

# ISTAHIBS BILL HAS A POTLACH

## Aged Indian Woman Follows Ancient Rite in Honor of Her Husband

By far the most important event in Indian circles in many moons was the potlatch given by Istahibs Bill, the aged widow of Chehalis Bill, at the Puyallup river, just across from the Indian school yesterday.

It is the first potlatch the Indians west of the mountains have had the opportunity of attending since Mrs. Anna Coates, the widow of Jim Coates, acted as the central figure in one held at the same place just a year ago.

Half a dozen or more tribes were represented at the ceremonies yesterday. They came from Chehalis, from Sashomish, from Oyster Bay, Port Madison—and there were scores of Puyallup present to show their respect for the memory of Chehalis Bill, in whose memory the potlatch was given, and incidentally, to take their chance of having bestowed upon them some of the money or presents which Chehalis Bill's widow distributed with a generous hand.

### Occasion for the Potlatch.

A potlatch is anything but a modern institution; it is among the oldest of Indian ceremonies, and in the more barbarous career of the redskin was looked upon as next in importance to the tribal war dance. The potlatch given by Istahibs Bill yesterday was an observance of a new monument erected at the grave of the departed Chehalis Bill, whose death occurred more than seven years ago, and as is customary, money and presents were freely distributed by the widow among the older members of the different tribes who showed their respect for the memory of the deceased Chehalis warrior.

Between 200 and 300 Indians—buckskins, children, and even little papagones—adorned the wide lawn that stretches out from the modern little cottage occupied by George Bird, which had been generously donated for the potlatch ceremonies yesterday. Some of them from more distant points commenced arriving as long ago as last Friday, and they have been straggling in ever since. Scores of little

tepees are pitched along the banks of the Puyallup and vehicles of various kinds were hitched on all sides. Along all roads leading to the scene of the potlatch could be seen Indians in pairs and in groups as early as 7 o'clock yesterday morning.

### Ceremonies at the Cemetery.

The first and most important was the "unveiling" of the new monument that had been erected at the head of the grave where Chehalis Bill sleeps in the little Indian cemetery adjoining the school. Here some 200 Indians gathered and reverently listened to older members of the tribes eulogize Chehalis Bill and tell what a brave warrior he had been.

When the ceremonies were over, the Indians marched back across the bridge to the home of George Bird, where the unique ceremonies incident to the potlatch proper were about to begin. Much interest attached to the preparations, for money and many presents were to be given away by the generous widow, and there was an air of expectancy on all sides. It was observed that there were at least a third more Indians on hand than had been at the cemetery.

Occupying a position of honor on the porch from which the presents were to be distributed, was Istahibs Bill, the widow, surrounded by a score or more of aged members of the various tribes, attired in their semi-civilized garb and especially solicitous for the comfort of the widow of Chehalis Bill. Farther out, stretched about on the green grass, were those of another generation, who sat about in groups and conversed in their native tongue, while the little dark-skinned children romped about and modernized the ancient institution by shooting firecrackers and chattering in broken English.

### Younger Men Expect Nothing.

Perched on the fence and in the spring wagons were many of the younger men of the tribes, and not expecting anything in the way of presents because of their youth, they sat

back, smoked cigarettes and scoffed at the ceremonies which were so sacred with their forefathers.

"Mammok kloh tum tum," said an aged tribesman in reply, to a query as to what might be the significance of a potlatch, and a younger buck, who stood nearby, was kind enough to explain that "mammok kloh tum tum," translated into English meant "to make friendly feeling." And this is why Istahibs Bill, the widow of Chehalis Bill, had sent out a call to her tribesmen far and near to gather on the banks of the Puyallup and accept her hospitality. She had sold some land and desired to make everlasting peace with all Indians. The potlatch yesterday was a modest affair, as potlatches go. In some instances Indians have been known to give away thousands of dollars and many presents at potlatches, but not so with Istahibs Bill. She did not even follow the ancient custom to the extent of giving away all she had.

### Gives Away About \$300 in Money.

She did, however, disburse something like \$300 in gold and silver, and made happy many squaws by presenting them with calico dress patterns in loud colors, blue and red always prevailing. He giving away of the money and the presents was a most interesting affair.

Seated on the broad porch at the feet of his aged mother, was Jim Bill, the only son of the respected and departed Chehalis Bill, and within reach of Jim, who was fittingly attired in a suit of clothes that didn't fit and a large red puff necktie, was a box containing the money and presents to be given away. Jim was the official spokesman of the affair. When Istahibs Bill, after looking about her at the many expectant, upturned faces, chose one of the number upon whom to bestow her generosity, she would speak in a low tone to her son, and Jim would make a noise much the same as a court bailiff calling a juror from the window of a country court room.

When young Jim arose to call a name there was absolute quiet on every hand, and when he had finished, some aged Indian would be seen to arise and go on a "dog trot" to the porch. There was no salutation; no ceremony of any kind. Young Jim would reach in the box containing the silver and gold, take up a coin, hand it to Charley Saticum, and the latter in turn would hand it to the fortunate individual whose name had been called.

### Charley Saticum Is Honored.

Incidentally, it might be mentioned here that Charley Saticum is one of the oldest and most respected Indians of the Puyallup tribe, and it was on this account that he was thus honored at the potlatch, for it is a great honor among the Indians to be chosen to distribute the presents.

The giving away of presents lasted for almost three hours. The men invariably received money, while for the women there were the calico dress

patterns. The first time around gold pieces were distributed, each "chosen one" being handed \$5. Finally the widow would cast her eyes on no more favored ones, although there were scores who had not been called forward and young Jim was instructed to call the names over again. It was at this stage that much disappointment was shown by those who had not profited by the visit. Less interest was manifested from that time on. The second time around silver was distributed, each Indian receiving from \$1 to \$2, and when the entire list had been gone over, there was another start at the beginning. Fifty-cent pieces and quarters were disbursed on the third round, and many of them went to the squaws.

### Feast a Feature of Festivities.

Finally the distribution of gifts was at an end—but the festivities were not over by any means. The big dinner was yet to be served, and no one of the Indians left until after the dinner. Two beaves had been slaughtered in anticipation of the event, and there was plenty for all. All the morning pots had been boiling over campfires farther down the banks of the Puyallup, and long tables, capable of accommodating at least 100 at a time, had been set up on the lawn.

It was at the feast that the younger bucks of the tribe "got even" for the manner in which they had been ignored at the distribution of the gifts. When the announcement was made that dinner was ready, cigarettes were thrown away and the young scions of a noble race scampered to the tables, filling the seats before the aged members could get a start. It soon became evident that whatever disappointment they might have felt had not affected their appetites, and the contents of pot after pot were passed among them, until finally they could eat no more and room was made for the older ones.

### Little of the Picturesque.

For the most part the Indians who graced the potlatch by their presence yesterday were dressed in "store clothes" and there was little of the picturesque about them. An occasional buck would be seen with a feather stuck in his hat, but there was no paint and no buckskin breeches and no tomahawks; in fact nothing to call to mind the Indian as pictured in the magazine story book.

It was more like a campmeeting than anything else, except there was no preaching. At the close of the gift distribution Charley Saticum, the oldest tribesman present, stepped out and made an address, but he talked in his native tongue and whatever he said didn't seem to impress his auditors.

The squaws who sat about on the ground in front of the little tepees pitched in the yard, however, were more picturesque. Many of them were wrapped about with bright-colored blankets, and practically all of them wore head coverings of bright red or light blue cloth. Two lofty "Miano-

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### GAVE UP SUPPORTER.

"I was a supporter for four years, to keep up my word, which had promised everything down before," writes Mrs. S. J. Croshaw, of Mansfield, N. Y. "My doctor told me no medicine would help me. I suffered almost misery, and could hardly walk. After taking two bottles of Cardui I have my supporter. Now I can take my fifth bottle, have no bad feelings as formerly, and can be on my feet half a day at a time. I strongly recommend Cardui to every suffering woman."

lulus" who wore elaborate creations of a millinery shop, and held themselves aloof from their more common sisters, were scoffed at for their pains. As a fitting close of the festivities, in which marked respect had been paid the memory of his father, young Jim Bill announced his intention of acting as host to the visitors at the carnival last night. In justice to the tribesmen it might be recalled that at the potlatch yesterday there was no gambling and no drinking. A more orderly gathering could not be imagined.

# GUILTY BUT IS EXCUSABLE

## President Makes a Distinction Between a Corporation and its Officers

Chicago—In a dispatch from Washington to the Record-Herald, under date of June 20, Walter Wellman says:

"President Roosevelt stands by Paul Morton. He will not permit the attorney general to prosecute Mr. Morton for alleged violation of the interstate commerce law. His decision to this effect is to be announced tomorrow.

"But this is not all. The President has written a most remarkable letter, which is also to be made public tomorrow. It is a letter in which he virtually places wings upon the broad shoulders of the young man who is now both secretary of the navy in this city, and chairman of the board of directors of the Equitable Life Assurance society in New York.

"The President reviews the whole episode of the Santa Fe rebates and violation of the law. He leaves little doubt that in his judgment the Santa Fe was guilty of technical infraction of the law, as a corporation. But the President differentiates between the corporation and its individual officers. He takes the ground that, whatever the officers of the railway did, they did in pursuance of a system at that time in vogue and because they could not well help themselves. What the government wants to do is to break up the system, to correct the methods of corporations. It does not wish to persecute individuals who were themselves victims of the system."

When the President comes to speak of Paul Morton as a man, the letter is characteristically "Rooseveltesque." He declares he chose Mr. Morton for a member of his cabinet because of his frank and outspoken in denunciation of the very practices with which the Santa Fe road is now charged with being guilty. The President says it was Mr. Morton's advocacy of reform in railroad methods that first attracted his attention to that gentleman, and, that instead of prosecution, Mr. Morton is entitled to commendation for what he has done. The President intimates that it would be the height of injustice to hale Mr. Morton before the courts for a technical violation of the law by a corporation with which he was connected and for which he might possibly be held technically responsible.

The President overrules the recommendation of Messrs. Harmon and Johnson, the special counsel employed by the government in the Santa Fe case, so far as Mr. Morton is concerned, and approves the decision of Attorney Gen-

eral Moody that there be no prosecution of individuals. It is true that when Mr. Morton, sensible of the proprieties of the situation, urged his resignation as secretary of the navy, the President quickly assented. Both men realized that Mr. Morton's usefulness as a member of the administration was at an end.

This action of the President comes at a most critical moment in the career of Paul Morton. As chairman of the board of directors of the Equitable, Mr. Morton has undertaken an Herculean task. That task is to restore popular confidence in the giant insurance society whose scandals have been recently aired in public. To do this work successfully, Mr. Morton will need every atom of his strength, every bit of his moral force. If he is to prove strong enough to pilot both the scandal-laden craft and its new skipper, Thomas F. Ryan, Mr. Morton will find it necessary to have the help of his friends and to fall back upon the reserves of his character and reputation. If at this crisis President Roosevelt had decided that the government should prosecute Mr. Morton for violation of the federal law, there can be no doubt of what effect it would have been. For Mr. Morton it would have spelled failure, the ruin of his career in its larger aspect. Confidence in the Equitable, which must at least be of slow growth, could not have been attained while its executive head was in the dock of a federal court.

Mr. Roosevelt not only declines to put this fatal blight upon the man and his newly-acquired opportunities and responsibilities, but he publicly gives his friend the right hand of his own faith and fellowship.

There is more cataract in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease and prescribed local remedies and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven cataract to be a constitutional disease and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one-hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials.

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Reform School Supplies. Sealed proposals are hereby requested for furnishing the Oregon State Reform School with supplies for the next six months, ending December 31, 1905. Lists with specifications will be furnished upon application to the superintendent.

Bidders will take notice there is no appropriation available for maintenance of the Reform School, therefore claims for supplies can only be audited by the Secretary of State and certificates of allowance issued to claimants. As soon as there is an appropriation available warrants will be issued in lieu of the certificates. Lists with specifications will be furnished upon application to the superintendent. All bids must be in by June 26, 1905.

N. H. LOONEY, Superintendent.

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