

Indian Legends of Vancouver Island

Alfred Carmichael

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[Illustration: THE LONE INDIAN]

INDIAN LEGENDS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

TEXT BY ALFRED CARMICHAEL

ILLUSTRATED BY J. SEMEYN

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BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

The unsophisticated aboriginal of British Columbia is almost a memory of the past. He leaves no permanent monument, no ruins of former greatness. His original habitation has long given place to the frame house of sawn timber, and with the exception of the carvings in black slate made by the Hydah Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands, and the stone hammers, spear and arrow points, fashioned in the days before the coming of the white man, the mementos of his sojourn in British Columbia are only relics in wood, bark or reeds.

In the Alberni District of Vancouver Island there are two tribes of Indians, the Seshaht and the Opitchesaht. During the winter season the Seshahts live in a village which occupies a beautiful and commanding site on the west bank of the Somass River.

Some thirty years ago when I first knew the Seshahts, they still celebrated the great Lokwana dance or wolf ritual on the occasion of an important potlatch, and I remember well the din made by the blowing of horns, the shaking of rattles, and the beating of sticks on the roof boards of Big Tom's great potlatch house, when the Indians sighted the suppositional wolves on the river bank opposite the Village.

In those days we were permitted to attend the potlatches and witness the animal and other dances, among which were the "Panther," "Red Headed Woodpecker," "Wild Swan" and the "Sawbill Duck." Generally we were welcome at the festivals, provided we did not laugh or show sign of any feeling save that of grave interest. Among my Indian acquaintances of those days was Ka-coop-et, better known in the district as Mr. Bill. Bill is a fine type of Seshaht, quite intelligent and with a fund of humour. Having made friends, he told me in a mixture of broken English and Chinook some of the old folk lore of his tribe. Of these stories I have selected for publication "How Shewish Became a Great Whale Hunter" and "The Finding of the Tsomass." This latter story as I present it, is a composite of three versions of the same tale, as received, by Gilbert Malcolm Sproat about the year 1862; by myself from "Bill" in 1896, and by Charles A. Cox, Indian Agent, resident at Alberni, from an old Indian called Ka-kay-un, in September 1921. Ka-kay-un credits his great great grandfather with being the father of the two young Indians who with the slave See-na-ulth discovered the valley now known as Alberni, while "Bill" gave the credit to the sons of "Wick-in-in-ish."

The framework for "The Legend of Eut-le-ten," was related to me by Rev. M. Swartout in the year 1897. Mr. Swartout was a missionary to the West Coast Indian tribes. He spoke the language of the natives fluently, and took great pains to get the story with as much accuracy as possible. A few years later, Mr. Swartout was drowned during a heavy storm while crossing in an open boat from the islands in Barkley Sound to Uclulet.

In the making of the stories into English, I have worked in what knowledge I have of the customs and habits of the West Coast Indians of Vancouver Island. In a few instances, due to a lack of refinement of thought in the original stories, I have taken some license in their transcription. The legends indicate the poetry that lies hidden in the folk lore of the British Columbia Coast Indian tribes. For place names and other valuable information I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Cox. The illustrations are original and are the work of Mr. J. Semeyn of Victoria.

ALFRED CARMICHAEL,
Victoria, B.C.

A PEN PICTURE OF BARKLEY SOUND

THE ANCIENT HOME OF THE SESAHTS

To the lone Indian, who slowly paddles his canoe upon the waters of this western sound, each tree of different

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kind by shade of green and shape of crown is known; the Toh-a-mupt or Sitca spruce with scaly bark and prickly spine; the feathery foliage of the Quilth-kla-mupt, the western hemlock, relieved in spring by the light green of tender shoots. The frond-like branches and aromatic scent betray to him the much-prized Hohm-ess, the giant cedar tree, from which he carves his staunch canoe. These form the woods which sweep from rocky shore to topmost hill.

Small bays with sandy beaches white with broken clam shells mark the shore, and if across the beach a stream of crystal water rippled to the sea, one Indian lodge or more was sure to be erected on the rising land behind; for Indians always choose to build their homes on sheltered sandy bays where pure fresh water runs, and so in years which are among those past and gone one could not fail to see the blue wood smoke of Indian fires hanging like gauze above the little bays; but most are now deserted and corner posts of old time houses alone are seen, and beds of stinging nettle cover ancient kitchen middens, and spirea and elderberry strive for space where once red strips of salmon hung in the smoke of punk-wood fires, and stillness reigns where once the Indians' mournful song was heard.

Between the bays are rugged rocky points, where, by the constant wash of winter waves the rocks are carved in shapes uncouth and weird—giants in stone, whose heads are crowned with scrubby conifers, upon whose feet the wild seas break, or in the summer time the gentle wavelets lap. On jutting rocks the black Klap-poose, the shag, in silence sits, while circling overhead the keen eyed gulls watch for the shoals of fry on which they feed.

[Illustration: ON JUTTING ROCKS THE BLACK KLAP-POOSE, THE SHAG IN SILENCE SITS]

Come now with me and I will guide you to some beauty spots, unknown, unguessed except to those who have explored the sea creeks and sheltered passage ways abounding on that western coast. Perhaps between two rugged rocks we may find an opening where it cuts its way deep into the land. In many parts, the lichen-covered canyon walls approach so close together that our canoe can scarcely pass, and more than likely we shall find the passage bridged by some old fallen tree, its ancient trunk enveloped in soft moss and seedling forest trees. Reflected in the water's surface are flowering berry shrubs, which adorn the banks on either side. We see the glossy-leaved shalal, the fruit of which the Indians gather to dry for winter use, and clumps of maiden hair and other ferns rooted in old tree trunks and rocky crevices. Such is the picture of many a salt sea creek found in the regions round fair Barkley Sound.

Perhaps our fancy leads among the islands of the sound. It may be that a storm has lately spent itself, and long deep swells are rolling in from the wide ocean lying to the west. Our staunch canoe is lost in the deep green waters of the heaving main. It climbs only to descend and climb once more, and thus we slowly cross the Middle Channel and reach calm water.

Soon what at first appeared to be unbroken shore breaks up into many passage ways. By one of these we enter, to find ourselves among a hundred isles. Each one is wooded to the water's edge, which often the trees overspread with outstretched boughs. Entranced, we paddle on until we leave behind all trace of ocean swell, and if the tide be low so that old sea-soaked snags are seen upon the shore, and boulders thick with barnacles and varied coloured sea-weeds in shades of brown and red, and here and there great clusters of blue mussel shells, these all, if the water be calm and undisturbed by wind, are mirrored on the surface of the stream, forming pictures most rare and beautiful. Thus for hours with ever fresh delight we thread the calm passage-ways between those isles. Beachlets of white sand and powdered shells are found where ocean swells at times may reach. On these we stroll and gather abalone shells and empty sea eggs and other relics up-thrown by winter storms. At evening we may reach a sheltered nook where years ago Indians built a little shelter in which to sit and watch the sun descend into the western sea. Perhaps we may conjure up the Indian's thought, who built that little shelter, and night on night in glorious summer time, squatted and watched the sun go down.

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Such is the setting for the following tales. Amid such scenes as these, the Indians lived and died.

[Illustration: A WEST COAST INDIAN WEARING THE KUT-SACK]

THE SUMMER HOME OF THE SSHAHTS

There is an island larger than the rest, called Ho-moh-ah, where once the tribe of Sshahts made their summer home. It lies well out to sea, and on the sheltered side the Sshahts lived. The chief of the tribe was Shewish. His house was large, so large that when he called his people to a great potlatch, they all could find within its walls an ample space to feast and dance. His house like all the old time dwellings was built on simple lines, the three great roof-logs each of single trees, upheld by posts of ample girth. The sides and roof of wide-split cedar boards were adzed to lie close, and fastened into place by twisted cedar rope. Within, on either side was raised a wooden platform two feet high. This platform and a portion of the floor adjoining it in sections was partitioned off by screens of cedar mats. Each section was the home of such as claimed close kinship with the chief. The centre of the lodge for its whole length was common to all who lived therein. The people cooked their food upon the common fire, the smoke of which curled up and found an exit through the smoke hole in the roof. The section tenanted by the family of Shewish lay furthest from the door. No feature except one marked it as different from the homes of lesser men. A pictographic painting—the Coat of Arms of the great family of Shewish hung upon the wall. The picture told in graphic form how came the name of Shewish to be famed among the hunters of the whale. It also told the legend of the THUNDER BIRDS.

[Illustration: HAND ADZE MADE AND USED BY INDIANS OF BARKLEY SOUND]

THE LEGEND OF THE THUNDER BIRDS

NAMES OCCURRING IN “THE LEGEND OF THE THUNDER BIRDS”

Kulakula is the [1]Chinook word for Bird.

Tee-tse-kin or Tootooch is the name given by the Barkley Sound Indians to the Thunder Bird, a mighty supernatural bird in Indian mythology.

Howchulis, the land of the Howchucklesahts, is better known by the name Uchucklesit, a safe harbour on the west side of the Alberni Canal at its junction with Barkley Sound. Uchucklesit is now the centre of an important fishing industry.

Quawteaht, is a great personage in Indian mythology, a beneficent being, and considered by many to be the progenitor of their race.

[1] CHINOOK, is a jargon or trade language still used on the coast of British Columbia both by the white men in conversing with the Indians, also by the latter when talking to members of a tribe speaking a different dialect. Chinook is a combination of English, French and Indian words.

THE LEGEND OF THE THUNDER BIRDS

The figure at the base of the pictographic painting represents the mammoth whale upon whose back the whole creation rests. Above the whale are seen the head and wings of the giant Kulakula the Tee-tse-kin the Thunder Bird which dwells aloft. When he flaps his wings or even moves a quill the thunder peals. When he blinks his eyes the lightning strikes. Upon his back a lake of large dimensions lies, from which the water pours in thunder storms. He is the lone survivor of four great Thunder Birds which dwelt upon the mountains

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of Uchucklesit. These mighty birds sustained themselves on whales, which they would carry to the mountain peaks, where Indians say, the bones of many whales have been found.

One time the "Great One," Quawteaht desiring to destroy the mighty Thunder Birds, entered the body of a whale, and swimming slowly approached Howchulis shore. The Thunder Birds espied it from their high retreat, and sweeping down made ready for the fray. First one attacked and drove his talons deep into the whale's back, then spreading his broad wings he tried to rise. Then Quawteaht gave strength to the great whale, which sounded, dragging the Tee-tse-kin beneath the waves. Up came the whale; a second Thunder Bird with all his force drove his strong claws deep into the quivering flesh. Then Quawteaht a second time gave strength and down the mammal plunged dragging with him the second Thunder Bird. A third was drowned in manner similar. Thereat the fourth and last Tootooch took wing and fled to distant heights, where he has ever since remained.

This is the story of the Thunder Birds.

[Illustration: WOODEN SCOOP FOR BALING THE WATER OUT OF A CANOE]

HOW SHEWISH BECAME A GREAT WHALE HUNTER

NAMES OCCURRING IN THE LEGEND OF SHEWISH

The Killer Whale or Ka-Kow-in has a large dorsal fin shown in a conventional manner in the pictograph between the Thunder Bird and the face of the Indian girl, sister to Shewish. The Killer Whale was often used as a family emblem or crest and as a source from which personal names were derived.

Klootsmah or Kloots-a-mah plural Klootsmuk the Indian word for "married woman" but used in the legends for girls as well as women. According to Gilbert Malcolm Sproat who lived in Alberni in the early "sixties" the term used for a young girl or daughter was "Ha-quitl-is" and for an unmarried woman "Ha-quatl."

Toquaht—the home of the Toquaht tribe of Indians, an old settlement on the north shore of Barkley Sound between Ucluelet and Pipestem Inlet.

The Kutsack, or Kats-hek is a loose cloak or mantle woven from the soft inner bark of the yellow cedar tree. Indian mats were made from the inner bark of the red cedar.

[Illustration: PICTOGRAPHIC PAINTING, THE COAT OF ARMS OF SHEWISH, SESAHT CHIEF
(Drawn by J. Semeyn from original sketch by the author)]

HOW SHEWISH BECAME A GREAT WHALE HUNTER

The centre figure in the pictographic painting is a wolf grotesquely drawn. Within her body four young wolves are seen. Above the wolf is a killer whale surmounted by a second picture of the Thunder Bird, and in the left top corner of the pictograph is seen the face of a young klootsmah or Indian girl. How strangely are her features pictured. With upturned hands she gazes in a blank unvarying stare. She holds the key to this old tale which the great scroll perpetuates. One time this Indian maiden, daughter of a chief of great renown, with her two sisters left their home on Village Island. They went in search of yellow cedar bark which grew in quantity upon the mountain top above the village, of Toquaht. The cedar bark is highly prized, and when the sap ascends in May to feed the new born green, the bark is loose and easily removed, and when the klootsmah cuts the bark through to the sap half round the tree and pulls with all her strength, it comes in strips from off the tree till the first branch is reached, and then it breaks and falls obedient at her dark feet. The klootsmah

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rolls it up and puts it in the basket on her back, and when she reaches home she splits the bark, and pounds it between stones, with water softening it, and after long and tedious work the fibres being separated, she cleanses them and weaves them into cloaks, and then with true artistic taste, trims them with pretty fur.

[Illustration: THE BARK GIVES WAY AND COMES IN STRIPS FROM OFF THE TREES]

The daughters of the Village Island chief took with them food to last for three whole suns. They started early, for many miles of paddling lay between them and the Toquaht shore. At length they reached the beach, and hiding their canoe beneath a giant spruce, they followed where a little trail beckoned them on and up the mountain side. For hours they climbed, wending their way through lonely, silent woods, the twittering wren the only life they saw or heard. At times they lost the trail, as it was overgrown with fern and berry bush. But once the leading klootmah stopped and signed to her companions to keep still. Halting, they waited while she pointed to the root fangs of a cedar tree, where well within the hollow butt a western timber wolf had made her lair. Gone was the mother, perhaps in quest of deer with which to feed her four young pups who calmly slept within that sheltered cave, awaiting her return.

The Indians are a superstitious race, and one of the old fetishes was this: that if by chance they could secure the young of a wolf from which to take some precious inner part, to rub upon the outer side of their canoes, it gave great luck in whaling, and thus it came to pass that when the klootsmuk found the she wolf's lair, they formed the plan of taking to their brother the four wolf pups, in order that he might become the chief of all whale hunters. Cautiously they placed them in the baskets on their backs and then retraced their steps. In time they reached the beach, and entered their canoe, when just as they pushed off, with giant springs and angry howl leapt the great mother wolf from the woods, but the klootsmuk were safe with their strange prizes, and soon their canoe cut gleefully through the waves, while their songs were wafted landward by the western breeze.

Upon an isle not far from home they hid the young wolf pups. This done, they squatted on the shore, and thought how best they might inform their brother of their lucky find. They were puzzled as to how this might be managed without awakening jealousies among the other members of the tribe, and they were fearful to face their father's wrath who surely would expect their craft well laden with the cedar bark. They reasoned long and then decided on a stratagem. One of the three would cut her foot with a mussel shell, and mark her tunic with the blood, and tell the story, that when they landed on the Toquaht shore an open mussel shell had cut her foot, therefore they could not go for cedar bark. They carried out this plan, and paddled slowly to Ho-moh-ah. The people saw them come, and wondered much what evil had befallen them, but when they saw the blood upon the kutsack of the youngest girl and saw her bound up foot, they guessed the trouble. Before the sun had set, the brother had been told of the wolf pups, and secretly that night he had taken from them the precious parts, and when he went hunting, he rubbed the medicine on his canoe, and had such wondrous luck he soon became the chief of all whale hunters. Such is the story told by that weird painting, which could be seen some years ago adorning the dark walls of the great potlatch house of Shewish, Seshah chief on Ho-moh-ah but better known as Village Island, Barkley Sound.

[Illustration: HALIBUT HOOK AND CLUB FOR STUNNING FISH]

THE FINDING OF THE TSOMASS

NAMES AND WORDS OCCURRING IN THE LEGEND "THE FINDING OF THE TSOMASS"

Alberni, the valley at the head of the Alberni Canal, a wonderful cleft or fjord which almost splits Vancouver Island in two. This fjord has its outlet in Barkley Sound on the west side of the island. The Alberni Canal was

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named by the Spaniards after Don Pedro Alberni, captain of infantry in charge of soldiers stationed at Nootka Sound, Vancouver Island, during the Spanish occupation.

Tsomass River—spelt and pronounced by the “Whites” Somass, a fine river formed by the confluence of the Stamps and Sproat or Klee-coot rivers, draining Great Central lake and Sproat or Klee-coot lake respectively. The Tsomass river flows through the Alberni Valley into the Alberni Canal.

The E-coulth-aht, is one of the many divisions of what Gilbert Malcolm Sproat called “the Aht tribes” inhabiting the west coast of Vancouver Island.

Po-po-moh-ah, is now known by the Spanish name “San Mateo Bay” situated on the east side of Barkley Sound, not far from the entrance to the Alberni Canal.

U-chuck-le-sit, is a small but safe harbour on the north side and near to the entrance to the Alberni Canal. The cannery, cold storage plant and village of Kildonan are built on the harbour.

Klu-quilth-soh, is the Indian name for a rather forbidding passage in the Alberni Canal, and known for strong winds and choppy seas. It is named by the white people “Hell’s Gate.”

Chehahs were Supernatural spirits or influences; there were good and bad chehahs.

She-she-took-a-muck was a ferocious whale supposed to have lived at Hell’s Gate, and to have swallowed Indians and their canoes. The whale was killed by the aid of Quawteaht.

Kah-oots was supposed to be one of the deities of Seshah mythology.

Tsa-a-toos,—(Copper Island) is a large island situated in Barkley Sound and near to the entrance to the Alberni Canal.

Toosh-ko, Hy-wach-es, Wak-ah-nit, (Copper Mountain) Tin-nim-ah, and Klu-quilth-koose (now known as Coos Creek) are place names on the Alberni Canal.

U-ah-tee—the north wind, Yuk-stees—the south wind.

O-lil-lie and Il-la-hie, are Chinook for berries and land or country respectively.

Ah-tooch is the Indian name for deer.

Lup-se-kup-se or Nooh-see-cupis, is a small piece of cleared land on the left bank of the Tsomass river and about half way between the towns of Port Alberni and Alberni.

Kleet-sa, is a high mountain rising from the waters of Taylor Arm, Sproat Lake, so named because of its white or chalky appearance.

Kuth-kah-chulth, is the Indian name for Mount Arrowsmith, a splendid peak rising directly east of the town of Port Alberni. Mount Arrowsmith is one of the highest mountains of Vancouver Island; it is 5976 feet in elevation.

Toh-a-muk-is, is the land fronting on the little bay just north of the foot of Argyle Street, Port Alberni.

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Kok-a-mah-kook, is a place close to the stream known as Dry Creek, and near to the railway round house, Port Alberni.

Kwa-nis, Kam-mass or Gam-mas as it is variously known, is a species of lily which comes into flower about the middle of April and remains in flower till June. It is gathered, roasted and preserved whole in bags for winter use.

THE FINDING OF THE TSOMASS

Near thirty miles from where Alberni pours her crystal stream out to the mighty fjord that cleaves Vancouver's Island nigh in twain, a tribe of Indians lived. Their village nestled at the foot of wooded hills, which everywhere on this indented coastline, rise straight up from out the North Pacific. They were a powerful tribe, E-coulth-aht by name; seven hundred strong, with many fighting men, and many children who played upon that shore. I think even now I hear the echo of their voices round the bay, and how marvelously clear an echo may be, among the inlets of that rockbound coast! I have heard my call flung back from side to side alternately, till it was lost among the rocky heights and ceased to be.

Across the bay from where the Indians lived, ran a stream, called Po-po-moh-ah. Here every autumn, when the salmon came, they stayed and caught the fish for winter use. Yet strange to say these ancient E-coulth-ahts seemed unaware that at their very doors, a nature hewn canal had its entrance. One fine September morning Ha-houlth-thuk-amik and Han-ah-kut-ish, the sons of Wick-in-in-ish or, as some say Ka-kay-un, accompanied by their father's slave See-na-ulth were paddling slowly to Po-po-moh-ah, when half across and near to Tsa-a-toos they saw dead salmon floating on the tide.

The salmon had spawned, and is it not strange to think that this, the king of fish should struggle up the rapid tumbling streams for many miles, against strong currents, over falls where the water breaks the least, perchance to fall within the wicker purse of Indian traps placed there so cunningly to catch them if they should fall back; and even if they escape the Indian traps and find the gravel bar where they four years before, began their life, and having spent themselves in giving life, sicken and die, their bodies even in death give sustenance to gulls and eagles circling round those haunts.

“These fish have come from where fresh water flows, so let us follow up from whence they come. Let Quawteaht direct our course, and we shall find new streams where salmon are in plenty and win great glory in our tribe.” Thus spake the sons of Wick-in-in-ish, and they turned the prow of their canoe upstream, and followed where the trail of salmon led, to the broad entrance of that splendid fjord.

Soon they paddled by the harbour U-chuck-le-sit, long famed for its safe anchorage and quiet retreat, when winter storms lash the waters of the sound. Leaving this quiet harbour on the left, they followed where the wider channel led to Klu-quilth-soh, that dark and stormy gate, where Indians say the dreaded Chehahs dwell among the rocky heights—“The Gates of Hell,” and when men seek to pass those gates the Chehahs blow upon them winds of evil fates from north and south and east and west. The water boils in that great witches pot, while Indians seek a sheltered beach in vain—no beach is there, no shelter from the storm. The mighty cliffs frown down relentlessly; the whale She-she-took-a-muck opens his great jaws and swallows voyagers, at which the chehahs laugh, and their wild laughter, Klu-quilth-soh's heights re-echo far away.

On this eventful day the evil chehahs were absent from their home and the Yuk-stees wind blew not too strong to cause the waves to dash along in wild commotion, and after paddling uneventfully through Klu-quilth-soh, the three E-coulth-ahts stopped beside Toosh-ko. Looking back they could not see Nob Point which hid their home from view,—it was as if the mountains which formed those stormy gates, had closed and barred them in.

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“What chehah” they cried, “has lured us within this inland sea and shut those gates? A–ha A–ha!” they called with anxious cry, and prayed Kah–oots to save them from all dangers. To the Saghali Tyee, the chief above, they also prayed to potlach kloshe to them, and guard them from the evil chehahs hovering round. After the relief of prayer, their spirits rose, and once again the splashing of their paddles marked their onward progress.

Soon they glided by Hy–wach–es Creek and rounding Wak–ah–nit they came in view of the great valley where the Tsomass flows. At once they ceased from paddling to gaze with pleasure on that favoured land, and as they looked they heard the sound of song from up the river valley.

The evening fell, the pleasant Yuk–stees wind blew more faintly, and as it passed away, over those calm inland waters swelled again the sound of many voices chanting Indian songs.

“There are people dwelling there,” they said. “It would be well if we delayed until morning.” Agreeing to this plan they crossed the channel and camped at Klu–quilth–coose.

Next morning while the grass was damp with dew, and long before the U–ah–tee wind had ceased, the sons of Wick–in–in–ish, hearing again the quaint alluring song, took their canoe and paddled on, to where between two grassy slopes, the Tsomass ends. When they approached the river mouth, they saw extending from the bank a salmon trap, and even to–day, the Indians will show at Lup–se–kup–se some old rotten sticks, which they affirm formed part of that same trap. The land was green, the wild duck’s quack was heard among the reeds which edged the river bank, while flocks of geese were feeding on the grass which grows thickly upon the tidal flats, the flats the Indians call Kwi–chuc–a–nit.

Upon the eastern bank the young men saw a wondrous house, which far surpassed their father’s lodge at home beyond the hills in Rainy Bay, in size of beams and boards. The sons of Wick–in–in–ish were afraid and would have turned the bow of their canoe home–bound, but that from the house they heard a woman call. “Oh come and stay with us, go not away. Our land is full of all the riches nature gives; our woods are bright with o–lil–lie most luscious to the taste; on yonder hill the nimble ah–tooch feed; in every stream the silver salmon swim so come within our lodge with us and stay awhile.” Ha–houlth–thuk–amik was mesmerized by the sweet welcoming and entered in, whereat the klootsmah said to him, “We welcome thee strange one unto our lodge, for we have never seen a man before. Come and join us in our song and dance, for when above great Kuth–kah–chulth the morning sun in glory rises, we chant this song.”

[Illustration: THE INDIAN MAIDEN’S SONG]

and when he sets over Kleetsa’s snow white crown, we dance around our fires, and sing again, and our hearts are happy in this our land.”

[Illustration: “WE DANCE ROUND OUR FIRES AND SING AGAIN”]

Now Han–ah–kut–ish was alarmed and much afraid that if his brother listened to the klootsmah and was attentive to her blandishments, he would forget the mission in which they were engaged, therefore he called to him to come, and after much persuasion the elder brother left the lodge and joined the younger and the slave See–na–ulth, and together they paddled up the stream to Ok–sock–tis opposite the present village of O–pit–ches–aht. Across the river there were houses in which more klootsmuk lived, but at this time they were employed in gathering Kwanis in the land behind, and when the young men sought them out they were afraid and all but one took flight escaping to the woods. This one had no fear but coming near to Ha–houlth–thuk–amik besought him with favour to look on her, but Han–ah–kut–ish again reminded him that they had not as yet attained the object of their quest.

Indian Legends of Vancouver Island

Still further up the stream they went, until they came to where they found the Ty-ee salmon spawning on the gravel bars. Believing they had found the object of their search they camped the night at Sah-ah-hie. All through the darkness they listened to the rushing of the fish, when the gaunt and savage males with flattened heads and upper jaws curved like a hook about the lower, and armed with dog-like teeth, fought for the females of their choice. With great satisfaction they heard the wallowing of the fish, as, with their heads and tails, they formed the elongated cavities in the gravel in which to lay their eggs. Then Ha-houlth-thuk-amik declared that this the Tsomass River was the source from which the dead fish came which they had seen when paddling to Po-po-moh-ah.

To Lup-se-kup-se they returned next day, and there they saw, among the women in the lodge, the girl who spoke to them, when they had landed on the river bank opposite Ok-sock-tis. Then Ha-houlth-thuk-amik, desiring to convey her home with him, took her aside and said, "If thou wilt come with me, say not a word, but unbeknown make haste and leave the house, and run across the point which forms the eastern bank where this the Tsomass river joins the inland sea, then hide thyself until we take thee in, as we are paddling home."

The klootsmah did as she was told and as the young men passed she jumped within the canoe, and was away with them. That night they stayed at Chis-toh-nit not far from Coleman creek, so named because in later days a white man of that name took up some land and dwelt there some little while.

Next morning the klootsmah said to Ha-houlth-thuk-amik, "I am Kla-kla-as-suks and I am now thy rightful wife and therefore I desire to make of thee a famous hunter of the whale, so come with me and climb the mountain called Kuk-a-ma-com-ulth where high above the timber line the green grass grows, and I will get for thee an Ow-yie medicine."

They climbed the mountain and she secured for him the medicine so desired by all who hunt the whale, and early next morning, blown by a strong U-ah-tee wind they started for Po-po-moh-ah and when they came to Klu-quilth-soh they found the gates wide open and passed safely through between the frowning cliffs, arriving home before the break of day.

Then Ha-houlth-thuk-amik aroused his father who was still asleep, and bade him light a fire, and when the fire was lit he told him how they ventured up the unknown way, between high cliffs, where they had lost all sight and sound of Rainy Bay. He told of the Tsomass land, and the salmon stream which far eclipsed their own Po-po-moh-ah, and then described the great and wondrous house, where the klootsmah dwelt, and how they sang to him "Yah-hin-in-ay." He told him also of Kla-kla-as-suks, the klootsmah who had left her home to be his rightful wife.

[Illustration: NEXT DAY E'RE MIDDAY CAME THEY HAD SET SAIL]

Then Wick-in-in-ish sent for all the tribe, and when they were assembled in his lodge, he told to them the story of the Tsomass land. Among the braves was much talking; and after speeches from the lesser chiefs, it was decided that next day before the sun had cast his shadow north and south, with Yuk-stees wind, they would set sail for Tsomass land.

That day in every house, in varied occupation, each family was busied. The cedar boards, which form the sides and roof of all their homes, were piled upon canoes. Atop of these were set their household goods, the mats of cedar bark, the wooden tubs in which they boiled their fish, the spears of flint, their hooks of bone, their fishing lines of kelp, and mattresses of water reeds. Large quantities of clams and mussels, also salmon cured by smoke they took with them, for Wick-in-in-ish planned to give a great potlatch to the strange tribe of Indian girls, from which his eldest son had chosen one to be his wife.

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Next morning long before the sun had reached the zenith they had set sail for Tsomass land. It truly must have been a sight to see that fleet of dark canoes, piled high with all the wealth of that great tribe, as with the sails of cedar bark filled with the Yuk-stees wind, they glided by the green or rocky shores which led them inland to the pleasant Tsomass land. Before the shadows of the night had spread among the gloomy conifers, the dark canoes had rounded Wak-a-nit, when, taking down their sails of cedar bark, they paddled silently close to the shore.

When near Tin-nim-ah, where the Indians say they find good stone for sharpening arrow points, they rested on their paddles, and first heard the women singing in their cedar lodge. Then Wick-in-in-ish addressed his tribe. "My children we have sailed for many miles, and our little ones are hungry and weary. Let us sojourn near this old spruce."

Thus they encamped near the conifer, and called the place Toha-a-muk-is after the spruce they were afraid to touch. Water they carried from near Kak-a-mak-kook, named from the alders growing round the stream. All through the night they heard the salmon splash to free themselves, so many Indians say, from sea lice clinging to their silver sides, and their hearts were happy with that refrain, which spoke to them of great supplies of food.

Early next day, before the forest trees were gilded by the glorious rising sun, the people heard the call of many birds, and looking northward where the Tsomass flows, forth from the mist, which in the early morning hangs like a veil of gauze among the trees, they saw a flock of Sand Hill cranes appear. They flew far above their heads and gradually ascending to the sky, vanished from their sight. These were the maidens, so the Indians say, who left behind them all this lovely land for regions unexplored, taking with them both clams and mussels. This is the reason Indians give for the lack of these shell-fish now, upon the shores of the great inland sea. The maidens also took the Kwa-nis bulbs, but as they flew they dropt a few upon the ground, hence the Kwa-nis bulb is still found in Tsomass land.

Wick-in-in-ish, with his sons, now made haste to paddle to the river mouth, but lo, the house was gone, no sign of it was left, and with it all the klootmah tribe had fled. Then he turned to Ha-houlth-thuk-amik and said, "This is thy land, and this thy future home shall be; thou and thy chosen one Kla-kla-as-suks shall dwell therein, and may thy children be many."

THE LEGEND OF EUT-LE-TEN

EXPLANATION OF "THE LEGEND OF EUT-LE-TEN"

As stated in the introduction, the details for this story were given by the late Indian missionary, Mr. M. Swartout, who received them direct from the Indians of Dodger's Cove, Barkley sound, in the year 1897.

The reader will recognize in this legend the Indian equivalent for Hansel and Gretel, Jack the Giant Killer, Jack and the Bean stalk, and other stories of childhood days.

It is not likely that the exploits of Eut-le-ten were considered by the older Indians to be the product of imagination, and most probably they believed that some time in the distant past, a supernatural being called Eut-le-ten was born and lived and performed extraordinary feats and taught them wonderful things.

This is an Ohyaht Indian story. The chief village of the Ohyahts was at a bay called Keeh-him between Bamfield and Cape Beale, Barkley Sound.

THE LEGEND OF EUT-LE-TEN

THE WITCH E-ISH-SO-OOLTH

Long, long ago, in the gloom of deep and silent woods there lived a witch or evil chehah. The Indians called her E-ish-so-oolth. So tall was she that, stalking through the forest, her head would brush the lower branches of the giant fir.

She dwelt in a huge lodge, the walls of which were built of cedar logs as thick as men are high. This evil chehah was the dread of young and old alike, for all believed that boys and girls and even men and women, who left their homes, not to return again, were taken to her lodge, there to be devoured at leisure. Therefore mothers often said, when children misbehaved, "Be good or I will call E-ish-so-oolth."

One day some Keeh-hin village children paddled from their home and landed on a nearby shore. Then something happened causing one to cry, and all the others scolding, threatened to call E-ish-so-oolth. The threat had no effect and the child cried on, till one in teasing spirit called loudly, "E-ish-so-oolth! E-ish-so-oolth! Oh come E-ish-so-oolth!"

Then forth from the woods a figure stalked, a tall gaunt form of terrible aspect. She leaned upon a gnarled and knotty stick and scanning the beach with cruel eyes she cried, "Who called me by my name E-ish-so-oolth?"

The children screamed and tried to run away; the chehah laughed one awful fiendish laugh, then caught them one by one with her lean hands. With the sticky gum of Douglas fir, she sealed their little jet black eyes so that they could not see which way led left or right, and threw them in the basket on her back, starting for home along the lonely forest trail.

As I have said, E-ish-so-oolth was tall, and many times bent her head to pass beneath low and spreading branches, and so it happened when stooping under a tree which brushed the basket top, four little hands gripped tightly hold of a kindly branch and held on fast.

When E-ish-so-oolth had gone on further not missing the two children, they clambered down, and partly freed their eyes from the vile pitch, running for home as fast as they could go. To their mothers they told the story, and how their playmates of that very morning, were now perchance within the witch's lodge, and no help to save them from a bloody fate. Then all the mothers of the kidnapped girls chanted the weird and doleful death lament. Four days and nights the dismal song was heard, beyond the blue wood smoke of Indian fires. Weeks of mourning passed, and all but one were comforted, but she sat all alone, and every morning she squatted on the sea grass at the shore, chanting that drear and mournful song.

THE BIRTH OF EUT-LE-TEN

Early one morning as she sat and cried, her tears flowed down and formed a little pool, a very little pool among the grass, the lank sea grass stems on which she crouched. Surprised, she saw a movement in the sand, the pool of tears was being changed into a child, a very little child, so small that when the mother picked up a mussel shell, she could cradle the small form within its pearly curve. Gently she carried it to her dark lodge, and set it in a safe and quiet place. Next day within the shell, there lay a wonder-child, in face and form most beautiful.

The little creature grew so fast that every day his mother went out to find new shells and larger shells in which to cradle him. She called him by the name of Eut-le-ten, and in all the village there was none so fair; in wisdom and in beauty none excelled. The child was observing beyond his years, and felt deepest sorrow at his

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mother's constant weeping. One day he inquired in tender tones, full of love and sympathy. "My Mother, tell me why you cry so much; why unconsolated you chant the death lament?"

Then the mother drawing him to her side told him of the tragedy which had befallen his sister. "The chehah came and carried off my girl, carried away your little sister to the woods, the dark and gloomy woods, and since that day her shadow has not crossed my mournful path," she said.

Then up spake Eut-le-ten and bravely said, "My Mother, I will seek your daughter, my little sister. I will save her from that awful fate you fear. Direct me now upon the lonesome road the dread witch took and I will seek her out."

And the mother knowing him to be a spirit-child, rejoiced and blessed his errand. They next sought out the little ones who saved themselves by clinging to the low branched tree, and from them they learned the trail the old witch took. Then sallied forth brave Eut-le-ten alone, off to give battle to E-ish-so-oolth.

THE QUEST

[Illustration: BRUSHING THE HEMLOCK BOUGHS, HE WALKED STEALTHILY]

Eut-le-ten started with no arms but his courage, to face the dread witch who had spirited away the children. The trail lay long, unknown and untrodden, save by the timber wolf, panther and black bear. It was feared by the Indians for dangers most dreadful—the greatest of all the chehah E-ish-so-oolth. He broke through dense shalal, fringing the green woods, making the shore line all but impenetrable. Into the thick woods, under the silvery spruce, brushing the hemlock boughs he walked stealthily. Salmon berry thickets impeded his progress, scratched his round limbs with the thorns on their canes. He passed white helebore, so tall and so handsome. He saw how the black bear had fed on swamp lily, tramping the glossy leaves into the black mud. He spurned the devil's club with berries so red and with poisonous thorns on stem and on leaf. Such was the trail as it led him far inland, inland away from his home by the sea. At last by a cool stream, the path lay before him. Hard by the stream a lodge was erected, a house of such size the boy stood dumbfounded, and he knew that this must be the dwelling of the children's dread captor.

Night time had come, the shadows had fallen and Eut-le-ten was tired with the long weary trail. Should he proceed or wait until morning? He climbed a tree which grew by the water, and hid in the branches to keep vigil, there to crave strength from the Saghahie spirit, the Hyas Tyee who dwells in the heavens, to grant him the strength, the wisdom, the courage to kill the dread witch. The night was long and the vigil lone, soundless except for the night hawk on wing, or the howl of the wolf in the quest of the red deer, or the splash of the salmon in the stream underneath.

Early next morning, before he descended, he plainly saw the form of the witch, coming to wash in the stream just below him. The water was clear reflecting her visage, fearsome in its hideous detail. Up in the tree brave Eut-le-ten saw her, he thought himself safe from her fierce prying eyes; he forgot that he too was mirrored below in the still water which lay at her feet. When she had finished her morning ablutions, she filled her vessel with water and turned to depart, when she saw just below her, the features of Eut-le-ten in the still water. Upraising her eyes to the branches above her, she saw there the boy half concealed in the foliage, and she smiled with a smile triumphant and cruel, thinking once more her fortune had found her, and brought to her lodge the boy she was wanting.

She greeted him, "Come, why tarriest up there? Come to my lodge, perchance thou art hungry; the fire has been kindled, the water is boiling, a welcome awaits thee, why tarriest longer? Descend from the tree and let me behold thee".

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Down climbed Eut-le-ten nothing affrighted, but filled with the knowledge no harm could befall him.

“Why hast thou come, and whence dost thou go? Why didst thou leave thy home by the sea?” Such were the questions E-ish-so-oolth asked him. Then struck by his fairness and beauty of limb, she questioned him thus, “Why is thy skin so fair, and why are thy limbs so beautiful?”

Then Eut-le-ten answered her, “When I was a boy my Mother laid me upon the bare ground with my head on a stone, my Father placed a large rock on my forehead. Thus I was given the gift of the fair.”

E-ish-so-oolth was envious of Eut-le-ten and much desired to look as young as he, so that with face so comely and so fair, she could entice the children to her lodge, wherefore she asked with evil ill concealed, “Can I by any means obtain this gift?”

Then Eut-le-ten divining her base thought and much desiring to make an end of her, declared that if she would lie down, and on the stone which lay beside the creek recline her head, he would place upon her forehead the stone which would both mould her features like to his, and make her skin as fair. The witch determined to try the charm at once, stretching her great length upon the ground, placed her head upon the stone.

Then Eut-le-ten lifted a great rock and hurled it down upon the witches head. “Die dread E-ish-so-oolth,” he cried. “No more with evil charms wilt thou entice the children to thy lonely forest home.”

So died the witch, and nevermore do mothers say when children misbehave. “Be good or I will call E-ish-so-oolth.”

THE OGRE

E-ish-so-oolth's husband was a mighty man, greater than any Indian on the coast. His limbs were rugged as the wind-swept fir which grows upon the stormy outer shores. His thick and matted hair fell in tangles over his great shoulders, and his sullen eyes looked from out his forehead with angry stare. Cruel as the gaunt and hungry timber wolf, such was the mate of dread E-ish-so-oolth. Beside him, Eut-le-ten had no length of arm or strength of limb with which to fend himself, still less attack this giant of the gloomy forest track, but he possessed weapons more potent than the brutal strength of this vile chehah man. A spirit child he was, a heaven sent boy, whom no evil ever could destroy.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE OGRE

The Ogre was at work cleaving a fallen tree, using wedges formed from the hardest, toughest wood the Indians know. It was the Kla-to-mupt, the western yew. With mighty blows of his stone hammer, he sunk a wedge deep in the log, rending it open, split to the centre of its giant heart.

The thunderous blows were heard by Eut-le-ten, who with fine courage followed up the sound, until he came in view of where the huge man worked with all his might.

Blow upon blow fell upon the wedge, deeper it sank into the log. The split grew wider. The sides of the great rent pressed hard upon the wedge, so hard that if the wedge were hit a glancing blow, it would fly out.

Thus it was, when the Ogre saw the wonder boy approach, and his great frame was filled with rage, because the boy betrayed no fear of him, that his dark face lit up as with a flame.

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[Illustration: THIS IS NOT THE OGRE, BUT A PORTRAIT OF KA-KOOP-ET (MR. BILL) Drawn by J Semeyn from photograph by Joseph Clegg of Port Alberni]

Taking his sledge of stone he struck a blow, as if upon the wedge, but let it drop; deep in the crack it fell far out of reach.

“Come here my boy,” he called, “I crave your help, I have lost my hammer within this mighty tree, I cannot reach it, so, jump in and get it, for I want it back.”

Eut-le-ten climbed upon the log, and dropt within the split as he was bid; the Ogre gave the wedge a sudden jog and out it sprang, and the sides came together like the jaws of some great trap.

“Ha! Ha!” the Ogre cried, “Oh! what a joke! with but a single stroke I have ground him small. E-ish-so-oolth that gentle little fey, will dine on mince-meat.”

The ugly Ogre made his clumsy jest, little knowing of the fate his spouse had met, when suddenly he saw upon the ground before him, an awesome thing, a little pool of water from which there came a quite unearthly sound. Then from the pool, with fear and awe, the Ogre saw brave Eut-le-ten uprising. Nothing could lay low this boy of wondrous parts, who could resolve himself to mother earth, and from the primal pool of tears arise to save the helpless and destroy their foes.

“Most wondrous boy, I feared that when the wedge slipt out you died; instead, my heart is filled with joy to see you live when I had thought you killed. Tell me from whence you draw your mystic power, and I will seek the place this very day. When I have found it out, I will repay you in ways more certain than I can now command.”

Thus spake the ogre, and Eut-le-ten replied, “Tis easy done. This gift is yours as well as mine. Test it but once, and you will see that you have powers as great as I.”

The giant's bulky frame was filled with pride. “You're right,” he swore, “the thing that you can do, by all the Tyee salmon, so can I.”

Once more the wedge was driven to the heart, until again the sides were spread a-gape. In climbed the giant,—he did not think the fit would be so tight.

“Are you all ready?” Eut-le-ten called out.

“Yes!” roared the giant, with a thunderous shout.

“Die then!” cried Eut-le-ten, as he took the hammer up, and struck upon the side the great yew wedge. Out sprung the wedge, the sides snapped together, crushing within the ogre's ponderous frame.

Ignoring his wild shouts they crunched to powder all his giant bones.

The ogre and his mate were thus destroyed, and never more have children been led astray by E-ish-so-oolth's dread and magic craft, to suffer death in ways too sad to tell.

[Illustration: STONE HAMMER USED BY THE INDIANS OF BARKLEY SOUND]

THE RELEASE OF THE CHILDREN

Then to the lodge sped brave Eut-le-ten to that great lodge of giant cedar logs, the home of the dead witch E-ish-so-oolth. The house was dark, for only through the door and the great smoke hole in the roof, did the pale light find its dim way. It was gloomy, and for the full time it takes a man to wake from a deep sleep, Eut-le-ten saw nothing but just the darkness of a moonless night, then slowly as if the day was dawning, objects were seen within the hall. In the centre was a smouldering fire, and in the hot ashes, some heated stones with which to boil the water in the wooden box in which the food was cooked. There beside the wooden box he saw two little forms, prepared by that old witch to satisfy her cruel appetite, and that of her bad chehah man. Then Eut-le-ten was very sad indeed, to think that he had come too late to save the little girls from such an awful fate, and as he looked and moaned within himself believing that his sister lay there dead, he heard a sound which seemed to come from the further end of the dark lodge, and turning round he saw some children imprisoned in a wicker cage. Then he spoke and told them to be brave, that he had come to save them from the witch; but they were frightened at the very sound of his strange voice, and cried aloud with fear. Eut-le-ten whispered softly, and with grease from the great whale he rubbed their eyes free from the pitch with which E-ish-so-oolth had closed them. Afterward he told them that his name was Eut-le-ten, who had killed E-ish-so-oolth, and how he had crushed the ogre within the log.

The frightened children were much comforted and followed Eut-le-ten from out of the lodge away from the dark house of E-ish-so-oolth into the sunlit woods, along the trail which led for many miles to the small bay. Then there was much rejoicing in the homes of all the children saved by Eut-le-ten, and joy unspeakable in his own lodge, when he gently led to his sorrowing mother the little sister, safe from the clutches of E-ish-so-oolth.

Then all the tribe did honor to Eut-le-ten. He was found in the councils of the chiefs, and tribes with homes on distant shores heard the great news—the news of how this wonder boy had killed the ogre and his dreaded wife, E-ish-so-oolth.

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF EUT-LE-TEN

THE ARROW CHAIN TO HEAVEN

Some time passed by, and Eut-le-ten conceived a plan to reach the land above the sky, which he believed, like all the Indian race, to be the roof of this our world, and hiding from our view the Illahie where the great chief—the Sagh-al-lie Tyee, Nas-nas-shup, the chief of all the chiefs abode. Nas-nas-shup had a daughter, far famed for her exceeding beauty, and the tales of her attractions were often related among the younger braves, and Eut-le-ten became enamoured of the thought of winning her, although the stories also told of dangers and death most terrible to him who strove to undergo the tests the old chief set for all who would desire his daughter's love.

Now Eut-le-ten was skillful with the bow, for many times he had brought down the deer as they were bounding through the forest glade, and with his arrow he had often pierced the silver salmon when they jumped from out the rushing waters of his native stream, and he had shot down from off the tallest tree, golden eagles or the great fish hawk.

Eut-le-ten called the men together, for he was highly favoured in his tribe, and counted as a chief because he killed the evil chehah, dread E-ish-so-oolth, and he directed them to make a multitude of arrows, straight and strong, and have them ready by a day he named to them. Forthwith they followed his instructions, and fashioned many arrows, long and straight and strong, and each one tipped with bone or flint, so sharp that it would pierce the thickest hide of the great elk which roamed in bands among the hills and in the open lands.

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[Illustration: "HE SHOT THE ARROW STRAIGHT ABOVE HIS HEAD"]

The arrows were completed in four suns, when Eut-le-ten went out upon the beach taking with him his strongest bow of yew, and shot an arrow straight above his head, high into the vault of heaven, far out of sight. Again he shot, and again, until at last an arrow line was formed from the earth beneath to heaven above, for his first shaft had fixed itself into the roof of this old world of ours, and the second arrow aimed with such great skill, had caught the end of it. The third, the fourth, and each succeeding one had attached itself, until a rope of shafts was made, for Eut-le-ten to climb into the world above—the Illahie, where Nas-nas-shup, the Sagh-al-lie Tyee, the chief of chiefs, and his fair daughter dwelt.

Then Eut-le-ten took leave of all the tribe and climbed the rope of arrows to the sky, beyond the peoples' sight, until at last he reached the portals of the land above.

THE TWO BLIND SQUAWS

First, Eut-le-ten saw two blind and ancient squaws preparing simple food for their repast, and when it was all ready they began to help each other to the food, not hearing Eut-le-ten who quietly watched until impelled by thoughts of mischief or of jest, took the food away from them.

Soon each old squaw accused the other of taking all the food and giving none, and angrily they talked and quarrelled much, each upbraiding the other for a misdeed of which neither was guilty, while Eut-le-ten stood by enjoying their discomfiture. Presently he spoke however, and at the sound of his young voice they stopped their noise, and ceased to wrangle more about the food. Instead they asked him to tell from whence he came, and who he was, and what had brought him there.

"I am a being from the lower world, and I have come to ask from Nas-nas-shup, the love of one, of whose great charms long tales are told among the young men of the world below." Thus Eut-le-ten answered the questions put by the old squaws, and when they heard his words, they were alarmed, and warned him to desist from his bold quest which was full of peril, as many men had found before, for none had yet returned who dared essay to win the daughter of Nas-nas-shup. Eut-le-ten would not be turned away from his resolve by any craven fear of perils or of dire calamity. Had he not killed the witch E-ish-so-oolth, and also her much dreaded chehah man? But before he left to go upon his quest, he asked the aged squaws what he could do to make amends for playing tricks at their expense.

"Oh stranger, give us sight, that we may see," they said, "for we have long been blind."

Eut-le-ten then bored a little hole into each eye of both the ancient squaws, and when they saw the pure white light of day after their long darkness, they were overjoyed, and thanking Eut-le-ten, they told to him the secrets of the house of Nas-nas-shup. They gave him charms to overcome the fire, in which he would be made to stand alone, and last, a stone of wondrous power to break the spikes which were set round the resting place of her he sought to win.

THE FOUR TERRORS GUARDING THE HOUSE OF NAS-NAS-SHUP

Before the house of Nas-nas-shup there was a lake in which there lived great demon frogs, which croaked loud warnings when any dared approach. Inside the outer door a codfish lay, of size enormous, ready to devour the bold intruder who might gain entrance there, and if the stranger safely passed the cod, his body would be entered by two snakes which waiting, sought to kill the fearless one. All these were safely passed by Eut-le-ten, who changed himself, when danger pressed too close, to that small primal pool of tears from which he sprang.

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Within the house he saw chief Nas–nas–shup clothed in his robe of prime sea otter skins. He also saw the spikes which surrounded the sacred place where lay the daughter of the chief.

The spikes were hidden in the ground, just where a stranger would be asked to rest awhile, but Eut–le–ten remembered what the old squaws said to him, and taking the stone charm he broke them down. The chief was astonished to see the power of Eut–le–ten, and forthwith asked of him from whence he came and what his errand was.

Then Eut–le–ten declared himself and said, “I come from that great world beneath the sky where many people live who do not know the land where dwells the Tyee Nas–nas–shup. I come to see the wonders of his lodge, and learn the many secrets hid from man, so that returning to my home below, I may be able so to teach the tribes, that many things of which they do not dream, may be revealed, and made as plain as day. But there is one of whom great tales are told among the young men of the world below, it is of her that I would speak to thee. Thy daughter, chief, I come to ask of thee, to be the mother of my little ones.”

THE TRIAL BY FIRE

[Illustration: THEN EUT–LE–TEN STOOD WITHIN THE FIRE]

Then Nas–nas–shup gathered many sticks of wood and built a fire so blazing hot that none could bear the heat, and turned to Eut–le–ten, “Stand in the fire that I may see if you are brave and strong enough to be worthy of her, my daughter.”

So Eut–le–ten stood within the fire, and with the charms provided him by the old squaws, reduced the heat, and came thereout alive and none the worse.

Now Nas–nas–shup proposed that they should seek some firewood upon the steep hill–side close by. Eut–le–ten consented, and next morning they went to gather firewood. While thus engaged Nas–nas–shup rolled a giant log down the steep hill toward Eut–le–ten, who never moved or sought to escape. The log rolled over him, but once again he turned into the pool of tears and sprang to life when danger passed away. Thereat the chief became convinced that he was more than mortal man, and gave his leave.

Thus Eut–le–ten was wed, and lived sometime within the higher realms, until one day he thought to visit those he left below. Then down the rope of arrow shafts he climbed, until he found himself upon the earth among his people, and to them he told wonderful things of the world above.

ASTRONOMY ACCORDING TO EUT–LE–TEN

The sun and moon emerge from out the house of Nas–nas–shup. The giant codfish guarding the entrance to the house, attempts to catch them passing. He often fails, but there are times when he succeeds, then there is darkness—an eclipse of the sun or moon the white men say, but that is false, it is the cod. The many stars which sparkle in the skies are Indians, who dwell above the earth. Such things and many more were told by him, and Eut–le–ten was counted as a chief more learned than any that had ever been.