

of the stern mountain valleys. Here it was joined by a river of greater magnitude and swifter current, and their united waters swept off through the valley in one impetuous stream, which, from its rapidity and turbulence, had received the name of Mad river. At the confluence of these streams the travellers encamped. An important point in their arduous journey had been attained, a few miles from their camp rose the three vast snowy peaks called the Tetons, or the Pilot Knobs, the great landmarks of the Columbia, by which they had shaped their course through this mountain wilderness. By their feet flowed the rapid current of Mad river, a stream ample enough to admit of the navigation of canoes, and down which they might possibly be able to steer their course to the main body of the Columbia. The Canadian voyageurs rejoiced at the idea of once more launching themselves upon their favorite element; of exchanging their horses for canoes, and of gliding down the bosoms of rivers, instead of scrambling over the backs of mountains. Others of the party, also, inexperienced in this kind of travelling, considered their toils and troubles as drawing to a close. They had conquered the chief difficulties of this great rocky barrier, and now flattered themselves with the hope of an easy downward course for the rest of their journey. Little did they dream of the hardships and perils by land and water, which were yet to be encountered in the frightful wilderness that intervened between them and the shores of the Pacific!