

Fraser canon. Here and there upon the river we saw Indians in their Chinook canoes—most of which were dug-outs made of tree-trunks. There are at least eight different stocks of Indians in the Province of British Columbia, and their languages, customs, folk-lore, and ethnology furnish an interesting study for scholars. Six of these stocks, with many subdivisions, live around the coast. The male coast-Indian is known as a Siwash; the woman is called a Klutchman.

The Indians

one sees in British Columbia bear little resemblance to the Noble Red Man of Fenimore Cooper's novels. They are almost as undersized and as brown as the Japanese, unwarlike, gentle to a degree, good-humored, unpicturesque, flat-nosed, and with faces of most uncomely width. We had seen many of them in Victoria and Vancouver, and came across them at frequent intervals at the stopping-places among the mountains and in their villages by the Fraser's banks. Their women, like those of the Maori, affect bright colors. They wear no head-gear, and their tresses—which are as black and straight and glossy as those of the Chinese—are worn with severe and comely plainness in front and fall in a thick plait down their backs. They carry their papooses (babies) slung in quaint 'moss-bags,' or miniature basket-cradles across their backs. The weight of babe and cradle and all is sustained by a strap or band passing, not over the mother's shoulders, but across her broad, flat forehead.

The Little Papoose

is fat, squat, and quiet. His body, arms, and legs are tightly bound and swathed after the Italian peasant fashion and then fastened down in his tiny cradle so that he cannot wriggle a muscle but those of his head and neck. Like the Chinese baby he takes life very seriously. He has all the taciturnity of his tribe, and he does not chatter and chuckle and crow and nod and wink

'As if his head were as full of kinks
And curious riddles as any sphinx.'

But the Indian mother can set it on the other side of the ledger that he is not, like the paleface papoose, a pink bundle of April weather—of beaming sunshine and sudden tears and long-drawn wailing by day, and a capricious Terror that splits the mystic stillness of the midnight hour with riotous and stormy yelling.

Here and there down the valley of the Fraser you run past, or stop at, Indian villages, and on little elevations near the banks you see the tribesmen's quaint and pathetic little cemeteries: small God's-acres that recall those of the Maori, with strange—sometimes grotesque—carved posts, and wooden crosses, and tall poles bearing the faded and tattered remnants of what were probably once upon a time gaily colored flags. Mission City, on the Fraser—43 miles from Vancouver—is so named because it was, and still remains, the seat of an important Catholic mission to the scattered Indian population round about. The 'city' is named for the future. It is in reality a small town. Its 'lions' are the mission buildings; the branch line of rail that goes away south through the mountains to the cities on the Puget Sound and distant San Francisco, and the 40,000 acres of rich, fat bottom-land that were won from the Fraser's overflow by a system of dykes that recalls to the passing traveller's mind reminiscences of *Pas de Calais* and the Netherlands. Close by the town, on a pleasant sunny rise, stands the Mission. It is a collection of large buildings on a great terrace with green fields and fruit patches sloping away towards the eternal snows. In the middle stands the church. It is flanked, at some distance, on the one side by a college for Indian boys, on the other side by a convent in which the minds and hearts of the little brown maidens are trained to knowledge and virtue and their hands to useful domestic arts. Other large buildings rest upon the green, sunny slope behind.

The Oblate Fathers are in charge of

The Indian Missions

—and, in fact, of practically all the parochial work in Canada from and including Winnipeg to the Pacific, and from the American boundary-line all through British Columbia and up to the borders of Alaska. 'They're the genuine article,' said a non-Catholic British Columbian to me, as he expatiated with great enthusiasm upon their work; 'none of your feather-bed missionaries—not much. Cultivated men, too; but they live with the Indians, on Indian fare—and precious little of it at times. Yes, sir; and they've saved the redskins from rum and low whites, and gathered them into their villages and instructed them and civilised them and turned them into honest Christians.' And then he told

how, on the death of the late Bishop Durieu (of New Westminster), a few years ago, thousands of Catholic Indians and chiefs from all over the Province assembled to do honor to his memory and to swell the historic funeral procession of all creeds and classes that did mourning around his grave. There are in the mainland of British Columbia over 15,000 Catholic Indians—about half of the total Catholic population, which, in turn, is rather more than one-third of the general population. Vancouver Island (which is a separate diocese) numbers among its Catholic population some 10,000 souls. A

Curious Little Bit of History

links the story of the Catholic Indian missions of Canada's Far West with those which the intrepid pathfinders Fathers Jogues, Marquette, Brebeuf, La Salle, Joliet, and other brave and noble men who founded missions in the seventeenth century along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes. The connecting link is furnished by Oregon, one of the Pacific States of the American Union. Between it and British Columbia lies the rugged and mountainous State of Washington. Oregon is, like its two northern neighbors, a beautiful country of snow-clad heights, dense forests, mighty water courses, and fertile fields. In the early years of the nineteenth century John Jacob Astor established the Pacific Fur Company—a rival to the Hudson Bay Company—and built a fort and factory at Astoria, in the north-western corner of Oregon, where the mighty volume of the Columbian River empties itself into the ocean. It so happened that, in 1811, some Canadian Catholic Indians took part in the fur-hunting expeditions of the Pacific Fur Company. Some of these were Iroquois—descendants of the fierce and intractable tribesmen who, in 1646, gave Canada its first martyr (Father Jogues), who were for generations the terror of successive French administrations, but whose present-day representatives are, in their homes on the banks of the Grand River in Ontario, the most industrious and progressive of all the Indian tribes of North America. The Pacific Fur Company's Catholic Indians took up their abode among the Flatheads of Oregon and imparted to them some of the principles of the Christian faith. The half-converted Flatheads became eager for more instruction. In 1830, and again in 1832, they sent delegates to St. Louis to ask for Catholic priests. In 1834, at the instance of Dr. John McLaughlin, Governor of the Hudson Bay Company's posts (who soon afterwards became himself a Catholic), the Canadians of the Wallamette Valley sent a delegation on a similar errand to Quebec. Archbishop Signay sent them Father Francis Norbert Blanchet. He celebrated the first Mass in Oregon, at Fort Bend, on the banks of the Columbia, on October 14, 1838. Seven years later he was made bishop. Oregon city became his See. He brought to Oregon the Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur, and the Jesuit Fathers—one of whom was the renowned apostle of the Indians, Father de Smet. Among the early companions of Bishop Blanchet's labors was Father Modeste Demers, who was consecrated first Bishop of Vancouver in 1846, when it was separated from Oregon and erected into an episcopal See. And this was the link that bound together in a chain of continuity the labors of the Catholic missionaries for the Siwash Indians of the West in the nineteenth century with the arduous toil of the French Fathers for the red man of the eastern provinces in the spacious and more strenuous days of the seventeenth.

The early history of British Columbia and of Canada's great North-West was, until a comparatively recent date, practically the

History of the Fur Trade.

This was a vast monopoly which the Hudson Bay Company held from the days of Charles II. till it ceded its rights to the Canadian Government in 1870. As they pushed their forts and stations farther afield among the unexplored regions of the west and north, the Indians came from all around to barter their rich furs for the Company's excellent goods. It was for the Company, as for the Indians, a lucrative trade. The many and various languages spoken by the tribesmen, however, long proved a trial to the bartering operations of the Company's agents. The difficulty was, however, overcome by the invention of a sort of Volapuk, or universal Indian language, with a limited vocabulary made up of a mixture of French and Indian words. This hybrid tongue is called Chinook. It approaches more nearly to the dignity of a separate tongue than the 'pidgin English' of the Far East, and is, in British Columbia, the common medium of communication between the white man and the Indian and between Indians of the different stocks that inhabit the Province.