

been used since the advent of the whites ; they are made sometimes of mats of cedar bark. The art of pottery is unknown among the British Columbia tribes ; but beautiful carving is done by the Zimshians in wood, ivory and stone, and they can even make jewellery out of gold or silver coins.

The native belief is described by Dr. Boas as “a pure worship of heaven.” Heaven, he says, is their great deity, who has a number of mediators called *Neg-nog*. Any natural object can be a negnog, but the most important ones are the sun, moon, lightning strokes, and animals. Heaven, these people think, rules the destinies of mankind. Heaven taught man to distinguish between good and bad. Heaven is gratified by the mere existence of man. Man’s offerings and prayers, and the smoke rising from his fires are especially agreeable to the unseen deity. Heaven loves those who take pity on the poor, and who do not try to become rich by selling at high prices what others want. Men must make themselves agreeable to the deity by cleanliness, by fasting, by their offerings burnt in the fire, and must treat with respect his messengers—especially the sun and moon. The Zimshians do not always pray to heaven directly, but more generally to his mediators. Thus they will sometimes address the Negnog collectively : “Negnog, Negnog ! Have pity on us. Else will there be no one to make smoke under you. Negnog, have pity on us !”

It seems almost strange that while thus addressing an unseen God beyond the skies, engaging in prayer and fasting, and trying to propitiate him by sacrifice and kindly acts one to another—they should still have practised so many atrocious and barbarous customs in the name of religion. In their religious dances they would work themselves up to a state of frenzy, and bite and tear the flesh not only of dogs but even of human beings. Mr. Duncan describes one of these horrible scenes, which, in the early days of his mission, used to be far from infrequent. An old chief had killed a female, and the body was thrown into the sea. Presently two bands of furious wretches appeared yelling and making the most unearthly sounds. Each band was led by a naked man with long black hair, who stooped to the ground and walked with high steps like a proud horse, shooting forward his arms in front of him—first one, then the other. For some time they seemed to be seeking the body, and when they came to it they commenced screaming and rushing round it like so many angry wolves. Finally they seized it, dragged it out of the water, and the two naked men began tearing it to pieces with their teeth. In a few minutes the crowd broke again into two, when each of the naked cannibals appeared with half of the body in his hands, and, separating a few yards, went on with their horrid feast.

It is satisfactory to know that these horrible orgies are now a thing of the past, and that the blessed light of the gospel has shone in upon the