

One day at Tahola I sat on a driftwood log with the warmth of the Chinook wind in my face; I listened to the screeching of the gulls, to the boom, suck and draw of the Pacific Ocean as its currents strove for harmony with those of the mouth of the Quinalt River; then it was that my spirit seemed to leave my being, to soar high above the mountainside green, high above the river, to view, the Olympic mountains, the river length, the old burial sight on the opposite bank, the great rocks out in the Ocean. Then I heard a voice speak to my spirit, "I show you my land and my people. I am Sicagwa'ta, the mighty hunter of whale and seal. I am he who "talks to the world." I am he who tells the world what I want. In the old days I sought the help of "the world" for myself in hunting, but now I speak to the world for the help of my people who I love. I speak but am not heard. They have forgotten the old days. The days of simple dignity of soul and living. Those days were in the times of our forefathers when a child was born the parents would "speak to the world" on behalf of the newborn papoose that the world would treat it gently. In good part this plea has always been answered for us as our climate has always been one of heavy warm rains that keep verdant our forests of Douglas fir and hemlock and spruce and keep prolific the salmon runs of Skekeye and Blueback Salmon. To maintain life has never been a great problem for us as the great River of tribal life has always been literally teeming at its mouth with not only salmon, but halibut, cod, flounder, sea bass and sole; with trout plentiful in the Creeks, and close a few miles away at Oyhut and Copalis, there were always a goodly

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supply of smoked fish and dried clams hanging over our fires. Due to this benevolence on the part of Nature, we, as a people have never had to stir ourselves very much in the search for food. Our River has held for us ^{such} a richness of life that that we have not had to use such inventive ability to get along. ~~Still~~ Our River has always been the center of our tribal life. we build our houses facing the River; we ^{spend hours} mending our nets on its banks; with each tide the changing currents in the River are a topic for conversation, for all interested in fishing, and who is not? Our River is our great source of food, for we are first and always salmon eaters, and even today our people are careful as our ancestors were careful, to throw the gut and head of the salmon back into the River that the spirit of the salmon will bring into being a new whole fish.

Then, as now, the great run of spring salmon began in late March or April, and reached its height in May and dwindled on until late June or July. One month before the run began everyone was actively engaged getting posts and boughs for the construction of the weirs, which were the chief means employed in taking the fish. The men worked day and night to get the trap in readiness. Then, during the time that the fish were running the men virtually lived at the weir. The fish were taken to the shore, given to the women, who dressed them and hung them over the continually burning fires in the houses. If an insufficient number of salmon were taken at this time, care would be taken to catch as many Black, Silver, and Dog salmon, as possible, during their run ^{at} during August and September. we used several kinds of nets. As the salmon would fight their way ~~through~~ through the powerful currents, at the Ocean-River

mouth, they were caught in drift nets, by harpoon, in dip nets, that some of my people still use, by extending them from canoes or by running along the rivers edge with the net held by its long fir handle. Other fish such as halibut, flounder, sea bass were taken by a line made of dried and twisted stems of kelp, fastened together, with a hook made of a straight piece of bone with a fork on one end. To catch the great schools of herring that appeared every summer we used a herring roan extended from the canoe.

Every year, between the spring and Fall salmon runs, my family and many other families would leave the river for the summer to dig clans at Oyhut and Copalis. Although this trip was a matter of only a few miles, and in time today, it can be measured by minutes, still for us it was a day's travel and an occasion of importance. Always, there were a great variety of activities open to us, as every family needed a year's supply of bark, grass and roots for the making of baskets and clothing. Every family needed various huckleberries, for the winter diet such as berries gooseberries, salmonberries, and edible roots such as camas, snakehead and fern root, and these we gathered. The older sons and fathers would make trips to the mountains for elk, bear and deer. By obtaining an adequate supply of dried fish, dried meat and berries we could live for three or four months of the winter in comparative idleness; performing such tasks as the weaving of blankets from rabbit skin, or the fur of wooly dogs, or from the skin of ducks, which were cut into strips and woven. It was during the wintertime also, that we carved out our dishes, platters, boxes and spoons from the vine maple, the outer bark of the hemlock and alder. We made the handles for our boxes from slender cedar bough, which we twisted ropelike. .

During our wintertime leisure, fathers often made bows and arrows for themselves and for their young sons. The bows were made of young white cedar, or of yew or vine-maple. The arrows were made of cedar or Kloxasinal with bone points. The quivers in which we kept our arrows were made of a single skin of wolf or wildcat. Often on a winters evening while stories were being told a few men would be whittling paddles for their canoes. We made different types of paddles for the different types of travel, ocean, river or ordinary travel. On these winter evenings around the fire the grandmothers would tell stories to the children using ¹cat's cradle figures. ^{know} how many of our people today of such simple, wholesome ways of entertaining themselves?

In the wintertime we spent a great time in the carving of our canoes from the tall red cedar. Also, we carefully mended our cedar canoes when necessary by drilling a pair of holes along the split and passing and tying cedar lizb withees or root through them. Then we made the seams watertight by smearing pitch over the former break. In the old days we were not a wasteful people, we mended things as they became broken and we took care of the food that nature bestowed on us. "

Nicagwa'ta sighed, " Perhaps I am remembering too much. Things and people, both have changed so. We lived in large, clean houses, as social prestige attended a large house. usually four or six families lived in one house, in a democratic way. each family having its own hearth, for warmth, for cooking for the drying of salmon and meat. out of course the village chief owned the largest house. it was to his ^{house} platform that the other men of the tribe came at daybreak. Always, it was to his house that the villagers would be summoned for advisement or

admonishment. But our chief never commanded us to do anything.

whenever a new house was needed, the whole village turned out to help build it. no one expected to be paid, but of course everyone was fed. we carefully adzed and decorated ^{the central beams and house} posts with pictures of the guardian spirits of the owners of the house, inside the house, a sleeping platform extended around the four sides. a wide shelf was suspended three feet below the eaves of the house where the dried fish and meat were stored. in the front of the house a plank platform with a plank seat was built where the men would gather to discuss local happenings and to sit and watch the earth. This platform was also a daytime work area, although we kept fires burning in