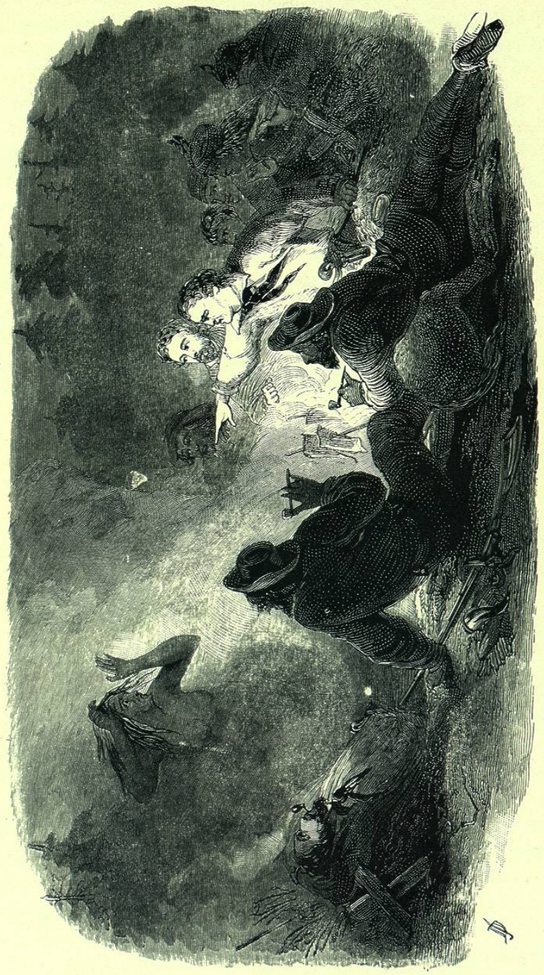
part of his *pot-au-feu* and his bunch of squirrels. I reassured him with a friendly shake of the hand and a trifling gift. He was a good-looking young man, well made, as these Indians usually are, and naked as a worm.

The Delawares lingered as we turned away, but I would not let them remain. Anyhow they regarded our journey as a kind of war-path, and no matter what kind of path he is upon a Delaware is always ready to take a scalp when he is in a country where there are strange Indians. We had gone but a short distance when I found they had brought away his bow and arrows, but I had them taken immediately back. These were well made ; the bow strong, and made still stronger with sinews, and the arrows were all headed with obsidian worked in the usual spear shape by patient labor, and nearly as sharp as steel. The Delawares took them back willingly when I reminded them that they had exposed the poor fellow to almost certain starvation by depriving him at the beginning of winter of his only means to procure food.

At one of our camps on the foot-slopes of a ridge we found again springs of boiling water; but a little way distant from the spring of cold water which supplied us.

A day or two after we saw mountain sheep for the first time in crossing the Basin. None were killed, but that afternoon Carson killed an antelope. That day we travelled late, making for the point of a wooded mountain where we had expected to find water, but on reaching it found only the dry bed of a creek where there was sometimes running water. It was too late to go farther and I turned up the creek bed, taking the chance to find it above as the mountain looked promising. Well up, towards the top of the mountain, nearly two thousand feet above the plain, we came upon a spring where the little basin afforded enough for careful use. A bench of the mountain near by made a good camping-ground, for the November nights were cool and newly-fallen snow already marked out the higher ridges of the mountains. With grass abundant, and pine wood and cedars to keep up the night fires, we were well provided for.

Sagundai who had first found the spring saw fresh tracks made in the sand by a woman's naked foot, and the spring had been recently cleaned out. But he saw no other indications of human life. We had made our supper on the antelope and were lying around the fire, and the men taking their great comfort in smoking. A good supper and a pipe make for them a comfortable ending no matter how hard the day has been. Carson who was lying on his back with his pipe in his mouth, his hands under his head and his feet to the fire, suddenly exclaimed, half rising and pointing to the other side of the fire, "Good God! look there!" In the blaze of the fire, peering over her skinny, crooked hands, which shaded her eyes from the glare, was standing an old woman apparently eighty years of age, nearly



OLD DIGGER WOMAN ABANDONED BY HER PEOPLE.

naked, her grizzly hair hanging down over her face and shoulders. She had thought it a camp of her people and had already begun to talk and gesticulate, when her open mouth was paralyzed with fright, as she saw the faces of the whites. She turned to escape, but the men had gathered about her and brought her around to the fire. Hunger and cold soon dispelled fear and she made us understand that she had been left by her people at the spring to die, because she was very old and could gather no more seeds and was no longer good for anything. She told us she had nothing to eat and was very hungry. We gave her immediately about a quarter of the antelope, thinking she would roast it by our fire, but no sooner did she get it in her hand than she darted off into the darkness. Some one ran after her with a brand of fire, but calling after her brought no answer. In the morning, her fresh tracks at the spring showed that she had been there for water during the night. Starvation had driven her to us, but her natural fear drove her away as quickly, so soon as she had secured something to eat. Before we started we left for her at the spring a little supply from what food we had. This, with what she could gather from the nut-pine trees on the mountain, together with our fire which she could easily keep up, would probably prolong her life even after the snows came. The nut-pines and cedars extend their branches out to the ground and in one of their thickets, as I have often proved, these make a comfortable shelter against the most violent snow-storms.

This was Sangundai's Spring. The names of my camps here along become the record of the rivalry of the men in finding good camps. It became the recurring interest of each day to prove their judgment of country as well as their skill as hunters.

The region here along had a special interest for me and our progress was slow for the two following days. We had now reached a low valley line that extends along the eastern foot of the ridges which constitute the Sierra Nevada. Into this low ground the rivers from the Sierra as well as from the Basin gather into a series of lakes extending south towards the head of the Gulf of California. I had a reason for carefully examining this part of the Basin, but the time needed for it would interfere with other objects and the winter was at hand.

The place appointed for meeting the main party was on the eastward shore of Walker's Lake near the point where the river to which I had given the same name empties into it. Making our way along the foot of the mountain towards our rendezvous we had reached one of the lakes where at this season the scattered Indians of the neighborhood were gathering to fish. Turning a point on the lake shore the party of Indians some twelve or fourteen in number came abruptly into view. They were advancing along in Indian file, one following the other, their heads bent forward and eyes

fixed on the ground. As our party met them the Indians did not turn their heads nor raise their eyes from the ground. Their conduct indicated unfriendliness, but, habituated to the uncertainties of savage life, we too fell readily into their humor, and passed on our way without word or halt. Even to us it was a strange meeting.

It was the solitary occasion where I met with such an instance of sullen and defiant hostility among Indians and where they neither sought nor avoided conflict. I judged that they either regarded us as intruders, or that they had received some recent injury from the whites who were now beginning to enter California, and which they wished but feared to avenge.

In this region the condition of the Indian is nearly akin to that of the lower animals. Here they are really *wild men*. In his wild state the Indian lives to get food. This is his business. The superfluous part of his life, that portion which can be otherwise employed, is devoted to some kind of warfare. From this lowest condition, where he is found as the simplest element of existence, up to the highest in which he is found on this continent, it is the same thing. In the Great Basin, where nearly naked he travelled on foot and lived in the sage-brush, I found him in the most elementary form; the men living alone, the women living alone, but all after food. Sometimes one man cooking by his solitary fire in the sage-brush which was his home, his bow and arrows and bunch of squirrels by his side; sometimes on the shore of a lake or river where food was more abundant a little band of men might be found occupied in fishing; miles away a few women would be met gathering seeds and insects, or huddled up in a shelter of sage-brush to keep off the snow. And the same on the mountains or prairies where the wild Indians were found in their highest condition, where they had horses and lived in lodges. The labor of their lives was to get something to eat. The occupation of the women was in gleaning from the earth everything of vegetable or insect life; the occupation of the men was to kill every animal they could for food and every man of every other tribe for pleasure. And, in every attempt to civilize, these are the two lines upon which he is to be met.

On the 24th we encamped at our rendezvous on the lake where beds of rushes made good pasturage for our animals. Three days afterward the main party arrived. They were all in good health, and had met with no serious accident. But the scarcity of game had made itself felt, and we were now all nearly out of provisions. It was now almost midwinter, and the open weather could not be expected to last.

In this journey across the Basin, between latitudes 41° and 38,° during the month of November from the 5th to the 25th, the mean temperature was 29° at sunrise and 40° at sunset, ranging at noon between 41° and 60°. There was a snow-storm between the 4th and 7th, snow falling principally

at night, and the sun occasionally breaking out in the day. The lower hills and valleys were covered only a few inches deep with snow, which the sun carried off in a few hours after the storm was over. The weather continued uninterruptedly clear and beautiful until the close of the month. But though the skies were clear it was colder now that we had come within the influence of the main Sierra.

I was in the neighborhood of the passage which I had forced across it a year before, and I had it on my mind. Heavy snows might be daily expected to block up the passes, and I considered that in this event it would be hopeless to attempt a crossing with the material of the whole party.

I therefore decided again to divide it, sending the main body under Kern to continue southward along the lake line and pass around the Point of the California Mountain into the head of the San Joaquin valley. There, as already described, the great Sierra comes down nearly to the plain, making a Point, as in the smaller links, and making open and easy passes where there is never or rarely snow. As before, Walker, who was familiar with the southern part of Upper California, was made the guide of the party; and, after considering the advantages of different places, it was agreed that the place of meeting for the two parties should be at a little lake in the valley of a river called the Lake Fork of the Tularé Lake.

With a selected party of fifteen, among whom were some of my best men, including several Delawares, I was to attempt the crossing of the mountain in order to get through to Sutter's Fort before the snow began to fall. At the fort I could obtain the necessary supplies for the relief of the main party.

Leaving them in good order, and cheerful at the prospect of escaping from the winter into the beautiful "California Valley," as it was then called, we separated, and I took up my route for the river which flows into Pyramid Lake, and which on my last journey I had named Salmon-Trout River.

I now entered a region which hardship had made familiar to me, and I was not compelled to feel my way, but used every hour of the day to press forward towards the Pass at the head of this river.

On the 1st of December I struck it above the lower cañon, and on the evening of the 4th camped at its head on the east side of the pass in the Sierra Nevada. Our effort had been to reach the pass before a heavy fall of snow, and we had succeeded. All night we watched the sky, ready to attempt the passage with the first indication of falling snow; but the sky continued clear. On our way up, the fine weather which we had left at the foot of the mountain continued to favor us, and when we reached the pass the only snow showing was on the peaks of the mountains.

At three in the afternoon the temperature was 46°; at sunset, 34°. The

observations of the night gave for the longitude of the pass, 120° 15′ 20″, and for latitude, 39° 17′ 12″. Early the next morning we climbed the rocky ridge which faces the eastern side, and at sunrise were on the crest of the divide, 7200 feet above the sea; the sky perfectly clear, and the temperature 22°. There was no snow in the pass, but already it showed apparently deep on higher ridges and mountain-tops. The emigrant road now passed here following down a fork of Bear River, which leads from the pass into the Sacramento valley. Finding this a rugged way, I turned to the south and encamped in a mountain-meadow where the grass was fresh and green. We had made good our passage of the mountain and entered now among the grand vegetation of the California valley. Even if the snow should now begin to fall, we could outstrip it into the valley, where the winter king already shrunk from the warm breath of spring.

The route the next day led over good travelling ground; gaining a broad leading ridge we travelled along through the silence of a noble pine forest where many of the trees were of great height and uncommon size. The tall red columns standing closely on the clear ground, the filtered, flickering sunshine from their summits far overhead, gave the dim religious light of cathedral aisles, opening out on every side, one after the other, as we advanced. Later, in early spring, these forest grounds are covered with a blue carpet of forget-me-nots.

The pines of the European forests would hide their diminished heads amidst these great columns of the Sierra. A species of cedar (*Thuya gigantea*) occurred often of extraordinary bulk and height. *Pinus Lambertiani* was one of the most frequent trees, distinguished among cone-bearing tribes by the length of its cones, which are sometimes sixteen or eighteen inches long. The Indians eat the inner part of the burr, and I noticed large heaps of them where they had been collected.

Leaving the higher ridges we gained the smoother spurs and descended about 4000 feet, the face of the country rapidly changing as we went down. The country became low and rolling; pines began to disappear, and varieties of oak, principally an evergreen resembling live oak, became the predominating forest growth. The oaks bear great quantities of acorns, which are the principal food of all the wild Indians; it is their bread-fruit tree. At a village of a few huts which we came upon there was a large supply of these acorns: eight or ten cribs of wicker-work containing about twenty bushels each. The sweetest and best acorns, somewhat resembling Italian chestnuts in taste, are obtained from a large tree belonging to the division of white oaks, distinguished by the length of its acorn, which is commonly an inch and a half and sometimes two inches. This long acorn characterizes the tree, which is a new species and is accordingly specified by Dr. Torrey as *Quercus longiglanda* (Torr. and Frem.)—long-acorn oak. This tree is