

cannon prevailed, and they did not molest us. They removed to a short distance, and two or three days after I visited the principal house with a native interpreter. "Chief," said I, on entering, "are you well? are your women in health? are your children hearty? and do your people get plenty of fish and fruits?" "Yes," answered an old man, "our families are well, our people have plenty of food, but how long this will last we know not; we see your ships, and hear things that make our hearts grow faint. They say that more King-George men will soon be here, and will take our land, our firewood, our fishing-grounds; that we shall be placed on a little spot, and shall have to do everything according to the fancies of the King-George men."

This was my first introduction to the savages. For some time their movements continued to be very threatening, and we were obliged to keep guard night and day, armed with revolvers, etc. Many rumours reached us of their purpose to attack us, but eventually Governor Douglas was good enough to send H.M. gun-boat *Grappler* to our aid, and the arrival of this vessel convinced the natives that the King-George men were in earnest.

Not to detain the reader from the special subject of this paper, I will proceed to describe, as far as limited space permits, some leading features connected with these people, which, for the sake of clearness and brevity, I will arrange under different heads.

To mention first the condition of these people. These Aht tribes are undoubtedly a degraded and wretched portion of the human race, but their manners are peculiar; they have an unusual respect for their women, certain curious ideas of rank and property, and a variety of tribal and intertribal usages not commonly associated in our minds with so primitive a condition as these tribes live in. This condition, in fact, seems to be just that of the people who may be supposed to have existed immediately before the age of the stone and fir-trees; the state of life suggested, if not quite revealed to modern inquirers, by the remains discovered in the Danish shell-mounds. Space does not allow me here to enter upon the subjects of the different archæological epochs and the condition of life they are supposed to indicate; but it appears to me that the wood at command must have been very influential in determining the state of the people; a bone-using age with soft wood, probably, would be in a better condition than a stone or iron-using age with hard woods; and perhaps those savages who have been supposed to have lived in the most wretched form of human existence, were in reality in a condition quite as good as that of the Ahts.

The localities chiefly inhabited by the Aht tribes are the three large Sounds on the west coast of Vancouver Island, called Niti-naht, Klah-oh-quaht, and Nootkah; the two former of which are