

the east coast of Vancouver's Island who have affinity with one another, have been grouped into three principal families or nations. The first of these is met with at Victoria and on the Fraser river, and may be called the Chinook Indians, from the language which is principally in use. In the second division may be comprised the tribes between Nanaimo on the east coast, and Fort Rupert at the extreme north of Vancouver's Island, and the Indians on the mainland between the same points. The Tsimshians, a third family, cluster round Fort Simpson, and occupy a line of coast extending from the Skeena river to the borders of Alaska.

On his arrival at Fort Simpson, on the 1st of October, 1857, Mr. Duncan found located there, to quote his own words in a recent official report, "Nine tribes, numbering (for I counted them) about 2,300 souls. These proved to be just one-third of the tribes speaking the Tsimshian language. Of the other eighteen tribes, five were scattered over 100 miles of the coast south of Fort Simpson, other five occupied the Naas river, and the remaining eight tribes lived on the Skeena river—the whole of the twenty-seven tribes numbering then not over 8,000 souls, though I at first set them down at 10,000. In addition to the Tsimshian tribes which I have mentioned, I found that Indians of other two distinct languages frequented the Fort for trade. These were the Alaska Coast Indians, whose nearest village was only some fifteen miles north of Fort Simpson, and the Hydahs from Queen Charlotte's Islands."

The tribal arrangements among the Tsimshians are very much the same as among other Indian clans. Each tribe has from three to five chiefs, one of whom is the acknowledged head. Among the head chiefs of the various tribes one again takes pre-eminence. At feasts and in council the chiefs are seated according to their rank. As an outward mark, to distinguish the rank of a chief, a pole is erected in front of his house. The greater the chief the higher the pole. The Indians are very jealous in regard to this distinction.

Every Indian family has a distinguishing crest, or "totem," as it is called in some places. This crest is usually some bird, or