

WANDERINGS OF AN ARTIST,
AMONG THE
INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA

FROM CANADA
TO VANCOEVER'S ISLAND AND OREGON
THROUGH THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S TERRITORY
AND
BACK AGAIN.

BY PAUL KANE.

LONDON
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS.

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CHAP. XIV.

Fort Victoria — Accidental Clover. — Blankets of Dog's Hair. — Aprons of Bark. — A Chief's Inauguration. — Monstrous Sturgeon. — Crows which Feed on Fish. — The Domestic Institution. — The Dead Slave. — Frightening a Native. — Washing the Dead. — The Game of Lehallum. — An Expensive Feast. — Medicine Caps.

April 8th. — I LEFT Nasqually this morning with six Indians in a canoe, and continued paddling on the whole day and the following night, as the tide seemed favourable, not stopping till 2 P.M., when we reached Fort Victoria on Vancouver's Island, having travelled ninety miles without stopping. Fort Victoria stands upon the banks of an inlet in the island about seven miles long and a quarter of a mile wide, forming a safe and convenient harbour, deep enough for any sized vessel. Its Indian name is the Esquimelt, or, Place for gathering Camas, great quantities of that vegetable being found in the neighbourhood. On my arrival I was kindly welcomed by Mr. Finlayson, the gentleman in charge. He gave me a comfortable room, which I

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made my head-quarters during the two months I was occupied in sketching excursions amongst the Indians in the neighbourhood and along the surrounding coasts.

The soil of this locality is good, and wheat is grown in considerable abundance. Clover grows plentifully, and is supposed to have sprung from accidental seeds which had fallen from the packages of goods brought from England; many of which are made up in hay.

The interior of the island has not been explored to any extent except by the Indians, who represent it as badly supplied with water in the summer, and the water obtained from a well dug at the fort was found to be too brackish for use. The appearance of the interior, when seen from the coast, is rocky and mountainous, evidently volcanic; the trees are large, principally oak and pine. The timbers of a vessel of some magnitude were being got out. The establishment is very large, and must eventually become the great depôt for the business of the Company. They had ten white men and forty Indians engaged in building new stores and warehouses. On the opposite side of the harbour, facing the fort, stands a village of Clal-lums Indians. They boast of being able to

turn out 500 warriors, armed chiefly with bows and arrows. The lodges are built of cedar like the Chinook lodges, but much larger, some of them being sixty or seventy feet long.

The men wear no clothing in summer, and nothing but a blanket in winter, made either of dog's hair alone, or dog's hair and goosedown mixed, frayed cedar-bark, or wildgoose skin, like the Chinooks. They have a peculiar breed of small dogs with long hair of a brownish black and a clear white. These dogs are bred for clothing purposes. The hair is cut off with a knife and mixed with goosedown and a little white earth, with a view of curing the feathers. This is then beaten together with sticks, and twisted into threads by rubbing it down the thigh with the palm of the hand, in the same way that a shoemaker forms his waxend, after which it undergoes a second twisting on a distaff to increase its firmness. The cedar bark is frayed and twisted into threads in a similar manner. These threads are then woven into blankets by a very simple loom of their own contrivance. A single thread is wound over rollers at the top and bottom of a square frame, so as to form a continuous woof through which an alternate thread is carried by the hand, and pressed closely together by a sort

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of wooden comb; by turning the rollers every part of the woof is brought within reach of the weaver; by this means a bag is formed, open at each end, which being cut down makes a square blanket. The women wear only an apron of twisted cedar-bark shreds, tied round the waist and hanging down in front only, almost to the knees. They however, use the blankets more than the men do, but certainly not from any feeling of delicacy.

This tribe flatten the head, but their language varies very much from the Chinook; however, the same patois used on the Columbia is spoken by many of them, and I was thus enabled to communicate easily with them. I took a sketch of Cheaclach, their head chief, of whose inauguration I heard the following account from an eye-witness. On his father becoming too old to fulfil the duties of head chief, the son was called upon by the tribe to take his place; on which occasion he left the mountains for the ostensible purpose of fasting and dreaming for thirty days and nights; these Indians, like all other tribes, placing great confidence in dreams, and believing that it is necessary to undergo a long fast whenever they are desirous of inducing one of any importance. At the end of

the period assigned, the tribe prepared a great feast. After covering himself with a thick covering of grease and goosedown, he rushed into the midst of the village, seized a small dog, and began devouring it alive, this being a customary preliminary on such occasions. The tribe collected about him singing and dancing in the wildest manner, on which he approached those whom he most regarded and bit their bare shoulders or arms, which was considered by them as a high mark of distinction, more especially those from whom he took the piece clean out and swallowed it. Of the women he took no notice.

I have seen many men on the North-west coast of the Pacific who bore frightful marks of what they regarded as an honourable distinction; nor is this the only way in which their persons become disfigured. I have myself seen a young girl bleeding most profusely from gashes inflicted by her own hand over her arms and bosom with a sharp flint, on the occasion of losing a near relative. After some time spent in singing and dancing, Chea-clach retired with his people to the feast prepared inside a large lodge, which consisted principally of whale's blubber, in their opinion the greatest of all delicacies, although they

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have salmon, cod, sturgeon, and other excellent fish in great abundance.

All the tribes about here subsist almost entirely upon fish, which they obtain with so little trouble during all seasons of the year, that they are probably the laziest race of people in the world. Sturgeon are caught in considerable numbers, and here attain an enormous size, weighing from four to six hundred weight; this is done by means of a long pointed spear handle seventy to eighty feet in length, fitted into, but not actually fastened to, a barbed spear-head, to which is attached a line, with which they feel along the bottom of the river where the sturgeon are found lying at the spawning season. Upon feeling the fish the barbed spear is driven in and the handle withdrawn. The fish is then gradually drawn in by the line, which being very long, allows the sturgeon to waste his great strength, so that he can with safety be taken into the canoe or towed ashore. Most of their fishing lines are formed of a long seaweed, which is often found 150 feet long, of equal thickness throughout the whole length, and about as thick as a black-lead pencil; while wet it is very strong. Their fish-hooks are made of pine-roots, made something in the shape of our ordinary hooks, but

attached differently to the line; the barb is made of bone.

Clams are in great plenty, and are preyed on in great numbers by the crows, who seize them in their claws and fly up with them to some height, and then let them drop on the rocks, which of course smashes the shell to pieces. I have watched dozens of them at this singular employment. A small oyster of a fine flavour is found in the bays in great plenty. Seal, wild ducks and geese, are also in great numbers.

The Indians are extremely fond of herring-roe, which they collect in the following manner:—Cedar branches are sunk to the bottom of the river in shallow places by placing upon them a few heavy stones, taking care not to cover the green foliage, as the fish prefer spawning on anything green. The branches are all covered by the next morning with the spawn, which is washed off into their waterproof baskets, to the bottom of which it sinks; it is then squeezed by the hand into small balls and dried, and is very palatable.

The only other vegetable besides the camas and wappatoos that the Indians use, are the roots of fern roasted, which here grow to a very large size.

Slavery in its most cruel form exists among the

Indians of the whole coast, from California to Behring's Straits, the stronger tribes making slaves of all the others they can conquer. In the interior, where there is but little warfare, slavery does not exist. On the coast a custom prevails which authorises the seizure and enslavement, unless ransomed by his friends, of every Indian met with at a distance from his tribe, although they may not be at war with each other. The master exercises the power of life and death over his slaves, whom he sacrifices at pleasure in gratification of any superstitious or other whim of the moment.

One morning while I was sketching, I saw upon the rocks the dead body of a young woman, thrown out to the vultures and crows, whom I had seen a few days previously walking about in perfect health. Mr. Finlayson, the gentleman in charge of Fort Victoria, accompanied me to the lodge she belonged to, where we found an Indian woman, her mistress, who made light of her death, and was doubtless the cause of it. She told us that a slave had no right to burial, and became perfectly furious when Mr. Finlayson told her that the slave was far better than herself. "I," she exclaimed, "the daughter of a chief, no better than a dead slave!" and bridling up with all the

dignity she could assume, she stalked out, and next morning she had up her lodge and was gone. I was also told by an eye-witness, of a chief, who having erected a colossal idol of wood, sacrificed five slaves to it, barbarously murdering them at its base, and asking in a boasting manner who amongst them could afford to kill so many slaves.

These Indians also flatten their heads, and are far more superstitious than any I have met with. They believe, for instance, that if they can procure the hair of an enemy and confine it with a frog in a hole, the head from which it came will suffer all the torments that the frog endures in its living grave. They are never seen to spit without carefully obliterating all traces of their saliva. This they do lest an enemy should find it, in which case they believe he would have the power of doing them some injury. They always spit on their blankets, if they happen to wear one at the time.

I was indebted to the superstitious fears which they attached to my pictures for the safety and ease with which I mingled amongst them. One of them gave me a great deal of annoyance by continually following and watching me wherever I went, for the purpose of warning the other Indians against my sketching them, telling them that it

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would expose them to all sorts of ill luck. I repeatedly requested him to desist, but in vain. At last I bethought me of looking steadily at himself, paper and pencil in hand, as if in the act of taking his likeness; when he became greatly alarmed, and asked me what I was about. I replied, "I am taking a sketch of you." He earnestly begged of me to stop, and promised never to annoy me again.

These Indians have a great dance, which is called "The Medicine Mask Dance;" this is performed both before and after any important action of the tribe, such as fishing, gathering camas, or going on a war party, either for the purpose of gaining the goodwill of the Great Spirit in their undertaking, or else in honour of him for the success which has attended them. Six or eight of the principal men of the tribe, generally medicine-men, adorn themselves with masks cut out of some soft light wood with feathers, highly painted and ornamented, with the eyes and mouth ingeniously made to open and shut. In their hands they hold carved rattles, which are shaken in time to a monotonous song or humming noise (for there are no words to it) which is sung by the whole company as they slowly dance round and round in a circle.

Among the Clal-lums and other tribes inhabiting this region, I have never heard any traditions as to their former origin, although such traditions are common amongst those on the east side of the Rocky Mountains. They do not believe in any future state of punishment, although in this world they suppose themselves exposed to the malicious designs of the skocoom, or evil genius, to whom they attribute all their misfortune and ill luck.

The good spirit is called Hias-Soch-a-la-Ti-Yah, that is, the great high chief, from whom they obtain all that is good in this life, and to whose happy and peaceful hunting-grounds they will all eventually go to reside for ever in comfort and abundance. The medicine-men of the tribe are supposed to possess a mysterious influence with these two spirits, either for good or evil. They form a secret society, the initiation into which is accompanied with great ceremony and much expense. The candidate has to prepare a feast for his friends and all who choose to partake of it, and make presents to the other medicine-men. A lodge is prepared for him which he enters, and remains alone for three days and nights without food, whilst those already initiated keep dancing and singing round the lodge during the whole time.

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After this fast, which is supposed to endue him with wonderful skill, he is taken up apparently lifeless and plunged into the nearest cold water, where they rub and wash him until he revives: this they call "washing the dead." As soon as he revives, he runs into the woods, and soon returns dressed as a medicine-man, which generally consists of the light down of the goose stuck all over their bodies and heads with thick grease, and a mantle of frayed cedar bark, with the medicine rattle in his hand. He now collects all his property, blankets, shells, and ornaments, and distributes the whole amongst his friends, trusting for his future support to the fees of his profession. The dancing and singing are still continued with great vigour, during the division of the property, at the conclusion of which the whole party again sit down to feast, apparently with miraculous appetites, the quantity of food consumed being perfectly incredible.

Their lodges are the largest buildings of any description that I have met with amongst Indians. They are divided in the interior into compartments, so as to accommodate eight or ten families, and are well built, considering that the boards are split from the logs with bone wedges; but they succeed in getting them out with great smoothness and regu-

larity. I took a sketch one day while a party were engaged in gambling in the centre of the lodge. The game is called lehallum, and is played with ten small circular pieces of wood, one of which is marked black; these pieces are shuffled about rapidly by the player between two bundles of frayed cedar bark. His opponent suddenly stops his shuffling, and endeavours to guess in which bundle the blackened piece is concealed. They are so passionately fond of this game that they frequently pass two or three consecutive days and nights at it without ceasing.

Saw-se-a the head chief of the Cowitchins, from the Gulf of Georgia, an inveterate gambler, was engaged at the game. He had come to the Esquimelt on a friendly visit. This chief was a great warrior in his younger days, and received an arrow through the cheek in one of his battles. He took many captives, whom he usually sold to the tribes further north, thus diminishing their chance of escaping back through a hostile country to their own people, the northern tribes making slaves only of those living south of them. He possessed much of what is considered wealth amongst the Indians, and it gradually accumulated from tributes which he exacted from his people. On his posses-

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sions reaching a certain amount it is customary to make a great feast, to which all contribute. The neighbouring chiefs with whom he is in amity are invited, and at the conclusion of the entertainment, he distributes all he has collected since the last feast, perhaps three or four years preceding, among his guests as presents. The amount of property thus collected and given away by a chief is sometimes very considerable. I have heard of one possessing as many as twelve bales of blankets, from twenty to thirty guns, with numberless pots, kettles, and pans, knives, and other articles of cutlery, and great quantities of beads, and other trinkets, as well as numerous beautiful Chinese boxes, which find their way here from the Sandwich Islands. The object in thus giving his treasures away is to add to his own importance in the eyes of others, his own people often boasting of how much their chief had given away, and exhibiting with pride such things as they had received themselves from him.

I also took a sketch of his son, No. 11, Culchillum. He had a medicine cap on, to which he attached great importance. It was made of human hair, taken from the heads of persons killed in battle, and ornamented with feathers. This, he told me, he only wore on great occasions, such as

his present visit to the Clal-lums. On my expressing a wish to purchase it, he told me that he valued it too highly to part with it; nor would



No. 11. — Portrait of Cul-chil-lum, with Medicine Cap.

he allow me to take it to my tent to finish this sketch without himself accompanying it, for fear it might be deprived of some of its magical properties.

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CHAP. XV.

A Coasting Trip.—Indian Curiosity.—Rather Violent Quacks.—An Awkward Hint.—Fighting for a Whale.—A Warm Siege.—Running a Deadly Muck.—Catching Wild Ducks.—A Great Unknown.—The Fate of the "Tonquin."—Fishing for Money.—Shawstun the Ugly.—Caledonian Suttee.—Beautiful Biglips.—Price of a Second Spouse.

As I was desirous to coast round the Straits of De Fuca and visit the tribes on its shores, I employed Chea-clach the head chief and four of his people to take me and the interpreter of the fort round the straits in his canoe; and on the morning of the 6th of May we started about 10 o'clock, running up the east side of Vancouver's Island, and crossed the canal De Aro to the main land. On nearing an Indian village, which contained, as I afterwards found, between five or six hundred Indians, they came rushing down to the beach in an attitude apparently hostile, and as the boats of the exploring expedition had been attacked the year before at the same place, we naturally felt some apprehensions for our safety.

We had no sooner approached the shore than a dense crowd surrounded us, wading up to their middles in water, and seizing our canoe dragged us all high and dry upon the shore, and inquired what we wanted. I replied, that I would explain my business to their chief, who immediately stepped forward in a friendly manner. Having told him that my business was to visit all the Indians, and to take likenesses of the head chiefs and great warriors, he took me to his lodge, where I seated myself on a mat with him in front of me and commenced my drawing. In a few minutes the place was crowded, and when it could hold no more, the people clambered to the top of the lodge and tore off the mats from the supports, to which they clung, one upon another, like a swarm of bees, peering down upon us. Look which way I could it seemed one solid mass of hideous faces, daubed with red and white mud.

I hastily finished my sketch and hurried away, first giving the chief a plug of tobacco for his civility. His name was Chea-clach, chief of the Clallums. On coming over I found the wind so strong that I thought it advisable to risk an encampment, and pitched my tent about two hundred yards from the village. We were soon

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surrounded by hundreds of Indians, the chief among the rest. I gave the latter some supper, and all the news, which he eagerly inquired after, and on my telling him I was tired and wished to go to sleep, which I could not do while so many of his people were about, he instantly arose and desired them to retire, which was promptly obeyed, he going away with them.

About 10 o'clock at night I strolled into the village, and on hearing a great noise in one of the lodges I entered it, and found an old woman supporting one of the handsomest Indian girls I had ever seen. She was in a state of nudity. Cross-legged and naked, in the middle of the room sat the medicine-man, with a wooden dish of water before him; twelve or fifteen other men were sitting round the lodge. The object in view was to cure the girl of a disease affecting her side. As soon as my presence was noticed a space was cleared for me to sit down. The officiating medicine-man appeared in a state of profuse perspiration from the exertions he had used, and soon took his seat among the rest as if quite exhausted; a younger medicine-man then took his place in front of the bowl, and close beside the patient. Throwing off his blanket he commenced

singing and gesticulating in the most violent manner, whilst the others kept time by beating with little sticks on hollow wooden bowls and drums, singing continually. After exercising himself in this manner for about half an hour, until the perspiration ran down his body, he darted suddenly upon the young woman, catching hold of her side with his teeth and shaking her for a few minutes, while the patient seemed to suffer great agony. He then relinquished his hold, and cried out he had got it, at the same time holding his hands to his mouth; after which he plunged them in the water and pretended to hold down with great difficulty the disease which he had extracted, lest it might spring out and return to its victim.

At length, having obtained the mastery over it, he turned round to me in an exulting manner, and held something up between the finger and thumb of each hand, which had the appearance of a piece of cartilage, whereupon one of the Indians sharpened his knife, and divided it in two, leaving one end in each hand. One of the pieces he threw into the water, and the other into the fire, accompanying the action with a diabolical noise, which none but a medicine-man can make. After which he got up perfectly satisfied with himself,

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although the poor patient seemed to me anything but relieved by the violent treatment she had undergone.

May 7th.—We this morning left our encampment before daylight, without waiting to pay our respects to the chief. In the afternoon we touched at Whitby's Island, which divides the Straits of De Fuca from Puget's Sound. A Catholic mission had been established on the island some few years before, but was obliged to be given up, owing to the turbulent disposition of the Indians, who, though friendly to the Hudson Bay Company as traders, look with great suspicion upon others who attempt to settle there, fearing that the whites would attempt to dispossess them of their lands.

On approaching the village of Toanichum, we perceived two stout bastions of logs, well calculated for defence in Indian warfare, and built with considerable skill. As our canoe neared the land, I observed them hurrying towards these bastions, and shortly afterwards we heard several shots. Supposing this to be intended as a salute, we drew still nearer, and were astonished at hearing more discharges, and seeing the balls fall near our canoe. My Indians immediately ceased paddling, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I could prevail

on them to proceed. Had we shown the least inclination to retreat, I have no doubt that the firing would have been continued, and with better aim. However, on my landing and asking what they meant, they said it was only done for the purpose of letting me know that they were in the possession of fire-arms.

They afterwards treated me very hospitably. Lock-hi-num, the chief, offered us all the supplies at his command. It was, however, with the greatest difficulty that I could prevail on him to let me take his likeness; but at last I succeeded, by showing him the likenesses of several other chiefs, and telling him that they were intended to be shown to his Great Mother, the Queen, who no doubt would be much disappointed if his was not amongst the rest. I remained amongst them two or three hours, and sketched the village. I also succeeded in getting a very good-looking woman, the wife of the second chief, to sit for me. She had the flattest head of any I had seen in that vicinity. We then crossed over to the south side of the strait, and encamped for the night.

May 8th.—Proceeded up the south side of the straits in our canoe, and encamped on a long

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sand spit, projecting into the straits three or four miles.

May 9th.—Made a portage across the spit, and by the evening reached I-eh-nus, a Clallum village or fort. It was composed of a double row of strong pickets, the outer ones about twenty feet high, and the inner row about five feet, enclosing a space of 150 feet square. The whole of this inner space is roofed in, and divided into small compartments, or pens, for the use of each separate family. There were about 200 of the tribe in the fort at the time of my arrival. Their chief, Yates-sut-soot, received me with great cordiality. I remained with them three days, and all the tribe treated me with kindness, with one solitary exception, proceeding from a superstitious fear that the presence of a white man in a lodge would produce sickness in the family. Yates-sut-soot was very apprehensive of an attack from the Macaw Indians, and believing my powers and influence as a medicine-man to be of much importance, eagerly asked me which side I would take, in the event of their coming. I replied, that as long as they treated me well I would be their friend.

A few months before my arrival a great battle had been fought with the Macaws, in which the

Clallums had suffered very severely. It originated in the Clallums having taken possession of the body of a whale which had been killed by the Macaws, but had got away, and was drifted by the current to the village. The Macaws demanded a share of the spoil, and also the return of their spears, some fifteen or twenty in number, which were sticking in the carcass; both demands were refused, and a feeling of animosity sprang up between the tribes.

There are few whales now caught on the coast, but the Indians are most enthusiastic in the hunt, and the blubber is highly prized amongst them; it is cut into strips about four inches wide and two feet long, and eaten generally with dried fish.

Their manner of catching the whale is ingenious, and from the description which I received of the hunt must be very exciting. Upon a whale being seen blowing in the offing, they rush down to their large canoes, and push off with ten or twelve men in each. Each canoe is furnished with a number of strong seal-skin bags filled with air, and made with great care and skill, capable of containing about ten gallons each. To each bag is attached a barbed spear-head, made of bone or iron, when they can get it, by a strong

string, eight or nine feet long, and in the socket of the spear-head is fitted a handle, seven or eight feet in length. Upon coming up with the whale, the barbed heads with the bags attached are driven into him and the handles withdrawn. The attack is continually renewed, until the whale is no longer able to sink from the buoyancy of the bags, when he is despatched and towed ashore. They are sometimes led twenty or thirty miles out to sea in the chase, but such is the admirable construction of their canoes, and so skilfully are they managed, that an accident rarely happens.

A few months after the quarrel about the whale, the brother of Yellow-cum, the head chief of the Macaws, went to Fort Victoria to trade for ammunition and other necessaries, and on his return was attacked by the Clallums. He and one of his men were killed, but three others escaped, and succeeded in getting to Cape Flattery, where Yellow-cum resided. Immediately upon hearing of the death of his brother, Yellow-cum fitted out twelve of his largest canoes, with twenty warriors in each, and made a sudden descent upon I-eh-nus; but he soon perceived that he had little chance of success while the Clallums remained within their enclosure completely pro-

tected by the logs, while his men were exposed without any shelter to the galling fire which was kept up through the openings between the pickets. He accordingly sent some of his party to the westward side of the fort, who set fire to the grass and wood, which soon communicated with the buildings, while he and the rest of his party kept watch to prevent any from escaping. The Clallums were soon forced to rush out and cover the retreat of their women and children into the mountains. Yates-sut-soot and Yellow-cum fought with great bravery hand to hand, with nothing but their knives, until they were separated in the mêlée. I saw one of the Clallums who had been shockingly gashed in the battle, having had to run through a long line of the Macaws, each of whom made a cut at him as he passed. The buildings were only partly consumed. Yellow-cum took eighteen prisoners, mostly females, who were made slaves, and he had eight heads stuck on poles placed in the bows of the canoes on his return. These heads are carried to their village, and placed in front of the lodge of the warriors who had killed them as trophies. These Indians do not scalp their enemies.

Near the village are numerous singular graves

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with different erections over them, on which the Indians place the offerings for the dead.

May 12th. — We left with the intention of returning to Vancouver's Island, but the wind being very violent we had to put back to the shore, which we coasted for twelve or fourteen miles, until we came to the mouth of a river. The land to the south of us rises in one continuous range of high mountains far as the eye can reach, the peaks of many of which are covered with snow, even at this period of the year. We ascended the river about a mile to an Indian fishing station called Suck. The whole breadth of the stream is obstructed by stakes and open work of willow and other branches, with holes at intervals leading into wicker compartments, which the fish enter in their way up the river from the sea. Once in they cannot get out, as the holes are formed with wicker work inside shaped something like a funnel or a wire mouse-trap. In this preserve they are speared without trouble when required, and the village has thus a constant supply of food. They were catching great quantities at the time of my arrival, and we obtained an abundant supply for a small piece of tobacco.

These Indians also take a great many ducks by

means of a fine net stretched between two posts about thirty feet high, and fifty or sixty feet apart. This is erected in a narrow valley through which the ducks fly in the evening. A smoky fire is made at the bottom of the net, which prevents the ducks from seeing it, and when they fly against it they become confused and fall down, when they are seized by the Indians.

The wind being still too strong for us to venture, we remained until the 14th. Chaw-u-wit, the chief's daughter, allowed me to take her likeness. Whilst she was sitting a great many of the Indians surrounded us, causing her much annoyance, as their native bashfulness renders all squaws peculiarly sensitive to any public notice or ridicule. She was, perhaps, about the best-looking girl I had seen in the straits, which is certainly no very high compliment to the rest of the female population.

Chea-clack considering that our canoe was too small, succeeded in changing it for a larger one, and at 3 o'clock A. M. we embarked and proceeded to make a traverse of thirty-two miles in an open sea. When we had been out for about a couple of hours the wind increased to a perfect gale, and blowing against an ebb tide caused a

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heavy swell. We were obliged to keep one man constantly baling to prevent our being swamped.

The Indians on board now commenced one of their wild chants, which increased to a perfect yell whenever a wave larger than the rest approached; this was accompanied with blowing and spitting against the wind as if they were in angry contention with the evil spirit of the storm. It was altogether a scene of the most wild and intense excitement: the mountainous waves roaming round our little canoe as if to engulf us every moment, the wind howling over our heads, and the yelling Indians, made it actually terrific. I was surprised at the dexterity with which they managed the canoe, all putting out their paddles on the windward side whenever a wave broke, thus breaking its force and guiding the spray over our heads to the other side of the boat.

It was with the greatest anxiety that I watched each coming wave as it came thundering down, and I must confess that I felt considerable fear as to the event. However, we arrived safely at the fort at 2 P. M., without further damage than what we suffered from intense fatigue, as might be expected, from eleven hours' hard work, thoroughly soaked and without food; but even this soon

passed away before the cheerful fire and "hearty" dinner with which we were welcomed at Fort Victoria. One of the Indians told me he had no fear during the storm, except on my account, as his brethren could easily reach the shore by swimming, even should the distance have been ten miles.

A couple of days after my arrival at the fort, I was engaged in taking the likeness of an Indian. The door of my room was suddenly thrown open, and an Indian entered of a very plain and unprepossessing appearance. As I was unwilling to be disturbed, I rather unceremoniously dismissed the intruder, and closed the door on him, supposing him to be some common Indian; for were I to admit all comers, I should have been annoyed from morning till night. About half an hour afterwards, Mr. Finlayson came in, and told me that the great Yellow-cum, the head chief of the Macaws at Cape Flattery, had arrived at the fort. I had heard so much of this chief, both from his enemies, the Clallums at I-eh-nus, and the Indians at Fort Vancouver, that I had determined to go to Cape Flattery, a distance of sixty miles, to see him. I was therefore very glad of his coming, as it would save

me the journey; and I immediately went out in search of him, and was not a little astonished and vexed to find in him the visitor I had so rudely sent out of my room. I of course apologised, by stating my ignorance of who he was, and told him how anxious I had been to see him, and of my intention of going to Cape Flattery for that purpose. He said that he willingly acquitted me of any intentional insult; but he had felt extremely mortified at being treated so before so many Indians.

He accompanied me to my room, where I made a sketch of him, and had from him a recital of much of his private history. Yellow-cum's father was the pilot of the unfortunate "Tonquin," the vessel sent out by John Jacob Astor to trade with the Indians north of Vancouver's Island, mentioned in Washington Irving's "Astoria." He was the only survivor who escaped from the vessel previous to her being blown up, the rest of the unfortunate crew having been butchered on board, or blown up with the ship. It was impossible to obtain a clear narrative of this melancholy event, as no white man lived to tell the tale.

Yellow-cum is the wealthiest man of his tribe. His property consists principally of slaves and

ioquas, a small shell found at Cape Flattery, and only there, in great abundance. These shells are used as money, and a great traffic is carried on among all the tribes by means of them. They are obtained at the bottom of the sea, at a considerable depth, by means of a long pole stuck in a flat board about fifteen inches square. From this board a number of bone pieces project, which, when pressed down, enter the hollow ends of the shells, which seem to be attached to the bottom by their small ends. The shells stick on the pieces, and are thus brought to the surface. They are from an inch and a half to two inches in length, and are white, slender, and hollow, and tapering to a point; slightly curved, and about the size of an ordinary tobacco-pipe stem. They are valuable in proportion to their length, and their value increases according to a fixed ratio, forty shells being the standard number to extend a fathom's length; which number, in that case, is equal in value to a beaver skin; but if thirty-nine be found large enough to make the fathom, it would be worth two beavers' skins; if thirty-eight, three skins; and so on, increasing one beaver skin for every shell less than the standard number.

Yellow-cum presented me with a pair of ear

ornaments of these shells, consisting of seventy or eighty shells in each. His wealth also partly consisted of sea otter skins, which are the most valuable fur found on the North American coast, their usual value in the tariff being twelve blankets; two blankets being equal to a gun; tobacco and ammunition and other things in proportion. The blanket is the standard by which the value of all articles on the north-west coast is calculated. Independent of his wealth, he possesses vast influence over all the tribes, and has become head chief from his own personal prowess and ability, and not from any hereditary claim to that dignity. It may be adduced, as a proof of the courage of this chief, and of his personal confidence, that I saw him at the fort surrounded by, and in cheerful conversation with, several of the chiefs of the Clallums, with whom he had often been engaged in deadly conflict. His prudence, however, led him to remain inside the fort after nightfall.

I visited the lodges of the Eus-ā-nich Indians, who were on a visit. The chief was very rich, and had eight wives with him. I made him understand, by showing him some sketches, that I wished to take his likeness. This was, however,

opposed so violently by his ladies, that I was glad to escape out of reach of their tongues, as they were all chattering together, while he sat like a Grand Turk, evidently flattered by the interest they showed for his welfare. A few days afterwards, I met the chief some distance from his camp, and alone, when he willingly consented to let me take his likeness upon my giving him a piece of tobacco.

In one of my daily excursions, I was particularly struck by the ugliness of an Indian whom I met. Upon inquiry, I found he was Shawstun, the head chief of the Sinahōmās. He inquired very earnestly if my sketching him would not involve the risk of his dying; and after I had finished the sketch, and given him a piece of tobacco, he held it up for some moments, and said it was a small recompense for risking his life. He followed me afterwards for two or three days, begging of me to destroy the picture; and at last, to get rid of him, I made a rough copy of it, which I tore up in his presence, pretending that it was the original.

I remained on Vancouver's Island until the 10th of June; and perhaps it would be as well, before my taking leave of it, to give a general sum-

mary of the information I acquired, from personal observation, and from the gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company, respecting the characteristics of the different tribes inhabiting these regions.

The Indians south of the Columbia River tattoo themselves below the mouth, which gives a light blue appearance to the countenance. Those at the mouth of the Columbia, and for a hundred miles up it, as well as those at Puget's Sound, and the Straits of De Fuea, and at the southern part of Vancouver's Island, have their heads flattened down in their infancy, as represented in the sketches of the Chinook tribe. Those inhabiting the north part of the island have their heads compressed into a conical shape during infancy. This is done by means of a bandage, which is wound round the forehead, and gradually tightened, until the head becomes of the required shape.

The next tribe lying north of these on the continent are called by the voyageurs "Babines," or Big-lips, from the fact of the females having their under lips enlarged by the insertion of a piece of wood. A small, slender piece of bone is inserted through the under lip of the infant, from below upwards, and is gradually enlarged, until a flat piece of wood three inches long, and an inch and

a half wide, has caused the lip to protrude to a frightful extent, the protrusion increasing with age. Great importance is attached to the size of the lip, as it constitutes the standard of female beauty; it also marks the difference between native free women and their slaves.

When the stick is removed on any occasion the lip drops down to the chin, presenting one of the most disgusting spectacles imaginable.

The men sometimes wear a ring through the nose, formed of bone, or brass if they can get it; but the practice is not universal. They wear a cap made of the fibres of cedar-bark, woven very finely together, and a blanket made from the wool of the mountain sheep; they are very valuable, and take years in making. For one which I procured with great difficulty, I had to pay five pounds of tobacco, ten charges of ammunition, one blanket, one pound of beads, two check shirts, and one ounce of vermilion.

The next tribes, still more north than the last, insert beads of various colours, two-thirds of their depth, into the whole length of the upper lip, giving it the appearance of so much bead work.

In the interior of New Caledonia, which is east of Vancouver's Island and north of the Columbia,

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among the tribe called "Taw-wa-tins," who are also Babines; and also among other tribes in their neighbourhood, the custom prevails of burning the bodies, with circumstances of peculiar barbarity to the widows of the deceased. The dead body of the husband is laid naked upon a large heap of resinous wood, his wife is then placed upon the body and covered over with a skin; the pile is then lighted, and the poor woman is compelled to remain until she is nearly suffocated, when she is allowed to descend as best she can through the smoke and flames. No sooner, however, does she reach the ground, than she is expected to prevent the body from becoming distorted by the action of the fire on the muscles and sinews; and whenever such an event takes place she must, with her bare hands, restore the burning corpse to its proper position; her person being the whole time exposed to the scorching effects of the intense heat. Should she fail in the due performance of this indispensable rite, from weakness or the intensity of her pain, she is held up by some one until the body is consumed. A continual singing and beating of drums is kept up throughout the ceremony, which drowns her cries. Afterwards she must collect the unconsumed pieces of bone

and ashes and put them into a bag made for the purpose, which she has to carry on her back for three years ; remaining for the time a slave to her husband's relations, and being neither allowed to wash nor comb herself for the whole time, so that she soon becomes a most disgusting object. At the expiration of the three years, a feast is given by her tormentors, who invite all the friends and relations of her and themselves. At the commencement they deposit with great ceremony the remains of the burnt dead in a box, which they affix to the top of a high pole, and dance around it. The widow is then stripped naked and smeared from head to foot with fish oil, over which one of the by-standers throws a quantity of swan's down, covering her entire person. She is then obliged to dance with the others. After all this is over she is free to marry again, if she have the inclination, and courage enough to venture on a second risk of being roasted alive and the subsequent horrors.

It has often happened that a widow who has married a second husband, in the hope perhaps of not outliving him, committed suicide in the event of her second husband's death, rather than undergo a second ordeal. I was unable to learn

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any explanation of the motive for these cruel rites, and can only account for them in the natural selfishness, laziness, and cruelty of the Indians, who probably hope by these means to render their wives more attentive to their personal ease and comfort ; whilst, at the same time, it secures them from assassination either by a jealous or an errant spouse.

CHAP. XVI.

Searching for a lost Wife. — A simple Ruse. — A Harvest of Fish. — The Legend of the Rock. — The little Fisherman. — Battle of the Dwarfs and Geese. — A Ride on a Whale. — An Indian Niobe. — Naming the Dead. — Licensed to get Drunk. — Settling old Scores. — Stealing a Skull. — Punishing Deserters. — An Amateur Surgeon. — Scarcity of Wood. — Rattlesnakes in Plenty. — The Grasshopper and Wolf. — The Magic Salmon Leap.

June 9th. — THE Company's vessel which annually brings out goods and despatches for the interior having arrived, Mr. Finlayson was anxious to forward the letters on, and knowing that I was soon to start on my return, he asked me if I would take them to Fort Vancouver. I was very anxious to do anything in my power in return for the hospitality and kindness I had received, and accordingly commenced my preparations for starting on the following morning. An old Nasqually chief had comè down to the coast to look for a favourite wife who had been carried off by some of his predatory neighbours, and, as he supposed, had

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been sold somewhere in Vancouver's Island. But not being successful in his search, he was now returning, and I engaged to go with him. He was very glad of my company, as my being the bearer of despatches would be a certain protection for the whole party from whatever Indians we might meet. I asked him how he had managed to escape on coming down, and he showed me an old piece of newspaper, which he said he held up whenever he met with strange Indians, and that they, supposing it to be a letter for Fort Victoria, had allowed him to pass without molestation.

The gentlemen in charge of the various posts, have frequent occasion to send letters, sometimes for a considerable distance, when it is either inconvenient or impossible for them to fit out a canoe with their own men to carry it. In such cases the letter is given to an Indian, who carries it as far as suits his convenience and safety. He then sells the letter to another, who carries it until he finds an opportunity of selling it to advantage ; it is thus passed on and sold until it arrives at its destination, gradually increasing in value according to the distance, and the last possessor receiving the reward for its safe delivery. In this manner letters are frequently sent with

perfect security, and with much greater rapidity than could be done otherwise.

June 10th.—Early in the morning I embarked with the chief, a wife he had brought with him, and two slaves: we paddled on all day, and made good progress. In the evening we encamped under a high rock, where we found some goose eggs, of which we made a hearty supper.

June 11th.—We came to a rocky island, which was covered with thousands of seal, playing and basking in the sun. We shot several of them, as the Indians highly prize the blubber as food; but it was far too oily for my stomach. I, however, shot a white-headed eagle, and roasted him for my supper, and found him particularly good eating.

June 12th.—In the evening we arrived at an Indian village, where we stopped for the night; the whole surface of the water at this place seemed to be alive with the gambles of a small silvery fish, dancing and glistening in the rays of the setting sun. This fish is about the size of our sardines, and is caught in immense numbers; it is called there ulé kun, and is much prized on account of its delicacy and extraordinary fatness. When dried this fish will burn from one end to the other with a clear steady light like a candle.

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There were several canoes out fishing in the evening, and they caught them with astonishing rapidity: this is done by means of an instrument about seven feet long, the handle is about three feet, into which is fixed a curved wooden blade about four feet, something the shape of a sabre, with the edge at the back. In this edge, at the distance of about an inch and a half, are inserted sharp bone teeth, about an inch long. The Indian stands in the canoe and, holding it as he would a paddle, draws it edgewise with both hands rapidly through the dense mass of fish, which are so thick that every tooth will strike a fish. One knock across the thwarts safely deposits them in the bottom of the canoe. This is done with such rapidity that they never use nets for this description of fishing.

June 13th.—To-day as we neared the shore we perceived two deer grazing, which the Indians were anxious to go after, but as we had already lost some time on the way I was more anxious to proceed. While at a very long distance I fired my double-barrelled gun at them, more in the hopes of driving them away than of killing them, when, much to the astonishment of both myself and the Indians, one of them fell dead. The chief looked

very hard at me and then examined the gun, apparently in doubt whether the magic was in the gun or myself. I said nothing, but took it all as a matter of course, whilst the Indians evidently looked upon me as a person not to be trifled with. We had a splendid supper that evening on our venison, and I took good care not to test the qualities of my gun again before them, although they often asked me.

June 14th.—Whilst passing an isolated rock, standing six or seven feet high above the water, and a little more than four feet in circumference, the old chief asked me if I knew what it had originally been. On my replying in the negative, he told me the following legend:—

“It is many moons since a Nasqually family lived near this spot. It consisted of a widow with four sons,—one of them was by her first husband, the other three by the second. The three younger sons treated their elder brother with great unkindness, refusing him any share of the produce of their hunting and fishing; he, on the contrary, wishing to conciliate them, always gave them a share of his spoils. He, in fact, was a great medicine-man, although this was unknown to them, and, being tired of their harsh treatment, which

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no kindness on his part seemed to soften, he at length resolved to retaliate. He accordingly one day entered the lodge, where they were feasting, and told them that there was a large seal a short distance off. They instantly seized their spears and started in the direction he pointed out, and, coming up to the animal, the eldest drove his spear into it. This seal was 'a great medicine,' a familiar of the elder brother, who had himself created him for the occasion. The foremost of them had no sooner driven in his spear than he found it impossible to disengage his hand from the handle, or to draw it out; the two others drove in their spears with the like effect. The seal now took to the water, dragging them after it, and swam far out to sea. Having travelled on for many miles they saw an island in the distance, towards which the seal made. On nearing the shore they found, for the first time, they could remove their hands from their spears. They accordingly landed, and supposing themselves in some enemy's country, they hid themselves in a clump of bushes from observation. While lying concealed, they saw a diminutive canoe coming round a point in the distance, paddled by a very little man, who, when he came opposite to where they were, anchored his boat with a stone

attached to a long line, without perceiving them. He now sprang over the side, and diving down, remained a long time under water. At length he rose to the surface, and brought with him a large fish, which he threw into the boat: this he repeated several times, each time looking in to count the fish he had caught. The three brothers being very hungry, one of them offered to swim out while the little man was under water, and steal one of the fish. This he safely accomplished before the return of the fisherman; but the little fellow no sooner returned with another fish than he discovered that one of those already caught was missing, and, stretching out his hand, he passed it slowly along the horizon, until it pointed directly to their place of concealment. He now drew up his anchor and paddled to the shore, and immediately discovered the three brothers, and being as miraculously strong as he was diminutive, he tied their hands and feet together and, throwing them into his canoe, jumped in and paddled back in the direction from whence he had come. Having rounded the distant point, where they had first descried him, they came to a village inhabited by a race of people as small as their captor, their houses, boats, and utensils being all in proportion to themselves.

“The three brothers were then taken out and thrown, bound as they were, into a lodge, while a council was convened to decide upon their fate. During the sitting of the council an immense flock of birds, resembling geese, but much larger, pounced down upon the inhabitants, and commenced a violent attack. These birds had the power of throwing their sharp quills like the porcupine, and although the little warriors fought with great valour, they soon became covered with the piercing darts and all sunk insensible on the ground. When all resistance had ceased, the birds took to flight and disappeared.

“The brothers had witnessed the conflict from their place of confinement, and with much labour had succeeded in releasing themselves from their bonds, when they went to the battle ground, and commenced pulling the quills from the apparently lifeless bodies; but no sooner had they done this, than all instantly returned to consciousness. When all of them had become well again they wished to express their gratitude to their preservers, and offered to grant whatsoever they should desire. The brothers requested to be sent back to their own country. A council was accordingly called to decide on the easiest mode of doing so, and they eventually

determined upon employing a whale for the purpose. The brothers were then seated on the back of the monster, and proceeded in the direction of Nasqually. However, when they had reached about half way, the whale began to think what a fool he was for carrying them instead of turning them into porpoises, and letting them swim home themselves. Now the whale is considered as a 'Soch-a-li-ti-yah,' or Great Spirit, although not the same as the 'Hias-Soch-a-li-ti-yah,' or Great High Spirit, possessing greater powers than all other animals put together, and no sooner had he thought upon the matter than he carried it into effect. This, accordingly, is the way that the porpoises first came into existence, and accounts for their being constantly at war with the seals, one of which species was the cause of their misfortunes. After the three brothers had so strangely disappeared, their mother came down to the beach and remained there for days, watching for their return and bewailing their absence with tears. Whilst thus engaged one day the whale happened to pass by, and, taking pity on her distress, turned her into that stone."

I could not observe any very special peculiarity in the formation of this rock while paddling past

it in a canoe; and, at least from the points of observation presented to my eye, no resemblance to the human figure, such as the conclusion of the legend might lead us to anticipate, appeared to be traceable. Standing, however, as this rock does, entirely isolated, and without any other being visible for miles around, it has naturally become an object of special note to the Indians, and is not uncalculated, from its solitary position, to be made the scene of some of the fanciful creations of their superstitious credulity.

June 15th. — We arrived at Nasqually, where I procured horses to take me to the Cowlitz River. I again crossed Prairie de Bute and Mud Mountain, and arrived at my old friend Kiscox's lodge on the evening of the third day; but, to my astonishment, I found him and his family unusually distant in their manners, and the children even running away from me and hiding. At last he asked if I had not taken the likeness of a woman when last among them. I said that I had, and mentioned her name, Caw wacham, alluding to the portrait of a woman and child, No. 10, page 205; a dead silence ensued, nor could I get the slightest answer to my inquiries. Upon leaving the lodge, I met a half-breed, who told me that Caw wacham was dead, and