

## 492 DAVID THOMPSON'S NARRATIVE

Salceesh tribes he had seen Forests of one or two day's journey ; that it was more than three winters since he had been there, that the south part of that country belonged to them, of late they had left it on account of the hostility of the Snake Indians of the Straw Tent Tribe, but if armed, they would again possess that country, from which, even from here, we are not far ; for in one day's march we come to the Mountains<sup>1</sup> which there, are low ; the next day we cross them, and the third day are where we hunt the Bisons, for which we have plenty of good Horses ; but they had no bison clothing among them. Through the whole of these Tribes I have seen no weapons of war, rarely a Bow and Arrows, and those fit only for small Deer ; not a single stone axe, and small sharp stones for knives without handles, they certainly have no turn for mechanics, an Esquimaux with their means would soon have stone tools and Kettles to hold water and boil their fish and meat ; whereas all these Tribes do not appear to have anything better than a weak small basket of Rushes for these necessary purposes. Most of the musical instruments of the eastern Natives are made of parchment, or raw hide dried as the tambour, drum and rattle ; and even allowing the skins of animals to be too valuable for such purposes, yet the hoofs of the small deer might be made into an agreeable Rattle as with the Indians on the east side of the Mountains ; the whole of their Music is their own voices which costs neither time nor labor.

We embarked and proceeded thirty two miles down the River, and passed about eighty families in small straggling Lodges ; at one of which of ten families we put ashore to smoke with them, but they were terrified at our appearance. My men stayed on the beach, and I went forward a few paces unarmed, and sat down with a pipe and stem in my hand ;

<sup>1</sup> The mountains here referred to are the Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon ; and the country where buffalo still ranged was the southern Idaho country along the courses of the Upper Snake river. [T. C. E.]