

notables, who possessed the land and enjoyed many jealously-guarded privileges, and the common people who had no voice in the councils of the nation and acted as serfs to the notables, with whom, and for whom, they hunted.

The titles of these American noblemen descended among the Carriers from uncle to nephew by a sister, and not from father to son, as with them matriarchate or mother-right, and not patriarchate, prevailed.

The rank of such personages was obtained and sustained through that famous institution familiar to the Indians of the whole North Pacific coast, the "potlach," or public distribution of victuals and goods, which was made by the aspirant or received notable, with the help, generally, of all the members of his particular clan.

For, as among the maritime Indians, the Carriers were also divided into several clans or gentes, which originated, in their estimation, a relationship closer and more binding than that resulting from blood parentage. Each gens had one or more totems which were held in high veneration, as was more particularly noticeable on festive occasions. In case of extended travelling—which, however, was of rather rare occurrence—the totem served also as an emblem guaranteeing to the bearer a brotherly reception and constant protection by any member of the same clan he might fall in with.

The kinship resulting from fellow-clanship was reputed to be so strict that it precluded the possibility of co-clansmen intermarrying, while, on the other hand, marriage between even first cousins, if on the mother's side, was quite common, and, in some cases, almost obligatory. By an immemorial custom, the widow of a Carrier was also inevitably transferred as wife to the deceased's surviving brother.

If we now pass from the general organization of the tribe to the constitution of the family, we see the wife working as a slave, without exercising any authority (unless, by exception, she were a notable), and the husband domineering as her lord and master and having in hands the full administration of the family affairs.

Polygamy flourished here as on the coast, and marriage, though somewhat difficult of attainment for the young man, was never considered as indissoluble.

Young girls, when they reached the age of puberty, had to undergo a very trying ordeal of sequestration accompanied by various bodily mortifications and penitential privations, which were the exact counterpart of those noted by all the authors who have treated of the maritime aborigines. Among other peculiarities, the pubescent girl had to wear a bonnet and veil of a particular pattern, protecting the passers-by from the malign influences which were supposed to emanate from her while she was menstruating. She could not scratch or even touch her head or hair with her fingers, but wore for that purpose a diminutive bone comb, and would also never drink but through a swan bone tube or "chalumeau."

Once she was married, the same sequestration and many of its concomitant observances were repeated on the occasion of every child-bearing and each recurring menstruation.

The death of a member of the tribe, especially of a nobleman, was seized upon as a pretext for interminable lamentations on the one side and ostentatious feasting and banquetting on the other. The remains having been cremated in the presence, if possible, of a large concourse of people, the few remaining charred bones were handed to the widow, to be continually carried in a small package for a term of one, two or