

Oregon, is unknown here. The universal disease is said gradually to be finding its way among them, though we noticed no marks of it. A more intimate knowledge of their languages would probably discover many curious observances which have escaped observation. At some of their dances, for instance, we were told they avoid particular articles of food, even fowls and eggs. The flesh of the grizzly bear, few of them will eat at all. It is said that they believe the spirits of the dead enter them, and a story was related to us of their begging the life of a wrinkled-faced old she grizzly bear, as the recipient of some particular grandam's soul, whom they fancied it resembled. Parker, who was our informant, stated that an Indian wife he once had, used to speak of a god called *Big-head*, and when it thundered said that he was angry. Most of them, however, who have any faith, worship "Pooyah," (the Puys of the Spaniards.) One custom which had been noticed, was that of crying together night and morning, as was supposed for the dead, even after the lapse of some years. This may however be the same ceremony alluded to above as existing on Clear Lake. The wilder of these tribes hunt, but do not depend on game for subsistence. On great hunts they make brush fences of some extent with intervals containing snares, and drive the deer into them. Sometimes also they creep upon and kill them with arrows. Their principal food consists of acorns, roots and pinolé. Fish are taken in weirs, the salmon ascending far up Russian river.

*Saturday, Aug. 23d.*— It was decided to send the four wagons we had brought with us, back to Sonoma, although it was possible to carry them somewhat further. Indeed an attempt had previously been made to take a train through to Humboldt Bay; and it actually proceeded as far as the main Eel river, where the last of them was abandoned. The trail followed the river for a couple of miles, when it diverged, passing up a narrow lateral valley. About six miles from camp we crossed a range of low hills, and again reached the main valley, which here widened out into a handsome plain. A couple of miles beyond, we reached the last house on the river, that of George Parker Armstrong, or, as he is erroneously called, "John Parker," to whom reference has already been made. The house was a small building of logs, or rather poles filled in with clay, and thatched with tulé. Its furniture was somewhat incongruous; for upon the earthen floor and beside a bulls' hide partition, stood huge china jars, camphor trunks, and lacquered ware in abundance, the relics of some vessel that had been wrecked on the coast during last spring. Parker, or Armstrong, was formerly a man-of-war's man in Captain Belcher's squadron, which he left during the exploration of this coast, some fourteen years ago, since when he had wandered about in California, and recently posted himself here in advance of the settlements. Near the house stood the rancheria of the Yukai band, with whom we had treated below. Three Indians had been implicated in the Clear Lake murder, and were accordingly



chastised by Captain Lyons on his return from Clear Lake, from which place he reached Russian river by a trail leading in here.

The valley at Parker's is some five miles in width by eight or ten long, but it is not as fertile as at Félix's. Above here the river during the dry season runs chiefly under the sand, and water is only to be obtained in occasional pools. We halted for the night at Lyons's encampment, having made between fourteen and fifteen miles. About a mile above, the east fork of Russian river comes in, after a winding course through the mountains. Upon it lies the valley inhabited by the Shanel-kayas and others before spoken of.

*Sunday, Aug. 24th.* — To obtain better grass we passed up the river for about six miles, finding the bottom narrow and worthless. Crossing the now dry bed of the stream, we sought for a camp on the right bank, intending to make a short march, as we desired the next day to reach the head of Eel river. Finding no water, however, we turned off to the right and halted in a small prairie, upon a spring branch. Several deer were killed near camp, but we were all surfeited with venison, and preferred beef. We saw during our march to-day a number of pines and firs, with the usual growth of mansanita and madroña. The latter is a gigantic rhododendron, which occasionally attains a diameter of two or three feet at the butt. It is a very ornamental tree; the leaves being evergreen, and of a bright color, while the bark, which scales off annually like that of the sycamore, is red. The wood is valuable for several purposes, being very compact and fine-grained. It is much used for saddle-trees. In our camp were several large bay trees, which filled the air with an odor too strong to be agreeable. This, which is also called the wild olive, bears a nut of the size of a hazel-nut, covered with a thick green rind, and is excessively oily. The Indians use it where it abounds, as a favorite article of food; roasting it, however, first. It should be mentioned that we were joined at Félix's by Mr. Thomas Sebring, one of the first party that traversed the route between here and Humboldt bay, and who now acted as our guide.

*Monday, Aug. 25th.* — We crossed the east fork of the river, and thence, by a high and steep ascent, gained the divide between that and the west fork; keeping, however, along the left side of the range, and looking down upon the valley of the latter. This is apparently narrow and broken, but is said to contain some good land and is well wooded. Water, however, is scarce during the summer. From these hills we could look back to a great distance, the peak at the entrance of the cañon below Félix's standing up distinctly, with a back-ground of mountains, part of the Coast range, the continuation of which bounded on the other side the valley to our left. Near us, one point formed a very noticeable landmark, resembling, as it did in many respects, the basaltic formations on the upper Columbia. We found on our route the