

Among the people of Nootka, one of the dresses seems peculiarly adapted to war. It is a thick tanned leathern mantle doubled, and appears to be the skin of an elk, or buffalo. This is fastened on in the ordinary manner, and is so contrived as to cover the breast quite up to the throat; part of it, at the same time, falling down to their heels. This garment is sometimes, very curiously painted, and is not only strong enough to resist arrows, but, as we understood from them, even spears cannot pierce it; so that it may be considered as their completest defensive armour.

From their exhibiting human skulls and bones to sale, there is little reason to doubt of their treating their enemies with a degree of brutal cruelty; but, as this circumstance rather marks a general agreement of character among almost every uncivilized tribe, in every age and country, they are not to be reproached with any charge of peculiar inhumanity. Their disposition, in this respect, we had not any reason to judge unfavourably of. They appear to be docile, courteous, and good-natured; but they are quick in resenting injuries, notwithstanding the predominancy of their phlegm; and, like all other passionate people, as quickly forgetting them.

A rattle, and a small whistle, are the only instruments of music which we have seen among them. The rattle is used when they sing; but upon what occasions the whistle is used, we never knew.

The only inhabited parts of the Sound seem to be the two villages already mentioned. A pretty exact computation of the number of inhabitants in both, might be made from the canoes that visited our ships, the second day after our arrival. They consisted of about a hundred, which, upon an average, contained at least five persons each. But, as there were very few women, old men, children, or youths, then among them, we may reasonably suppose, that the number of the inhabitants of the two villages could not be less than four times the number of our visitors; being two thousand in the whole.

Their houses consist of very long broad planks, resting upon the edges of each other, tied, in different parts, with withes of pine-bark. They have only slender posts on the outside, at considerable distances from each other, to which they are also fastened; but there are some larger poles within, placed adant. The sides and ends of these habitations are about seven or eight feet in height, but the back part is somewhat higher. The planks, therefore, which compose the roof, slant forward, and, being loose, may be moved at pleasure. They may either be put close to exclude the rain, or separated to admit the light in fine weather.

The furniture of their houses consists principally of chests and boxes of various sizes, piled upon each other, at the sides or ends of the house; in which are deposited their garments, skins, masks, and other articles that are deemed valuable.—Many of them are double, or the upper one serves as a lid to