

protecting themselves from the fierce blasts of winter in underground dwellings. So, too, did the Indians of British Columbia, especially in the upper country, descend into what were known as *keekwillies*, great holes in the earth capable of containing several families and their dogs. A hole was made at the top, through which passed a pole arranged on the principle of the bear's pole at the Zoo, up and down which the people climbed. In the summer permanent houses were inhabited, each containing several families, much as one reads was the case in the early Welsh houses. Each family had its own share of the dwelling. But in the fishing season the houses were abandoned, as they still are, for tent life. You see a family of Indians going from place to place on the river bank to fish, and taking all their earthly possessions with them—their tent cover and poles, blankets, iron cooking pot, and fishing hooks and lines; but everything bought, nothing made by themselves any longer, with the exception of a few baskets and mats. The bath hut, in which steam was generated by throwing water on hot stones till an almost intolerable temperature was reached, resembled the celebrated "Russian" bath. Fire was procured in the usual savage fashion by twirling a stick rapidly round; but was carried about wherever practicable, as even the Indians dreaded the long and tedious process of procuring it.

Of the Indians as they appear after their contact with civilization there is little interesting to relate. Though they are protected by Government in every possible way, they are rapidly dying out. A few days of lazy fishing will procure the coast and river Indians enough for their simple wants; they have forgotten their ingenious arts and manufactures with the influx of English and American goods. They need not even plant the potatoes for which they have acquired a liking. "Why me plant potato?" they will say; "white man plant potato for me." They can buy all they require with the price the numerous canneries* will pay for their fish. There are exceptions, survivals of the fittest. Some of the Indians work steadily at the saw-mills and canneries; some even claim their rights of full citizenship, cultivate their land, and—I have been told with bated breath—grow rich enough to have white men working for them! An Indian can always claim his right to citizenship when he has shown his fitness for it. He then gives up all share in the well-meant but demoralizing "reservations," all right to pauperizing independence; he can assume a surname, vote, and own land by sale or pre-emption.*

* By pre-emption, a settler living on land, and making certain improvements, becomes its owner on paying a dollar per acre.