

they attempted it, the guide and his horse were nearly lost. To swim the river was equally impracticable, in the weak and worn-out state of their animals. They therefore proceeded down its bank, looking for a ford. On their way, Inass killed a wild cow, one of a herd of ten. It is said that the wild cattle, which have originated from the animals that have escaped from the herds passing through the country to Oregon, are increasing very fast.

They encamped in a beautiful oak grove, near the junction of the Feather river with the Sacramento. The two rivers are of about the same size, being each seventy yards wide. The waters of the Feather are clear, and in many places deep; the banks are, as usual, lined with sycamore, cotton-wood, and oak, and were at this time about twenty-five feet above the stream. It appears to be navigable for boats. The party succeeded in fording it on the 18th, within two miles of the junction. Near the ford, the Indians had an extensive burial-ground, marked by a vast number of skulls and bones, that lie scattered around in all directions, and are said to be all that remains of a once powerful tribe, that has been swept off by disease.

They then proceeded on to Captain Suter's, where they arrived the next day.

The officers appear to have entered this valley with a high idea of its fruitfulness, and with the expectation of finding the soil abounding with every thing that could make it desirable for the abode of the agriculturist, and susceptible of producing all that can add to the comfort or convenience of man. It is not surprising that they should have been sadly disappointed, when they beheld a large part of it barren, and destitute even of pasturage, while that which is fertile is liable to be annually overflowed. The high prairie is equally gravelly and unfertile. Yet it is necessary to say there is a sufficient quantity of good soil to make it a valuable agricultural country, and that it would be capable of affording subsistence to a large number of inhabitants, more, however, from the extraordinary fertility of these grounds than from their extent.

After leaving Captain Suter's, or New Helvetia, the party divided. The detachment under Lieutenant Emmons, with Messrs. Dana, Agate, Colvocoressis, and Dr. Whittle, embarked in the Vincennes' launch, which met them a short distance below that place, and reached San Francisco at eight o'clock p. m. on the 24th.

The other detachment, consisting of Messrs. Eld, Peale, Rich, Brackenridge, and the sergeant, with some of the men, went by land. I cannot avoid again returning my thanks to Captain Suter, for his kindness to this party. All the officers spoke most particularly of the