

of these was to visit the primeval forest of pines in the rear of Astoria, a sight well worth seeing. Mr. Drayton took a camera lucida drawing of one of the largest trees, which the opposite plate is engraved from. It conveys a good idea of the thick growth of the trees, and is quite characteristic of this forest. The soil on which this timber grows is rich and fertile, but the obstacles to the agriculturist are almost insuperable. The largest tree of the sketch was thirty-nine feet six inches in circumference, eight feet above the ground, and had a bark eleven inches thick. The height could not be ascertained, but it was thought to be upwards of two hundred and fifty feet, and the tree was perfectly straight.

It was the season of the fishery when the Peacock was wrecked, and the Kilamukes, Clatsops, and Chinooks, were collected in the neighbourhood. Many of these came with their families, and took up their abode near Astoria; for it costs them little trouble to move all their worldly goods. They generally had for sale salmon, venison, sturgeon, moc-casins, and mats.

When the crew first landed, eight or ten salmon might be bought for a cotton shirt, or its value in red or green baize; but the Indians soon found that higher prices might be obtained for the asking, and before our departure from the Columbia river, the price was enhanced one-half.

The vicious propensities of the Indians were seen here, as they appear around all the posts of the Hudson Bay Company, or where strangers are encamped: gambling is the vice to which they are most prone. Both sexes are equally filthy, and I am inclined to believe will continue so; for their habits are inveterate, and from all the accounts I could gather from different sources, there is reason to believe that they have not improved or been benefited by their constant intercourse with the whites, except in a very few cases. It is indeed probable that the whole race will be extinguished ere long, from the natural effects of their mode of life, even if no pestilential disease should come among them to sweep them off in a single season.

I saw more of their gambling here, and the lengths to which they carry it, than in any other place, in consequence of having occasion to come oftener in contact with them. The game most practised was played by one of them concealing two small sticks in the hand so adroitly as to elude scrutiny, while the others guessed which hand contained them. Two parties play at this, sitting upon different sides of a large board; and whilst the concealment of the stick is going on, they keep up a kind of chaunt and beating with the sticks, to produce confusion and noise, in order to distract the attention of the players. The air they sing is—