

ROTTEN-FEATHERS

[The continuation of this story from page 100, line 6, was told by Chief Mountain, as follows:]

Twice she tried to cut it, then the feather snapped and the boys all fell down. The eldest one kept the feather and received the name Rotten-feathers. At the same time when the boys fell down a great many bones fell down from heaven. Rotten-feathers moved the feather over them four times and the bones became again living people.

Then the brothers went to Skeena river. Little-grindstone ate of the berries that were growing there and was transformed into a mountain that may be seen to this day. The brothers traveled on and reached a mountain which they were unable to pass. Rotten-feathers moved his feather over it and the mountain melted down. The molten rock may still be seen.

Finally they came to a canyon. They saw a town on the other side of the river and a bridge leading across to it. Here they met a woman named Great-goose (Wi-ksem-ha'x), who warned them. She said, "You can not cross this bridge. If you try to do so, it will break and you will be drowned. On the other side lives Chieftainess Knife-hand (Haq'ólem-an'ón), who has a beautiful daughter. She cuts off with her hands the heads of all her daughter's suitors." Rotten-feathers thought he could overcome her by means of his magic feather. He crossed the bridge in safety and entered the house. The old woman laughed when she saw him, and immediately asked her daughter to spread the bed. At night he lay down with the young woman. He had his hair tied in a bunch on top of his head and in it he had hidden his feather. As soon as the young woman was fast asleep he arranged his own hair like that of a woman and tied the young woman's hair in a topknot. Then he pretended to be asleep. Soon the old woman came. She felt of the heads of the sleepers. She believed her daughter to be the stranger and cut off her head. Then Rotten-feathers tied up his hair again and put the feather on top. He took the labret of the dead woman. Therefore he received the name Labret. The feather carried him back across the river. Great-goose greeted him, saying, "My son, did you come back safely?" He told her what had happened. On the following morning Knife-hand came across the river wailing, "My child! my child! Sister Great-goose, how did it happen that your child became a great supernatural being?" Great-goose replied, "The heavens were clear when my child was born, therefore she has become a great supernatural being, sister." Then Knife-hand said, "O, yes, sister Great-goose." ("Iḡō'uḡuē, Iḡō'uḡuē, ḡaxḡō'dēsḡat Iḡō'uḡun, ḡ'ik" Wi-ksem-ha'x, qan wi-nexnō'qt."—"Lda wi-lā'nt. lax-ha' desḡa't Iḡō'uḡuē, nel qan wi-nexnō'qt, ḡ'ik".—"Hā, net, ḡ'ik" Wi-ksem-ha'x.")