

MR. WOOD'S NARRATIVE.

(Continued.)

Prudence and reasonable regard for our safety, compelled us to keep a careful watch during the night, notwithstanding this, and the fact that some of the company felt little inclination to sleep, one of those exposed to the pitchy darkness of the night, crept stealthily to the spot where we were encamped, and took from beneath the blankets a Colt's revolver, without detection—the surprise of—and particularly as to the loss, who by the way, was one of those who were a little disposed to sleep.

At the first glimpse of dawn we were prepared for a start, but not, however, in this to avoid our engagement made the evening before; for, notwithstanding our intention, they, together with a host of their women and children, as early made their appearance. We proceeded without delay to satisfy their curiosity, and fulfill our promise. Handing a piece of paper, about two and a half inches in diameter, to one of the Indians, directing him to place the same upon a tree about sixty paces distant, they in the meantime having arranged themselves on either side, the shot was made. Not expecting any report, they were completely terrified at the noise caused by the discharge of the gun, particularly the women and children, who set up a terrible yelling, at the same time scattering in every direction. After looking about them and discovering that none of their number had been injured, they at length returned, and being curious to see what effect the gun produced, approached the tree, and examined the paper, which the ball had perforated, and the tree where the same had entered and then departed. They now seemed disposed to treat us with greater respect than they had done. Taking advantage of the impression created upon their minds by what they had just witnessed, we endeavored to fasten upon them the conviction that our small company were able successfully to cope with all they could bring against us, and to warn them that the force of a ball thrown from one of our guns, and the amount of execution it would do, was as nearly equal in proportion to that of a larger gun, as the force of a ball from a rifle is to that of a musket.

It had been our intention to follow the river down, although its course, during from this point northward, was not in the direction we desired to take. Against this, however, the Indians cautioned us, asserting that there were numerous and very large tribes scattered all along the river to its mouth, who would certainly oppose our passing, although their country, besides, on being made to understand the object we had in view, they informed us that our best route, both in point of distance and on account of the Indians, was to leave the river and strike westward.

This advice we, upon the whole, thought best to follow, and accordingly commenced the ascent of the mountain that now lay in our path.

The night of the second day after leaving the river, having pitched our camp, we set about preparing a supper. I would not consume the time in detailing so minutely the circumstances, but a portion of the material of this night's meat, although a morsel delicious and palatable in comparison with some of which we partook later in our journey, and it being the first time within my exploration

as often as it was made, it was wrought upon the belief that the coast could certainly be reached in much less time than it would require to return to the river. After picking our way, the whole of this day through an almost impenetrable forest, we came to a small prairie. This we reached about sunset, worn down with fatigue and feeling, but too acutely the painful sensations occasioned by a long abstinence from food. Here we determined to remain awhile, to hunt for something upon which to subsist.

On leaving the south fork of the Trinity, we had hoped by this time to have gained the sea shore, but in this expectation we were doomed to disappointment. The dim outline of distant mountains still marked the horizon, the sun was when our eyes were first cast in the direction of our route, upon reaching the summit of the first mountain.

In the morning all the party, save a guard for the camp, started out to search for food, and after a short time succeeded in killing several deer. A quantity of venison steak broiled or cooked in the ashes, soon appeased the extreme hunger with which we were suffering. Here we remained several days for the purpose of recovering our well exhausted strength. During our stay at this place, we cured a quantity of moosegon with which, upon resuming our journey, we packed the animals and proceeded on foot ourselves, thinking that by so doing we could certainly take sufficient to last, if not until more could be obtained. But no; on we toiled, faithfully and constantly, until the last of the venison was consumed, and the first, and second, and third day of fasting came and passed.

During all this time our animals suffered intensely for want of food. The only kind that could be obtained for them was leaves and in places even these could be procured only by cutting down trees. Two of them, however, were too far reduced to go further, and we were compelled to leave them behind.

Again we had the good fortune to reach a piece of mountain prairie where we found an abundance of grass for ourselves, and plenty of grain for the animals. At this place we remained three days, collecting and preparing meat for use while traveling. We had now two months less in number, and consequently were obliged to increase the loads of those remaining in order to pack sufficient to keep soul and body together for a reasonable length of time, for as we left our camping place, when or where another would be found was of course uncertain, and to pack our provisions ourselves was a thing out of the question, in our present condition.

Having prepared as large a quantity of meat as our animals could carry, on we went. Disappointment seemed to be our constant companion. Without following us day after day in our zig-zag course, and detailing the occurrences that transpired, suffice it to say ten days passed away without being favored with the sight of any living thing that could be made available or useful for food. Again, was our stock of provisions exhausted. For several days we subsisted upon a species of "nut" resembling the nutmeg, but far more bitter and insipid, and the only way they could be used was by roasting them until crisp and dry. A dose of these we found to be from six to ten, and to be taken about every fifteen minutes—a larger dose or more was certain to operate as an emetic. Our drink was for the greater part of

some danger had befallen him, and immediately hastened to his assistance. I shall not soon forget the scene that was now presented to me. There stood Van Duzen re-charging his rifle; near by lay three grizzly bears, two dead and the third with his back broken. Two others stood near by, grinning and marking in a most remarkable manner, looking first upon their fallen companions and then upon us. As this was my first introduction to "Bruin," and the meeting being so sudden and unexpected, I hesitated a moment whether to approach, and become better acquainted, or remain a spectator. There was a certain something in their appearance that involuntarily brought to mind the many tales I had heard related of their ferocity, which disturbed, and particularly when wounded, I, however, concluded to venture a shot at one of them, and with that intention advanced towards them. Van Duzen perceiving this, called on me to stop, fearing that we might get into trouble. Hoodless of his caution, I approached slowly, intently watching their movements, until within fifteen steps of one of them when I stopped and fired. The shot was a fatal one—the shaggy monster fell, with a howl, dead upon the ground. At the same moment Wilson, who had frequent firing had likewise attracted to the spot, sent a ball through the heart of the remaining bear with a similar result. This you will say was pretty good shooting, to kill five grizzly bears with as many shots out of one hand. But it is nevertheless true. As for myself, I can say, without boasting—although it was my first experience in hunting this kind of game, and although I was conscious of the fact that should my shot fail to be a fatal one, the bear would in all probability be upon me before I could get ten steps from the place where I stood. But I still had room to spare. Our situation had become so desperate, and the conviction fast settling upon our minds that each day passed in the mountains lessened the probability of reaching any settlement in safety, that recklessness and indifference had become a second nature with me.

Our attention having been so completely engrossed in the encounter with the grizzly bear, we had no time for cogitation, and we lost the opportunity of getting any of them. However, before night we succeeded in bringing several deer into camp. At this place we remained five days, feasting and fattening on bear meat, and preparing venison for future use.

Our progress up to this time had been very slow. The distance traveled for day did not exceed an average of seven miles. The appearance of the country now seemed to change—the mountain ridges were less high and abrupt than those over which we had passed, but were more densely covered with timber. Our belief now was that twelve miles further travel would bring us, if not to the coast, at least to a more level country, when our advance would be more rapid and attended with less difficulty and suffering. We therefore resumed our journey with lighter hearts and more buoyant hopes.

Our estimation of the distance to the coast or valley, subsequently proved to be not far from correct. The redwood forests, however, through which we had to pass, were more dense and difficult to penetrate than any before; consequently our progress was in proportion retarded. Dr. Gregg expressed a desire to measure the circumference of some of these plants of the forest, and occasionally called up-

my mind which to-day is as fresh as if it occurred but yesterday. Our stock of flour was exhausted; the almost continual rain, however, had so saturated our entire camp equipage—the flour among the rest—that there had formed on the inner surface of the sacks in which it had been carried, a kind of paste, which the dampness had soured and moulded. This was carefully packed off, softened with water, and equally divided among the party when each one, after the same had been submitted to a process of hardening before the fire, devoured his portion with an avidity that would have astonished and shocked one with an appetite more delicate than ours.

Nothing now remained of the stock of provisions that constituted our outfit, flour, pork, beans—all were gone. The night of the 13th of November we were compelled to reduce supplies to our blankets. Our animals, however, had been without feed for the previous two days, but were now luxuriating in the grass, which had tended to render our situation the more supportable; for the preservation of our animals, next to food ourselves, was of the highest importance, because upon them we depended for the packing of our blankets and provisions, when fortunate enough to find any of the latter.

During the succeeding day, a halt was several times called to consider the proposition submitted by some to return—but as often as it was made it was overruled, upon the belief that the coast could certainly be reached in much less time than it would require to return to the river. After picking our way the whole of this day through an almost impenetrable forest, we came to a small prairie. This we reached about sunset, worn down with fatigue, and feeling but too acutely the painful sensations occasioned by a long abstinence from food. Here we determined to remain awhile, to hunt for something upon which to subsist.

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the time, a tea made of *Yerba Buena*—an herb that resembles mint. It seemed that each scene of toil and suffering which we had been compelled to undergo, after leaving these recruiting places—that were to us like oases to the traveler across the sandy desert—was but the prelude to another of a worse and more trying character. Not one was without its quota of hardship, privation, and almost starvation. At length we reached another opening in this world wide forest, and without first selecting a camping place, as was usual with us, we hastened to search for food. We ascended a rocky eminence that overlooked the country for a considerable distance around. Upon gaining the summit, one of the most attractive and thrilling scenes opened to our view. To us it was unquestionably more interesting from the fact that we were laboring under the not very agreeable sensations produced by two days and a half total abstinence from food. On one side were feeding little knots of deer, on another and nearer to us was a large herd of elk, and still in another direction both were to be seen. After a few moments' consultation we determined to attack the elk, and accordingly separated in order to approach them from different directions.

Scarcely a half hour had elapsed, before I heard the report of a rifle, and two more in quick succession. From the direction, I supposed it to be Van Duzon, and from the rapid succession in which the shots were fired, I was fearful that some danger had befallen him, and immediately hastened to his assistance. I shall not soon forget the scene that was now presented to me. There stood Van Duzon re-charging his rifle; near by lay three grizzly bears, two dead and the third with his back broken. Two others stood near by, grinning and snarling in a most amiable manner, looking first upon their fallen companions and then upon us. As this was my first introduction to Bruin, and the meeting being so sudden and unexpected, I hesitated a moment whether to approach and become better acquainted, or remain a spectator. There was a certain something in their appearance that involuntarily brought to mind the many tales I had heard related of their ferocity, which disturbed, and particularly when wounded; I, however, concluded to venture a shot at one of them, and with that intention advanced towards them. Van Duzon perceiving this, called on me to stop, fearing that we might get into trouble. Moodless of his caution, I approached slowly, intently watching their movements, until within fifteen steps of one of them when I stopped and fired. The shot was a fatal one—the sluggish monster fell, with a howl, dead upon the ground. At the same moment Wilson, whom the frequent firing had likewise attracted to the spot, sent a ball through the heart of the remaining bear with a similar result. This you will say was pretty good shooting, to kill five grizzly bears with as many shots out of one hand. But it is nevertheless true. As for myself I can say without boasting—although it was my first exper-

on some of us to assist him. Not being in the most amiable state of mind and feeling at this time, and having neither ambition to gratify nor desire to enlighten the curious world, we not infrequently answered his calls with abundant abuse. His obstinate perseverance, however, in one or two instances, resulted in success. One redwood tree was measured the diameter of, which was found to be twenty-two feet, and it was no unusual thing to find these trees reaching the enormous height of three hundred feet. This may excite incredulity abroad, but trees have since been found in this redwood forest of much greater dimensions.

(To be continued.)

THE HUMBOLDT TIMES.
EUREKA, HUMBOLDT COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1863.
Business Directory | The Market Home. | where necessity had reduced me to a life 'the times, a few words of Trida Lucia--an | on some of 'ur to assist him. Not be ar