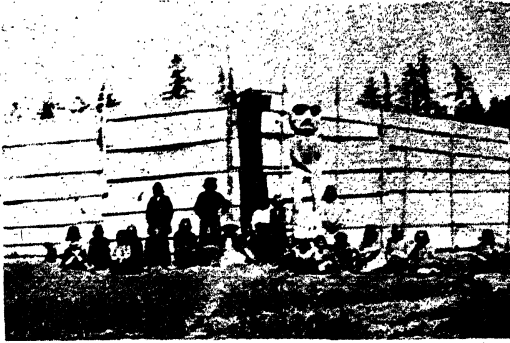


counted for. Articles distributed to the indigent, old, and afflicted were given gratis; articles distributed to the commonalty were expected to be recouped by service when hereafter required to the value of the property given, with interest added; articles given to persons



A group of Victoria Indians.

of consequence were to be repaid by property of equal value, plus interest, which would be reckoned according to the length of time occupied by the recipient in reimbursing the donor. It will thus appear that this distribution of property was of great importance to Indians of all classes, as it not only affected them socially, tending to en-



Making Oolachan Grease, Naas River.

large their ideas by the opportunities afforded for the interchange of information, but was really the foundation of their fiscal system and had a primary influence in directing their intertribal policy.

The several dialects spoken by the

Indians of this Province would appear to be derived from three distinct languages, to which writers on the subject, from want of more appropriate terms, have given the somewhat arbitrary names of the Salish Kuak-yohl and Tinneh languages. Added to these is the Haidah, a fourth and distinct language, of which only one dialect exists. All the Indians speaking dialects of these languages hold traditions to the effect that they pushed their way from the north southward, the Tinneh Indians, whose congeners are still to be found in the Yukon and Mackenzie valleys, being the last migration. Their legends point to their having partly destroyed and partly intermarried with tribes who had occupied the country be-



Thompson River Indians.

fore them, and whose very names are now nearly wholly forgotten. The consequence of these intermarriages is shewn in the wonderful modifications which their original languages have sustained, changes being observed in the words used by bands who are near neighbours. A remarkable instance of the comparatively short period in which an Indian language may be lost is exhibited in the case of the Similkameen band of Indians. About one hundred and twenty years ago a party of Chilcotins, mostly young men with their wives but no children, left their country on the war-path against the Sushwaps of the Bonapare (Tluhtans). On their arrival at Tluhtans they found no In-