

FOLK-LORE.

Skaukw and Kwaietek ; or, the Origin of Daylight.

Very long ago in the ancient days it was always dark, the daylight being then shut up in a box and carefully stowed away in the dwelling of Kwaietek, the Sea-gull, who alone possessed it. This condition of things had gone on for a long time when Skaukw, the Raven, determined to make his brother Kwaietek share his precious treasure with the rest of the world. So one day he made some torches, and, lighting some, went down to the beach and sought when the tide was out for Skwatsai (sea-urchin's eggs). Having found as many as he required, he took them home, and, after eating the contents, placed the empty shells, with their spines still attached to them, on a platter. Stealthily taking these to Kwaietek's house, he spreads them over his doorstep, so that he cannot come out without treading upon them and running the spines into his feet. Next morning when Sea-gull came out of his dwelling he trod upon the shells and ran several of the sharp spines into his naked feet, which made them so sore that he was obliged to keep indoors and nurse them. Later in the day Raven came along, ostensibly to pay a friendly visit, but really to see how far his stratagem for procuring the Skwail or Daylight had been successful. He finds Sea-gull laid up, unable to walk. "What is the matter, brother Kwaietek?" said Raven. "Oh!" responded he, "I think some of your children must have been playing on my doorstep last night and left some sea-eggs there; for this morning, as I was leaving the house, I trod upon some, and the spines must have pierced my feet, and now they are so sore and swollen in consequence that I cannot put them to the ground without pain." "Let me look at them," said Skaukw; "perhaps I can find the spines and take them out for you." So saying, he took hold of one of his brother's feet and pretended to take out the sea-urchins' spines with his stone knife. He dug the instrument in so roughly and gave Sea-gull so much pain that the latter cried out in his agony. "Am I hurting you?" questioned Raven. "It is so dark I cannot properly see what I am