

# REPORT

LANDS AND WORKS OFFICE,  
Victoria, June 22nd, 1869.

SIR,

In obedience to your request, conveyed to me by letter of the 17th instant from the Private Secretary, I have the honor to lay before you, enclosed herewith, a Journal of the proceedings during the recent visit of His Excellency the late Governor Seymour to the North West Coast in H. M. S. Sparrowhawk, and I take the opportunity of appending the following remarks thereon.

It is a matter of congratulation that the settlement of the murderous quarrel carried on during the past twelve months between the Naas and Chimpsean Tribes, which was the main object of our lamented Governor's visit to this part of the Colony, has been so fully and satisfactorily accomplished.

From information obtained from Mr. Duncan, Mr. Tomlinson, and Mr. Cunningham of Fort Simpson, as well as from Indians of the contending tribes, I am satisfied that the killing of the Naas Indian in which this bloody dispute originated was purely accidental. A Naas Indian, formerly resident at Metlakatlah, gave a feast (on the occasion of his marriage to a Chief's daughter) to members of both the Naas and Chimpsean Tribes, who up to that time had been living on most friendly terms. For this feast a supply of rum was purchased from the Schooner "Nanaimo Packet," and during the drunken orgies which ensued a Chimpsean Chief, by the accidental discharge of his pistol, killed one of the Naas people.

We were fortunate enough to detect this Schooner, after a twelve months' immunity, in the act of again dispensing liquor to the same Indians amongst whom the quarrel between these tribes originated, and almost at the very place where it arose. Her seizure and condemnation (after due enquiry) had a very salutary and timely effect in showing to the tribes of that neighbourhood that Government are able and determined to punish offenders against the law whether white people or Indians.

In the fight which followed the accidental killing of the Naas Indian, two Chimpsean Chiefs were killed; and, in accordance with the savage requirement of Indian law, the loss of these Chiefs had to be compensated by the slaughter of an equivalent in number and rank of the opposite tribe. Thus, murder followed murder in continual succession, with no prospect of complete satisfaction on either side. There was no real ground for the hostility of these tribes towards each other; they were on the contrary, anxious to be at peace, so as to avail themselves of the spring fishery in the Naas River, which affords the main source of subsistence to all the Indians of this neighbourhood. Without the interposition of some powerful peacemaker, however, reconciliation was impracticable; and this quarrel might have lasted for years, with ever increasing waste of blood, but for the intervention which ensured its complete cessation.

The murder of the three Naas Indians resident at Kincolith did not originate in any ill feeling towards that Mission Station. Mr. Tomlinson and his work are held in respect by both contending parties, as well as by the Indians generally along that part of the Coast, and there is no reason to suppose that his life was at any time in danger. But the minds of Indians cannot readily admit that members of a tribe with which they are at war can be denationalised, and placed out of reach of their savage laws of revenge, by the mere act of residing at the time at a Mission Station, especially a Station situate, as Kincolith is, in a most remote part of the Colony, and in the midst of a notoriously ferocious race of Indians.

And here it may be observed that, however admirable the spirit and intention of such Mission Stations, and however valuable their humanizing influence, on the surrounding savage tribes, tending directly to the discontinuance of barbarous customs such as have given rise to the outrages and disturbances now under reference, it is questionable how far the establishment of such posts should be encouraged in situations so remote from the centre of Government as Kincolith, while a field for Missionary labour, extending for four hundred miles southward along the Coast from Metlakatlah, remains entirely unoccupied. It would appear more judicious and advisable that Missionary enterprise should radiate gradually from the centre of civilization, instead of isolating itself at once at points, like Kincolith on the utmost verge of the Colony. So long, however, as that Station is continued it must, most assuredly, be held under the protection of Government; but it is evident that the very remoteness alone of such posts renders efficient protection a matter of much practical difficulty, and in many cases entails on the Colonial Government considerable embarrassment and pecuniary outlay.