ing them in the tall grass, and kindling a good fire from some dead logs of fallen timber, for their protection, we bivouacked among them in the opening for the night. The timber surrounding the circular space which we occupied is very tall. The bright blaze of our fire defined indistinctly the columnar shapes of the pines, and their overarching branches. Fancy soon pictured our residence for the night a spacious gothic temple, whose walls had mouldered away, leaving the pillars and the skeleton roof, through which the bright stars were twinkling, standing, in defiance of the assaults of time and the fury of the elements. The temperature of the evening is delightful, and the sky serene and cloudless.

One of our party this morning picked up a human skull near the trail. Some unfortunate emigrant, probably, had been interred near the spot, and, being exhumed by the Indians or wolves, this was a portion of his skeleton. I saw large numbers of pheasants during our march to-day, and shot one with my pistol while riding along. Raspberries, and a small, bitter cherry, have been quite abundant in places. Distance 25 miles.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Bear Valley—Provisions exhausted—California quail—Manzanita—The pine-nut—Deep hollow—Evergreen oak—First view of the Sacramento Valley—A body of California Indians—Live-oak acorns—Arrive at Johnson's—Indian dandy—Cheering and astonishing news from Mexico—Obtain food—A Californian newspaper.

August 27.—A slight frost was perceptible on the grass this morning. We descended the stream, on which we were encamped, several miles, keeping generally in sight of it, and passing around several *cañones* by climbing, with much difficulty, the steep sides of the mountains. We reached at last a *cañon* of several miles in length, around which it was impossible to



pass without ascending to the summit of the steep and rocky ridge. Passing from this ridge, in a southwest course, we crossed a valley in which there is a small lake. From this lake we returned back to the ridge again, along which we travelled over a very rocky and difficult road, through tall and dense timber, until three o'clock, P. M., when we reached a narrow place, so steep on both sides and so sharp on the top that our mules could with difficulty stand upon it.

The emigrant wagons of last year were let down this precipice, on the northern side, with ropes. With considerable difficulty we got our mules down it. A descent of two miles brought us into a handsome, fertile valley, five or six miles in length, and varying from one to two in breadth. This is called "Bear Valley." Vegetation is very luxuriant and fresh. In addition to the usual variety of grasses and some flowers, I noticed large patches of wild peas. We found a small stream winding through it, bordered by clumps of willows. We encamped near this rivulet of the lonely mountain-vale, under some tall pines.

Here was cooked the last of our flour. A pint of rice, a skin or scrap of rancid bacon, weighing a half-pound, and some coffee, (our sugar having been exhausted for two weeks,) compose our stock of provisions for the residue of our journey. The truly impoverished condition of our larder produced a slight sensation of uneasiness and regret. But a hope that we were not far from the settlements; a huge, blazing fire, made of the dry pine logs, flashing its cheerful light over our camp; the peaceful and holy serenity of the scenery, illuminated by the rays of the waxing moon shining with brilliant splendor from the vaporless blue arch of the heavens, soon dispelled all unpleasant forebodings in regard to the future.

We flushed, in the course of the day's march, several flocks of the California quail or partridge. It is not so large as the quail of the Atlantic. Its plumage is dark and glossy, and it has a small tuft or crown of feathers on its head. It is a most graceful and beautiful bird. There has been but little variation in the growth of timber. A few oaks have exhibited themselves among the pines, firs, and cedars. We have met occa-

sionally with a reddish berry called by the Californians, *manzanita*, (little apple.) The berry is produced by small trees which stand in clumps, about ten or twelve feet in height, shedding their bark annually, leaving a smooth red surface. The flavor of the fruit is an agreeable acid, something like that of our apple. The burrs of the pine, which have fallen to the ground, are sometimes twelve inches in length, and contain a nut, (*piñon*,) which, although it is said to be nutritious, is not agreeable to the taste. A shrub, which growing in our gardens is called the wax-berry, I saw in several places to-day. The signs of the grisly bear and of the deer have been numerous since we crossed the Pass of the Sierra Nevada, but not one of these animals has been seen on this side. Distance 24 miles.

August 28.—A cup of coffee without sugar constituted our breakfast. Our march to-day has been one of great fatigue, and almost wholly without incident or interest. During the forenoon we were constantly engaged in rising and descending the sides of the high mountain ranges, on either hand of the stream, to avoid the *cañones*, deep chasms and ravines, and immense ledges of granite rocks, with which the narrow valley is choked. In the afternoon we travelled along a high ridge, sometimes over elevated peaks, with deep and frightful abysses yawning their darkened and hideous depths beneath us. About five o'clock, P. M., by a descent so steep for a mile and a half, that ourselves and our animals slid rather than walked down it, we entered a small hollow or ravine, which we named "Steep Hollow." A gurgling brook of pure cold water runs through it over a rocky bed. In the hollow there was about a quarter of an acre of pretty good grass, and our mules soon fed this down to its roots, without leaving a blade standing.

Having nothing else to do, we made large fires of the dead oak timber that had been cut down by the emigrants of previous years, for the purpose of subsisting their animals upon its foliage. A cup of coffee without sugar, was our supper.

The oak timber has been more plentiful to-day than yesterday. The pines, firs, and cedars maintain their majestic dimensions. Our animals are much exhausted. The road has been



exceedingly difficult, and consequently our progress has been slow. Distance 20 miles.

August 29.—The morning was clear and severely cold. The keen atmosphere, as soon as I threw off my blankets, just before daylight, produced an aguish sensation that I have not previously felt on the journey. The depth and consequent dampness of our encampment, probably, was one cause of this affection. Our physical exhaustion from incessant labor, and the want of adequate nourishment, was another.

Nuttall, a young gentleman of our mess, of fine intelligence and many interesting and amiable qualities of mind and heart, feeling, as we all did, the faintness, if not the pangs of hunger, insisted that if we would delay the commencement of our day's march a short time, he would prepare a soup from the rancid bacon-skins remaining in our provision-sack. In compliance with his request, the camp-kettle was placed on the fire, and the scraps placed in it, and in about fifteen minutes the soup was declared to be made. We gathered around it, with high expectations of a repast, under the circumstances, of great richness, and a high, if not a delicate flavor. But a single spoonful to each seemed to satisfy the desires of the whole party for this kind of food, if it did not their appetites. It produced a nausea that neither hunger nor philosophy could curb or resist.

We rose from the deep hollow of our encampment by a very steep ascent, and mounting the high ridges once more, continued along them nearly the whole day, in a general south-west course. The mountains have not been so rugged or so elevated to-day, but have approximated nearer the dimensions and features of hills, and we have found less difficulty in our progress over them. This change in the physical formation of the surface of the country, cheered us with the hope that we should obtain a view of the valley of the Sacramento before night. But as we ascended elevation after elevation, with anticipations of a prospect so gratifying, our hopes were as often disappointed by a succession of hills or mountains rising one after another beyond us.

We crossed, near the close of our day's march, one or two

small valleys or bottoms timbered with evergreen oaks, (*Quercus Ilex,*) giving them the appearance of old apple-orchards. The shape and foliage of this oak, previous to minute examination, presents an exact resemblance of the apple-tree. The channels of the water-courses running through these valleys were dry, and the grass parched and dead. A plant having a yellow flower, dispensing a strong and agreeable aromatic odor, perfumed the atmosphere in many places. Some berries, but not very abundant or pleasant to the taste, were observed. We saw in a number of places, ladders erected by the Indians, for climbing the pine-trees to gather the nuts, and the poles used for the same purpose. An Indian was seen, but he ran from us with great speed, disappearing behind the forest-trees. Some hares and a fox were started, and a hare was killed by one of the party.

One of our pack-mules became so exhausted this afternoon, that she refused to proceed. After stripping and vainly trying various expedients to urge her along, I haltered her with a tight noose around the nose, and fastening the end of the rope to the horn of my saddle, dragged her into camp. She had performed such faithful service, that I could not leave her to perish of hunger and thirst, or to be devoured by the wolves of the wilderness. The feet of all our mules are very tender, and they move with much apparent pain. We encamped at five o'clock in a ravine, half a mile to the left of the trail, where we found some small pools of water and a little dead grass in their vicinity. A soup of the hare killed on our march to-day, constituted our supper and only meal for two days. Distance 25 miles.

August 30.—The temperature this morning was pleasant, and the atmosphere perfectly clear and calm. We commenced our march early, determined, if possible, to force our way out of the mountains and to reach Johnson's, the nearest settlement in the valley of Sacramento, about 40 miles, above or north of Sutter's Fort, before we encamped.

After travelling some three or four miles rising and descending a number of hills, from the summit of one more elevated



than the others surrounding it, the spacious valley of the Sacramento suddenly burst upon my view, at an apparent distance of fifteen miles. A broad line of timber running through the centre of the valley indicated the course of the main river, and smaller and fainter lines on either side of this, winding through the brown and flat plain, marked the channels of its tributaries. I contemplated this most welcome scene with such emotions of pleasure as may be imagined by those who have ever crossed the desert plains and mountains of western America, until Jacob, who was in advance of the remainder of the party, came within the reach of my voice. I shouted to him that we were "out of the woods"—to pull off his hat and give three cheers, so loud that those in the rear could hear them. Very soon the huzzas of those behind were ringing and echoing through the hills, valleys, and forests, and the whole party came up with an exuberance of joy in their motions and depicted upon their countenances. It was a moment of cordial and heartfelt congratulations.

Taking a direct course west, in order to reach the valley at the nearest point, we soon struck a small horse-trail, which we followed over low gravelly hills with grassy hollows between, timbered with the evergreen oak, forming in many places a most inviting landscape. About one o'clock we discovered at the distance of half a mile, a number of men, apparently twenty or thirty. Some of them were dressed in white shirts and pantaloons, with the Mexican sombrero, or broad-brim hat, others were nearly naked and resembled the Indians we had frequently seen on the eastern side of the Sierra. They had evidently discovered us before we saw them, for they seemed to be in great commotion, shouting and running in various directions. Some of our party suggested that they might be a body of Mexican soldiers stationed here for the purpose of opposing the entrance of the emigrants into California, a conjecture that seemed reasonable, under the probable existing relations between Mexico and the United States. However, upon a careful examination I could not discover that they had any arms, and felt pretty well assured from their movements, that they

were not an organized body of soldiers. But halting until the whole party came up, I requested them to see that all their pieces were charged and capped, which being done, we moved forward to the point (a small grove of oaks on a gentle elevation) where the most numerous body of the strange men were concentrated. We rode up to them, at the same time holding out our hands in token of friendship, a signal which they reciprocated immediately.

They were evidently very much rejoiced to find that we had no hostile designs upon them. With the exception of two half-breed Spaniards, they were Indians, and several of them conversed in Spanish, and were or had been the servants of settlers in the valley. One of the half-breeds, of a pleasing and intelligant countenance and good address, introduced us to their chief, (El Capitan,) and wished to know if we had not some tobacco to give him. I had a small quantity of tobacco, about half of which I gave to the chief, and distributed the residue among the party as far as it would go. I saw, however, that the chief divided his portion among those who received none. *El Capitan* was a man of about forty-five, of large frame and great apparent muscular power, but his countenance was heavy, dull, and melancholy, manifesting neither good humor nor intelligence. His long, coarse, and matted hair fell down upon his shoulders in a most neglected condition. A faded cotton handkerchief was tied around his head. I could see none of the ornaments of royalty upon him, but his clothing was much inferior to that of many of his party, who I presume had obtained theirs by laboring for the white settlers. Many of them were in a state of nudity.

We soon learned from them that they were a party engaged in gathering acorns, which to these poor Indians are what wheat and maize are to us. They showed us large quantities in their baskets under the trees. When dried and pulverized, the flour of the acorn is made into bread or mush, and is their "staff of life." It is their chief article of subsistence in this section of California. Their luxuries, such as bull-beef and horse-meat, they obtain by theft, or pay for in labor at exorbitant rates. The acorn of California, from the evergreen oak, (*Quercus Ilex,*) is much larger, more oily, and less bitter than on the Atlantic side of the continent. In fruitful seasons the ground beneath the trees is covered with the nuts, and the Indians have the providence, when the produce of the oak is thus plentiful, to provide against a short crop and the famine which must necessarily result to them from it, by laying up a supply greater than they will consume in one year.



We inquired the distance to the residence of Mr. Johnson. They made signs indicating that it was but a short distance. After some little delay we prevailed upon one of them who was naked, by promising him a reward, to accompany us as our guide. He conducted us safely, in about an hour and a half, to the house of Mr. Johnson, situated on Bear creek, a tributary of the Rio de los Plumas, near the edge of the valley of the Sacramento. The house of Mr. Johnson is a small building of two rooms, one-half constructed of logs, the other of adobes or sun-dried bricks. Several pens made of poles and pickets surround the house. A building of any kind, inhabited by civilized beings, was almost a curiosity to us. Some of our party, when about a mile distant, fancied from something white which they saw in the door, resembling at a distance the shape of a woman clad in light garments, that it was Mrs. Johnson, who would be there to welcome them with all the hospitality of an American lady. Great was their disappointment, however, when they came in front of the door, to find it closed. A light frame with a raw-hide nailed upon it, was the construction of the door. The central portion of the raw-hide was white, the natural color of the animal from which it had been taken, and into this melted the graceful figure, and the welcome countenance of the white woman in white. Mr. Johnson was not at home, and the house was shut up. This we learned from a little Indian, the only human object we could find about the premises; he intimated by signs, however, that Mr. Johnson would return when the sun set.

We encamped under some trees in front of the house, resolved to do as well as we could, in our half-famished condi-

tion, until Mr. J. returned. In looking around the place, we saw where a quantity of wheat had been threshed, consequently there should be flour in the house. In one of the pens there were several young calves, showing conclusively that there must be milk. There was a small attempt at gardening, but no vegetables visible. We tried to prevail upon the Indian to bring us some flour, but the little heathen shook his head, either not understanding us or signifying that he could not get at it. We then made him comprehend that we wanted milk, and after showing him a bright-colored cotton handkerchief, he demanded our bucket and started with it after the cows. They were brought to the pen where the calves were confined, and one of them being fastened by the horns with a raw-hide rope, the calf was admitted to her to keep her gentle during the process of milking. Our bucket was nearly filled with rich milk, and this, with a cup of coffee, took off the edge of our hunger.

In the mean time we performed our ablutions in the creek, and having shed our much-worn clothing, we presented most of it to the naked Indian who acted as our guide. He was soon clad in a complete suit from head to feet, and strutted about with a most dandified and self-satisfied air. A small pocket looking-glass completed his happiness. He left us with a bundle of rags under his arms, nearly overjoyed at his good luck.

At sunset the dogs about the house began to bark most vociferously, and ran off over a gentle rise of ground to the north. Two men on horseback soon made their appearance on the rising ground, and, seeing us, rode to our camp. They were two Franco-Americans, originally from Canada or St. Louis, who had wandered to California in some trapping expedition, and had remained in the country. They were arranging to build houses and settle permanently in this neighborhood. From them we learned the gratifying intelligence, that the whole of Upper California was in possession of the United States. Intelligence, they further stated, had been received, that General Taylor, after having met and defeated the Mexican forces in four pitched battles, killing an incredible number, some forty or fifty thousand, had triumphantly marched into the city of Mexico. The



last part of this news, of course, judging from the situation of General Taylor when we left the United States, (war not having then been declared,) was impossible; but sifting the news and comparing one statement with another, the result to our minds was, that General T. had been eminently successful, defeating the Mexicans, whenever he had met them, with considerable slaughter. This, of course, produced much exultation and enthusiasm among us.

We informed the two gentlemen, that we were and had been for some time entirely destitute of provisions, and were in a state bordering upon starvation. One of them immediately started off at a gallop to his cabin not far distant, and soon returned with a pan of unbolted flour and some tallow to cook it with. This, he said, was all he had, and if such had not been the case, he would have brought us something more. But we could not comprehend the use of tallow in cooking. We, however, afterwards learned that beef-tallow in California is used for culinary purposes in the same manner that hog's-lard is with us; and, on the whole, the prejudice against it being done away with by habit, I do not know that the former is not preferable to the latter—so much does habit and prejudice enter into the account and make up the sum of our likes and dislikes. We felt very grateful to this gentleman for his opportune present, for he would receive no compensation for it; and the fires were immediately blazing to render his generous donation of practical benefit.

Mr. Johnson returned home about nine o'clock. He was originally a New England sailor, and cast upon this remote coast by some of the vicissitudes common to those of his calling, had finally turned farmer or ranchero. He is a bachelor, with Indian servants, and stated that he had no food prepared for us, but such as was in the house was at our service. A pile of small cheeses, and numerous pans of milk with thick cream upon them, were exhibited on the table, and they disappeared with a rapidity dangerous to the health of those who consumed them.

Mr. J. gave us the first number of the first newspaper ever

published in California, entitled "The Californian," and published and edited at Monterey by Dr. Robert Semple, a native Kentuckian. It was dated about two weeks back. From the columns of this small sheet we gleaned some farther items of general intelligence from the United States, all of great interest to us. The leading paragraph, under the editorial head, was, in substance, a call upon the people of California to set about the organization of a territorial government, with a view to immediate annexation to the United States. This seemed and sounded very odd. We had been travelling in as straight a line as we could, crossing rivers, mountains, and deserts, nearly four months beyond the bounds of civilization, and for the greater distance beyond the boundaries of territory claimed by our government; but here, on the remotest confines of the world as it were, where we expected to visit and explore a foreign country, we found ourselves under American authority, and about to be "annexed" to the American Union. Events such as this are very remarkable, and are well calculated to excite the pride and vanity, if they do not always tally with the reason and judgment, of American citizens and republicans. Distance 17 miles.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Soil of Johnson's rancho—His crops—Price of flour—Soil of the Sacramento valley—Sinclair's rancho—A white woman—Sutter's Fort—New Helvetia—Interview with Captain Sutter—Reflections upon our journey—Table of distances from Independence to San Francisco.

August 31.—The soil of the bottom-land of Mr. Johnson's rancho appears to be fertile and productive of good crops. He settled here last October. A small wheat-field, although the season was not regarded as a good one, produced him 300 bushels, an average of 25 or 30 bushels to the acre. In addition to this he raised a crop of barley, the kernel of which is



the largest I have ever previously seen. I saw corn standing in the field, but it did not look promising,—the ground was evidently too dry for it.

We procured of Mr. Johnson a quantity of unbolted flour at the rate of $8 per 100 lbs.; also some fresh beef, cheese, and butter, (the last three luxuries, which we had not for a long time tasted.) At 1 o'clock we marched south seven miles, and encamped on the bank of a chain of small ponds of water. The grass around the ponds was rank and green, and we were protected from the hot rays of the afternoon sun by the shade of evergreen oaks. This oak, which is the prevailing timber in the valleys of Upper California, although it much resembles the live-oak of Florida, is not precisely the same species. It is much more porous and brittle. We saw on the plain several flocks of antelope, one of which numbered at least two hundred. A species of the jackal, called here the *coyote*, frequently approached within a few rods of us. Large numbers of wild ducks were flying about and swimming in the ponds. We shot several of these. Distance 7 miles.

September 1.—A clear, pleasant morning. We took a south course down the valley, and at 4 o'clock, p. m., reached the residence of John Sinclair, Esq., on the Rio de los Americanos, about two miles east of Sutter's Fort. The valley of the Sacramento, as far as we have travelled down it, is from 30 to 40 miles in width, from the foot of the low benches of the Sierra Nevada, to the elevated range of hills on the western side. The composition of the soil appears to be such as to render it highly productive, with proper cultivation, of the small grains. The ground is trodden up by immense herds of cattle and horses which grazed here early in the spring, when it was wet and apparently miry. We passed through large evergreen oak groves, some of them miles in width. Game is very abundant. We frequently saw deer feeding quietly one or two hundred yards from us, and large flocks of antelopes.

Mr. Sinclair, with a number of horses and Indians, was engaged in threshing wheat. His crop this year, he informed me, would be about three thousand bushels. The soil of his

rancho, situated in the bottom of the Rio de los Americanos, just above its junction with the Sacramento, is highly fertile. His wheat-fields are secured against the numerous herds of cattle and horses, which constitute the largest item in the husbandry of this country, by ditches about five feet in depth, and four or five feet over at the surface. The dwelling-house and out-houses of Mr. Sinclair, are all constructed after American models, and present a most comfortable and neat appearance. It was a pleasant scene, after having travelled many months in the wilderness, to survey this abode of apparent thrift and enjoyment, resembling so nearly those we had left in the far-off country behind us.

In searching for the ford over the Rio de los Americanos, in order to proceed on to Sutter's Fort, I saw a lady of a graceful though fragile figure, dressed in the costume of our own countrywomen. She was giving some directions to her female servants, and did not discover me until I spoke to her and inquired the position of the ford. Her pale and delicate, but handsome and expressive countenance, indicated much surprise, produced by my sudden and unexpected salutation. But collecting herself, she replied to my inquiry in vernacular English, and the sounds of her voice, speaking our own language, and her civilized appearance, were highly pleasing. This lady, I presume, was Mrs. Sinclair, but I never saw her afterwards.

Crossing the Rio de los Americanos, the waters of which, at this season, are quite shallow at the ford, we proceeded over a well-beaten road to Sutter's Fort, arriving there when the sun was about an hour and a half high. Riding up to the front gate I saw two Indian sentinels pacing to and fro before it, and several Americans, or *foreigners*, (as all who are not Californians by birth are here called,) sitting in the gateway, dressed in buckskin pantaloons and blue sailors' shirts with white stars worked on the collars. I inquired if Captain Sutter was in the fort? A very small man, with a peculiarly sharp red face and a most voluble tongue, gave the response. He was probably a corporal. He said in substance, that perhaps I was not aware of the great changes which had recently taken place in California;—that the fort now belonged to the United States, and that Captain Sutter, although he was in the fort, had no control over it. He was going into a minute history of the complicated circumstances and events which had produced this result, when I reminded him that we were too much fatigued to listen to a long discourse, but if Captain Sutter was inside the walls, and could conveniently step to the gate a moment, I would be glad to see him. A lazy-looking Indian with a ruminating countenance, after some time spent in parleying, was dispatched with my message to Captain Sutter.



Capt. S. soon came to the gate, and saluted us with much gentlemanly courtesy, and friendly cordiality. He said that events had transpired in the country, which, to his deep regret, had so far deprived him of the control of his own property, that he did not feel authorized to invite us inside of the walls to remain. The fort, he said, was occupied by soldiers, under the pay of the U. S., and commanded by Mr. Kern. I replied to him, that although it would be something of a novelty to sleep under a roof, after our late nomadic life, it was a matter of small consideration. If he would supply us with some meat, a little salt, and such vegetables as he might have, we neither asked nor desired more from his hospitality, which we all knew was liberal, to the highest degree of generosity.

A servant was immediately dispatched with orders to furnish us with a supply of beef, salt, melons, onions, and tomatoes, for which no compensation would be received. We proceeded immediately to a grove of live-oak timber, about two miles west of the fort, and encamped within a half a mile of the Sacramento river. Our fires were soon blazing brightly, added to the light of which was the brilliant effulgence of the moon, now near its full, clothing the tree-tops, and the far-stretching landscape, with a silvery light; and rendering our encampment far more agreeable to me than the confined walls of any edifice erected by human hands.

With sincere and devout thankfulness I laid myself on my hard bed, to sleep once more within the boundaries of civilization. Since we left our homes none of our party have met with

any serious accidents or disasters. With the small number of only nine men, we have travelled from Fort Laramie to Sutter's Fort, a distance of nearly 1700 miles, over trackless and barren deserts, and almost impassable mountains; through tribes of savage Indians, encountering necessarily many difficulties, and enduring great hardships and privations; and here we all are, in good health, with the loss of nothing materially valuable belonging to us, except a single animal, which gave out from fatigue, and was left on the road. We have had no quarrels with Indians, rendering it necessary in self-defence to take their lives; but on the contrary, whenever we have met them on our journey, by our deportment towards them, their friendship has been conciliated, or their hostility softened and disarmed, without striking a blow. We uniformly respected their feelings and their rights, and they respected us. Results so favorable as these, to expeditions constituted as was ours, and acting under such circumstances, are not often recorded. Distance 28 miles.

TABLE *of distances from Independence, Missouri, to Sutter's Fort, on the Sacramento river, Upper California.*

The following is a table of distances from Independence to Sutter's Fort, in California, by the route which I travelled, according to the daily estimate of our marches.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| From Independence, Mo., to Fort Laramie, | 672 | miles. |
| From Fort Laramie to "Pacific Springs," (South Pass,) | 311 | " |
| From the "South Pass," (Pacific Springs,) to Fort Bridger, | 133 | " |
| From Fort Bridger to Salt Lake, | 106 | " |
| From Salt Lake to Mary's river, | 315 | " |
| Down Mary's river to the "Sink," | 274 | " |
| From the "Sink" to Truckee Lake, | 134 | " |
| From Truckee Lake to Johnson's, | 111 | " |
| From Johnson's to Sutter's Fort, | 35 | " |
| Total distance from Independence, Mo., to Sutter's Fort, in California, | 2091 | " |
| The distance from Sutter's Fort by land, to the town of San Francisco, (via the Puebla of San Jose,) near the mouth of the Bay of S. F., and five miles from the Pacific Ocean, is | 200 | " |
| Total, | 2291 | miles. |



## CHAPTER XX.

Account of the disasters to the emigrating parties of 1846—The Oregon emigrants—Causes of delay which resulted in fatal consequences—Generosity of the people of San Francisco, and Capt. Sutter—John Sinclair's statement—Dreadful sufferings of the first party who crossed on the snows—George McKinstry's statement—Journal of one of the sufferers—List of those who perished—Particulars of the death of George Donner and wife—Keysburgh's cannibalism—Interment of the bones by Gen. Kearney's party in June, 1847.

HAVING accomplished the journey from the United States to the civilized districts of Upper California, it is proper that I should give some account of those with whom I started and travelled a portion of the distance.

The great bulk of the emigration of 1846 both to California and Oregon took the old routes of former emigrating parties. The company of Capt. West on Mary's river had a difficulty and a fight with a large party of Digger Indians. In this encounter a Mr. Sallee lost his life from a wound by a poisoned arrow. Mr. Lippincott was wounded in the knee, but he recovered. With this exception all of these, I believe, reached their destination in safety and in good season.

A party consisting of some sixty or eighty wagons bound for Oregon, among whom were the Messrs. Putnam of Lexington, Ky., took the new route to the Wilhamette valley, explored by Mr. Applegate and his party, whom we met on Mary's river. This company became entangled in the Umpqua mountains, (not very distant from the settlements of Oregon,) and after suffering great hardships, were compelled to abandon all their wagons and baggage. With the aid of parties sent for their relief from the Wilhamette valley, nearly all of them, however, reached their destination. Mr. Newton, whom I have previously mentioned, was murdered by some Indians. They professed to be friendly and loitered about Mr. N.'s camp. He suspected