

knots an hour, a Canadian lad named Joseph LaPierre fell overboard. This was an awkward accident, as all eyes were at the time gazing with admiration on the scenery of the land. In an instant, however, the sails were backed, boats lowered, and everything at hand thrown overboard to save the drowning man; but before he could be picked up the ship had distanced him more than a mile, and when the boatswain reached the ship with the body, the captain, in his usual sympathizing mood, peremptorily ordered him about to pick up all the trumpery which had been thrown into the water. This took a considerable time. The apparently lifeless body was then hoisted on board, and every means tried to restore animation, and at last, by rolling the body in warm [29] blankets, and rubbing it with salt, the lad recovered, after being thirty-eight minutes in the water, and though unable to swim.

Mr. Fox, who had again fallen under the captain's displeasure, and who had been, in consequence, off duty for a week past, was reinstated this morning. This was no sooner done, however, than the fourth mate, the captain's own brother, was put into irons. The young Thorn was as factious and morose a subject as his brother; with this only difference, that he had less power to do mischief. He had maltreated one of the passengers; and the captain, in order to show impartiality, awarded him the above punishment.

[30] CHAPTER III ¹⁰

Karakakooa Bay—The sailors desert—The captain's conduct—Productions of Owhyhee—Tocaigh Bay—Governor Young—Royal proclamation—Woahoo—Ourourah, the residence of Tammeatameah—Harbour fees—Excursion on shore—The Queen's umbrella—The King's appearance—Royal palace and guards—Arsenal, or royal workshop—Royal dinner—His Majesty's fleet—Morais, or places of public worship—Sacred or puranee ground tabooed—Storm—A sailor left to his fate among the natives—Parting visit from his Majesty—His meanness—Diving of the natives—Native proas: how made—Clothing—Customs and peculiarities—Character of the women—White men at the Sandwich Islands—The King's disposition towards foreigners—Captain Cook—Pahooas, or war spears—A sham fight—Religion—Tammeatmeah conquerer and king—Apparent happiness of the natives—Prophetic hint—Distressed situation of a boat.

ON the 13th of February the ship anchored in Karakakooa Bay, in the island of Owhyhee, and within a mile of the place where the unfortunate Captain Cook fell in 1779. The Sandwich Islands are eleven in number, and lie between the 19th and 22nd parallels of N. latitude, and the meridians of 151° and 160° W. longitude. The climate is warm but healthy, and more temperate and uniform than [31] is usual in tropical countries; nor is it subject to hurricanes and earthquakes. In their customs and manners the natives resemble the New Zealanders, and like them are a warlike people: all classes tattoo their bodies.

Karakakooa Bay is about a mile or more in extent, but

¹⁰ Compare Ross's account of the Hawaiian Islands with that of Franchère, especially notes 22-34.—ED.

sheltered only on one side, which presents a high rugged front of coral rock, resembling a rampart or battery in the bottom of the bay, facing the ocean, with two bushy trees on it waving in the wind like flags. The shores, with the exception of the above-mentioned rock, are everywhere low, with here and there clumps of cocoa-nut and other trees, which give a pleasing variety to the scene; and the land, rising gradually as it recedes to a considerable height, looks down over intervening hill and dale upon the delightful little villages of Kakooa and Kowrowa.

We were now near land, and the captain's conduct to both passengers and crew had fostered a spirit of desertion among the sailors: Jack Tar, slipping off in the night, was seen no more. This new feature in our affairs portended no good, but brought about a sweeping change, for the captain had now no resource but to place his chief confidence in those whom he had all along maltreated and affected to despise. In this state of things, the natives were employed to bring back the deserters. One Roberts, a yankee, was confined below; Ems, a Welshman, was tied up and flogged; Johnston, an Englishman, [32] was put in irons; and Anderson, the boatswain, could not be found. Storming and stamping on deck, the captain called up all hands; he swore, he threatened, and abused the whole ship's company, making, if possible, things worse. I really pitied the poor man, although he had brought all this trouble upon himself: with all his faults he had some good qualities, and in his present trying situation we all forgot our wrongs, and cheerfully exerted ourselves to help him out of his difficulties. The clerks were appointed to assist the officers, and the Canadians to supply the place of the sailors in keeping watch and doing the other duties on shore; while the partners, forgetting

former animosities, joined hand in hand with the captain in providing for the wants of the ship.

Order being now restored, the partners and some of the clerks went occasionally on shore; meantime, the natives having paid several visits on board, and sounded our bargain-making chiefs (for they are shrewd dealers), a brisk trade commenced in plantains, bananas, yams, taro, bread-fruit, sweet potatoes, sugar-canes, cocoa-nuts, and some pork, the principal productions of the place. We had not been long here, however, till we learned that the chief of the island resided at a place called Tocaigh Bay, some distance off; and as we expected a further and better supply there, we sailed for that place, where we had an interview with the governor, a white man, named John Young. He received us kindly, and with [33] every mark of attention peculiar to an Indian chief; showed us his wife, his daughter, his household, and vassals—a strange assemblage of wealth and poverty, filth and plenty.

Governor Young was a native of England, and belonged to an American ship, the *Eleanor*, of which he was boat-swain. That vessel, happening to touch at the Sandwich Islands in 1790, left Young there to shift for himself; but his nautical skill and good conduct soon recommended him to the reigning prince, Tammeatameah, and he is now Viceroy or Governor of Owhyhee. He is about 60 years of age, shrewd, and healthy; but, from his long residence among the natives, he has imbibed so much of their habits and peculiarities, that he is now more Indian than white man.

We had not been long at the village of Tocaigh, when Governor Young gave us to understand that no rain had fallen in that neighbourhood during the four preceding years, and that in consequence provisions were very

scarce, and good water was not to be found there at any time. These details were discouraging. The natives, however, began a brisk trade in fruits and vegetables; we, however, were desirous of purchasing hogs and goats, but were told that the sale of pork had been prohibited by royal proclamation, and that, without the permission of the king, who resided in the island of Woahoo, no subject could dispose of any. Anxious to complete our supplies, we immediately resolved on sailing to Woahoo.

[34] On the 21st of February, we cast anchor abreast of Ourourah, the metropolis of Woahoo, and royal residence of Tammeatameah. This is the richest and most delightful spot in the whole archipelago. On our approaching the land, two white officers came on board; the one a Spaniard, secretary to his majesty; the other a Welshman, the harbour master: the latter brought us safe to anchor in Whyteete Bay, for which service he demanded and was paid five Spanish dollars.

The royal village of Ourourah is situate at the foot of a hill, facing the ocean, on the west side of the island. The houses were 740 in number, and contained 2025 inhabitants. It will appear strange that so few inhabitants should require so many houses, but this will be explained hereafter. Behind the village there is an extensive field under fine cultivation—perhaps it may measure 500 acres; but its appearance was greatly injured by irregular enclosures, or rather division lines, formed of loose stones running on the surface, intersecting and crossing each other in every possible direction, for the purpose of marking the plot claimed by each individual or family: the whole is cultivated with much skill and industry, the soil teeming rich, and the labour abundant, with here and there small water-courses and aqueducts.

Immediately after coming to anchor, Captain Thorn, accompanied by Mr. M'Kay and Mr. M'Dougall, waited on his majesty, Tammeatameah, [35] and after dining with him, returned on board. In the afternoon his majesty and three queens returned the visit in state, the royal canoe being paddled by sixteen chiefs, with the state arm-chest on board. Their majesties were received with becoming ceremony. The flag was displayed, and three guns fired. The king was conducted to the cabin followed by his valet, who held a spitting-box in his hand, but the queens preferred remaining on deck. While here, they very unceremoniously disrobed themselves, plunged overboard, and after swimming and sporting for some time in the water, came on board again and dressed themselves, after which they joined Tammeatameah in the cabin, where they did ample justice to a good collation, drank two bottles of wine, and left us apparently well pleased with their reception. The chiefs remained all the time in the royal yacht alongside.

Tammeatameah appeared to be about fifty years of age; straight and portly, but not corpulent; his countenance was pleasing, but his complexion rather dark, even for an Indian. He had on a common beaver hat, a shirt, and neckcloth, which had once been white; a long blue coat with velvet collar, a cassimere vest, corduroy trousers, and a pair of strong military shoes; he also wore a long and not inelegant sword, which he said he got from his brother, the king of England.

During these interviews and visits of ceremony, the captain had broached the subject of pork to [36] his majesty; but this was not the work of an hour nor of a day; pork was a royal monopoly, and the king well knew how to turn it to his advantage on the present occasion,

for several conferences were held, and all the *pros* and *cons* of a hard bargain discussed, before the royal contract was concluded. Time however, brought it about, and the negotiation was finally closed; the king furnished the requisite supplies of hogs, goats, poultry, and vegetables, for all of which a stipulated quantity of merchandise was to be given in return. Business now commenced, and good water and provisions were brought to the ship in boat-loads; and as the king further pledged himself, that if any of the sailors deserted he would answer for their safe delivery again, this assurance, although the words of kings are not always sacred, had the effect of relieving the passengers from the ship's duties; we were, therefore, enabled to go on shore.

On walking up to the royal city on our first landing, we were met by two of the queens, accompanied by a page of honour. They were all three walking abreast, the page in the middle, and holding with his two hands a splendid parasol of the richest silk, measuring six feet eight inches in diameter. From this umbrella hung twelve massy tassels, weighing at least a pound each. The ladies were very communicative, and after detaining us for nearly half an hour passed on. We were soon afterwards introduced to his majesty, who honoured us with a glass of arrack. Here [37] we had a full view of the royal palace, the royal family, and the life-guards. The palace consisted of thirteen houses, built so as to form a square. All the buildings of the country are a kind of wicker work, remarkable for their neatness and regularity; and although slender, they appear to be strong and durable; nor did there appear any difference between the royal buildings and the other houses of the place, the square and courtyard excepted. The king occupied three of these houses;

one for eating, another for sleeping, and the third for business, which may be called the audience chamber. Each of the queens occupied three also; a dressing house, a sleeping house, and an eating house. His majesty never enters any of the queens' houses, nor do they ever enter any of his: in this respect, they are always tabooed. There is a house set apart exclusively for their interviews. The established custom of the land is that each family, however poor, invariably occupies three houses; and this will explain why so many houses are required for so few inhabitants.

We also saw two of the king's sons; one of them was in disgrace and tabooed; that is, interdicted from speaking with anybody. We were next shown the life-guards, consisting of forty men, accoutred in something of the English style, with muskets, belts, and bayonets; but their uniform was rather old and shabby. The parade-ground, or place where the guards were on duty, lay just behind the royal buildings, on a level square green spot made up for the [38] purpose, and on which were placed eighteen four or six pounders, all mounted, and apparently in good order.

From this we proceeded to a long narrow range of buildings, where a number of artisans were at work, making ship, sloop, and boat tackling, ropes, blocks, and all the other *et ceteras* required for his majesty's fleet; while others again, in a wing of the same building, were employed in finishing single and double canoes; the former for pleasure, the latter for commercial purposes. At the far end of the buildings was erected a blacksmith's forge; and beyond that, in a side room, lay the masts, spars, and rigging of a new schooner. The tools used by the different workmen were very simple, slender, few, and ill-made, and yet the work done by them surprised us.

While in the workshops, Mr. M'Kay took a fancy to a small knot of wood, about the size of a pint-pot, and asked it of the king. His majesty took the bit of wood in his hand, and after looking at it for some time turned round to Mr. M'Kay and said, "This is a very valuable piece of wood; it is the finest koeve, and what my Erees make their pipes of; but if you will give me a new hat for it, you can have it." Mr. M'Kay smiled, adding, "Your majesty shall have it." So the bargain was struck, but Mr. M'Kay fell in love with no more of his majesty's wood. They make their own cloth, cordage, salt, sugar, and whisky.

[39] The king then invited us to dine; and entering a small wretched hovel adjoining the workshop, we all sat down round a dirty little table, on which was spread some viands, yams, taro, cocoa-nuts, pork, bread-fruit, and arrack. The king grew very jovial, ate and drank freely, and pressed us to follow his example. After dinner, he apologized for the meanness of the place, by saying that his banqueting house was tabooed that day. Dinner being over, he brought us to see a large stone building, the only one of the kind on the island, situate at some distance from the other buildings; but he showed no disposition to open the door and let us have a peep at the inside. He said it cost him 2,000 dollars. We were told the royal treasure and other valuables were kept there. Behind the stone building, and near the shore, was lying at anchor an old ship of about 300 tons, with some guns and men on deck—said to be the guard-ship. From this position, we saw sixteen vessels of different sizes, from 10 to 200 tons, all lying in a wretched and ruinous condition along the beach; some on shore, others afloat, but all apparently useless. The day being excessively warm, and

our curiosity gratified, we took leave of his majesty, and staid for the night at the house of a Mr. Brown, an American settler, who had resided on the island for several years.

After passing an agreeable night, we bade adieu to our hospitable landlord, and set out to view the morais, or places of public worship. Of these, Ourourah [40] alone contains fifteen of this description. Each morai is composed of several miserable-looking little huts, or houses. Passing by all the inferior ones, we at length reached the king's morai, or principal one of the place. It consisted of five low, gloomy, and pestiferous houses, huddled close together; and alongside of the principal one stood an image made of wood, resembling a pillar, about 28 feet high, in the shape of the human figure, cut and carved with various devices; the head large, and the rude sculpture on it presenting the likeness of a human face, carved on the top with a black cowl. About thirty yards from the houses, all round about, was a clear spot called the "king's tabooed ground," surrounded by an enclosure. This sacred spot is often rigorously tabooed and set apart for penance. It was while walking to and fro on this solitary place that we saw Tatooirah, the king's eldest son, who was in disgrace. We were prevented from entering within the enclosure. At the foot of this pagot, or pillar, were scattered on the ground several dead animals: we saw four dogs, two hogs, five cats, and large quantities of vegetables, almost all in a state of putrefaction, the whole emitting a most offensive smell. On the death of the king or other great eree, and in times of war, human sacrifices are frequently offered at the shrine of this moloch. The word *taboo* implies interdiction or prohibition from touching the place, person, or thing tabooed; a violation of

which is always severely punished, and at the king's morai, with death.

[41] We had scarcely got on board, late in the evening, when a tremendous gale from the land arose and drove the ship out to sea. The fury of the tempest and darkness of the night obliged us to cut cable, and two days were spent in anxious forebodings, ere we got back again into harbour.

On the 27th, all our supplies, according to contract, were safe on board; and from the good conduct of the sailors since our arrival, we began to think matters would go on smoothly for the future; but these hopes were of short duration — the hasty and choleric disposition of the captain destroyed our anticipations. Two of the boats had gone on shore as usual; but on the call for all hands to embark, three of the sailors were missing. The boats, without waiting a moment, pushed off, but had reached the ship only fifteen minutes before two of the three men arrived in an Indian canoe. Notwithstanding the anxiety they manifested, and their assurance that the boat had not been off five minutes before they were on the beach, they were both tied up, flogged, and then put in irons. But this was not all; Emms, the third man, not being able to procure a canoe, had unfortunately to pass the night on shore, but arrived the next morning by sunrise. On arriving alongside, the captain, who was pacing the deck at the time did not wait till he got on board, but jumping into a boat which lay alongside, laid hold of some sugar-canes with which the boat was loaded, and bundled the poor fellow, sprawling and speechless, at [42] his feet; then jumping on deck, kept pacing to and fro in no very pleasant mood; but on perceiving Emms still struggling to get up, he leaped into the boat a second time, and called one of the sailors to follow him. The poor fellow, on seeing

the captain, called out for mercy; but in his wrath the captain forgot mercy, and laid him again senseless at his feet, then ordered him to be thrown overboard! Immediately on throwing the man into the sea, Mr. Fox made signs to some Indians, who dragged him into their canoe and paddled off to shore. During this scene, no one interfered; for the captain, in his frantic fits of passion, was capable of going any lengths, and would rather have destroyed the expedition, the ship, and every one on board, than be thwarted in what he considered as ship discipline, or his nautical duties.

In the evening, the Indians brought Emms again to the ship. Here the little fellow implored forgiveness, and begged to be taken on board; but the captain was inexorable, and threatened him with instant death if he attempted to come alongside. Soon after he made his appearance again, but with no better effect. He then asked for his protection, a paper which the American sailors generally take with them to sea. The captain returning no answer to this request, Mr. Fox contrived to throw his clothes and protection overboard unperceived, at the same time making signs to the Indians to convey them to Emms. On receiving the little bundle, he remained [43] for some time without uttering a word; at last, bursting into tears, he implored again and again to be admitted on board, but to no purpose. All hopes now vanishing, the heroic little fellow, standing up in the canoe, took off his cap, and waving it in the air, with a sorrowful heart bade adieu to his shipmates; the canoe then paddled to land, and we saw him no more.

Our supplies being now completed, the king came on board before our departure; and it will appear something surprising that the honest and wealthy monarch, forgetting

the rank and pomp of royalty, should at his parting visit covet everything he saw with us: he even expressed a wish to see the contents of our trunks; he begged a handkerchief from me, a penknife from another, a pair of shoes from a third, a hat from a fourth, and when refused, talked of his kindness to us on shore; while, on the other hand, he bowed low when presented with a breastpin, a few needles, or paper-cased looking-glass, not worth a groat. Even the cabin-boy and cook were not forgotten by this "King of the Isles," for he asked a piece of black-ball from the former, and an old saucepan from the latter. His avarice and meanness in these respects had no bounds, and we were all greatly relieved when he bade us farewell and departed.

Having taken leave of his majesty, I shall now make a few remarks on the habits, dress, and language of the natives.

[44] The Sandwich Islanders are bold swimmers, and expert navigators. They are like ducks in the water. As soon as we had cast anchor in Karakokooa Bay the natives, men and women, indiscriminately flocked about the ship in great numbers: some swimming, others in canoes, but all naked, although the *Tonquin* lay a mile from the shore. Few, however, being admitted on board at once (probably a necessary precaution), the others waited very contentedly floating on the surface of the water alongside, amusing themselves now and then by plunging and playing round the ship. After passing several hours in this way, they would then make a simultaneous start for the land, diving and plunging, sporting and playing, like so many seals or fish in a storm all the way. During their gambols about the ship, we often amused ourselves by dropping a button, nail, or pin into the water; but such

was their keenness of sight and their agility, that the trifle had scarcely penetrated the surface of the water before it was in their possession; nothing could escape them. On one occasion a ship's block happening to fall overboard, one of the natives was asked to dive for it in thirty-six feet of water; but after remaining three minutes and fifty seconds under water he came up unsuccessful; another tried it and succeeded, after being under water four minutes and twelve seconds: the blood, however, burst from his nose and ears immediately after.

Their voyaging canoes are made to ride on the [45] roughest water with safety by means of a balance or outrigger shaped like a boat's keel, and attached to the canoe at the distance of five feet by two slender beams. The canoe goes fully as well with as without the balance, skipping on the surface of the water as if no such appendage accompanied it. When the swell or surge strikes the canoe on the balance side, the weight of the outrigger prevents its upsetting, and when on the opposite side the buoyancy of the outrigger, now sunk in the water, has the same effect.

The climate here is so very mild and warm that the natives seldom wear any clothing, and when they do, it is of their own manufacture, and extremely simple. The inner bark of different trees (the *touta* in particular) is prepared by beating it into a pulp or soft thin web, not unlike grey paper, called *tuppa*. The common people wear it in this raw state, but the better sort paint it with various colours, resembling printed cotton. *Tappa* is as strong as cartridge paper, but not so thick, and can answer for clothing only in dry climates. The common dress of the men consists of a piece of this *tappa*, about ten inches broad and nine feet long, like a belt, called *maro*. The

maro is thrown carelessly round the loins, then passed between the thighs, and tied on the left side. The females wear the pow or pau, a piece of tappa similar to the maro, only a little broader, and worn in the same manner; but the queens had on, in addition to the pow, a loose mantle or shawl thrown round [46] the body, called kihei, which consisted of twenty-one folds of tappa; yet when compressed it did not equal in thickness an English blanket. The kihei is generally worn by persons of distinction, but seldom of more than two or three folds, excepting among the higher ranks. Like a Chinese mandarin, a lady here makes known her rank by her dress, and by the number of folds in her kihei.

A custom prevalent here, and which is, I believe, peculiar to these islanders, is, that the women always eat apart from the men, and are forbidden the use of pork. The favourite dish among all classes is raw fish, mashed or pounded in a mortar. Considering their rude and savage life, these people are very cleanly. The houses of all classes are lined and decorated with painted tappa, and the floors overspread with variegated mats. The women are handsome in person, engaging in their manners, well featured, and have countenances full of joy and tranquillity; but chastity is not their virtue.

The king's will is the paramount law of the land, but he is represented as a mild and generous sovereign, invariably friendly to the whites whom choice or accident has thrown on these islands. To those who behave well the king allots land, and gives them slaves to work it. He protects both them and their property, and is loth ever to punish an evildoer. Near Ourourah we saw eight or ten white men comfortably settled; and upwards of thirty [47] others naked and wild among the natives, wretched

unprincipled vagabonds, of almost every nation in Europe, without clothing and without either house or home.

I have already noticed the principal esculent vegetables growing here; there are also some beautiful kinds of wood; that called koeve, of which the war spears or pahooas are made, and sandalwood, are the kinds most highly esteemed among the natives for their hardness and polish. The cocoa-nut, in clumps here and there, forms delightful groves, and these are often frequented by the industrious females for the purpose of manufacturing and painting their tappa—preferring the cool shade and open air to the heat of a dwellinghouse.

At the place where Captain Cook was killed, which we visited soon after our arrival, were still a few old and shattered cocoa-nut trees, pierced with the shot from his ships; and a flat coral rock; at the water's edge, is still pointed out to strangers as the fatal spot where he fell.

The chief weapon used in their warfare is the pahooa or spear, 12 feet long, polished, barbed, and painted. It is poised and thrown with the right hand with incredible force and precision. His majesty ordered fifty men to parade one day, and invited us to see them exercising, and we were certainly much gratified and astonished at their skill in throwing and parrying the weapons.

[48] After going through several manœuvres, the king picked four of the best marksmen out, and ordered one of them to stand at a certain point; the three others at a distance of sixty yards from him, all armed with pahooas, and facing one another. The three last mentioned were to dart their spears at the single man, and he to parry them off or catch them in passing. Each of the three had twelve pahooas; the single man but one. Immediately after taking his position the single man put himself upon

his guard, by skipping and leaping from right to left with the quickness of lightning: the others, equally on the alert, prepared to throw. All eyes were now anxiously intent; presently one threw his spear, at a short interval the next followed; as did the third — two at a time next threw, and then all three let fly at once, and continued to throw without intermission until the whole thirty-six spears were spent, which was done in less than three minutes. The single man, who was placed like a target to be shot at, defended himself nobly with the spear he had in his hand, and sent those of his opponents whistling in every direction, for he had either to parry them off like a skilful boxer, or be run through on the spot; but such was the agility with which he shifted from one position to another, and managed the spear with his right hand, that he seemed rather to be playing and amusing himself than seriously engaged, for twice or thrice he dexterously seized his opponent's spear at [49] the moment it came in contact with his own, allowing at the same time the latter to fly off, and this shifting or exchanging spears is thought a masterpiece, being the most difficult and dangerous manœuvre in the whole affair, and it is only an adept that can attempt it with safety. When all was over, the man had received a slight wound on the left arm; but it happens not unfrequently that he who is thus placed is killed on the spot; for if he allows the spear to be knocked out of his hand without catching another, he is almost sure to fall, as the throwers are not allowed to stop while a pahooa remains with them, and every weapon is hurled with a deadly intention.

The king is said to be a dexterous pahooa man himself, and it was his prowess and knowledge in war, and not his rank, that made him sovereign of these islands. After

the people had dispersed, the man who had acted so conspicuous a part in the exhibition just described, came to us and offered to risk his life for a handkerchief, at the distance of twenty yards; telling us to select the best marksman among us, with a fowlingpiece either with shot or ball, and he would stand before him, and either win the handkerchief or lose his life! We were not disposed, however, to accept the challenge, but gave the fellow a handkerchief and sent him about his business.

All the islands of this group, excepting one, have [50] acknowledged Tammeatameah as their king, and the jarring interests and feuds of the different islands have at last sunk into a system of union which, if we may judge from appearance, renders this country, under its present government, an earthly paradise, and the inhabitants thereof as free from care, and perhaps as happy, as any in the globe;—but mark! civilized man has now begun to trade on its innocent and peaceful soil: there is an end, therefore, to all primeval simplicity and happiness.

These people speak with a quickness which almost baffles imitation; and in very many instances, the same word is repeated twice. The language is bold and masculine; and, although the accent be clear, is very difficult to be attained by the whites.

We shall now take our leave of the friendly and hospitable natives of these islands. On his majesty leaving the ship, a boat was sent to shore for a few remaining articles; meantime, preparations were made for weighing anchor. The wind from the sea beginning to blow retarded the boat's return; and the delay so nettled our worthy commander, that he gave orders to set sail, and the ship stood out to sea, leaving the boat to follow as she could. The wind soon increasing to a gale,

the boat had to struggle with a tempestuous sea for six hours, during which time we expected every minute to witness her destruction. The Falkland Island affair was yet fresh in our [51] minds, and this seemed to equal, if not surpass it in cruelty. At length, however, the ship bore down, and with much difficulty rescued the boat's crew from a watery grave.

[52] CHAPTER IV ¹¹

Departure from the Sandwich Islands — Bad weather — Live stock destroyed — Columbia River — A boat and crew lost — Captain's conduct towards Mr. Fox — Mouth of the river — Bar and breakers — Cape Disappointment — Point Adams — Narrow escape of the long boat — Sounding the bar — A boat and crew left to perish — The ship in the breakers — Critical situation — Melancholy narrative of Steven Weeks — Search made for the lost boat, and narrow escape — Long boat swamped — Fidelity of the natives — Preparations for leaving the ship — Captain Thorn — The voyage concluded.

ON the 1st of March, 1811, we took our departure from the Sandwich Islands; steering direct for Columbia River. The first step taken, after leaving the land, was to liberate those who had been put in irons. Poor fellows! they considered themselves particularly unfortunate, and doubly punished, in not having been partakers of the pleasures which the others had enjoyed on shore. All our thoughts now tended to one point; and the hope of soon terminating a long and irksome voyage made us forget all former misunderstandings, and a few days passed in harmony and good-fellowship, until the 12th, when the weather be-

¹¹ Compare the following account with that of Franchère, particularly notes 36, 37, 40, 41.—ED.

coming squally and cold, with snow [53] and sleet, the partners wished to serve out some articles of clothing to the passengers, who now began to feel very sensibly the change of climate; but the captain considered the broaching of a bale or box as an encroachment on his authority, and a violation of ship rules, and therefore steadily opposed it. This gave rise to bad blood on both sides. The partners swore they would have such articles as they wanted; the captain swore they should touch nothing. The dispute went to such a height that pistols were resorted to, and all, from stem to stern, seemed for a moment involved in the flame of civil war; but on this, as on a former occasion, Mr. David Stuart and some others interfering brought about a reconciliation. The partners desisted; the captain kept his bales and boxes untouched; and the men froze in the icy rigging of the ship until many of them were obliged to take to their hammocks.

On the 14th, in lat. 37° N. and long. 137° W., a violent gale came on, which increased almost to a hurricane, and lasted four days without intermission, during which we were much puzzled in manœuvring the ship. She had sprung a leak, but not seriously. Sometimes we had to let her scud before the wind; sometimes she lay-to; sometimes under one sail, sometimes under another, labouring greatly; and much anxiety was felt by all on board. During this storm, almost everything on deck was carried off or dashed to pieces; all our live stock were either killed or washed overboard; and so bad was the weather, [54] first with rain, and then with sleet, hail, frost, and snow which froze on the rigging as it fell, that there was no bending either ropes or sails, and the poor sailors were harassed to death. But bad and harassing as this state of things was, it proved to be only the beginning of our

troubles, and a prelude to far greater trials. During this gale, we sustained considerable damage in the sails and rigging, besides the loss of our live stock, and other things on board.

On the 22nd of March, we came in sight of land, which, on a nearer approach, proved to be Cape Disappointment, a promontory forming the north side of the Great Oregon or Columbia River. The sight filled every heart with gladness. But the cloudy and stormy state of the weather prevented us seeing clearly the mouth of the river; being then about ten miles from land. The aspect of the coast was wild and dangerous, and for some time the ship lay-to, until the captain could satisfy himself that it was the entrance of the river; which he had no sooner done, than Mr. Fox, the first mate, was ordered to go and examine the channel on the bar. At half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Fox left the ship, having with him one sailor, a very old Frenchman, and three Canadian lads, unacquainted with sea service — two of them being carters from La Chine, and the other a Montreal barber. Mr. Fox objected to such hands; but the captain refused to change them, adding that he had none else to spare. Mr. Fox then represented the impossibility of performing the business [55] in such weather, and on such a rough sea, even with the best seamen, adding, that the waves were too high for any boat to live in. The captain, turning sharply round, said — “Mr. Fox, if you are afraid of water, you should have remained at Boston.” On this Mr. Fox immediately ordered the boat to be lowered, and the men to embark. If the crew was bad, the boat was still worse — being scarcely seaworthy, and very small. While this was going on, the partners, who were all partial to Mr. Fox, began to sympathize with him, and to intercede

with the captain to defer examining the bar till a favourable change took place in the weather. But he was deaf to entreaties, stamped, and swore that a combination was formed to frustrate all his designs. The partners' interference, therefore, only riveted him the more in his determination, and Mr. Fox was peremptorily ordered to proceed. He, seeing that the captain was immoveable, turned to the partners with tears in his eyes and said — "My uncle was drowned here not many years ago, and now I am going to lay my bones with his." He then shook hands with all around him, and bade them adieu. Stepping into the boat — "Farewell, my friends!" said he; "we will perhaps meet again in the next world." And the words were prophetic.

The moment the boat pushed off, all hands crowded in silence to take a last farewell of her. The weather was boisterous, and the sea rough, so that we often lost sight of the boat before she got 100 yards from [56] the ship; nor had she gone that far before she became utterly unmanageable, sometimes broaching broadside to the foaming surges, and at other times almost whirling round like a top, then tossing on the crest of a huge wave would sink again for a time and disappear altogether. At last she hoisted the flag; the meaning could not be mistaken; we knew it was a signal of distress. At this instant all the people crowded round the captain, and implored him to try and save the boat; but in an angry tone he ordered about ship, and we saw the ill-fated boat no more.

Mr. Fox was not only an able officer, but an experienced seaman, and a great favourite among all classes on board; and this circumstance, I fear, proved his ruin, for his uniform kindness and affability to the passengers had from the commencement of the voyage drawn down upon his

head the ill-will of his captain; and his being sent off on the present perilous and forlorn undertaking, with such awkward and inexperienced hands, whose language he did not understand, is a proof of that ill-will.

The mouth of Columbia River is remarkable for its sand-bars and high surf at all seasons, but more particularly in the spring and fall, during the equinoctial gales: these sand-bars frequently shift, the channel of course shifting along with them, which renders the passage at all times extremely dangerous. The bar, or rather the chain of sand banks, over which the huge waves and foaming breakers [57] roll so awfully, is a league broad, and extends in a white foaming sheet for many miles, both south and north of the mouth of the river, forming as it were an impracticable barrier to the entrance, and threatening with instant destruction everything that comes near it.

The river at its mouth is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles broad, confined by Cape Disappointment on the north, and Point Adams on the south; the former is a rocky cliff or promontory, rising about 500 feet above the level of the water, and covered on the top with a few scattered trees of stunted growth; the latter a low sandy point, jutting out about 300 yards into the river, directly opposite to Cape Disappointment: the deepest water is near the Cape, but the channel is both narrow and intricate. The country is low, and the impervious forests give to the surrounding coast a wild and gloomy aspect.

After the captain ordered about ship, as already stated, some angry words passed between himself and Mr. Mumford, the second officer, which ended in the latter being ordered below. After passing an anxious night, the return of day only increased the anxiety, and every mind was filled with gloomy apprehensions. In the course of this

day, Mr. Mumford resumed his duties, and the ship kept beating off and on till noon, when she cast anchor in fourteen fathoms, about a mile from the breakers; and the weather becoming calm, Mr. M'Kay, Mr. David Stuart, myself, and several others, embarking in the [58] long boat, which was well manned and armed, stood in for the shore, in hopes of being able to effect a landing. On approaching the bar, the terrific chain of breakers, which kept rolling one after another in awful succession, completely overpowered us with dread; and the fearful suction or current became so irresistibly great, that, before we were aware of it, the boat was drawn into them, and became unmanageable: at this instant, Mr. Mumford, who was at the helm, called out, "Let us turn back, and pull for your lives; pull hard, or you are all dead men". In turning round, the boat broached broadside to the surf, and was for some time in imminent danger of being engulfed or dashed to pieces; and, although every effort was made, we were for twelve minutes struggling in this perilous situation, between hope and despair, before we got clear, or the boat obeyed the oars, and yet we were still two miles from the shore; and, had it not been for the prompt and determined step taken by Mr. Mumford, the boat and every soul on board of it must have inevitably perished. Notwithstanding our narrow escape, we made a second and third attempt, but without success, and then returned to the ship. The same afternoon, Mr. Mumford was sent more to the south to seek for a channel, but to no purpose. The charts were again examined, and every preparation made for next morning.

On the 25th, early in the morning, Mr. Mumford was again ordered in another direction to go and discover [59] if possible the proper channel, and ascertain the depth of

water. After several trials, in one or two of which the boat got again entangled in the breakers, and had a very narrow escape, she at length came into $2\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms of water, and then returned; but the captain seemed to hint that Mr. Mumford had not done so much as he might have done, or in other words, he was dissatisfied; indeed, his mind was not in a state to be satisfied with anything, not even with himself; but his officers, whatever they did, were sure to displease.

The captain now called on Mr. Aikens, the third mate, and ordered him to go and sound in a more northerly direction, and if he found $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms water to hoist a flag as a signal. At three o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Aikens, together with the sailmaker, armourer, and two Sandwich Islanders, embarked in the pinnace, and proceeded to the bar. As soon as the pinnace hoisted the flag agreed upon, the ship weighed anchor and stood in for the channel; at the same time the boat, pulling back from the bar, met the ship about half a mile from the breakers, in eight fathoms, going in with a gentle sea-breeze, at the rate of three knots an hour.

As the ship and boat drew near to each other, the latter steered a little aside to be out of the ship's way, then lay upon her oars in smooth water, waiting to be taken on board, while the ship passed on within twenty yards of them in silence; nor did the people in the boat speak a single word. As soon as the [60] ship had passed, and no motion made to take the boat on board, every one appeared thunderstruck, and Mr. M'Kay was the first that spoke,—“Who,” said he, “is going to throw a rope to the boat?” No one answered; but by this time she had fallen astern, and began to pull after the ship. Every one now called out, “The boat, the boat!” The partners, in astonish-

ment, entreated the captain to take the boat on board, but he coolly replied, "I can give them no assistance." Mr. Mumford said it would not be the work of a minute. "Back a sail, throw a rope overboard," cried the partners; the answer was, "No, I will not endanger the ship." We now felt convinced that the boat and crew were devoted to destruction — no advice was given them, no assistance offered, no reasons assigned for risking so cruel a sacrifice of human life — for the place where the boat met us was entirely free from the influence of the breakers, and a long way from the bar. It is impossible, therefore, to account for the cool indifference manifested towards the fated boat and her crew, unless we suppose that the mind of the captain was so absorbed in apprehension, and perplexed with anxiety at the danger which stared him in the face, and which he was about to encounter in a few minutes, that he could not be brought to give a thought to anything else but the safety of the ship.

During this time the ship was drawing nearer and nearer to the breakers, which called our attention [61] from the boat to look out for our own safety; but she was seen for some time struggling hard to follow the ship as we entered the breakers, the sight of which was appalling. On the ship making the first plunge, every countenance looked dismay; and the sun, at the time just sinking below the horizon, seemed to say, "Prepare for your last." Mr. Mumford was now ordered to the mast-head, to point out the channel. The water decreasing from 8 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms, she struck tremendously on the second reef or shoal; and the surges breaking over her stern overwhelmed everything on deck. Every one who could, sprang aloft, and clung for life to the rigging. The waves at times broke ten feet high over her, and at other times she was in danger

of foundering: she struck again and again, and, regardless of her helm, was tossed and whirled in every direction, and became completely unmanageable. Night now began to spread an impenetrable gloom over the turbulent deep. Dark, indeed, was that dreadful night. We had got about a mile into the breakers, and not far from the rocks at the foot of the cape, against which the foaming surges wreaked their fury unceasingly. Our anxiety was still further increased by the wind dying away, and the tide still ebbing. At this instant, some one called out, "We are all lost, the ship is among the rocks." A desperate effort was then made to let go the anchors — two were thrown overboard; the sails kept flapping for some time: nor was the danger diminished by learning the fact [62] that the surf dragged ship, anchors, and all, along with it. But there is a limit to all things: hour after hour had passed, and terrific was the sight; yet our faithful bark still defied the elements, until the tide providentially beginning to flow — just at a time when it appeared as if no earthly power could save us from a watery grave — brought about our deliverance by carrying the ship along with it into Baker's Bay, snug within the Cape, where we lay in safety.

Here are two points for consideration; first, the time of sounding: and, secondly, the time chosen for entering the breakers. In respect to both, there was an unwarrantable precipitation — a manifest want of sound judgment. We made the land in the middle of a storm, the channel and coast both unknown to us, and without either pilot or guide: under such circumstances, it was evident to all that no boat could live on the water at the time, far less reach the shore; and our entering the breakers at so late an hour, the sun at the time not being fifty minutes above the horizon, the channel also being unexplored, was certainly

a premature and forlorn undertaking: but there existed such disunion — such a spirit of contradiction on board — that the only wonder is how we ever got so far. But I must now inform the reader what became of the boat.

In the morning of the 26th, Captain Thorn, Mr. M'Kay, myself, and a few men, left the ship, to take a view of the coast from the top of Cape Disappointment, to try if we could learn any tidings of the [63] boats. We had not proceeded fifty yards, when we saw Steven Weeks, the armourer, standing under the shelter of a rock, shivering and half-dead with cold. Joy for a moment filled our hearts, and running up to the poor fellow, we inquired for his comrades, but could get no satisfactory reply; we then brought him to the ship, and, after giving him some food, resumed our inquiries; but he appeared so overpowered with grief and vexation, that we could scarcely get a word from him; in short, he seemed to reproach us bitterly. "You did it purposely," said he, in great agitation; but after some time, and when we had first told him what we had suffered, he seemed to come round, as if his feelings were soothed by the recital of our dangers; and then he related his melancholy tale, in the following words:—

"After the ship passed us we pulled hard to follow her, thinking every moment you would take us on board; but when we saw her enter the breakers we considered ourselves as lost. We tried to pull back again, but in vain; for we were drawn into the breakers in spite of all we could do. We saw the ship make two or three heavy plunges; but just at this time we ourselves were struck with the boiling surf, and the boat went reeling in every direction; in an instant a heavy sea swamped her — poor Mr. Aikens and John Coles were never seen after. As soon as I got above the surface of the water, I kept tossing about at the

mercy of the waves. While in this state I saw the two Sandwich Islanders struggling [64] through the surf to get hold of the boat, and being expert swimmers they succeeded. After long struggles they got her turned upon her keel, bailed out some of the water, and recovered one of the oars. I made several attempts to get near them, but the weight of my clothes and the rough sea had almost exhausted me. I could scarcely keep myself above water, and the Owhyhees were so much occupied about the boat, that they seemed to take no notice of anything else. In vain I tried to make signs, and to call out; every effort only sank me more and more. The tide had drawn the boat by this time out to sea, and almost free of the breakers, when the two islanders saw me, now supporting myself by a floating oar, and made for me. The poor fellows tried to haul me into the boat, but their strength failed them. At last, taking hold of my clothes in their teeth, they fortunately succeeded. We then stood out to sea as night set in, and a darker one I never saw. The Owhyhees, overcome with wet and cold, began to lose hope, and their fortitude forsook them, so that they lay down despairingly in the boat, nor could I arouse them from their drowsy stupor. When I saw that I had nothing to expect from them, I set to sculling the boat myself, and yet it was with much ado I could stand on my legs. During the night one of the Indians died in despair, and the other seemed to court death, for he lost all heart, and would not utter a single word. When the tide began to flow I was roused by the sense [65] of my danger, for the sound of the breakers grew louder and louder, and I knew if I got entangled in them in my exhausted state all was lost; I, therefore, set to with might and main, as a last effort, to keep the boat out to sea, and at daylight I was within a quarter of a mile of the breakers, and about double that

distance short of the Cape. I paused for a moment, 'What is to be done?' I said to myself; 'death itself is preferable to this protracted struggle.' So, turning the head of my boat for shore, I determined to reach the land or die in the attempt. Providence favoured my resolution, the breakers seemed to aid in hurrying me out of the watery element; and the sun had scarcely risen when the boat was thrown up high and dry on the beach. I had much ado to extricate myself from her, and to drag my benumbed limbs along. On seeing myself once more on dry land, I sat down and felt a momentary relief; but this was followed by gloomy reflections. I then got into the boat again, and seeing the poor islander still alive, but insensible, I hauled him out of the boat, and with much ado carried him to the border of the wood, when covering him with leaves I left him to die. While gathering the leaves I happened to come upon a beaten path, which brought me here." Such was Weeks's melancholy story: himself and the Indian being the only survivors of the last boat, it follows that eight men in all lost their lives in entering this fatal river.

[66] In the evening the Sandwich Islander who died in the boat was interred on the beach where the boat came ashore; the other poor fellow was carried to the ship, and afterwards recovered.

On the 27th I was appointed to head a party to go in search of the boat that was lost on the 22nd; but after examining the coast for upwards of forty miles southwards, not a trace of our missing friends was discovered, nor did we ever learn any tidings of them.

We had on this occasion a specimen of Chinooke navigation. While crossing the river in an Indian canoe, on our way back to the ship, we were suddenly overtaken by a storm, and our craft was upset in the middle of the

passage. The expertness of the natives in their favourite element was here put to the test. At this time we were upwards of two miles from the shore, while eight persons unable to swim were floating in every direction; coats, hats, and everything else adrift, and all depending on the fidelity of the four Indians who undertook to carry us over; yet, notwithstanding the roughness of the water, and the wind blowing a gale at the time, these poor fellows kept swimming about like so many fishes, righted the canoe, and got us all into her again, while they themselves staid in the water, with one hand on the canoe and the other paddling. In this manner they supported themselves, tossing to and fro, till we bailed the water out of our frail craft, and got under weigh again. Here it was that [67] the Indians showed the skill and dexterity peculiar to them. The instant the canoe rose on the top of a wave, those on the windward side darted down their long paddles to the armpits in the water to prevent her from upsetting; while those on the leese side at the same moment pulled theirs up, but kept ready as soon as the wave had passed under her to thrust them down again in a similar manner, and thus by their alternate movements they kept the canoe steady, so that we got safe to shore without another upset, and with the loss of only a few articles of clothing; but we suffered severely from wet and cold.

During this time the Indians from the village which we had left, seeing our critical situation, had manned and sent off two canoes to our assistance. One of the boats from the ship was also despatched for the same purpose; but all would have proved too late had we not been fortunate enough of ourselves to weather the storm.

The Indians all the time never lost their presence of

mind. Indeed, it was supposed, from the skilful manner in which they acted afterwards, that the sordid rascals had upset us wilfully, in order to claim the merit of having saved us, and therewith a double recompense for their trip. The boat which had put off to our assistance was upset on her return to the ship; and had it not been for the two Indian canoes that followed us, its crew would have all perished.

[68] On the 4th of April the long boat was swamped off Chinooke Point, when ten persons were saved by Comecomly and his people. On this occasion, however, many articles of value were lost, so that every hour admonished us that we stepped on insecure and slippery ground. Every succeeding day was marked by some new and alarming disaster; but a few remarks will now suffice to conclude the account of our voyage, in which we sailed, according to the ship's log, 21,852 miles.

Captain Thorn was an able and expert seaman; but, unfortunately, his treatment of the people under his command was strongly tinctured with cruelty and despotism. He delighted in ruling with a rod of iron; his officers were treated with harshness, his sailors with cruelty, and every one else was regarded by him with contempt. With a jealous and peevish temper, he was easily excited; and the moment he heard the Scotch Highlanders speak to each other in the Scottish dialect, or the Canadians in the French language, he was on his high horse, making every one on board as unhappy as himself; and this brings us down to the period of our departure from the ship, a period to which we all anxiously looked forward, and the satisfaction both felt and expressed was universal, when the general order was read that all the passengers should prepare to land on the following day.

[69] CHAPTER V ¹²

Preparations for landing — Site of the new emporium of the west — Astor's representative — Hard work — Huge trees — Natives — Comecomly — Mode of felling trees — Danger — Trying scenes — Three men killed — Three wounded — Party reduced by sickness — Disaffection — Conduct of the deputy — Desertion — Mr. Astor's policy — Climate — Indian rumours — Comecomly's intrigues and policy — Trip to the cascades — Mr. M'Kay and north-west notions — Anecdote — Exploring party to the north — Several persons killed — Hostile threats of the Indians — Potatoes and other seeds planted — New building — Astoria — Departure of the ship — Dangerous situation of the whites — Great assemblage of Indians — People under arms — Blunderbuss accident — Alarming moment — Two strangers arrive — Mr. Thompson at Astoria — M'Dougall's policy — The two great functionaries.

FOR some days, much time was spent in examining both sides of the inlet, with a view of choosing a suitable place to build on. At last it was settled that the new establishment should be erected on the south side, on a small rising ground situate between Point George on the west and Tonquin Point on the east, distant twelve miles from the mouth of the inlet or bar.

[70] On the 12th of April, therefore, the whole party, consisting of thirty-three persons, all British subjects excepting three (eleven Sandwich Islanders being included in that number), left the ship and encamped on shore.

However pleasing the change, to be relieved from a long and tedious voyage, and from the tyranny of a sullen

¹² Compare Ross's description of the building of Astoria with that of *Franchère*, particularly notes 42, 44, 61.— ED.

despotic captain, the day was not one of pleasure, but of labour. The misfortunes we had met with in crossing the fatal bar had deadened all sensibility, and cast a melancholy gloom over our most sanguine expectations. In our present position, everything harmonized with our feelings, to darken our future prospects. Silent and with heavy hearts we began the toil of the day, in clearing away brush and rotten wood for a spot to encamp on.

The person who now assumed the command was the deputy-agent, Duncan M'Dougall, Esq., an old north-western, who, in the absence of Mr. Hunt, held the first place in Mr. Astor's confidence. He was a man of but ordinary capacity, with an irritable, peevish temper; the most unfit man in the world to head an expedition or command men.

From the site of the establishment, the eye could wander over a varied and interesting scene. The extensive Sound, with its rocky shores, lay in front; the breakers on the bar, rolling in wild confusion, closed the view on the west; on the east, the country as far as the Sound had a wild and varied aspect; while towards the south, the impervious and magnificent [71] forest darkened the landscape, as far as the eye could reach. The place thus selected for the emporium of the west, might challenge the whole continent to produce a spot of equal extent presenting more difficulties to the settler: studded with gigantic trees of almost incredible size, many of them measuring fifty feet in girth, and so close together, and intermingled with huge rocks, as to make it a work of no ordinary labour to level and clear the ground. With this task before us, every man, from the highest to the lowest, was armed with an axe in one hand and a gun in the other; the former for attacking the woods, the latter for defence against the savage hordes

which were constantly prowling about. In the garb of labourers, and in the sweat of our brow, we now commenced earning our bread. In this manner we all kept toiling and tearing away, from sunrise till sunset — from Monday till Saturday; and during the nights we kept watch without intermission.

On our first arrival, the natives of the place appeared very friendly towards us, owing no doubt to some trifling presents which they now and then received from us; but still, circumstances occurred occasionally which indicated treachery, and kept us always on our guard, against the more distant tribes in particular, for their attitude was invariably shy and hostile. Our ill opinion of them proved but too true in the sequel; but we had all along received every assurance of fidelity and protection from Comecomly, [72] the principal chief of the place, and in him we reposed much confidence.

The frame of a coasting vessel, to be named the *Dolly*, was brought out on board the *Tonquin*, and as soon as we had got a spot cleared, the carpenters were set to work, to fit her up for immediate service; but the smallness of her size, of only thirty tons, rendered her useless for any purpose but that of navigating the river.

It would have made a cynic smile to see this pioneer corps, composed of traders, shopkeepers, voyageurs, and Owhyhees, all ignorant alike in this new walk of life, and the most ignorant of all, the leader. Many of the party had never handled an axe before, and but few of them knew how to use a gun, but necessity, the mother of invention, soon taught us both. After placing our guns in some secure place at hand, and viewing the height and the breadth of the tree to be cut down, the party, with some labour, would erect a scaffold round it; this done, four

men — for that was the number appointed to each of those huge trees — would then mount the scaffold, and commence cutting, at the height of eight or ten feet from the ground, the handles of our axes varying, according to circumstances, from two and a half to five feet in length. At every other stroke, a look was cast round, to see that all was safe; but the least rustling among the bushes caused a general stop; more or less time was thus lost in anxious suspense. After [73] listening and looking round, the party resumed their labour, cutting and looking about alternately. In this manner the day would be spent, and often to little purpose: as night often set in before the tree begun with in the morning was half cut down. Indeed, it sometimes required two days, or more, to fell one tree; but when nearly cut through, it would be viewed fifty different times, and from as many different positions, to ascertain where it was likely to fall, and to warn parties of the danger.

There is an art in felling a tree, as well as in planting one; but unfortunately none of us had learned that art, and hours together would be spent in conjectures and discussions: one calling out that it would fall here; another, there; in short, there were as many opinions as there were individuals about it; and, at last, when all hands were assembled to witness the fall, how often were we disappointed! the tree would still stand erect, bidding defiance to our efforts, while every now and then some of the most impatient or fool-hardy would venture to jump on the scaffold and give a blow or two more. Much time was often spent in this desultory manner, before the mighty tree gave way; but it seldom came to the ground. So thick was the forest, and so close the trees together, that in its fall it would often rest its ponderous top on some other

friendly tree; sometimes a number of them would hang together, keeping us in awful suspense, and giving us double labour to extricate the one from the other, and when [74] we had so far succeeded, the removal of the monster stump was the work of days. The tearing up of the roots was equally arduous, although less dangerous: and when this last operation was got through, both tree and stump had to be blown to pieces by gunpowder before either could be removed from the spot.

Nearly two months of this laborious and incessant toil had passed, and we had scarcely yet an acre of ground cleared. In the mean time three of our men were killed by the natives, two more wounded by the falling of trees, and one had his hand blown off by gunpowder.

But the labour, however trying, we were prepared to undergo. It was against neglect and ill-treatment that our feelings revolted. The people suffered greatly from the humidity of the climate. The Sandwich Islanders, used to a dry, pure atmosphere, sank under its influence; damp fogs and sleet were frequent, and every other day was a day of rain. Such is the climate of Columbia at this season of the year, and all this time we were without tents or shelter; add to this the bad quality of our food, consisting solely of boiled fish and wild roots, without even salt, and we had to depend at all times on the success or good-will of the natives for our daily supply, which was far from being regular; so that one-half of the party, on an average, were constantly on the sick list; and on more than one occasion I have seen the whole party so reduced that scarcely [75] one could help the other, and all this chiefly owing to the conduct of Mr. Astor; first, in not sending out a medical man with the party; and, secondly, in his choice of the great pasha, M' Dougall, whom he placed at the head

of his affairs. The sick and the sound both fared alike; the necessities of both were overlooked, while he, himself, was served in state; for a good many articles of provision had been put on shore before the ship sailed.

Our hard labour by day, with the watching during night, had not only reduced our party by sickness to a mere nothing, but raised a spirit of discontent, and plots and plans were set on foot to abandon all, and cross the continent by land. This extravagant resolution was, however, overruled by the more moderate of the malcontents, yet it resulted in a party waiting on M'Dougall with the view of bettering the existing state of things, and opening his eyes to his own situation; but this produced no good effect; it rather augmented the evil: and a second deputation proved equally unsuccessful. At last four men deserted, and had proceeded eighty miles up the river when they were laid hold of by the Indians and kept in a tent; nor would the stern and crafty chief of the tribe deliver them up until he had received a ransom for them.

Yet all this could not open the eyes of M'Dougall, nor was it till he had rashly ventured to provoke all classes, that he began to see clearly that he was standing on the verge of a precipice. Everything at [76] this moment seemed at a stand; the folly and imprudence of the man in power had nearly extinguished all hopes of success. Another party of six men, headed by one of the Americans, deserted, but were brought back the third day by our friendly chief, Comecomly. We had some time ago found out that the sordid hope of gain alone attached this old and crafty chief to the whites.

The desertion of these parties, and the number confined by sickness, began now to admonish the man at the head of affairs that he had probably gone a step too far, and that

it is much easier to destroy than restore confidence. He suddenly changed for the better; tents were distributed among the sick, and more attention was paid to their diet; still there was no medical man to attend the sufferers. In this case we surely look in vain for that sagacity and forethought which Mr. Astor was thought to possess. His own interest was involved in the result, and nothing could more clearly prove his reckless indifference for the lives of his people than his not providing a medical man of some kind or other, either for his ship or his infant colony.

But feuds and petty grievances among ourselves, arising chiefly from our minds being soured by hardships, were not the only obstacles we had to contend with; our weakness and forlorn situation began to open our eyes to a sense of common danger, and fear began to exercise its influence, so that unanimity alone could enable us to oppose a [77] common enemy. Rumours from all quarters and suspicious appearances had raised an alarm that the distant tribes were forming some dark design of cutting us off, and reports countenancing this belief were daily brought us by Comecomly and his people. We now established a regular patrol of six men, which diminished our labouring body to a mere nothing, but under such circumstances self-preservation obliged us to adopt every precaution. Comecomly was sent for, and questioned on the occasion; but all we could learn from him was, that the hostile tribes were a very bad people, and ill-disposed towards the whites, and this we had no reason to disbelieve, because Comecomly and his people were the only Indians who had regularly traded with us; consequently, we were anxious to ascertain the cause of this rupture between us and the distant tribes.

We had now begun to pick up a few words of the

language, and were given to understand that the crafty Chinookes, like the cat in the fable, had fomented and nourished the misunderstanding between us and the distant tribes; that they had artfully impressed the latter with the idea that we were hostile towards them, and, by the same crafty policy, assuring us of their enmity. By this stratagem, they kept them from coming near us — thereby monopolizing all the trade themselves, by buying up all the furs, and selling them again to us at double their first cost. As soon, however, as we were convinced of the [78] intrigues of old Comecomly and his people, we set about counteracting them. For this purpose, several parties were sent up the country in different directions, to do away with the unfavourable impressions, and to convince the natives, far and near, of our friendly intentions to all.

On the 2nd of May, Mr. M'Kay, accompanied by Mr. Robert Stuart, in a small canoe, and four men, proceeded up the river to sound the dispositions of the Indians, and to assure them of our good-will towards them; and likewise to gain some information respecting the surrounding country and state of the water. Having proceeded as far as the cascades, a distance of 180 miles, made some presents to the principal men, and convinced all the different tribes they saw of the friendly intentions of the whites, the party returned again at the end of twelve days, reporting most favourably of both natives and country.

Mr. M'Kay had figured in the north-west as an Indian trader — was very active, but whimsical and eccentric. An anecdote will picture the man:— It is a habit among the grandees of the Indian trade to have May-poles with their names inscribed thereon on conspicuous places, not to dance round, but merely to denote that such a person

passed there on such a day, or to commemorate some event. For this purpose, the tallest tree on the highest ground is generally selected, and all the branches are stripped off excepting a small tuft at the top.

On Mr. M'Kay's return from his reconnoitring [79] expedition up the river, he ordered one of his men to climb a lofty tree and dress it for a May-pole. The man very willingly undertook the job, expecting, as usual on these occasions, to get a dram; but he had no sooner reached the top than his master, through love of mischief, lighting a fire at the bottom, set the tree in a blaze. The poor fellow was instantly enveloped in a cloud of smoke, and called out for mercy. Water was dashed on the tree; but this only increased the danger by augmenting the smoke, for the fire ran up the bark of the gummy pine like gunpowder, and was soon beyond our reach, so that all hope of saving the man's life was at an end. Descending a little, however, he leaped, in despair, on to a branch of another tree, which fortunately offered him a chance of safety; and there he hung between earth and heaven, like a squirrel on a twig, till another man, at no small risk, got up and rescued him from his perilous situation.

Soon after M'Kay's return from the cascades, Mr. Robert Stuart, myself, and five men, proceeded on an excursion to the north. It was here that we became fully acquainted with the dangerous effects of the Chinooke policy. The Indians, on our approach, flew to arms, and made signs for us to keep at a distance. We halted, and tried to moderate their ferocity by a display of presents; but they would not listen to us. Their forces were collecting fast; every moment's delay increased our danger; and, fearful of being surrounded, we were deliberating on a hasty [80] retreat, when, fortunately, a friendly Indian

happened to arrive, by means of whom we got into conversation with the others; and the result was, that they explained and cleared up the matter to our utmost satisfaction, and showed us several piles of furs laid up in store waiting the Chinooke traders; but when they saw and compared the prices we paid with that which the Chinookes were in the habit of giving them, they put their hands on their mouths in astonishment, and strongly urged us to return again, saying they would never more trade with the one-eyed chief. We got back again to the establishment on the fifteenth day; yet, notwithstanding the apparent friendly impression we had made on these sordid and treacherous rogues, we had a very narrow escape in crossing one of the rivers — for a party of them had got before us, taken up a strong position on the opposite bank, and disputed the passage; but, by a little manœuvring, we defeated their intentions. Soon afterwards, however, one of our men was killed by them; and on another occasion, a Mr. M'Kenzie and his whole party, consisting of eight men, were cut to pieces by them.

But we shall now return, for a moment, to notice what was going on at the establishment. On the fourth day after our landing, we planted some potatoes and sowed a few garden seeds, and on the 16th of May we laid the foundations of our first building; but in order to procure suitable timber for the purpose, we had to go back some distance — the wood on [81] the site being so large and unmanageable; and for want of cattle to haul it, we had to carry it on our shoulders, or drag it along the ground — a task of no ordinary difficulty. For this purpose, eight men were harnessed, and they conveyed in six days all the timber required for a building or store of sixty feet long by twenty-six broad. On the 18th, as soon as the foundation

was completed, the establishment was named Astoria, in honour of Astor, the projector of the enterprise.

The *Tonquin*, in the prosecution of her voyage along the coast, left Astoria on the 1st of June, and crossed the bar on the 5th, when we saw her for the last time. The captain had landed but a small part of the cargo, intending on his return to put the rest on shore; but with his ship all was lost, and Astoria, in consequence, was left almost destitute of the necessary articles of trade. Mr. M'Kay, as supercargo, went on board with Mr. Lewis and two Canadians; but Mr. Mumford, the second officer, was dismissed and sent on shore. On M'Kay's embarking, he called me aside, and taking me by the hand recommended his son to my care; then adding — "You see," said he, "how unfortunate we are: the captain, in one of his frantic fits, has now discharged the only officer on board," alluding to Mr. Mumford. "If you ever see us safe back, it will be a miracle." So saying, we parted, and he slept on board. The departure of the ship unfolded to us the danger of our situation. It is allowed by all experienced fur-traders, [82] that in forming an establishment among savages, the first consideration is safety; and although we had been aware that the ship's stay protected the embryo settlement, and that her departure would proclaim to all the hostile tribes around our defenceless state, yet was there any preparation made for the event?—None. When the ship left us, not a gun was mounted; not a palisade raised; nor the least precaution taken to secure either life or property. Such was the character of the man whom Mr. Astor placed at the head of his affairs.

The Indians from all quarters now began to assemble in such swarms, that we had to relinquish all labour, and think only of defence. We naturally put the worst con-

struction on so formidable an array of savages in arms. On the other hand, the arrival of the different tribes might have been produced by the steps we had lately taken in regard to the Chinooke policy, of assuring them of our friendly intentions; but the departure of the ship had left us so powerless and weak, that we could not help suspecting their intentions; and our suspicion was strengthened by the absence of Comecomly and his people, who had avoided coming near us ever since the arrival of the strangers. We had frequently sent for the crafty chief, but he as frequently disappointed us, until he was given to understand that a large present would be the reward of his good offices in the present emergency, for we had reason to believe that now, as on former occasions, he was very [83] busy in labouring to conceal the truth, or, in other words, sowing the seeds of alienation, in order that he and his people might as usual engross all the foreign trade themselves.

At length Comecomly arrived; necessity compelled us to dissemble our opinion of his conduct: he was received with open arms, behaved well, and rendered us essential services. We now opened a friendly intercourse with the strangers; traded with each tribe in turn; made some presents; and they left us, apparently well satisfied with the friendly reception they had experienced, while we were no less agreeably relieved by their departure. The guard was reduced, and the people set to work as usual. Comecomly and his two sons received each a suit of chief's clothing; nor did they omit to insinuate, that to their influence and good offices we not only owed our safety, but were indebted for all the furs obtained from our distant visitors.

Some days afterwards, however, an awkward circum-

stance took place, which threatened to involve us again in serious troubles. While in the act of removing some leaf tobacco, an Indian was detected in the act of pilfering — for they are notorious thieves; the tobacco was taken from him, and he was reprimanded for his conduct. “What!” said the fellow, indignantly, “do you say I am a thief?” at the same time drawing his bow. M’Dougall then ordered him to be hand-cuffed and imprisoned, with a sentinel over him, in one of the deep but open pits, out of [84] which a large tree had been dug. In the night, however, he contrived to effect his escape, carrying off not only his irons, but the sentinel’s gun along with him. Next day Comecomly, accompanied by a large retinue, arrived at Astoria; the great mufti, as usual, was ushered into the tent of state. Here M’Dougall was showing the Chinooke Tye-yea, among other things, the properties of a blunderbuss, and in so doing made a woful blunder, for off went the piece unexpectedly, shattering a corner of his majesty’s robe. The report and the dense smoke issuing from the place proclaimed danger, and the affrighted chief, darting out of the tent without his robe, cap, or gun, began calling to his people, who in a moment, giving the war-whoop and arming themselves, fiercely menaced the whites with destruction. In the mean time one of our sentinels, hearing the report of the gun, and seeing the tent enveloped in a cloud of smoke, and the chief running off at full speed from it, supposed that he had murdered M’Dougall, and fired after him, calling out treason! murder! at the sound of which our people flew to arms; and every man, with his finger on the trigger of his gun, advanced to the spot. M’Dougall and myself, who fortunately knew the circumstances, hastened to run in between the hostile ranks, making signs of peace, and

after a tumultuous moment, the mysterious affair was explained without bloodshed; yet long afterwards the chief retained some suspicion that a plot had been formed against his life.

[85] Among the many visitors who every now and then presented themselves, were two strange Indians, in the character of man and wife, from the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains, and who may probably figure in our narrative hereafter. The husband, named Ko-come-ne-pe-ca, was a very shrewd and intelligent Indian, who addressed us in the Algonquin language, and gave us much information respecting the interior of the country.

On the 15th of July, we were rather surprised at the unexpected arrival of a north-west proprietor at Astoria, and still more so at the free and cordial reception given to an opponent. Mr. Thompson, northwest-like, came dashing down the Columbia in a light canoe, manned with eight Iroquois and an interpreter, chiefly men from the vicinity of Montreal. M'Dougall received him like a brother; nothing was too good for Mr. Thompson; he had access everywhere; saw and examined everything; and whatever he asked for he got, as if he had been one of ourselves. Mr. Thompson at once recognised the two strange Indians, and gave us to understand that they were both females. His own visit had evidently no other object but to discourage us — a manœuvre of the North-West policy to extend their own trade at the expense of ours; but he failed. The dangers and difficulties, which he took great pains to paint in their worst colours, did not deter us. He forgot that in speaking to us, he was speaking to north-westerns — men as experienced and as cunning as himself. The [86] North-West had penetrated to the west side of the mountains as early as 1804, and had

in 1811 two or three small posts on the waters of the Columbia, exclusive of the New Caledonia quarter. Every one knew this, and knowing it, how could we account for the more than warm and unreserved welcome Mr. Thompson met with from Astor's representative. Unless, as some thought at the time, M'Dougall was trying to pay Mr. Thompson back with his own coin, by putting on a fair face, so as to dupe him into an avowal of his real object. This is more than probable, for in point of acuteness, duplicity, and diplomatic craft, they were perhaps well matched.

[87] CHAPTER VI

The ten tribes — Number of warriors — Their laws — Chief's arbitrary power — Dress, games, and arms of the men — Dress of the women, slaves, and basket-making — Lewdness of the women — Food, ornaments — The salmon — Superstitious customs — Sturgeon — Fathom-fish — Roots and berries — Circulating medium — Econé, or Good Spirit — Ecutoch, or Bad Spirit — Etaminua, or priests — Keelalles, or doctors — War canoes — Diseases — Winter houses — Temporary, or Summer houses — Fleas — Practice of flattening the head — Colonization — Wallamitte — Cowlitz, or Puget's Sound — Conclusion.

ALL the Indian tribes inhabiting the country about the mouth of the Columbia, and for a hundred miles round, may be classed in the following manner:— 1. Chinooks;— 2. Clatsops;— 3. Cathlamux;— 4. Wakiacums;— 5. Wacalamus;— 6. Cattleputles;— 7. Clatscanias;— 8. Killimux;— 9. Moltnomas;— and, 10. Chickelis; amounting collectively to about 2,000 warriors.¹³ But they are a

¹³ The tribes of the Pacific coast were numerous, and their classification varies. For the Chinook, Clatsop, Wakiacum, Cathlapotle (Cattleputles), Tillamook (Killamux), Multnomah, and Chehalis (Chickelis), see Franchère,

commercial rather than a warlike people. Traffic in slaves and furs is their occupation. They are said to be decreasing in numbers. All these tribes appear to be descended from the same stock, live in rather friendly intercourse [88] with, and resemble one another in language, dress, and habits. Their origin, like that of the other aborigines of the continent, is involved in fable, although they pretend to be derived from the musk-rat. Polygamy is common among them, and a man may have as many wives as he pleases, but he is bound to maintain his own children. In war, every man belonging to the tribe is bound to follow his chief; and a coward is often punished with death. All property is sacred in the eye of the law, nor can any one touch it excepting the principal chief, or head Tye-yea, who is above the law, or rather he possesses an arbitrary power without any positive check, so that if he conceive a liking to anything belonging to his subjects, be it a wife or a daughter, he can take it without infringing the law; but he must, nevertheless, pay for what he takes — and their laws assign a nominal value to property of every kind.

The Chinooks are crafty and intriguing, and have probably learned the arts of cheating, flattery, and dissimulation in the course of their traffic with the coasting traders: for, on our first arrival among them, we found guns, kettles, and various other articles of foreign manufacture in their possession, and they were up to all the shifts of bargaining. Nor are they less ingenious than inquisitive; the art they display in the making of canoes, of

notes 39, 40, 45, 52, 53, 65, 67. The other tribes cannot positively be identified, except the Katlamat (Cathlamux), who were a branch of the Upper Chinook, giving name to the town of Cathlamet, Washington. On the subject of the native races of this section, see Thwaites, *Original Journals of Lewis and Clark Expedition* (New York, 1904), under Scientific Data: Ethnology.—ED.

pagods, and of fishing-tackle, and other useful instruments, deserves commendation. They show much skill in carved [89] work, which they finish with the most delicate polish.

The men are generally stout, muscular, and strong, but not tall, and have nothing ferocious in their countenances. Their dress invariably consists of a loose garment, made of the skin of the wood-rat, neatly sewed together and painted, which they wrap round the body like a blanket; nor does the hardy savage, though constantly rustling through the woods, ever wear a shirt, leggings, or shoes. The chief's robe is made of sea-otter skin and other valuable furs. All classes wear the cheapool, or hat, which is made of a tough strong kind of grass, and is of so close a texture as to be water-proof. The crown is of a conic form, terminating generally in a point at the top, and the rim so very broad as to screen the shoulders from the rain. The cheapool is chequered or diversified with the rude figures of different animals, particularly the dog and deer, not painted, but ingeniously interwoven.¹⁴ Their war garments are of two kinds, one is termed clemal, of elk-skin, dressed and worked to the thickness of nearly half an inch, and arrow-proof. The clemal nearly covers the whole body, with an opening left on the right side to allow the arm free action in combat. The other is a kind of vest, made of small round sticks of the size and shape of arrows, twelve inches long: they are laid side to side, and then sewed together, and fixed on the body like a waistcoat. This is arrow-proof also. They carry a circular [90] shield, about eighteen inches in diameter, which is likewise made of the elk-skin; but in addition

¹⁴ For information concerning the wood-rat, sea-otter, and cheapool, see Franchère, notes 128-130.—ED.

to its thickness it is hardened by fire and painted, and is not only arrow-proof, but proof against the knife and the tomahawk also. Their implements of warfare are guns, bows and arrows, knife, bludgeon, and tomahawk, all of which they use with great dexterity. A Chinooke Indian armed *cap-à-pie* is a most unsightly and hideous being.

When not employed either in war or hunting, the men generally spend their time in gambling. The chief game, *chal-e-chal*, at which they stake their most valuable property, is played by six persons, with ten circular palettes of polished wood, in size and shape resembling dollars. A mat three feet broad and six feet long is spread on the ground, and the articles at stake laid at one end, then the parties seat themselves, three on each side of the mat, facing one another; this done, one of the players takes up the ten palettes, shuffling and shifting them in his hands, when at a signal given he separates them in his two fists, and throws them out on the mat towards his opponent, and according as the palettes roll, slide, or lie on the mat when thrown, the party wins or loses. This he does three times successively. In this manner each tries his skill in turn, till one of the parties wins. Whole days and nights are spent in this game without ceasing, and the Indians seldom grumble or repine even should they lose all that they possess. During the [91] game the players keep chanting a loud and sonorous tune, accompanying the different gestures of the body just as the voyageurs keep time to the paddle.

Having noticed some of the characteristic manners and customs of the men, I shall now indulge the reader's curiosity with a few remarks on the habits and accomplishments of the fair sex. The women are generally of the middle size, but very stout and flabby, with short

necks and shapeless limbs; yet they are well-featured, with something of a smile on the countenance, fair complexion, light hair, and prominent eyes. In addition to the rat-garment used by the men, the women wear a kind of fringed petticoat suspended from the waist down to the knees, made of the inner rind of the cedar bark, and twisted into threads, which hang loose like a weaver's thrums, and keep flapping and twisting about with every motion of the body, giving them a waddle or duck gait. This garment might deserve praise for its simplicity, or rather for its oddity, but it does not screen nature from the prying eye; yet it is remarkably convenient on many occasions. In a calm the sails lie close to the mast, metaphorically speaking, but when the wind blows the bare poles are seen.

Instead of the cedar petticoat, the women of some tribes prefer a breech cloth, similar to the pow of the Owhyhee females, and is nothing more than a piece of dressed deer-skin, six inches broad and four feet long, which, after passing between the thighs, [92] is tied round the waist. Words can hardly express the disgusting unsightliness of this singular female dress. The women, when not employed in their domestic labour, are generally occupied in curing fish, collecting roots, and making mats and baskets; the latter, of various sizes and different shapes, are made of the roots of certain shrubs, which are flexible and strong, and they are capable of containing any liquid. In this branch of industry they excel among Indian tribes. The neatness and good taste displayed in the Chinooke baskets are peculiar to that article, which is eagerly sought after as a curiosity.

The women here are not generally subject to that drudgery common among most other Indian tribes.

Slaves do all the laborious work; and a Chinooke matron is constantly attended by two, three, or more slaves, who are on all occasions obsequious to her will. In trade and barter the women are as actively employed as the men, and it is as common to see the wife, followed by a train of slaves, trading at the factory, as her husband. Slaves are the fruits of war and of trade among the tribes along the sea-coast far to the north, and are regularly bought and sold in the same manner as any other article of property; but I never knew a single instance of a Chinooke, or one of the neighbouring tribes, ever selling his wife, or daughter, or any other member of his family.

Chastity is not considered a virtue by the Chinooke [93] women, and their amorous propensities know no bounds. All classes, from the highest to the lowest, indulge in coarse sensuality and shameless profligacy. Even the chief would boast of obtaining a paltry toy or trifle in return for the prostitution of his virgin daughter.

The females are excessively fond of singing and adorning their persons with the fantastic trinkets peculiar to savages; and on these occasions the slaves are generally rigged out the best, in order to attract attention and procure admirers. All classes marry very young; and every woman, whether free born or a slave, is purchased by her husband.

Children are suckled at the breast till their second or third year, and the mother, in consequence, becomes an old hag at the age of thirty-five.

The women have also their own amusements. Their chief game, called omintook, is played by two only, with four beaver teeth, curiously marked and numbered on one side, which they throw like dice. The two women being seated on the ground, face to face, like the men at chal-e-