

repeating, and afterwards in writing down in almost the same terms what has been told me. This method has also the advantage of preventing the narrative from being cut up in those short, half-line sentences common to the stories transcribed on dictation, and which some may wrongly believe to be the normal condition of Indian phraseology.

The English translations of the following legends have been made in as simple a style and as literal as was possible consistently with intelligibility and clearness of expression. Hence the quaintness of some passages.

I.—PURSUED BY THEIR MOTHER'S HEAD.

Told by Lizette Elmök, of Stella (West End of Lake Fraser).

A man was living with¹ a woman. He always slept away from her whenever he was preparing his traps², and he observed faithfully all the ancient prescriptions. Yet he could catch no game. Animals wanted him not³; they all avoided his traps. Each time that he returned home from a visit to his traps he found his wife with her face painted and her hair carefully combed.

One day that he had left as usual, he spied her from afar, and noticed her painting her face and carefully combing her hair. Then she set out for a tree, dried up yet standing⁴. Once she had reached its base, she seized a stick and therewith struck the tree several blows. Presently two big serpents crept down from the top of the tree and knew her⁵.

Now that he knew why game avoided his traps, her husband returned home unseen by her, and there arrived, he spoke not a word. But shortly after, he took a big knife, concealed it in his bosom⁶ and made for the dried-up tree. Then he did as he had seen his wife do, struck the tree with a stick and when the two big serpents had come down creeping on him, he cut their heads off with his dagger. He next set their mouths and eyes a-yawning by means of splinters and carried them home.

¹ *Ys-ri-ska*, lit. "was sitting near". Is used to designate the matrimonial union.

² See "Notes on the Western Dénés," Trans. Can. Inst., Vol. IV., p. 108.

³ Carrier idiom. The natives always speak of caught game as if a sort of sympathy existed between it and themselves.

⁴ The Carrier word *kon-yak* means all that.

⁵ In the biblical sense of the word.

⁶ The dress of the primitive Carriers being devoid of pockets, any object carried about the person was either suspended from the neck or from the belt, or, if concealment was desired, stored in the folds of the tunic.