

offence by some unbecoming act. When this god was angry with them they endeavored to propitiate him by throwing some portion of their food, principally salmon, into the sea for the purpose of gaining the influence of the god of the sea whom they believed was more powerful than the god of the sun, and could counteract the latter's influence over them. When the Haidas camped near a beach, before they began to erect their tents or cook their food, they would invariably take some dry halibut and berries and cast it into the fire to propitiate the god of the earth and to secure his protection from danger during the night. The god of the earth did not require this food for himself, but carried it to the friends of those encamped who had died within the past year. They were not to manifest a penurious spirit in this rite, else they would all die within the next twelve months. The god of the clouds was another deity, which inspired the ancient Haidas with dread and awe. On days when the atmosphere was heavy and the clouds were hanging low down, the Indians thought the cloud god was out searching for a meal, and any one caught out on such a day was bound to die within a short time to furnish a dish for this cruel and cannibal-like god. This god had a novel way of securing his victims. When he got near enough to a man, he seized his spirit and carried it on high, and in a short while the body had to go in search of his spirit and so fell into the power of the god.

The Haidas did not fear the two great gods so much as they did the minor ones, for they believed the former were too great and dignified to care for them while on earth, but were busy preparing habitations for them to live in after passing from this earth. The two supreme gods were worshipped, but not feared, and none of the old Indians now living can give a definite answer respecting the powers ascribed to them. If they wished relief from trouble they would evoke the aid of the god of light; and if they wished to bring an eternal curse on their enemies, they would pray and offer sacrifices of fish to the god of darkness. Their supplications were addressed to the chief gods through the god of the sun or the god of

the earth, but their sacrifices were almost always made to the minor deities in order to secure their good offices as mediators. Ordinarily most of their religious rites and ceremonies had reference only to the earth and sea gods.

Here is an idea of what a heathen Indian thinks of the future state of life in the happy hunting grounds: When a Haida was about to die he saw a canoe full of his bye-gone friends coming with the tide to bid him welcome to the spirit land. They were supposed to have been sent by the god of death, and the dying man rejoiced to know that after a period passed in the city of death (purgatory) he would with his friends be permitted to enter the happy hunting grounds. His visionary friends called to him and bade him come into the land of great and wonderful things, into the land of plenty, rest and peace. "The birds of our country," they cried, "will bring you delicious berries, the dogs of our city will furnish you with bear skins, your house will be made of beautiful cedar, gloriously adorned with inset shells. You will be a great chief attended by many slaves, and the hair seals will provide you with all the kinds of fish there are in the sea. Come now, for the tide is at ebb and we must depart." As the messengers float back on the ebbing tide, the spirit of the called one takes its flight, and in due course the body is buried with much show and ceremony. The soul had to remain in the city of the dead for a year to undergo a process of purification previous to its admittance to the happy hunting grounds. At the end of that period, the soul assumed the form of its earthly body and passed into its eternal abode, capable of all the pleasures and functions of the human body, but in an infinitely higher and finer degree.

When a bad Indian died his soul was supposed to meet a pretty sad fate. (1) His soul was tortured in the region of the clouds and had to witness the cloud god feasting on its dead body. (2) The soul was so near the earth, that it had a consuming desire to return among friends. (3) It even had a dread of being conducted to the infernal regions. Sometimes permission was granted to souls to return from the clouds and revisit the earth. On such