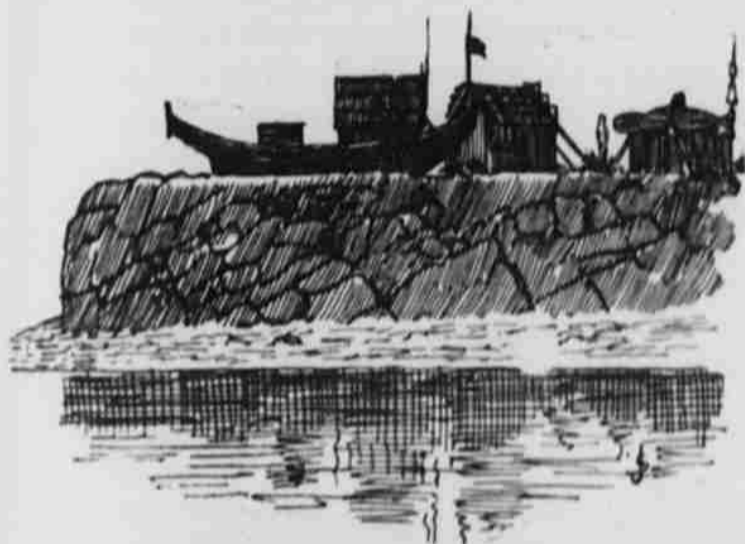


## INDIAN BURIAL PLACES.

EVERY traveler through the region lying between the Columbia and Alaska has seen one or more places of sepulture used by the native tribes for the interment of their dead, and every collection of photographs contains a variety of pictures of such unique and curious cemeteries. The tribes formerly living within those limits were numerous and the eth-



SHELL ISLAND CEMETERY, FORT RUPERT BAY, B. C.

nologist finds great difficulty in dividing them into families. Bancroft classifies them into six great families, as follows: The Haidahs, occupying Queen Charlotte's islands and other adjacent islands and the mainland; the Nookas, embracing all the tribes on Vancouver island and the mainland opposite for some distance inland; the Shushwaps, occupying the great interior plateau of British Columbia to the Rocky mountains; the Puget sound family inhabiting the region about that great inland sea; the Chinooks, occupying both banks of the Columbia as far as the dalles, and the great Willamette valley and adjacent ocean coast; and the Sahaptins, extending through Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho and Northeastern Oregon. These are, of course, simply names applied to combinations of tribes occupying extended areas, and were in most cases borne by the leading tribe of the region credited to it.

The Haidah tribe, whose name was thus given to designate all the coast tribes of Southern Alaska and Northern British Columbia, lived on Queen Charlotte islands, where still live the few remaining representatives of what was the most civilized and intelligent tribe of natives encountered on the Pacific coast north of Mexico. Indeed, so light of color and so different are they from other tribes, that the theory has been advanced that they are a more recent importation from Asia than their neighbors, and are of more modern Mongolian origin. The Haidahs and other tribes of that region practice cremation to a certain extent and in a crude way. The disposition of the mortal remains

of defunct persons depends considerably upon the station occupied by the deceased in his life time. Slaves are disposed of by throwing their bodies into a river or the sea, but free persons are cremated, though often the body is buried for a time. But little ceremony is observed in disposing of unimportant individuals, but a chief or the head of a family is burned with quite a demonstration. A funeral pyre of logs is made, not high and elaborate like those of India, but enough to make a good fire. Upon this the body is laid, and, not infrequently, articles of value formerly possessed by the deceased, and about this the members of the tribe gather while the body is being consumed by the flames. The ashes and unburned bones are variously disposed of. They are placed in boxes, baskets or canoes, or wrapped in mats or bark, and are buried or deposited on the ground, placed in a tree, or on a platform or suspended from poles. With them are frequently placed spears, paddles, bows, etc., presumably for the use of the departed in the spirit land, and care is always taken to break or otherwise destroy their usefulness in this world, for the ghoulish greed that would rob the dead is not a characteristic of the Caucasian only.

By the side of these platforms or burial rocks is often planted a memorial pole upon which is carved the pedigree of the deceased, consisting of the various "crests" representing the families to which he belonged. These crests are the figures of various animals, birds and fishes, such as the bear, raven, eagle, whale, etc. This totem stick is generally of cedar, and is a duplicate of the huge carved cedar post, possibly thirty feet high, that stands beside the entrance to the house of the deceased. This custom of carving the family genealogy is peculiar to the natives of that region, the use of it and the skill to do the work decreasing as progress is made to the southward. The genuine Haidah tribe are the most skillful and in addition to wood also carve totem sticks in stone in a most neat and artistic man-



"DEAD HOUSE" ON VANCOUVER ISLAND.