

RETURN TO

which is the same name by which his successor was known when I visited it. This tribe was the first to find out the way of manufacturing the "hootchino," or fire water. It had been acquired by them from a soldier who had been discharged, or who had deserted from the United States garrison which had been stationed for a short time near this point. Almost every Indian lodge in the camp possessed a still. This was generally made up of coal oil cans, the worm being long hollow tubes of kelp, a species of seaweed, joined together. In their drunken carousals recourse was generally had to their fire-arms to settle their disputes. This chief, Kinnanook, with two of his men, had been brought to us at Metlakahtla on one occasion severely wounded. He had received three bullets in his side, each of which had found a separate exit. For weeks he was unable to lie down, and could only rest and sleep by inclining forward on a form placed across his bed, which was on the floor. When at length he was so far restored as to be enabled to return to his tribe, he carried with him quite a number of pieces of shattered bone which had been extracted from his wounds. Being as yet a heathen, he feared that any medicine man or sorcerer obtaining a scrap of bone belonging to him could by witchcraft accomplish his destruction. In consequence of the care and kindness shown on that occasion, I was invited to his lodge, and hospitably entertained. His father, a venerable-looking old chief named Andah, was still living. His hair was as white as wool, which is but seldom seen among Indians. He was evidently well cared for by his daughter, whom I had known previously, as she had made an unhappy union with a Nishka chief, which caused her on one occasion to make an attempt on her own life. This old chief, her father, died some time after my visit. He had adopted the name of "Ebbits," from the captain of some ship whose acquaintance he had made and whom he admired. Before his death he had a great totem pole prepared and erected, and on a

1940
20
1860

QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

tablet near this totem is inscribed, "To the memory of Ebbits, Head Chief of the Tongas, who died in 1880, aged 100 years." The Haidas who accompanied me numbered some thirty canoes, and they were all received and lodged in the camp. We arrived on the Saturday, and on the following day, being Sunday, I was enabled to conduct two services and a Sunday school at mid-day. Here again I had the Indians of three languages present. I preached in Tsimshian and in Chinook. Knowing the serious mistakes which some speakers have fallen into when using Chinook, I have always declined to use it except when unavoidable. It is related of the late Bishop of Columbia, Dr. Hills, that on his first visit to Nanaimo the Indians assembled to meet him, when he addressed them in English, which was translated to them in Chinook. "Children of the forest," he began, which was rendered, "Tenas tilicum mitlite kopa stick," or "Little men stationed among the sticks." After such an introduction, the Bishop must have been discouraged by the lack of interest manifested by the Indians in his address. It no doubt conveyed a very different impression to that intended by the good Bishop.

I was thankful at the close of the day that I had thus had an opportunity of proclaiming the message of salvation to the three nationalities—Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit—in a camp where heathenism had so long held undisputed sway. As I had learned from Chief Edenshaw that the Haidas could not leave for a day or two, I determined to pay a flying visit to Metlakahtla to greet our good friend, Admiral Prevost, who had arrived on a visit after my departure. Finding that Edenshaw and Cowhoe were both desirous to see the Admiral also, whom they had not met since the time when, as captain of H.M.S. *Virago*, he had threatened to shell their encampment for the destruction of the American schooner *Susan Sturges*, I invited them to accompany me. Accordingly, we embarked at midnight, and, favoured by a fair wind, we reached

1852

RETURN TO

Vancouver
1853

Metlakahtla early the following morning, having run some thirty-five miles. We found the camp in holiday dress, with flags flying and Indians rejoicing at the visit of the Admiral. Together with my Haida friends, I joined in the welcome, which was warmly reciprocated by the Admiral. I introduced Chief Edenshaw to him, and reminded him of the difficulty he had when, as captain of H.M.S. *Virago*, he visited this chief's camp on Virago Sound. Indeed, it was from this visit that the Sound had received its name. Edenshaw and his tribe had been involved in the capture of the *Susan Sturges* and her crew, as well as in other raids. He could, at that time, boast of possessing a larger number of slaves than any other chief on the Islands. But now he no longer feared to face a naval officer, as he had learned not only to obey the law himself, but to lead his tribe to do the same. The Admiral was delighted to learn that the Haidas were abandoning the war-path and devoting themselves to follow the path of peace. We re-embarked early on the morning of the following day (Tuesday), and, favoured by a breeze from the south-east, which gradually increased to a squall, we reached Tongas at noon. As we approached the shore, we were surprised to find that of some thirty Haida canoes which we had left drawn up on the beach, not one was now to be seen. We at once apprehended mischief. Our fears were increased on seeing canoes of the Tongas who appeared outside their lodges with their faces blackened.

Instructing the Haida chiefs to remain in the canoe, prepared to put off at once, I walked up to the chief's house, and, entering, inquired the cause of the disappearance of the Haidas. I was informed that after I had left at midnight on the Sunday, one of their men had brought out some "hoochino," or "fire water," and had dealt it out to his Haida guests. He then offered to sell a quantity and found many purchasers. They continued drinking until almost all of them were intoxicated. In this state

QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

a Haida entered the chief's house, he being absent at the time, and, seizing a seat, hurled it at the chief's old father. He might have killed him had the seat struck him on the head, but fortunately he was able to ward off the blow, but, in so doing, his arm and shoulder were badly bruised and lacerated. Had Kinnanook been in the camp at the time, he would have shot his father's assailant at sight. This would have caused the Haidas to have taken to their guns, and much loss of life would have ensued on both sides, as not many years previously the Haidas had made a raid on this camp, and after many had been killed on either side the Haidas had succeeded in capturing a number whom they carried off into slavery. Fortunately there were several of the Haidas who had refused the liquor and remained sober. One of these, a sub-chief, instantly seized and ejected the offender. Then, calling several of his friends to his aid, he brought a peace-offering of fifty trading blankets and a new gun, which he laid before the old chief. This done, they called on all who were sufficiently sober to aid in launching the canoes, and, hurriedly shipping their freight and effects, they cast in those who were unable to care for themselves, and put off to sea, so that before the dawn of the following day they had left the Tongas camp far behind. Thus the few who had remained sober had saved the situation, and wiped out the disgrace by the timely peace-offering thus made. Nevertheless, as I reminded those of them who had gathered around me to relate the grievance, the mischief had originated with themselves in introducing the liquor. The daughter of the injured chief agreed with me, and expressed her satisfaction that Kinnanook was away at the time, as, being of a hasty temper, he would at once have sought revenge for the insult and injury inflicted on his father in his own camp and dwelling.

Without further delay we re-embarked in search of the fleet, but did not come up with them for two days. When

RETURN TO

at length we sighted them they were emerging from the bays and shelters where they had encamped. The majority of them had their faces blackened, and were evidently prepared to fight had they been followed. As the weather was unsettled, we put into a small harbour near Cape Chacon, a point which has latterly become widely known as being the starting-place of the Alaskan boundary line. Here we remained weather bound for a fortnight. Day by day passed without any abatement of the frequent squalls from the south-west. At length our food supply having run out, we were compelled to gather shell-fish and crabs for our sustenance. The time was not lost, however; I found special opportunity whilst thus encamped with the Haidas, both in the acquirement of the language, and also in imparting instruction to them. As Chief Edenshew was a fluent Tsimshian speaker, he was able to assist me in this. Some of them learned to sing songs of praise during that period which I often heard afterwards when in camp.

At length, at daybreak one morning, there was a stir in the camp. I arose hurriedly, and found all busy launching canoes and embarking their freight. It was a fair morning, but on looking at my aneroid I found it had fallen during the night, and the dark clouds which were rising in the south-west betokened bad weather. It is a clear run of some forty miles across Dixon's Entrance from Cape Chacon to Massett. It was just 4.30 in the morning when we started, and with a beam wind for the first five hours we made good progress. We had just reached a point in mid-ocean, when a strong south-westerly squall burst upon us from the Pacific. It was accompanied by a driving rain, and in a short time every sail was lost to view. The sea arose, and great waves crested with foam threatened continually to swamp our frail craft. As the large boxes of fish grease broke loose from their fastenings, they were tossed about, until their lids were loosened and fell off. Then every wave that struck us caused the grease to splash forth over every-

QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

thing. I was soaked with it from head to foot. When the storm broke, I had divested myself of all but my under-clothing, and put on my life-belt, which I had provided myself with for long canoe journeys.

The Chief Edenshew, who was a good seaman and was steering, reminded me that it would only prolong my misery if we were capsized, as I could never reach the shore. I reminded him that none of the bodies of those lately lost had been found, whereas a life-belt would probably have floated anyone wearing it to the shore, whether dead or alive. This statement satisfied him, as he concluded that should we be wrecked my body would enable those finding it to realise their fate, as well as mine. Just then the chief's son, Cowhoe, arose in the canoe, and called upon us to assist him in casting the grease boxes, with what grease remained in them, overboard. A huge wave struck us at the time, and he was well nigh gone, but by clinging to the thwart he was saved. We were all opposed to casting the grease overboard, as it not only ballasted the canoe, but also the grease, as it was washed overboard smoothed the waves, and prevented them from breaking over us in full force. By bailing out the water with buckets as it washed into the canoe, and with but two feet of sail to the wind, we ploughed onwards. Every wave threatened to engulf us, and as we could only see a few yards ahead, we feared we might be running towards the dangerous shoal to the north-east of the islands named Rose Spit. It was about nine-thirty when the squall struck us, and at about one hour after noon it began to lift, and we found to our great relief that we were not far out of our course. We were also enabled to sight some of the other canoes which had outlived the squall, though they had lost in the property which they had been compelled to cast overboard. Large numbers of the Haidas came down to the beach to see us land, and with them came also my old friend the trader: "Whatever caused you to venture on the ocean in such weather as this?" he

QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

inquired. "Our provisions ran short," I informed him. "Well," said he, "you are a desperate man. You are determined to die in the water." "Squire," I replied, "how would you like to be encamped on the rocky shores of Alaska for days without any food but shell-fish?" I asked. "Not at all," he replied, "yet to be drowned is worse"; and, having thus declared himself, he turned and walked off grumbling about "desperate men" and "great dangers." But we realised that He who had calmed the angry waves of the Galilean sea had been with us, and His blessed assurance, "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid," encouraged us when otherwise heart and strength were failing.

CHAPTER XIV

FIRST VISIT TO SKIDEGATE

"Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
Broadcast it o'er the land.
Thou knowest not which may thrive,
The late or early sown;
Grace keeps the chosen germ alive,
When and wherever strown."

—MONTGOMERY.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."—*Ecclesiastes* xi. 1.

ASSOCIATION and companionship with many of the Haidas when travelling with them, both in storm and sunshine, had led to a measure of mutual confidence. Like most Indians, they were pleased to see that the white man could endure hardship just as well as they themselves could. I had travelled with them in their canoes, had shared in their dangers, had partaken of their peculiar dishes, and by so doing I had gained an influence of which the medicine men and their followers were jealous. Consequently I was not greatly surprised when secretly informed one night by a young chief that the medicine men were plotting to take my life. They had used all their enchantments, and had even succeeded in obtaining some articles of clothing belonging to me over which they had exhausted all their orgies in vain. And now they had summoned all the young men to drink of the salt water in order to ascertain if all were faithful to them. This man, in order to escape

FIRST VISIT TO SKIDEGATE

the penalty, had hidden in the forest, from which he had now ventured under cover of the darkness to apprise me of their designs. They discovered him, however, on the following day, and, having bound him hand and foot, he was carried down to the sea, and submerged again and again until almost drowned, in order to compel him to swallow a sufficient quantity of the salt water. It is believed and asserted by the necromancers that the salt water will kill and expel the evil spirit which is causing trouble in the camp, and should anyone shrink from the ordeal the accusation is sure to fall upon him. Hence the friends and relations of this young chief were the most eager to discover him, and compel him to undergo the test, in order to deliver him from the ban of the medicine men, which often resulted fatally to the accused.

This practice of drinking large quantities of salt water is not only followed to divert suspicion of guilt when trouble is abroad in the camp, but also when about to set out on a warlike expedition. In the war that occurred between the Northern Haidas and Tsimsheans some time prior to the establishment of Missions on the coast, the story is told that when the Haidas of Massett determined to attack the Tsimsheans in return for injuries inflicted upon some of their people by the latter, they banded together and began to drink sea water. After drinking this for six nights, they set out to war in ten canoes. When they reached the mainland, some stopped at Quado in Metlakahtla Inlet. Whilst concealed there, they attacked a number of canoes which were passing to Kshwahtlins and Kloiyah, two fishing stations near to the present site of Prince Rupert, and in one day these Haidas captured and destroyed seven canoes and killed about twenty-eight of the Tsimsheans. This was in revenge for the injuries inflicted by the Tsimsheans on them in the early summer, when they had visited Port Simpson to trade. Latterly I have seen the sea water drunk by the Haida hunters when about to embark in quest of the

FIRST VISIT TO SKIDEGATE

fur seal and sea otter. It was just at this time, when I was harassed and discouraged by the evil devices of the medicine men, that a little incident occurred which served to encourage me. The young chief Cowhoe came to me one day, bringing with him a little book. "Some years ago," he said, "when the fighting fire-ship came here to punish us for having seized the American schooner, and to set the crew whom we had enslaved free, the captain called me to him, and spoke kindly to me, though I did not know what he said, as he spoke in the white man's tongue. Then he brought me this book, which he wrote in before he handed it to me. I have kept it carefully in my box ever since, and now I have brought it to you so that you may tell me what it is, and what the words are which he has written in it."

I took the book, and found it was a copy of the New Testament as published by the "Naval and Military Bible Society," London. On the fly-leaf was written: "To the Indian Boy, Edenshew's son. I trust that the bread cast upon the waters will soon be found.—James C. Prevost, Captain, H.M.S. Satellite, 1859."

"How wonderful!" I exclaimed, as I looked from the book to its owner, and realised that the good captain's desire and prayer were being fulfilled. Not just as he would have had it, "soon," but just as it had been promised, "after many days." For eighteen years had passed away, and now at length the bread was being found indeed. "Why, this," I said, "is just the good news that I have been telling you and your people. This is the word of 'Sha-nung-Etlageda,' the word of the Chief Above!"

"Is it indeed?" he exclaimed. "Is it really so, and I never knew it. I was foolish then, I was but a small boy, and I had almost forgotten it. But your arrival, and your words seem to have reminded me of it. I must endeavour to learn to read it now."

I took it out of his hand again, and turned to a text I

*There is
not
what
happened*

1859

1859

*1859
18
1877*