

languages besides the Chinook jargon were spoken here by Indians belonging to as many tribes. My intention was to learn the one native to the place, but I soon found that if I were to do so I would not be able to converse with the Indians belonging to the other two tribes; so I learned the Chinook jargon, and found it very useful.

Horatio Hale said in 1841 that the tide of white population which was setting in this direction would soon overwhelm it, "leaving no trace, but such as may exist on the written page." In 1890 he said that the prediction has been only partially fulfilled, adding, "the language, in fact, seems destined to a long life and wide usefulness, though in a region somewhat remote from its original seat. On the site of Fort Vancouver it is now only heard from stray Indians, who have wandered thither from their reservations. But on the reservations and in the interior it is still in frequent use. . . . In British Columbia and parts of Alaska it is the prevailing medium of intercourse between the whites and the natives. There, too, the Indian tribes are not likely to die out." He also adds that these natives are likely to keep up a friendly commerce with their civilized neighbors for centuries, and that this will be done by means of this jargon; so that there is reason to believe that it will have its office of an international speech to fulfill among the many-languaged tribes of northwestern America for hundreds and perhaps thousands of years to come. This spread, this life of the jargon, so contrary to his ideas fifty years ago, is due solely to its usefulness.

Its future will depend on this same usefulness. As the Indians die or learn to speak English, as they are now doing on Puget sound, it will soon be of no use. I have been surprised to see how little Chinook the school children know who are even sixteen years of age. Yet the reason is plain; it is for intercourse between whites and Indians. But they have learned the English from an early age, and so have had no use for the Chinook. As nearly all the Indian children on Puget sound of school age are now in school, there will be no use for it when their parents are dead.* But so long as there will be Indians from California to

* Oregon Trade Language, pp. 21, 22.