

and have always been remarked for their attentions and kindness to the infirm and aged, who are first to be provided for. One of their customs would, however, go to prove that these good qualities cannot exist in the degree in which some represent it. When an Indian of this tribe dies, leaving young children who are not able to defend themselves, his other relatives seize upon his property, and particularly the horses, which he may have left. The only excuse they offer for this kind of robbery and desertion is, that their fathers did so before them.

I have before said, that there is no authority recognised in their chief, at least so far as the power to inflict punishments for crimes or disorders is concerned. There is, however, often a principal man, who, from the circumstance of possessing wealth, intelligence, and character, and sometimes from birth, united, obtains a sort of control or chieftainship, and exercises an authority over others from his personal influence, ruling more by persuasion than by command through sanction of law. The extent of his authority must of course depend upon the individual's own temper: if he were a determined character, he might no doubt exercise very considerable power.

Punishment for crime is generally inflicted by the tribe, and frequently goes so far as to expel the delinquent; but I understand that the circumstances under which the crime was committed, have great influence in their decisions, and that they are for the most part just. Punishment is not by any means certain, an instance of which occurred in the case of Cornelius sending the very man with horses, which had been hired of him, who had the year before, on a similar errand, cheated him out of the stipulated pay. The chief had no redress for this wrong, and moreover, felt obliged again to employ the same person, from fear, as was supposed, of exciting the ill-will of his friends or tribe.

As respects the belief of these Indians in a Supreme Being, they had a very confused idea. Their ceremonies were connected with their superstitions, and one of the most remarkable of these was called "huwash." This results from the belief that the spirit within a person may be separated from the body for a short time, without the person being aware of it, or its causing death, provided it be quickly restored to him. This accident of losing the spirit is supposed to become first known to the medicine-man in a dream, who communicates it to the unhappy individual, and who, in return, immediately employs him to recover it. During a whole night the medicine-man will be engaged in hunting it up, passing from one lodge to another, singing and dancing. Towards morning, they retire into a separate lodge, which is closed up