THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA INDIANS*

No. III. [The Euroc]

On the lower Klamath, from Weitspeck down, and along the coast for about twenty miles, live the Eurocs, the largest tribe in northern California. They have no name for their tribe, the designation "Euroc" (down the river) being applied to them by their more inventive neighbors, the Cahrocs, for conveniency. They have names only for separate villages, as Weitspeck, Unuh Mrh, Requa, etc. Living nearer the coast, the Eurocs are several shades darker than the Cahrocs, and their physique is less noble, their foreheads being lower and their chins more protruding. Unlike the Sacramento River Indians, both they and the Cahrocs do not walk pigeon-toed, but plant their feet nearly as broadly as Americans. They have much the same customs as their up-river neighbors, but an entirely different language, though the two tribes very generally learn each other's tongues; and two of them will sit and patter gossip for hours, each using his own speech. A White Man listening may understand the one well, but never a syllable of the other. The Euroc is notable for its gutturalness, and there are words and syllables which contain no perceptible vowel sounds, as mrpr, "nose;" chlec chih, "earth;" wrh yenex, "child," etc. A Welshman told me he had detected in the language the peculiar Welsh sound of "ll," which is quite inexpressible in English. In conversation they terminate many words with a kind of aspiration, which is imperfectly indicated by the letter "h"--a sort of catching of the sound, immediately followed by a letting out of the residue of breath with a quick little grunt. This makes their speech harsh and halting; the voice often comes to a dead stop in the middle of a sentence. The language seems to have had a monosyllabic origin; and, indeed, they pronounce many dissyllables as if they were two monosyllables.

As among the Cahrocs, the Chief has no authority beyond his own village, and even there his functions are principally advisory. Like the Pretor of ancient Rome, he can proclaim do, dico, but he can scarcely add the rest, addico. He can state the law or the custom and the facts, and he can give his opinion, but he can hardly pronounce judgment. The office is not hereditary; the headman, or captain, is generally one of the oldest, and always one of the astutest, men of the village.

Their houses--and the following descriptions will serve also for the Cahrocs--are sometimes constructed on the level earth, but oftener they excavate a round cellar, four or five feet deep and twelve or fifteen feet in diameter. Over this they build a square cabin of split poles or puncheons, planted erect in the ground, and covered with a flattish, two-sided, puncheon roof. They eat in the cellar (it is only a pit, and is not covered except by the roof), squatting in a circle around a fire, but sleep on the bank above, next to the walls of the cabin. For a door they take a puncheon about four feet wide, set it up at one corner of the cabin, and, with infinite scraping of flints and elk-horns, pierce a round hole through it, barely large enough to admit the

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passage of an Indian on all-fours. The cabin, being built entirely of wood, and not thatched, accounts partly for the keen, smooth eyes of the Klamath tribes, compared with the odious, purblind optics often seen in the thatched wigwams farther south. A space in front of the cabin is kept clean-swept, and is frequently paved with cobbles, with a large one placed each side of the door-hole; and on this pavement the squaws sit, spinning no end of tattle while they weave their baskets. Though they have not the American's all-day industry, both these Klamath tribes are job-thrifty, and contrive to have a considerable sum of money by them. For instance, the trading-post at Klamath Bluffs alone sold, in 1871, over $3,000 worth of merchandise, though there were only about six miners among its customers. Here is a significant item: the proprietor said he sold over seven hundred pounds of soap annually to the Eurocs alone. I often peeped into their cabins, and seldom failed to see there wheaten bread, coffee, matches, bacon, and a very considerable wardrobe hanging in the smoky attic. They are more generally dressed in complete civilized suits, and more generally ride on horseback, than any others, except the Mission Indians.

How do they get the money to procure these things? They mine a little, drive pack-trains a good deal, transport goods and passengers on the river, make and sell canoes, whipsaw lumber for the miners, fetch and carry about the mining-camps, go over to Scott Valley and hire themselves out on the farms in the summer, etc. A painter connected with a party of mining surveyors who passed through that region one time sought to employ some of the Euroc squaws as models; but, libidinous and avaricious as they are, he could not prevail on a single one to sit for him for a less sum than $10. These Indians are enterprising: they push out from their native valley. You shall find them in Crescent City, Trinidad, and Arcata, working in the saw-mills, on the Hoopa Reservation, etc., though they always wish to be carried home to the banks of the Klamath to be buried. When we consider that they have learned all these things merely by imitation, it is no little to their credit.

These smoke-blackened hamlets are thick along the Klamath, and reminded me constantly of the villages in the canton of Valais, only the Indian cabins have only one story. On this account, the Euroc dwelling is more like the chalet. And they are every whit as clean, as comfortable, and as substantial as those very sennhutten wherein is manufactured the world-famous Emmenthaller cheese, for I have been inside of both, and know whereof I affirm. And yet, when I saw these swarthy Eurocs creeping on all-fours out of their round door-holes, or sticking their shock-pates up through the hatchway of the sweathouse, just on a level with the earth, I thought of black bears oftener than any thing else.

From willow-twigs or pine-roots they weave large round mats for holding acorn-flour; various-sized, squash-shaped, flattish baskets, water-tight--deep, conical ones, each of about a bushel capacity, to be lugged on their backs; and others, to be used at pleasure as drinking-cups or skull-caps (for the squaws only, as the men wear nothing on their heads), in which latter capacity they fit neatly. They ornament they baskets with some ingenuity, by weaving in black-colored roots in squares, diamonds, or zigzag lines; but they never attempt the curve (which seems to mark

the transition from barbaric to civilized art) or the imitation of any object in Nature. In carrying her baby or a quantity of acorns, the squaw fills the deep, conical basket, and suspends it on her back by a strap which passes loosely around it and athwart her forehead. She leans far forward, and so relieves her neck; but I have seen the braves carry heavy burdens for miles, walking quite erect, though they showed they were not accustomed to the drudgery, by clasping their hands behind their heads to ease their necks of the terrible strain.

As the redwood grows only along the lower Klamath, the Eurocs have a monopoly of making canoes, and they sell many to the Cahrocs. A canoe on the Klamath is not pointed like the Chippewa canoe, but the width at either end is equal to the tree's diameter. On the great bar across the mouth of the river, and all along the coast for eighty miles, there are tens of thousands of mighty redwoods hove up on the strand, having been either floated down by the rivers or grubbed down by the never-resting surf. Hence the Indians are not obliged to fell any trees, and have only to burn them into suitable lengths. In making the canoe, they spread pitch on whatever place they wish to reduce, and when it has burned deep enough, they round them out with wonderful symmetry and elegance, leaving the sides and ends very thin, and as smooth as if they had been sand-papered. At the stern they burn and polish out a neat little bracket, which serves as a seat for the boatman. They spend an infinity of puddering on these canoes, two Indians sometimes working on one five or six months--burning, scraping, polishing with soapstones, etc. When completed, they are sold for various money, ranging from $10 to $30, or even more.

Yet we give here two instances showing the carefulness and foresight of the Eurocs in bread-and-butter concerns. When they are not using these canoes, they turn them bottom-side up on the moist sand and bream them, or haul them up into the dampest and shadiest coves,or, at the least, cover them thickly with leaves and brush-wood, to prevent the thin ends from sun-cracking. When they do become thus cracked, they bore holes through with a deer's-horn, and bind the ends together with withes, twisting the same tight with sticks--a kind of rude tourniquet--which closes up the cracks better than calking would.

The other instance is a device they have for preserving their arrows. To make raccoon's skin, turn it wrong-side out, sew it up, and suspend it by a string passed over the shoulder, while the striped tail gayly flutters in the breeze. In the animal's head they stuff a quantity of grass or moss, as a cushion for the arrow-heads to rest in, which prevents them from being broken. The one captial charge usually leveled against savages is that they are shiftless, but these things are not shiftless.

In catching salmon they employ principal ly nets, woven of fine roots or grass, which are stretched across eddies in the Klamath--always with the mouth downstream. (18) Where there is not a natural eddy, they sometimes create one by throwing out a rude wing-dam. They select eddies, because it is there the salmon congregate to rest themselves. At the head of the eddy they erect fishing-booths over the water, by planting slender poles in the bottom of the river, and lashing others over them, in a light and artistic

framework, with a floor a few feet above the water, and regular rafters overhead, on which brushwood is placed for a screen against the sun and moon. In one of these really picturesque booths an Indian sleeps at night, with a string leading up from the net to his fingers: so that when a salmon begins to flounce in it he is awakened. Sometimes the string is attached to an ingenious rattle-trap of sticks or bones (or a bell, nowadays), which will chink or clatter, and answer the same purpose. They also spear salmon from these booths with a fish-gig, furnished with movable barbs, which, after entering the fish, spread open and prevent the withdrawal of the instrument. Another mode they sometimes employ, is, to stand on a large bowlder in the main current, where the salmon and the little skeggers shoot in to rest in the eddy when ascending the stream, whereupon they scoop them up in dip-nets. Again, they construct a weir of willow-stakes nearly across the stream at the shallows, leaving only a narrow chute, wherein is set a funnel-shaped trap of splints, with a funnel-shaped entrance at the large end. The salmon easily shoots into this, but can not return. By all these methods they capture an enormous quantity of fish: William McGarvey says he has often seen a ton of dried salmon hanging in the smoky attic of a cabin.

There are two runs of salmon in the Klamath: one in the spring and one in the autumn, of which the former is the better, the fish being then smaller and sweeter. The Whites along the river compel the Indians to open their weirs a certain number of days a week, during the spring run, that they may participate in the catch.

It is easy to see that these fish-dams, if made impassable, may breed contention between the villages along the river, for if a village adopt a greedy policy, their neighbors above will descend in wrath, and there will be a bloody riot, unless the dam is opened. I have often thought that the numerous village feuds, and the extremely democratic and centrifugal tendencies of the Eurocs, may be largely accounted for by this system of fishing and the consequent bickering. The Cahrocs depend principally upon hunting, and in that there is room for all and small chance of collision: hence, there is a moderate amount of solidarity in the tribe, while the Eurocs are so little homogeneous, that, as we have seen, they have no one name for themselves.

On lagoons and shallow reaches of the river they have a way of trapping wild ducks, which is ingenious. They sprinkle huckleberries or salal-berries on the bottom, then stretch a coarse net a few inches under the surface of the water. Seeing the tempting decoy, the ducks dive for it, thrust their heads through the meshes of the net, and the feathers prevent their return. Thus they are drowned, and remain quiet, with their tails elevated: so that others are not frightened, and an abundant catch sometimes rewards the trapper.

Along the coast they engage largely in smelt-fishing. The fisherman takes two long, slender poles, which he frames together with a cross-piece in the shape of the letter A, and across this he stretches a net with small meshes, bagging down considerably. This net he connects by a throat with a long bag-net floating in the water behind him, and then, provided with a strong staff, he wades out up to his middle. When an unusually heavy billow surges in,he plants his staff firmly on the bottom, ducks his

head forward, and allows it to boom over him. After each wave, he dips with his net and hoists it up, whereupon the smelts slide down to the point and through the throat into the bag-net. When the latter contains a bushel or so, he goes ashore and empties it into his squaw's hamper. About sunset appears to be the most favorable time for smelt-fishing; and at this time the great bar across the mouth of the Klamath presents a lively and interesting spectacle. Sometimes many scores of swarthy heads may be seen bobbing in the surf, like so many sea-lions. The squaws hurry to and fro across the bar, bowing themselves under their great conical hampers, carrying the smelts back to the canoes in the river, while the papooses caper around stark-naked, whoop, throw up their heels, and playfully insinuate pebbles into each other's ears. After the great copper globe of the sun burns into the ocean, bivouac-fires spring up along the sand, among the enormous redwood drift-logs, and families hover around them to roast the evening repast. The squaws bustle about the fires, while the weary smelt-fishermen, in their nude and savage strength, are grouped together, squatting or leaning about, with their smooth, dark, clean-molded limbs in statuesque attitudes of repose. Dozens of canoes, laden with bushels of the little silver-fishes, shove off and move silently away up the darkling river. The village of Requa, perched on the shoulder of the bluff, amid the lush, cool ferns, swashing in the soft sea-breeze, tinkles with the happy cackle of brown babies, tumbling on their heads with the puppies; and the fires within the cabins gleam through the round door-holes like so many full-orbed moons heaving out of the breast of the mountain.

Smelt being small, the squaws dry them whole, by laying them awhile on wooden kilns, with interstices to allow the smoke to rise up freely, and then finishing the process in the sun. They eat them uncooked, with sauce of salal-berries, new-plucked. They are not to say lickerish, from a civilized point of view, but undoubtedly wholesome. Let an Indian be journeying anywhither, and you shall always find in his baskets some bars of this silver bullion, or flakes of rich, orange-colored salmon.

As might be surmised, from their respective circumstances, the Cahrocs are respectable Nimrods, while the Eurocs are chicken-hearted in the wood, but deft and daring on the wave. They pretend that when they go into the forest, devils shaped like bears shoot arrows at them, which travel straight until they are about to impinge on them, when they suddenly swerve aside. Of their cowardice in this regard I had ocular demonstration, when clambering with three Euroc guides around coast headlands; when, to my surprise, I climbed where they dared not follow. They stood looking and calling at me, with much genuine concern; but when the loose stones under me commenced crumbling and rolling down, they rushed "from under," like frightened sheep. On the other hand, I could not but admire the dash and coolness of Salmon Billy, whom a bold soldier-boy and myself employed to take us down the river in his canoe. When we were thumping down the rapids, where the water curled its green lips around the canoe as if it would swallow it bodily, until it was nearly a third full of water, Billy stood up in the stern, with his long linen coattails flowing behind him, and his eyes glinted with savage joy, while he bowsed away hearty, first on this side, then on that, until we shot down at race-horse speed. He got a trifle nervous at times, which we could always tell by his commencing to whistle under his breath; and in the roughest rapids he would get to whistling very fast; but his stroke was never steadier than then. In a pinch like

this, he would bawl out to us to trim the canoe, or to sit still, with an imperiousness that amused me greatly.

I must also relate a little incident, showing the exceeding cunning of this same Salmon Billy. One day I was toiling down the trail along the Klamath, in an execrable drizzle of rain, which, together with the maze of cattle-trails, obscured the path and led me on many a wild-goose chase. At every village the Indians would swarm out, and offer me their canoes, at an extortionate price; but it was only three or four miles to the Klamath Bluffs trading-post, and I determined to push on, since their canoes afforded no protection against the shower. I soon discovered that, whenever I left a village, an Indian would dash down the bank, leap into his canoe, shoot swiftly down the river, and put the next one below on the alert, lest I should pass them unperceived. So it continued for some time; and each village--they were often less than a quarter of a mile apart--lowered the price a little, though still charging about three times too much. At last, I came to fresh tracks, which had evidently been made by American boots, and I followed them joyfully; but they soon led me into a thick jungle, dripping with rain, where I speedily lost the way, and got saturated from head to foot. In a perfect desperation, I floundered out somehow and got down on the river-bank, determined to employ the first passing canoe, at whatever cost. In a few minutes, who, of all men in the world, should come paddling tranquilly around the bend but Salmon Billy!

It is necessary here to go back and mention that Billy had taken note of me in his village, and, instead of going down to warn his neighbors, had studied his own advantage, shot down ahead, bowled his canoe ashore, made the tracks on purpose to decoy me into the jungle, then regained his canoe by a roundabout way, and dashed out of my sight. From his covert he saw me come down on the bank, quite beat out and in a most bedraggled condition; so presently he hove in sight, paddling leisurely around the bend, with the most unconscious and casual air in the world. In a moment a suspicion of foul play flashed upon me, but there was no other way for it. So I gave a shout at him, but he looked the other way. I whooped at him again, with a certain elevation of voice. He narrowly scrutinized a woodpecker flying overhead, then fastened his gaze earnestly upon a frog singing on a bowlder ashore. He couldn't hear me, the rascal! until I bawled at him three times. I paid him his price without a word. The next day he took me down to the mouth of the river, and when I spoke to him about the tracks Billy's face remained as calm as a cucumber, but he suddenly forgot all his stock of English, and could understand never a word more.

Filthy though they are, the Eurocs do not neglect the morning bath. On the Coast, I have seen the smooth-skinned, pudgy, shock-pated braves, on a leaden, foggy morning, crawl on all-fours out of their wretched huts, which were cobbled up of drift-wood, take off the narrow breech-cloths which were their only coverings, and dip up the chilly brine over them with their double-hands, letting it trickle all down their swarthy bodies in a manner that made me shiver. The young squaws, notwithstanding their almost total lack of virtue, are quite modest in sea-bathing--fully as modest as the female bathers at Brighton. They are also sufficiently modest elsewhere in outward deportment.

As among the Cahrocs, marriage is illegal unless preceded by the payment of money; but when a young Indian becomes enamored of a maiden, and can not wait to collect the amount of shells demanded by her father, he is sometimes allowed to pay half the amount, and become what is termed "half-married." Instead of bringing her (19) to his cabin and making her his slave, he goes to live in her cabin and becomes her slave.

Divorce is very easily accomplished, at the will of the husband, the only indispensable formality being that he must receive back from his father-in-law the money which he paid for his spouse. For this reason, since the advent of the Americans, the honorable estate of matrimony has fallen sadly into desuetude among the young braves, because they seldom have shell-money nowadays, and the old Indians prefer that in exchange for their daughters. Besides that, if one paid American money for his wife, his father-in-law would squander it (the old generation dislike the White Man's money, but hoard up shell-money like true misers) and thus, in case of divorce, he could not recover his gold and silver.

The Eurocs are rather a more lively and less austere race than the Cahrocs, and observe more dances. They celebrate the birth of a child with a dance. There is a dance calley oomay likee, in which both sexes participate; but it is not a proper subject of description, being worse than the can-can. Then there is the vernal Salmon Dance, which is something different from the formal and solemn ceremonial of the Cahrocs. We can well imagine with what great joy the villagers engage in this, when--after a dreary and desolate winter of rain, during which the wolf has been hardly kept away from their doors, and the housefather has gone down many and many a time to peer into the Klamath, if perchance he might see the black-backed, finny rovers shooting through the water, but in vain, and has then turned on his heel and cursed with bitter cursing the White Man (the waugeh), who muddies the water so he can no longer see to spear his necessary meat--when, at last, as the ferns are greening on the mountain-side and the birds of spring are singing, the joyful cry resounds through the village, "Maypoot, maypoot!" (The salmon, the salmon!) They are coming at last! Then, hand joined in hand, they caper in a circle around the fire, or, separated in couples, a brave and a squaw together, they cut such antics as would make the monkeys envious.

Like the Cahrocs, they believe old squaws can, by witchcraft, prevent the salmon from ascending the river, and in former times they not unfrequently slew with butcherly murder the unfortunate hag so suspected. Let those who remember the horrors of the Salem persecutions cast the condemnatory stone, if they will. To the Euroc, salmon is all-in-all. They even has a pole erected at the mouth of the Klamath to show them the way in--a tall pole on the sandbar-ornamented with a smallish and rather pretty cross, with two streamers fluttering from it.

The one solitary attempt at ornamental wood-carving that I have seen in California was among the Eurocs, and was evidently connected in some manner with the salmon-fishery. It was a figure something like one of the ancient Roman termini--a satyr's or devil's bust, but fashioned in profile from a puncheon about three inches

(20) thick. It was extremely rude, the nose and chin being sharp-pointed, and the head falttish; the arms rigidly straight, and extending down at a little distance from the body; and on the rump a curving, diabolical tail about three feet long. It was arrayed in a United States regulation coat, with the arms loosely thrust into the sleeves, the body stuffed with grass, and the tail sticking out between the flaps. Perched on a short pole, on a lofty, fern-grown hill at the mouth of the Klamath, it stood looking out over the ocean with a comically lugubrious expression. No Indian would explain its purport, but it was evidently made with some such intent as that above indicated--a kind of shabby St. Anthony preaching a silent sermon to the fishes.

They trim up trees for sweat-house fuel in the same curious way as the Cahrocs; and I have seen hundreds of trees thus docked, to represent a man's head and outstretched arms. The Eurocs say they are intended merely as guides to the squaws, to direct them to the villages when they have been out in the mountains. But this is only one of those pretenses, those mystifications, which they are so fond of making, and they have a deeper significance.

They also have a curious custom of dropping twigs and boughs at the junctions of trails, which sometimes accumulate in heaps several feet high, like wood-rats'
(21) nests. Every Indian who passes deposits a twig on the pile, but without observing any method that a White Man can discover. No one will explain this custom, either, but they laugh the matter off when broached, though they probably observe it, like so many other things, merely "for luck."

In saluting each other, the Eurocs say aiyuquoi (friendship), without any further ceremony. With slight variations, this expression prevails among several tribes of north-western California, who speak entirely different languages.

They bury the dead in a recumbent posture, and observe about the same usages of mourning as the Cahrocs. After a death, they keep a fire burning certain nights in the vicinity of the grave. They hold and believe--at last, the "Big Indians" do--that the spirits of the departed are compelled to cross an extremely attenuated greased pole, which bridges over the chasm of the "Debatable Land," and that they require the fire to light them on their darksome journey. A righteous soul traverses the pole quicker than a wicked one: hence they regulate the number of nights for burning a light according to the character for goodness or the opposite which the deceased possessed in this world. If this greased pole were perpendicular, like the mat de cocagne in the frolics of the Champs Elysees, I should account this an Indian parallel to the Teutonic myth of Jack and the Bean-stalk. But they appear to think it is horizontal, leading over, bridgewise, to the Happy Western Land beyond the ocean, which gives it more resemblance to the Mohammedan fable of Al Sirat.

They fully believe in the transmigration of souls: that they return to earth as birds, squirrels, rabbits, or other feeble animals, liable to be harried and devoured. It is more especially the wicked who are subject to this misfortune, as a punishment.

A word as to the size of the Euroc tribe. Henry Ormond, chief clerk of the Hoopa Reservation, told me that, in 1870, he descended the lower Klamath, from Weitspeck down, in a canoe --forty miles-- and carefully enumerated all the Indians living along its banks. He found the number to be 2,700, which would be at the rate of $67\frac{1}{2}$ inhabitants to the square mile, along the river. This does not include the Eurocs living immediately along the coast, nor those scattered in Arcata, Trinidad, the reservation, etc. It must be borne in mind that there are no wild oats growing along the Klamath, and few acorns; and that the Eurocs are timid and infrequent hunters. Furthermore, before the Whites had come among them--bringing their corruptions and their maladies--the Indians were probably twice as numerous as now, or at the rate of 135 to the riparian square mile. Probably there are 2,000 miles of streams in California, which, before the miners muddied the waters, were capable of yielding salmon in nearly equal abundance with the Klamath, and which, with the addition of the wild oats and acorns on their banks, would have maintained a population as dense as that above mentioned. At this rate, there would have been 270,000 living on the salmon-streams (22) alone, to say nothing of the great multitudes who dwelt on the interior plains, around the lakes, in the beautiful and fertile coast valleys, and along the ocean-coast. As to the enormous numbers of salmon which ascended these rivers, before the miners roiled the current, there can be no doubt. Here, one veteran pioneer says, he has seen many an Indian wigwam containing a ton of dried salmon; another, that he could have walked across the stream and stepped every step on a dead salmon; another, that he has seen them so crowded in the deep and quiet reaches of the river that he could not thrust down a spear without transfixing one or more. From what I have seen myself on the upper Sacramento, three hundred miles from the Pacific, I can believe them all. Hence, the computation above ventured does not seem to be exaggerated.

A EUROC'S REVENGE.

A certain Euroc went down to the sea-coast with his family, and in one of his hunting excursions he quarreled with a man of this tribe, and shot him unto death. The brother of the murdered man, in accordance with the custom of the tribe, demanded a ransom, or blood-money. He asked $60; but he finally offered to compromise the matter upon the receipt of $10 in hand paid. The slayer refused to pay him any thing whatever; and after a fierce wrangle, he gathered his family about him and returned to his home near Klamath Bluffs, saying nothing to any one about the circumstance.

Soon afterward, the owner of the Klamath Bluffs trading-post observed a strange Indian prowling about the vicinity in a manner that excited his curiosity. He was always alone, and was always fetching quick, stealthy glances around him; and was never separated one moment from his bow and quiver; and was never visible during daylight hours, coming to the post only after night-fall. The Indians always dawdle around a frontier store in large numbers by day; but soon after the eveing dusk comes on, they all disappear in their cabins; and it was only when they were all away that this strange Indian would enter, cautiously, and glancing quickly around, to see that no other Indian was present. Then he would go up to the counter, set down his bow within easy clutching distance, and purchase the smallest quantity of crackers the

trader would sell, and occasionally, also, as much more of tobacco, matches, or some other trifling article. After a few half-whispered words, he would slink quietly out, and be seen no more until the following evening. He never missed an evening, but always made his appearance in the same manner, went through the same maneuvres, and always bought a half-pound of crackers--never over a pound.

The merchant grew uneasy; but he had learned by bitter experience the folly of meddling in Indian feuds, and he said nothing--only watched. Month after month passed away, and still this inscrutable Indian continued to come every evening, slipped softly into the store, carefully closed the door behind him, made his little purchases, and then went away. He grew gaunt and haggard, and on his drawn cheeks he could now hardly force a smile as he greeted the trader; but not one word did he breathe of his secret purpose.

He was the avenger of his murdered brother, waiting and watching for the life which he had sworn by his god to offer to the horrid Oomah. Night after night he was lying beside a certain brook, where he awaited the slayer. Week after week, month after month, passed on , until five moons had waxed and waned; the shrilling rains, and the frosts, and the snows of winter came and went, and beat upon his shriveled body; the moaning winds shook his unshortened locks, and whistled through his rotting blanket; the great fern-slopes of the mountains faded from green to golden, to wine-color, to russet, to tawny, buried their ugliness under the winding-sheet of the snow, then lived again in the tender green of spring--and still his wasting eyes glared out through the thicket, and still the victim came not.

But, at last, one morning in the soft, early spring, at daybreak, he beholds him for whom he is waiting. He comes down a winding pathway, and descends into the brook to bathe. He lays off his girdle on a ferny bank. He stands erect and supple, stretches up his smooth, brown arms above his head, and all his body quivers with the delight of a fresh, morning air-bath. Sitting in his blanket, the avenger of blood peers through his leafy screen. A moment ago he was shivering with cold; but all his tremor is suddenly stilled. His stiffened fingers grow suddenly lithe, as they grip the arrow. In his eyes, late so faded and rayless, is now the glitter of ferocious hate. Without moving his eyes a moment from the foe, he softly couches the arrow. All the strength wasted through months is now in his arms again. There is no wavering in his aim. The sweet hope of revenge has steadied it to deadly certainty. Twangs the bow and slips the arrow, smooth and swift, through the limber air. The blood-guilty one is smitten low. He lies still beside the brook. The long vigil is ended; and savage justice has its rounded dues.