

Landesbibliothek Oldenburg

Digitalisierung von Drucken

A Voyage To The Pacific Ocean

Undertaken, By The Command Of His Majesty, For Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere. To Determine The Position and Extent of the West Side of North America; its Distance from Asia; and the Practicability of a Northern Passage to Europe. Performed Under The Direction Of Captians Cook, ...

Cook, James

London, 1784

Chap. III.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-1497

C H A P. III.

Manner of building the Houses in Nootka Sound.—Inside of them described.—Furniture and Utensils.—Wooden Images.—Employments of the Men.—Of the Women.—Food, animal and vegetable.—Manner of preparing it.—Weapons.—Manufactures and mechanic Arts.—Carving and Painting.—Canoes.—Implements for fishing and hunting.—Iron Tools.—Manner of procuring that Metal.—Remarks on their Language, and a Specimen of it.—Astronomical and nautical Observations made in Nootka Sound.

THE two towns or villages, mentioned in the course of my Journal, seem to be the only inhabited parts of the Sound. The number of inhabitants in both might be pretty exactly computed from the canoes that were about the ships the second day after our arrival. They amounted to about a hundred; which, at a very moderate allowance, must, upon an average, have held five persons each. But as there were scarcely any women, very old men, children, or youths amongst them at that time, I think it will rather be rating the number of the inhabitants of the two towns too low, if we suppose they could be less than four times the number of our visitors; that is, two thousand in the whole.

1778.
April.

The village at the entrance of the Sound stands on the side of a rising ground, which has a pretty steep ascent



1778.
April.

from the beach to the verge of the wood, in which space it is situated.

The houses are disposed in three ranges or rows, rising gradually behind each other; the largest being that in front, and the others less; besides a few straggling, or single ones, at each end. These ranges are interrupted or disjointed at irregular distances, by narrow paths, or lanes, that pass upward; but those which run in the direction of the houses, between the rows, are much broader. Though there be some appearance of regularity in this disposition, there is none in the single houses; for each of the divisions, made by the paths, may be considered either as one house, or as many; there being no regular or complete separation, either without or within, to distinguish them by. They are built of very long and broad planks*, resting upon the edges of each other, fastened or tied by withes of pine bark, here and there; and have only slender posts, or rather poles, at considerable distances, on the outside, to which they also are tied; but within are some larger poles placed aslant. The height of the sides and ends of these habitations, is seven or eight feet; but the back part is a little higher, by which means the planks, that compose the roof, slant forward, and are laid on loose, so as to be moved about; either to be put close, to exclude the rain; or, in fair weather, to be separated, to let in the light, and carry out the smoke. They are, however, upon the whole, miserable dwellings, and constructed with little care or ingenuity. For, though the side-planks be made to fit pretty closely in

* The habitations of the natives, more to the North upon this coast, where Behring's people landed in 1741, seem to resemble those of Nootka. Muller describes them thus: "Ces cabanes étoient de bois revetu de planches bien unies, & même enchanérées en quelques endroits." Muller, *Decouvertes*, p. 255.



some places, in others they are quite open; and there are no regular doors into them; the only way of entrance being either by a hole, where the unequal length of the planks has accidentally left an opening; or, in some cases, the planks are made to pass a little beyond each other, or overlap, about two feet asunder; and the entrance is in this space. There are also holes, or windows, in the sides of the houses to look out at; but without any regularity of shape or disposition; and these have bits of mat hung before them, to prevent the rain getting in.

1778.
April.

On the inside, one may frequently see from one end to the other of these ranges of building without interruption. For though, in general, there be the rudiments, or rather vestiges, of separations on each side, for the accommodation of different families, they are such as do not intercept the sight; and often consist of no more than pieces of plank, running from the side toward the middle of the house; so that, if they were complete, the whole might be compared to a long stable, with a double range of stalls, and a broad passage in the middle. Close to the sides, in each of these parts, is a little bench of boards, raised five or six inches higher than the rest of the floor, and covered with mats, on which the family sit and sleep. These benches are commonly seven or eight feet long, and four or five broad. In the middle of the floor, between them, is the fire-place, which has neither hearth nor chimney. In one house, which was in the end of a middle range, almost quite separated from the rest by a high close partition, and the most regular, as to design, of any that I saw, there were four of these benches; each of which held a single family, at a corner, but without any separation by boards; and the middle part of the house appeared common to them all.



1778.
April.

Their furniture consists chiefly of a great number of chests and boxes of all sizes, which are generally piled upon each other, close to the sides or ends of the house; and contain their spare garments, skins, masks, and other things which they set a value upon. Some of these are double, or one covers the other as a lid; others have a lid fastened with thongs; and some of the very large ones have a square hole, or scuttle, cut in the upper part; by which the things are put in and taken out. They are often painted black, studded with the teeth of different animals, or carved with a kind of freeze-work, and figures of birds or animals, as decorations. Their other domestic utensils are mostly square and oblong pails or buckets to hold water and other things; round wooden cups and bowls; and small shallow wooden troughs, about two feet long, out of which they eat their food; and baskets of twigs, bags of matting, &c. Their fishing implements, and other things also, lie or hang up in different parts of the house, but without the least order; so that the whole is a complete scene of confusion; and the only places that do not partake of this confusion are the sleeping-benches, that have nothing on them but the mats; which are also cleaner, or of a finer sort, than those they commonly have to sit on in their boats.

The nastiness and stench of their houses are, however, at least equal to the confusion. For, as they dry their fish within doors, they also gut them there, which, with their bones and fragments thrown down at meals, and the addition of other sorts of filth, lie every where in heaps, and are, I believe, never carried away, till it becomes troublesome, from their size, to walk over them. In a word, their houses are as filthy as hog-sties; every thing in and about them stinking of fish, train-oil, and smoke.



But, amidst all the filth and confusion that are found in the houses, many of them are decorated with images. These are nothing more than the trunks of very large trees, four or five feet high, set up singly, or by pairs, at the upper end of the apartment, with the front carved into a human face; the arms and hands cut out upon the sides, and variously painted; so that the whole is a truly monstrous figure. The general name of these images is *Klumma*; and the names of two particular ones, which stood abreast of each other, three or four feet asunder, in one of the houses, were *Natchkoa* and *Matsecta*. Mr. Webber's view of the inside of a Nootka house, in which these images are represented, will convey a more perfect idea of them than any description. A mat, by way of curtain, for the most part hung before them, which the natives were not willing, at all times, to remove; and when they did unveil them, they seemed to speak of them in a very mysterious manner. It should seem that they are, at times, accustomed to make offerings to them; if we can draw this inference from their desiring us, as we interpreted their signs, to give something to these images, when they drew aside the mats that covered them*. It was natural,
from

1778.
April.

* It should seem, that Mr. Webber was obliged to repeat his offerings pretty frequently, before he could be permitted to finish his drawing of these images. The following account is in his own words: "After having made a general view of their habitations, I sought for an inside, which might furnish me with sufficient matter to convey a perfect idea of the mode in which these people live. Such was soon found. While I was employed, a man approached me with a large knife in his hand, seemingly displeas'd, when he observed that my eyes were fixed on two representations of human figures, which were placed at one end of the apartment, carved on planks, of a gigantic proportion, and painted after their custom. However, I took as little notice of him as possible, and proceeded; to prevent which, he soon provided himself with a mat, and placed it in such a manner as to hinder my having any longer a sight of them. Being pretty certain that I could have no future opportunity to finish my drawing, and the object being too interesting to be omitted,
" I con-



1778.
April.

from these circumstances, for us to think that they were representatives of their gods, or symbols of some religious or superstitious object: and yet we had proofs of the little real estimation they were in; for with a small quantity of iron or brass, I could have purchased all the gods (if their images were such) in the place. I did not see one that was not offered to me; and I actually got two or three of the very smallest sort.

The chief employment of the men seems to be that of fishing, and killing land or sea animals, for the sustenance of their families; for we saw few of them doing any thing in the houses; whereas the women were occupied in manufacturing their flaxen or woollen garments, and in preparing the sardines for drying; which they also carry up from the beach in twig-baskets, after the men have brought them in their canoes. The women are also sent in the small canoes to gather muscles, and other shell-fish; and perhaps on some other occasions; for they manage these with as much dexterity as the men; who, when in the canoes with them, seem to pay little attention to their sex, by offering to relieve them from the labour of the paddle; nor, indeed, do they treat them with any particular respect or tenderness in other situations. The young men appeared to be the most indolent or idle set in this community; for they were either sitting about, in scattered companies, to bask

“ I considered that a little bribery might probably have some effect. Accordingly I
 “ made an offer of a button from my coat, which, being of metal, I thought they
 “ would be pleased with. This, instantly, produced the desired effect. For the mat
 “ was removed, and I was left at liberty to proceed as before. Scarcely had I seated
 “ myself, and made a beginning, when he returned and renewed his former practice,
 “ continuing it till I had parted with every single button; and when he saw that he
 “ had completely stripped me, I met with no farther obstruction.”

themselves



themselves in the sun; or lay wallowing in the sand upon the beach, like a number of hogs, for the same purpose, without any covering. But this disregard of decency was confined to the men. The women were always properly clothed, and behaved with the utmost propriety; justly deserving all commendation, for a bashfulness and modesty becoming their sex; but more meritorious in them, as the men seem to have no sense of shame. It is impossible, however, that we should have been able to observe the exact mode of their domestic life and employments, from a single visit (as the first was quite transitory) of a few hours. For it may be easily supposed, that, on such an occasion, most of the labour of all the inhabitants of the village would cease upon our arrival, and an interruption be given even to the usual manner of appearing in their houses, during their more remis or sociable hours, when left to themselves. We were much better enabled to form some judgment of their disposition, and, in some measure, even of their method of living, from the frequent visits so many of them paid us at our ships, in their canoes; in which, it should seem, they spend a great deal of time, at least in the summer season. For we observed that they not only eat and sleep frequently in them, but strip off their clothes, and lay themselves along to bask in the sun, in the same manner as we had seen practised at their village. Their canoes of the larger sort, are, indeed, sufficiently spacious for that purpose, and perfectly dry; so that, under shelter of a skin, they are, except in rainy weather, much more comfortable habitations than their houses.

Though their food, strictly speaking, may be said to consist of every thing animal or vegetable that they can procure, the quantity of the latter bears an exceedingly small proportion

1773.
April.



1778.
April.

tion to that of the former. Their greatest reliance seems to be upon the sea, as affording fish, muscles, and smaller shell-fish, and sea-animals. Of the first, the principal are herrings and sardines; the two species of bream formerly mentioned; and small cod. But the herrings and sardines are not only eaten fresh, in their season, but likewise serve as stores, which, after being dried and smoked, are preserved by being sewed up in mats, so as to form large bales, three or four feet square. It seems that the herrings also supply them with another grand resource for food; which is a vast quantity of roe, very curiously prepared. It is strewed upon, or, as it were, incrustated about, small branches of the Canadian pine. They also prepare it upon a long narrow sea-grass, which grows plentifully upon the rocks, under water. This *caviare*, if it may be so called, is kept in baskets or bags of mat, and used occasionally, being first dipped in water. It may be considered as the winter bread of these people, and has no disagreeable taste. They also eat the roe of some other fish, which, from the size of its grains, must be very large; but it has a rancid taste and smell. It does not appear that they prepare any other fish in this manner, to preserve them for any length of time. For though they split and dry a few of the bream and *chimæra*, which are pretty plentiful; they do not smoke them as the herrings and sardines.

The next article, on which they seem to depend for a large proportion of their food, is the large muscle; great abundance of which are found in the Sound. These are roasted in their shells, then stuck upon long wooden skewers, and taken off occasionally as wanted; being eat without any other preparation, though they often dip them in oil, as a sauce. The other marine productions, such as the smaller
shell-

shell-fish, though they contribute to increase the general flock, are by no means to be looked upon as a standing or material article of their food, when compared to those just mentioned.

1778.
April.

Of the sea-animals, the most common that we saw in use amongst them, as food, is the porpoise; the fat or rind of which, as well as the flesh, they cut in large pieces, and having dried them, as they do the herrings, eat them without any farther preparation. They also prepare a sort of broth from this animal, in its fresh state, in a singular manner, putting pieces of it in a square wooden vessel or bucket, with water, and then throwing heated stones into it. This operation they repeat till they think the contents are sufficiently stewed or seethed. They put in the fresh, and take out the other stones, with a cleft stick, which serves as tongs; the vessel being always placed near the fire, for that purpose*. This is a pretty common dish amongst them; and, from its appearance, seems to be strong, nourishing food. The oil which they procure from these and other sea-animals, is also used by them in great quantities; both sucking it alone, with a large scoop or spoon, made of horn; or mixing it with other food, as sauce.

It may also be presumed that they feed upon other sea-animals, such as seals, sea-otters, and whales; not only from the skins of the two first being frequent amongst them, but from the great number of implements, of all sorts, intended to destroy these different animals;

* This operation is represented by Mr. Webber, in his drawing of the inside of a Nootka house.



1778.
April.

which clearly points out their dependance upon them; though perhaps they do not catch them in great plenty at all seasons; which seemed to be the case while we lay there, as no great number of fresh skins, or pieces of the flesh, were seen.

The same might, perhaps, be said of the land-animals, which, though doubtless the natives sometimes kill them, appeared to be scarce at this time; as we did not see a single piece of the flesh belonging to any of them; and though their skins be in tolerable plenty, it is probable that many of these are procured by traffic from other tribes. Upon the whole, it seems plain, from a variety of circumstances, that these people procure almost all their animal food from the sea, if we except a few birds, of which the gulls or sea-fowl, which they shoot with their arrows, are the most material.

As the Canadian pine-branches and sea-grass, on which the fish roe is strewed, may be considered as their only winter-vegetables; so, as the spring advances, they make use of several others as they come in season. The most common of these, which we observed, were two sorts of liliaceous roots, one simply tunicated, the other granulated upon its surface, called *mabkatte* and *koobquoppa*, which have a mild sweetish taste, and are mucilaginous, and eaten raw. The next, which they have in great quantities, is a root called *abeita*, resembling, in taste, our liquorice; and another fern root, whose leaves were not yet disclosed. They also eat, raw, another small, sweetish, insipid root, about the thickness of *sarsaparilla*; but we were ignorant of the plant to which it belongs; and also of another root, which is very large and palmated, which we saw them dig up near

the village, and afterward eat it. It is also probable that, as the season advances, they have many others, which we did not see. For though there be no appearance of cultivation amongst them, there are great quantities of alder, gooseberry and currant bushes, whose fruits they may eat in their natural state, as we have seen them eat the leaves of the last, and of the lilies, just as they were plucked from the plant. It must, however, be observed, that one of the conditions which they seem to require, in all food, is, that it should be of the bland or less acrid kind; for they would not eat the leek or garlic, though they brought vast quantities to sell, when they understood we were fond of it. Indeed, they seemed to have no relish for any of our food; and when offered spirituous liquors, they rejected them as something unnatural and disgusting to the palate.

1778.
April.

Though they sometimes eat small marine-animals, in their fresh state, raw, it is their common practice to roast or broil their food; for they are quite ignorant of our method of boiling; unless we allow that of preparing their porpoise broth is such; and, indeed, their vessels being all of wood, are quite insufficient for this purpose.

Their manner of eating is exactly consonant to the nastiness of their houses and persons; for the troughs and platters, in which they put their food, appear never to have been washed from the time they were first made, and the dirty remains of a former meal are only swept away by the succeeding one. They also tear every thing solid, or tough, to pieces, with their hands and teeth; for though they make use of their knives to cut off the larger portions, they have not, as yet, thought of reducing these to smaller pieces and mouthfuls, by the same means, though obvi-

T t 2

ously



1778.
April.

ously more convenient and cleanly. But they seem to have no idea of cleanliness; for they eat the roots which they dig from the ground, without so much as shaking off the soil that adheres to them.

We are uncertain if they have any set time for meals; for we have seen them eat at all hours, in their canoes. And yet, from seeing several messes of the porpoise broth preparing toward noon, when we visited the village, I should suspect that they make a principal meal about that time.

Their weapons are bows and arrows, slings, spears, short truncheons of bone, somewhat like the *patoe patoo* of New Zealand, and a small pick-axe, not unlike the common American *tomahawk*. The spear has generally a long point, made of bone. Some of the arrows are pointed with iron; but most commonly their points were of indented bone. The tomahawk is a stone, six or eight inches long, pointed at one end, and the other end fixed into a handle of wood. This handle resembles the head and neck of the human figure; and the stone is fixed in the mouth, so as to represent an enormously large tongue. To make the resemblance still stronger, human hair is also fixed to it. This weapon they call *taarweesh*, or *tsuskeeah*. They have another stone weapon called *seeaik*, nine inches or a foot long, with a square point.

From the number of stone weapons, and others, we might almost conclude, that it is their custom to engage in close fight; and we had too convincing proofs that their wars are both frequent and bloody, from the vast number of human skulls which they brought to sell.

Their



Their manufactures, and mechanic arts, are far more extensive and ingenious, whether we regard the design, or the execution, than could have been expected from the natural disposition of the people, and the little progress that civilization has made amongst them in other respects. The flaxen and woollen garments, with which they cover themselves, must necessarily engage their first care; and are the most material of those that can be ranked under the head of manufactures. The former of these are made of the bark of a pine-tree, beat into a hempen state. It is not spun, but, after being properly prepared, is spread upon a stick, which is fastened across to two others that stand upright. It is disposed in such a manner, that the manufacturer, who sits on her hams at this simple machine, knots it across with small plaited threads, at the distance of half an inch from each other. Though, by this method, it be not so close or firm as cloth that is woven, the bunches between the knots make it sufficiently impervious to the air, by filling the interstices; and it has the additional advantage of being softer and more pliable. The woollen garments, though probably manufactured in the same manner, have the strongest resemblance to woven cloth. But the various figures which are very artificially inserted in them, destroy the supposition of their being wrought in a loom; it being extremely unlikely, that these people should be so dexterous as to be able to finish such a complex work, unless immediately by their hands. They are of different degrees of fineness; some resembling our coarsest rugs or blankets; and others almost equal to our finest sorts, or even softer, and certainly warmer. The wool, of which they are made, seems to be taken from different animals, as the fox and brown *lynx*; the last of which is by far the finest sort; and, in its natural state, differs

1778.
April.

1778.
April.

little from the colour of our coarser wools; but the hair, with which the animal is also covered, being intermixed, its appearance, when wrought, is somewhat different. The ornamental parts or figures in these garments, which are disposed with great taste, are commonly of a different colour, being dyed, chiefly, either of a deep brown, or of a yellow; the last of which, when it is new, equals the best in our carpets as to brightness.

To their taste or design in working figures upon their garments, corresponds their fondness for carving, in every thing they make of wood. Nothing is without a kind of freeze-work, or the figure of some animal upon it; but the most general representation is that of the human face, which is often cut out upon birds, and the other monstrous figures mentioned before; and even upon their stone and their bone weapons. The general design of all these things is perfectly sufficient to convey a knowledge of the object they are intended to represent; but the carving is not executed with the nicety that a dexterous artist would bestow even upon an indifferent design. The same, however, cannot be said of many of the human masks and heads; where they shew themselves to be ingenious sculptors. They not only preserve, with great exactness, the general character of their own faces, but finish the more minute parts, with a degree of accuracy in proportion, and neatness in execution. The strong propensity of this people to works of this sort, is remarkable, in a vast variety of particulars. Small whole human figures; representations of birds, fish, and land and sea animals; models of their household utensils and of their canoes, were found amongst them in great abundance.

The



The imitative arts being nearly allied, no wonder that, to their skill in working figures in their garments, and carving them in wood, they should add that of drawing them in colours. We have sometimes seen the whole process of their whale-fishery painted on the caps they wear. This, though rudely executed, serves, at least, to shew, that though there be no appearance of the knowledge of letters amongst them, they have some notion of a method of commemorating and representing actions, in a lasting way, independently of what may be recorded in their songs and traditions. They have also other figures painted on some of their things; but it is doubtful if they ought to be considered as symbols, that have certain established significations, or only the mere creation of fancy and caprice.

1778.
April.

Their canoes are of a simple structure; but, to appearance, well calculated for every useful purpose. Even the largest, which carry twenty people or more, are formed of one tree. Many of them are forty feet long, seven broad, and about three deep. From the middle, toward each end, they become gradually narrower, the after-part, or stern, ending abruptly or perpendicularly, with a small knob on the top; but the fore-part is lengthened out, stretching forward and upward, ending in a notched point or prow, considerably higher than the sides of the canoe, which run nearly in a straight line. For the most part, they are without any ornament; but some have a little carving, and are decorated by setting seals' teeth on the surface, like studs; as is the practice on their masks and weapons. A few have, likewise, a kind of additional head or prow, like a large cut-water, which is painted with the figure of some animal. They have no seats, nor any other supporters, on the inside, than several round sticks, little thicker than a cane, placed across,

at



1778.
April.

at mid depth. They are very light, and their breadth and flatness enable them to swim firmly, without an out-rigger, which none of them have; a remarkable distinction between the navigation of all the American nations, and that of the Southern parts of the East Indies, and the Islands in the Pacific Ocean. Their paddles are small and light; the shape, in some measure, resembling that of a large leaf, pointed at the bottom, broadest in the middle, and gradually losing itself in the shaft, the whole being about five feet long. They have acquired great dexterity in managing these paddles, by constant use; for sails are no part of their art of navigation.

Their implements for fishing and hunting, which are both ingeniously contrived, and well made, are nets, hooks and lines, harpoons, gigs, and an instrument like an oar. This last is about twenty feet long, four or five inches broad, and about half an inch thick. Each edge, for about two-thirds of its length (the other third being its handle), is set with sharp bone-teeth, about two inches long. Herrings and sardines, and such other small fish as come in shoals, are attacked with this instrument; which is struck into the shoal, and the fish are caught either upon, or between the teeth. Their hooks are made of bone and wood, and rather inartificially; but the harpoon, with which they strike the whales and lesser sea animals, shews a great reach of contrivance. It is composed of a piece of bone, cut into two barbs, in which is fixed, the oval blade of a large muscle shell, in which is the point of the instrument. To this is fastened about two or three fathoms of rope; and to throw this harpoon, they use a shaft of about twelve or fifteen feet long, to which the line or rope is made fast; and to one end of which the harpoon is fixed, so as to separate
from

from the shaft, and leave it floating upon the water as a buoy, when the animal darts away with the harpoon.

1778.
April.

We can say nothing as to the manner of their catching or killing land animals, unless we may suppose that they shoot the smaller sorts with their arrows, and engage bears, or wolves and foxes, with their spears. They have, indeed, several nets, which are probably applied to that purpose *; as they frequently throw them over their heads, to shew their use, when they brought them to us for sale. They also, sometimes, decoy animals, by covering themselves with a skin, and running about upon all fours, which they do very nimbly, as appeared from the specimens of their skill, which they exhibited to us, making a kind of noise or neighing at the same time; and, on these occasions, the masks, or carved heads, as well as the real dried heads, of the different animals, are put on.

As to the materials, of which they make their various articles, it is to be observed, that every thing of the rope kind, is formed either from thongs of skins, and sinews of animals; or from the same flaxen substance of which their mantles are manufactured. The sinews often appeared to be of such a length, that it might be presumed they could be of no other animal than the whale. And the same may be said of the bones of which they make their weapons already mentioned; such as their bark-beating instruments, the points of their spears, and the barbs of their harpoons.

Their great dexterity in works of wood, may, in some measure, be ascribed to the assistance they receive from iron

* One of the methods of catching the sea-otter, when ashore, in Kamtschatka, is with nets. See *Cox's Russian Discoveries*, p. 13.



1778.
April.

tools. For, as far as we know, they use no other; at least, we saw only one chissel of bone. And though, originally, their tools must have been of different materials, it is not improbable that many of their improvements have been made since they acquired a knowledge of that metal, which now is universally used in their various wooden works. The chissel and the knife, are the only forms, as far as we saw, that iron assumes amongst them. The chissel is a long flat piece, fitted into a handle of wood. A stone serves for a mallet, and a piece of fish-skin for a polisher. I have seen some of these chissels that were eight or ten inches long, and three or four inches broad; but, in general, they were smaller. The knives are of various sizes; some very large; and their blades are crooked, somewhat like our pruning-knife; but the edge is on the back or convex part. Most of them that we saw were about the breadth and thickness of an iron hoop; and their singular form marks that they are not of European make. Probably, they are imitations of their own original instruments, used for the same purposes. They sharpen these iron tools upon a coarse slate whetstone; and likewise keep the whole instrument constantly bright.

Iron, which they call *seckemaile*, (which name they also give to tin, and all white metals) being familiar to these people, it was very natural for us to speculate about the mode of its being conveyed to them. Upon our arrival in the Sound, they immediately discovered a knowledge of traffic, and an inclination for it; and we were convinced afterward, that they had not received this knowledge from a cursory interview with any strangers; but, from their method, it seemed to be an established practice, of which they were fond, and in which they were also well skilled. With whom they carry on

on this traffic, may perhaps admit of some doubt. For though we found amongst them things doubtless of European manufacture, or at least derived from some civilized nation, such as iron and brass, it, by no means, appears that they receive them immediately from these nations. For we never observed the least sign of their having seen ships like ours before, nor of their having traded with such people. Many circumstances serve to prove this almost beyond a doubt. They were earnest in their inquiries, by signs, on our arrival, if we meant to settle amongst them; and if we came as friends: signifying, at the same time, that they gave the wood and water freely, from friendship. This not only proves, that they considered the place as entirely their property, without fearing any superiority; but the inquiry would have been an unnatural one, on a supposition that any ships had been here before; had trafficked, and supplied themselves with wood and water; and had then departed; for, in that case, they might reasonably expect we would do the same. They, indeed, expressed no marks of surprize at seeing our ships. But this, as I observed before, may be imputed to their natural indolence of temper, and want of curiosity. Nor were they even startled at the report of a musquet; till, one day, upon their endeavouring to make us sensible, that their arrows and spears could not penetrate the hide-dresses, one of our gentlemen shot a musquet ball through one of them, folded six times. At this they were so much staggered, that they plainly discovered their ignorance of the effect of fire-arms. This was very often confirmed afterward, when we used them at their village, and other places, to shoot birds, the manner of which plainly confounded them; and our explanations of the use

1778.
April.



1778.
April.

of shot and ball, were received with the most significant marks of their having no previous ideas on this matter.

Some account of a Spanish voyage to this coast, in 1774, or 1775, had reached England before I sailed; but the foregoing circumstances sufficiently prove, that these ships had not been at Nootka*. Besides this, it was evident that iron was too common here; was in too many hands; and the uses of it were too well known, for them to have had the first knowledge of it so very lately; or, indeed, at any earlier period, by an accidental supply from a ship. Doubtless, from the general use they make of this metal, it may be supposed to come from some constant source, by way of traffic, and that not of a very late date; for they are as dexterous in using their tools as the longest practice can make them. The most probable way, therefore, by which we can suppose that they get their iron, is by trading for it with other Indian tribes, who either have immediate communication with European settlements upon that continent, or receive it, perhaps, through several intermediate nations. The same might be said of the brass and copper found amongst them.

Whether these things be introduced by way of Hudson's Bay and Canada, from the Indians, who deal with our traders, and so successively across from one tribe to the other; or whether they be brought from the North Western parts of Mexico, in the same manner; perhaps cannot be easily

* We now know that Captain Cook's conjecture was well founded. It appears, from the Journal of this Voyage, already referred to, that the Spaniards had intercourse with the natives of this coast, only in three places, in latitude $41^{\circ} 7'$; in latitude $47^{\circ} 21'$; and in latitude $57^{\circ} 18'$. So that they were not within two degrees of Nootka; and it is most probable, that the people there never heard of these Spanish ships.

determined. But it should seem, that not only the rude materials, but some articles in their manufactured state, find their way hither. The brass ornaments for noses, in particular, are so neatly made, that I am doubtful whether the Indians are capable of fabricating them. The materials certainly are European; as no American tribes have been found, who knew the method of making brass; though copper has been commonly met with, and, from its softness, might be fashioned into any shape, and also polished. If our traders to Hudson's Bay and Canada do not use such articles in their traffic with the natives, they must have been introduced at Nootka from the quarter of Mexico, from whence, no doubt, the two silver table-spoons, met with here, were originally derived. It is most probable, however, that the Spaniards are not such eager traders, nor have formed such extensive connections with the tribes North of Mexico, as to supply them with quantities of iron, from which they can spare so much to the people here*.

1778.
April.

Of the political and religious institutions established amongst them, it cannot be supposed that we should learn much. This we could observe, that there are such men as Chiefs, who are distinguished by the name or title of *Ac-week*, and to whom the others are, in some measure, subordinate. But, I should guess, the authority of each of these great men extends no farther than the family to which he

* Though the two silver table-spoons, found at Nootka Sound, most probably came from the Spaniards in the South, there seems to be sufficient grounds for believing that the regular supply of iron comes from a different quarter. It is remarkable, that the Spaniards, in 1775, found at *Puerto de la Trinidad*, in latitude $41^{\circ} 7'$, arrows pointed with copper or iron, which they understood were procured from the North. Mr. Daines Barrington, in a note at this part of the Spanish Journal, p. 20. says, "I should conceive that the copper and iron, here mentioned, must have originally been bartered at our forts in Hudson's Bay."

belongs,



1778.
April.

belongs, and who own him as their head. These *Acweeks* were not always elderly men; from which I concluded that this title came to them by inheritance.

I saw nothing that could give the least insight into their notions of religion, besides the figures before mentioned, called by them *Klumma*. Most probably these were idols; but as they frequently mentioned the word *acweek*, when they spoke of them, we may, perhaps, be authorized to suppose that they are the images of some of their ancestors, whom they venerate as divinities. But all this is mere conjecture; for we saw no act of religious homage paid to them; nor could we gain any information, as we had learned little more of their language, than to ask the names of things, without being able to hold any conversation with the natives, that might instruct us as to their institutions or traditions.

In drawing up the preceding account of the people of this Sound, I have occasionally blended Mr. Anderson's observations with my own; but I owe every thing to him that relates to their language; and the following remarks are in his own words.

“ Their language is, by no means, harsh or disagreeable, farther than proceeds from their using the *k* and *b* with more force, or pronouncing them with less softness than we do; and, upon the whole, it abounds rather with what we may call labial and dental, than with guttural sounds. The simple sounds which we have not heard them use, and which, consequently, may be reckoned rare, or wanting in their language, are those represented by the letters *b, d, f, g, r,* and *v*. But, on the other hand, they have one, which is very frequent, and not used by us. It is formed, in a particular



particular manner, by clashing the tongue partly against the roof of the mouth, with considerable force; and may be compared to a very coarse or harsh method of lisping. It is difficult to represent this sound by any composition of our letters, unless, somehow, from *lsztbl*. This is one of their most usual terminations, though we sometimes found it in the beginning of words. The next most general termination is composed of *tl*; and many words end with *z* and *s*. A specimen or two, of each of these, is here put down:

1778.
April.

<i>Opulsztbl,</i>	The sun.
<i>Onulsztbl,</i>	The moon.
<i>Kahsheetl,</i>	Dead.
<i>Teesheetl,</i>	To throw a stone.
<i>Koomitz,</i>	A human skull.
<i>Quahmifs,</i>	Fish roc.

They seem to take so great a latitude in their mode of speaking, that I have sometimes observed four or five different terminations of the same word. This is a circumstance very puzzling at first to a stranger, and marks a great imperfection in their language.

As to the composition of it, we can say very little; having been scarcely able to distinguish the several parts of speech. It can only be inferred, from their method of speaking, which is very slow and distinct, that it has few prepositions or conjunctions; and, as far as we could discover, is destitute of even a single interjection, to express admiration or surprize. From its having few conjunctions, it may be conceived, that these being thought unnecessary, as being understood, each single word, with them, will also express a great deal, or comprehend several simple ideas; which seems to be the case. But, for the same reason, the language



1778.
April.

guage will be defective in other respects ; not having words to distinguish or express differences which really exist, and hence not sufficiently copious. This was observed to be the case, in many instances, particularly with respect to the names of animals. The relation or affinity it may bear to other languages, either on this, or on the Asiatic continent, I have not been able sufficiently to trace, for want of proper specimens to compare it with, except those of the Esquimaux, and Indians about Hudson's Bay ; to neither of which it bears the least resemblance. On the other hand, from the few Mexican words I have been able to procure, there is the most obvious agreement, in the very frequent terminations of the words in *l*, *tl*, or *z*, throughout the language*.”

The large vocabulary of the Nootka language, collected by Mr. Anderson, shall be reserved for another place †, as its insertion here would too much interrupt our narration. At present, I only select their numerals, for the satisfaction of such of our readers as love to compare those of different nations, in different parts of the world:

<i>Tsarwack,</i>	One.
<i>Akkla,</i>	Two.
<i>Katfitsa,</i>	Three.
<i>Mo, or moo,</i>	Four.
<i>Sochab,</i>	Five.
<i>Nospo,</i>	Six.
<i>Atlepoo,</i>	Seven.
<i>Atlaquolthl,</i>	Eight.
<i>Tsarwaquolthl,</i>	Nine.
<i>Haceoo,</i>	Ten.

* May we not, in confirmation of Mr. Anderson's remark, observe, that *Opulzathk*, the Nootka name of the Sun ; and *Vitziputzli*, the name of the Mexican Divinity, have no very distant affinity in sound ?

† It will be found at the end of the third volume.



Were I to affix a name to the people of Nootka, as a distinct nation, I would call them *Wakashians*; from the word *wakash*, which was very frequently in their mouths. It seemed to express applause, approbation, and friendship. For when they appeared to be satisfied, or well pleased with any thing they saw, or any incident that happened, they would, with one voice, call out *wakash! wakash!* I shall take my leave of them, with remarking, that, differing so essentially as they certainly do, in their persons, their customs, and language, from the inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, we cannot suppose their respective progenitors to have been united in the same tribe, or to have had any intimate connection, when they emigrated from their original settlements, into the places where we now find their descendants.

1778.
April.

My account of the transactions in Nootka Sound would be imperfect, without adding the astronomical and nautical observations made by us, while the ships were in that station.

Latitude.

The latitude of the observatory by	-	{	Sun	-	-	49°	36'	1"	15'''
			Stars	{	South	49°	36'	8"	36'''
					North	49°	36'	10"	30'''

The mean of these means - 49° 36' 6", 47''' North.

Longitude.

The longitude, by lunar observations	{	Twenty sets taken on the	}	21st and 23d of March	233°	26'	18"	7'''	
		Ninety-three taken at the		}	observatory	233°	18'	6"	6'''
		Twenty-four taken on the			}	1st, 2d, and 3d of May	233°	7'	16"

The mean of these means - 233° 17' 14", 0''' East.



1778.
April.

But by reducing each set taken before
we arrived in the Sound, and after
we left it, by the time-keeper, and
adding them up with those made
on the spot, the mean of the 137
sets will be - - - - } $233^{\circ} 17' 30'', 5''$

Longitude by the } Greenwich rate - $235^{\circ} 46' 51'', 0''$
time-keeper { Ulietea rate - $233^{\circ} 59' 24'', 0''$

From the results of the last fifteen days observations of equal altitudes of the Sun, the daily rate of the time-keeper was losing, on mean time, $7''$; and on the 16th of April, she was too slow for mean time, by $16^h 0^m 58'', 45$. There was found an irregularity in her rate, greater than at any time before. It was thought proper to reject the first five days, as the rate in them differed so much from that of the fifteen following; and even in these, each day differed from another more than usual.

Variation of the Compass.

April 4th. { A. M. } Observatory, { $15^{\circ} 57' 48\frac{1}{2}''$ }
 { P. M. } Mean of four needles { $15^{\circ} 41' 2''$ } } $15^{\circ} 49' 25''$ East.
5th. { A. M. } On board the ship, { $19^{\circ} 50' 49''$ }
17th. { P. M. } Mean of four needles { $19^{\circ} 38' 46''$ } } $19^{\circ} 44' 37\frac{1}{2}''$

The variation found on board the ship, ought to be taken for the true one; not only as it agreed with what we observed at sea; but because it was found, that there was something ashore that had a considerable effect upon the compasses; in some places more than others. At one spot, on the West point of the Sound, the needle was attracted $11\frac{3}{4}$ points from its proper direction.

*Inclination of the dipping Needle.*1778.
April.

April 5th. On board with balanced needle	{ Marked Unmarked }	{ End North and dipping }	{ 71° 26' 22½" 71° 54' 22½" }	} 71° 40' 22½"
The same needle at the observatory	{ Marked Unmarked }	{ End North and dipping }	{ 72° 3' 45" 71° 56' 15" }	} 70° 0' 0"
18th. Ditto - - -	{ Marked Unmarked }	{ End North and dipping }	{ 71° 58' 20" 72° 16' 10" }	} 72° 7' 15"
5th. Spare needle at the observatory	{ Marked Unmarked }	{ End North and dipping }	{ 72° 32' 30" 73° 6' 0" }	} 72° 49' 15"
18th. Ditto - - -	{ Marked Unmarked }	{ End North and dipping }	{ 72° 55' 0" 73° 28' 30" }	} 73° 11' 45"
22d. Spare needle on board - - -	{ Marked Unmarked }	{ End North and dipping }	{ 73° 28' 38" 72° 53' 30" }	} 73° 11' 0"
Hence the mean dip, with both needles, on shore,	-	-	-	72° 32' 3½"
On board - - - - -	-	-	-	72° 25' 4½"

This is as near as can be expected; and shews, that whatever it was that affected the compasses, whether on board or ashore, it had no effect upon the dipping needles.

Tides.

It is high-water on the days of the new and full moon, at 12^h 20^m. The perpendicular rise and fall, eight feet nine inches; which is to be understood of the day-tides, and those which happen two or three days after the full and new moon. The night tides, at this time, rise near two feet higher. This was very conspicuous during the spring-tide of the full moon, which happened soon after our arrival; and it was obvious, that it would be the same in those of the new moon, though we did not remain here long enough to see the whole of its effect.

Some circumstances, that occurred daily, relating to this, deserve particular notice. In the cove where we got wood

X x 2

and



1778.
April.

and water, was a great deal of drift-wood thrown ashore; a part of which we had to remove, to come at the water. It often happened, that large pieces or trees, which we had removed in the day, out of the reach of the then high-water, were found, the next morning, floated again in our way; and all our spouts, for conveying down the water, thrown out of their places, which were immoveable during the day tides. We also found, that wood, which we had split up for fuel, and had deposited beyond the reach of the day tide, floated away during the night. Some of these circumstances happened every night or morning, for three or four days in the height of the spring-tides; during which time we were obliged to attend every morning tide, to remove the large logs out of the way of watering.

I cannot say, whether the flood-tide falls into the Sound from the North West, South West, or South East. I think it does not come from the last quarter; but this is only conjecture, founded upon the following observations: The South East gales, which we had in the Sound, were so far from increasing the rise of the tide, that they rather diminished it; which would hardly have happened, if the flood and wind had been in the same direction.

CHAP.

