

house belonging to his tribe, and is followed by his train. When this is done, in some cases he has a ramble on the tops of the same houses, during which he is anxiously watched by his attendants, as if they expected his flight. By-and-bye he condescends to come down, and they then follow him to his den, which is marked by a rope made of red bark being hung over the doorway, so as to prevent any person from ignorantly violating its precincts. None are allowed to enter that house but those connected with the art; all I know, therefore, of their further proceedings is, that they keep up a furious hammering, singing, and screeching for hours during the day.

"Of all these parties, none are so much dreaded as the cannibals. One morning I was called to witness a stir in the camp which had been caused by this set. When I reached the gallery I saw hundreds of Tsimshians sitting in their canoes, which they had just pushed away from the beach. I was told that the cannibal party were in search of a body to devour, and if they failed to find a dead one, it was probable they would seize the first living one that came in their way; so that all the people living near to the cannibals' house had taken to their canoes to escape being torn to pieces. It is the custom among these Indians to burn their dead; but I suppose for these occasions they take care to deposit a corpse somewhere, in order to satisfy these inhuman wretches.

"These, then, are some of the things and scenes which occur in the day during the winter months, while the nights are taken up with amusements—singing and dancing. Occasionally the medicine parties invite people to their several houses, and exhibit tricks before them of various kinds. Some of the actors appear as bears, while others wear masks, the parts of which are moved by strings. The great feature in their proceedings is to pretend to murder, and then to restore to life, and so forth. The cannibal, on such occasions, is generally supplied with two, three, or four human bodies, which he tears to pieces before his audience. Several persons, either from bravado or as a charm, present their arms for him to bite. I have seen several whom he has thus bitten, and I hear two have died from the effects."

One of the most curious and characteristic customs of the Indians of British Columbia is the *giving away of property* at feasts. Mr. Duncan gives the following account of it:—

"These feasts are generally connected with the giving away of pro-