

Bannock Creek

July 1, 1901

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I did not think like that article by Lang in wh. he referred to made much of the anthropomorphic nature of the subjoined up aloft & inculcates several ideas in the way of Hornitt's. He reads too much quite agree with this. Because this writer but I only have one ancient pen.

Ala Frazer,

By good chance

I have the opportunity of sending you down another line and am anxious to do so. Because what I told you last time was not quite correct in regard to the setting of the Totem here. We thought that we had it all right but find out that when the men told us they sat their Totem as they said 'all day' it did not quite mean this. What really happens is as follows. The tribe (Kaitish) is of course divided into two main halves (each subdivided again) and speaking generally the Totem groups are divided up between the two

main halves. A <sup>a b c d etc</sup> B <sup>e f g h etc</sup>

If A & B are the two main halves & a b ... g h etc the Totems then what happens is this: -

A man say of A kills a totem animal & but before eating it he either sends a small portion to the man B & then f or the whole of it: in either case the man Bf eat a small portion & this all of the rest to men of A. This is done ~~absolutely~~ absolutely at all their vis of daily occurrence.

No man will eat ~~anything~~ anything the Totem of another man without first getting his permission to do so. On the other hand if a man say of A & B then a eats too much of his own Totem he will be on the

natives say "poisoned" (that is killed by a charmed totem) by men of B. for the simple reason that if he eats too freely of his Totem then he will lose the power of performing witchiema and so of increasing it. At all witchiema ceremonies the man of the Totem (1) has to perform the ceremony for increasing it & (2) the other men must bring the Totem animal or plant to him before eating it themselves & he (1) first eats a small part & (2) give their permission to eat it freely.

In many ways this is more interesting than merely eating the Totem 'all day' without any restrictions whatever, as it seems very clearly to show that in their minds at present the one idea is that the men of the

totem are responsible for its persistence  
and what we have not had before  
the other men keep them up to the  
mark by 'boning' them if they do  
anything which will impair their  
capacity for preserving the totemic  
animal. In the water totem a

man unless thirsty and alone is not  
allowed to help himself to water but has  
this given to him by certain special individuals.

Of course we don't want this published  
yet but if it be of service to you you are  
quite welcome to refer to it but please state  
that it is still subject to further inquiry  
though I think after much trouble that  
we have got to the bottom of it in this  
tribe.

It does not sound much but you  
will understand how difficult it is to get  
at the precise facts with savages. We  
are getting on very fairly well but wade  
through endless traditions for here & there a  
speck of something of real value.

Yours very sincerely

W. Baldwin Spencer.