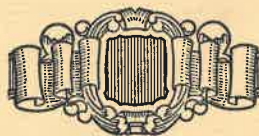


5343 6-

Description of a Journey and Visit to the Pawnee Indians

who live on the Platte River, a tributary to the Missouri,
70 miles from its mouth by Brn. Gottlieb F. Oehler
and David Z. Smith, April 22 — May 18, 1851,
to which is added

A Description of the Manners and Customs
of the Pawnee Indians by Dr. D. Z. Smith.



Reprinted from the Moravian Church Miscellany of 1851-1852
New York, 1914

DESCRIPTION

A JOURNEY AND VISIT TO THE PAWNEE INDIANS, WHO LIVE ON THE PLATTE RIVER, A TRIBUTARY OF THE MISSOURI. 70 MILES FROM ITS MOUTH, BY THE BRN. GOTTLIEB F. OEHLER AND DAVID Z. SMITH. (April 22d—May 18th, 1851.)

Having in the course of the winter written letters of inquiry to Mr. Samuel Allis, teacher of a government-school for Pawnee children, and Major Barrow, U. S. agent for the Pawnees, both residing at Bellevue, and having received letters from both, of an encouraging nature, we left Westfield on the morning of April 22d, on our intended trip. Br. Paul Oehler accompanied us to Weston, in order to take the wagon back, which was to convey us thither. Passing by the Baptist mission-station, Briggs' Vale, where we called in a few minutes, we then struck the prairie, which we kept till our arrival at Fort Leavenworth, about twenty-four miles from Westfield. This is a very pretty prairie, undulating, and at places quite broken, with here and there a high bluff or mound, rising above the surrounding country. "Pilot Bluff," a few miles from Leavenworth, stands picturesque in the prairie, and affords a beautiful prospect. We passed a company of infantry in the prairie, traveling from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Gibson. The quartermaster at the fort, Mr. Ogden, with whom Br. Oehler was previously acquainted, received us very courteously, and gave us a letter of introduction to the quartermaster at Fort Kearney, in case we should be obliged to go that way on our return home and need any assistance.—Fort Leavenworth is pleasantly situated on a high prairie, near the bank of the Missouri, about 35 miles above the mouth of Kansas River. It is a place of considerable business, in the way of furnishing military stores for the more western forts. At the wharf a large warehouse has been built by the Government for the purpose of depositing military stores. The premises are kept in a very neat and cleanly condition, and a large garden has been prepared near by, for the soldiers to raise vegetables for their use. After crossing the Missouri on a horse-boat, which is kept here at the expense of the Government, we proceeded towards Weston, situated about five miles above. The first part of our road lay through the bottom, in wet weather almost impassable on account of the mud, but at present dry, though rather rough. The latter half of the road lay along the river, on the side of

prettiest that we have yet seen in the West. The town is situated in a rolling prairie, with some timber on all sides in view. The whole prairie being occupied by the town and adjacent fields, checkered off by fences into lots of a few acres each, gives it the appearance of an old-country settlement, though it was commenced only about fourteen years ago. Land here sells from fifteen to twenty dollars per acre. The village numbers about 800 inhabitants. The houses are mostly one-story frame, neatly painted white, with brick chimneys, surrounded by neat yards and grass-plots. Almost every house is furnished with a lightning-rod, which struck us as something rather unusual in this western country. The whole scenery around reminded us forcibly of the landscape around Bethlehem, Pa. In the village three churches, all of brick, have been erected, belonging to the O. S. and N. S. Presbyterians, and Campbellites. The courthouse, a brick edifice, stands in the centre of the town, in an open square. A few days ago two destructive fires occurred in the village, consuming a whole row of houses facing the square, and destroying property to the amount of 20,000 dollars, supposed to be the work of incendiaries. We were detained here two days, the coach from above, in which we were to proceed, instead of arriving on the evening of the 23rd, did not come in till the evening of the 25th.

26th. At length, after breakfast, we were enabled to leave Savannah and proceed on our journey. Our traveling company was very disagreeable, being shockingly profane. In traveling in these parts one might almost suppose that all the inhabitants were given to profanity, and the name of God and of the Savior is used in the most revolting manner. As we traveled on the country continued more or less broken, the timber becoming scarcer the further North we proceeded. Oregon, through which we passed in the afternoon, is a newly settled but thriving town, with a tolerably populous neighborhood. Soon after leaving Oregon we left the bluffs to our right and descended into a most beautiful bottom country, bordering on the Missouri River. The bottom is about ten or twelve miles wide, quite level, bounded by a line of high bluffs to the right hand, at the base of which our road lay. About five or six miles off to our left a strip of timber (the only to be seen) from four to five miles wide skirted the river all the rest of the bottom, and the neighboring high bluffs were one continued prairie. The soil is splendid, but all the most eligible sites are already occupied by settlers, who hold their claims at enormous prices. Timber is very scarce, and so is stone. Not a pebble is to be seen either on the bluffs, or in the bottom. The settlers are obliged to resort to ditching and mud-fencing. This is done

tacies, according to their opinion, are: 1st, the general apostasy of all the nations of the earth to idolatry; 2dly, the apostasy of the Jews, and 3dly the appostacy of the different sects calling themselves christians, etc.

About sunset we arrived at Trading Point, the commencement of a continuation of bluffs on both sides of the river, called "Council Bluffs." On the opposite side of the river is Bellevue, the residence of Mr. Allis, who keeps a government-school for Pawnee children, and of the Pawnee, Otoe and Omahaw Agent, Maj. Barrow; there are also here two trading establishments, and blacksmith-shops for the Indians; about a mile below, on the same side of the river, is the Mission Station of the General Assembly's (O. S.) Board, among the Otoes and Omahaws, under the superintendence of Mr. E. McKinney. Immediately after our arrival at Trading Point we had a conversation with Mr. Allis, who happened to be on that side of the river. He told us that he and Mr. McKinney had been expecting our arrival, and that the Pawnees, to whom he had mentioned our intention of coming to see them, were anxiously awaiting us.

29th. During the night we experienced one of those sudden changes common to this country; in the morning when we awoke the wind was blowing a gale, and it was snowing very fast. About 10 o'clock we thought we would venture to cross the Missouri to the opposite side; the attempt was accompanied with great peril to our lives. The wind beat the water into the skiff, the ferryman's hands became so benumbed that he could hardly pull the oars any more, and by the combined effect of the gale and current we drifted about a mile below the usual landing-place. Mr. Allis stood watching on shore, ready to help us, and as soon as the skiff touched the bank he held to it, and having fastened it he assisted us with our trunks up the steep bank. Having proceeded to his house, we were glad to warm our numb limbs by the fire. The provisions, for the accommodation of Mr. Allis' family and Pawnee children, are wretched, right on the bank of the Missouri. The dwelling which is occupied by them was formerly a trading establishment and is almost in ruins. The family, besides ten or twelve Pawnee children, and several white children, are obliged to live in one small room, the only one hardly fit to be occupied, about eighteen feet square, which serves for parlor, sitting-room, and kitchen, and a sleeping apartment for the children above. Mr. and Mrs. Allis are devoted missionaries. They were among the first missionaries of the American Board, who nearly twenty years ago commenced a mission among the Pawnees; since the abandonment of that mission a few years ago,

however, are decaying and falling down, and it is probably the intention of the missionaries to remove them altogether, as such fortifications, though they may guard against depredations of the Indians, still have a tendency of creating prejudices on their part. Our reception at the mission was very cordial, and we had reason for thankfulness to the Lord in providing such kind friends for us. The superintendent of this mission is the Rev. E. McKinney, who previously to his commencing the mission among the Otoes and Omahaws, had been laboring among the Creeks and Choctaws. They have at present about thirty-five children and youth in the institution, Otoes and Omahaws, and a few Puncaws and Pawnees. On our introduction to the children, the Pawnee children pushed themselves in advance of all the rest, in order to be the first in shaking hands with us, thinking they had the best right to us, who were going to visit their people. The two tribes, the Otoes and Omahaws, among whom this mission is located, are still, like all the western prairie tribes in their originally savage state, not having as yet, like the eastern tribes of Indians on the North American continent, made any advancement in civilization, until within a few years having lived remote from the good as well as the evil influences of the whites. The greater part of the year they roam, like the other prairie Indians, over the extensive prairies on this side of the Rocky Mountains, chasing the buffalo, which is the same to them as the seal is to the Greenlander. Their proximity to the whites, however, and the facilities afforded them for obtaining intoxicating liquors, during the short time that they remain at their villages, has latterly had a demoralizing and degenerating effect upon them; and the counteracting influence of the gospel seems as yet to have made no visible impression upon any of them. Still the missionaries, who are laboring here, are sowing the seed in tears, trusting to the promise of our Lord: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." And surely, when we look back at the labors of our first missionaries among the heathen, and consider how the Lord eventually crowned their toils, who will doubt His ability and willingness to do the same thing at the present day, when even the heathen tribes are begging to have missionaries among them—an instance of which we witnessed at a council, which Mr. McKinney held with a delegation of the principal chiefs of the Puncaws, a tribe of wild Indians living about 150 miles up the Missouri, who had come to Council Bluffs expressly for the purpose of soliciting missionaries. The following is a speech which the principal speaker made to Mr. McKinney:

same? Or have we forgotten the history of our first missions among them, the piety and consistent christian lives of our first Indian converts, their persecutions from their heathen brethren, and their sufferings even unto death for the sake of the gospel? If we wish to find where the fault lies we must look for it in *our own hearts*. *There* it is. *There* is a lack of that missionary spirit which actuated our forefathers! *There* is a lack of that true Spirit of our Savior, who in his missionary capacity to a *world* of sinners has set us a pattern to follow. We have sadly degenerated, and the spirit of the world has taken a powerful hold upon our minds; and it is meet for us all *seriously, earnestly, prayerfully*, to cry: "Turn us unto thee, oh! Lord, and we shall be turned; *renew our days as of old!*"—

In order to make our visit from Bellevue to the Pawnees, it was necessary that we should be well supplied with provisions, as the Pawnees were at present very much straitened for the necessaries of life. These Mr. McKinney kindly volunteered to furnish us with, besides sufficient extra to make a small feast of cracker and coffee for the chiefs of each village. Mr. Allis was recommended to us by all as the best interpreter, and on account of his acquaintance with the Pawnees, and having their good will, it was altogether an advantage to us to secure his kind offices, which he was willing to afford. Mr. Sharpee promised to furnish us two mules, and Mr. Reed, the farmer at the mission, gave us the use of his light two-horse wagon. Thus before the close of the week our arrangements were made to commence our journey to the Pawnees the following Monday, May 5th.

Sunday, May the 4th.—We were both called upon to take an active part in the meetings to-day at the Presbyterian mission. As it is very unusual for any adult Indians to attend these meetings on the Lord's day, the exercises are conducted altogether in the English language. In the forenoon there is Sunday school for the children of the institution. At about 2 o'clock, P. M., there is public preaching, which, besides all at the mission, Mr. Allis and his Pawnee children, and some of the white families from Bellevue, attend. In the evening there is a meeting in which a discourse is addressed particularly to the Indian children, but which is attended by all. In these evening meetings different scripture truths are presented to the children in a simple narrative style, and not only the children themselves, but also those employed in the mission, seem to be very much interested in these instructive meetings.

In the afternoon br. Oehler, in company with Mr. Reed, the farmer of the mission, visited the village of the Omahaws,

with the Mormon settlement of Kaneshville, beautifully spread out before us, situated in one of the valleys between the bluffs about six or eight miles distant, beyond the river; on our left, in the middle ground, lay the valleys of the Great and Little Papillion, with the Omahaw village, like a cluster of potatoe hills, situated on the opposite bank, near their confluence, with here and there a clump of timber along both streams, while far away in the distance could plainly be distinguished the valley of the Platte, with the timber, growing on its numerous islands.

After proceeding some five miles in the prairie, we met a large train of Oregon emigrants, who, by some interested person, had been induced to turn about, in order to take a road, which would lead them to another ferry on the Elkhorn river, (a branch of the Platte,) and although Mr. Sharpee represented to them that the road they had been travelling was the better, still his representations were of no avail, and they preferred to travel a route 15 or 20 miles further than ours, and much worse bridged across the mudholes. A large company of wild Indians (Omahaws) was hovering on horseback around the train, watching a favorable opportunity to steal something, or perchance, should a beef stray some distance from the rest, (a good opportunity for which was given by their turning back again,) to drive it behind a bluff and slay it.

The sight of a large train of 20 or 30 wagons, travelling in long single file, with four or more yoke of oxen or cows attached to each, is really picturesque; and we had frequently the opportunity on our journey of beholding such a long line of white-covered wagons, presenting, at a distance of several miles, a beautiful appearance. During the day we passed several trains, destined for Oregon, Salt Lake, or California. In the Oregon trains we observed many *cows* yoked in teams, besides numbers of them driven along loose; milchcows commanding a high price in Oregon.

When the sun had nearly reached the western horizon, we arrived at our camping ground,—a small clump of trees on the Great Papillion,—a spot generally selected by the emigrants, at the end of the first day's travel, west of the Bluffs. The animals in our *train*, consisting of a horse, a pony, belonging to our Pawnee friend, and two mules, were first driven to the water, of which they stood in great need. The horse was then hobbled, *i.e.*, a rope tied around both forelegs, so short, as merely to enable it to get along slowly to graze, and to hinder it from straying too far away. The pony and the two mules were secured by means of a rope about 30 feet long, tied around the neck of each, and dragging behind them, so as to facilitate

are passing through their country, they frequently apply to them for tobacco, or some other small presents. It seems that in the above instance, while the Pawnees were hovering around the train, they were refused a present, and one of the men, with the ox-whip, struck an Indian, who came near, which, of course, roused the feelings of the Indians. These accordingly drove off a beef or two, which were then despatched.—

The Elkhorn at this place is a deep and rapid stream, about 20 yards wide. Two French halfbreeds are living here, in order to keep a ferry for the emigrants.—Having passed over the Elkhorn, our road lay across a bottom prairie extending between the Elkhorn and Platte rivers. We now turned off from the wagon road, taking the village for our landmark; without any track across the prairie, and soon arrived on the north bank of the Platte.—The grass being somewhat more advanced in the bottom than on the high bluff on the opposite side, where the village is situated, the Pawnees had turned their ponies to graze in the bottom, watched by the women and children.—Many women were also engaged in digging for roots with their hoes, provisions being at present very scarce among them. We were soon surrounded by a crowd of young men, women and children, who by their smiling countenances seemed to bid us welcome.—It is difficult to describe our feelings on the present occasion. We were now in sight of the village, where the people lived, whom we had come to visit, in order to give them the opportunity of accepting or rejecting the offer of having Missionaries to live among them, to lead them to the Savior of sinners. A wide stream, over a mile across, separated us from the object of our journey, and could not be crossed without getting assistance from the very people, for whose benefit we had come. From the conversation of Mr. Allis and Mr. Sharpee with the Indians there seemed to be some difficulty in getting help, originating in a jealousy existing between the Chief in our company and the principal Chief of the village. Meantime it commenced raining, and a strong, chilly wind was blowing, which forced us to wrap ourselves in our blankets. In this perplexity nearly an hour was spent. At length a messenger was despatched across the river to inform the principal chief of the village, Siskatuppe, of our arrival, with the request that he would send us some men to assist us to cross. After another hour's patient waiting we were cheered by seeing the chief with about twenty men coming to our help.—The ford of the river is only about four feet at the deepest places, but what makes this river peculiarly perilous in crossing is the shifting quicksand at the bottom, so that, while crossing, it is necessary to keep constantly moving;—for

a feast of coffee and crackers, which he had prepared for the chiefs, during which he intended to make inquiries respecting his stolen horse. When we arrived Mr. Sharpee informed us that, as the principal men were now assembled, it would be a convenient opportunity for us to hold a council with them. We accordingly commenced by informing them of our object. The jealousy between the chiefs, however, became apparent, and after some consultation among themselves Siskatuppe intimated that some of the chiefs were not present, and as the business before us was of great importance to the whole band they ought also to be summoned. It was, therefore, resolved immediately to adjourn to his lodge, in order to receive our communications. Accordingly all the chiefs and braves having been assembled, we were informed that they were now ready to hear us. Br. Smith then in a speech, which was interpreted by Mr. Allis, informed them of the object of our visit. Hereupon Siskatuppe made an address, welcoming us in the kindest manner and hoping that we might send missionaries among them. Br. Oehler then, in an address, explained to them more particularly the object which missionaries have in view, and that it was especially our present aim among them to find out whether they were desirous not only of having their outward condition bettered, but of having the missionaries among them to teach them about a Savior, who came into this world to save us from our sins, to preach whom was our first and principal design. Several other chiefs and braves then made speeches, expressive of their satisfaction at our coming to see them, and welcoming us to live with them, promising us their protection; so that we should in no wise be hindered by any of their people; and that we might rest assured that our cattle and all other property which we might bring along with us should not be destroyed or molested by any one. Moreover, they acknowledged that they needed instruction, and that they would all be willing to listen to us. We were very much pleased with the apparent earnestness with which these remarks were made, and have no doubt that they made these promises in good faith. Before us were thus assembled the *nobility* of the village,—the chiefs and braves, besides numbers of the common people, at least 500 in all, sitting in solemn council. What a spectacle for the humble missionaries of the cross! Here were the representatives of a village, numbering at least 2,500 souls, deliberating upon the acceptance or rejection of missionaries,—holding a council, unconsciously, whether the time in the providence of the Lord had at length arrived, when they should again be instructed in the knowledge of the “*Unknown God*,” whom they, and their fath-

May 8th.—Early in the morning we were awakened by the shrill voices of the Pawnee women, who were engaged in cleaning up the lodge, and collecting their hoes, previous to their going out to the fields to prepare the ground for planting corn. Our breakfast being over, and having had our animals brought from the pasture, we, together with the gentleman from Fort Kearney and his interpreter, started for the upper village, distant about 25 miles, accompanied by our old friend Gatarritatkutz and another Pawnee. Our road was again for several miles across the high prairie. We then descended into the bottom prairie of the Platte, travelling about five miles in sight of the river, when we made a halt near the stream in order to prepare dinner. The situation here pleased us very much, as very suitable for a mission station, should the Pawnees be permanently located where they at present reside. The timber on the islands in the Platte is very easily obtained here. The prairie bottom is from two to three miles wide, gently ascending to the bluffs, and extends about ten miles along the Platte, before the bluffs again approach the river. A mile or two from where we took our lunch a beautiful spring of never failing water gushes forth from the bluff. After dinner, having permitted our animals to graze a while, we proceeded on our journey, travelling partly on the high prairie, after ascending the bluff, and partly in the bottom. At a certain place, as we were travelling along, we noticed, that our Pawnee friends rode aside to a spot, where their attention seemed to be rivetted upon something on the ground. Inquiring what it was, they informed us, that at that place about nine or ten months ago, a Sioux chief had been killed by the Pawnees. It seems, he had made a hostile incursion upon the Pawnees, with a company of his people, and having found some squaws engaged at work in their fields, he had killed them. The Pawnees, irritated at this unprovoked attack, immediately made up a party, who hotly pursued their enemies, and, the horse of the Sioux chief being wearied, and not able to keep up with the rest, he called to his men: "Stop not for me, but save yourselves; I shall die fighting." His pursuers soon came up with him and killed him, fighting bravely. The spot where he had been killed still presented the marks of Indian barbarity; stones, arrows, and small pieces of the skull, which had been cleft by their tomahawks, lying around,—the bones having been carried away with the carcass by the wolves of the prairie. We turned away in disgust from a place, which had been the scene of such a barbarous atrocity, praying only the more fervently to the Lord, that the passions of these poor people might be softened down

wished to look at them while dancing, we were welcome to come out and see them.—After a little while we went out and looked at them for some time, while they were engaged in these religious exercises. Our hearts melted, and our eyes filled with tears at the thought of the benighted state of their minds, living without *Christ*, and without *hope*. We were not long engaged in these mournful reflections, when a messenger arrived inviting us to a feast. We followed the messenger, who led us to a lodge, which we entered. Our host, who had prepared a feast for us, was no other than the chief of the Grand Pawnee Band, and principal chief of the whole Pawnee nation. He received us in a very warm and affectionate manner, embraced us, and welcomed us among his people. His name is Asseruregar-rigu;—he seems to be extremely old, on the verge of the grave, yet, in spite of his great age, is still very much respected by his nation. After being invited to sit down on mats, a dish of green corn soup was placed before us, which was very palatable. The old man complained, that the corn had not been sufficiently boiled, as he had ordered it to be put over when he heard of our arrival, and had been anxious to be the first to welcome us by a feast.—

Our repast being finished, we were yet invited to several feasts prepared by the chiefs of the village, whereupon we returned to the medicine lodge. In the evening a council of the chiefs and braves was called, in order to inform them of the business upon which we had come to visit them. We were received in the most cordial manner, embraced by several of the chiefs, and after informing them of our object the principal chief of the Pawnee tribe, aforementioned, made a reply to the following effect: "It appears to me this evening as though I had been dead a long time and had suddenly to-day risen from the dead,—so glad am I to hear the news that teachers are willing to come among us, in order to live with us and instruct us. We shall welcome you among us, and the chiefs will see to it, that your property and cattle shall be protected;—I hope you will come *soon* to live with us. I am now a very old man,—I must soon go hence; therefore come *soon* that I may behold the missionaries living among my people before I die." Speeches to a similar effect were then made by Leezikutz, chief of the Republican band, Terrericawaw, chief of the Topages (pronounced Tuppay) band, and two or three other inferior chiefs, which were all interpreted; and finally a chief named Lalogehanesarn (or Fatty, as he is called by the whites, from his corpulence, something very unusual among wild Indians) closed by making a long appeal to the chiefs, delivered in a very loud and sonorous voice, exhorting them to *keep* the prom-

ed in igniting. In the evening we arrived at the Lower Village, where we staid over night at Siskatuppe's lodge.

May 10th.—Towards morning a very heavy thundergust passed over the village, and the water came pouring into the lodge, from the small opening above (which is made to let out the smoke), and the shrill voices of the women, who seemed to be scolding one another while engaged in cleaning up the water, disturbed us considerably in our slumbers. In the morning the Pawnees informed us that the Platte was rising; we, therefore, hastened to get ready for travelling, and crossed the river without much difficulty, in the same manner as at the first time. Arrived at the opposite bank, we made a present of some tobacco to our Pawnee friends, for assisting us in crossing the river. A large company of Pawnees followed us, who intended going to the Omahaw village in order to trade for corn. When we arrived at the ferry of the Elkhorn, a heavy gust was threatening to overtake us, and we had hardly crossed, secured our baggage, and got into the hut of the ferrymen, when a furious hail-storm passed over us. The rain having detained us so long, that it was impossible to reach another camping ground by daylight, we pitched our tent here for the night.

May 11th.—During the night, another gust passed over us, but our tent kept us dry and comfortable. One of the ferrymen, who had arrived during the night from Council Bluffs, informed us that the bridge across the Papilion, over which we had passed, had been washed away by the high water occasioned by the heavy rains, and that he had been obliged to swim the stream, which had swollen to the size of a river. We, therefore concluded to take another route, which would lead along a high ridge between the Great and Little Papilion, and strike the former opposite the Omahaw village, at the confluence of the two streams, where we hoped to get assistance, should we find any difficulty in crossing.

When we arrived at the place, we found both streams very much swollen by the heavy rains. Collecting some wood together, we made a fire, and prepared our dinner, while the party of Pawnees, who had followed us, were busied in crossing the Little Papilion, in order to get to the Omahaw village. After we had finished our meal, and had come to the crossing of the Great Papilion, preparations were made for getting our wagon, baggage, and ourselves on the other side and here we found Mr. Sharpee, who has travelled several times to the Rocky Mountains, and was accustomed to meet with such exigencies as the present, to be of invaluable service to us. Under his direction the tent-cloth was spread out on the ground, upon

took passage in her down the river. On the evening of the 16th the boat arrived at Weston, and in the afternoon of the 17th left there for Kansas, where we arrived at dark. After breakfast on the following morning, the 18th, we proceeded to *Westfield*, eight miles, on foot, where we arrived just as the congregation were leaving the church after the service, which had been held by the national assistant, Frederic Samuel—truly thankful to the Lord to find all well at home, after an absence of nearly four weeks.

DESCRIPTION

OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PAWNEE INDIANS

(By BR. D. Z. SMITH.)

BANDS OR CLANS.—All the Indian tribes are subdivided into bands or clans. The *Pawnees* have among them four distinct bands, viz., the Loups (pronounced *Loos*), the Republicans, the Topages (Tuppays), and the Grand Pawnees. Each band has at its head a Chief, among whom, however, the Chief of the Grand Pawnees, Asseruregarrigu, is considered the Principal Chief of the whole tribe.

VILLAGES, LOCALITIES, FORMER MISSIONARIES, &c.—The Pawnees live in two villages at present, both on the South side of the Platte or Nebraska river. The lower village lies about 50 miles from Bellevue, and about 10 or 15 miles above the mouth of the Elkhorn river, the first important tributary of the Platte from the North; and the upper village is situated about 20 or 25 miles above the lower, nearly opposite the mouth of the Loup Fork of the Platte, the next branch of any consequence above the Elkhorn. Both villages are situated on eminences, so that the approach of an enemy can easily be observed, and a sharp lookout is constantly kept in order to guard against any sudden surprise from a hostile force. Sentinels are constantly posted on all the surrounding heights, who can immediately by signs, known among the Indians, transmit intelligence in case of impending danger. During the night, sentinels are constantly perched upon the tops of the lodges, to guard against any unexpected nocturnal attack. When we were on our return, and remained over night at the Loup village, a report, probably a false alarm, had reached there during the day, that a large war-party of Sioux had lately been seen near the head waters of the Elkhorn river. During the night sentinels were as usual posted upon the lodges, a little more noisy, however, than generally, yelling to one another and singing, nearly the whole night. Upon our inquiring why the sen-

security against future incursions, and prove a safeguard, when our mission will once be established among them.

LANGUAGE.—The Pawnee language is said to be altogether different from the languages of the surrounding prairie tribes. The Otoes, the Ioways, the Osages, the Kansas or Caws, the Omahaws, the Puncaws, etc., seem all to speak dialects of the same language, the Dakota; while the Pawnee language seems, by its great difference, to point back to the earliest periods of the residence of the Indians in this country, when a disruption may have taken place, that formed them into a distinct nation.

POPULATION, LODGES, etc.—The lower village consists of about 80 lodges, with a population of nearly 2,500; and in the upper village there are between 140 and 150 lodges, the population amounting perhaps to 3,500. On approaching a village, the lodges have the appearance of so many small hillocks, of a conical form, huddled up together in the closest possible manner, with only narrow passages between for walking, and the rest of the space filled up by pens, formed of stakes, for confining their ponies during the night, to guard them from being suddenly taken off by a warlike party of another tribe.

The Pawnee lodges are of a circular form, large and spacious in the interior; many of them being 50 feet in diameter. Three and sometimes four circular rows of forked trunks of trees are placed upright, at appropriate distances from each other. The row nearest the centre consists of only four such upright timbers, about 15 or 20 feet high, while the crotches in the more exterior rows are shorter and more numerous, in proportion as the circumference is greater. These forks or crotches support thick crossbeams, upon which a frame of long poles is laid, extending from the ground at the outer circumference of the lodge to the top, leaving only an opening at the apex, of about four feet in diameter, to answer the double purpose of letting in the light, and letting out the smoke. Upon the frame work of poles, willow osiers are laid, and the whole is then covered with prairie sod from 12 to 18 inches thick. Immediately below the opening above, a hole is sunk in the centre for the fire-place, common to all the residents of the lodge. From five to ten families, generally related together, have a common occupancy of one lodge, governed by a head man, who may be styled the lodge chief. Around the circumference of the lodge are recesses for sleeping, partitioned off for each family, resembling the berths on board of steamboats, many of which are screened in front and on the sides by willow-twigs laid above each other, tied fast to a frame, which, partly with the reddish bark on, and partly white from having the bark taken off, exhibit considerable taste in those who wrought them.

a scarce article, and secondly, because anything that is salted and dried, imbibes moisture in damp weather, and sooner becomes rancid than meat dried without salt.

Besides the buffalo, as their main subsistence, they raise some corn, beans, and pumpkins. As they use no other agricultural implements than hoes, their fields are not very extensive. For suitable spots of cultivation they generally select the mouth of a ravine, or any spot where, by the washing of the rains, the ground has become loose and mellow, and consequently the sod may more easily be extirpated than in the prairies generally, where the ground can only be prepared by turning the thick sod by means of a large prairie plough, and three or four yoke of oxen.

Their fields are not enclosed by fences or any other kind of protection. Having no other stock but horses, which are constantly herded and watched during the day time, and shut up in enclosures in the village during the night, fences are unnecessary. While absent from their homes, their fields are subject to depredations from prairie wolves and deer, which however no ordinary fence could restrain. Because these poor people have no other agricultural implements than hoes, the spots which they are obliged to select for fields are often at great distances from each other, and frequently from five to eight miles from their village. When abroad, to prepare and plant them in the spring, and gather the corn in the fall, they are often exposed to attacks of their enemies. While the husband is watching from some neighboring eminence to guard against the stealthy approach of any hostile force, the wife is engaged in the labor of the field. With fear and trembling their field-labor is thus performed, and many a one, while so employed, is suddenly fallen upon and killed by a marauding party of enemies.

When we visited them, they particularly requested us "to beg their Great Father, the President, that he should be so kind and again break up some ground for them, as he had done in former years, that they might be able to plant more corn." We have brought in the petition of these destitute people before the proper Department at Washington, and it is greatly to be desired that our benevolent Government may do something for them in their wretched state.

As has already been remarked, they were in an almost starving condition when we visited them. The hunt had proved unsuccessful, so that in the lower village they had no meat whatever, and had to depend upon the little corn that they had raised the preceding year. In the upper village they were also

form, and almost feminine in their features, the women are short and low, with stooping gait, downcast looks, harsh features, and hair dishevelled; and dirty, ragged, and filthy in their appearance. Such is a picture of heathenism! Have we not cause to be grateful for the benign influence of the gospel upon our land, so that we are elevated far above such a miserable state of heathenism? Unto the Lord be all the praise!

Though it is generally a feature among heathen nations, that it is considered a shame for the men to labor, while all the work devolves upon the females, still the Pawnees seem not altogether indisposed to be instructed. Mr. Sharpee, who has been acquainted with them and other Indians in these parts for nearly 20 years, told us that the Pawnee men were unlike those of other tribes, since they were willing to lay hold of a plough or any other farming utensil, and only the instruction was wanting to make them industrious. Mr. Allis, too, who has been acquainted with them for the last 20 years, and has lived among them a great portion of this period, informed us that when the missionaries were formerly living among them, several of the Pawnees had already commenced the use of the plough. The good beginning was, however, interrupted by their missionaries having to leave them.

DRESS.—The dress of the men consists in nothing but a small piece of cloth, fastened around the middle. This, we observed, was generally the only covering they had on, when in their lodges. When abroad, they had a buffalo robe or blanket wrapped around them. The females are more decently clothed than the men. Their dress consists of leggings, generally made of scarlet cloth, over which a piece of blue or brown woolen cloth is tied around the waist, the ends lapping over each other and extending a little below the knees. The upper dress consists of a shirt, or short gown, made of calico, reaching to the middle. Over the whole a blanket or robe is slung, above which, on the back, may frequently be discovered the black sparkling eyes of a little "papoose" peering forth.

INTOXICATING DRINK.—It is somewhat remarkable that the Pawnees are not so fond of "fire water" as other tribes, who are fast dwindling away from the demoralizing and debasing effects of intoxicating drink. Nothing, perhaps, has aided more in diminishing the population of different Indian tribes, than spirituous liquors. To the missionary it is always gratifying and encouraging to observe, when a tribe takes a bold stand against the introduction of this destructive poison. The Pawnees allow none to be brought into their villages.

BURYING THEIR DEAD.—On the highest mounds in the prairie, we often observed little hillocks of earth, which we were

informed were the places of sepulture of their chiefs and others of their tribe. A tall bush was frequently stuck in the ground, to designate the spot. We were also informed, that among the Pawnees and other wild tribes the cruel practice prevails, when they are on their hunt, and their old people get so feeble, that they can no longer accompany them, of leaving them behind, and even burying them alive.—In allusion to this fact Mr. Allis, pointing to their old and feeble chief, addressed the other chiefs as follows: "I have learned that you intend to put aside your old chief, because he is now feeble and sickly, and perhaps you will even think of burying him, when he can no longer follow you; but I want you to take care of him. He has been like a father to you. When he was yet strong, you know his kettle was always over the fire with plenty. He has always been a friend of the whites, and you ought to esteem him for the services he has rendered your nation, and not to bury him before he is dead."

More might be added, to show the wretchedness of their present state, but we should fear to become too tedious. Sufficient, however, has been said to prove that these poor people need the assistance of missionaries to better them in their outward condition. But, when we consider their spiritual destitution—their ignorance darkness and superstition—

Shall we whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?"

"Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." But "how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:13, 14). In the face of all difficulties, let us not be deterred from bringing the glad tidings of Salvation to these benighted savages; thereby perhaps paving the way for still more extensive operations among the aborigines of our country; and thus, by breaking unto them the bread of life, proving the means of repairing, in part, the numberless wrongs inflicted upon this poor abject race, by people who call themselves christians.

THE MALASPINA EXPEDITION

\$2.00



NO *"In the Pursuit
of Knowledge..."*