

would not all land together nor would they come directly to the village itself, but would land some distance from the Kitrhahla village, in full view of the people. When all had landed at the camping place, they would make ready to come in their ceremonial dresses. And at this kind of feast ~~which~~ it would not be a sae'oirk (a feast to proclaim or assume a name, or a position or a crest— sae: make; 'oirh: proclaim). The guests then would come in the form of their various narhnorh costumes, and as represented. It was conveyed by messengers who exhibited several narhnorhs of Tseebesae, and this was to make known to the guests that they must come with their own narhnorhs, show them at the Tseebesae's feast. 1

So now all of the Tsimcyan had gathered at the temporary camping place. This place was ⁱⁿ under the constant contact with Tseebesae, who knew when each chief arrived. When all of the invited chiefs had arrived, he sent over his greeters and invitations to the chiefs saying, "Chiefs, you and all your people will come to the house of Tseebes at once." When they had invited all the guests, the greeters ² returned and on their return the great halla-it drum began to sound in the chief's house. This drum was a hug box generally about six feet in length; in height, five feet, and in thickness about two feet. It was suspended from the rafters of the house usually alongside of the singing platforms ('wes) and when this started to beat, it was either an alarm to arouse the people or an announcement that the chief was now ready to receive his guests, if this was in connection ^{with} of a feast. As soon as it was heard, the invited guests made preparations to go to the feast and the order in which they were invited was that of their entry. The first tribe would go and so on, and the last of the Tsimcyan were Gisparhlaw'ts and the chief Legyarh. Legyarh, whose special privilege it was to be the last to enter, was acknowledged, he had been the last to arrive at the camping grounds. Now when the Gitrhahla greeters came to the Gisparhlaw'ts camp, one of the greeters took offence at what one of the young Gisparhlaw'ts had said. This greeter was Nirhtsees and he was the head man of Gitrhahla, a very influential person. As he had a deformed face this gave

3 hlinhae-it: to-meet-and-beseech.

him a bird-like appearance. So the young Gisparhlaw'ts had exclaimed, "Look at the blue jay without its wings." This was repeated many times and was heard by Nirhtsees who was very angry. To further hurt the Gitrhahla's feelings, the young Gisparhlaw'ts added, "That is how all their wise men appear. They are like blue jays without wings." "The Gisparhlawts are making fun of us. Some of their young people have just called me a blue jay without wings, and some others have said, "All our ~~xxxxxx~~lekakigyet have the same comic appearance." When Tseebesae heard this, he was very angry too. As his big drum was now beating to invite the guests, he was so angry that he said, "Stop beating the drum, and send my greeters to tell the invited guests that the feast has been postponed. The greeters will be sent to invite them when everything is ready. Tseebesae has changed his plans. He does not want you to be disappointed." These greeters went over at once and when they returned from the Tsimsyan camp, Tseebesae said, "I will now use and install one of my most difficult and secrete narhnorhs: my revolving steps. Over these all the guests must arrive, and only a few will be able to enter over them without humiliation. As this is a narhnorh and my special privilege to use in my own feast, no one must take offence. But I will humiliate them and they shall be sorry for having offended you. I want especially to humiliate Legyærh and to show his tribe that we are as big as they are and as clever." The messengers went over at once and to each of the invited chiefs they went in spreading eagle down and, saying as they did, "Chief, chief, Tseebesae has changed his plans of entertaining you and he wishes to make you all happy. That is why he has changed his plans. He was afraid that the present plans he had intended using would not have been amusing enough. So he has at the last moment, while he still had the chance, changed his strategy. So be patient, chiefs, chiefs, and wise men who are the counsellors of the chiefs." This was repeated to everyone of the chiefs who now retired to their camping place to await the next call of the Gitr^hahla chief.

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Tseebesae then called together his halla-its³ and they at once began to build the revolving steps leading up into the small aperture in front of the feast house, through which all of the guests would have to enter. ^{all} ~~any~~ that fell off or were unable to use these steps were humbled and considered as inferior people, until they would redeem themselves by feats of dancing. Many of the Gitrhahla were against using this, as they feared its unknown use would lead to war and feuds between the Gitrhahla and those humiliated. They were afraid of the consequences. But Tseebesae was very much angered and humiliated by the ridicule of the young Gisparhlawts men who had said, "Look at the blue jay without wings." They now decided that only when Legyerh and his men used these revolving steps would they manipulate them so as to humiliate. With the other guests they would not do so. The entrance was at a rising angle⁴ and in going through it, one had (to almost) travel through and it was then that the steps would revolve and anyone caught unaware would be thrown off. Everyone had to go in through this. No one could refuse and meanwhile they would be taunted in song by the Gitrhahla and be referred to as kaenawtset (hermaphrodite). This was a very low insult. So now when everything was already, and the singers had ~~intoned~~ intoned the songs of the narhnorh Hlkurawhlem-kaenerhs, Revolving-Steps, Tseebesae sent out his messengers again to invite in the Tsimsyan chiefs and in the same way each chief and his tribe. In the same order ^{the} each chief and ^{the} his people came and were met at the shore by Tseebesae's greeters, who met them with hlimkae'awa hallae-it. This was a contest between those on the shore and the guests in the canoes who threw to each other an invisible narhnorh (power). The first would be thrown by those on the shore, by the greeters who then sang of the virtues of his narhnorh power. Then one in the canoe would stand up and reach into the air, and then grab something and struggle and wrestle with it finally overcoming it. Then those in the canoe began singing that this narhnorh was easily overcome, and the people on the shore were beaten and then those in the canoe began to sing again. This time they sang of the virtues of their own narhnorh power and they threw this invisible power to those standing on the shore. One of the greeters jumped into the air and grasped something

3 The hallae-its have men the men who constructed and manipulated the supernatural contrivance - the narhnorh.

and then began to wrestle and tumble about with this invisible power, and after a long struggle overcame it, those on shore began taunting and singing of the weakness of the power, and then threw out their narhnorh. The same procedure was repeated as at first. This they did several times and then the master of ceremonies t'elhallaie-it would call out, "Come, chief, come! The fire now burns in my master's house. He has been awaiting your arrival for a long while." The guests landed and were led up to the house, then the singers of Tseebesae began to sing of the virtues of the revolving steps declaring that only brave people were allowed to use them, as was being done now. Then the guests were led to the steps, and if it is the will of the hallae-it operating these steps, he can pull a cord and the steps began collapsing, but otherwise the guests walked up and there was nothing happening. This whole procedure was repeated with each one of the guest chiefs and their people. It now came to the last, Legyarh and the Gisparhlawts, whose special privilege it was to be the last guest in, and he also was the principal guest (men'wérh). Legyarh and his tribesmen reached the revolving steps, and as Legyarh walked up, the steps collapsed throwing him off. He was followed by the strong man of the tribe and this man also was thrown a long distance and he was much humiliated. Legyarh went out of the feast very indignant and returned to his camp together with his people. The Gitrhahla sent messengers to beg him to come to the feast, and many times the messengers went out but Legyarh and his people paid no attention. Then one of the Gitrhahla chiefs came and then Legyarh and his men replied, "Because you have come, is why I will go to the feast." So then Legyarh came in and this time he did use the revolving steps without being made to fall and they were then seated in the feast house, when a Gitrhahla man began to sing about their strong man who had never been defeated and would never be defeated. So much was said about this man and taunts were being directed at the huge Gisparhlawts strong man. It was an open challenge. The Gisparhlawts then went to where the Gitrhahla man sat and without warning grasped him and threw him down the middle of the house. The Gisparhlaw'ts was sitting at the top of the five terraces or steps of the house, and when he threw the Gitrhahla man down their terrace steps, he broke the man's back. There was considerable

excitement, and again the Gisparhlaw'ts people went out, and this time the Gitrhahla people were humiliated, as their strong man, whom they were sure would be able to overcome his rival had been killed and without any struggle. They had expected to be easily victorious. Legyarh took refuge in the house of Lutkutsemi, a Larhs^kneek house of the same origin as Legyarh. Deprhae, who was a relative of the Gitrhahla strong man, came in, to the place where Legyarh was and for a time threatened him to combat, but soon Lutkutsemi and Tseebesae sent in his head man to scatter eagle down upon Legyarh and his head men and again invited them to the feast. Now at this time, had the Gisparhlawts failed to respond, a Gilludzae man was ready to challenge the Gitrhahla. But now the Gitrhahla had been overcome.

- 1 Such as me'waetsengyet: Crazy-Person. This person would be to all appearances crazy, with his face behind a mask showing distorted features, also with ragged clothes, and carrying on as a crazy one.
- 2 hlimhae-its: to-meet-and-beseach.
- 3 hallae-its here means men who constructed and manipulated the supernatural contrivances - the narhnorhs.
- 4 See the diagram in the manuscript.