



BODY OF CHIEF "SHAKES" LYING IN STATE, PREPARATORY TO CREMATION.

that the spirits have left him, the Shamán makes that statement for him. The hair is generally worn long by the Alaskan women; always short by the men, except the Shamáns, who never cut or comb the hair, nor are the matted locks benefited any by the habit of powdering and greasing for occasions of ceremony. The hair is kept tied up, except when the Shamán is exercising his peculiar functions. Then it is shaken out in long, snaky ropes, which dance over the shoulders. Some take these ropes of hair and stick them all over with flat scales of pitch, increasing thereby the Medusa-like appearance of the head. I made for myself a fair reputation for sorcery while in Coon-nah-nah-thklé's camp by a judicious use of my repeating-rifle and revolver. The chief and I shot at a mark, and I am afraid he was the better shot. He gave me a little amulet (whale totem), which he said would bring me good luck if I would hang it on my rifle. Then he took the weapon and passed his hands over it, and blew on it, which he said would prevent its ever hurting him.

The spirits of the Thlinkit mythology are classified as Ki-yékh, spirits of the air; Tah-ki-yékh, spirits of the earth; Te-ki-yékh, spirits of the water; and Yékh, subordinate or minor spirits. The spirits of those killed in war become Ki-yékh, and the aurora is the flashing of their lights when they are dancing their

war dances. Hence, an auroral display is a sign of war. The chief deity of the Thlinkits, the Bramah, the Creator, is Yehl. One would suppose that he would be the deity of the Tinneh, or interior Indians. Yet among the Thlinkits the raven is held peculiarly sacred for his sake, and the early writers (Veniaminoff and Wrangell) declare the raven to be a foul and ill-omened bird among the Tinneh. Yehl is symbolized in the raven for the reason that one of his chief exploits, the bringing of fresh water to the Thlinkits, was done under the guise of a raven. The sum of Thlinkit philosophy is, "Live as Yehl lived." Their great totem is Yehl's totem or the raven totem, the raven being the symbol. Another scarcely inferior totem is the Kanúkh (wolf), the wolf being the symbol. The third (and, so far as I know, the last) totem is Tset'kh (the whale). Who Tset'kh was before he was a whale and what he did I could not learn.

Their totemic system is the most curious one that ever came to my notice. The totemic relationship is stronger than that of blood. The child follows the totem of the mother, and in family quarrels the opponents must array themselves with their totems; hence, half-brothers are often called on to fight each other. I used to be surprised at having my vagabonds tell me perfect strangers were their "brothers" or "sisters," until I found it meant brother or sister