

the deity, into its present shape. At last I found that the use of masks is closely connected with two institutions of these tribes, — with their clans or gentes, and with their secret societies. The latter class of masks is confined to the *Kwakiutl*, *Nutka*, and *Tsimshian*, and I believe that they originated with the firstnamed people. The meaning of each mask is not known outside the gens or society to which it belongs.

This fact makes the study one of great difficulty. It is only by chance that a specimen belonging to one of our collections can be identified, as only in rare exceptions the place where it was purchased is clearly stated. The majority of specimens are purchased in Victoria, where they are collected by traders, who, of course, keep no record of their origin.

Besides this, the Indians are in the habit of trading masks, and copying certain models which strike their fancy from neighboring tribes. The meaning of these specimens is, of course, not known to the people who use it, and it is necessary to study first the source from which such carvings were derived. Thus the beautiful raven rattles of the *Tsimshian* are frequently imitated by the *Kwakiutl*, and the beautifully woven Chilcat-blankets are used as far south as Comox. The carved head-dresses of the *Tsimshian*, the *Amhalai't* (used in dances), with their attachment of ermine-skins, are even used by the natives of Victoria.

My inquiries cover the whole coast of British Columbia. In the extreme northern part of this region a peculiar kind of mask, which has been so well described by KRAUSE, is used as a helmet. I do not think that this custom extends very far south. Setting this aside, we may distinguish two kinds of masks, dancing masks, and masks attached to house-fronts and heraldic columns.

The latter are especially used by tribes of *Kwakiutl* lineage and by the *Bilqula*. All masks of this kind are clan masks, having reference to the crest of the house-owner or post-owner. They are generally made of cedar-wood, and from three to five feet high. One of the most beautiful specimens I have seen, is a mask of the sun, forming the top of an heraldic column in Alert Bay, Vancouver Island. It belongs to the chief of the gens *Si'sentle* of the *Nimkish* tribe. The latter is the second in rank among the tribes of the *Kwakiutl* group, which form one of the subdivisions of the linguistic stock of the same name. The clan claims to be descended from the sun, who assumed the shape of a bird, and came down from heaven. He was transformed into a man, and settled in the territory of the *Nimkish* tribe. The name of this mask is *Tleselak'umtl* (sun-mask, from *tle' sela*, sun; *ik'umtl*, mask). It has a bird's face, and is surrounded by rays. Certain clans of the *Bilqula* have the mythical *Masmasala'niq*, covered by an immense hat, on the tops of their house-fronts; but the use of masks for this purpose is, on the whole, not very extensive.

In order to understand their meaning and use, it is necessary to investigate very thoroughly the social organization of each tribe, and to study these masks in connection with the carvings represented on the posts and beams of the houses and with the paintings found on the housefronts. Thus the *Kwakiutl* proper are the highest in rank among the group to which the *Nimkish* belong. They are divided into four groups, which rank as follows: first, the *Kue' tela*; next the *K'o' moyue* or *Kue' qa* (the latter being their war name); then the *Lo' kuilila*; and finally the *Watakwakiutl*. Each of these is divided into a number of clans, some of which, however, belong to two or three of these divisions. I shall mention here the divisions of the *Kue' tela* only, again arranged according to rank, and shall add their principal carvings.