed by fire. Several of the people who had owned articles found in this head had been complaining of feeling very poorly, and could not imagine what was the matter with them. No suggestion had ever been made to them that they were being bewitched, but they all claimed that they felt a relief at once when the articles were returned, and they all made a speedy recovery. No one was ever able to identify the head, nor was the witch-doctor who had prepared this ever located.

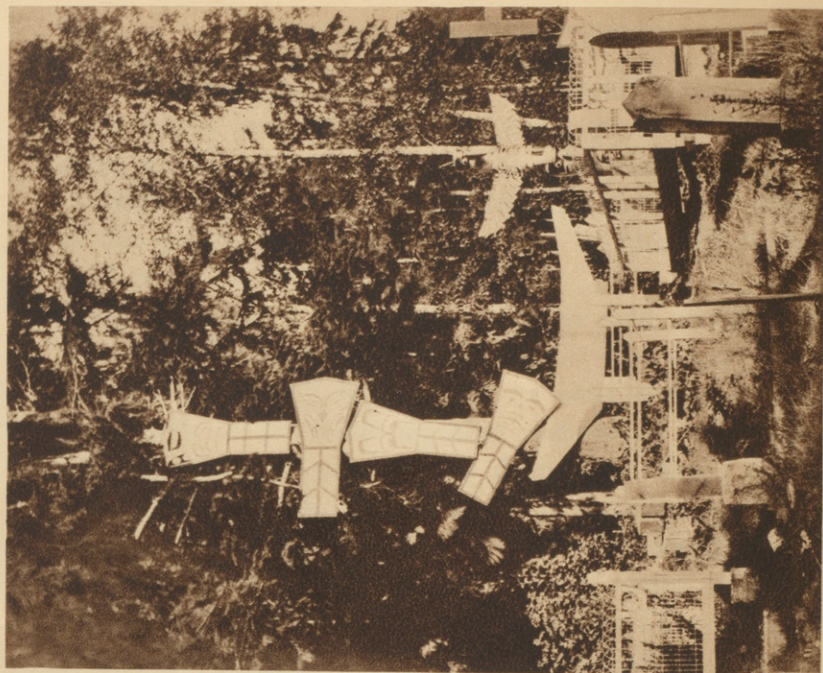
As late as the year of grace 1929, a case of witchcraft came up before me personally for investigation. A young girl and a middle-aged man who were no relation to one another had both died at Kingcome Inlet. The girl, before she died, said that she had reason to believe that an Indian known as Dick Smoky had bewitched her, and that

he was compelling her to die. She stated further that if they would look through his house, particularly in the attic, which was rather difficult to enter, they would find the cause of her death, as she was sure that some portion of her person or her clothing would be found in a clam-shell or cockle-shell in the attic.

No attention was paid to what she said for the time being, but the next day the girl died. The owner of the house, Dick Smoky, happened to be away at the time, but the people all gathered together and talked it over and decided to investigate. They found the house locked, and having no key, they soon pried the door open with an axe. When they got inside they climbed up a small ladder into the attic and there they found a cockle-shell hanging up over a little window. They took this down, and discovered that the two half-shells had been pried apart, a lock of hair put in it, the shells closed together again and the join covered with black pitch. When found, it was in a high state of putrefaction, as the cockle had not been removed from the shell before the hair had been put in. This to the Indians was an infallible sign of witchcraft, so they pursued their investigations further. The cottage in which Smoky lived was only one story in height, and consisted principally of one good-sized room, which was lined inside with V-joint tongued and grooved material. The lower part was put on as a dado, with the V-joint standing perpendicularly. About a dozen boards in this dado were loose, and after working a little with it they found that they could be removed. From the space inside they collected an assortment of odds and ends.

In one space they found an old yeast-powder tin. They





INDIAN GRAVES

took the cover off this and found a small china doll with the legs broken off, the body being about two inches long. On the back of the doll was a small package of darning wool, tied on with human hair. In another part they found some tissue paper with apple peelings in it, and two frog's legs. In another recess they found three beads, part of the finger of an old glove, one frog leg, and a little bundle of hair. In another place were found two or three pieces of rag, apparently the remains of an old shirt, a tooth that had been extracted by the dentist, and a little lock of hair. In another recess they found a small bundle of dried seaweed tied together with a bit of string. Great excitement prevailed throughout the whole of the village, and a rush message was sent to the Indian agent to come and investigate. A few days later I went in, questioned all the Indians, and decided that a prima facie case had not been established against the man, and adjourned it for further investigation.

The man who had died was known by the name of Leslie Nelson, and he had been suffering from the ravages of tuberculosis for about two years, but he had not been expected to die quite so soon, and doubtless the thought that he was being bewitched had hastened his death. Many of the people were of the opinion that the tooth with the little bits of shirt found in Smoky's house had been the property of Leslie, and that the clam-shell or cockle-shell containing some of the hair of the girl had been the cause of her death, although two doctors had visited her and examined her and said that she was suffering from spinal meningitis. Smoky had been ill for some little time, and had been undergoing hospital treatment at Alert

Bay, and did not return to his own village for some two months later.

At one of their feasts or gatherings some of the relatives of the dead girl and of the dead man got up at the meeting and accused Smoky of having been the cause of the death of their friends, and in order to get even with him, had each broken a copper and had paid out certain sums of money to the people who were present in order to witness the challenge. Smoky very wisely took no action with regard to it, and made no statement of any kind, but quietly sent word to me as to what was going on. Accompanied by the provincial constable, I made a special trip to Kingcome Inlet and called the principals concerned and had a quiet little meeting. It was explained to them that those who had broken these coppers and had given away money in connection with them had left themselves liable to imprisonment for not less than two months, and not more than six months; that they had allowed their superstitious feelings to run away with their common sense and good judgment; but they would be placed on probation, and the provincial police would not prosecute for this violation of the Indian Act until some other breach of the peace had occurred; and they all shook hands and agreed to be good friends for the rest of their natural lives, which was indeed an unusual proceeding for Indians to adopt.

Smoky has since died and his fellow-tribesmen feel now much more at rest.

Who has not been thrilled by the adventures of Tom Sawyer; how he tried to charm the warts away by resorting to strange expedients! Even at the present time there are many so-called intelligent people who are extremely super-

stitious. They have an unholy fear of the number thirteen; they will not pass another person on the stair; they will not go under a ladder; they always want to see the new moon over the left shoulder, and various other superstitions too numerous to mention. If such things prevail in our civilized times, it might only be expected that similar or worse superstitions should exist among the aborigines.

Rheumatism, particularly of the knees, was always a more or less chronic complaint amongst the Indians of the coast, and the old remedy, inspired by their superstition, was a peculiar one. A common garter snake was caught; the larger the snake the more efficacious the remedy. The medicine man caused the patient to be seated in such a position that the knees were bent; he then commenced his incantations, and in the midst of them he seized the snake's head from behind, and with the thumb and first finger forced open the jaws to the widest extent. He would then command the evil spirits to come out of the leg and enter into the snake, and while doing so would draw the snake's head four times down the bare leg of the patient from about two inches above the knee to about two inches below. In a snake's mouth there are two sharp teeth in the upper jaw, and while performing the incantations, each one of these teeth must make a cut in the flesh, and the deeper the cut and the more blood that flowed, the more certain was the cure.

Four is the perfect or magic number of these people, and it would not be efficacious if the operation was performed a less or a greater number of times than four. If the patient did not recover from the remedy completely,

it was always ascribed to the fact that some of his enemies must have caught and charmed the snake previously, knowing it was to be used for this particular patient, and thus have deprived it of the power of healing. After the operation, the snake was always dressed with a girdle of red cedar bark, which has so often been referred to, and then allowed to escape.

CHAPTER IX

COMPARISONS

THERE seems to be neither positive information nor definite knowledge as to the exact racial origin of the Indians of the Pacific coast. The idea of the Indian that is prevalent in the ordinary mind, the Indian that pictures portray, is a tall, raw-boned, sharp-featured individual, with great powers of endurance, and with great stoicism in all matters pertaining to life. That may be true of the Indians of the prairies and the Indians of the east, but is certainly not true with regard to those of the Pacific coast.

There are many people who believe that the coast Indians, from their racial characteristics, from their features, and from their physique, are descendants of some Asiatic race, most probably of the Japanese. It is seldom that one sees a coast Indian who is above medium height; his figure is stocky, his features are round, his nose has a tendency to be flat, and his cheek bones are high, all of which features are exactly similar to those of the Japanese.

It is a well-authenticated fact that amongst the people of Mongolian blood there exists what is medically known as the 'Mongolian spot.' All children of that blood have at birth a bluish-black spot on the back, just above the natal cleft. The spot is not larger than a ten-cent piece, and is very pronounced at birth, but becomes more and more indistinct as the child grows, and finally at from

the ages of ten to fifteen it disappears. From observations taken both at Bella Bella hospital and at the hospital at Alert Bay, the majority of the Indian children have the Mongolian spot at birth, and this fact confirms other data that the coast Indian is of Mongolian, and most probably of Japanese origin, in the far distant past, but it is so remote that there are few, if any, legends left concerning the migration.

Owing to their methods of life, where all their travelling was done by canoe, the coast Indians have always been well developed in the shoulders, chest, and arms, but inclined to be short-legged and undeveloped in the lower extremities. In industry they are somewhat peculiar. They are good workers, but only work by fits and starts, and seem entirely to lack that form of mind that produces the plodder with patience and staying power. As fishermen they have always excelled, because the fishing is a constant change, never being the same drudgery day after day, as pertains to most manual labour. They make good longshoremen, because when working on a boat they are working in a crowd, and they 'jolly' one another along, and to make matters more to their liking, in between times they have a good rest, so that work is not continuous. They are capable of great bursts of speed, but seem to be unable to keep it up.

On the occasion of my first visit to this northern country, another young man and myself engaged the services of an Indian to act as our guide, as we wished to do a little mountaineering. We set off early one morning, and the first day taxed our strength to the utmost, as the Indian guide seemed to have it in his mind that he would outdo

us in endurance. When we camped at night we were so tired we could hardly move. The next morning we started off again, and we found that it did not require nearly so much exertion to keep up with our guide, and toward the end of the day we had to spur him on. On the third day we returned, and he was absolutely played out; all his energy had been spent on the first spurt, and he was not able to keep it up. This seems to be characteristic of all the Indians along the coast, with, of course, odd exceptions.

On this particular trip we had occasion to descend a very slippery slope on which the heather was growing about eight inches high, and was in full bloom. We whites slid down very carefully and kept the end of our sharpened staffs dragging all the way, so that we could stop instantly if necessary. Our guide was barefooted, but he stood erect and slid down. His toes were extended and he allowed the heather to run between them, and if he found he was gaining too much speed, by gripping them together he checked himself or stopped at will.

There is one physical peculiarity common to all the Indians of the coast, and that is that very few of them can grow a reasonable beard. They all have certain signs of hair on the face, but only a very occasional one ever allows his beard to grow, because of the fact that there is not sufficient hair on his face to make a respectable showing. This is very like the Japanese, and helps to bear out the comparison.

The Indians seldom show very much initiative in any particular respect, but are very quick to copy, and in many instances are able to improve on the copy. The children at school very readily learn to write, as that is purely a

matter of copying, and the writing done by children who have only been in school for a couple of months is really surprising. They are ingenious in some ways, and have a rough-and-ready way of doing most things.

On one occasion I was travelling with two Indians in a canoe, and we had to cross a portion of Queen Charlotte Sound where the crossing was about sixteen miles. We had got about three miles out from shore when a thick fog settled. We had no compass. I was worried as to how we were going to make the other side, but before the fog obliterated the land ahead of us in the direction in which we were travelling, one of the Indians quietly got up from his seat, stuck a small mast up in the bow of the canoe, tied a string about a hundred feet long sufficiently high above his head that it would not interfere with him when he was rowing, tied a small stick on the other end, and then sat down again to row. We had two pairs of oars and a paddle; when they were rowing they kept the string hanging exactly over the stern of the canoe, and, excepting for the small drift which we made owing to the tide being on our beam, we landed exactly at our destination.

In the way of power boats they have shown considerable ingenuity, as they will often make an engine run that another person can do nothing with. They will have it tied together with pieces of string, and pieces of hay-wire, but they generally get where they want to go, but are not always at all careful as to whether they are doing it with the greatest economy.

At many of the canneries, more particularly in the Rivers Inlet area, the cannery managers offer a special cash bonus each season for what is known as 'high boat' for the

season. High boat means that the fishermen using that boat have caught and delivered to the cannery the largest number of fish. There is great competition each year for this honour, and although there are whites, Japanese, and Indian fishermen engaged, about half the prizes are won by Indians.

The curriculum in all the Indian schools corresponds to that taught in the provincial public schools, and the pupils from all the schools, more particularly the residential schools, take exactly the same competitive examinations as do the children in the provincial schools. They are handicapped to begin with by the fact that when they commence attending school many of them do not speak any English. They have to acquire a language and also a mode of thought that is altogether foreign to them, and yet in 1926, when the High School entrance examinations were held at Alert Bay centre, there were eight pupils who were successful, four from the Indian Residential School, and four from the public school, and it can be said to the credit of the Indian schools that their four pupils headed the list for this examination centre.

Under the auspices of the National Defence Department of Canada, there is an association called the Dominion Rifle Association, which holds shooting competitions open to the schools throughout all Canada. In 1928 a team from the Alert Bay Indian Residential School took part in one of these competitions, and was successful in gaining second prize against all the schools of Canada, and one pupil won the gold medal for being the best individual shot. Rifle-shooting is comparatively new amongst them, yet when they come into competition

with others they seem to be able to hold their own very successfully.

The mastery of English seems to give them considerable difficulty. They easily learn big words, but very often misuse them, and sometimes very interesting and amusing letters are received at the office from some of the Indians. The following is a sample:

Dec. 13, 1913.

To

W. M. Halliday, Indian Agent. I am very please to require for what is you diligent to essential that I like to exchange for my grandfather Dead now for is Real entire ownership of the lands. I meaning grandfather land in greenpoint. please communication for my good wishes to object explained by the government law. of to exchange my grandfather. you know how we active to got executive of the Indian engaging law I patlats all acting. But now Halliday I like you to execution me a good assisting and give me notes to me, to let me entire the to ownership of the land. But I know the land is not community property. But only Bally lakes to remain in the Region in greenpoint about 20 years befor. that is my executive for that I think is the possession for my object. But please Reply and notifying one whatever you know the correct of this matter. Please write reply soon prompt to your sincerely,

MAJOR DICK.

In other ways they are also very fond of copying or imitating other people. On one occasion one of the head chiefs of the agency was in the office and I noticed that he was twirling a finger ring on the third finger of his left hand, and my curiosity being aroused, I examined it closely, and found that he had got a large ring with a masonic emblem on it. I asked him how and where he got it. He replied: 'I bought it from Eaton's for fourteen

dollars; I saw you wearing a ring like that on your finger, and I thought that if it was good for a chief like you to have a ring like that, it would be a good thing for me, so I bought one like yours.' I did not undeceive him as to his right to wear the ring, but let the matter go.

There is one very material difference between the Japanese and the Indians, and this is in the fact that the Indians have absolutely no parental control over their children. The children are in the condition of the Israelites in the time of the judges, each one doing what is right in his own eyes, and they practically manage and control themselves. They are not obliged to keep regular hours, and if they have any money they squander it on what pleases their fancy, a considerable portion being spent on all kinds of foods which may be very nice and very enjoyable, but are not suitable for children, and the parents say nothing in the way of advising them.

I remember one day a boy of about ten asked his father for fifty cents to buy some oranges. The father did not happen to have fifty cents with him, but gave the lad twenty-five cents. He looked at it for a moment, threw it away on the beach, and walked off in indignation that his command had not been acceded to; the father spent the better part of a half-day searching for the twenty-five cents before he found it.

CHAPTER X

MEDICAL PROGRESSION

As a young man I had a preconceived notion, gathered from current literature of the day, that amongst Indians there were many wise old women who were well skilled in medicines and nursing, and that they had their own remedies, consisting of balsams and salves, compounded and prepared by themselves, which were a cure-all for wounds, bruises, and hurts of that nature. Possibly there may be a certain amount of truth in it in other parts of Canada, but my researches into the old habits and customs of the Indians of the coast of British Columbia lead me to believe that the latter knew practically nothing either of medicine or nursing. The old medicine man was a weird figure amongst them. He possessed a power over them, not because of his skill in curing diseases or wounds, but because of his skill in incantations and trying to drive away the evil spirits. His operations consisted in painting his face, putting on some sort of a fantastic costume more or less terrifying in its appearance, shaking one to four rattles, and making hideous noises. These rattles were all shaken together over the bed of the invalid, and the hands of the doctor or medicine man were waved back and forth, and a tone of voice used which was never used on any other occasion.

I remember well the first time I ever heard a medicine

man at work. I had been visiting a friend at Kingcome Inlet, and had been detained until it was getting late before starting to go home. The path led through thick forest, and I had no lantern with me. As I was passing by the last house in the village I heard the cry of a medicine man. Possibly my nervous system was somewhat unstrung at the time, but the sounds were so weird that involuntarily my hair stood on end, and I think I made better time travelling over that trail in the dark than I have ever done in the daylight, but it seemed to me the faster I went the faster I wanted to go. I could hear the incantations for some distance, in spite of the speed at which I was travelling, and I can easily understand that in the work of the medicine man amongst his own people it would be a case of kill or cure immediately.

As white people commenced to be more numerous in the vicinity, the Indians looked to them more or less for assistance in all cases of sickness or disability. In 1894 two Indians called to see me while I was living at Kingcome Inlet, and asked me if I knew anything about medicine. I ascertained from them that a young child had been badly scalded twenty-four hours earlier, and they had been unable to do anything to help it, and would I come and bring some good strong medicine with me and see what I could do. Among the assets of our establishment was a fairly well-stocked medicine chest, containing simple common-sense remedies. I took a supply with me and went up to see the child. I found that a little girl of about two years had accidentally fallen and put one arm right up to the shoulder in a pot of boiling water. It was terribly scalded and the poor child had cried so much that

at the time of my arrival she was unable to even make a noise, though still trying to do so. All that had been done for the care of the patient was to take the leaf of a skunk cabbage, a very foul-smelling weed which grows in that vicinity, and tie it round the arm at the shoulder and the wrist. I immediately applied carron oil, and bandaged it loosely but very carefully, and told them the child was in a bad way, but I thought that it would be possible to bring her through safely if they would only obey instructions. The relief from pain was so great and the little mite was so weary that she dropped off to sleep before I had finished dressing the arm. As she had eaten nothing, they were very anxious that she should have some nourishment before going to sleep, but I advised them to let her sleep, as sleep would revive her more than anything else. The father came to see me the next day and told me that the child had slept comfortably all night, had had some breakfast, and had gone off to sleep again. I warned him that under no consideration must the bandages be removed or even touched until I went myself and did it. About five o'clock that afternoon the father and uncle came to see me and told me that the child was dead. They seemed to have had an idea that a miracle had been performed, and they had taken off the bandages to see if the skin was all healed and grown over, and the second shock, after the prolonged agony of the twenty-four hours, was too much for the child.

For many years all Indian agents were obliged to be more or less amateur doctors. The Department supplied them with what medicines were needed, and the agent in travelling round from place to place always carried a

medicine chest. It is perfectly true that on all possible occasions a good dose of Epsom-salts was administered to the patient, and very often that was the only remedy needed. At that time the nearest doctor was in Vancouver or Victoria, and people had to depend very largely on themselves and their own common sense, only taking the most serious cases to the cities for medical treatment.

Like their white brethren, Indians are ready to try out any new cult that is brought to their attention. At Cape Mudge village on one occasion there were a number of visiting Indians who had come for the salmon-trolling season, and who were encamped with the Cape Mudge people, who had generously allowed the visitors the use of two of their houses. They belonged to a religious sect somewhat akin to what are commonly known as Holy Rollers. The wife of their chief was taken ill, and although the medical officer of the Department had treated her, she did not mend as quickly as her friends thought she should. It happened to be at the time of one of my periodic visits, and when I landed I heard a great noise of bells ringing and the sound of singing in one of these houses. The wife of the resident missionary was standing outside, and at her request I went into the house. I found the sick woman propped up in bed, with her husband sitting directly behind her, and he was supporting her with his arms. The place was all lighted with candles, and most of the visiting tribe were dancing round the room, shaking bells in each hand. It was an extremely hot day, and what with the lack of ventilation, the heat from outside and from the candles, the dancers fell one by one with exhaustion, but their places were immediately taken by

others. I immediately ordered the dancing to cease and turned everybody out of the room, and opened the windows, but the patient died a few hours later, and the blame for her death was placed on my unfortunate head.

Dr. R. W. Large, whose memory is still sacred amongst the Indians from this section of the country to the Naas River, was the first recognized medical authority along the coast. He was a medical missionary, and devoted all his time to the care of the Indians. For a number of years he was stationed at Bella Bella, then was transferred to Port Simpson, where he remained until the time of his death. He was not only a good medical man, but was also a good Christian man of an unusually high type, and his influence went very far towards helping along the work in which he was engaged.

He was succeeded by Dr. George H. Darby, who is still engaged in the work, and who is in charge of the hospital at Bella Bella. A new and enlarged hospital has been built at Bella Bella, and in memory of Dr. Large it is called the 'R. W. Large Memorial Hospital.' During the fishing season they operate a branch at Rivers Inlet, and all who are in touch with what is being done, which includes the Indians, speak most highly of the work that is accomplished there by Dr. Darby and his capable assistants. He has performed a number of very serious operations, which were always emergency ones, and his record is one that can be envied. Too much credit cannot be given him for his work, and it must not be forgotten that this work necessarily entails a great amount of self-denial and sacrifice, with few recompenses save the realization of labour well done.



MASKS FOR DANCES

1888



In this section of the country there was no medical man for many years, either official or private, but as the country was opened up and developed, and doctors came to the various districts to practise, the Department of Indian Affairs very generously gave a retaining fee for each place where a medical man was located, in order that the Indians might have the benefit of skilled treatment.

The Rev. John Antle, who is a Newfoundlander by birth and who had worked with and under Dr. Richard Grenfell of Newfoundland and Labrador, had come to British Columbia, and was so impressed with the opportunities for work of that nature that he succeeded in having organized what is known to-day as the 'Columbia Coast Mission.' At first the service rendered was small, owing to lack of funds, and it took considerable time to get things properly organized. Now they have three hospitals in operation, and the mission ship *Columbia*, which makes regular trips round the northern district, calling amongst other places at all the Indian villages, carries an additional doctor, so that if at any time an emergency case arises where two doctors are necessary, she is called, by means of the wireless telephone which is installed on board, so that the additional doctor may assist the resident doctor at the hospital.

The Department not only contributes generously towards the retaining fee of the doctors, but it has come to the rescue and pays liberal allowances to the hospitals for Indian patients treated therein, and we can look forward very confidently to an increase in the population of the Indians, owing to the better care that the people themselves have, and more particularly to the better care of the children. Hitherto the infant mortality has been enormously high,

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but now, through the establishment of these hospitals, the staff of which are unsparing in their efforts when opportunity occurs, and also through the assistance and advice of field matrons and nurses, the Indians are gradually acquiring a better physical life than they have had before, and the population, instead of decreasing, has been gradually increasing for several years past.

The records of the Hudson's Bay Company show that when the fort was established at Fort Rupert there were about 3,500 Indians in that vicinity; which included a number of other tribes that were located near, but not at Fort Rupert. The white man is largely responsible for the near extermination of the Indian. He brought in liquor, which the natives had never known before, and for which they soon acquired a very strong liking, with disastrous results; and the white man also introduced diseases among them which decreased their power of resistance, so that when an epidemic of smallpox broke out between fifty and sixty years ago, the Indian population was almost exterminated, and now in the vicinity of Fort Rupert, instead of 3,500 Indians, there are only about a hundred.

Possibly another reason may be given why the Indians are increasing, and why their physique is improving, but the reason does not reflect creditably on the white people. It is owing to the infusion of white blood that these results are occurring. A very large percentage of the Indians to-day are not of pure Indian blood, but have a large admixture of white blood, and, as one can imagine, it is not the better class of white men who have thus degraded themselves by intermingling with the Indian women, so

that the result morally is not so great as the result physically. However, it will hasten the time when the Indians as such will be no more, but will be absorbed into the white race, and will help to carry the burden that so far has been borne by the white man for his benefit.

CHAPTER XI

PROGRESS AND EDUCATION

IN order to fully realize and understand what progress has been made amongst the Indians of the Pacific coast, it will be necessary to envision conditions as they formerly existed. There is very little record of any work that was done amongst the Indians or as to their mode of life prior to the advent of Mr. William Duncan, whose missionary work amongst the Indians, more particularly in the vicinity of the mouth of the Skeena River, has become a matter of world-wide reputation.

In 1858, when Mr. Duncan arrived there, he wrote to the Church Missionary Society of London, England, who had sent him out there, and from his letters one can imagine something of the deplorable condition of the Indians and the heathenism and cannibalism that prevailed amongst them. He writes that in July of that year a chief's daughter had been injured on one arm, and an old woman who happened to be a slave was hobbling by, near the beach. At a word from the father of the girl, the old woman was clubbed to death, and her body thrown into the sea, with the idea that if there was any hereafter she would be in waiting to take care of his daughter if she should die from her sore arm. A short time later, Mr. Duncan heard terrible noises, and on looking out to see what was the matter, he saw two parties, each conveying

a naked Indian, of what we call in our part the *hamatsa*. With horrible cries and yells, these two creatures plunged into the water and pulled out the body, which they proceeded to tear into parts with their teeth. The two parties then separated, each one accompanying his wild man, who continued to howl and tear out and eat pieces of the still quivering flesh.

Mr. Duncan by degrees gained a great hold over the Indians, and many of them turned away from their heathenism and adopted the gospel of Christianity. The noise of this became bruited abroad, and one of the chiefs from Fort Rupert paid a visit to that district, and was so impressed with what he saw that he immediately asked that a missionary should be sent to his part of the country. Accordingly, in 1877 the Rev. Alfred James Hall, also a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, was sent. He lived for a short time at Fort Rupert, but on the solicitations and advice of Mr. Huson, an old-time resident, he changed his quarters to Alert Bay, as it was more central. At that time Cormorant Island, on which Alert Bay is situated, was under lease from the Government to Mr. Huson, but he told Mr. Hall that if he would come to Alert Bay and establish a mission, he would surrender the lease which he had of the island, and would assist Mr. Hall in every way to get sufficient ground to have a good mission.

Accordingly, in 1878 Mr. Hall transferred from Fort Rupert to Alert Bay. Another reason why the transfer was made was that Alert Bay was on the direct route for all vessels travelling north and south. Shortly after his arrival, Mr. Hall wrote to the parent society describing

conditions amongst the Indians in not quite so strong terms as Mr. Duncan had used, but still strong enough to impress one with the cannibalism and horrible customs of the Indians.

In order to show their fortitude and bravery, young men submitted themselves as voluntary sacrifices, and fish-hooks such as are used in fishing for halibut would be put into their backs and the back of their legs, making three hooks in each person, and they would be driven round by their following, who would pull and haul on the strings attached to the eyes of the hooks until finally the hooks would tear their way through. However, even as late as 1894, when I first took up my residence in this section of the country, I know of one case where at a village within a radius of thirty miles of Alert Bay, two men submitted themselves voluntarily to being hung up to a beam by ropes which were inserted through the flesh of the back and through the legs, until they kicked themselves free. This was only, comparatively speaking, a very few years ago.

Mr. Duncan, in his work amongst the Indians, when converts were made, made it an essential thing for them to absolutely promise to forgo and give up all their old heathen ways, enumerating, amongst other things, the system which is commonly known as the *potlatch*. It is to be regretted very much that Mr. Hall in his work amongst them did not insist on this also, as otherwise his work would have been absolutely perfect, and had he done so, progress would have been much more rapid in this agency than it has been.

Mr. Hall early realized that it was only by education that any progress could be made. They had to be taught.

Some of the promising young men and young women did not belong to the village at Alert Bay, and they had expressed the desire to be taught. There was very much active opposition amongst the older Indians to the children going to school at all, except in the case of a very few. The result was that Mr. Hall thought it would be much better if he could have a sort of residential school, where the young people whom he hoped to train for missionary work could be properly taught not only what we call 'book learning,' but also the gospel of Christianity, and the use of machinery and other mechanical devices.

Considerably at his own expense, and entirely at his own inconvenience, he turned the mission house in which he lived into a residential school. Some of those whom he taught have passed away; some of them are still living, but all speak with the greatest gratitude and the greatest affection of the work that was done by Mr. Hall. In order to help the Indians and give them some means of employment, he had a small sawmill built at Alert Bay, in which the Indians were given all the labour to do, there never being at any time more than one white man in their employ as a sort of foreman or overseer.

About this time Mr. R. H. Pidcock was made Indian agent, with his headquarters originally at Fort Rupert, but the old fort unfortunately was burned to the ground, by which Mr. Pidcock lost all his personal effects, and it was considered wiser then to transfer the headquarters of the agency from Fort Rupert to Alert Bay. Mr. Pidcock, like Mr. Hall, was a man of broad vision, and he saw that the residential school was going to be an invaluable means of training the young Indians; he succeeded, after

considerable correspondence, in having about four hundred and fifty acres of land on Cormorant Island set aside for school purposes, and the first residential school for boys was built on a portion of this.

Shakespeare, in his play *Julius Caesar*, has one of his characters state: 'The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones.' While this may be true in many instances, so far as the work of Mr. Hall and Mr. Pidcock is concerned, Kipling has a much truer conception in his *School Song*, where he states:

Praise and bless we famous men,
Men of little showing;
For their work continueth,
But their work continueth,
Broad and strong continueth,
Far beyond their knowing.

Mr. A. W. Corker, who was at that time a lay missionary amongst the Indians, and who had been stationed at Kingcome Inlet, was transferred, and became the first principal of this school, which position he held for many years. At first it was with the very greatest difficulty that any pupils could be obtained for the school, and those who did come were very wild and almost intractable. In February 1897 I came to Alert Bay to assist Mr. Corker in his work at the school, and with the exception of three years during which I was engaged in other occupations, I have spent the rest of the time living and working amongst the Indians in this agency.

One of the first troubles that arose at the school, which is being related to show the natural tendencies of the Indians and the difficulties of the work, occurred one night

within a month of my arrival. About eight o'clock in the evening, one of the pupils of the school came rushing in and almost collapsed on the floor. He said he had been waylaid on his way home from the village, had been beaten, slashed with a knife, and had just managed to escape with his life. Mr. Corker was almost as good at medicine and surgery as the average doctor, and we examined all the wounds, bandaged them up properly, and we set out on a little tour of investigation.

It so happened that although this was about the middle of March, there had been a slight fall of snow, and we could follow the tracks. We found the foot prints of this boy coming out of a small open space in the woods, so we went in and made a thorough examination, then got the provincial constable and brought him into council with us, and we decided that the wounds were entirely self-inflicted, as there was no other track leading to the spot, and the boy had been getting lonesome and homesick and was looking for an opportunity to get away, as if he could make people believe this story it would not be safe for him to remain at the school, and his people would so clamour for his release that he would be allowed to go home. The boy later confessed the whole thing, and said that it had been deliberate. On three different occasions the school was nearly burned by incendiary fires, most of which were caused by the boys themselves.

Up to this time very little attempt had been made towards the education of the girls. The girls were a great asset to their parents or the head of the clan. In order to realize money for the *potlatch*, they were prostituted at a very early age by both father and mother, and they were

also bestowed in marriage—if the term can be correctly used—to the highest bidder, and the older Indians felt that if the girls were educated, they would want to mark out a new line for themselves and would refuse to obey the dictates of this old custom. A few years later Mr. Hall succeeded in getting the Church Missionary Society to start a small training school for girls, which was attended by about six or seven. A few day schools were created, some of which are still in existence, and by degrees the Indians became more educated, but it was not until the second generation arose that they seemed to show any particular desire for education. They used to say quite pointedly: ‘We managed to get along without being able to read and write, why should not our children do the same thing?’

The Department of Indian Affairs has been most generous in their treatment of the Indians, particularly in the way of education. Dr. Duncan Campbell Scott, the Deputy Minister, was for a number of years the Superintendent of Indian Education, and he fostered all educational attempts that were made amongst the Indians. In many instances very little tangible result has been seen, but in many other instances wonderful results have been attained from the wise and generous policy inaugurated by him. When he was finally promoted to be the Deputy Minister of the Department, his activities and his opportunities increased, and I feel that too great a tribute cannot be paid to the part that he has taken in the expansion of education, improvement, and progress amongst the Indians.

The first residential school for boys was built of wood, and although when it was pulled down in 1930 it looked

antiquated, it was quite sufficient for the needs of the time in which it was built. Later on there was a better building put up for the training of the girls, with a capacity of twenty-five girls and the necessary staff. This was very ably managed under the principalship of Mr. Corker as long as he remained in the school work, and while it took a considerable time to fill the school, by degrees it became too small, until at the last there were thirty-six girls being trained in a school and home that was only originally built for twenty-five.

These matters were brought to the attention of the Department, and their liberal policy continued, until now we have one of the most modern and up-to-date buildings in the whole of Canada, with a capacity of 240 pupils. The change in the attitude of the Indians toward education can be seen, for instead of encountering a difficulty in obtaining pupils, the school is now almost full and next year will have a capacity enrolment.

In other matters the progress has been just as marked as it has been in educational matters. In 1906, when I was appointed Indian agent, I took a minute survey of the conditions prevailing at all the villages, and have endeavoured since that time to encourage the inhabitants of these villages to build better houses and to get better equipment. To-day, some of the villages are a credit to any place. At the Indian village at Cape Mudge the houses are all modern, well-finished, and have electric light and water in each home. At Campbell River, with one exception, they are all modern houses. As this village is very scattered, they have no piped water-supply and no electric light. These two villages were at one time a byword for

all that was evil and wicked. The Cape Mudge Indians early showed a desire for improvement. They had about fifteen million feet of good merchantable timber on the reserve at Cape Mudge, and the matter was brought to the attention of the Department, and a loan of \$3,500 was made to the agent to help them to get proper logging equipment. An agreement was made with them by which all moneys received for the sale of the timber were to be used to repay the loan. This was done, and the first operation completely wiped out the debt. They afterwards got a second donkey engine, as some of the timber was a little too far away to be drawn to the water by means of the one donkey engine. This was fully paid for, and the money coming to them for wages has kept them in comfort for many years. They only work at the logging during the season when there is no fishing.

Several other bands or tribes of Indians have been assisted in the same way, and so far, with one exception, the operations have been very successful. In the one exception a tribute is due to the Powell River Company. They had contracted to buy the timber at a stated and fixed price. While the Indians were conducting the operation of getting the logs ready for delivery the market price of logs had increased by four dollars per thousand feet board measure. In order to prevent any loss to the Indian Agent personally or to the Department of Indian Affairs, this Company voluntarily paid the increased price.

In former years, as to-day, fishing has been the backbone and the mainstay of Indian operations. For many years it was a common sight to see whole fleets of canoes

under sail from the northern part of this agency travelling to the Fraser River for the sockeye fishing there. Fish brought a low price but were very plentiful, and as a general rule the family would return at the close of the season with approximately one hundred dollars net profit for their labours. With this money they were able to buy the ordinary necessities which they were unable to produce themselves. When the Rivers Inlet area was opened up, large numbers of them went there, the cannery tugs going round from place to place picking up the Indians and their families and taking them to the various canneries. Generally speaking, about a hundred dollars a year was the extent of their savings. However, in those days a hundred dollars had considerably more purchasing power than it has at the time of writing, and the Indians had never learned any extravagant habits. Later on, purse-seine fishing commenced, and a number of Indians started out for themselves, usually getting assistance from some cannery to provide them with engine and nets. About the close of the period of the war, for about five or six years, they made money so fast that they lost all sense of proportion. It was quite a common thing for one man during the fishing season with his boat to clear five or six thousand dollars, and they learned to spend money too recklessly. Of late years, owing to various conditions, principally due to the changes in the Fishing Regulations, and the necessity for conservation on the part of the Department of Fisheries, they have not been able to earn much money, and they are coming back again to a more stabilized way of living and expenditure.

Socially, there has been just as marked an improvement as there has been religiously, educationally, and in a business

way. As related before, in 1894, during the warm weather, the male Indians went round absolutely naked as long as it was warm enough to keep them comfortable. When it got a little colder, they wore a shirt as the only garment, and full dress at that time consisted of a suit of underwear and a blanket, usually without shoes. To-day the Indians are as well dressed as any other people. It is quite a common thing at some of the dances which are held, which, by the way, are not heathen dances, but where ordinary jazz music prevails, to see the young men and young women as respectably clad as any that could be found anywhere within ten counties. Not only is their dress all that could be desired, but their deportment at these gatherings leaves very little room for criticism.

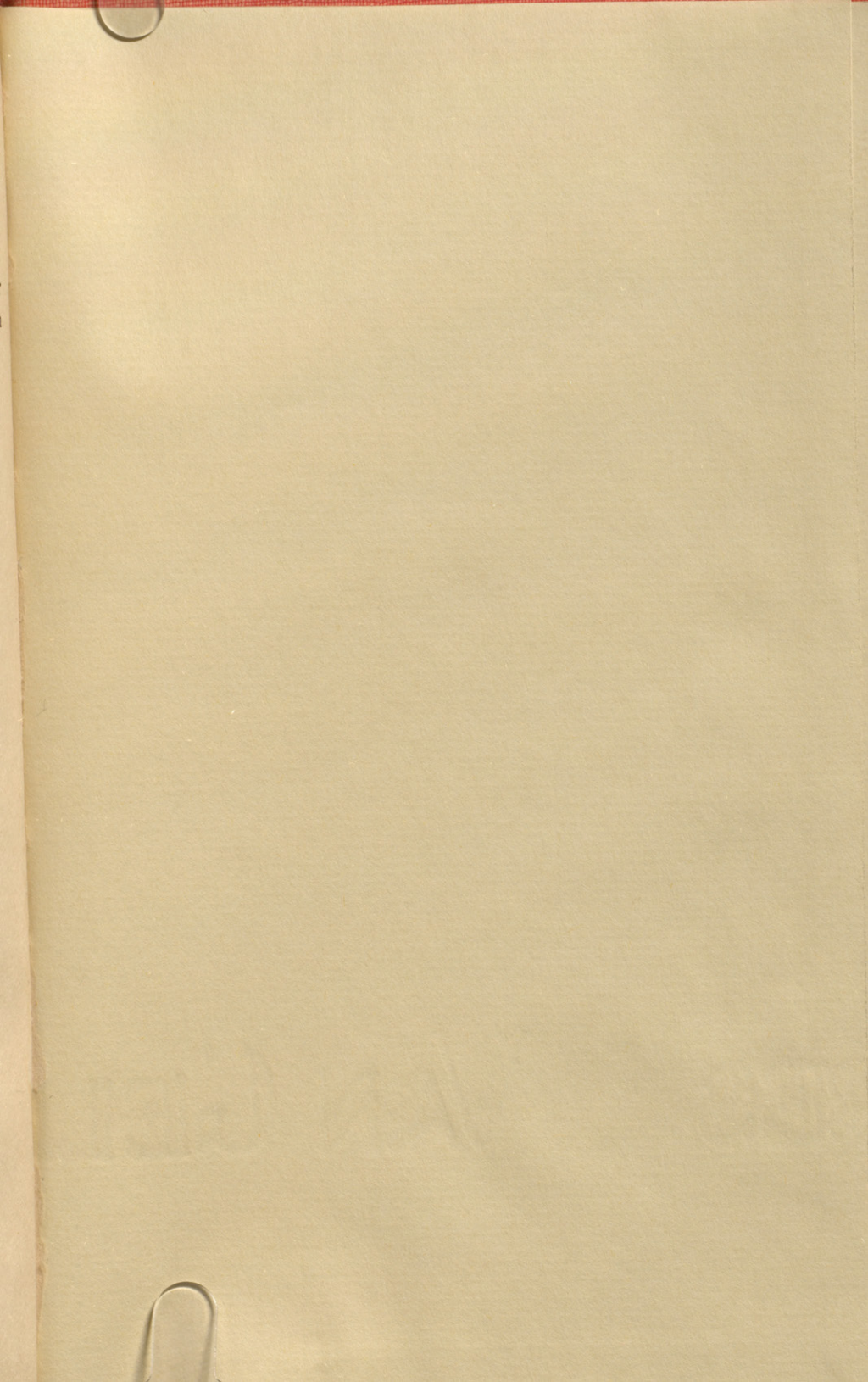
They still have the idea of very lavish entertainments, and when there is any feasting in connection with the affair, the quantities of food provided are inordinately large, and the old custom prevails that you eat what you can, and carry home the rest of the stuff that is given to you, to eat on the morrow or the day after. They are quite musical, having an orchestra of their own in most places. In the churches they nearly all have a choir composed almost entirely of Indians, and the music produced is quite creditable and quite harmonious. A number of the younger people can play either the piano or organ, and in almost every house they have a gramophone of some kind, and the choice of records on the whole reflects great credit on them.

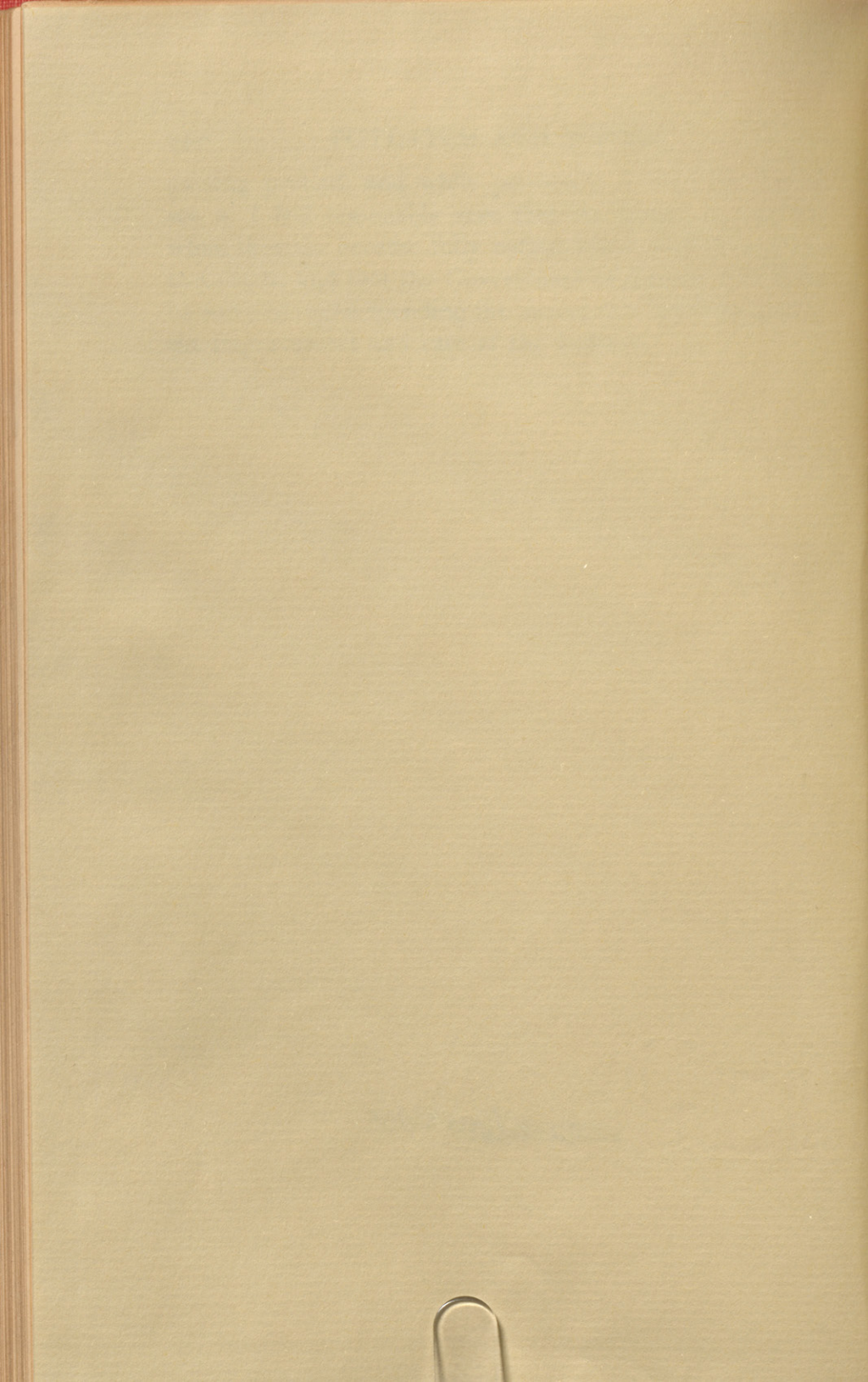
The one feature which has militated against further progress amongst the Indians is the lack of home influence. The old people are still imbued with the *potlatch* idea,

which is anything but a home-making one, and the younger people get very little encouragement of any kind in the way of making their homes pleasant and comfortable. This, however, will gradually become changed as time goes on and another generation grows up, and when we consider that it is only fifty-two years since the first work was done amongst them, we are forced to admit that while there is still room for improvement, wonderful progress has been made.

As for the future, it has often been said by some, even thinking people, that it has been money wasted by the Department of Indian Affairs in trying to bolster up a declining and decaying race, but this has been said without giving due consideration to all the facts and circumstances in connection with it. The Indian was the original possessor and owner of the country in which we live. We came in, and without force, or without argument, absorbed his country and called it our own; and by the terms of Confederation, the Dominion Government took on themselves the oversight of the Indians with a promise that they should be treated fairly and squarely. This promise has been kept in all fidelity and honesty, and the day will come, and it is not far distant, when the Indians who are in the province of British Columbia will receive their enfranchisement; will cease to become minors in the eyes of the law, and will be honest, law-abiding, respected citizens of Canada. This has been the aim and object of the Department and its officials ever since they took over the trust imposed upon them under the terms of Confederation. So far in this agency there have been only two applications for enfranchisement, but at the present time the idea is

gaining ground, and while personally I may not live to see it, I feel reasonably sure that the Indian population, when they do become fully enfranchised, will be a credit to Canada, and that the Government of Canada will never be sorry or regret spending the money that has been used in the improvement and care of the Indians.





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