

The Chemawa American

Printed at Chemawa, Oregon, and Devoted to the Interests of Indian Education

Vol. XXVIII

Wednesday, April 6, 1927

No. 29

3 MAY 8
COPY - 1956 ✓

ORIGIN OF BLACK BEAR AND BLACKFISH

James Curwood Oliver

At the mouth of a little river that empties into Puget Sound there lived three Indian brothers. The two younger brothers were great hunters and the older stayed at home and carved canoes and sold them to his brothers. They paid him with meat that they had killed in the hunt.

The younger brothers quit bringing meat to their brother and the older brother was almost starved to death. He decided that his brothers were trying to get rid of him and this made him very revengeful.

He said, "How can I fool my brothers?" He made his plan and started to carve out a seal from a little cedar log. He worked patiently at his seal, taking great care not to let his brothers see him working. After finishing the seal he told him to bellow like a seal. The seal obeyed but it sounded like a cow bawling.

"That won't do," he said, so he carved a little more and then tried the seal, and it sounded exactly like a seal.

The older brother told the seal that when it grew dark and foggy that he was going to place him out on the little sand-bar in the middle of the river, and that he was to "holler like a seal until the brothers go out there and spear you. When they spear you, you swim away with them. Swim all night and half of the next day, and by that time you will be close to the ocean. Then you leave them and come up near the shore as a log."

That evening the brothers came to visit him. While they were seated by the fire the older brother said that he was going out to get some fresh water, and while on his supposed journey he placed the seal on the sand-bar.

When he returned he told the brothers that there were seals on the sand-bar, and for them to go out and kill one.

The brothers paddled out and both speared the seal at the same time. The spear stuck fast in the seal and he did as he was told and swam away with them. The brothers tried to let loose of the spear, but couldn't. The seal swam all night and half of the next day and came up near the shore as a log and

the brothers swam ashore with their spears.

The brothers sat on the beach and talked about how their brother had tried to get rid of them.

They drew a picture of their brother in the sand. They talked to the picture. They turned it into their brother and then told him he would have to go into the woods and eat berries in order to live. He ate berries so much and so long that he turned into a black bear.

One of the brothers said to the other that as they liked to hunt so well they would go into the water and hunt forever. They marched straight into the water with their spears on their shoulders and turned into black fish. The black fish chase the salmon into the fresh water creeks and the bear comes down and eats the fish that his brothers chase up for him.

If you ever see a black fish, notice the big fin on his back. That was the spear, and the black fish uses it to fight the other animals of the sea. Today they are the greatest hunters of the sea.

The Indians of Puget Sound are afraid to this day of the black fish and they never bother him.

If these three had lived in peace with each other we would not have black bears and black fish.

THE ORIGIN OF ANTS

William Wall

Once there lived a man who carried a bag made of buffalo hide and decorated with beads in many colors. It was made by one of the tribe's bravest braves. In this bag this man carried thousands of ants. These ants were very kind to their master, yet they were very dangerous. These ants were a great help to their master, the chief of the tribe. He held his high place by their support. At any time there was a scarcity of food or clothing he would carry his bag of ants to a place where there were many animals, open it and announce to these thousands of ants what to do, and these little creatures would do it. These ants kept this chief's tribe from want of food and clothing.

These little insects were very popular and their master was very proud of his fine friends. Many times the Chief would stay awake late into the night

(Continued on page 4)