

ible in the Spanish Colonies of the South, than in any other settlement which Europeans have effected among native tribes. Every inhabitant of Canada knows to what a remnant of squalid beggary the aborigines are reduced. Even where they yet enjoy the most their pristine manners, this is still too true. Simpson describes the manners of a tribe something further removed from civilization than even those of Caughnawaga, Lorette, or St. Regis :—

At our landing place we found an encampment of two or three hundred Pend' d'Oreilles, who were preparing to go to hunt the buffalo. We were soon visited by about a dozen chiefs, who remained with us two or three hours. They were handsome in their appearance, and more stately in their manners than any savages that we had yet seen on this side of the mountains, and their graceful bow, as they shook hands, was rivaled only by their bland smile. In fact, their behavior was elegant and refined. Amongst our visitors was one individual, who has been intrusted with Carlo's horses, and he promised to bring them to us the next morning.

Near our encampment was a native cemetery, the neat little tombs being surrounded by pickets. We were surprised, however, to see a wooden cross placed at the head of each grave, the result of a recent visit of some Catholic priests; but as a practical illustration of the value of such conversions, we found on a neighbouring tree a number of offerings to one of the departed spirits, and a basket of provisions for its voyage to the next world. If the Indians had any definite idea at all of the cross, they put it merely on the same footing as their other medicines or charms.

Next day, while we were waiting the arrival of such of our people as were coming by land from the Kullspelm Lake, we employed our leisure in paying a visit to the native camp, crossing, for this purpose, a small stream in canoes closely resembling those that we had seen on the Kootonais river. On our arrival, all the inmates of about twenty-five lodges, at least all such as could move, rushed to shake hands with us. The tents were of every conceivable shape, some oblong, others round and so on, while the clumsy framework was covered with mats, or bark, or boughs, or skins, or anything else that had come in the way. The interior, to say nothing of swarms of vermin, contained a most heterogeneous collection of mats, guns, skins, pots, pans, baskets, kmmas, berries, children, dogs, ashes, filth and rubbish, and round the sides were arranged the beds of mats, generally raised a little from the ground. Though the men were doing little or nothing, yet the women were all busily employed in preparing kmmas and berries, including hips and haws, into cakes against winter.

The kmmas, which deserves a more particular description, is very like the onion, excepting that it has little or no taste. It grows on swampy ground; and, when the plant, which bears a blue flower, has produced its seed, the root is dug up by the women by means of a stick about two feet long with a handle across the head of it, and thrown into baskets slung on their backs. As the article is very abundant, each of the poor creatures generally collects about a peck a day. When taken home, the kmmas is placed over a gentle fire in the open air, fermenting, after about two days and nights, into a black substance which has something of the flavor of liquorice. After being pounded in a trough, this stuff is formed into cakes, which, when thoroughly baked, are stowed away in baskets for the winter. After all this preparation the kmmas is but a poor and nauseous food. These people, however, were likely soon to have something better as a result of their contact with civilization. In one of their lodges, we were surprised to find several baskets of

potatoes; and, in answer to our inquiries on the subject, we were shown two patches of ground where they had been produced, the seed and implements having been supplied from Fort Colville.

We next crossed the river to a camp of about the same size on the other side, where the men were lounging and the women laboring pretty much in the same way as those that we had just left. In one tent a sight presented itself, which was equally novel and unnatural. Surrounded by a crowd of spectators, a party of fellows were playing at cards, obtained in the Snake country, from some American trappers; and a more melancholy exemplification of the influence of civilization on barbarism could hardly be imagined than the apparently scientific eagerness with which these naked and hungry savages thumbed and turned the black and greasy pasteboard. Though the men, who sold the cards, might have taught the use of them, yet I could not help tracing the wretched exhibition to a more remote source—a source with which I was, myself, in some measure, connected. In this same hell of the wilderness I found Spokan Garry, one of the lads already mentioned as having been sent to Red River, for their education; and there was little reason to doubt, that, with his superior knowledge, he was the master-spirit, if not the prime-mover of the scene. On his return to his countrymen, he had, for a time, endeavoured to teach them to read and write; but he had gradually abandoned the attempt, assigning, as his reason, or his pretext, that the others "jawed him so about it." He forthwith relapsed into his original barbarism, taking to himself as many wives as he could get; and then, becoming a gambler, he lost both all that he had of his own and all that he could beg or borrow from others. He was evidently ashamed of his proceedings, for he would not come out of the tent to shake hands even with an old friend.

Nor is the fact otherwise among the cocoa groves of Tahiti. "About the year 1777", says Melville—

Captain Cook estimated the population of Tahiti at about two hundred thousand. By a regular census, taken some four or five years ago, it was found to be only nine thousand. This amazing decrease, not only shows the malignity of the evils necessary to produce it; but, from the fact, the inference unavoidably follows, that all the wars, child murders, and other depopulating causes, alledged to have existed in former times, were nothing in comparison to them.

And he confirms this statement from the evidence of Ruschenberger, of the United States Navy, who gives this proof of his accuracy from the records kept on the Island :—

The district of Rohalo, in Hawaii, at one time numbered 8679 souls: four years after, the population was 6175: decrease, in that time, 2504. No extraordinary cause is assigned for this depopulation. Vide *A Voyage round the World, in the years 1835-36-37*. By W. S. Ruschenberger, M. D. (Philadelphia, 1838, 8vo.) The chapter on the Sandwich Islands.

In respectability of manners and dress, Mr. Melville conceives these people as much degraded, as they are diminished in numbers. In place of the cultivation of the bread-fruit tree, the manufacture of the tappa cloth, and the building of canoes, indolence has become the most marked feature of the Tahitian character. Cultivation is neglected, the canoes of the present day are much inferior to those in use by the forefathers of the islanders, and the graceful dresses of native cloth formerly used, have given place to a preposterous combination of ill-assorted European garments, whose