

men to leave the place: they seemed at the instant, desirous to wreak vengeance upon him for his intrusion. His retreat was precipitate, as he well knew the consequences of delay and the danger of disturbing the medicine-man during his incantations. If the patient should die, they invariably impute the fatal result to the disturbance, and ascribe the death to the intruder. This invariably leads to his being put to death, by the nearest of kin, who deems this act a duty. Plumondon said, that he was not at all surprised at the fear the young chief showed; for he had himself been placed in similar circumstances a short time before, when his father had died. The medicine-man imputed his death to a chief of the Klackatacks, whom this young chief shortly afterwards killed. Occurrences of this description have led to long and bloody wars among the tribes; and the only way of settling and overcoming this difficulty, is by paying a valuation for the deceased. I understood that from five to twenty blankets, according to rank, and the estimation in which the deceased was held, is considered a proper indemnity.

We encamped a few miles above Oak Point, on the prairie, in a grove of trees. The next morning was beautiful, and the birds were singing blithely around us. Our Indians were as merry as the birds. There was an entire absence of game birds, though a great number of singing ones were seen.

We passed during the day Coffin Rock, which is about seven miles above the Mount Coffin before spoken of. It is of small dimensions, and has been the burial-place of chiefs, who are usually interred in canoes, which are provided with all the necessary appendages for their journey to the land of spirits and their hunting-grounds. The mode of disposing of their dead seems to have been different on the south side of the Columbia. On the Cowlitz we observed many canoes near the bank of the river, supported between four trees: these contain the remains of their dead, are painted in a variety of figures, and have gifts from their friends hung around them. I was told that this is not only done at the time of their burial, but frequently for several months after. All the sepulchres of this description that I saw were going to decay.

All the Indians have a great regard for these places of interment, and consider them as being sacred.

Shortly after we passed this point, we met a canoe, and one of our Indians was informed that his child was dead. We made a stop soon after, and I observed that the man scarified himself on the leg in several places, until he bled profusely; this done, he lighted his pipe, and seemed to smoke for consolation. He kept himself for that evening