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The Far West, and Its Native Inhabitants

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THE FAR WEST,

AND ITS NATIVE INHABITANTS.*

The region thus named, has receded from the view of dwellers near the Atlantic, as Will-o'-the-wisp, or the horizon does, before the advancing traveller. Men of thirty five years old can remember, when central Kentucky was the 'Far West.' Then, the shores of the Mississippi became so: then, the country some fifty or a hundred miles towards the interior of Missouri: then, successively, the Osage, and Kansas, and Yellow-stone regions. But now, nothing short of the vast and diversified territories west of the Rocky Mountains, answers to that expressive term. There, stopped by the Pacific ocean, the Far West must perforce cease its flight; or, should it essay a passage yet further, and perch upon the islands in that broadest expanse of waters, it will encounter the 'Far East,' a long prior occupant of them.

* The paper which follows, relates mainly to Washington Irving's late work, "*The Rocky Mountains*, or *Scenes, Incidents, and Adventures in the Far West:* digested from the journal of Captain B. L. E. Bonneville, U. S. A., and illustrated from various other sources." 2 vols. 12mo.

Of all entertaining and intelligent explorers of the present "Far West," namely, the Rocky Mountains, and the regions beyond,—commend us to Captain Bonneville, of the United States Army; especially, with Geoffry Crayon to sketch the history of his travels for him. Having been deeply interested by hearing the Captain recite the incidents and adventures of several years spent by him in a most romantic and spirit-stirring exploration of that region, Mr. Irving (nothing loth, it may be conjectured) took upon him the task of reducing those written and oral narratives to an attractive form. Adding to these, much gathered elsewhere, he produced the two volumes mentioned in our note.

Captain Bonneville went, with the sanction of the United States' government; but all that it gave him was a poor leave of absence from his military duties, from August, 1831, till October, 1833; the whole enterprise to be at his own cost. With the object of exploring the country, he combined that of trapping beaver and shooting buffalo: and such were the dangers and difficulties in prospect, from the distance and character of the region to be traversed, the jealousy of rival hunting companies (English and American), and the hostility of Savage tribes; that a strong corps, well armed, equipped, and provisioned, was indispensable. Captain B. was so successful in his preparations, as to set out early in May, 1832, from Fort Osage, on the Missouri, with one hundred and ten stout and active men; many of them expert hunters. Instead of pack-horses, usually employed in such journeys, twenty wagons carried the baggage. The advantages of this plan were almost from the first counterbalanced by the necessity it produced, of bridging, or digging roads, over innumerable deep ravines cut through the prairies by winter torrents: and soon after attaining the high, rugged tract which may be regarded as the base of the Rocky Mountains, the dryness of the atmosphere so contracted and loosened the joints of the wheels, while the ground became so impracticable for wagons, that they were necessarily thrown aside. Our adventurers, from near the mouth of the Kansas River, struck off due West; instead of ascending the Missouri, which would have led them more northwardly. Their journeyings, almost entirely over vast plains more or less undulating, though constantly rising towards the west; sometimes sterile, sometimes rich, and generally destitute of tree or shrub; brought them, on the 2d of June, to the Nebraska, or Platte River, far above its junction with the Missouri. On the 11th, they reached the fork of the Nebraska; one of its branches coming from the south-west, near the head waters of the Arkansas, the other from the west, where lay the Rocky Mountains. Up this latter they resolved to go. Still ascending the southern prong however for two days, to find a practicable crossing place, they ferried their goods over it (where it was six hundred yards wide) in extempore boats, made by covering the wagon bodies with buffalo hides, besmeared with a compound of tallow and ashes. Thence they passed, over high-rolling prairies, swarming with buffaloes, to the north fork, nine miles distant. On the 17th, they reached a small but beautiful grove, where they heard, with inexpressible delight, the first notes of singing birds that had greeted them since they left Missouri. 'It was a beautiful sunset, and a sight of the glowing rays, mantling the tree tops and rustling branches, seemed to gladden every heart.' They pitched their camp in the grove, kindled their fires, partook merrily of their rude fare, and resigned themselves to the sweetest sleep they had enjoyed since their outset upon the prairies. Mounting higher and higher towards the mountains, they began to see the black-tailed deer, a large kind, frequenting mountainous countries. From a commanding peak, Captain Bonneville saw the surrounding plains, as far as his eye could reach, blackened by countless herds of buffalo. Near this place is a natural curiosity called the Chimney. From the top of a conical mound four hundred feet high, rises a shaft or column of nearly petrified clay, with alternate layers of red and white sandstone; one hundred and twenty feet high. It is visible thirty miles off. The scenery grew at every step more wild and striking. Towards the 26th of June, flocks of the *ahsahta*, or *bighorn*, occurred. This animal, sometimes called the mountain sheep, frequents cliffs and crags; 'bounding like goats from crag to crag; often trooping along the lofty shelves of the mountains, under the guidance of some venerable patriarch with horns twisted lower than his muzzle; and sometimes peering over the edge of a precipice, so high that they appear scarce bigger than crows.' The bighorn has the short hair and the shape of a deer; but the head and horns of a sheep: and its flesh is excellent food.

By observations taken about this time, Capt. B. ascertained his latitude to be 41° 47′ north; and his longitude 102° 57′ west of Greenwich, or 25° 57′ west of Washington.

Our adventurers were now in the territory ranged over by the Crow Indians: 'one of the most roving, warlike, crafty, and predatory tribes of the mountains; horse-stealers of the first order, and easily provoked to acts of sanguinary violence.' The hunters one day came galloping in, waving their caps, and giving the alarm cry of "Indians! Indians!" Instant preparation was made for battle; the Captain leading on, slowly and cautiously.

"In a little while he beheld the Crow warriors emerging from among the bluffs. There were about sixty of them; fine martial looking fellows, painted and arrayed for war, and mounted on horses decked out with all kinds of wild trappings. They came prancing along in gallant style, with many wild and dextrous evolutions, for none can surpass them in horsemanship; and their bright colors, and flaunting and fantastic embellishments, glaring and sparkling in the morning sunshine, gave them really a striking appearance.

"Their mode of approach, to one not acquainted with the tactics and ceremonies of this rude chivalry of the wilderness, had an air of direct hostility. They came galloping forward in a body as if about to make a furious charge, but, when close at hand, opened to the right and left, and wheeled in wide circles round the travellers, whooping and yelling like maniacs.

"This done, their mock fury sank into a calm, and the chief approaching the captain, who had remained warily drawn up, though informed of the pacific nature of the manœuvre, extended to him the hand of friendship. The pipe of peace was smoked, and now all was good fellowship."

After some further friendly intercourse, the parties separated, and continued their respective marches. The elevation now attained, had become manifest by

"the effect of the dryness and rarefaction of the atmosphere upon his waggons. The wood-work shrunk; the paint boxes of the wheels were continually working out, and it was necessary

to support the spokes by stout props to prevent their falling asunder. The travellers were now entering one of those great steppes of the far west, where the prevalent aridity of the atmosphere renders the country unfit for cultivation. In these regions, there is a fresh sweet growth of grass in the spring, but it is scanty and *short*, and parches up in the course of the summer, so that there is none for the hunters to set fire to in the autumn. It is a common observation, that 'above the forks of the Platte the grass does not burn.' The great elevation of these plains, and the dryness of the atmosphere, will tend to retain these immense regions in a state of pristine wildness.

"In the course of a day or two more, the travellers entered that wild and broken tract of the Crow country called the Black hills, and here their journey became toilsome in the extreme. Rugged steeps and deep ravines incessantly obstructed their progress, so that a great part of the day was spent in the painful toil of digging through banks, filling up ravines, forcing the waggons up the most forbidding ascents, or swinging them with ropes down the face of dangerous precipices. The shoes of their horses were worn out, and their feet injured by the rugged and stony roads. The travellers were annoyed also by frequent but brief storms, which would come hurrying over the hills, or through the mountain defiles, rage with great fury for a short time, and then pass off, leaving every thing calm and serene again."

We will not trace their route minutely; far less attempt to abridge the interesting account of its varied incidents. Suffice it, to give a faint outline of the movements of Captain Bonneville himself; without regard to those of the various bands or 'brigades' of hunters, trappers, and explorers, detached by him from time to time.

Leaving the Nebraska, or main branch of the Platte, he crossed over to the Sweet-Water, a more southerly prong of that river: and on the 20th of July, caught a near and distinct view of the Rocky Mountains. It was that part of them, called the Wind River Mountains. Passing around the south-eastern extremity of these, he, on the 24th of July, left the Sweet-Water; and in seven hours and a half more, arrived upon a stream running south-westwardly, containing very fine trout. This he knew to be a tributary to the Pacific: and it proved to be a branch of the Colorado of the West, by the Indians called *Seeds-ke-dee*, or *Green River;* falling into the Gulf of California. On this river he remained encamped, hunting, and acquainting himself with the country, its Indian inhabitants and its white visitants, until the 22d of August; when he moved northward, towards Salmon River, a branch of Snake River, which by uniting with Clarke's, forms the Columbia. His baggage was carried in packs, three to a mule, or pack-horse. The route lay along the western, or rather south-western side, of the Wind River Mountains; which were capped with perpetual snows. Indeed, the next year, Captain B. ascended one peak of them, which he supposed the highest in North America. But it is doubtless exceeded by one in the more northwardly part of the Rocky Mountains; recently ascertained by trigonometry and the barometer to be 25,000 feet high: overtopping Chimborazo, and any other known mountain, except the highest of the Himaleh chain. With the Wind River Mountains on his right, and varying scenes of knobs, forests, prairies, and an immense lava plain spreading south of Snake River, on his left, Captain B. pursued his difficult and perilous march until, in September, he reached the waters of Salmon river, and the roaming ground (rather than the domain) of the Nez Percés (or Pierced Nose) Indians*

* Called by the trappers, *Nepercy* Indians.

His whole intercourse with this tribe leaves it doubtful whether the reader should most pity their wretched poverty (the consequence of their total want of energy), or admire their docility, and kindness of nature. At the first meeting, they had been hunting, but all their provisions were exhausted, except a few dried salmon; and they were nearly famished. 'Yet, finding the white men equally in want, they offered to share even this meagre pittance; and frequently repeated the offer, with an eagerness that left no doubt of their sincerity.'

On the 28th of September, Captain B. halted, to go into winter quarters. Among the twenty men whom he kept with him (sending out the rest in detachments, to hunt), extreme scarcity prevailed, as the buffalo had been driven away by the Indians. Hunger often had to be appeased with roots, or the flesh of wolves and muskrats. Some Nez Percés families who joined them exhibited a still greater degree of suffering. They had not a morsel of meat or fish; nor other food, 'excepting roots, wild rose buds, the barks of certain plants, and other vegetable productions.' Yet they neither murmured nor complained; and even gave a part of their poor supplies to our travellers. These rude and poor people had a deep infusion of religious principle. They refused to join a hunting party of Captain Bonneville's men, on a day which the Great Spirit had made sacred; even though starvation imminently threatened them. And their honesty, and purity of purpose, were truly extraordinary. They had derived, perhaps from California, perhaps from Canada, some idea of Christian doctrine, which had fixed deeply in their minds, and operated strongly upon their conduct. To these gleams of knowledge and faith, Captain B. added largely by his instructions; which were imbibed with greediness by his docile disciples.

In December, Captain B. was induced by the scarcity of provision, and the hope of successful hunting, to go southward again, as far as Snake River; where, as he heard, deer, beaver, and buffalo all abounded. He remained in that region till July, 1833, trapping many beavers, and killing immense numbers of buffalo; when, breaking up the camp, he returned to the Colorado, near which, in *caches*, or subterranean hiding places, he had concealed his surplus stores, on his first arrival in the country. As his route

"lay through what was considered the most perilous part of all this region of dangers, he took all his measures with military skill, and observed the strictest circumspection. When on the march, a small scouting party was always thrown in the advance, to reconnoitre the whole country through which they were to pass. The encampments were selected with the greatest care, and a continual watch was kept up night and day. The horses were brought in and picketed at night, and at daybreak a party was sent out to scour the neighborhood for half a mile round, beating up every grove and thicket that could give shelter to a lurking foe. When all was reported safe, the horses were cast loose and turned out to graze. Were such precautions generally observed by traders and hunters, we should not so often hear of parties being surprised by the Indians.

"Having stated the military arrangements of the captain, we may here mention a mode of defence on the open prairie, which we have heard from a veteran in the Indian trade. When a party of trappers is on a journey with a convoy of goods or peltries, every man has three pack-horses under his care; each horse laden with three packs. Every man is provided with a picket with an iron head, a mallet, and hobbles, or leathern fetters for the horses. The trappers proceed across the prairie in a long line; or sometimes three parallel lines, sufficiently distant from

each other to prevent the packs from interfering. At an alarm, when there is no covert at hand, the line wheels, soas to bring the front to the rear and form a circle. All then dismount, drive their pickets into the ground in the centre, fasten the horses to them, and hobble their fore legs, so that, in case of alarm, they cannot break away. They then unload them, and dispose of their packs as breastworks on the periphery of the circle; each man having nine packs behind which to shelter himself. In this promptly formed fortress, they await the assault of the enemy, and are enabled to set large bands of Indians at defiance."

Captain Bonneville's precautions made his march safe. In the Colorado country, a general meeting took place, not only of all his brigades, but of some rival bands of trappers, connected with the American, and Rocky Mountain Fur Companies; and several weeks were spent in hilarity and convivial enjoyment. His next movement was back to the navigable part of the Bighorn River, a large southern branch of the Yellowstone, itself one of the main prongs of the Missouri; to send homeward the furs he had collected. West of Green River, and southwest from the camp, lay a large salt water lake, called in the map attached to Mr. Irving's book, 'Lake Bonneville.' It is said to be 150 miles long, and 50 wide: and to be situated one mile and three fourths, above the sea. Desirous to ascertain the whole truth concerning this lake, the captain equipped forty men, under the command of his lieutenant, Mr. Walker; with instructions to go, trapping, around its margin, to record in a journal everything worth noting that might present itself, and to make maps of the country. He then set out upon his journey to the Bighorn. Below the American Falls, which are just after that river has passed through the Bighorn mountains (a sort of eastern vanguard to the Rocky mountains), his peltries, and those of some rival trappers who accompanied him, were committed to boats made by stretching buffalo hides over wooden frames; and these were launched upon the stream which was to carry them on its long and winding course to St. Louis. Captain B. then returned, with those of his men who remained, to the Colorado; hunting by the way, and expending much time with extreme toil in a vain attempt to shorten their route by crossing the Wind River mountains, instead of going round their south-eastern end, as before. After struggling with difficulties which almost startle the reader to contemplate; climbing rocks and peaks presenting every variety of ruggedness and every degree of elevation; it was found impossible for men, much less for horses, to proceed; and regaining the eastern side of the chain, they pursued their former, more level route, to the camp and buried stores upon Green river. We omit various movements, around the Wind River mountains, to Bear river (falling into Lake Bonneville); and to the Portneuf, a branch of Snake river, where, in November 1833, the party encamped for the winter. Hence the captain took the bold resolution to visit the lower part of the Columbia, on which stands fort Vancouver, held by the Hudson's Bay Company. He began this perilous journey on Christmas day; with only three men, all on horseback. Their general course was nearly westward, down the southern side of Snake river; through forests, over bleak prairies, and mountains both lofty and rugged. All former hardships and difficulties were trivial, compared with those which attended this journey. In the vain attempt of the preceding September, to cross Wind River mountains, the reader's credulity is heavily taxed by the narrative of ravines and precipices passed by unshod horses; and in several other parts of the captain's enterprise, one is puzzled to perceive how those poor beasts could subsist, and travel with heavy burthens, upon no food save twigs, and bunches of grass growing out of the snow or found by raking it away. But now, all former marvels of this kind recur, combined; and with increased magnitude. The cliffs and crags up and down which horses and men clambered, amid deep snows and over sheets of ice, make credible whatever is told of mule journeys over the Andes, or even the startling wonders of Captain Riley's Narrative. And the scanty fare upon which they lived and labored, reminds us of knight-errant times, when many days often elapsed, without any food taken by knight or steed. Bread does not appear to have been tasted by Capt. B. during his three years' toils. At length our four travellers reached a village of the lower Nez Percés; by whom they were treated with a kindness even greater than that which they had received the previous winter from their 'cousins,' the Upper Nez Percés.

Some amusing incidents here occurred. The Indian style of *naming* is well known. As a party of Sacs and Foxes lately at Washington, are said to have bestowed upon a high functionary there, the sobriquet of The Little Fox; so the Lower Nez Percés, observing Captain Bonneville's baldness, called him the "Bald Chief:" and they were exceedingly puzzled and curious to know whether he had been scalped in war, or enjoyed a natural exemption from that mischief. Again—they fed him plentifully on roots, their own usual food; but he and his train pined for dried salmon and venison, which they had reason to believe were in secret store. To draw out these, he adopted this plan: Having a trusty plaid, somewhat tarnished by years of hard service, but still richly enough variegated to excite great admiration among his simple hosts, (especially the squaws,) he cut it into numerous strips; which he made into Turkish-fashioned turbans, and other fanciful head-gear. 'These, judiciously distributed among such of the women-kind as seemed of most consequence,' speedily brought 'abundance of dried salmon and deers' hearts.' The next laughable occurrence had a mixture of the provoking. The aged chief of the village had been particularly kind to the captain: and, as they were about to part, took him aside to shew him, both by words and deeds, how much he loved him. He had resolved to give him a fine horse.

"So saying, he made a signal, and forthwith a beautiful young horse, of a brown color, was led, prancing and snorting, to the place. Captain Bonneville was suitably affected by this mark of friendship; but his experience in what is proverbially called 'Indian giving,' made him aware that a parting pledge was necessary on his own part, to prove that this friendship was reciprocated. He accordingly placed a handsome rifle in the hands of the venerable chief; whose benevolent heart was evidently touched and gratified by this outward and visible sign of amity.

"The worthy captain having now, as he thought, balanced this little account of friendship, was about to shift his saddle to this noble gift-horse, when the affectionate patriarch plucked him by the sleeve, and introduced to him a whimpering, whining, leathern-skinned old squaw, that might have passed for an Egyptian mummy, without drying. 'This,' said he, 'is my wife; she is a good wife—I love her very much. She loves the horse—she loves him a great deal—she will cry very much at

losing him.—I do not know how I shall comfort her—and that makes my heart very sore.'

"What could the worthy captain do, to console the tender-hearted old squaw; and, peradventure, to save the venerable patriarch from a curtain lecture? He bethought himself of a pair of earbobs; it was true, the patriarch's better-half was of an age and appearance that seemed to put personal vanity out of the question: but when is personal vanity extinct? The moment he produced the glittering earbobs, the whimpering and whining of the sempiternal beldame were at an end. She eagerly placed the precious baubles in her ears, and, though as ugly as the Witch of Endor, went off with a sideling gait, and coquettish air, as though she had been a perfect Semiramis.

"The captain had now saddled his newly acquired steed, and his foot was in the stirrup, when the affectionate patriarch again stepped forward, and presented to him a young Pierced-nose, who had a peculiarly sulky look. 'This,' said the venerable chief, 'is my son: he is very good; a great horseman—he always took care of this very fine horse—he brought him up from a colt, and made him what he is. He is very fond of this fine horse—he loves him like a brother—his heart will be very heavy when this fine horse leaves the camp.'

"What could the captain do, to reward the youthful hope of this venerable pair, and comfort him for the loss of his foster-brother, the horse? He bethought him of a hatchet, which might be spared from his slender stores. No sooner did he place the implement in the hands of young hopeful, than his countenance brightened up, and he went off rejoicing in his hatchet, to the full as much as did his respectable mother in her earbobs.

"The captain was now in the saddle, and about to start, when the affectionate old patriarch stepped forward, for the third time, and, while he laid one hand gently on the mane of the horse, held up the rifle in the other. 'This rifle,' said he, 'shall be *my great medicine*. I will hug it to my heart—I will always love it, for the sake of my good friend, the bald-headed chief. But a rifle, by itself, is dumb—I cannot make it speak. If I had a little powder and ball, I would take it out with me, and would now and then shoot a deer: and when I brought the meat home to my hungry family, I would say—this was killed by the rifle of my friend, the bald-headed chief, to whom I gave that very fine horse.'

"There was no resisting this appeal: the captain, forthwith furnished the coveted supply of powder and ball; but at the same time, put spurs to his very fine gift-horse, and the first trial of his speed was to get out of all further manifestation of friendship, on the part of the affectionate old patriarch and his insinuating family."

Through the remainder of the tribe, our adventurers experienced more solid and disinterested kindness. The journey was pleasant and easy, to Fort Wallah-Wallah, on the Columbia, about a hundred miles from its mouth, and not far below the junction of Clarke's with Snake River: where they arrived on the 4th of March, 1834. It was held by the Hudson's Bay Company: whose superintendant there, with the jealousy characterizing all the competitors for the peltry trade of that region, refused to Captain B. all supplies or facilities for further exploration, or for opening any commerce with the natives. He therefore set out in two days, upon his return: and, after a journey less toilsome and distressful 'tis true than the outward one, but still abounding in perils and sufferings, he rejoined his main body, on the Portneuf River, about the middle of May.

In a curious plain of white clay, near Bear River, are many mineral springs, variously impregnated. Several of them have the appearance, and even (with a little aid from fancy) the taste, of beer; containing it is said, a strong carbonate of soda. Though there was hourly danger of an attack from the Blackfeet, the men, in passing these springs, resolved to have a sham drunken frolic.

"In a few moments, every spring had its jovial knot of hard drinkers, with tin cup in hand, indulging in a mock carouse; quaffing, pledging, toasting, bandying jokes, singing drinking songs, and uttering peals of laughter, until it seemed as if their imaginations had given potency to the beverage, and cheated them into a fit of intoxication. Indeed, in the excitement of the moment, they were loud and extravagant in their commendations of 'the mountain tap;' elevating it above every beverage produced from hops or malt. It was a singular and fantastic scene; suited to a region where every thing is strange and peculiar:—These groups of trappers, and hunters, and Indians, with their wild costumes, and wilder countenances; their boisterous gaiety, and reckless air; quaffing, and making merry round these sparkling fountains; while beside them lay their weapons, ready to be snatched up for instant service. Painters are fond of representing banditti, at their rude and picturesque carousals; but here were groups, still more rude and picturesque; and it needed but a sudden onset of Blackfeet, and a quick transition from a fantastic revel to a furious melée, to have rendered this picture of a trapper's life complete. The beer frolic, however, passed off without any untoward circumstance; and, unlike most drinking bouts, left neither headache, nor heartache, behind."

Another hunting season, followed by another journey to a still lower point than before upon the Columbia, in hopes of negotiating a connexion in trade with the natives—which hopes were again foiled by the jealousy and influence of the Hudson's Bay Company—brought the month of November.

Besides the adventures of Captain Bonneville and his immediate companions, passed over thus lightly by us, interesting episodes are formed of the expedition sent to explore the great salt lake (lake Bonneville); and of a party associated with one Captain Wyeth, of Boston, in various enterprises worthy of Yankee boldness, and talent for *contrivance*. The explorers of the salt lake wholly failed in that object. They wandered into California; and there, amongst the Spanish settlers, wasted the time and substance which they ought to have employed in Captain Bonneville's service.

Having wintered on Bear River, he, in April, 1835, removed to the Colorado; and thence to Wind River, which runs from the mountains of that name, eastward, into the Bighorn, a tributary of the Yellowstone. There, in June, a general rendezvous took place, of all his remaining forces; and they set out homeward. On the 22d of August, they reached the frontier settlements.

"Here, according to his own account, his cavalcade might have been taken for a procession of tatterdemalion savages; for the men were ragged almost to nakedness, and had contracted a wildness of aspect during three years of wandering in the wilderness. A few hours in a populous town, however, produced a magical metamorphosis. Hats of the most ample brim and longest nap; coats with buttons that shone like mirrors, and pantaloons of the most liberal plenitude, took place of the well-worn trapper's equipments; and the happy wearers might be seen strolling about in all directions, scattering their silver like sailors just from a cruise."

Everywhere through his two volumes, Mr. Irving has interspersed numberless incidents and descriptions, which, graced by his inimitable manner, render the work deeply engaging. The costumes, equipments, and characters, of the several kinds of trappers, and tribes of Indians; sketches of scenery; geographic and geological descriptions; narratives of hardships, battles, and escapes; anecdotes illustrative and entertaining; keep the blood of any man who has aught of Sinbad's or Robinson Crusoe's roving propensity, in a

constant fermentation; and render him full fain, like Captain Bonneville, to make his "bow to the splendors and gaieties of civilized life, and plunge again amidst the hardships and perils of the wilderness."

All the Indians of the Upper Missouri, and of the Columbia region, hunt and fight on horseback; and seem to be the best riders in the world. A frequent feat is the one described as performed by a Crow warrior, when he and his brethren had driven a band of their enemies, the Blackfeet, into a thicket, whence the aim was to dislodge them. Force having been found ineffectual, the Crow 'Brave' thought to provoke them out. He therefore 'advanced alone, with that martial air and equestrian grace for which the tribe is noted. When within an arrow's flight of the thicket, he loosened his rein, urged his horse to full speed, threw his body on the opposite side, so as to hang by but one leg and present no mark to the foe; in this way, he swept along in front of the thicket, launching his arrows from under the neck of his steed. Then regaining the saddle, he wheeled round, and returned whooping and scoffing to his companions, who received him with yells of applause.' The same was done by several others: but the Blackfeet were not to be tempted from their covert.

Two most unwelcome conclusions force themselves upon the mind, in reading this book; both of them, opinions long held by many; but ascribed by many also to the jaundiced vision of a morbid philanthropy. *First*, that the aborigines of this continent owe most of their vices to contact with Europeans: *second*, that four-fifths, at least, of our wars with the Indians, are attributable to the perfidy or violence of white men. The first conclusion is demonstrated by the views here presented, of the guileless kindness, and the temperance, of those tribes who have had little or no intercourse with the whites. The second is confirmed by at least three glaring instances of blended treachery and cruelty, practised by men either connected with Captain Bonneville, or engaged in pursuits like his, at the same time. One of these instances was the shooting of a chief, on his advancing, alone, to meet a flag of truce borne by his murderer. Another was the *burning alive* of several Indian captives, because their countrymen would not restore some stolen horses. One such act might pardonably be deemed, by unlettered savages, justification for a hundred retaliatory atrocities.

Before we part with Mr. Irving, a duty remains to be done, for which no thanks are to be expected. Censures are to be dealt out. But in what writer is it half so important that faults of style should be noted for his correction, as in the most admired, and therefore the most likely to be copied, of all living Americans?—Nowhere, save in the effusions of Mr. Charles Phillips, can a more enormous instance be found of alliteration, that poorest rhetorical artifice,—than in the following phrases, employed in shewing that "a man who bestrides a horse, must be essentially different from a man who *cowers* in a *canoe*." The former is "heedless of hardship; daring of danger; prodigal of the present;" &c. How far beneath Mr. Irving is such a jingle! Again; in the two volumes, there are probably a dozen applications of a single pet phrase; and that, drawn from the slang dictionary. It is the word *game*, used thus—"his *game* look;" "a *game* warrior;" "a *game* bird" (applied to a man); "game feather;" "game qualities;" &c. &c. Again; does Mr. I. design a playful mockery of Sir Piercie Shafton, or is it downright serious affectation, when he twice uses the verb *dominate*, for *overlook*, or *overtop*? One more cavil, and we have done. The book seems to us too minute, and over-embellished. There are too many details of personal adventure; too much recital of unimportant events; too many high-colored delineations of local scenery. A travelling artist would not have charged his portfolio with more landscapes; and when it is considered, how far the pen falls short of the pencil in conveying just images of such scenes to the mind; the indiscreetness of a writer's attempting them so frequently, is manifest. Throughout the work, there is so much circumstantial and apparently fanciful garniture, that a shade of discredit is thrown upon the verity of Captain Bonneville's facts. The reader half suspects that he is reading another "Conquest of Granada;" a tale, 'founded on fact:' instead of a true narrative of a plain and sensible man's travels through an interesting country. Divested of these excrescences, yet retaining all becoming ornament, the work might have been of but half its present size, and have had thrice its present number of gratified readers.