

A
V O Y A G E
R O U N D T H E W O R L D,

PERFORMED
DURING THE YEARS 1790, 1791, AND 1792,

BY
ÉTIENNE MARCHAND,

PRECEDED
BY A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION,
AND
Illustrated by Charts, etc.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
OF
C. P. CLARET FLEURIEU,
OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, AND OF THE BOARD OF
LONGITUDE OF FRANCE.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATERNOSTER-ROW; AND T. CADELL, JUN.
AND W. DAVIES, STRAND.

1801.

mily societies has not yet any other ideas than those the object of which is the preservation of himself and his family. But, on the NORTH-WEST coast of AMERICA, we have found houses with two stories, fifty feet in length, thirty-five feet in breadth, and twelve or fifteen feet in height*, in which the assemblage of the framing and the strength of the wood ingeniously make up for the want of the more solid materials which, in order to be detached from the sides of the mountains or extracted from the bowels of the earth, require machines too complicated for the Americans to have been already able to have invented them: we see, in the small islands which would scarcely be thought habitable †, each habitation with a portal that occupies the whole elevation of the fore-front, surmounted by wooden statues erect, and ornamented on its jambs with carved figures of birds, fishes, and other animals; we there see a sort of temples ‡, monuments in honour of the dead §; and, what, undoubtedly, is no less astonishing, pictures painted on wood, nine feet long by five feet broad, on which all the parts of the human body, drawn separately, are represented in different colours; the features of which, partly effaced, attest the antiquity of the work, and remind us of those large pictures, those emblematical paintings, those hieroglyphics which served the people of MEXICO in lieu of written history: all the articles of furniture in use among the natives are covered with various ornaments of carved-work, intaglio, and in relief, and species of hieroglyphics; and these ornaments are not destitute of agreeableness and of a sort of perfection ||; dresses, studied and whimsical, but very complex

* See page 268, and following of this volume.

† *Ibid.* page 270.

‡ *Ibid.* page 274.

§ *Ibid.* pages 273 and 274.

|| The editor of *Dixon's* journal, whose voyage embraces the whole of the *north-west* coast, from *Nootka* Sound to *Cook's* River, tells us, when he is treating of this coast in general, that "the Indians are very fond of masks or visors, and various kinds of caps, such as birds, beasts, fishes, and sometimes representations of the human face; they have likewise many of these devices carved in wood, and some of them far from being ill executed."

"Whether or no they make use of any hieroglyphics to perpetuate the memory of events," adds he, "I cannot say; though their numerous drawings of birds and fishes, and their carved representations of animals and human faces might, perhaps, warrant a supposition of the kind. Many of these carvings are well proportioned, and executed with a considerable degree of ingenuity,

The partitions, six or seven feet high, are surmounted by a roof, a little sloped, the summit of which is raised from ten to twelve feet above the ground. These partitions and the roofing are faced with planks, each of which is about two feet wide. In the middle of the roof, is made a large square opening which affords, at once, both entrance to the light, and issue to the smoke. There are also a few small windows open on the sides. These houses have two stories, although one only be visible. The second is under ground, or rather its upper part, or ceiling, is even with the surface of the spot in which the stakes are driven. It consists of a cellar about five feet in depth, dug in the inside of the habitation, at the distance of six feet from the walls throughout the whole of the circumference. The descent to it is by three or four steps made in the platform of earth which is reserved between the foundations of the walls and the cellar; and these steps, of earth well beaten, are cased with planks which prevent the soil from falling in. Beams laid across, and covered with thick planks, form the upper floor of this subterraneous story, which preserves from moisture the outer story whose floor is on a level with the ground. The guide of the French explained to them that the cellar is the winter habitation.

The entrance-door of these edifices deserves a particular description.

This door, the threshold of which is raised about a foot and a half above the ground, is of an elliptical figure; the great diameter, which is given by the height of the opening, is not more than three feet, and the small diameter, or the breadth, is not more than two: it may be conceived that it is not very convenient to enter the house by this oval. This opening is made in the thickness of a large trunk of a tree which rises perpendicularly in the middle of one of the fronts of the habitation, and occupies the whole of its height: it imitates the form of a gaping human mouth, or rather that of a beast, and it is sur-

mounted by a hooked nose *, about two feet in length, proportioned, in point of size, to the monstrous face to which it belongs. It might therefore be imagined that, in the language of the inhabitants of the NORTH island of QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S Isles, the door of the house is called *the mouth*: and if we chose to go back to an ancient people with whom we are better acquainted than with this, we should find that the root of the word *ostium*, door, is *Os*, mouth; and it is well known that the Latins say indifferently *Os* or *Ostium fluminis*; and the French, indifferently too, the *entrance* or the *mouth* of a river, the *mouths* of the RHONE, the *mouths* of the NILE, &c. Over the door, is seen the figure of a man carved, in the attitude of a child in the womb, and remarkable for the extreme smallness of the parts which characterize his sex; and above this figure, rises a gigantic statue of a man erect, which terminates the sculpture and the decoration of the portal; the head of this statue is dressed with a cap in the form of a sugar-loaf, the height of which is almost equal to that of the figure itself. On the parts of the surface which are not occupied by the capital subjects, are interspersed carved figures of frogs or toads, lizards, and other animals, and arms, legs, thighs, and other parts of the human body: a stranger might imagine that he saw the *ex voto* suspended to the door-case of the niche of a *Madona*.

On comparing these pieces of sculpture to those large pictures which had been seen the day before in a place which appears consecrated to a Supreme Being, we should be tempted to believe that these various figures are emblems which are connected with the religion of this people. But how inquire into the matter when the voyager is ignorant of the language of the country? All that Captain CHANAL and his party could comprehend from the answers which

* It has been seen, in page 224 of this volume, that the grotesque heads which, in the extraordinary dress of the Tchinkitanayans, are applied over the knees, bear in like manner a hooked nose of an immoderate size.