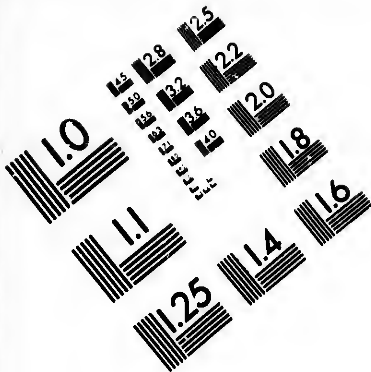
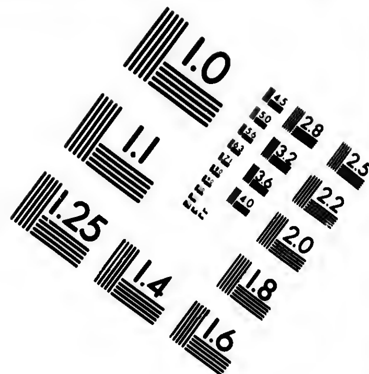

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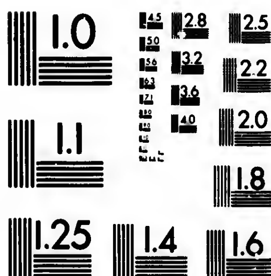
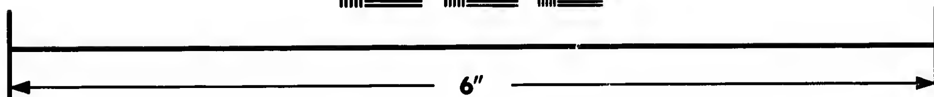

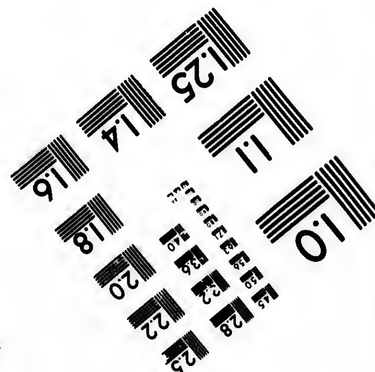

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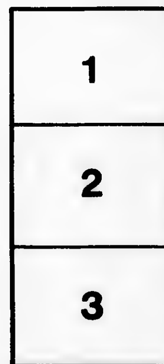

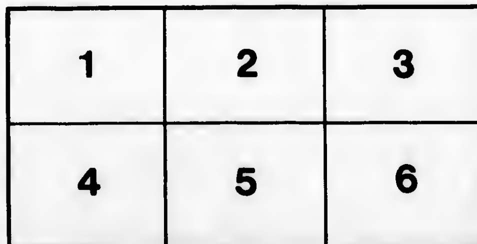

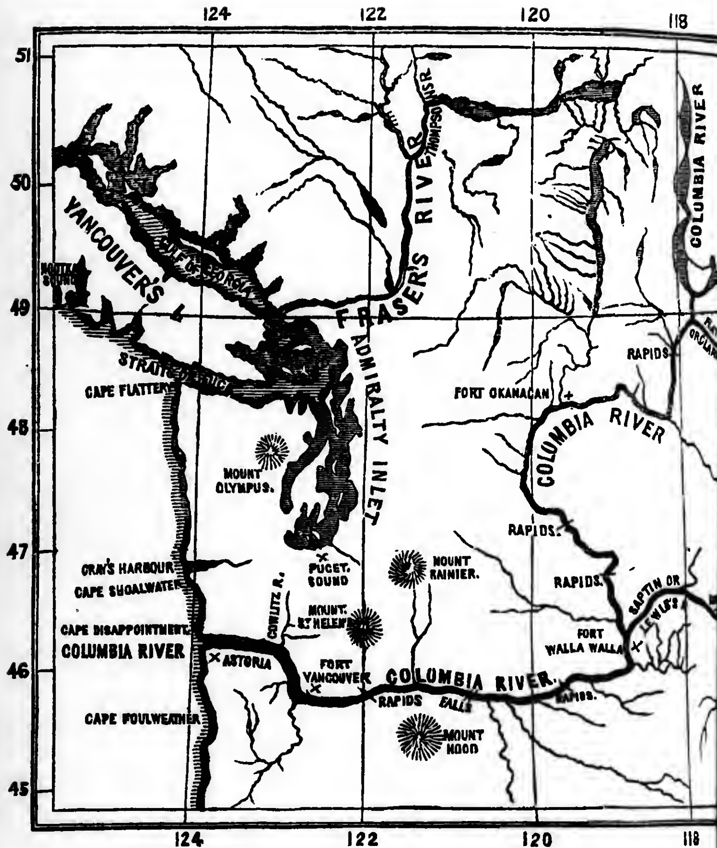
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VANCOUVER'S I.
FRASER'S RIVER
THOMPSON'S R.
COLUMBIA RIVER
STRAITS
CAPE FLATTERY
ADMIRALTY INLET
RAPIDS
FORT OKANAGAN
COLUMBIA RIVER
MOUNT OLYMPUS.
RAPIDS.
GRAY'S HARBOUR
CAPE SHOALWATER
PUGET SOUND
MOUNT RAINIER.
RAPIDS.
SAPTIN OR LEWIS'S
COWLITZ R.
MOUNT ST HELENS
CAPE DISAPPOINTMENT
COLUMBIA RIVER
FORT WALLA WALLA
ASTORIA
FORT VANCOUVER
COLUMBIA RIVER.
RAPIDS
FALLS
RAPIDS.
CAPE FOULWEATHER
MOUNT HOOD

THE

OREGON TERRITORY,

CONSISTING OF A BRIEF

DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY

AND ITS

PRODUCTIONS;

AND OF THE HABITS AND MANNERS

OF THE

NATIVE INDIAN TRIBES.

WITH A MAP OF THE TERRITORY.

LONDON:
M. A. NATTALI, 23, BEDFORD STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

1846.

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rs, Stamford-street.

THE OREGON TERRITORY.

The transition, from our acknowledged and defined possessions upon the eastern side of the large continent of North America to the, at present, debatable land on its western shores, is, although physically difficult from the primitive condition of the vast tract of country which intervenes, easy enough for geographical and mental survey; for we have merely to glance our eye across the map, and we look down upon a small portion of the world's surface, claimed, upon the plea of original discovery, by two mighty nations, whose harmony, and with it possibly that of the whole civilised world, its arrogated possession has threatened to disturb. As a portion of the belt with which we girdle the northern region of that continent, it will not be considered out of place to add to the present volume a brief and rapid description of the country, which has recently excited such absorbing interest upon both sides of the Atlantic, and which is designated as the Oregon territory, from the circumstance of the waters of the large river which bears the name of Oregon, or Columbia, either in

its main stream, or by its tributaries, forming the natural drain of, and watering in their undulating and serpentine course, the country through which they flow. In the absence of any strictly defined limits to this territory, and for the sake of temporary convenience, we may assume its northern and southern boundaries to be formed by the 53° and 42° parallels of northern latitude, within which the sources of the streams of this large confluence of waters spring. To the west its natural boundary is the Pacific Ocean, and to the east it presents a lofty barrier in the Rocky Mountains and their snow-clad and inhospitable peaks, which cut off communication, except through occasional defiles difficult to thread, from the plains and prairies further eastward, watered by the Saskatchawan, and the Missouri. This mountain range is the Northern continuation of the enormous chain which runs, but slightly deviating, from north to south through the entire continent of America, and, as it were, constituting it an organic whole by means of this vertebral column, without which, doubtless, South America would have swung off into the great Ocean as a vast island, a counterbalance to its antipodal parallelism, New Holland. The area circumscribed by this boundary contains about 400,000 square miles (a space thus somewhat equal to twice the dimensions of France) of considerably varied surface, but in general character mountainous, with intervening high upland pastures, and table-land prairies. It is well watered, chiefly by the tribu-

taries of the great Columbia river, and its temperature, although varying considerably, as must necessarily be the case in such an extensive tract, is sufficiently mild during its winters to admit of cattle finding an adequate supply of green pasture throughout their duration.

The coast, from its northern extremity, as far south as the parallel 48° N., is considerably indented and fringed with creeks, and friths, and straits, indicating the incessant action of the water upon the main land by the bead-like chain of islands that thus far skirt it, and which thus form a close cover for the denizens of the main in the succession of coves and channels, and point to one valuable and prolific source for the exercise of the industry and commerce of the future occupants of the adjacent land. The most northerly of these islands is Queen Charlotte's, in the shape of a long lozenge, and which is more than 100 miles in length, and 60 broad at its widest part, and situated at the northern extremity of the boundary, but separated from the main land by a distance greater than its extremest breadth. A hundred miles further south, and trending to the coast, which laps round its southern apex, and separated therefrom by the strait known by the name of its first discoverer, Juan de Fuca, lies Vancouver's Island, extending rather more than 200 miles south and about 35 miles broad, and of nearly equal diameter throughout. Upon the western coast of this large Island lies Nootka sound, known from the period of its discovery by Cook.

This large Island is rich and versatile in its picturesque beauty and romantic scenery, being densely timbered, for even its very highest hills are covered to the top with luxuriant woods which spread downwards to the very margin of the ocean, but varied with wide plains and verdurous prairies, which have been described as even more fertile than the paradise of Oregon, the Wallemette valley, lying between the Columbia and the Umqua. At its northern extremity coal has been found, and ores of silver, copper, and iron have been discovered amongst its hills. The salubrity of its climate, and its many natural advantages, have induced the Hudson's Bay Company to establish here their fort and settlement named Victoria, in honour of our gracious Queen. The broad arm of the sea, or strait, which separates this island from the main, was originally discovered in its south-western entrance by the Greek voyager, Juan de Fuca, but it was first navigated throughout its whole course by Vancouver between 1792 and 1794, who closely inspected the sounds, gulfs, and archipelagos, with which it abounds, the most interesting of which lie off from the Straits of Fuca, bearing south and east, and are Admiralty Sound, Puget's Sound, running 40 miles south of the parent strait, Hood's Canal, and Ports Hudson and Discovery. The islands studding the angle of the strait whence these waters turn off are described as being luxuriantly beautiful in their vegetation, and have been named in accordance with the features which most forcibly

struck the original discoverers thus we have Strawberry Cove, Cypress Island, and others as significantly characterized. Some abound in deer, and present the appearance of parks decorated with clumps of trees as elegantly distributed as by the hand of art studying decoration, thus proving the veracity of Nature's apostle and apologist, who says:—

> "Nature is made better by no mean;
> But Nature makes that mean."

For here Nature was in genuine *deshabille* and wholly innocent of man's altering hand. It is into the northern arm of the Straits of Fuca, different portions of which have received different names although but the same branch of the sea, and at the southern extremity of that part of the Strait called the Gulf of Georgia, that Frazer's River, navigable for light craft to a considerable distance, debouches, emptying there the waters it has accumulated in its southern course, running parallel with the northern arm of its great twin sister the Columbia River—the only two considerable rivers, either with respect to the length of their course, or to the body of water they convey to the Ocean, of those of the American Continent which flow into the Pacific. The shores of the mainland skirting this strait, but especially most northerly, alternate between high rocky coasts covered with pines and firs and low sandy sterile dunes, giving it thus an inhospitable and cheerless aspect; but its waters abound with a variety of fish, especially sturgeon,

and at its extreme northern outlet whales were observed gambolling in the Pacific. Proceeding coastwise southward from the entrance of the Straits of Fuca, several promontories and headlands jut forth into the ocean, the most conspicuous of which is Cape Flattery, which forms the apex of its south-western extremity. Beyond this we have Cape Disappointment, the northern boundary of the estuary of the Columbia, and Cape Foulweather and Blanco, further south. The whole coast as far as Cape Mendecino, the northern extremity of Mexico, presents a range of hills varying in their distance from the sea, and descending to it either in gradual slopes, or by spurs from the adjacent coast range of mountains, which form the several promontories and bluffs which rise abruptly, and give variation to its line which occasionally sinks into low sandy cliffs and beaches. The uniformity of the line of land is interrupted only by occasional small rivers and streams, the chief of which, exclusive of the Columbia, are the Umqua and the Clammet, the sources of which are in the proximate range of hills. The general aspect of this coast as seen from the sea is that of abundant and luxuriant vegetation, varying according to its undulation between pasture land and forest.

In reascending the coast for the purpose of ascertaining its capabilities in a maritime and commercial point of view, which is necessarily dependant upon the harbourage it offers, and the facilities thence accruing for receiving and shel-

tering vessels of burthen and of large draught, the first available place is presented by the mouth of the Columbia River itself, which in the native name of one of its upper branches, discovered by Carver, somewhere between 1766 and 1778, supposed, from the indefinite description left, to be that branch now known as the Flathead, or Clarke's river, gives the name of Oregon to the whole territory. The estuary of this river, which empties itself into the Pacific a little north of the 46th degree, lies so concealed by the bluffs and headlands which project in opposite directions and lap across it, thus giving an uninterrupted appearance to the coast, that although seven miles wide at its extreme outlet between Cape Disappointment, a kind of peninsula terminating in a steep knoll or promontory, crowned with a forest of pine-trees, and connected with the mainland by a low and narrow neck, and Point Adams, which is a flat, sandy-spit of land, stretching into the ocean, that it was not seen by Vancouver in 1792, who sailed close to shore, but was immediately afterwards discovered and entered by Captain Gray, in the Columbia, the name of whose vessel has been perpetuated in the name of the river. Immediately within Cape Disappointment is a wide open bay, called Baker's Bay, and terminating at Chenook Point, named from a neighbouring tribe of Indians. The velocity of the current of the river, combined with a bar or sandbank which stretches across its mouth, and extends four or five miles into the sea, and over which there

is scarcely ever a greater draught than about five fathoms of water, together with a chain of breakers upon the bar which check its direct navigation, and nearly block up its entrance, will prevent its being accessible by vessels of large tonnage. From various other causes it has been computed that it cannot be entered more than three months in every year, and it presents additional uncertainty from the sand-banks at its entrance, being of a shifting character, and rarely long in the same position. A succession of sand-banks occupy the centre of the broad mouth of this river, to a distance of twenty-five miles upwards; and these are succeeded by a chain of islands which extend as far as the entrance of the Cowlitz River, five and twenty miles still higher; but it is navigable as far as Point Vancouver, about a hundred miles from its mouth, where it is about 600 fathoms wide and six fathoms deep. In this vicinity its upward navigation also terminates, owing to the succession of falls its now mountainous course leaps down; and its tidal variation, which has a rise and fall of about eight feet at its mouth, also gradually ceases.

Its course thus far is nearly south-east, but varying in breadth according to its bays and indentations. The shores are in some places high and rocky, with low marshy islands at their feet, subject to inundation, and covered with willows, poplars, and other trees that love an alluvial soil. Sometimes the mountains recede and give place to beautiful plains and noble forests. Whilst the river

margin is richly fringed with trees of deciduous foliage, the rough uplands are crowned by majestic pines and firs of gigantic size, some towering to the height of between two and three hundred feet, with proportionate circumference. Out of these the Indians make their great canoes and pirogues.

We thus find that the chief river of the country is not navigable for large commercial enterprises; and proceeding coastwise from its mouth still further north, at a distance of about twenty-five miles, we discover in Gray's Bay a deep inlet, which being but two miles and a half wide at its entrance, expands within into a broad bay, nine miles wide and seven long, which at its eastern extremity receives the waters of the Chickeeles River, a small stream that descends from the mountains which separate the seaward coast from the waters of Puget's Sound. The same difficulty of shoally water exists at the entrance of this sheltered cove which we found at the mouth of the Columbia, the whole intervening coast being remarkably mountainous and rugged, and we have therefore to sail still further north for a safe and available harbour for shipping. Nothing of this character presents itself until redescending the Straits of Fuca, when we approach, near its south-eastern extremity, the two deep bays discovered by Vancouver in 1792, and named by him Ports Discovery and Hudson, a short distance to the west of Hood's Canal. This harbour is about two miles wide, with an extent of about ten miles inland, and a depth of water varying from

twenty-five to thirty fathoms. It has further the advantage of being covered in front by an island called Protection Island, of which Vancouver has given the following description:—He says: "On landing on the west end, and ascending its eminence, which was a nearly perpendicular cliff, our attention was immediately called to a landscape almost as enchantingly beautiful as the most elegantly finished pleasure-grounds in Europe. The summit of this island presented nearly a horizontal surface, interspersed with some inequalities of ground, which produced a beautiful variety on an extensive lawn covered with luxuriant grass, and diversified with abundance of flowers. To the north-westward was a coppice of pine-trees, and shrubs of various sorts, that seemed as if it had been planted for the purpose of protecting from the north-west winds, this delightful meadow, over which were promiscuously scattered a few clumps of trees, that would have puzzled the most ingenious designer of pleasure-grounds to have arranged more agreeably. While we stopped to contemplate these several beauties of nature, in a prospect no less pleasing than unexpected, we gathered some gooseberries and roses in a state of considerable forwardness." This was on the 1st of May, 1792, It was at the same period that he gives us the following pleasing description of the scenery in the vicinity of Port Discovery, on the mainland:—"The delightful serenity of the weather greatly aided the beautiful scenery that was now presented.

The surface of the sea was perfectly smooth, and the country before us presented all that bounteous nature could be expected to draw into one point of view. As we had no reason to imagine that this country had ever been indebted for any of its decorations to the hand of man, I could not possibly believe that any uncultivated country had ever been discovered exhibiting so rich a picture. The land which interrupted the horizon below the north-west and north quarters, seemed to be much broken, from whence its eastern extent, round to south-east, was bounded by a ridge of snowy mountains, appearing to be nearly in a north and south direction, on which Mount Baker rose conspicuously, remarkable for its height and the snowy mountains that stretch from its base to the north and south. Between us and this snowy range, the land, which on the sea-shore terminated like that we had lately passed, in low perpendicular cliffs, or on beaches of sand or stone, rose here in a very gentle ascent, and was well covered with a variety of stately forest-trees: these, however, did not conceal the whole face of the country in one uninterrupted wilderness, but pleasantly clothed its eminences and chequered the valleys, presenting in many directions extensive spaces, that wore the appearance of having been cleared by art, like the beautiful island we had visited the day before—a picture so pleasing could not fail to call to our remembrance certain delightful and beloved situations in Old England."

Contiguous to Port Discovery on the east is Port

Hudson, another inlet lying between the former and Hood's Canal, which, with an opening one mile broad, expands within in a semicircular form towards the west to a distance of about eight miles, and within this cavity presents an excellent harbour with a depth of water averaging twenty fathoms. Hood's Canal, Puget's Sound, and Admiralty Inlet, afford each in their capacity and extent, excellent places for anchorage, but none with the conveniences for harbourage offered by those we have noticed.

Following the coast northward we do not again find localities of equal capability for this purpose. Frazer's river presents the same disadvantage that we found rendering the navigation of the Columbia impracticable to vessels of large tonnage in the bar of sand which crosses its mouth, which appears to be deposited at the mouth of all these rivers that debouche, running from the eastward, into the Pacific, and which would seem to arise from the counteraction the waters of the Pacific offer to their rapid flow. A further impediment to the harbourage of the several creeks and inlets, such as Desolation Sound, Bute's Canal, Loughborough Canal, and Knight's Canal, &c. is offered by the archipelago of islands which vessels must necessarily thread to reach them, and the rapidity of the currents and depth of water which flow within their channels. This remark will refer to the whole coast to the northern frontier of the territory north of Queen Charlotte's Sound.

Having thus surveyed the coast line of this terri-

tory, we shall now return to its opposite frontier, the all but impassable barrier of the Rocky or Stony Mountains. We have before observed that this forms a link of the great chain of the Andes, and concurrently participates in the peculiarities of those "Giants of the Western Star." It presents the same characteristics of igneous origin in its granitic masses, its gullies, and basaltic rocks, and of volcanic agency still operating in the adjacent hot-springs, and salt lakes, and waters, and the occasional eruption of some of the craters of the parallel cascade range where Mount St. Helen's was seen spouting forth its fire and smoke, and casting its ashes to a distance of fifty miles.

This rocky and mountainous region has of course not yet been subjected to the inspection which it will progressively receive as greater facilities shall present themselves in the occupation and settlement of the adjacent country on its western side, which, from the impulse emigration has taken thitherward, seems to promise that it will eventually become inhabited land, although the aridity of climate arising from the great elevation of the plateaus in their immediate vicinity does not augur favourably for its agricultural cultivation, and these fastnesses will possibly ever continue the exclusive domain of their aboriginal denizens, the elk, the buffalo, the argali, antelope, and bear, and their scarcely more human destroyers, the nomadic hordes of savages. From the direct observations yet made the greatest altitude of these mountains has been

found to be about 16,000 feet above the level of the sea, which is the height of Mount Brown and Mount Hooker, between the parallels of 50 and 51; and Fremont has calculated the elevation of the highest peak in the vicinity of the south pass of the Rocky Mountains which he scaled to be 13,579 feet above the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. But he considers that some of the peaks of the cascade range are of still greater height, reaching the prodigious elevation of 20,000 feet; and Mr. Thompson is supposed to have ascertained the elevation of one to be 25,000. But the extreme elevation of the great steppes which range along the feet of the Rocky Mountains take away from the true height of their peaks, which, as we have shown, yield to few in the known world in point of real altitude.

The elevation of the pass itself is 7000 feet above the sea. In approaching the peaks which form the crest of this ridge of mountains, Fremont and his party frequently found little lakes held in the hollows between the mountains; sometimes when at high elevations they saw in the valley before them, and among the hills, a number of lakes of different levels, some two or three hundred feet above others, with which they communicate by foaming torrents, all sending up the roar of their cataracts. It was on the 13th of August that the highest peak appeared so near that they supposed it would be an easy day's work to reach it, and that they would be able to return back to the encampment in the even-

ing. But the first ridge hid a succession of others, and the advance was slow; and when, with great difficulty, they had climbed up a rugged acclivity five hundred feet high, it was to make but a descent of about the same distance to reach the ascent of a higher ridge. Every ridge that was surmounted was supposed would be the last, until they were involved in the most rugged precipices, sometimes passing beneath bridges formed by huge fragments of granite, and at others clambering over rocks slippery with ice and snow. The day was thus passed in these wearying yet exciting marches, and without food; and now, elevated ten thousand feet above the Gulf of Mexico, they lay down upon the snow to sleep. They resumed their effort to reach the summit the following day, having previously obtained food from the camp below. The party soon came scattered among fields of ice and innumerable precipices, each seeking the best path to ascend the peak. After another day's toil and another night's rest, they at length reached the snow line, and then commenced uninterrupted climbing, and the use of their toes became necessary to assist them in their further advance. Shortly they reached a point where the buttress was overhanging, and there was no other way of surmounting the difficulty than by passing round one side of it which formed the face of a vertical precipice several hundred feet high. A small valley was passed and another ascent climbed, and the crest was reached. Fremont sprang in transport upon its summit, yet one step

more would have precipitated him into an immense snow field five hundred feet below. The crest was a narrow strip only three feet wide. The barometer was mounted in the snow of the summit; a ramrod was fixed in a crevice, and on it the American flag was unfurled. No signs of life had been perceived in these upper regions, and the most profound and terrible solitude reigned around and forced upon the mind the great features of the place. Whilst seated here, a common humble bee, winging its flight from the eastern valley, alighted on the knee of one of the men, and was captured and preserved as the only record of organic life observed at these great altitudes, and in this vast solitude.

Another traveller, Captain Bonneville, thus describes the ascent of this crest and the magnificent view from it. After much toil, he reached the summit of a lofty cliff, but it was only to behold gigantic peaks rising all around and towering far into the snowy regions of the atmosphere. Selecting one which appeared to be the highest, he crossed a narrow intervening valley, and began to scale it. He soon found that he had undertaken a tremendous task; the ascent was so steep and rugged that he was frequently obliged to clamber on hands and knees, with his gun slung across his back. Frequently exhausted with fatigue, and dripping with perspiration, he threw himself upon the snow and took handfuls of it to allay his parching thirst; but ascending still higher, cool breezes refreshed him, and springing on with fresh ardour,

he at length attained the summit. Here a scene burst upon his view, which for a time astonished and overwhelmed him with its immensity. He stood in fact upon that dividing ridge which the Indians regard as the crest of the world, and on each side of which the landscape may be said to decline to the two cardinal oceans of the globe. Whichever way he turned his eye it was confounded by the vastness and variety of objects. Beneath him the Rocky Mountains seemed to open all their secret recesses; deep solemn valleys, glittering lakes, dreary passes, rugged defiles, and foaming torrents; while beyond their savage precincts the eye was lost in an almost immeasurable landscape stretching on every side into dim and hazy distance, like the expanse of a vast sea. Whichever way he looked he beheld vast plains glimmering with reflected sunshine; mighty streams wandering on their shining course toward either ocean; and snowy mountains, chain beyond chain, and peak beyond peak, till they melted like clouds into the horizon. He stood for awhile gazing upon this scene, lost in a crowd of vague and indefinite ideas and sensations. A long-drawn inspiration at length relieved him from this enthralment of the mind, and he began to analyze the parts of this vast panorama. The enumeration of a few of its features will give some idea of its collective grandeur and magnificence. The peak he stood on commanded the whole varied river chain, which may be considered one immense mountain,

broken into snowy peaks and lateral spurs, and seamed with narrow valleys, some of which glittered with silver lakes and gushing streams, the fountain-heads, as it were, of the mighty tributaries to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Beyond the snowy peaks to the south, and far below the mountain range, the Sweet Water river was seen pursuing its tranquil way through the rugged region of the Black Hills. In the east the head-waters of Wind River wandered through a plain, until, mingling in one powerful current, they forced their way through the range of Horn Mountains, and were lost to view. To the north were caught glimpses of the upper streams of the Yellowstone, the great tributary of the Missouri. In a north-westerly direction were seen some of the sources of the Oregon or Columbia, flowing past the towering landmarks called the Three Tetons, and pouring their waters down into the great lava plain; and beneath, at his feet, were the Green River, or Colorado of the West, setting forth on its pilgrimage to the Gulf of California; at first a mere mountain-torrent, dashing northward over crag and precipice, in a succession of cascades, and tumbling into the plain, where, expanding into an ample river, it circled away to the south, and after alternately shining out and disappearing in the mazes of the vast landscape, was finally lost in a horizon of mountains, distinctly discernible through the purity of the atmosphere encircling this immense area with their outer range of shadowy peaks

faintly marked upon the verge of the horizon. To descend and extricate himself from the heart of this rock-piled wilderness was almost as difficult as to penetrate it. He took his course down the ravine of a tumbling stream, descending from rock to rock, and shelf to shelf, between stupendous cliffs and beetling crags that sprang up to the sky. Often obliged to cross and recross the rushing torrent as it wound foaming and roaring down its broken channel, or walled by perpendicular precipices, and sometimes passing beneath cascades which pitched from such lofty heights that the water fell into the stream like heavy rain; in other places torrents came tumbling from crag to crag, dashing into foam and spray, and making tremendous din and uproar.

Within sight thus of this spot are the sources of several large rivers, viz. the Rio Colorado of the Gulf of California, and the Columbia in its south branch, flowing west; and of the Yellowstone and the Nebraska, both branches of the Missouri, and of the Great Missouri itself, flowing east. It is thus both east and west that this gigantic chain of mountains nourishes, by the percolation of the eternal snows of its high summits, the waters which on both sides meander in their huge serpentine course through the vast countries they fertilize.

The Rocky Mountains, known to the early explorers as the Chippewyan Mountains, do not present a range of uniform elevation, but rather groups, and occasionally detached peaks. Though

some of these rise to the region of perpetual snows, yet their height from their immediate bases is not so great as might be imagined, as they swell up from elevated plains, several thousand feet above the level of the ocean. These plains are often of a desolate sterility, mere sandy wastes, formed of the detritus of the granite heights, destitute of trees and herbage, scorched by the ardent and reflected rays of the summer's sun, and in winter swept by chilling blasts from the snow-clad mountains. Such is a great part of that vast region extending north and south along the mountains, several hundred miles in width, which has not been improperly termed the Great American Desert. It is a region that almost discourages all hope of cultivation, and can be only traversed with safety by keeping near the streams which intersect it. Extensive districts likewise occur among the higher regions of the mountains of considerable fertility; between them are deep valleys with small streams winding through them, which find their way to the lower plains, and discharge themselves into those vast rivers which traverse the prairies like great arteries, and drain the continent.

Between this lofty ridge and the next intersecting one which runs parallel with it, the high plains which rise into a table-land of considerable elevation, are at intervals gored and gashed with numerous and dangerous chasms from four to ten feet wide; and it is even sometimes necessary to travel a distance of fifty or sixty miles to get round one

of these tremendous ravines; and the lower plain, which extends to the feet of these mountains, is broken up near their bases into crests and ridges, resembling the surges of the ocean breaking on a rocky shore.

A remarkable peculiarity incidental to this mountain range is that, on its eastern slope, the river and creek bottoms are fertile and luxuriant in their vegetation, whilst the ascents themselves are desolate and barren; whereas on the western side these features are reversed, the mountain slopes affording rich pasturage for flocks and herds, whilst the valleys through which the streams flow are sterile, rocky, and bare.

Nearly parallel to this lofty range, and at nearly equal distances, a second and a third intervene, within the territory watered by the Columbia, and between it and the sea, running nearly north and south, thus dividing it into three regions. The first, or highest range, is called the Blue Mountains, a name derived from the azure tint with which they are clothed when seen from a distance, between which and the Rocky Mountains lie high table-land or steppes. The southern part of this region is, as we have described it, a desert of volcanic origin, deep narrow valleys, and wide plains covered with sand and gravel. During the winter there is but little snow upon the valleys, but the summits of the mountains are never bare. It rarely rains, and no dew falls. Between the Blue Mountains and the cascade range, that nearest to the

Pacific, and so named from the succession of falls which the Columbia makes in its passage across them, foaming impetuously towards the ocean, may be called the middle region of Oregon.

The immediate vicinity of these mountains is shagged with dense and gloomy forests, and cut up by deep and precipitous ravines; the ground sometimes broken by a brawling stream, with a broken rocky bed and with shouldering cliffs and promontories on either side. But from these savage and darkly wooded defiles the landscape occasionally changes as if by magic. The rude mountains and rugged ravines soften into beautiful hills and intervening meadows, with rivulets winding through fresh herbage, and sparkling and murmuring over gravelly beds, the whole forming a verdant and pastoral scene which derives additional charms from being locked up in the bosom of such a hard hearted region.

The general character of this middle region is elevated and dry, and less fertile than that portion which skirts the ocean. It consists chiefly of plains, covered with grass and small shrubs. Forest timber is here comparatively scarce, and the trees which are found are of the softer kinds of wood, and useless for economical purposes, as the willow, the sumac, and the cotton wood. Although its atmosphere is characterized as dry, it is visited by periodical rains, but the climate is healthy. The country is not adapted for the cultivation of the cereals, but is well suited for pasture land,

as is testified by the abundance of horses reared here by the Indians. The most promising section of the country is that which lies between the cascade range and the sea, and which we may style the lowlands. It is a strip of land varying between 30 and 100 miles in width and intersected by spurs, set off occasionally from the range which forms its frontier. The climate within this district is warm and dry. From April to October, during the prevalence of the westerly winds, rain seldom falls, but during the other months, when the wind blows constantly from the south, the rain is almost incessant. Snow is rarely seen in this district, and agricultural operations can be carried on throughout the whole of the year. Most of the productions of the northern states of America thrive here, and horses and cattle can subsist throughout the winter without fodder. The second bottoms of rivers, being above inundation, are very fertile, and extensive tracts are covered with rich and luxuriant grass. The forests on the uplands and sloping mountain ridges abound with timber-trees of very large size, consisting chiefly of pines, fir, larch, and their congeners. The most fertile region of the whole of this fertile district is the valley of the Wallemette, a stream which flows westerly from its source, in the cascade range, in the vicinity of that of the Umqua, when subsequently curving northerly it glides into the Columbia at about 90 miles from the mouth of that river. The valley through which this river runs is about

300 miles long, and its sheltered situation has an obvious effect upon its climate; for it is a region of great beauty and luxuriance, with lakes and pools, and green meadows shaded by noble groves. The country bordering this river is finely diversified with prairies and hills, and forests of oak, ash, maple, and cedar. It abounds with elk and deer, and the stream itself is well stocked with beaver. In the vicinity of the mountains it is interspersed with glens and ravines well wooded; its copses abound in game, and the land, in its natural state, is usually ready for the plough and exceedingly productive. The climate is mild, and the air is loaded with the perfume of the odoriferous shrubs which nature has profusely scattered over the domain.

It is through these three distinct districts that the great Columbia river takes its course, fed by the large arms of its several tributaries, all the principal branches of which take their rise, together with the main stream, from the Rocky Mountains. It commences its course in about latitude 50°, and flows north-westerly beyond latitude 52° where it curves southerly at its junction with Canoe river. It is near this angle, between Mounts Hooker and Brown, where the most northern pass opens to the Eastern country watered by the Saskatchawan. It now takes its course, flowing in a direct line south and forming a string of lakes on the eastern side of the Blue Mountains, as far as parallel 49°, where it receives its first tributary, in Flatbow

River, which has just expanded into a wide lake, and which from its source near that of the Columbia had taken a southerly range along the foot of those mountains and a subsequent curvature northwards, as it were, the duplication of that taken by the Columbia itself. It is now speedily joined by Clarke's, or Flathead river, which, after a devious curve from its origin in latitude 46° in the Rocky Mountains, runs nearly parallel with the return of the Flatbow, and joins the Columbia about 30 miles below that river. The Columbia then proceeds due south, and forming an angle round the base of the Blue Mountains, rushes precipitously eastward through a gorge of that chain, when curving round their western slopes it receives the Okanagan, which is rather a succession of lakes than a river, that derive their influx of waters from the western defiles of the range. The two rivers, about the place of their confluence, are bordered by immense prairies, covered with herbage, but destitute of trees; and the point itself is ornamented with wild flowers of every hue, in which innumerable humming-birds banquet the live-long day.

Thus speeded onward, it undulates in a tortuous course, along the western base of the Blue Mountains, and it is at the angle here formed, of which the point of juncture with the Okanagan may be considered the apex, that that remarkable feature called the *Grande Coulée* occurs, the conformation of which plainly indicates that the course

of the stream was once in its bed, but by some violent orgasm of nature it has been forcibly conveyed through a different defile, to its present channel on the opposite side of the mountains. The *Coulée* is a broad chasm, between basaltic palisades, about 800 feet high. It varies from two to three miles in width, and is about fifty miles long. Its bottom is plain, apparently level; but to the north there are several granite knolls resembling islands, about 700 feet high, which are called the ***Iles des Pierres***. A gently undulating prairie country leads to the *Coulée des* ***Pierres***, which in its peculiarities resembles the ***Grande Coulée***, but it is on a smaller scale. This turns off at right angles, and joins the Columbia. What tends to confirm the opinion that this once formed the channel of the Columbia is the appearance of boulders of granite being found at its southern extremity, whilst no rock of that substance is found nearer than its northern commencement. The river, still proceeding in its southerly course with considerable sinuosity, receives near lat. 46° its great southern branch, the Saptin, or Lewis' River. This river has its origin near the south pass of the Rocky Mountains, and there called the Snake River. It flows north-westerly through the wide and elevated prairie or steppe-land lying between the Rocky and the Blue Mountains, receiving many tributaries, chiefly from the west, deducing their origin from the Blue Mountains. The largest of these is Malheur River, exceedingly

tortuous in its course. It is next joined by Salmon River, the largest of its eastern tributaries, and subsequently by the Kooskooskee, both of which spring from the Rocky Mountains. It is throughout the prairies watered by these rivers that buffaloes still range in enormous herds, but which are daily decreasing in consequence of the indiscriminate slaughter of them by the Indians. Clarke's River now joins the Columbia, by a direct easterly course, having first precipitated itself over the falls and obstructions of the Blue Mountains. From this point of juncture, flowing a short distance further south, the Colombia receives the waters of the Walla Walla, and then takes at right angles a course due west, turbulently precipitating itself in a succession of rapids, first through the Dalles, which name is given to that portion of the river where its channel lies within the compressed space of about 300 feet, confined within basaltic perpendicular walls, through which the river appears to have worn gradually its present deep course. Just above these Dalles it receives John Day's River, and Shuter's River from the south; and at their junction with it the country is flat and sandy, with loose grass and cacti distributed over it, affording shelter for the hares and game with which it abounds. It is now impelled forward through the broken country and precipitous declivities of the Cascade range of mountains, which derives its name from the succession of rapids over which the Columbia tears and boils.

These falls or rapids are situated about one hundred and eighty miles above the mouth of the river. The first is a perpendicular cascade of twenty feet, after which there is a swift descent for a mile, between islands of hard black rock, to another pitch of eight feet divided by two rocks. About two miles and a half below this the river expands into a wide basin, seemingly dammed up by a perpendicular ridge of black rock. A current, however, sets diagonally to the left of this rocky barrier where there is a chasm forty-five yards in width. Through this the whole body of the river roars along, swelling and whirling and boiling for some distance in the wildest confusion; and here, in descending this turbulent stream, the chief danger arises, not from the rocks but from the great surges and whirlpools. At a distance of a mile and a half from the foot of this narrow channel is a rapid, formed by two rocky islands; and two miles beyond is a second great fall, over a ledge of rocks twenty feet high, extending nearly from shore to shore. The river is again compressed into a channel from fifty to a hundred feet wide, worn through a rough bed of hard black rock, along which it boils and roars with great fury for the distance of three miles. This portion is called the "long narrows." Before it again expands into the usual amplitude of its stream, it is bordered by stupendous precipices, clothed with fir and white cedar. One of these precipices or cliffs is curiously worn by time and

the weather, which have given it the appearance of a ruined fortress, with tower and battlements beetling high above the river; while two small cascades, one hundred and fifty feet in height, pitch down from the fissures of the rocks.

Between this its last descent and the sea, it receives the Wallemette from the south at the point where its own tides cease, which at its estuary have a rise and fall of about eight feet; and this estuary, with its facilities for navigation, and with that its prospect of ever forming a large commercial depôt, has been already described.

The agricultural capabilities of a new country must necessarily determine the prospective advantages to be derived from its extensive colonisation; and as the country we have thus rapidly traversed has been carefully inspected with this view by a very competent judge, Mr. Farnham, we will briefly state the result of his investigation, whence it appears that the whole of the elevated land lying between the Blue Mountains and the Rocky Mountains, through which the Upper Columbia and the Saptin or Lewis River flow, is an alternation of vast tracts of desert and prairie, scored by volcanic ravines and chasms, occupied by nomadic tribes of ferocious Indians, essentially hunters from the nature of the soil and climate, and changing their position with the migrations of the animals which they pursue. The next interval, lying between the Blue Mountains and the Cascade Range, is also but a succession of deserts, dotted it is true here and

there with habitable spots, but still possessing no feature sufficiently indicative of being capable of wide agricultural exertions, although in the immediate vicinity of the streams grain and fruit may thrive. The remainder of the territory, commonly called the "Low Country," is the only portion of it that bears any claim to an agricultural character. It is bounded on the north by the Straits of Fuca and Puget's Sound, in lat. 48; on the east by the Cascade Range, on the south by the parallel of 42, and on the west by the Ocean; thus comprising seven degrees of latitude and about one hundred miles of longitude, equal to about 49,000 square miles, which is equivalent to 31,000,000 acres. About one third of this may be ploughed and another third pastured. The remainder consists of irreclaimable ridges of minor mountains crossing the country in all directions. To this should be added Vancouver's Island, 200 miles long by 30 in average width; and Queen Charlotte's Island, 100 miles long by an average of 15 in width; in both which may be supposed to be the same ratio of arable, pasture, and irreclaimable land, viz. 1,500,000 acres of each. And thus we have a rough, but, I believe, a generally correct estimate of the agricultural capacities of Lower Oregon—about 12,000,000 of acres of arable, and 12,000,000 of acres of pasture land. The arable land of other parts of the territory is so inconsiderable as to be scarcely worthy of mention. At a rough calculation there are about 10,000,000 of acres of pasture

land in all the region east of the Cascade Range. Thus, throughout Oregon, there are but 12,000,000 of acres of arable country. And within the limits described we have a surface of 215,000,000 of acres; deducting from this 32,000,000, as the habitable portion, leaves 183,000,000 of acres of deserts and mountains.

Howsoever arid and barren the general features of a large country may be, and as unprofitable as its aspect is to the eye that views it, solely with regard to its promise of utility to large communities of civilized man, yet nature is never so niggard of attractive charms as not to present a pleasing picture, when these, which are widely disseminated over a large surface, are brought into close and compact conjunction. Therefore in the brief survey we shall take of the productions of this country, it must be borne in mind that many of them are procured severally from very distant localities, and combined in one apparent cornucopia. They seem even already to have allured numerous bands of emigrants to toil, sanguine with the hope of prospective advantage, across wide and desolate deserts, from the industrious and thriving communities of civilization, into the heart of the wilderness. Man's chief necessaries are food and shelter, and the colonist, in selecting a new and distant country for habitation, must waive all idea of the stores he may convey with him, or the supplies he may conceive himself able to command, and first ascertain if, in default of these, the new home will furnish

him with his absolute wants. The earth is sometimes, yet rarely, the parent who, when she is asked for bread, gives a stone; and here, by the computation we have just shown, she would thus prove herself. Yet is the land diversified in its produce. Many edible roots are found upon which whole tribes of aborigines feed, and when we remember that the potato and the yam are both natives of America, we see no reason why other roots as beneficial to man might not occur amongst the varied vegetation of that prolific region.

In a country so much intersected by rivers as is the heart of Oregon, their immediate vicinity will of course present a luxuriant vegetation, and it is chiefly in the line of the watercourses that it has been inspected. The aridity of the climate arising from the great elevation of the largest portion of the land, and the absence of refreshing rains, are the chief causes of its general barrenness. No rain falls between April and October, and a temperature, which during the middle of the day at this season fluctuates between 75 and 93 degrees, must necessarily parch up the whole surface of the land, which gapes in fissures for refreshing irrigation. But so free a compensator is Nature, that the bunch grass, peculiar to the wide steppes, thus burnt up, retains, unlike other grasses, its nutritious qualities, even when dried upon the soil. Fertile spots alone produce the roots to which we have alluded, the chief of which is the Wappatoo, which gives its name to an island where it abounds, dividing the Walle-

mette into two branches at its conjunction with the Columbia.

The forest timbers are white oak, hemlock, spruce, fir, yellow pine, ash, white and red cedar, maple, willow, and a few walnut; of which the fir and cedar, should the country eventually become colonized, will be among its most valuable articles of export. Flax, hemp, and cotton grow in the lower country. It numbers many aromatic shrubs, and the forests are rendered almost impenetrable by clambering vines and parasites. It produces fruits in great abundance and of various kinds, such as gooseberries, both yellow and purple, the former growing on a stalk free from thorns. There are also three kinds of currants, one very large and well tasted, purple, and growing on a bush eight or nine feet high; another of a yellow colour, and of the size and taste of the large red currant, on a bush four or five feet high; and the third a beautiful scarlet, resembling the strawberry in sweetness, though rather insipid, and growing on a low bush. Strawberries are found in profusion, as also are raspberries, both red and yellow; very large and finely flavoured whortleberries, cranberries, service-berries, blackberries, sloes, and wild and choke cherries. Among the flowering vines is one deserving of particular notice. Each flower is composed of six leaves or petals, about three inches in length, of a beautiful crimson, the inside spotted with white. Its leaves, of a fine green, are oval and disposed in threes. This plant

climbs upon trees without attaching itself to them; when it has reached the topmost branches, it descends perpendicularly, and as it continues to grow, extends from tree to tree, until its various stalks interlace the grove like the rigging of a ship. The stems or trunks of this vine are tougher and more flexible than willow, and are from fifty to one hundred fathoms in length. From the fibres the Indians manufacture baskets of such close texture as to hold water. This country teems also with innumerable flowers, which enamel the pastures with the varied beauties of their tints.

Just as the geological constitution of a country influences its vegetation will the latter affect its zoology; thus the frugivorous birds and animals follow fruits, as the gramnivorous do the grains and roots; and the wide prairie lands and forests afford sustenance to those which pasture and browse; and where these abound we invariably find the carnivorous tribes in their track. Thus nature, by its succession of links both of conformation and appetite, is universally held together, and its choral dance of destruction and reproduction is kept in incessant action and reaction throughout the alternation of its seasons. Among the birds of this country we find eagles, vultures, crows, ravens, and magpies, in large flocks; wookpeckers, pigeons, partridges, grouse, and a very extensive variety of singing-birds. Birds, of course, from their greater powers of locomotion, are less tied to a soil than any other description of creature; and

from the multitudes of migratory kinds we are prepared to expect a greater variety of these than the existing lists announce, which at due and congenial seasons will visit this large tract of country. Aquatic birds abound in a country intersected by so many streams, and we accordingly find swans, geese of many kinds, brant and ducks of every description, as well as herons and cranes. And on its seaward coasts we observe pelicans, gulls, curlews, guillemots, and divers of vast varieties. Its coasts are visited, and the mouths of its rivers swarm, with shoals of nutritious fish, sufficient to form extensive fisheries, and a prime staple for commercial activity and enterprise: among these we may enumerate the sturgeon, the sardine, and the salmon, which are apparently inexhaustible in their prolific abundance. The sardine, called uthlecan by the natives, makes its appearance about the beginning of February, and is six inches long; it very much resembles a smelt, and is of a delicious flavour, and so fat as to burn like a candle, for which it is often used by the savages. It enters the rivers in immense shoals, like solid columns, often extending to the depth of five or more feet, and is scooped up in small nets, by which means a canoe is soon filled, or the shore heaped with them, and they are then dried and strung for subsequent use. But though salmon is the chief fish that visit these rivers, ascending them in its season, which extends from May to August, in large quantities, when the peculiar character of

the Columbia admirably adapts it for their capture in the succession of rapids whereby its course is precipitated. These form a succession of leaps, at which points the piscatory tribes of natives post themselves for the purpose of laying in their stores, as well as for barter with other tribes, who exchange dried buffalo-flesh and game of different kinds for salmon cured by these. An inferior species of salmon succeeds this, and continues to be caught from August to December. It is remarkable for having a double row of teeth, half an inch long, and extremely sharp, from whence it has received the name of the dog-toothed salmon.

The quadrupeds which are found, and which as yet constitute the only riches it has produced in the large quantities of furs that have been collected and trafficked away, and to which trade, as we shall subsequently recur, will detain us now merely in their rapid enumeration, consist of panthers, of rare occurrence, and only in the southern parts; the black and grizzly bear, the antelope, the ahsahta, or big-horn, the stag, elk, hart, fallow-deer, argali, beaver, the sea and river otter, the muskwash, or musk-rat, the fox, wolf, mink, a small kind of otter, raccoon, lynx, various kinds of the weasel tribes, squirrels of different descriptions; and almost exclusively restricted to the upland region, the buffalo, or bison, in innumerable herds. The horse and the dog are found domesticated among the natives; some tribes of whom keep the latter for food, and it is found both palatable and nutritious.

Of these animals the muskwash, or musk-rat, furnishes the greatest number of skins yearly exported from that teeming country. It is one of the gnawing animals, as its name indicates, and its habits are very much allied to those of the beaver, being social and very prolific. It is of about the size of a rabbit, and is of a reddish-grey colour; it constructs little huts composed of grass and rushes, on the edge of streams, cemented with clay, in which several families live together, and its food consists of roots. But although thus partaking of the nature of the beaver, yet do they neither swim nor dive well. As the natural history of the beaver may not be familiar to all our readers, and as its skin constitutes a staple article in the export of fur, and besides being extremely interesting, we will give a brief notice of it. It is of about the size of a badger, with a thick round head, short small ears, diminutive eyes, an obtuse muzzle, and vertical fissure, like a rabbit, and hare in the upper lip. It has two large cutting teeth in each jaw, which enables it to strip off and divide the bark of trees, and to gnaw through trunks of considerable thickness. They are as sharp as chisels, strongly enamelled on the anterior surface, and with the peculiar faculty of growing as fast from the base as they are worn down at the extremity. Their fore limbs are shorter than their hinder, and these possess great strength and muscularity. They have five toes on each foot, and, to adapt them to the element in which they chiefly reside, the

hinder ones are webbed, and in further correspondence, as every thing in nature harmonises, their tail, which serves them as a rudder, is large and flat and oval, half as long as the body, and covered with scales in lieu of fur. They are of a bright brown colour, and their fur consists of two kinds, the hair in front being soft, short, and silky, and behind long and coarse. During summer they live in holes on the banks of rivers, which they quit only to seek food, which consists of the bark of young trees, herbage or berries. In the autumn they assemble in communities, sometimes two or three hundred strong, to prepare conjunctively a winter dwelling. They usually choose a stream not likely to be frozen to the bottom, the current of which yields them the advantage of water-carriage for their materials, and they prefer the northern bank for the sake of enjoying the sun, and an island usually for the sake of security. If, as is often the case, the spot selected be the bank of a river where the water is rather shallow, they construct a dam with considerable ingenuity and industry, by carrying a mole across in a straight line if the stream be slow, but curved if the current be rapid. This they form convex and perpendicular on the side opposite the current, but declining on the other from a summit three feet thick to a base ten or twelve feet broad. They frame it of timber, stones, and clay, for which purpose the trees nearest the water's edge and above the site of their structure are chosen. They

gnaw these with the instinctive sagacity which instructs them to induce them to fall towards the stream; they then lop off the branches, which with the trunks they cut into the lengths they require, and float them down to their destination. Here they are secured by stones brought by these extraordinary animals in their paws from the bottom, and a succession of layers compacted by mud completes the work. Their huts vary in number from ten to thirty, and are built of the same materials, six or seven feet above the water, of an oval or round shape, and coped in with a dome or roof. The entrance is made beneath a projection which advances several feet into the stream, with a regular descent at least three feet below the surface, to guard against its being frozen up. This the hunters call the angle, and a single dwelling is sometimes furnished with two or more. Near the entrance, and on the outside of the houses, the beavers store up the branches of trees, the bark of which forms their chief subsistence during the winter; and these magazines sometimes contain more than a cartload of provisions. Their work is all performed at night, and with great expedition. The numbers in each individual dwelling seldom exceed two or four old ones, and thrice as many young ones. The females produce once a year from two to four at a birth, who quit their parents at the age of three years. Their flesh is usually esteemed by the hunters and trappers, who live chiefly upon it during their expeditions, and be-

sides their skins, which supply fur for hats, which is now being rapidly superseded by silk, both on account of its greater expense and the decrease of the number of animals, this creature produces a secretion known by the name of castor, a substance used in medicine.

Of the furs produced in this country, that of the silver fox is perhaps the rarest and most valuable. This animal is a native of the woody country below the Columbia River. It has a long, thick, deep, lead-coloured fur, intermingled with long hairs, invariably white at the top, forming a bright, lustrous, silver grey. The skin of the grizzly bear is also a very valuable fur, worth usually, at wholesale price, more than a thousand dollars. This animal is of the size of a cow, and of prodigious strength. His speed exceeds that of a man, but is inferior to that of the horse. In attacking, it rears itself on its hind legs and springs the length of its body, and it possesses terrific claws, which are sometimes nine inches in length, capable of tearing everything before them. The bison, or, as it is more usually called, the buffalo, is also an animal of great importance in the interior of the country, where its range rarely extends so far as the Blue Mountains, nor much higher north than Flat Head or Clarke's River. This animal is larger than the ox, being usually six feet high at the shoulder, and will sometimes reach the weight of two thousand pounds. In front he is large and strong, and covered with long woolly hair of a uniform dun

colour, although they are said to occur sometimes, yet rarely, spotted. It has a long and shaggy mane on the neck and shoulders. The hinder parts are comparatively slender. His head is prone, and his small eyes glancing from beneath his rugged locks give him a fierce and sinister look. The horns are short, sharp, curved, and turn backward. The tail, which is not much more than a foot long, is nearly naked except at the tip, which has a tuft of long black hair. The bulls and cows live in separate herds, except during the rutting season; but at all times one or two old bulls accompany a large herd of cows; and these herds are sometimes so numerous, that Lewis and Clarke tell us, that on the banks of the Missouri, for the width of a mile, these animals densely covered it, including also an island over which they passed—crossing as thickly as they could swim; and we find by a traveller on the western side of the Rocky Mountains, that he found them moving in countless droves, traversing plains, pouring through the intricate defiles of mountains, swimming rivers, having their hereditary paths and highways worn deep through the country, and making for the surest passes of the mountains and the most practicable fords of the rivers. When once a great column is in full career, it goes straight forward regardless of all obstacles, those in front being impelled by the moving mass behind, and trampling down everything in their course. It was the lot of this traveller and his companions one night to encamp on one of these buffalo

landing places, exactly on the trail. They had not been long asleep, when they were awakened by a great bellowing and tramping, and the rush and splash and snorting of animals in the river. They had just time to ascertain that a buffalo army was entering the river on the opposite side and making towards the landing place; by the time they had shifted their camp the head of the column had reached the shore, and came pressing up the bank. It was singular to behold by moonlight this countless throng, making their way across the river, blowing, bellowing, and splashing. Sometimes they pass in such dense and continuous columns as to form a temporary dam across the river, the waters of which rise and rush over their backs, or between their squadrons. The roaring and rushing sounds of one of these vast herds crossing a river may sometimes, in a still night, be heard for miles. In pursuing a herd of buffaloes a strong odour of musk is emitted and is left in their wake, and their feet make the grass crackle as if it were on fire. They are peculiarly susceptible of the scent of a man, and will wind him at a distance of even two or three miles when to the leeward of him, and they then commence galloping in great alarm, and with the greatest speed. They take great pleasure in wallowing and throwing up the dust, which at a distance resembles the spouting of a whale. Buffaloes and elks are sometimes seen on the same prairies, and do not appear to be affected by each other's presence; but they will not herd

together. The buffalo will not intermix with any but its own kind, and all attempts to cross it with the common cow have proved hitherto abortive. These migratory wanderings of large herds of buffaloes is always accompanied by packs of wolves, which harass them on the rear and flank, and the raven, and the crow, and the vulture are not very distant, to revel in the mortality which accompanies from various causes, but chiefly the indiscriminate slaughter by the savages, of these vast herds of animals.

Having thus far progressed on a rapid and imperfect survey of this country and its native productions, those at least which we may consider as most indigenous, we may proceed to glance at its autochthones, or aborigines, who at a period beyond the reach of tradition must have migrated to these regions, where the gradual influence of local circumstances and climate have stamped an indelible and permanent character upon their habits and manners, and broken them into distinct tribes, which seem in their broadest features to be deduced from two sources—the squalid Esquimaux of the north-west and arctic circles, and the fiery, irascible, and warlike race of coppery-red Indians of the eastern and Atlantic plains. Their numbers, in as far as a rough calculation may approximate, would seem to be somewhere about 40,000; but of course this must necessarily be a very vague estimate. They are thus distributed:—along the coast, about 14,000; and of these the greatest re-

lative proportion inhabit Vancouver's and Queen Charlotte's Island. In the interior of the "Lower Country," as far as the Cascade range, and about the Cascades, there may be 4000. Between the Cascade range and the Blue Mountains occur perhaps about 3500, and the nomadic tribes which wander about the Rocky Mountains and on the steppes intervening between them and the Blue Mountains make up the rest.

The effect of different modes of life upon the human frame and human character is strikingly instanced in the contrast between the hunting Indians of the prairies and the piscatory Indians of the sea-coasts. The former, continually on horseback scouring the plains, gaining their food by hardy exercise, and subsisting chiefly on flesh, are generally tall, sinewy, meagre, but well-formed, and of bold and fierce deportment: the latter, lounging about the river-banks, or squatted and curved up in their canoes, are generally low in stature, ill-shaped, with crooked legs, thick ankles, and broad flat feet. They are inferior also in muscular power and activity, and in energetic qualities and appearance, to the hard-riding savages of the prairies. The most prevalent and universal character, and which, although with modifications, pervades almost all the tribes, is ferocity and faithlessness, and the instinctive cunning which is universally characteristic of man in his uncultivated state, whether his skin be white, red, or black.

The tribes frequenting the most northerly shores

of this region exhibit, as has been shown by Cook, who described fully the habits of those dwelling in the vicinity of Nootka Sound, considerable mechanical ingenuity in the construction of their matted and plaited clothing, made of the inner bark of several trees, their carved arms, the construction of their canoes and of their dwellings. All tribes are universally fond of painting themselves with the gaudiest colours, and a similar uncouth taste is exhibited in their adornments and clothing. Before the introduction of iron tools amongst them their ingenuity was necessarily taxed to make instruments to fell timber for the construction of their dwellings and the various requirements for which sharp tools were needed; and the specimens that have been brought to Europe of their beautiful carving are the surest proof of their having overcome this difficulty. Their dwellings were framed upon centre posts about twenty feet high, upon which a long pole rests, which forms the keel of the roof; from this transverse rafters descend to another similar one placed lengthwise, forming the eaves, and about five feet from the ground; and this frame is skirted with a sort of wainscoting enclosing it, the whole tied together at the angles with cords of cedar bark; within, the sides are subdivided, like the stalls of a stable, and these they occupy as sleeping-places.

Those inhabiting the vicinity of the mouth of the Columbia consist of four tribes, the Chinooks, the Clatsops, the Wahkiacums, and the Cathlamahs.

They resemble each other in person, dress, language, and manner, and were probably from the same stock, but broken into tribes, or rather hordes, by the feuds and schisms frequent among the Indians, and which originate either in personal jealousies or the rancour of the violent passions of our common nature. These people generally live by fishing, but they occasionally hunt the elk and deer, and ensnare the waterfowl of the ponds and rivers. These piscatory tribes of the coast excel in the management of canoes, and are never more at home than when riding upon the waves. Their canoes vary in form and size. Some are upwards of fifty feet long, cut out of a single tree, either fir or white cedar, and capable of carrying thirty persons. They have thwart pieces from side to side, about three inches thick, and their gunwales flare outwards, so as to cast off the surges of the waves. The bow and stern are decorated with grotesque figures of men and animals, sometimes five feet in length. In managing their canoes they kneel two and two along the bottom, sitting on their heels, and wielding paddles from four to five feet long, while one sits on the stern and steers with a paddle of the same kind. The women are equally expert with the men in managing the canoe, and generally take the helm. It is surprising with what fearless unconcern the savages venture in their light barks upon the roughest and most tempestuous seas. They seem to ride upon the waves like sea-fowl. Should a surge throw the canoe upon its side, and

endanger its overthrow, those to windward lean over the upper gunwale, thrust their paddles deep into the wave, apparently catch the water and force it under the canoe, and by this action not merely regain an equilibrium, but give the bark a vigorous impulse forward.

These tribes are rather a diminutive race, generally below five feet five inches, with crooked legs and thick ankles, the causes of which we have already alluded to. The women increase the deformity by wearing tight bandages round the ankles, which prevent the circulation of the blood, and cause a swelling of the muscles of the leg. Neither sex can boast of personal beauty; their faces are round, with small but animated eyes. Their noses are broad and flat at top, and fleshy at the end, with large nostrils. They have wide mouths, thick lips, and short, irregular, and dirty teeth. In summer time, previous to the arrival of the whites, the men were entirely naked; in the winter and in bad weather they wore a small robe reaching to the middle of the thigh, made of the skins of animals, or of the wool of the mountain sheep. Occasionally they wore a kind of mantle of matting, to keep off the rain; but having thus protected the back and shoulders, they left the rest of the body naked. The women wore similar robes, though shorter, not reaching below the waist; besides which they had a kind of petticoat or fringe, reaching from the waist to the knee, formed of the fibres of cedar bark, broken into strands, or

a tissue of silk grass, twisted and knotted at the ends. This was the usual dress of the women in summer; in inclement weather they added a vest of skins similar to the robe. The men eradicated every vestige of a beard, considering it a great deformity. Both sexes, on the other hand, cherished the hair of the head, which with them is generally black and rather coarse. They allowed it to grow to a great length, and were very proud and careful of it, sometimes wearing it plaited, sometimes wound round the head in fanciful tresses. No greater affront could be offered to them than to cut off their treasured locks. They had conical hats with narrow brims, woven of bear grass, or of the fibres of cedar bark, interwoven with designs of various shapes and colours. These hats were nearly waterproof, and very durable. The favourite ornaments of the men were collars of bears' claws, the trophies of hunting exploits; and the women and children wore similar decorations of elks' tusks. The men, who carry a passion for personal decoration further than the females, did not think their gala equipments complete unless they had a jewel of haiqua or wampum dangling at the nose. Thus arrayed, their hair besmeared with fish oil, and their bodies bedaubed with red clay, they considered themselves irresistible. When on warlike expeditions, they painted their faces and bodies in the most hideous and grotesque manner. Their arms were bows and arrows, spears and war-clubs. Some wore a corslet formed of pieces of hard

wood, laced together with bear-grass, so as to form a light coat of mail pliant to the body; and a kind of casque of cedar bark, leather, and bear-grass, sufficient to protect the head from an arrow or war-club. A more complete article of defensive armour was a buff jerkin or shirt of great thickness, made of doublings of elk-skin, and reaching to the feet, holes being left for the head and arms. This was perfectly arrow-proof, and it was besides endowed with charmed virtues by the spells and mystic ceremonials of the medicine-man or conjuror. The religious belief of these savages was extremely limited and confined, or rather, in all probability, their explanations were little understood by their visitors. They had an idea of a benevolent and omnipotent Spirit, the creator of all things. They represent him as assuming various shapes at pleasure, but generally that of an immense bird. He usually inhabits the sun, but occasionally wings his way through the aërial regions, and sees all that is doing upon the earth. Should anything displease him, he vents his wrath in terrific storms and tempests, the lightning being the flashes of his eyes and the thunder the clapping of his wings. To propitiate his favour they offer to him annual sacrifices of salmon and venison, the first fruits of their fishing and hunting. Besides this aërial spirit, they believe in an inferior one, who inhabits the fire, and of whom they are in perpetual dread, as, though he possessed equally the power of good and evil, the evil is apt to pre-

dominate. They endeavour therefore to keep him in a good humour by frequent offerings. He is supposed also to have great influence with the winged spirit, their sovereign protector and benefactor. They implore him consequently to act as their interpreter, and procure them all desirable things, such as success in fishing and hunting, abundance of game, obedient wives, and male children. These Indians have likewise their priests or conjurors, or medicine-men, who pretend to be in the confidence of the deities and the expounders and enforcers of their will. Each of these medicine-men has his idols carved in wood, representing the spirits of the air and of the fire under some rude and grotesque form of a bear or beaver or other quadruped, or that of a bird or fish. These idols are hung round with amulets or votive offerings, such as beavers' teeth and bears' and eagles' claws.

When any chief personage is dangerously ill, the medicine-man is sent for. Each brings with him his idols, with which he retires into a canoe to hold a consultation. As doctors are prone to disagree, so these medicine-men have now and then a violent altercation as to the malady of the patient or the treatment of it. To settle this they beat their idols soundly against each other, and whichever first loses a tooth or a claw is considered as confuted, and his votary retires from the field.

Polygamy is not only allowed, but considered honourable; and the greater number of wives a man can maintain the more important is he in the eyes

of the tribe. The first wife however takes rank of all the others, and is considered mistress of the house. He also who exceeds his neighbours in the number of his wives, male children, and slaves, is elected chief of the village. Feuds are frequent among them, but are not very deadly; thus totally differing from the warlike races in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains, but, with the ferocity of the latter, if they fall upon an inferior force or village weakly defended, they slay all the men and carry off the women and children as slaves. They are mean and paltry as warriors, and altogether inferior in heroic qualities to the truly equestrian savages of the buffalo plains. A great portion of their time is passed in revelry, music, dancing, and gambling. Their music scarcely deserves the name, the instruments being of the rudest kind. Their singing is harsh and discordant; the songs are chiefly extempore, relating to passing circumstances, the persons present, or any trifling subject that strikes the attention of the singer. They have several kinds of dances, some of them lively and pleasing. The women are rarely permitted to dance with the men, but form groups apart, dancing to the same instrument and song. They are also notorious thieves, and proud of their dexterity; and frequent success gains them applause, but the clumsy thief is scoffed at and despised.

Each village forms a petty sovereignty governed by its own chief, who, however, possesses but little authority unless he be a man of wealth and substance,

—that is, possessed of canoes, slaves, and wives. The greater number of these the greater is the chief.

We thus here see a further proof of slavery being a customary feature of the primitive condition of mankind, and its abolition the greatest test of the progressive advancement of civilization, promoted beneath the genial and benign influence of the moral and religious doctrines of Christianity and its inspiriting philanthropy. And if anything could reconcile us to the prospect of a war with the United States to determine the disputed possession of this territory, it would only be the hopeful consideration, that this mighty empire would, when once armed and in the field, and on the waves, and arrayed with the awful attributes of an avenging Nemesis, never consent to withdraw her overwhelming energies until, as a condition for her acceptance of the submissively-tendered palm and olive, the total abrogation and abolition of slavery in the States, where the lustre of the starred standard is dimmed by its red stripes.

These slaves are the women and children of other either subjugated or defeated tribes taken in war. They are well treated while in good health, but occupied in all kinds of drudgery. Should they become useless, however, by sickness or old age, they are totally neglected and left to perish; nor is any respect paid to their bodies after death. With respect to the dead, all tribes of Indians have a very reverential feeling for their remains. A proof of this is shown by the description of an

Indian sepulchre, now destroyed by an accidental fire which took place during Captain Wilkes's exploring expedition. This place of sepulture was called Mount Coffin by the Europeans who first visited that part of the Columbia, a place held in great reverence by the Indians; it is seated near the part where the Cowlitz river falls into the Columbia. It was an isolated rock about one hundred and fifty feet high, rising from a low marshy soil, and totally disconnected with the adjacent mountains. Their preparation for interment is this: the dead body is wrapped in a mantle of skins, laid in his canoe, with his paddle, his fishing spear, and other implements beside him, and placed aloft on some rocky eminence, overlooking the river, bay, or lake he has frequented: he is thus fitted to launch away upon those placid streams and sunny lakes, stocked with all kinds of fish and waterfowl, which are prepared in the next world for those who have acquitted themselves as good sons, good fathers, good husbands, and above all good fishermen, during their mortal sojourn. This isolated rock presented a spectacle of this kind, numerous dead bodies being deposited in canoes on its summit; while on poles around were trophies, or rather funereal offerings of trinkets, garments, baskets of roots, and other articles for the use of the deceased. The friends of the deceased, especially the women, repaired thither at sunrise and sunset for some time after a burial, singing a funeral dirge, accompanied by loud wailings and lamentations.

A remarkable custom prevails among many tribes of Indians of flattening the forehead. The process by which this deformity is effected commences immediately after birth. The infant is laid in a wooden trough by way of cradle. The end on which the head reposes is higher than the rest. A padding is placed on the forehead of the infant, with a piece of bark above it, and is pressed down by cords which pass through holes on each side of the trough. As the tightening of the padding and the pressing of the head to the board is gradual, the process is said not to be attended with much pain. The appearance of the infant, however, while in this state of compression is whimsically hideous, and its little black eyes being forced out by the tightness of the bandages resemble those of a mouse choked in a trap. About a year's pressure is sufficient to produce the desired effect, at the end of which time the child emerges from its bandages a complete flathead, and continues so through life. This flattening has an aristocratical significancy, and is a sign of freedom, as no slave is permitted to bestow this enviable deformity on his child.

There is inherent in all Indian tribes the spirit and sagacity of traffic, and its most prominent feature, the desire to overreach. But the only instance of commercial enterprise being methodically and systematically carried out at a regular depôt is the village of Wishram, at the head of the Long Narrows, on the Columbia, in the Cascade Range

of Mountains. Their trade consists in the salmon which are caught at these falls. In the early part of the season, when the water is high, the salmon ascend the river in incredible numbers. As they pass through this narrow strait, the Indians, standing on the rocks, or on the ends of wooden stages projecting from the banks, scoop them up with small nets distended on hoops and attached to long handles, and cast them on shore. They are then cured and packed in a peculiar manner. After having been disembowelled, they are exposed to the sun on scaffolds, erected on the river banks. When sufficiently dry, they are pounded fine between two stones, pressed into the smallest compass, and packed in baskets or bales of grass matting, about two feet long and one in diameter, lined with the cured skin of a salmon. The top is likewise covered with fish skins, secured by cords passing through holes in the edge of the basket. Packages are then made, each containing twelve of these bales, seven at bottom and five at top, pressed closely to each other with the corded side upwards, wrapped in mats and corded. These are placed in dry situations, and again covered with matting. Each of these packages contains from ninety to a hundred pounds of dried fish, which, in this state, will keep. The dwellings at Wishram are very like those we have described, as being built by the native tribes along shore, towards the northern portions of the territory, indicating, possibly, a further affinity of common origin. The houses are

built of wood with long sloping roofs, the floor is sunk about six feet below the surface of the ground, with a low door at the gabel end, extremely narrow and partly sunk. Through this it is necessary to crawl and then to descend a short ladder. This inconvenient entrance is probably for the purpose of defence. There were also loopholes beneath the eaves, apparently for the discharge of arrows. The houses are sufficiently large to contain two or three families: just within the door are the sleeping places ranged along the walls, like berths in a ship, and furnished with pallets of matting. These extended along one half of the building; the remaining half was appropriated to the storing of dried fish. It is to this place that the tribes from the mouth of the Columbia repaired with the fish of the sea coast, the roots, berries, and especially the Wappatoo, gathered in the lower parts of the river, together with goods and trinkets, obtained from the ships which casually visited the coast. Hither also the tribes from the Rocky Mountains brought down horses, beargrass, quamash, and other commodities of the interior. The merchant fishermen at the falls acted as middlemen or factors, and passed the objects of traffic as it were cross-handed, trading away part of the wares received from the mountain tribe, to those of the river and the plains, and *vice versâ*; their packages of pounded salmon entered largely into the system of barter, and being carried off in opposite directions, found their way to the savage hunting camps far

in the interior, and to the casual white traders, who touched upon the coast.

The habits of trade and the avidity of gain have their corrupting effects, even in the wilderness, as may be instanced in the members of this aboriginal emporium; for they are denounced by the same traveller, from whom we derive the above sketch of the place, as saucy, impudent rascals, who will steal when they can, and pillage whenever a weak party falls into their power.

Further in the interior we find the equestrian race. It is a remarkable fact that the horse, which is not a native of the soil, should have become so identified with the habits and manners of these children of the wilderness, as to be an almost essential portion of their existence. It is also a singular fact that from the period of its first introduction by the Spaniards it should have propagated so rapidly and spread so widely as to reassume throughout the prairie land of both South and North America its primitive state of freedom, whence it was first subjugated by the wandering hordes of the steppes of Tartary. Congeniality of climate and similarity of country are without doubt the causes of the comparatively rapid distribution of this noble and useful animal throughout this vast continent. Among these Indians it is the chief proof of wealth, and a constant source of war to acquire its possession. Tribes which are essentially nomadic do not, of course, build durably like those who have settled residences. We thus

find the habitations of the majority of these to be mere tents and cabins, or lodges of mats, or skins, or straw, one cause of which is possibly the peculiar nature of the country they occupy, which is very destitute of timber. Yet each tribe has a different mode of shaping or arranging them, so that it is easy to tell, on seeing a lodge or encampment at a distance, to what tribe the inhabitants belong. They sometimes present a gay and fanciful appearance, being painted with undulating bands of red or yellow, or decorated with rude figures of horses, deer and buffaloes, and with human faces painted like full moons four and five feet broad. We thus see art in its infancy practised by these savages, its first principles being thus natively inherent to humanity.

These tribes are in continual war with each other, and their wars are of the most harassing kind, consisting not merely of conflicts and expeditions of moment, involving the sacking, burning, and massacre of villages, but of individual acts of treachery, murder, and cold-blooded cruelty; or of the vaunting and foolhardy exploits of single warriors, either to avenge some personal wrong, or to gain the vain-glorious trophy of a scalp. The lonely hunter, the wandering wayfarer, the poor squaw cutting wood or gathering straw, is liable to be surprised and slaughtered. In this way tribes are either swept away at once, or gradually thinned out, and savage life is thus surrounded with constant horrors and alarms.

That the race of red men should diminish from year to year, and so few should survive of the numerous nations which evidently once peopled the vast regions of the West, is therefore not surprising; it is rather a matter of surprise that so many should still survive, for the existence of a savage in these parts seems little better than a prolonged and all-besetting death.

The life of an Indian when at home in his village is a life of indolence and amusement. To the women are consigned the labours of the household and the field. She arranges the lodge, brings wood for the fire, cooks, jerks venison and buffalo meat, dresses the skins of animals killed in the chace, and cultivates the little patch of maize, pumpkins, and pulse, which furnishes a great part of their provisions. Their time for repose and recreation is at sunset, when, the labour of the day being ended, they gather together to amuse themselves with petty games, or to hold gossiping convocations on the tops of their lodges. The Indian is not to be degraded by useful or menial toil. It is enough that he exposes himself to the hardships of the chace and the perils of war, that he brings home food for his family, and watches and fights for its protection. Everything else is beneath his attention. When at home, he attends only to his weapons and his horses, preparing the means of future exploit, or he engages with his comrades in games of dexterity, agility, and strength, or in gambling games in which everything is put at

hazard with a recklessness seldom witnessed in civilized life.

A great part of the idle leisure of the Indians when at home is passed in groups, squatted together on the bank of a river, on the top of a mound on the prairie, or on the roof of one of their earth-covered lodges, talking over the news of the day, the affairs of the tribe, the events and exploits of their last hunting or fishing expedition, or listening to the stories of old times, told by some veteran chronicler. As to the Indian women, they are far from complaining of their lot. On the contrary, they would despise their husbands could they stoop to any menial office, and would think it conveyed an imputation upon their own conduct. It is the worst insult one virago can cast upon another in a moment of altercation: "Infamous woman! I have seen your husband carrying wood into his lodge to make the fire. Where was his squaw, that he should be obliged to make a woman of himself?"

These predatory tribes universally use scouts to be on the look-out, a precaution absolutely necessary to secure them from foray and destruction. The immense plains they usually inhabit present a horizon like the ocean, so that any object of importance can be seen at a great distance, owing to the extreme purity and elasticity of the atmosphere. The sky has that delicious blue for which the sky of Italy is renowned; the sun shines with a splendour unobscured by any cloud or vapour, and their

starlight nights are glorious. It is by these nights that the Indians compute time. This purity of the air increases nearer the mountains and on the more elevated prairies; and thus information may be communicated to a great distance. The scouts are stationed on the hills to look out for game and for enemies, and are in a manner living telegraphs, conveying their intelligence by concerted signals. If they wish to give notice of a herd of buffalos in the plain beyond, they gallop backwards and forwards abreast on the summit of the hill. If they perceive an enemy at hand, they gallop to and fro, crossing each other, at sight of which the whole village flies to arms.

In case of such an alarm the village is in an instant in a state of uproar: men, women, and children are brawling and shouting, dogs barking, yelping, and howling. Some of the warriors run to gather in their horses from the prairies, and others for their weapons. As fast as they could arm and equip they sally forth, some on horseback, some on foot—some hastily arrayed in their war-dress, with coronets of fluttering feathers, and their bodies smeared with paint; others naked, and only furnished with the weapons they had snatched up. The women and children gather on the slope of the lodges, and heighten the confusion of the scene by their vociferation. Old men who can no longer bear arms take similar positions, and harangue the warriors as they pass, exhorting them to valorous

deeds. Some of the veterans take arms themselves, and sally forth with tottering steps. In this way they pour forth helter-skelter, riding and running with hideous yells and war-whoops, like so many bedlamites or demoniacs let loose.

On the return of a war-party from a successful expedition, a warrior, usually the leader, gallops homeward to announce the fact, and to prepare the village for their reception by going forth to meet them on their approach. Preparations are immediately made for this great martial ceremony. All the finery and equipments of the warriors are sent forth to them that they may appear to the greatest advantage. In suitable seasons some tribes of these savages go naked, but they have their gala dress, of which they are not a little vain. This usually consists of a gay surcoat and leggings of the dressed skin of the antelope, resembling chamois' leather, and embroidered with porcupine quills brilliantly dyed. A buffalo robe is thrown over the right shoulder, and across the left is slung a quiver of arrows. They wear gay coronets of plumes, particularly those of the swan; but the feathers of the black eagle are considered the most worthy, being a sacred bird among the Indian warriors. He who has killed an enemy in his own land is entitled to drag at his heels a fox-skin attached to each mocassin; and he who has slain a grizzly bear wears a necklace of his claws, the most glorious trophy that a hunter can exhibit;

and may we not also see in these distinctions something analogous to the origin of armorial bearings in the feudal period of European civilization? An Indian toilet is an operation of some toil and trouble; the warrior has often to paint himself from head to foot, and is extremely capricious and difficult to please as to the hideous distribution of streaks and colours. During the interval of suspense occupied in these preparations all sports and business are at a stand-still, excepting that in the lodges the pains-taking squaws are silently busied getting ready the repasts for the warriors. At last a mingled sound of voices and rude music is faintly heard in the distance, giving notice that the procession is on its march. The old men and such of the squaws as can leave their employments hasten forth to meet it. It has a wild and picturesque effect as it moves along with measured step to the cadence of songs and savage instruments; the warlike standards and trophies flaunting aloft, and the feathers and paint and silver ornaments of the warriors glaring and glittering in the sunshine. The bands march in separate bodies under their several leaders. The warriors on foot come first in platoons of ten or twelve abreast; then the horsemen. Each bears its trophies of scalps, elevated on poles, their long black locks streaming in the wind; and each is accompanied by its rude music and minstrelsy. The warriors are variously armed with bows and arrows and war-clubs, and all have shields of buffalo hide, a kind of defence ge-

nerally used by the Indians of the open prairies, who have not the covert of trees and forests to protect them. They are painted in the most savage style, and some have the stamp of a red hand across their mouths, a sign that they had drunk the life-blood of a foe. As they approach the village, the old men and women go forth to meet them, and the scene which now ensues disproves the accounts of Indian apathy and stoicism. Parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, the bridegroom and his bride, meet with the most rapturous expressions of joy, while wailings and lamentations are heard from the relatives of the killed and wounded. The procession however continues on with slow and measured step in cadence to the solemn chant, and the warriors maintain their fixed and stern demeanour. The village soon becomes a scene of festivity and triumph. The banners and trophies and scalps and painted shields are elevated on poles near the lodges. Then commence the war-feasts and scalp-dances, with warlike songs and savage music, while the old heralds go round from lodge to lodge, promulgating with loud voices the events of the battle and the exploits of the different warriors. But in the intervals of the boisterous revelry of the village other sounds are heard from the surrounding hills, the piteous wailings of the women, who retire thither to mourn in darkness and solitude for those who have fallen in battle. Thus the same passions and the same feelings animate humanity under every condition,

howsoever modified by circumstance and civilization, for—

> "One touch of Nature
> Makes the whole world kin."

Their ardent nature is not only exhibited in war, but wherever excitement elicits it: thus in the pursuit of the elk and the buffalo, in the heat of the chace, they spare neither themselves nor their steeds, for they course along the prairies at full speed, plunging down precipices and frightful ravines, that threaten the necks of both horse and horseman. The Indian steed, well trained to the chace, seems as mad as his rider, and pursues the game as eagerly as if it were his natural prey, on the flesh of which he was to banquet. In hunting the deer they ring or surround it, and run them down in a circle. Their mode of capturing the antelope is somewhat similar: the women go into the thickest fields of wormwood, and pulling it up in great quantities, construct a hedge with it, about three feet high, enclosing about a hundred acres. A single opening is left for the admission of the game. This done, the women conceal themselves behind the wormwood, and wait patiently for the coming of the antelopes, which sometimes enter this spacious trap in considerable numbers. As soon as they are in, the women give the signal, and the men hasten to play their part. One only of them enters the pen at a time, and after chasing the terrified animals round the enclosure, he is relieved by one of his companions. In this way they

take turns, relieving each other, and keeping up a continued pursuit, without fatigue to themselves. The poor antelopes in the end are so wearied down that the whole party of men enter and despatch them with clubs, not one escaping that has entered the enclosure. The most curious circumstance in this chace is, that an animal so fleet and agile as the antelope, and straining for its life, should range round and round this enclosure without attempting to overleap the low barrier which surrounds it: such however is said to be the fact, and such their only mode of hunting the antelope.

In their religious notions there appears some degree of resemblance with those of the tribes frequenting the lower parts of the Columbia. Thus they believe in the existence of a good and evil spirit, and consequently in a future state of rewards and punishments. They hold, that after death the good Indian goes to a country in which there will be a perpetual summer; that he will meet his wife and children; that the rivers will abound with fish, and the plains with the much-loved buffalo; and that he will spend his time in hunting and fishing, free from the terrors of war, or the apprehension of cold and famine. The bad man they believe will go to a place covered with eternal snow; that he will always be shivering with cold, and will see fires at a distance that he cannot enjoy; water which he cannot procure to quench his thirst; and buffalo and deer which he cannot kill to appease

his hunger. An impenetrable wood, full of wolves, panthers, and serpents, separates these poor wretches from their fortunate brethren in the meadows of ease. Their punishment is not, however, eternal, and according to the different shades of their crimes they are sooner or later emancipated, and permitted to join their friends in the abodes of tranquillity. Their code of morality, although short, is comprehensive. They say that bravery, love of truth, attention to parents, obedience to their chiefs, and affection for their wives and children, are the principal virtues which entitle them to the place of happiness, while the opposite vices condemn them to that of misery. They have a curious tradition with respect to beavers, which they firmly believe are a fallen race of Indians, who, in consequence of their wickedness, vexed the Good Spirit, and were condemned by him to their present shape, but that, in due time, they will be restored to their humanity. They allege, that he-beavers have the power of speech, and that they have heard them talk with each other, and seen them sitting in council on an offending member.

These are more or less the habits of the several tribes which frequent the sources and course of all the branches of the Columbia, and who are thus distributed. In the vicinity of its upper waters, near Mount Brown and Mount Hooker, we find the Carrier Indians, and about the sources of the Okanagan, the tribe of the Soushwaps; the Flat-heads along its course, and about the vicinity of its

junction with the Columbia, and spreading also about the confluence of Clarke's River with the Columbia. In the prairies, embraced within the converging arms of the Columbia and the Flatbow river, and along the base of that portion of the Rocky Mountains, we find the Kootanie tribe, and the tribe of Nez Percés, Shahaptans, or Chipanish, occupying the country lying between Clarke's River and the Salmon River. To the west of these, and in the angle formed by the Columbia, adjacent to where it is joined by the Saptin, the country is occupied by the tribe of Walla Walla, who give their name to a river which flows into the Columbia, just below where it receives the waters of the Saptin. The country through which this river, called also Snake, or South Columbia River, and its numerous tributaries, flow, is inhabited about the middle of its course by the Shoshones, or Snake Indians, and to the south of them is posted the Boonack tribe. West of these, and south of the Walla Walla tribe, we find the Cayuse, and variously along the southern defiles and acclivities and table-lands at the feet of this southern portion of the Rocky Mountain ridge. Changing place occasionally to both slopes of the range the country is harassed by the predatory tribes of Crow Indians and Blackfeet Indians, who thus occupy it at its most accessible pass from landward, that to which Fremont's name has been given, near the source of the Sweet Water.

There appears to be no consistent reason why

one of these tribes should be called Blackfeet, or another Flatheads, for the feet of the former are no blacker than those of the other tribes, and the custom of flattening the head, the process of which we have previously described, appears to be restricted to some of the piscatory tribes of the coast. The Shoshones are also called Snake Indians from their dwelling upon the Saptin or Snake River, which has received that name from the multitude of rattlesnakes with which its course abounds. Of these tribes, the Blackfeet and Crows appear to be the most ferocious, waging incessant and exterminating war against the adjoining clans. But the Snake Indians bear the highest character of all, in their unaffected piety and general kindliness and hospitality.

The chief curb to the ferocious disposition of the Blackfeet is found in the Boonack tribe, who, though not of a revengeful disposition, have a deadly enmity to that tribe, possibly implanted by their unprovoked aggressions; and are usually more than masters for them when their forces are equal.

Although we have thus located the several tribes in distinct quarters, we must still understand these Indians to be restless, roving beings, continually intent on enterprises of war, traffic, and hunting. Clarke's River or the Shahaptan appears to be the great thoroughfare for their migrations to and from the Rocky Mountains, whither they repair

to hunt the buffalo in that vicinity, or to make war upon their inveterate antagonists.

These appear to be the principal features of the country and its inhabitants at the period of its exploration. Its first discovery would seem to have been made by the great circumnavigator, Sir Francis Drake, between 1578 and 80, when he gave to it the name of New Albion; and this confirmed must certainly determine the right of possession. In 1776, Captain Cook more closely inspected a portion of the coast, and Captain Vancouver in 1792 sailed thither to make a survey of it, and this he accomplished for the Straits of Fuca, the discovery of which inlet we have alluded to at the commencement of this brief description. In 1793, immediately after Vancouver had sailed past the mouth of the Columbia or Oregon without detecting it, Captain Gray, in the ship Columbia, discovered its entrance, and sailed into it, navigating its estuary for some distance upwards. It appears that the large prices procured by the furs conveyed by accident by Captain King to Canton, drew the attention of the fur companies to this region, and since which period exploration has tended thither from Canada and the United States by the successive fur companies which have collected those commodities in the Northern parts of America All these distinct trading associations seem now to have merged in the prevalence of the Hudson's Bay Company, which holds its monopoly

from the crown of England, and is thus a somewhat parallel instance of a state within a state to that of the dominion of the East India Company on the opposite side of the Pacific. Our prolonged description of the evanescent race of native tribes leaves us but little space to dilate upon the chief allurement of the white men to that inhospitable region. But we cannot forbear a passing glance at the fur trade, which, when we consider the enormous quantity of animal life it annually destroys, must even become still more evanescent than the races which the expansive populousness of civilization threatens eventually to chase from their fastnesses in the wildness and mountains, and expunge totally from the face of the earth. But if this has been hitherto the tendency of European development throughout America, we have but to reflect that a mutual war of extermination is being carried on by these tribes amongst themselves, and we may indulge the hope that the humanising influences fostered by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose sway over this region will, without doubt, be retained by the omnipotent arm of the powerful empire under whose patronage they enjoy it, will tend to check the devastating principles at work. We also sincerely trust that the predominance of the Christian religion as inculcated by its emissaries, sanctioned and stimulated by that body, may eventually curb the entire sanguinary spirit of all these tribes, even as it seems already to have worked some effect upon several of them, and

that its precepts and doctrines, by their benign spirit, may render them capable of the full enjoyment of all its cheering prospects, and with these conjunctively of the highest condition and happiness of civilization.

The fur trade, like all large branches of commerce, has peculiar and distinctive features, which are enhanced in this instance by the nature of the occupation. It has to do with the wild natives of the woods, and the mountains, and the plains, and the lakes, and the rivers; and its produce is the skins of animals who will not bear man's yoke, and must therefore be sought in their native haunts and retreats. The pride and ostentation of man seek gratification on every hand, and whatever can lend lustre to his vanity is prized, and bears its price in relation to the difficulty of obtaining it, especially where beauty is combined with rarity. Thus the skins of those animals which are most difficult to find bear the highest price, and of course are sought for with the greatest eagerness by those who hunt them. Collecting these skins has given rise to four distinct classes of men, whose lives are a succession of romantic incidents passed as they are in the fastnesses of primitive nature, or in intercourse with the scarcely less primitive savages, who are their only occasional occupants. These men are technically called voyageurs, hunters, trappers, and mountaineers, according to the nature of the peculiar branch of the trade they pursue. They are usually in the pay of a fur company, or some-

times traffic with it on their o account; but even so their accumulation of skins comes thus into the general depôt. These voyageurs are a species of carriers, who have sprung out of the fur trade as conveyancers of these precious merchandise along the interior waters to their final place of deposit; but being little occupied in the trade of the Oregon territory, and as we must hasten to a conclusion, we shall not enlarge upon their description. The trappers are, as their name indicates, occupied in trapping animals, and especially beavers, upon the different streams which intersect this country. Wanderers of the wilderness, according to the vicissitudes of the seasons, the migrations of animals, and the plenty or scarcity of game, they lead a precarious and unsettled existence, exposed to sun and storm, and all kinds of hardships, until they resemble the Indians in complexion as well as in tastes and habits. From time to time they bring the peltries—the technical name derived from the French for furs—to the trading-houses of the Company, in whose employ they have been brought up; and here they traffic them away for such articles of merchandise or ammunition as they may stand in need of. Being constantly exposed to the casualties of Indian foray, they have been taught by necessity, that parent of invention, to conceal the produce of their success, as well as their necessaries of ammunition, provision, &c., whilst upon prolonged expeditions, far, far away in the heart of the wilderness, to pre-

vent their being carried off by the Indians, with whom they are usually in a state of incessant hostility, in places called technically *caches*, from the French verb *cacher*, to hide; but although a European term has been applied to these places of deposit, they were in use by the natives long before the intrusion of the white men upon their soil. It is in fact the only mode that migratory hordes have of preserving their valuables from robbery during their long absences from their villages or accustomed haunts on hunting expeditions, or during the vicissitudes of war. The utmost skill and caution are required to render these places of concealment invisible to the lynx eye of an Indian. The first care is to seek out a proper situation, which is generally some dry low bank of clay, on the margin of a water-course. As soon as the precise spot is pitched upon, blankets, saddlecloths, and other coverings are spread over the surrounding grass and bushes, to prevent foot-tracks or any other derangement. A circle of about two feet in diameter is then nicely cut in the sod, which is carefully removed, with the loose soil immediately beneath it, and laid aside in a place where it will be safe from anything that may change its appearance. It is then dug down and enlarged within to the size required. The cave being thus formed, it is well lined with dry grass, bark, sticks, and poles, and occasionally a dried hide. The property intended to be hidden is then laid in, and it is covered over by the sod previously removed. All tracks

are carefully obliterated, and it is frequently sprinkled with water to destroy the scent lest the wolves and bears should be attracted to the place and root up the concealed treasure; and the place is not revisited until there be a necessity for opening the cache. To the hunter his horse is as essential as to the mountaineer his rifle. In the daytime, while engaged on the prairie cutting up the deer or buffalo he has slain, he depends upon his faithful horse as a sentinel. The sagacious animal sees and smells all around him, and by his starting and whinnying gives notice of the approach of strangers. There seems to be a dumb communion and fellowship between the hunter and his horse. They mutually rely upon each other for company and protection, and nothing is more difficult, it is said, than to surprise an experienced hunter on the prairie, while his old and favourite steed is at his side. The mountaineer has equally his companion in his rifle, for it is essential to his security in the vicissitudes of his hazardous life. On going from lodge to lodge to visit his comrades he takes it with him. On seating himself in a lodge he lays it beside him ready to be snatched up; when he goes out, he takes it up as regularly as a citizen would his walking-staff. His rifle is his constant friend and protector. These mountaineers have sprung up from the nature of the trade they pursue. Trading and trapping they scale the vast mountain chains, and pursue their hazardous vocations amidst these wild recesses.

They move from place to place on horseback. The equestrian exercise in which they are continually engaged, the nature of the countries they traverse, vast plains and mountains, pure and exhilarating in their atmosphere, seem to make them physically and mentally a lively and mercurial race. They are hardy, lithe, vigorous, and active, extravagant in word and thought and deed; heedless of hardships, daring of danger, prodigal of the present, and thoughtless of the future.

The following table gives an account of one year's produce of furs, obtained either through the instrumentality of these men, or by direct trade with the Indians, who have learnt by degrees the advantages that result from commercial intercourse with the white men who have settled among them :—

Bear	2,100
Beaver	106,000
Buffalo	500
Deer	750
Ditto, dressed	1,200
Elk	700
Fisher	1,650
Fox	1,000
Kitt fox	4,000
Lynx	6,000
Marten	32,000
Muskwash	17,000
Mink	1,800
Otter	4,600
Raccoon	100
Wolverine	600
Wolf	3,800

This country, known but so short a time, is now sprinkled with stations, and posts, and forts by the Hudson's Bay Company, for the conjoint purposes

of trading and protecting its servants. The chief settlement is Fort Vancouver, on the north bank of the Columbia, ninety miles from the sea. Dr. M'Loughlin, the Governor of the territory, resides here. It is an enclosure thirty-seven rods long, and eighteen wide, strongly stockaded, within which are eight substantial buildings and many smaller ones. This place has a considerable farming establishment. There are large fertile prairies which they occupy for tillage and pasture, and forests for fencing materials and other purposes. They have a garden of five acres, abounding with vegetables and fruit, as peaches, apples, grapes, strawberries; and figs, oranges, and lemons have also been introduced. They have a flour mill worked by ox-power, and a saw mill from which boards are sent even to the Sandwich Islands. There is a chapel for divine service, a school for children belonging to the establishment, and shops for blacksmiths, joiners, carpenters, and other mechanical trades. Fort George, or Astoria, is eight miles from the mouth of the Columbia. It has two buildings and a garden of two acres. Fort Walla Walla is on the south side of the Columbia, ten miles below the entrance of Lewis's River. Fort Colvin, on the south side of Clarke's River, below the Kettle falls, just before it enters the Columbia. This also has a considerable farming establishment. Fort Okonagan, at the entrance into the Columbia, of the river of that name, 100 miles below Clarke's River. The Hudson's Bay

Company have also several other trading ports in this territory. And on the Wallemette, fifty-five miles above its entrance into the Columbia, is M'Kay's settlement; and twelve miles above is Jarvis's settlement, which contains numerous families, which consist mostly of retiring servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, with their half-breed families and a few Americans. It is to this river, and the valley watered by it, that the course of American emigration has tended. The American Missionary board has also several stations in this country, one at Astoria, another at Multnomia, a third on the Columbia about 140 miles from its mouth, a fourth at Puget's Sound, a fifth at Wallemette, another at Clatsop, and another at the Umqua, a river which empties itself into the Pacific, about 200 miles below the Columbia.

To compress into so close a compass the various features of so large a country, renders inevitable the omission of some; but such have been selected as were thought would give the best idea of the nature of the region, combined with what should also prove most interesting and instructive in the perusal.

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