

not far from the main rivers, and had two or more long entrances, which consisted of trenches roofed with sticks and brush, and thickly covered over with earth. These passages were low, and were blocked at the mouth by large stones. Food and water were kept on hand inside. These fortresses were said to be impregnable, as they could not be broken into successfully, and they could not be set on fire from the outside. Siege was never resorted to. No war-parties were strong enough to maintain a siege in an enemy's country; besides, they carried no food with them. The fortresses of the Lillooet were quite different in construction, and were sometimes taken by storm or set on fire with arrows to which lighted cedar-bark was attached.

Before the arrival of the fur-traders, the Thompson Indians often engaged in war-expeditions. Up to 1858, and even later, regular tribal wars, in which one whole tribe was arrayed against another, were very rare. Most of their warfare was for the sake of plunder, adventure, or revenge. War-parties numbered from five or six individuals to companies of several hundred. A man who refused to join in these war-expeditions lost the respect of his fellows. Though many of the chiefs favored peace rather than war, yet there was seldom much difficulty in obtaining men for these expeditions, many joining for the sake of the spoils, others merely from love of adventure or to obtain distinction.

Many are the stories told of the exploits of these war-parties, some of which make conspicuous their endurance, courage, and prowess; but these tales oftener recount the most revolting cruelty and the basest treachery. The object of these parties was to surprise their enemy by a stealthy attack or sudden onslaught. Ambuscades were also frequent. It was considered a very brave deed to take a stockade or fortified house by storm, but this was not often done.

The war-party was under the command of a war-chief. Young men of little experience were always kept in the middle of the party. The best men always led. A number of scouts were sent ahead, and watched the camp at night. Large parties employed four scouts. The warriors communicated by signals, such as imitations of cries of birds or other animals, and by sign language. Notices were left for distant members of the party by means of sticks placed in peculiar positions, etc. The war-party took little food along. They ate sparingly. The food was distributed by the chief, who passed it around the circle of warriors in a direction opposite to that of the sun's course. They also lighted as few and as small fires as possible, preferring for this purpose yellow-pine bark, called the "enemy's firewood," because its fire goes out quickly, and it is difficult to tell how long the fire has been made.

The men of a war-party wore little clothing, so as to have the greatest freedom for action. Many went naked above the waist, while others covered most of their body with armor. Before engaging in a hand-to-hand contest, the bow and quiver were often thrown aside. During the march, and particularly before an attack, the warriors put on their war-paint, and dressed their hair in the style peculiar to the warrior (see p. 226). They painted the face, and often all the