

continued for a period of from 8 to 12 months, by which time the head has lost its natural shape and acquired that of a wedge, the front of the skull becoming flat, broad and higher at the crown, giving it a most unnatural appearance.

Many people would suppose that from the extent to which this is carried the operation would be attended with great suffering to the infant, but I have never heard the infants crying or moaning, although I have seen the eyes seemingly starting out of the sockets from the great pressure. But on the contrary, when the lashings were removed I have noticed them cry until they were replaced.

From the apparent dullness of the children whilst under the pressure I should imagine that a state of torpor or insensibility is induced, and that the return to consciousness occasioned by its removal must be naturally followed by the sense of pain.

This unnatural operation does not however seem to injure the health, the mortality amongst the Flat-Head children not being perceptibly greater than amongst other Indian tribes. Nor does it seem to injure their intellect, on the contrary, the Flat-Heads are generally considered fully as intelligent as the surrounding tribes who allow their heads to preserve their natural shape; and it is from amongst the round-heads that the Flat-Heads take their slaves; looking with contempt even upon the whites for having round heads, the *flat-head* being considered as the distinguishing mark of freedom. I may here remark, that, amongst the tribes who have slaves there is always something which conspicuously marks the difference between the slave and the free, such as the Chimseyan, who wear a ring in the nose, and the Babbenes who have a large piece of wood inserted through the under lip. The Chinooks, like all other Indian tribes, pluck out the beard on its first appearance.

I would willingly give a specimen of the barbarous language of these people, were it possible to represent by any combination of the letters of our alphabet the horrible harsh spluttering sounds which proceed from their throats, apparently unguided either by the tongue or lips.

It is so difficult to acquire a mastery of their language that none have been able to attain it unless those who have been born amongst them.

They have, however, by their intercourse with the English and French traders succeeded in amalgamating, after a fashion, some words of each of these tongues with their own and formed a sort of Patois, barbarous enough certainly, but still sufficient to enable them to communicate with the traders.

This Patois I was enabled, after some short time, to acquire, and could converse with most of the chiefs with tolerable ease. There common salutation is *Clah hoh ah yah*, originating, as I believe, in their having heard in the early days of the fur trade a gentleman named Clark frequently addressed by his friends, "Clark, how are you?" This salutation is now applied to every white man, their own language affording no appropriate expression.

Their language is also peculiar in containing no eaths, or any words conveying gratitude or thanks.

Their habits are extremely filthy, their persons abounding with vermin, and one of their chief amusements consists in picking these disgusting insects from each others' heads and eating them. On my asking an Indian one day why he ate them, he replied that they bit him and he gratified his revenge by biting them in return. It will naturally be supposed that they are thus beset from want of combs or other means of displacing the intruders; but this is not the case, they pride themselves on carrying such companions about them, and

giving their friends the opportunity of amusing themselves in hunting and eating them.

The costume of the men consists of a musk-rat skin robe, the size of one of our ordinary blankets, thrown over the shoulders, without any breach-cloth, moccasins or leggings.

Painting the face is not much practised amongst them except on extraordinary occasions, such as the death of a relative, some solemn feast, or going on a war party.

The female dress consists of a girdle of cedar bark round the waist, with a dense mass of strings of the same material hanging from it all around and reaching almost to the knees. This is their sole summer habiliment.

They, however, in very severe weather add the musk-rat blanket. They also make another description of blanket from the skin of the wild goose, which is here taken in great abundance. The skin is stripped from the bird with the feathers on and cut into strips, which they twist so as to have the feathers outwards. This makes a feathered cord, and is then netted together so as to form a blanket, the feathers filling up the meshes, rendering it a light and very warm covering.

In the summer these are entirely thrown aside, not being in any case worn from feelings of delicacy.

The men go quite naked, though the women always wear the cedar petticoat. The country which the Chinooks inhabit being almost destitute of furs they have little to trade in with the whites.

This, coupled with their laziness—probably induced by the ease with which they procure fish, which is their chief subsistence—prevents their obtaining ornaments of European manufacture, consequently anything of the kind is seldom seen amongst them. They, however, wear long strings of small shells found on the coast called Iougas, and used by them also as money.

A great traffic is carried on amongst all the tribes through the medium of these shells. They are fished up from the bottom of the sea, and are from an inch and a-half to two inches in length; they are white, slender, hollow and tapering to a point, slightly curved and about the size of the stem of an ordinary clay tobacco pipe. They are valuable in proportion to their length, and their value increases according to a fixed ratio, forty shells being the standard number required to extend a fathoms' length, which number is in that case equal in value to a beaver's skin, but if 39 be found long enough to make the fathom it would be worth 2 beaver skins, if 38 three skins, and so on, increasing one beaverskin for every shell less than the standard number.

The Chinooks evince very little taste in comparison with some of the tribes on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, in ornamenting either their persons or their warlike or domestic implements.

The only utensils I saw at all creditable to their decorative skill were carved bowls and spoons of horn, and baskets made of roots and grass woven so closely as to serve all the purposes of a pail in holding and carrying water.

In these they even boil the salmon which constitute their principal food. This is done by immersing the fish in one of the baskets filled with water, into which they throw red hot stones until the fish is cooked, and I have seen fish dressed as expeditiously by them in this way as if done in a kettle over a fire by our own people. The salmon is taken during the months of June and July in immense numbers in the Columbia river and its tributaries by spearing and with gill nets.

They have also a small hand net something like our common landing net, which is used in rapids where the salmon are crowded together and near the surface.