

merges into the Okinagan branch. These, with the Sinapoiluch, the Spokans, the Skoielpoi of Colville, and their offshoots, continue the connexion to the Saeliss, who compose the eastern branch. My notice of this tribe will be confined chiefly to the western and less known portion, occupying the vicinity of Frazer's River.

On leaving the verge of the Carrier country, near Alexandria, a marked change is at once perceptible. A dialect of the Saeliss, guttural and dissonant to a degree, succeeded the dialects of Chipewyan root, in themselves, by the way, nowise remarkable for euphony. In customs, the change, though less abrupt, is very striking. We may note, for example, the different structure of their dwellings, and the opposite views of comfort which their neighbors appear to maintain. The Carrier, during summer, while living at his fishing village, resides in a house the four walls of which are framed with posts filled up with neatly peeled pine saplings, and surmounted by a substantial roof of bark. Beneath the slope of this, his split salmon are hung to dry in the smoke, while the inmates recline luxuriously amid the unctuous drippings beneath. When cold weather approaches, these fishing stations are abandoned, and the inhabitants, first having stored their dried fish and berries, disperse to winter in spots favorable for snaring, and where dry fuel is abundant. There, congregated in little hamlets of several families, each household constructs a roomy hut of pine boughs so thickly piled and interthatched as to afford perfect shelter, and with the aid of a substantial fire, to become a dwelling, airy indeed, but sufficiently warm and agreeable.

The Atnah, on the other hand, erects during the summer a hasty pent-roof, with a few mats or some boughs, in such wise as to afford shade, at least, if not shelter. Winter calls for a warmer retreat. To secure it, a large hole is dug in the ground; the cavity is roofed over, and then closely covered with the earth taken from the interior. A notched post, projecting through a hole in the roof, at once door and chim-

ney, afford the means of ingress and egress. A very small fire serves to keep such a habitation warm; but the den is necessarily unwholesome, and redolent, as may be supposed, of any thing but roses. I have mentioned already that at the opposite verge of the Tacully nation, the lip disfiguration has been borrowed from the Chimseyans of the coast; in turn the Ta-otins* of Alexandria have assimilated with their Shewhap neighbors in so far as to have adopted the filthy huts in question; but the practice does not extend further into New Caledonia.

The Shewhapmuch are greatly destitute of that pride of personal adornment which characterises the Carriers, in common with most savage nations; not to mention those civilized ones among whom it is no wise eschewed. Among the lower Nicutemuchs, indeed, setting ornament aside as far as regards the male inhabitants, even the ordinary observances of decency in dress are neglected. I am thus precise because the contrast is great in this respect between the modesty of the interior nations, and the absence of it, so manifest on the part of the male population of the N. W. coast and its immediate vicinity. I may here further mention that of all the numerous Indian septs with which I have become acquainted, the Nicutemuchs are perhaps nearest the savage state. Congregating for mutual protection in villages, frequently palisaded, they had, until lately, a very limited intercourse with the whites. Their country, poor in fur-bearing animals, or to say the least, negligently hunted, held out no inducement for the establishment among them of trading posts; the source of comparative affluence to their neighbors. Poor, naked and numerous, the habitual treachery and vindictiveness of their character are fostered by the ceaseless feuds which they entertain with all around. Nor is this inimical spirit confined to external enemies; nearly every family has a minor *vendetta* of its own to prosecute. Yet while exploring with a small party toward Fort Langley in

* Ta-otin, or Enta-otin, i. e. the "lower people" as occupying the lowest part on Frazer's River of the Carrier tribe. The general affix, "otin" is simply a modification of the word *dancer*, signifying "a man," in Chipewyan and Tacully.