

hut, and anxiously watched it, night and day, until she heard of her husband's fate. Their impression is that, so long as the person watchèd for is alive and moves about, his twin'-gak (spirit) causes the cord to vibrate, and when at length it hangs slack and vibrates no longer, he is supposed to be dead. This wife, having heard of the movements of a magnet suspended by a thread to the ship's observatory, sent to inquire if it had any connection with her husband's case.

Thunder is rare in their locality, but, when it occurs, they say it is caused by a man-spirit who dwells, with his family, in a tent far away to the north. He is an ill-natured fellow, who sleeps most of his time, and, when he wakes up, he bids his children go out and make thunder and lightning, by shaking inflated skins and waving torches.

They do not entertain any clear idea of a future state of existence, nor can they apparently imagine that a person altogether dies. The soul is a twin'-gak, they say, seated in the lungs, and from it emanates all thoughts, which, as they rise, the tongue gives utterance to. Some of them consider a man has *four* twin'-gaks in his breast, and others that, wherever a man went, there was, in the ground beneath him, his familiar spirit, which moved as he moved, and was only severed from him in death. They say the body *sleeps*, and the spirit descends into the earth, to associate with those which have gone before, and subsists on bad food, such as roots, stones, and mosquitoes. In order not to offend the spirits of the departed, their bodies are wrapped in skins, and laid with the head to the east. As his clothes, and other portions of property he habitually used, including the sledge on which he was carried, would bring ill-luck to any one else who took them, they are left with the body, in a torn or broken state; and the family to which he belonged keep within the hut for five days, not daring to work, lest the spirits should be offended. They believe death will happen to any one infringing this custom. Diseases are twin'-gaks, and so hurtful do they think the touch of a corpse that they will not

smoke from the same pipe, nor drink out of the same cup, with any one who was a near relative of the deceased, until after a period of purification.

Of the Indians, it is related that some of them are very savage and cruel, loving deeds of murder simply for the sport of killing. But these we believe to belong more to the interior tribes, for many instances are recorded where the Indian is very different to this, and may be considered perfectly trustworthy. The following illustrates this:

"The printed slips of paper delivered by the officers of H. M. S. Plover, on the 25th of April, 1854, to the Rat Indians, were received 27th June, 1854, at the Hudson Bay Company's establishment, Fort Youcon, supposed latitude, 66° N., longitude, 7° 55' W. The Rat Indians are in the habit of making periodical trading excursions to the Esquimaux along the sea-coast. They are a harmless, inoffensive set of Indians, ever ready and willing to render every assistance they can to the whites."

Still there are other tribes who have often proved very ferocious. These belong to the Koolooch group, which comprise thirteen tribes, and abide west of the Rocky Mountains, numbering about forty-five thousand souls. Some of these Indians, especially the Kok-you-kons, are considered revengeful, fierce, and blood-thirsty. It was a portion of them that fell upon and murdered the Governor, employés, Esquimaux villagers, and an English officer, at the Russian port of Darabin, in February, 1851. But the fault does not lie with the Red Men. Sir Edward Belcher has well observed "that civilization might be materially facilitated were the aborigines not bound down by the iron hand of Russian domination." This, alas! has been too true, not only of Russia, but of the Hudson Bay Company's rule also; and, now that the poor native tribes are to have a new and more enterprising Power to reign over them, let us hope their better qualities will be drawn out, and the future prove more beneficial to their unfortunate race.