

deserts existing in Upper California. This wind, or simoon, during the summer, is held in great dread in this part of the country, for it is of a burning character that is quite overpowering. It generally comes from the southwest. In consequence of this feature of the climate, there is very little vegetation near the fort, not only on account of the heat and dryness, but owing to the vast clouds of drifting sand, which are frequently so great as to darken the sky. In summer it blows here constantly, and at night the wind generally amounts to a gale. Mr. Drayton represents his situation in the northeast bastion of the fort as quite uncomfortable, from the fear of its being blown down.

The Indian mode of taking salmon was witnessed at this place. It consists in the erection of a fish-weir of basket-work, supported by poles. This is placed across the stream, in the form of an acute angle. This barrier dams the water sufficiently to create a little fall. The salmon swim up the river at night, and when they reach the barrier, they jump over the low side, which is down stream, but are unable to leap the higher one. A little before daylight, the Indians spread their nets, carefully avoiding to disturb the fish about the weir, and take all those that have been ensnared. These usually amount to about twenty-five.

Small parties of the Cayuse, Wallawallas, and Nez Percés, were now returning from the Grande Ronde. They occupied about thirty lodges, made of poles, mats, and skins, bought from the Shoshones. The wood-cut of these Indians' lodges will be found at the end of the chapter.

During the week, the Columbia had fallen ten feet. It is here one thousand yards wide, and the altitude of Fort Wallawalla above the sea is twelve hundred and eighty-six feet.

The proximity of these Indians afforded Mr. Drayton an opportunity of observing them, and having an Indian boy with him, who understood both their language and English, he had no difficulty in communicating with them.

The chief of the Wallawallas, who is called Puipui-Marmax (Yellow-Bird) and the Nez Percé chief Touwatui, (or Young Chief,) seemed intelligent and friendly, but the white residents consider them as great rogues. They were going to the Shaste country to trade for blankets, powder and ball, together with trinkets and beads, in exchange for their horses and beaver-skins.

The Company, and the settlers of the Willamette, refuse to trade either powder or ball in this country, and it is but a short time since the Indians have been able to obtain any. The reason assigned by the Company and residents for this restriction is, that the natives