

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.

Supplemental to volume one collected in 1931.

About the 2011 Edition

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CAPT. JAMES COOK'S ARRIVAL AT NOOTKA.

Rev. C.M. Tate conversation, J.S. Matthews, 19 December 1932.

Rev. C.M. Tate, Methodist Indian Missionary, just celebrated his 80th birthday, and suffering in bed in consequence of too many visitors, helped to consecrate the first Indian church in Granville (Vancouver) soon after his arrival in British Columbia in 1870, and afterwards served as itinerant missionary to Indians at various places, for instance, Fort Simpson, Bella Bella, Ocean Falls, Rivers Inlet, Yale, Nooksahk, Chilliwack, Musqueam, Snauq, Nanaimo, Nootka and Victoria, etc.

"Oh, I must tell you what they told me on the west coast" (of Vancouver Island). "When I was over there, the west coast Indians told me—that's quite a long time ago, too, in the 1870s or 1880s—that their ancestors saw the first ships coming to Nootka; Capt. Cook's ships; they sent for the conjurers; wise men you can call them if you like.

"I suppose the Indians first saw the ships far off on the horizon; anyway their sails were seen some distance out to sea, and with the hull half or completely out of sight owing to distance, would look rather mysterious to people who had never seen such things. The white sails were heaving and rising with the waves; the sails probably were not very white; anyway, they were very visible as the ships were tacking up and down in order to make the land. The conjurers said that the moon men had come down, and were using big snakes for a canoe, tacking backwards and forwards.

"When the ships finally got to Nootka they dropped anchor and, of course, as the anchor chains dropped through the hawse pipe, they made a great noise. The conjurers said that was the moon men speaking, and the Indians fled to the woods.

"After a while, so I was told, the young men, the young braves, said, 'You only die once, let's go out and see what it's all about; suppose we take a canoe and go out.' So they did. They wore sea otter garments; very valuable furs now, very valuable indeed, but quite common with the Indians at that time. When they got out to the ships and saw the white faces of the men, why, that confirmed what the conjurers said about the moon men; it looked as though the conjurers were right. Finally they approached closer when some of the moon men came to the edge of the ship and let down some coloured beads on a string; some of the braver Indians went closer, and then beads were dropped into the canoe. Ultimately one or two of the moon men came down the ladder a little way, and dropped some beads into the canoes, and finally three or four of the Indians were persuaded to leave their canoes, and climb up the ladder to the ship's deck.

"Everything pointed to confirm the conjurer's statements that these were the moon men. The moon men wore yellow, they had a brass band around their caps, they had brass epaulets and brass buttons. Then the captain of the ship came, and blew on the fur of their sea otter garments, and his features showed surprise at the fine furs.

"One of the young Indians said to the other, 'I think he wants our coats,' and the companion replied, 'if you will give him yours I will give him mine too,' so both did, and then the captain of the moon men said, 'you have given me your coats; now I will give you mine,' and then some undervests and underdrawers were brought, and the Indians were shown how to put them on. They were well pleased.

"Next, the two young men were invited down in the ship, and the captain called to the steward or someone to bring some biscuits, and ship's biscuits or something of the sort were brought on a pan, and the captain pointed to his mouth. The two Indians looked at each other, and said, in their own language, of course, 'we never eat bones.' Then another pan was brought, this time with some red stuff on it, jam, and the same performance of pointing to the mouth repeated. The two young Indians decided that these moon men eat blood and bones. One of the moon men took one of the 'bones' and broke it, and placed a piece of blood (jam); I think they told me, 'dipped it in the blood,' and ate it. The two Indians decided they did not care for that sort of food, and abstained.

"The captain then sent for some new tin plates from below. These were brought and held up to the light of the port hole and, of course, reflected their faces, the ceiling, and everything else. The two Indians now concluded that the moon men had brought the stars with them. Finally the tin plates were presented to the Indians.

"When the two young fellows went on shore, highly delighted, they told the conjurers that they had seen the moon men all right; the conjurers were right, they were the moon men and they had brought the stars with them.

"The whole incident," concluded Mr. Tate, "I was told, put the Nootka Indians forever on a higher plane than any other tribe, and made them the most important tribe on the coast, for it was they who had brought the moon men and the stars to the Indians.

"About their houses. I never saw a palisaded Indian fort; their houses were their forts. When they were attacked, they ran, I suppose, to their houses. They cut little holes in the thick sides of their houses, and shot at their enemies with bow and arrow through those little holes. Then again, in many of the houses, the earthen floor was two, perhaps three feet below the bottom of the outside wooden walls and the ground level outside the house, so that when the Indians were squatted on the floor inside, their heads were below the ground level outside, and that afforded still more protection from arrows, etc.

"The tops of the four corner posts of their houses were grooved to receive and hold the cross logs or plates; then right down the centre, longways down the middle was a great beam to carry the roof. Inside, the four corner posts were usually ornamented with carvings. The sides of the building were of thick cedar slabs, split with deer's horn wedges, and laid horizontally not perpendicularly one above the other to form the wall" (see Captain Cook's *Voyages*, drawing of Nootka) "between two upright stakes of moderate dimensions, and these stakes were lashed together with green cedar bark, or some such strapping, which held the stakes together and thus kept the slabs of the wall in position. There were no windows, just an entrance without door, and usually there were no curtains or such protection from the weather across the entrance. The beams above the wall were very light; they carried little weight, only the roof, or such weight of the roof as was not taken by the big beam down the centre; the walls supported themselves only; they had no part of the weight of the roof to carry. The light stakes holding up the walls were at intervals, the horizontal wall boards or slabs slipped in between them, and then the stakes strapped together."

POTLATCHES.

"For use at the potlatch, there was a sort of platform which they used to build in front of their houses. It was supported on four stout posts with the usual grooves at the top to receive the cross log or plate. The platform was high in the air, oh, perhaps ten or fifteen feet, and was perhaps five feet wide by fifteen or twenty feet long, just a very high platform from which they threw the blankets or other gifts at the potlatch. The name of the man for whom the gift was intended would be called out, and a blanket from the pile on top of the platform would be thrown, and come flying through the air to the crowd below; if the proper man caught it, well and good, but it was quite a part of the proceeding for others to try and get it. There would be a sort of scramble. Some would have long spears and would spear the blanket as it came flying down; then four or five would grab at it, and cut off with a knife as much as he could of what he had grabbed; thus the blanket would be cut into four or perhaps five or more pieces, and each man would retain whatever portion he had cut off. Afterwards the piece would be unraveled, and the wool woven into a blanket more to their liking.

GARMENTS.

"The first Indians I saw were at Neah Bay, not far from Cape Flattery, in 1870. The garments they were wearing then were a sort of sack arrangement with holes for them to poke their heads and arms through. Today you see local Indians wearing headdresses of Indian feathers, etc. I never saw those headdresses in the early days, and it is my opinion that they are inventions which the coast Indians have copied from the pictures they have seen of prairie Indians." (Note: Paull says they wore eagle's feathers in their hair; see photograph of "Faithful Jim," drowned in Fraser River, 1902.)

CANOES.

"You can always tell a canoe belonging to a Squamish Indian. No other canoes I know of have the straight stem with the projecting counter above it." (Note: Paull looked at a photograph of Vancouver "Before the Fire," panorama view of waterfront and Hastings Mill, and on which two Indian canoes appear, and said, "Those are the canoes of our former enemies, the northern Indians." Both ends of the canoe sweep upwards.)

A cup of tea, afternoon tea, was brought in to Rev. C.M. Tate as he lay in bed, and he continued:

"Yes, the Indians have certainly been valuable friends to the whiteman; they are a sincere, honest, God-fearing race. To my own knowledge, up around Yale anyway, they succoured many a poor starving miner, and asked no return, nor told what they did." (See Mr. Tate's remarks elsewhere.) "And as for honesty, why, I remember Mr. Wells, the celebrated dairy farmer up at Sardis and Chilliwack telling me with much amusement how some man had come from eastern Canada to him for advice where to take up land, and he had shown him a place near at hand, remarking that an Indian reserve adjoined it. The man had replied, 'Oh, that's too bad; steal everything you've got.' 'Well,' Mr. Wells told me he had replied, 'you see that shed, it is full of bacon and ham, and there is another one full of vegetables; never have I missed a thing, and as for locking the doors of our house, why, we simply never do it.'

"Then again, when I was preaching at Snauq, old Chief George's" (Chip-kaay-am) "community or potlatch house under the present Burrard Bridge, I would call out at the end of the meeting asking if anyone had anything to say, or sometimes old Chief George would do it himself. In any case, he would usually get up and make some remarks of some sort, give the young men some good advice as to how to deport themselves, and the proper things to do. Old Chief George was, as Jim Franks" (Chillahminst) "says, a very good, kind man, a fine Indian.

"Then, when I was up at Bella Bella, the Bella Bella Indians contributed their mite to the help of the poor in London, England. I had told them of how people in the poorer districts of London, England, were starving, so they, they themselves, took up a collection; my story had appealed to them. They said to me, 'Why don't they come out here; plenty of food out here if they would come.'"

I suggested to the Rev. Mr. Tate that the stories associated around the various legendary rocks around English Bay, etc., had been wrongly stressed by writers as tales of romance rather than, as they should be, allegorical truths illuminating morality, and that my interpretation of the legends of Chitchulayuk (Point Grey) and Slahkayulsh (Siwash Rock)—Indian men, in both instances, turned into stone for punishment—was that they were intended to be an exemplification of the truths of morality, and was, in the case of Chitchulayuk, for the purpose of illustrating the folly of jealousy, and in the case of Slahkayulsh, the folly of greed.

"Quite true," replied Mr. Tate, "you know of course, that Mount Baker is the 'Mother of All Indians.' The Indians said to me once, 'You say in your bible that Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt; it's just as reasonable for the mother of Indians to have been turned into a mountain of snow.' It is a pity that the whitemen have not treated the Indians as well as the Indians have treated the whites.

"The Indians are a splendid people if treated right. The New Zealanders fought for their rights; it might have been better if the Indians had done a little fighting. But old Sir James Douglas was at the bottom of it; if he had not treated them squarely at the first we probably should have had a fight on our hands. He did buy a good deal of their land, but when he applied to the British government for funds to buy land from the Indians for the settlers, the British government said they had no funds for that purpose, and that the proper thing to do was to sell what land he had to the whites, and with that money buy more land from the Indians. As an instance of what went on: when the Indians were approached to sell the Songhees Reserve, I told them that if they sold any land they would sell it forever. I got a stinging letter from Helmcken threatening to put me in jail for resisting the government; I told him to go to it. I asked a man in Victoria how much the Songhees Reserve was worth, and he said three millions, but all the Indians got for it was \$400,000.

"Which reminds me that the Indians got their flour from dried fern root—saak is the word for fern; Sooke at Victoria is named after it—after it is dried, fern root breaks up into a white powder. The Indian name is Swymuth for New Westminster; 'swy' means 'to buy'; the Indians gave it that name after they started to go down there to buy things from the traders. Esquimalt is much the same interpretation; both have the same meaning. The Indian name for the death dance was swyhee, quite different. Kokohpai on Marine Drive, now part of Locarno Beach, must have had a lot of crab apple trees there at one time; the Indian name for crab apple is kokwap; just another illustration of how dialects differ. I am not sure about the meaning of 'Stuckale' (Great Northern Cannery, West Vancouver); it seems to me there must be a head or something there, a mountain. I once composed a hymn, and wanted a title for it, so I chose 'Stuckale to Jesus,'

which interprets 'head of all, chief of chiefs,' or 'Jesus, head of all,' but I believe the local Squamish Indians have another meaning for it."

FORT SIMPSON AND NORTHERN INDIANS.

"In 1874 I was appointed to Fort Simpson, now Port Simpson, for the purpose of opening up a mission in that district; I remained at Fort Simpson but a few months; I was exchanged with the Rev. Thomas Crosby, who was located at Chilliwack, and made my home at Chilliwack."

THE "BITING MAN" AND BELLA BELLA.

"In 1880 we opened a school for Indian youth—both sexes—at Bella Bella, and I was sent north again. It was at Bella Bella that my wife first remarked upon the sores upon the arms of the Indian girls, and urged enquiry as to how they were caused. We had been giving the girls medical treatment for sores on their arms, lacerations of different shapes but mostly crescent shaped, such as would be caused by teeth if the girls had been bitten, and some so septic as to be running sores. We discovered that certain of the male Indians belonged to a sort of secret order whose strange prerogative was that of biting people; this privilege was largely practiced on girls, rarely on men. The bites were on the thick of the arm, usually between elbow and shoulder; the teeth made marks like brands, and, of course, bites from teeth which knew no dentifrice from birth to death, might be expected to, and did cause, a good deal of blood poisoning. We were frequently obliged to cauterize wounds, to poultice them. Let me illustrate the situation by an experience I had; it must have been in 1882.

"I was going on a pastoral visit to one of the villages near Ocean Falls, a place called Kokite, in a canoe with several Indians from Bella Bella together with their wives. When we were about a mile distant from Kokite, we caught the first sounds of the beating of Indian drums, gongs, singing, and the general noise of celebration. My Indian companions, both men and women, became alarmed, said it would be impossible to go on, and proposed to turn back. I protested with vigour, and said, 'no'; we must keep on, I said, the Great Father would protect all. With much trepidation they finally resumed paddling, and as we approached nearer, we could see on the shore one of the dancers with a rope around his body making his way down the beach to the water's edge, and apparently dragging after him half a dozen men who were making pretence of holding him back. I learned afterwards that he was the 'biting man.'

"We landed, and I accosted the 'biting man,' who immediately withdrew to one of the houses with those men who had been pretending to hold him back. They barred the door after entering. My own Indian crew promptly took to the woods; they feared something or other, probably that the 'biting man' or his followers would attack me or us, or that there was going to be trouble. I protested to the 'biting man' and his companions against the manner of my reception. I told them I had come on a friendly visit, and what did it mean that they received us in this insulting manner.

"The 'biting man' and his companions remained closeted within the house all day. On attempting to approach the building I was told that the 'biting man' was within, that I could not enter; no one was allowed to enter."

THE CEREMONY OF INITIATION.

"As explained to me, initiation into the secret order of the 'biting man' was a barbarous, diabolical ceremony. I was informed that the proposed initiates first went into the mountains, washed themselves with mountain stream water, brushed themselves with spruce boughs, etc., all to cleanse themselves; and then came back and—almost too horrible to contemplate—went to a graveyard, or somehow procured a piece of putrefying human flesh, and gnawed at that; after which they were admitted a member of the 'biting man' order." (Note: Prof. Boas has written at length on this "order.") "One chief told me that, if they could, they would get instead the rib of a piece of deer with flesh on it, or something of the sort, and tear away with their teeth at that; deception, of course, he told me, but evidently they were not above avoiding the ordeal, if they could.

"My wife and I were teaching the girls at our school at Bella Bella, and of course ministering to their sores. When other tribes found that we were successful in our healing we were rather overrun with appeals to establish schools."

EXPERIENCES AT BELLA COOLA.

"I had another interesting experience at Bella Coola. We were endeavouring to get the Indians to accept the Christian teaching. You see, my tenure of office was at a period of time when the Indians were becoming fairly familiar with the white man and his habits. Prior to my period, the Indians had been left very largely to themselves, retained much of their old mode of living, kept very largely to old practices; but in my day, they had had, from their childhood, some sort of more or less remote association with the whiteman, spoke broken English, had a general conception of white man's methods. On the other hand, the whiteman had left the Indians pretty much to themselves.

"But the natives had by no means lost their fear of their old enemies; times were not so remote that they could not recall some of the terrors of the past; nor had they abandoned their precautions to protect themselves from the attacks of their native foes.

"In response to my pleadings I was told that it all sounded very good, but they enquired what, if they did as I asked, was to protect them from the attacks of their enemies. Their enemies would raid their villages, carry off such as they could catch of their women and children; the wolf dance was a protection against these depredations; it would make their enemies fear them. They agreed that they would be quite willing to accept our Christian teachings if we would first assure them of immunity from attack by killing off their enemies for them. Otherwise, what protection would they have?"

THE WOLF DANCE.

"The wolf dance was a representation of the wolf. The Indians had a couple of shutters or clappers which they clapped together, and at the same time they howled, 'whoaf, whoaf,' in imitation of the wolf. The wolf dance had nothing to do with the 'biting man'; that was a secret order, entirely separate.

"In this connection I might tell you that, whilst travelling with the Indians—it was in the seventies, on trails about Nanaimo—I asked the reason for the mounds of shells frequently to be seen deep in the forest. The reply was made me, 'that is where our people have been eating.' What had happened was this. When the enemy appeared, the warrior sent the weaker to the woods, and subsequently carried food, clams, fish, etc., to them; after the foe had departed the weaker would return again from the woods. The Yuclataws were the most dreaded tribe on the coast; they were not satisfied with killing their enemies, but, so the Indians informed me, cut off the heads of the vanquished, stuck the head on a pole, fastened the pole upright in the canoe, and proceeded home in triumph."

OOLICHAN GREASE.

"As you know, the Indians are very fond of oolichan grease, a rather disgusting edible for Europeans to whom it has a most repulsive odour. But Indians will smother it over all kinds of food, and smack their lips. I recall one instance when I arrived very late one night at an Indian fishing village. I was immediately ushered into the chief's house, and his wife began to prepare food for me. A fresh lot of halibut had just come in, and she began to cook. Out came her oolichan box, and the big horn spoon, a sort of great ladle, made I think from the horn of the big horn sheep. Of course, the more grease—they valued it—the greater the honour to the guest. I protested that I was unworthy of so much grease, but without avail; to my chagrin, she was lavish, and simply showered her esteem on me by smothering the halibut with the grease. I never acquired a taste for it; I am hopeless, without hope, that I ever shall.

"I recall most vividly the first time I consented to eat with an Indian family. It was in 1871 in the community house at Nanaimo. I happened to arrive just as the family gathered around a large wooden platter of boiled cod. I asked the privilege of dipping in with them, when, to their astonishment, they discovered that I was willing to eat with them; they seemed overjoyed."

INDIAN FOOD-GARDENS.

"The Indians had no gardens such as we know; they got their livelihood from water and beach. Then, too, they used a lot of berries, shalal and other berries, which for winter's use they dried and made up in big flat compressed cakes on the same principle as our raisins. When wanted, they would break off a piece, soak it in water, and cook. The Tsimpsons, in the north, preserved theirs in grease."

INDIAN FISHING.

"Originally, before they got our nets, the Indians fished with frames of slats placed close together to keep the fish from getting through—not small fish, but such as salmon. The frame was made of small round horizontal poles to which were affixed perpendicular slats of split cedar, fastened by rope or bark entwined so as to hold them to the poles and form a frame. The frames were sunk into the water, and put down in the gravel with stakes with sharpened points." (Note: see August Kitsilano's narrative explaining how the sandbar where Granville Island now stands was used to catch or trap fish by the Indians for Snauq, Burrard Bridge.) "The slats kept the fish from getting through. The Indians put the frames right across the river, leaving out a slat or two in the middle where the water was swift. Above this opening they usually had an overhead walk, upon which they would stand and spear—or jag with a hook—the fish, usually salmon, as they came through the opening. Sometimes they would have a canoe lying alongside the frame to throw the fish into; at Bella Coola I have seen a canoe almost sunk with the load of fish, generally salmon.

"In later days the poor Indians felt the effects of the white man's fishing laws; they fined the poor Indian ten or fifteen dollars if he went out and caught a salmon in a stream which, from time immemorial, his ancestors had caught their fish. Which reminds me that they took his land as well."

THE INDIAN LAND QUESTION.

"I remember once an assemblage of about one hundred Indians, mostly chiefs—I acted as interpreter for them—mostly chiefs, assembled at Victoria, and after discussing their land complaints with Sir Richard McBride for about three hours, he replied saying, 'You have no case.' A big raw boned Indian, a monster of a fellow, from Douglas Lake, got up and said, 'You say we have no case?'

"Then he made movements as though rolling up his sleeves, and said, 'McBride'—he did not even say Mr. McBride—'when men disagree they usually fight.' Sir Richard looked alarmed. 'Now I want to fight you; I will fight you; not your Indian law, but with your whitemans law. For money you give title to land; where did you get your title from? When people give title, they must first have acquired it themselves. Where did you get your title from?' That was pretty good reasoning, eh?

"Another chief from up the coast said, 'You say you got your title from the Queen. What is the Queen's' (Queen Victoria) "'title to us. Where did she get her title from that she can give it to you?'"

SIR JAMES DOUGLAS.

"The Indians thought a great deal of Sir James Douglas. That land which he got from them around Victoria he bought from them. True he gave them only a few blankets, some biscuits and molasses, but he bought it. He once wrote to the British government that British Columbia was filling up, and that he wanted money to buy land from the Indians so that he could sell it to the settlers, otherwise there might be trouble but the British government's reply was that they had no money for the purchase of lands, that he had better sell a little and use the proceeds to buy more. My opinion is that if the whole case had gone to the Privy Council that the Indians would have won out." (See below.)

INDIAN RESPECT FOR BRITISH LAW AND JUDGE BEGBIE.

"The Fraser River Indians had a great respect for Judge Begbie. When the toughs from California bound for the Cariboo shot the Indians for sport, Judge Begbie came along with his bluejackets, held court in the open along the Cariboo road, and the offending white man would be strung up without much formality soon afterwards. I remember, soon after the occurrence, being told by white men how, at one of these open air courts, Judge Begbie had concluded his remarks to the offender whom he had sentenced to be hanged for shooting Indians (above Yale) in cold blood, by saying, 'I wish you to understand that, under the British flag, an Indian's life is just as valuable as any other life.'"

KINDLY DISPOSITION OF INDIANS.

(See above.) "I quite agree with you that the Indian people are a splendid people if treated right; it's a pity the whiteman has not treated them as well as they have treated the whiteman. The New Zealand Maoris fought for their rights; it might have been better if our Indians had fought for theirs, but old Sir James Douglas was at the bottom of it; if he had not treated them squarely at the first we probably should have had a fight on our hands. He did buy a good deal of their land, but when he applied to the British

government for funds to buy land for the settlers from the Indians, the British government said they had no funds for that purpose, and that the proper thing to do was to sell land to the white, and with that money buy more land from the Indians.

“As I found them, all Indians were a kindly, hospitable, joyful and entertaining people. Once you got on the right side of them there was little too good for their friends to whom they gave the best they had. Many of the miners returned down the Fraser from the Cariboo ‘dead broke,’ and without food, and were helped back to civilization largely through the kindness of the Indians who frequently gave them supper, bed and breakfast—such as it was—asking no return, and in that way the miners got one day further on their journey to the coast.”

CHRISTIANITY’S MYSTERIOUS POWER.

Query: Looking back over the years, Mr. Tate, and with the mellowed judgment which long experience and white hairs give, do you consider your life’s effort wasted?

“I should say not,” vigorously ejaculated Mr. Tate in his indignant retort; there was no mistaking the meaning of the answer to the impertinent question; then he continued.

“Critics have often told us of the futility of trying to civilize Indians by simply preaching to them without first educating them, but experience has taught that it is much easier to educate the head after the heart is made right. Lawless barbarians have never become law-abiding citizens by book learning, but by Christianity we have seen the cannibal savage become a docile member of the community, and literally ask for the education that would enable him to compete with the educated people who had invaded his territory, and not be forever playing a losing game.

“A lone result of missionary labour, the smoke-begrimed community house where a dozen families herded together under anything but moral and sanitary conditions, has given place to the individual family cottage, and war paint has been washed from their faces, the feathers combed out of their hair, and modern clothing has supplanted the blanket pinned around the body with a wooden skewer. The canoe has given place to the gas boat built by themselves, and so far as the Indians are concerned, life and property is perfectly safe for the white man in any part of the country, largely due to the work of the missionaries; at least, so said a government official to me a short time ago.”

MISSIONARIES MORE VALUABLE THAN WARSHIPS.

“Let me relate some of my experiences to prove that contention. Some time in the 1840s or 1850s the Bella Bellas made a raid on the Rivers Inlet Indians, carried off their women and children to be slaves, a most intolerable affront and degradation. A couple of decades later it fell to me to persuade some Bella Bellas to accompany me down to Rivers Inlet on missionary work. After our arrival at Rivers Inlet, one of my Indian companions brought the alarming report to me that he had overheard a conversation—the two tribes speak the same language—to the effect that under cover of the night, the Rivers Inlets proposed paying the Bella Bellas back. During the conversation overheard, the question had come up as to what was to be done with the white man, that was myself; the decision was that he would have to suffer the same fate as the rest of them, to cover up the deed. When they first brought the report to me, I said, ‘We are in God’s hands; he will take care of us.’

“After dark I got out my magic lantern and slides, and we all went into the community house, and there, whilst the Indians of both tribes were all seated together, I displayed the lantern slides portraying the life of our Saviour, and gave the necessary explanations. After the entertainment was over, I saw the Rivers Inlet Indians wrap their blankets around them in that particular crouching attitude common to Indians, and one by one, slide off out into the darkness, went to their own shacks, lay down and went to sleep. The Bella Bellas with myself stayed in the big community house and did likewise. In the morning I said to my Indian companions, ‘Do you see how the Great Father protects His children?’

MURDERS.

“Take the case of the schooner at Rivers Inlet whose crew was never again heard of. It is a legendary story, and it was in speaking to the Indians about the past that they told me of it. I don’t remember the name of the vessel; I don’t know that the Indians knew it themselves. From what I could learn, the schooner went into Rivers Inlet to buy furs, and an easy way to secure furs is to exchange liquor for them.

The whitemen offered liquor, and the Indians scraped together all the furs that they could, and got liquor in exchange. In due time, the Indians said, 'Give us more liquor.' The whitemen replied, 'More furs, more liquor; no more furs, no more liquor.' The Indians had no more furs, so they found a way to get the liquor; they murdered the crew to get it, but those whitemen, indirectly, murdered themselves.

"Then again, down at Victoria I have seen the Yuclataws and their old enemies from Cape Mudge and Campbell River sitting on the same bench singing hymns and prayer and—the Yuclataws were desperados.

BETTER THAN WARSHIPS.

"No warships, nor half a dozen of them, could have brought about changes like these. 'In the earlier days,' an old friend said to me once, 'a man's life was not safe beyond a few miles outside Victoria,' and then my friend added, perhaps a little cynically, but not much, 'now you are safer among the Indians than among whites.'"

The Rev. Mr. Tate was a guest of the City of Vancouver on 1 July 1932 at the opening of the splendid Burrard Bridge which passes directly over Snauq, the Indian village where formerly he preached in the Indian potlatch house. He was a somewhat prolific writer. His works include *Our Indian Missions in British Columbia*, published by the Methodist Church in Toronto; translated the Gospel of St. Mark into an Indian language, published a book of hymns in Indian tongue, and a dictionary of Chinook jargon. Now over 80, he is a tall, venerable gentleman of clear complexion, white hair, stately carriage and kindly bearing.

"Our dear old Dr. Tate," writes F.C. Stephenson of Toronto, "his life has counted for much. Any honour we can show him is small reward."

Also see "Indian villages and landmarks," "Burrard Inlet and English Bay," "Before the Whiteman Came."

Rev. C.M. Tate died at 9 a.m. today (whilst this is being typewritten) at the home of his nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Watson, 1749 Nelson Street, Vancouver; an illuminating instance of the wisdom of getting historical material while it is procurable. J.S.M. 28 February 1933.

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 1933

The Moonmen at Nootka, 1778

J. S. MATTHEWS.

Snatches from recent conversations with Rev. C. M. Tate, a noble Methodist missionary, who gave his life to the Indians; a butcher boy whose ecclesiastical training college was the canoe; who assisted in the dedication of the first church in Vancouver—built in 1876 by the Indians—and who died last week, aged 81, a beloved and happy man.

"OH, I must tell you what the west coast Indians told me, a long time ago, too, about the '70's, that when they saw the first ships coming into Nootka, they sent for the conjurers; wise men you may call them if you like.

"The ships were far off on the horizon when first seen, and were tacking backwards and forwards to make the land, the sails heaving and falling with the waves. The conjurers said it was the men from the moon who had come down, and were using sea serpents, snakes they called them, for canoes. I suppose a ship with hull half down, owing to distance, with foam at her bow, and sails somewhat the grey color of the moon in daytime, would look a little mysterious to those who had never seen such things.

"Finally the ships anchored at Nootka, and, of course, as the anchor chain ran through the hawse pipe, it made a great noise. The conjurers said it was the moonmen speaking; the Indians took to the woods.

"Then I was told, some young braves said 'you only die once, let's take a canoe and go out,' so they did. When they got closer and saw the white faces, why, the conjurers were right; they were the moonmen. The moonmen came to the edge of the ship and let down beads on a string, then the canoe went closer, and some beads were dropped in the canoe; one of the moonmen came down a rope ladder, and dropped more beads in the canoe; finally the braves were persuaded to climb up to the ship's deck.

"THE moonmen had a yellow band on their caps, yellow epaulets, and yellow (brass) buttons; they were moonmen sure.

"The Indians wore sea-otter garments, extremely valuable furs now, but common then. The captain blew on their furs, and showed astonishment at their beauty. One of the Indians said to his comrade, 'I believe he wants our 'coats'; the other replied, 'I believe he does; if you will give him yours, I will give him mine,' and they did. Then the captain of the moonmen made signs, 'you have given me your coat, now I will give you mine.' Some undervests and underdrawers were brought, and the Indians shown how to put them on. They were pleased.

"Next they entered the cabin. The captain called for a pan of biscuits, ship's biscuits, I suppose, and pointed to his mouth. The Indians looked askance at each other, and said, 'We never eat bones.' Then another pan with red stuff, jam, was brought, and one of the moonmen took a 'bone,' broke it, and 'dipped it in the blood.' The Indians decided the moonmen ate blood and bones; they did not care for such food.

"Some new tin plates were brought, and held up to the light, and reflected the ceiling, their faces, etc.; the Indians concluded the moonmen had brought the stars with them.

"Then they went ashore again, taking the 'stars' with them, and the news that the wise men were right; it was the moonmen who had come, and they had brought the stars with them. The 'stars' were hung up in the huts as ornaments.

"The whole incident, I was told, put the Nootka Indians on a higher plane than other tribes, for it was they who had brought the moonmen and the stars to the Indians."

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"YOU know, of course, that Mount Baker is the 'Mother of All Indians.' The Indians said to me once, 'You say in your Bible that Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt; would it not be just as reasonable for the 'Mother of Indians' to have been turned into a mountain of snow, or Slahkayulsh (Siwash Rock) the fisherman into a column of rock?

Query—"Looking backwards, Mr. Tate, and with that mellowed judgment which long years, much tribulation, and white locks give, do you consider your life's effort wasted?"

Mr. Tate's answer (with much emphasis): "I should say not."

Then calmly. "One missionary was more valuable than a warship; no warship, or fleet of warships, could have wrought such changes. Critics have often expounded the futility of trying to civilize by simply preaching at them, but experience has taught that you must reach the heart before you can educate the head."