SONGS OF THE MODOC INDIANS.

BY ALBERT S. GATSCIIET.

During numerous conferences which the author has had in former years with Modoc Indians he was enabled to record from dictation a number of curious songs which they highly prize and frequently sing while either at work or sitting idly in their lodges. Only a few of them are of a lugubrious character; the majority are merry utterances of a mind free from care. There are erotic songs, dance-songs, satiric and mythologic songs, all being delivered in a way that is half spoken and half sung. Some, however, have attractive and elaborate melodies, which, if well arranged for the piano or string instruments, would doubtless produce a sensation in cultured communities.

I. Of the songs below, the first one is introduced as being sung or spoken by a small species of prairie-owl (Speotyto hypogea), which has the faculty of turning its head around and then turning it instantaneously to its normal position. The bird is therefore called in Modoc rollhead or turnlhead, and, like everything else seemingly miraculous or unaccountable, is made the subject of songs and folk-stories. When this owl draws its body up it appears almost ball-shaped, and when it travels over the surface of the prairie seems like a light-colored ball rolling rapidly over the ground. This owl lives in the ground. It is referred to in two conjurers' songs published in my "Klamath Indians of Southwestern Oregon," I, p. 154 (Washington, 1890) as Nush pilan tilalwa'nah, which signifies "as a head only I roll around," and (ibid., I, p. 167) as Lu'pakš e-u mu'luash, "white chalk is my medicine tool," because the feathers of the bird are of a chalk-white or grayish shade.

In the song below, the man, after throwing off his garments and limbs, appears also as "a head only" and rolls on for many miles, when he is seen partaking of food inside of his subterranean lodge. Evidently the "hi'shuakš," or young man, who had just carried his sister on his back to her bridegroom and left her close to a pine tree, had become exhausted by his exertions, and to feel more free had thrown away all his clothing, then parted also with some of his limbs and was transformed into a "rollhead." The faithfulness of the dog is well sketched, and the whole song is somewhat dramatic, which is not generally characteristic of Indian songs. The songs of the Pacific slope Indians are usually much shorter than the following, not often exceeding two lines in length.

NUSH-TILANSNCASHAM SHUI'NH, THE SONG OF THE ROLLHEAD OWL.

Hi'shuakš ta'pukash e'nan ygo'gapelə shuinọ'ta:
A man (his) sister carrying on returned while singing his book
"Tchu'i hai tak nə nen kōsh tam'mo'la."
"Just now we (have gone) to the pine and have returned from it."

"Wa'tchéq: " Wa-wi'na'!"

Hi'shuakš: Tchi'shka Āliu-iča'ga, ge'pk'i, mish ta'la na
Dear pet Īliu-iča'ga, come here, I just only wanted

gi'tki gi'g ak; pu'edša nə kāšhigo'ga. Shui'na: to tell (you); I throw away being exhausted. (Then) he sings:

(my garments)
"Tchu'i hai' tak nə nen kōsh tam'mo'la."
"We have just gone to the pine and came back from there."

"Hi'shuakš vnto'flagha wa'kšaha.
The man throws away (his) mocassins.

Watcha'gə (Dog runs after the mocassins and brings them back): Wa-wi'na'!

Hi'shuakš: Tchi'shka Āliu-iča'ga, ge'pk'i, mish ta'la
My little Īliu-iča'ga, come to me, to you simply

nə gi'tki gi'g ak, pu'edša nə kāšhigo'ga, shui'na:
I wanted to tell (that) I throw away

(my limbs)
"Tchu'i hai ta'k nə nen kōsh tam'mo'la."
"Presently we have come back from the pine."

Pu'edša to'kash hi'shuakš.
(Then) throws away (his) legs the man.

Watcha'gə: (Dog runs after the legs) Wa-wi'na'!

When the man had thrown away not only his mocassins but both legs, and the faithful dog had run after them and brought them back to his master, at the same time barking wa-wi'na', he also sacrificed his shirt, his hat, and both arms, repeating the words: pu'edša tchu'fish, tchu'yeah, wāk: "I cast away my shirt, my head-cover, my arms." The dog then tried to carry home the discarded articles; but after repeating the "Tchi'shka Āliu-
"i-wa'-ga, etc.," the ungrateful man finished by cutting his own neck, so that the head (nu'sh) was the only remaining member. The head traveled on and on for miles and miles over the earth.

The end of the story is as follows:

Tu'paksh ga'lamapa
ta'nlra'na m'naktau'lu paucd'hipsik
His sister followed him, picking up everything he had cast away.

tsa't'kalshtka skas'tchampile; tchini' ga'tpa ah'hsin'shstat, tch'hiin
and in (her) basket carried (it) home; after arriving at the lodge, she looked down.

shlah' no'sh pilu pa'p'kash. Ga'ulo'ltchampile tu'paksh, tch'hiin'k
and saw (his) b-ad only; it was eating. Stopped down (from the sister, and
the lodge top)

skat'gan va'sho'kanksh. Nen ka'ta'niin.
putting down (the basket) was What is said, (goes) so far.

What is said, (goes) so far.

II. THE ROBIN REDBREAST—A CRADLE SONG.

Una'sh, una'sh kinma'dsh pa'tak
una'sh, una'sh wala'sh pa'tak
una'sh, una'sh tchwi'p, tsiw'p,
tchi'telh, tsi'ts, tchlttch.

Early in the morning will eat ants (the robin),
etk'ui ak mish n't pa'kias
uneasy perhaps.

Una'sh pa'tak kimii'dsh p's'w'p,
una'sh paltak kimii'dsh wi'stak,
una'sh, una'sh p's'w'p, p's'w'p,
tch'i'tch, tsi'ts, tchi'tch.

This very pretty song is also sung in the following strain:

Una'sh pa'tak kimii'dsh p's'w'p,
una'sh paltak kimii'dsh wi'stak,
una'sh, uma'sh p's'w'p, p's'w'p,
tch'i'tch, tsi'ts, tchi'tch.

The cradle song graphically depicts the habits of the wi'stak
or robin, which is seen earlier than other birds flying toward
the cedar to pick at the bark in search of ants. The mothers
tell their babes that Robin Redbreast sings the above p's'w'p
song to its young and sometimes also to its grandmother. The
grandmother often plays a part in bird-lore; the 6'lash or gray
dove when raising its plaintive voice is supposed to utter com-
plaints before its grandmother.

III. SATIRIC SONG.

K'uu'i ak mish n't pa'kias Ku'hasht' ho nunatu'ga.

"Uneasy you feel at Koha'shti for its numerous pyres."
ge'pka, to come; ge'p'k'i, come thou, imperative form. Used when the coming is a coming toward the one speaking. Cf. ga'tpa.

ge'-u, my, mine.

gi, to tell, to say; gi'tki gi'ug mish, in order to tell you.

hail, a particle which is in most instances intranslatable, but refers to acts or things seen or visible: "as you see."

hí'shuakel, (1) husband; (2) male person. Literally "consort, associate."

hú, Modoc particle for há'tk, há'nk in Klamath; points to distance in time and space.

i, thou, you; mish, thee, you, the objective case of i.

i'tkal, to find, to pick up long objects as sticks, boxes, garments, etc.; i'tkalp'éli, to pick them up again, repeatedly.

ka, so much; ka-tá'nian, so much of it, extending so far in length or size.

Modocs use this term to say that a story told has come to an end.

kí'i'dshika, to be tired, exhausted, fagged out; kidshigo'ga, verbal causative: on account of being tired.

kima'dsh, ant; lit.: "the one who travels sidewise."

kösh, kösh, pine-tree.

Ku'nuushtí, "at the boat-starting place" on the northeastern end of Upper Klamath lake, Lake county, Oregon. See remarks in Text.

kú'í'i, badly, wretchedly, uneasily, mournfully.

lu'pa'kash, chalk, lime-substance.

mish, thee, you, to thee, to you; the objective case of i, thou.

mu'kush, tool, implement, and applying to conjurers' practices only. Literally: "what makes ready," from mu'lla, to be ready.

ná, abbrev. from ná't, nád, we.

ná'muktua, everything, and every sort of thing; compound of ná'nu, every, all, and tua', which thing? and thing in general.

nám, particle corresponding to our: as they say, as reported, as you hear.

ná'p'ka, the medial form of ná'p'ka; to feel, to have a sensation. Refers here to sensations of a sickly, disagreeable kind, the adverb kú'í'i, badly, being added to the verb.

ná, I, ná'tak, myself; its objective case is násh, nish, me, to me.

ná'sh, head. ná'sh pi'la, the head only, as a head only.

mu'kush-tilamán'ash, rollhead out; Speytoyo hypogea.

nu'ta, to burn, cremate. nuná'ga, on account of repeated cremations (of bodies).

ó'lash, ó'lish (1) white hair or down; (2) mourning dote, whose note is ó-ó; Zenaidura carolinensis. A derivative is ó'lehalito, gray-haired or having gray down.

pa'ka, to eat, to feed on; pa'p'kash, eating for a while, or continually:

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pí'tan is a compound of pi'ta only and na, abbr. from ná I, myself.
pí's'wá, imitation of the robin's note.

pu'edhàsh, to throw or cast away. pu'edhàsh ki, he was or had been throwing away.

shílá, to see, perceive; shílá-n', she saw at the time.

shínu'sh, lodge, wigwam, house. shínu'shátat, locative case: at (her) wigwam.

shínu'na, to sing; shínu'na, verbal durative: while singing.

shínu'sh, (1) song; (2) conjurer's song, and also conjurer's song-object, these being mainly animals invoked by the conjurer to find out the disease of the patient.

ska'la, to put down a basket or similar implement; ska'la is participle of the present tense: putting it down.

ska'cha, to carry something in a basket or similar implement. ska'cha is participle of the present tense: carrying it.

e'zí'tkalash, basket. e'zí'tkalashka, instrumental case: in (her) basket.

tak (1) particle not easy to translate, but marking contrast or contrary statements; (2) when appended to verbal stems it forms a future tense in Modoc, as in pa'tak, it will eat, for pa'n tak; pa'n, to eat.

Pa'pa'pka is another form for the future tense.

ta'la, adv., straightly; only, but. ta'la ak, just only.

tam'nto'la, to return from, kösh, from the pine tree. Derivative of ta'ma'na to travel.

teh'húnk, and then; abbreviated from teh'ti húnk.

teh'ti'ska, pet, darling; the ending -ka (-aga, -ak, -aka) shows it to be a diminutive form.

teh'ti'ch, te'i'ts, imitations of the note of the robin redbreast.

tehwí'p', imitation of the note of the robin redbreast.

tcho'kash, leg and legs.

toch'í', then, afterward, and.

tcho'k, any head-cover, as cap, hat, ornamental head-dress.

toch'í, to look down to the ground; to look into, as into a lodge or wigwam. Tooch'í, looking into.

tilatú'nahs, to roll about, to turn around, to revolve, v. intr.

tu'p'kash, abbr. tu'pak, younger sister.MODEC INDIANS.

usu'eh, õ'ush, and õ'na, at an early hour.

ushe'ko'kank, to be scared or frightened for a while or thoroughly.
uato'le'nah, to throw off, to cast away while going or traveling.

wà'kí, wà'k, arm and arms.

wa'k'shna, moccasin, sing and plural.

wàtch'sh, wa'tchag, dog.

wi'sax, robin redbreast, Merula migratoria.