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ABUKS TLALUMKWAKS.

Chief Jossea related the following at the January Social Meeting of the Epworth League at Kitamaat. Translated by the Rev. G. H. Raley.

"In the Fall of the year a long, long time ago, after the flood (not before), the husband of Abuks Tlalumkwaks was lost, most probably by the capsizing of his canoe in the Kitamaat arm of the sea. His widow felt such grief that she decided not to return at the close of the salmon run, with her people, to the winter village for the festivities of the season. Her brother aided her in building a house on the banks of the Klough River, then left her with her two children to spend her allotted time of mourning in solitude.

The tribe thought she would die from cold or lack of food; however, she found a number of dead salmon in the river, these she smoked, and before the snow fell she had gathered a large quantity of sticks for the fire which was kept burning day and night.

One bitterly cold night shortly after the New Year, Abuks Tlalumkwaks heard a wolf howl at a distance from the house. It came nearer and nearer and she was afraid; the howling turned into a loud cry of pain,—

ah, ah, ah, ahoo, ahoo, ahoo!!!
said the wolf, then it grew fainter as the wolf had retreated into the forest. In the early morning she looked out and saw the wolf had made a zigzag track, as if crazy.

The following night as she was putting her children to bed, she heard the wolf again not an angry howl, but rather the noise was similar to that of a dog when it is about to die happily. She covered her children with new cedar bark mats, that the wolf would not scent them. By this time the wolf was pawing and scratching at the door, she unfastened it and left it slightly open then sat down on the floor and poked up the fire, anxiously awaiting the result.

The great gaunt hungry wolf came in and she was afraid of him, thinking he wanted to eat her, she said:—

"Nohloch, Nohloch,* what is it you want?" The wolf did not answer, but by the light from the blazing logs, she saw he kept his head on one side, and his jaw was swollen double its usual size.

"Come here," she said, and as the wolf approached her, she felt sick hearted seeing he was suffering intense pain. He placed his head on her knee, she opened his mouth and saw at once the cause of his misery; firmly lodged between his teeth was a piece of bone broken out of the thigh of the mountain goat upon which he had doubtless some days before dined. Taking up a piece of stick she sharpened one end, and with it pried out the bone.

At once the wolf found relief.
"Now," she said, "pity men, pity me, you see my food is short, my salmon is nearly finished, and the winter is not ended." The wolf said nothing, believing that "actions speak louder than words."

He went out to a mound of earth some distance from the house, and lifted up his voice calling all his tribe to council. Wolves came from all quarters. Their

chief told of his ailment, and of the kind, skillful treatment he had received at the hands of Abuks Tlalumkwaks.

"I want to shew her," he said, "that one good turn deserves another. Go quickly and before dawn have at her house all kinds of food."

His tribesmen being thus dispatched, obeyed without question, making the valley ring as they went to hunt. They were successful in the chase, and returned bearing grizzly and black bear, cariboo, venison, also such delicacies as porcupine and beaver. These they piled against the front of her house, and in the morning her surprise and joy was great.

She took a pointed stick and toasted some bear meat before the fire, and handed it to the children. The elder would not eat believing it to be poisoned, the younger ate and did not die so his brother also took some, and after the family had feasted on the fresh meat as long as they could, the remainder which filled up the house, was cut and dried for future use. They lived well throughout the rest of the winter.

In the spring as soon as the ice left the river, the wife of the brother of Abuks Tlalumkwaks said to him, "you had better take your canoe and go and find out what has befallen that woman and her family at Klough; bring home their bones. So he went, and as they poled up the river saw smoke in the distance. He said to his companion "they cannot be dead for I see smoke." Arriving at the door, Abuks Tlalumkwaks saw him, and said "Is that you my brother?"

"Yes," he replied, "I thought you were dead."

"I should have been had it not been for a wolf, he and his friends brought me all this food," she said.

She prepared food for the hungry men, cooking meat in a box with hot stones.

After the meal they went to sleep. Before starting back to Kitamaat the following morning, they found their canoe loaded to the gunwale with all kinds of meat.

Abuks Tlalumkwaks determined she would never let an opportunity pass of relieving suffering, convinced in her belief that "a good act always has its reward."

*Kohloch is an expression used by the Kitamaats when addressing whatever is an object of fear.

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