

advisers. The strength of intellect that devised the wonderful political organization of this race should have caused them to examine the new religion for themselves, but there were reasons for postponing its acceptance. They were a race of warriors, who devoted all their energy to gaining a superiority over other tribes. They loved intensely their native religion, and the "medicine men" opposed the new religion, as they foresaw the loss of prestige and power. Bloody warfare does not prepare the hearts of men for spiritual meditation; and the history of the introduction of Christianity among the Huron-Iroquois by the Jesuits strongly enforces this truth.

The Coast and Island Indians, although addicted to many barbarous customs, are possessed of considerable power of intellect. Living near the sea, and constant adventurous toil to gain a livelihood, increase and sustain this mental power. Sir George Simpson wrote concerning the Indians of British Columbia, residing near Fort Simpson, that they were very clever and ingenious. They carved steamers, animals and many other objects very neatly in stone, wood and ivory, imitating, in short, everything that they saw, either in reality or in drawings. One man had prepared very accurate charts of most parts of the adjacent shores.

Large quantities of salmon are caught by the coast tribes, and were they to engage in this kind of work in order to get sufficient for food only, there would follow periods of idleness and mental inertia. They have, however, sought other kinds of labour, making oil from the oolachan and dogfish, and working in saw-mills and canneries. When the natives first came in contact with the teachers of Christianity, their wars, prevailing superstitious practices, and opposition from the "medicine-men," presented a strong obstacle to the new doctrines. The missionaries employed the Chinook jargon for a time, only to discard it as useless for the purpose of teaching religious truth. Assiduously studying the native languages, they preached, worked and lived heroically, and the artistic natives gradually pondered over, and finally accepted, the Gospel. The different denominations engaged in Christianizing the natives of British Columbia have been eminently successful in their labours. Whilst not detracting in the least from the honours due these earnest and worthy teachers of the faith, their success, in part, follows from the influence of country and climate.

The Mountain Tribes introduce to us a people with environment and mode of life entirely different from those that have been mentioned. Feelings of reverence and awe take possession of the