

EXCURSION TO THE OREGON.

midable enemies of the white man, the party pushed on, but not without occasional mishaps; at one time the horses ran away, and had to be chased for a whole night, and even when the labour of the chase was over, three were irrecoverably lost; at another time half of the party were drenched crossing a wide creek full of black mud, which the men had to flounder through on horse-back. The weather, too, was becoming intolerably warm. They had frequently been favoured with fresh breezes, which made it very agreeable; but the moment these failed, they were almost suffocated with intense heat. Their rate of travelling was about twenty miles per day, which in this warm weather, and with heavily burdened horses, was as much as could be accomplished with comfort to the travellers and their animals.

The general aspect, however, of the country through which they were travelling, was exceedingly beautiful. "The little streams are fringed with a thick growth of pretty trees and bushes, and the buds are now swelling, and the leaves expanding, to 'welcome back the spring.' The birds, too, sing joyously amongst them—grosbeaks, thrushes, and buntings—a merry and musical band. I am particularly fond of sallying out early in the morning, and strolling around the camp. The light breeze just bends the tall tops of the grass on the boundless prairie, the birds are commencing their matin carollings, and all nature looks fresh and beautiful. The horses of the camp are lying comfortably on their sides, and seem, by the glances which they give me in passing, to know that their hour of toil is approaching, and the patient kine are ruminating in happy unconsciousness."

One morning the scouts came in with the intelligence that they had found a large trail of white men bearing north-west. Captain Wyeth and his party concluded that this was another caravan belonging to a rival trading company, and that it had passed them noiselessly in the course of the night, in order to be beforehand with them in traffic with the Indian tribes through which they were passing. The party grumbled a little at the unfriendly conduct of the rival caravan in stealing a march upon them; but consoled themselves by making the reflection, that competition is the soul of commerce, and that, in the same circumstances, they would in all probability have acted in the same way. While discussing the affair at breakfast, three Indians, of a tribe called the Ottos, made their appearance. These visitors were suspected of being concerned in the loss of the three horses mentioned above; but as the crime could not be brought home to them by any kind of evidence, they were received in a friendly manner; and, as usual, the pipe of peace was smoked with them.

"While these people," says Mr Townsend, "were smoking the pipe of peace with us after breakfast, I observed that Richardson, our chief hunter (an experienced man in this country, of a tall and iron frame, and almost child-like simplicity of character, in fact, an exact counterpart of Hawk-eye in his younger