

along the mainland the coast was desolate, and the name of Desolation Sound was appropriately given to a scene of extraordinary ruggedness and wintry rigour. Here a boating party ransacked one of the deserted villages, lately inhabited by some three hundred persons, from whose rags and filth they did not escape unscathed. On the contrary, they were so furiously infested by legions of fleas that they were glad to rush into the sea to escape from their tormentors; and this was hardly a sufficient refuge from the hungry vermin. It is curious enough, in the way of coincidence, that a very similar visitation occurred, only a few months ago, to our Sappers and Miners employed on the commission to mark the boundary line, (the forty-ninth parallel of latitude,) in conjunction with the American government. In this case, however, the assailants were not fleas, but mosquitoes; and our informant describes them as myriads upon myriads, darkening the wood through which our men had to pass, and literally covering them with stings on every part of their persons, and which penetrated through every impediment. So fierce and insufferable was the onslaught, that they were compelled to fly from the enemy, and, like the Vaucouverists of old, seek safety by plunging up to their chins in the water. Even with this resource, their defence was incomplete, and they were obliged to boil their clothes before they could get rid of the annoying and dangerous insects. Unless improved culture mitigates this scourge, there will be an obstacle to overcome, during a few months of the best season, which was not contemplated when the expedition was sent out. But to return to our voyagers of last century.

While the island was populous and friendly to traffic, the opposite shore (as we have noticed) displayed throughout the utmost signs of ravage and misery. Skulls and skeletons were lying about in every direction. Some corpses were half burnt, some were thrust into holes, and some were suspended in canoes or baskets upon trees. War or desertion had depopulated the coast; and it was only at considerable distances that tribes were found to vary the monotony of wretchedness. At one place our sailors were enjoying a pic-nic entertainment, of which, fortunately for that feast, venison pasty formed a substantial dish. The Indians, as usual, watched the feed, and got a share occasionally, to encourage their good dispositions. But the venison was no treat for them: they could scarcely be induced to taste it; and when they did put a morsel between their lips, they instantly spat it out again, with every symptom of unutterable disgust and loathing. They fancied it was human flesh; and they were not cannibals, like the white men! Luckily, the head and haunch of a deer was at hand in the boat, and when they were shown, and the party convinced of the lawful nature of the meat, they set to work with a will, and relished the steaks like so many aldermen.

But other intercourse was neither so innocuous nor ended so well. The "Dædalus" arrived with stores, and with the news that Mr. Gooch the astronomer had been barbarously murdered at Woahoo, which deed Captain Vancouver had to avenge by

convicting three of the assassins and delivering them over to their own chief for execution. The latter conveyed them from the ship, cruelly strapped down in canoes, and deliberately blew out their brains in succession with a pistol, the fellows seeming to care very little about the process.

It was on the 12th of August, (Grouse day,) 1793, that our countrymen were exposed to the most desperate attack from these cunning and blood-thirsty savages. A launch and a yawl were near the shore, though apart from each other, with four canoes full of natives, singing and apparently peaceably inclined; when another small canoe came up, and its two mariners approached without hesitation, in good humour, accepting presents, and all seeming inoffensive and friendly. But this was a ruse to put the crews off their guard, which was only unsuccessful in consequence of its being observed that the savages were armed, and therefore not to be trusted. They soon surrounded Lieutenant Puget in the yawl, and became exceedingly clamorous, at the same time hallooing on other large canoes from the beach to join them. This was succeeded by thieving, and the violent seizure of whatever they could lay their hands upon. The yawl was ordered to push from the shore, but the assailants hung on the quarters, caught hold of the oars, and screamed out, "Winnee Watter," (whatever that might mean).

At length, a large canoe arrived, under the command of a furious old woman with a huge lip ornament, who laid her vessel across the bow of the English boat, and, pulling up the lead line, like a regular old Salt, lashed the two together. This was the signal for action. A young chief in another canoe put on a mask resembling a wolf's face compounded with a human countenance, and prepared for battle; a third stole a musket; and the situation was imminently critical. A parley was attempted, but fifty daggers were drawn, and spears brandished to reject the overture. Yet a brief lull ensued, and the launch was working up to the rescue, the aged fury vociferously continuing to urge on the assailants. An old man also conspicuously exerted himself; and, with his comrades, began to plunder the boat. There was no farther time for temporizing; the launch had got within pistol shot, and the word was given to "Fire!" Instantaneous was the dispersion, as of wild ducks on a lake. Those in the small canoes leaped overboard and swam for their lives. Those in the larger craft, by a clever manœuvre, rushed all to one side, and so tilted up the other as a shield to protect them, and thus paddled off, crabwise, as fast as they could to the shore. Two of our men were badly wounded, and some fire-arms and cartridge boxes abstracted; and when the savages reached the shore, they climbed the rocks and threw large stones, thirty or forty yards, against the boats, but without effect.

These and all other adventures, privations, and dangers passed, one hundred and thirty-nine of our brave fellows (one missing) arrived safe at home in 1795, and the history of their toils was published in 1798, within a few months after the death of their intrepid commander. The narrative has