INFORMATION

RESPECTING THE

HISTORY CONDITION AND PROSPECTS

OF THE

INDIAN TRIBES of the UNITED STATES;

Collected and prepared under the

direction of the **BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS** per act of Congress

of March 3rd 1847.

BY HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT L.L.D.

Illustrated by

S. EASTMAN; CAPT. U. S. ARMY.

Published by authority of Congress.

Part IV

PHILADELPHIA:

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

HP6385

256. They have a worship of them, but I never saw them worshipping the Great Spirit. Their choruses are solemn, and conducted with much decorum.

257. Cradle songs, I know of none. The child is sung to, by the women humming or making a whistle through the teeth. I do not know that I ever heard a father sing to a child to put it asleep, or to stop its crying. I have heard the father sing to them to make them dance, which is about all the singing accorded to children. All the sculpturing we see is on some of the war implements and cradles, and some of them are quite fanciful."

4. MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE MOQUI AND NAVAJO TRIBES OF NEW MEXICO.

Dr. P. G. S. Ten Broeck, Assistant Surgeon in the United States' Army, while stationed at the most advanced posts in New Mexico, west of the Rio Grande, in 1851 and 1852, performed several excursions into the more remote towns and villages of the Moqui and Navajo tribes. Five or six months were occupied in these excursions, in which he became deeply interested in their manners and customs, which he recorded in his journal on the spot, while the impressions created on his mind were fresh and full. He has, at my request, furnished the following extracts from his journal. They present these tribes, of whom many false reports have been circulated, in a new and interesting light. Their idiosyncracies are, in many respects, remarkable.

The several bands of the Moqui tribe, of whom we have had the last information, are shown to be cultivators of the soil, and to raise large flocks of sheep, from whose wool a very compact and beautiful species of blanket is woven. Yet these sheep are never shorn until after death. The Indians possess no process of dressing them, which is not simply an aboriginal art; nor of tanning any species of skin, or converting it into leather. They are a semi-agricultural and pacific people, not engaging in wars and predatory excursions, like the more fierce and military Navajoes near them. They dwell, indeed, within the territorial area of the latter, with whom their language denotes an affinity.

These new views of the low domestic condition and arts of these tribes, tend to take away from the overcharged accounts of Coronado and his contemporaries, which we promulgated in his expedition to Cibola, in 1542 — an era, indeed, of extravagant excitement and description. (Pueblo of Laguna: Plate V.)

"*Dec. 25th*, 1851.—I attended church to-day, and witnessed a curious spectacle. The church is quite a large building of stone, laid up in mud, and is surmounted by a wooden cross. It is long and narrow, and the walls are whitewashed in much the

better constructed. This people have been much harassed by the Navajoes, with whom they wage constant war, and to defend themselves against whom they have placed around all the trails leading to the town, pits, ten feet deep, and just large enough to receive a horse, at the bottom of which long and sharp-pointed stakes are planted upright, and which are covered over with earth and bushes, in so artful a manner that no one would suspect their existence. When Colonel Sumner was encamped near here last summer, his command lost several horses and mules by falling into these pits. The Zuñians have flocks and herds, and they weave, spin, and knit, like the Lagunians, but their painted earthenware is far prettier. Their language is different from that of any of the other Pueblos. They are supposed by some to be descended from the band of Welsh, which Prince Madoc took with him on a voyage of discovery, in the twelfth century; and it is said that they weave peculiarly and in the same manner as the people of Wales.

There are among them some albino-looking Indians, with perfectly white hair, light blue eyes, and a dead white complexion which exposure to the sun does not darken. Their features are generally Indian. I saw here two eagles in cages; also a number of fine turkeys, the first I have seen in New Mexico.

March 31*st*, 1852.—Between eleven and twelve to-day we arrived at the first towns of Magui. All the inhabitants turned out, crowding the streets and house-tops to have a view of the white men. All the old men pressed forward to shake hands with us, and we were most hospitably received and conducted to the governor's house, where we were at once feasted upon guavas and a leg of mutton broiled upon the coals. After the feast we smoked with them, and they then said that we should move our camp in, and that they would give us a room and plenty of wood for the men, and sell us corn for the animals. Accordingly a Magui Indian was despatched with a note to the sergeant, ordering him to break up camp and move into town. The Indian left on foot at half past twelve P. M., and although it took an hour to catch the mules and pack up, the men arrived and were in their quarters by six P. M. The camp was about eight and a half miles from the village. He could not have been more than an hour in going there, but they are accustomed to running from their infancy, and have great bottom. This evening we bought sufficient corn for the mules at $5.00 per faneja, (two and a half bushels,) paying in bayjeta or red cloth, and they are now enjoying their first hearty meal for many days. The three villages here are situated on a strong bluff, about 300 feet high, and from 30 to 150 feet wide, which is approached by a trail passable for horses at only one point. This is very steep, and an hour's work in throwing down the stones with which it is in many places built up, could render it utterly inaccessible to horsemen. At all other points they have constructed footpaths, steps, &c., by which they pass up and down. The side of the rock is not perfectly perpendicular, but after a sheer descent of sixty or seventy feet there are

ledges from five to eight yards wide, on which they have established their sheep-folds. The bluff is about 800 yards long, and the towns are some 150 yards apart. That upon the southern point contains fully as many inhabitants as both the others, and the houses are larger and higher: horses cannot reach it, as the rock is much broken up between it and the second town.

The houses are built of stone, laid in mud, (which must have been brought from the plain below, as there is not a particle of soil upon the rock), and in the same form as those of the other Pueblos. They are, however, by far the poorest I have seen. The stories are but little over six feet high, and scarcely any of the houses can boast of doors or windows. The rafters are small poles of piñon, seven feet with centre-pole, and supporting posts running lengthways through the building. Over these, and at right angles with smaller ones, poles covered with rushes are placed, and a coating of mud over all forms the roof. They are whitewashed inside with white clay. Hanging by strings from the rafters, I saw some curious and rather horrible little Aztec images made of wood or clay, and decorated with paint and feathers, which the guide told me were "saints;" but I have seen the children playing with them in the most irreverent manner. The houses are entered by means of ladders, as in the other Pueblos. The bluff runs nearly north and south, inclining a very little to the north-west. When a quarter of a mile from its foot, it is impossible for a stranger to distinguish the town, as, from the little wood used, there is no smoke perceptible, and the houses look exactly like the piles of rocks to be seen on any of the neighboring misas; and I did not know where the Moqui was until fairly on the top of the ridge and just entering Harro, the first town, which is situated on the north end. We are stopping in the middle town. The Moquis say that one week ago, three Mexicans and two Americans passed through here, who stated that they had been travelling with the Coyoteros, who attacked them and killed five Americans of the party; and that just after, other Americans came up, killed three Coyoteros, and ran off with much stock. This party, on leaving here, took the trail for the Cañon de Chilly. There is a mountain, in the plain south-west from Moqui, which is covered with perpetual snow, and called by the Navajoes, Cierra Natary — the chief mountain.

They say that by riding very fast, one can go from here to the river in a day, or in two, by easy marches. The Navajoes say that a large party of Americans have been living all winter on the river near this mountain, one day's easy ride from here. When there is great drought in the valley, the Moquis go in procession to a large spring in the mountain for water, and they affirm that after doing so, they always have plenty of rain. I saw three Payoche Indians to-day. They live on a triangular piece of land, formed by the junction of the San Juan and Colorado of the West, and, I believe, never come into the settlements to trade. There is no running stream near here, and they obtain all their water from a small spring near the eastern base of the mountain, or rather bluff. They do not irrigate, nor do they plough, as they have no cattle,

HP6388

and I have not seen ten horses or mules about the place. The valley is most miserably poor, but there are thousands of acres in it. They plant in the sand.

April 1st.—I was quite sick last night with a most awful headache, and had a chill in the evening. I was awakened at midnight by the Indians, who were singing and dancing in the Plaza for some hours, doubtless in preparation for to-day. I have been trading to-day with Moquis, Navajoes, and Payoches, and going now and then to look at the dancing in the Plaza just behind us, which, they tell me, is a religious ceremony to bring on rain.

The weather to-day has been very disagreeable, with a cold wind from the south. As I have been under the weather, we have not yet had our grand talk with the Moquis, but I hope will have it to-morrow.

The dance to-day has been a most singular one, and differs from any I have ever seen among the other Pueblo Indians; the dresses of the performers being more quaint and rich. There were twenty men and as many women, ranged in two files. The dresses of the men were similar to those I have described at Laguna during the Christmas holydays, except that they wear on their heads large pasteboard towers painted typically, and curiously decorated with feathers; and each man has his face entirely covered by a vizor made of small willows with the bark peeled off, and dyed a deep brown. They all carry in their hands gourds filled with small pebbles, which are rattled to keep time with the dancing. The women all have their hair put up in the manner peculiar to virgins; and immediately in the centre, where the hair is parted, a long, straight eagle's feather is fixed, (Plate 7, Fig. 5). They are also adorned with turkey and eagle's feathers, in much the same way as the malinchi of the Lagunians. But by far the most beautiful part of their dress is a tilma of some three and a half feet square, which is thrown over the shoulders, fastened in front, and, hanging down behind, reaches half-way below the knee. This tilma is pure white. Its materials I should suppose to be cotton or wool. Its texture is very fine, and it has one or more wide borders of beautiful colors, exceedingly well wrought in, and of curious patterns. The women also wear vizors of willow sticks, which are colored a bright yellow, and arranged in parallel rows, like Pandean pipes. On each side of the files is placed a small boy, who dances or canters up and down the line, and is most accurately modelled after the popular representation of his Satanic majesty's imps, (Plate 7, Fig. 4). With the exception of a very short-fringed tunic, reaching just below the hip joint, and a broad sash fastened around the waist, the boy is entirely naked. On his head he wears a thing like a sugar-loaf painted black, which passes over the whole head, and rests upon his shoulders. Around the bottom of this, encircling his neck, is a wreath made of twigs from the spruce-tree, and on the top are fixed two long feathers which much resemble horns, and are kept in their places by a connecting string. The whole body is painted black, relieved by white rings placed at regular intervals over the whole

person. The appearance of these little imps, as they gambolled along the line of dancers, was most amusing. They had neither a tombe accompaniment, nor a band of singers; but the dancers furnished their own music, and a most strange sound it was, resembling very much the noise, on a large scale, of a swarm of blue-bottle flies in an empty hogshead.

Each one was rolling out an aw, aw, aw, aw, in a deep base tone; and the sound coming through a hollow vizor, produced the effect described. The dance was a most monotonous one, the dancers remaining in the same place, and alternately lifting their feet, in time to the song and gourds. The only change of position was an occasional "about face." When the first came in, two old men, who acted as masters of ceremonies, went along the whole line, and with a powder held between the thumb and fore-finger, anointed each dancer on the shoulder. After dancing awhile in the mode above described, the ranks were opened, and rugs and blankets being brought and spread upon the ground, the virgins squatted on them, while the men kept up a kind of mumming dance in front. Every third or fourth female had at this time a large hollow gourd placed before her, on which rested a grooved piece of wood, shaped like an old-fashioned washboard; and by drawing the dry shoulder-blade of a sheep rapidly across this, a sound was produced similar to that of a watchman's rattle. After performing the same dance on each side of the Plaza, they left, to return again in about fifteen minutes; and thus they kept it up from sun-rise till dark, when the dancing ceased.

As appendages to the feast, they had clowns who served as messengers and waiters, and also to amuse the spectators while the dancers were away. The first batch consisted of six or eight young men, in breech-clouts, having some comical daubs of paint on their faces and persons, with wigs made of black sheep-skins. Some wore ram's horns on their heads, and were amusing themselves by attempts at dancing, singing, and running races, when they were attacked by a huge grizzly bear (or rather a fellow in the skin of one), which, after a long pursuit, and many hard fights, they brought to bay and killed. They then immediately opened him, and took from out of his body a quantity of guavas, green corn, &c.; which his bearship had undoubtedly appropriated from the refreshments provided for the clowns. But no sooner had they disposed of Bruin, than a new trouble came upon them in the shape of two ugly little imps, who prowling about, took every opportunity to annoy them; and when, by dint of great perseverance, they succeeded in freeing themselves from these misshapen brats, it rushed eight or ten most horrible-looking figures (in masks), all armed with whips, which they did not for a moment hesitate to apply most liberally, to any of the poor clowns who were so unlucky as to fall into their clutches. They even tied some hands and foot, and laid them out in the Plaza.

It seemed they were of the same race as the imps, and came to avenge the treatment they had received at the hands of the clowns; for the "limbs of Satan" returned

almost immediately, and took an active part in their capture, and in superintending the flagellating operations. Such horrible masks I never saw before—noses six inches long, mouths from ear to ear, and great goggle eyes, as big as half a hen's egg, hanging by a string partly out of the socket. They came and vanished like a dream, and only staying long enough to inflict a signal chastisement on the unfortunate clowns; who, however, soon regained their wonted spirits, after their tormentors left; and for the rest of the day had the field to themselves.

The simple Indians appeared highly delighted by these performances; and I must avow having had many a hearty laugh at their whimsicalities.

While the dances were going on, large baskets, filled with guavas of different forms and colors, roasted ears of corn, bread, meat, and other eatables, were brought in, and distributed by the virgins among all the spectators. The old governor tells me, this evening, that it is contrary to their usages to permit the females to dance; and that those whom I supposed to be young virgins, were in fact young men, dressed in female apparel for the occasion. This is a custom peculiar to the Moquis, I think, for in all the other Pueblos I visited, the women dance.

April 2d.—Snow fell last night, and it has continued all the forenoon. The weather is very cold and disagreeable, with a strong south wind blowing. We hired a Navajo Indian to take our horses over to the other side of the mountain (about six miles) to graze them; and as the weather would not allow us to visit the other four towns, we seated ourselves down with the governor, and other principal men; smoked, and had our "big talk," obtaining from them as much information as possible, relative to their history, customs, origin, religion, crops, &c.

The principal ruler was present.

This government is hereditary, but does not necessarily descend to the sons of the incumbent; for if the people prefer any other blood-relation, he is chosen.

The population of the seven villages, I should estimate at 8000, of which one-half is found in the first three. They say that of late years, wars and disease have greatly decreased their numbers. They spoke of fevers and disease, which I suppose to be phthisic and pertussis. They observe no particular burial-rites. They believe in the existence of a great Father, who lives where the sun rises, and a great Mother, who lives where the sun sets. The first is the author of all the evils that befall them—as war, pestilence, famine, &c.; and the great Mother is the very reverse of this, and from her are derived the blessings they enjoy—fertilizing showers, &c. In the course of the "talk," the principal governor made a speech, in which he said,—"Now we all know that it is good the Americans have come among us; for our great father, who lives where the sun rises, is pacified, and our great mother, who lives where the sun sets, is smiling; and in token of her approbation, sends fertilizing showers (it was snowing at the time), which will enrich our fields, and enable us to raise the harvest

whereby we subsist." They say it generally rains this time of the year. Of the origin, they give the following account.

Many, many years ago, their great Mother brought from her home in the west nin races of men, in the following forms: First, the deer race; Second, the sand rac Third, the water race; Fourth, the bear race; Fifth, the hare race; Sixth, the prair wolf race; Seventh, the rattlesnake race; Eighth, the tobacco-plant race; Ninth, th reed-grass race. Having placed them on the spot where their villages now stand, sh transformed them into men, who built the present Pueblos, and the distinction of rac is still kept up. One told me he was of the sand race; another the deer, & They are firm believers in metempsychosis, and say that when they die, they w resolve into their original forms, and become bears, deer, &c., again.

The chief governor is of the deer race. [Here is the totemic element.—S.]

Shortly after the Pueblos were built, the great mother came in person, and brough them all the domestic animals they now have; which are principally sheep and goat and a few very large donkeys. They have scarcely any horses and mules, as there no grass nearer than six miles from the rock; and their frequent wars with the Nav joes render it almost impossible to keep them. The sacred fire is kept constant burning by the old men; and all I could glean from them was, that some great mi fortune would befall their people, if they allowed it to be extinguished. They kno nothing of Montezuma, and have never had any Spanish or other missionaries amon them. All the seeds they possess were brought from where the morning-star rise They plant in May or June, and harvest in October and November. They do no plough or irrigate, but put their seeds in the sand, and depend upon the rains for wate They raise corn, melons, pumpkins, beans, and onions; also a cotton, of which I pr cured a specimen, and a species of mongrel tobacco.

They have also a few peach-trees, and are the only Pueblo Indians who raise cotto They have no small grain of any kind. They say they have known the Spaniard ever since they can remember. About twenty years ago, a party of about fiftee Americans, the first they ever saw, came over the mountains and took the Zuñi trai Six years afterwards, another party, with four females, passed through. Their cro last year was very small, and sometimes fails them entirely on account of the drough For this reason they hoard up their corn, and that sold us was four years old. Roastin ears, hanging around the room, are of the same age.

Their mode of marriage might well be introduced into the United States, with th Bloomer costume. Here, instead of the swain asking the hand of the fair one, sh selects the young man who is to her fancy, and then her father proposes the match t the sire of the lucky youth. This proposition is never refused. The preliminari being arranged, the young man on his part furnishes two pair of moccasins, two fu blankets, two mattrasses, and two of the sashes used at the feast — while the maide for her share, provides an abundance of eatables, when the marriage is celebrated b

asting and dancing. Polygamy is unknown among them; but at any time, if either of the parties become dissatisfied, they can divorce themselves and marry with others, as they please. In case there are children, they are taken care of by their respective grandparents. They are a simple, happy, and most hospitable people. The vice of intoxication is unknown among them, as they have no kind of fermented liquors. When a stranger visits one of their houses, the first act is to set food before him, and nothing is done "till he has eaten." In every village are one or more edifices under ground, and you descend a ladder to get into them. (Plate 6.) They answer to our village groceries, being a place of general resort for the male population. I went into one of them — it was stifling hot, and all the light and air came through the scuttle above. In the centre was a small square box of stone, in which was a fire of guava bushes, and around this a few old men were smoking. All around the room were Indians naked to the "breech-clout;" some were engaged in sewing, and others spinning and knitting. On a bench in the back-ground sat a warrior, most extravagantly painted, who was undoubtedly undergoing some ordeal — as I was not allowed to approach him. They knit, weave, and spin, as in the other Pueblos, and besides make fabrics of cotton.

The chief men have pipes made of smooth polished stone, and of a peculiar shape, which have been handed down from generation to generation. (Fig. I, Plate 7.) They say their pipes were found centuries ago, by their forefathers, at the bottom of the water, in a very deep ravine in a mountain to the west, and that they were found already made in their present form.

Their year is reckoned by twelve lunar months. They wear necklaces of a very small sea-shell, ground flat (doubtless procured from California), which, they say, was brought to them by other Indians who lived over the mountains to the west, and say they obtain them from three old men who never die. Several Navajoes, who were present at the conversation, appeared perfectly friendly. I saw, to-day, a Navajo chief, named Cavallada, who has a paper from Governor Calhoun, making him a chief.

The villages of the Moquis are seven in number, (Plate 7), and more nearly correspond to the seven cities of Cibola,[1] (spoken of by Mr. Gallatin in his letter to Lieutenant Emory, U. S. A., T. I.), than any which have yet been discovered. They are situated in the same valley: they are upon the bluff. Oraivaz, called Musquins by the Mexicans, is almost due west from the bluff, and about thirty miles distant. There is another town at twenty miles W. by S., and two more about S. S. W., and some eight or ten miles distant from the first three. Of these, the two at the southern extremity of the bluff are the largest, containing probably 2000 inhabitants; Oraivaz is the second in size. They all speak the same language except Harno, the most northern town of the three, which has a different language and some customs peculiar to itself. It is,

[1] Not so. Vide Mr. Kern's map, ante p. 32.

however, considered one of the towns of the confederation, and joins in all the feasts. It seems a very singular fact that, being within 150 yards of the middle town, Harno should have preserved for so long a period its own language and customs. The other Moquis say the inhabitants of this town have a great advantage over them, as they perfectly understand the common language, and none but the people of Harno understand their dialect. It is the smallest town of the three. The dress of the men, when abroad, is similar to that of the other Pueblos. When at home, they have a great fancy for going in "puris naturalibus," meaning nothing but the breech-clout and moccasins. If they slip out for a moment, they perhaps throw a blanket over their shoulders. They dress their hair like the Lagunians. I was much amused with one fellow who had a kind of full dress on, which he had obtained from the Eutaws of the Great Salt Lake, who were here last fall. (The governor showed me a letter signed by one Day, an Indian agent, and Brigham Young, the Mormon governor, which the Eutaws had with them. This was their first visit, but they are to return next fall.) This coat was made of alternate pieces of red and blue cloth, with large bright buttons, shoulder-knots and tops of horse-hair; and with it buttoned up to the chin, and naught else on, he would strut about with as much self-satisfaction as any Broadway dandy. The women are the prettiest squaws I have yet seen, and are very industrious. Their manner of dressing the hair is very pretty. While virgins, it is done up on each side of the head in two inverse rolls, which bear some resemblance to the horns of the mountain-sheep. After marriage they wear it in two large knots or braids on each side of the face. In the northern town they dress their hair differently—the unmarried wearing all the hair long and in two large knots on each side of the face; and after marriage parting it transversely from ear to ear, and cutting off the front hair in a line with the eyebrows. These people make the same kind of pottery as the Zuñians and Lagunians.

April 3d. — The frost seems to have had the desired effect, for it snowed again last night, and has been alternately snowing and clearing off all day; and while the sun was clouded, we had very cold and disagreeable weather.

We started at 9 A. M., and were truly an hour getting down the trail, so slippery was it from the melting snow. We have had a very fair sample of the hospitality of these kind people to-day. It being known that we were to depart this morning, woman after woman came to the house where we were stopping, each bringing either a basket of corn, meal, or guavas to give us, that we might not suffer for food while on the road home. The governor killed a sheep, and presented it to us. When we were fairly started, and passing through the towns, the women stood at the tops of the ladders, with little baskets of corn-meal, urging us to take them.

April 5th. — Myths of the Aborigines of New Mexico. — Old Santiago, our guide and interpreter, is a Navajo Indian, who was for some time a prisoner among the

3. AN ACCOUNT OF THE NAVAJOES OF NEW MEXICO.

BY MAJOR E. BACKUS, U. S. A.[1]

THERE is probably no tribe of Indians, within the limits of New Mexico, which has so signally redressed its own wrongs, or inspired its inhabitants with so great a degree of terror, as the Navajoes. Having no permanent habitations, and being in possession of a hardy and active race of horses, they have usually been prepared to resent or inflict injuries, and to appropriate to their own use the property and persons of their neighbors, the Mexicans. A bitter and mutual feeling of hatred has long existed between them; and many years of friendly intercourse will be requisite to efface the recollection of injuries inflicted, and of wrongs unredressed.

The Navajoes occupy a large extent of country directly west from Sante Fé, extending from near the Rio Grande on the east, to the Colorado on the west; and from the land of the Utahs on the north, to the Apaches on the south. It is nearly bisected by the Sierra de los Mimbres; and presents to the eye a succession of elevated mountain peaks, of timbered table-lands, of dry and unproductive valleys, and of broken fields of lava. (See Plate 1.) There is no considerable stream of water within their borders; and those traced upon the maps as rivers, are usually dry during three-fourths of the year. There are some excellent springs in the valleys and cañons of the mountains; but the water is soon absorbed by the thirsty and porous soil, after having flowed but a few hundred yards upon its surface.

Before the period when New Mexico became an integral portion of the United States, little or nothing had been done towards subjugating the Navajoes. Their depredations upon the citizens of the upper Rio Grande became so frequent and formidable, that in 1846 an expedition was fitted out against them by Colonel Doniphan, who marched into their country, and met their principal men at a place known as the Ojo del oso (bear spring). A treaty was entered into, only to be violated on the part of the Navajoes, as soon as the troops had retired. In the summer of 1849, Colonel Washington marched from Santa Fé, with a suitable force, for the Navajoe head-quarters, at the Cañon de Chelle. In a collision which ensued, one of the principal

---

WASHINGTON, Feb'y 10th, 1853.

[1] HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT, ESQ.,

SIR:—The following brief sketch of the Navajoe Indians, of New Mexico, is respectfully submitted for your examination. I was a resident of their country less than a year, and was too much occupied with official duties, to permit me to devote that time to the subject which it properly merits. If you should deem it worthy of a place in the valuable work which you are now preparing, I shall feel more than compensated for the little labor I have been able to bestow upon it.

Respectfully, your Friend and Ob't Servant,

E. BACKUS.

men, a rich Navajoe, was killed, A satisfactory treaty was finally entered into, and Colonel Washington returned to Sante Fé with ample evidence, that the quiet of the frontier would not be disturbed by the Navajoes, without a new and sufficient cause. Nor was an occasion long delayed. The brutal murder of Chopaton, by Mexicans, near Ciboltetta, added to other offences against the Navajoes, soon rekindled former animosities, and the border was once more in a state of anarchy and confusion. Colonel Munroe, the new Governor, made partial preparations, in 1850, for prosecuting the war; but no decided movement was made against the Navajoes until August, 1851, when Colonel Sumner marched for their strong-hold, the Cañon de Chelle, with the determination of punishing them, in the first place—and, secondly, of leaving a strong garrison *in the very heart of their country*. On the 7th of September, 1851, he arrived at Cañoncitto Bonito, and soon after gave orders for the construction of a military post, to be called Fort Defiance. (Plates 29 and 30.) Its primary object was to enforce the conditions of Washington's treaty of 1849, and its complete success shows the soundness of the policy which induced such a course. I was, at the same time, assigned to the command of the new post, and invested with full authority to effect the objects in view, in such manner as circumstances, from time to time, might dictate. Colonel Sumner proceeded to the Cañon de Chelle, with six companies of dragoons, and a battery of artillery, and after penetrating the Cañon some twelve miles, and finding it impracticable to bring the enemy to a decisive action, he returned to Fort Defiance, and thence to Santa Fé. Several unimportant skirmishes took place, in and near the Cañon, with but trifling injury to either party. While the troops were ascending the Cañon, the Indians were on the top of its vertical walls, at so great a height, that the arrows which they fired at the troops below lost their force, and fell horizontally upon the ground. The highest wall of this Cañon is estimated at 1000 feet above the plain. A small peach-orchard was observed in the Cañon, as well as some patches of wheat, corn, and beans. The Indians subsequently acknowledged a loss of several men killed, while the troops had but one man severely wounded with a ball, and two slightly wounded with arrows. But few of the Indians had fire-arms, and they showed a far greater willingness to steal, than to fight. Several collisions also occurred at Fort Defiance, between our pickets and small parties of Indians, who presented themselves in a thieving attitude; but they never appeared in force, or exhibited any hostile intention, beyond that of appropriating to their own use our property and animals, in which design they met with a signal defeat, and then retired from the field. About the 20th of October, 1851, forty Moqui Indians, headed by their governor, presented themselves at Fort Defiance, and requested an interview on the part of the Navajoes, who, they said, were desirous of living on terms of peace and friendship with the Americans. A favorable answer was returned, and on the 26th of the same month, a formidable body of Navajoes, well mounted, and armed with guns, lances, bows, and arrows, presented themselves in front of the garrison, and solicited an interview. It

[illegible] sketch by Lt Col J H Eaton USA

Pl. 29

R Hinshelwood

FORT DEFIANCE & CAÑONCITO PORTO, NEW MEXICO

Buildings [illegible]

HP6397

was at once granted, and resulted in an agreement, on their part, to cease hostilities and depredations against the troops of the United States, the citizens of New Mexico, and the pueblas of Tunice and Moqui. From that day to the period of my departure, in August, 1852, not a hostile act was committed by the Navajoes, and not a depredation, of any magnitude, could be traced to their agency. They unquestionably have among their numbers bad men — habitual thieves, who can only be controlled by the strong arm of power; but, in this respect, they differ but little from the rest of mankind, laws and force being requisite to coerce bad men of all nations, be their skins white, black, or red. As a nation of Indians, the Navajoes do not deserve the character given them by the people of New Mexico. From the period of their earliest history, the Mexicans have injured and oppressed them to the extent of their power; and because these Indians have redressed their own wrongs, the degenerate Mexicans have represented them as a nation of thieves and assassins.

The government of the Navajoes seems to resemble more nearly that of the patriarchal, than any other form. There are many rich men among them, whose possessions consist mainly of horses and sheep. Every drove and flock is necessarily attended by its herders. Hence, every rich man has many dependants, and these dependants are obedient to his will, in peace and in war. The only elective office among them, so far as I could learn, is that of War-chief; and such office, I believe, expires with the occasion which created it. Every rich Navajoe may be considered the chief of his clan, or of his own dependants; and these clans are usually friendly with each other, and make common cause against a common enemy. In addition to the clans referred to, there are many Navajoes who recognize no leader, and who live the lives of vagabonds, stealing indiscriminately, as occasion offers, from friends and foes. They are never trusted by the rich Navajoes, who are in perpetual dread of their depredations.

I could never learn that they have any laws for the punishment of offences. I asked a rich Navajoe how they punished their people for the crime of *theft*. He replied, "Not at all. If I attempt to whip a poor man who has stolen my property, he will defend himself with his arrows, and will rob me again. If I leave him unpunished, he will only take what he requires at the time." This reply probably referred only to petty thefts. They will always defend their flocks and herds at any hazard.

The country occupied by the Navajoes is not susceptible of a high state of cultivation, on account of its deficiency of water, and the porous character of the soil. A large spring stream will seldom flow a mile upon the surface of the ground, before it is absorbed. Hence the difficulty of irrigating any large body of land; and without irrigation, it is difficult to raise even the fourth of an ordinary crop. An exception to this rule will be found at Tunice and Moqui, Indian Pueblos within the Navajoe territory, where fair crops are frequently raised on a sandy soil, without the aid of irriga-

HP6398

tion. Besides the points named, there are other fertile spots, where water and a fair soil are found combined, though very limited in size. At such points the Indians cultivate small fields of wheat, corn, beans, melons, and a few other vegetables. Their most extensive fields are in the Cañon de Chille, where water, if not on the surface, can always be found by digging a few feet in the sand. They have also a few peach trees at this place, but they are too much neglected to succeed well. A small, but agreeable nut, called the Piñon, grows abundantly in this country; and during a period of scarcity, it sometimes constitutes the sole food of the poorer class of natives, for many successive weeks. It has a thin shell, and contains much oil. Its flavor is much improved by roasting. A small wild potato is also found on the plains near Fort Defiance. It resembles the cultivated potato, but is not usually larger than a hickory-nut. It will unquestionably improve by changing its soil and climate. It forms a considerable item in the food of the Navajoes, from April to June.

The domestic animals of the Navajoes are horses, sheep, and goats; also, a few cows and mules.

Of wild animals, they have the brown bear, antelope, black-tailed deer, wild cat, prairie-dog, and a variety of squirrels; one, with a long fringe of black hair upon its ears, and a broad flat tail, is very beautiful. Its flesh is not eaten by the Indians.

Next to the horse, the sheep is the most useful animal to the Navajoe. The flesh is eaten, in the absence of game; and the wool is carefully preserved, and manufactured into blankets and stockings. The blankets are woven so compactly as to be almost impervious to water; and besides constituting an important part of their clothing, are used as a medium of traffic with the itinerant traders from the Rio Grande. Deer-skins are used in making moccasins and breeches. Domestic shirting is purchased from traders. It has been said that the Navajoes and Moquis manufacture beautiful fabrics of cotton. This is partially true of the Moquis; but the Navajoes raise no cotton, while that of the Moquis is of a very inferior quality. Their wardrobes are never extravagantly supplied, and in summer are frequently reduced to a shirt and pair of moccasins.

The habitual position of the Navajoe is on horseback; and few men can be found to equal him in the management of that animal. There are several rich men among them, who have four or five hundred horses; many of which are worth from fifty to one hundred dollars each, and some few will command a still higher price. I was informed, by officers who attended a Navajoe dance at Cienega Juanitto, that they saw at least two thousand horses at that place, feeding on the plains, under the charge of their herders. In addition to the above, at least five hundred Indians were mounted, during the whole day and night. These Navajoe horses are active and hardy, having much endurance, and a fair turn of speed. It is my opinion that, bare-footed and grass-fed, they can out-travel American horses, under the same treatment; but on good roads, with good feed and care, I believe the Navajoe, with all his spirit, would be

HP6399

found sadly inferior to the horses of the United States. The Navajoes ride like the Californians, viz., at a rapid rate; and I am induced to believe their horses are identically the same. Their speed and powers of endurance have, in my opinion, been vastly overrated in both cases.

The Navajoes live much in the open air. Their lodges are exceedingly rude structures of sticks, about four or five feet high, with a triangular opening for ingress and egress. On the outside, against the sticks, are placed flat stones and earth, to cover the intervals, and protect them from the weather. As often as they change their grazing-grounds, so often do they repair and re-occupy some deserted lodge; and as their residence in it is to be but brief, the repairs and labor bestowed upon it are of the most meagre and trifling character.

In the autumn and winter, these Indians are found in the southern portion of their country, where there is but little snow, and where their animals can find good pasturage. Early in the spring, they return to the Cienegas and Mesas of the north, where a majority of them remain during the summer.

I once endeavored to persuade a rich Navajoe to build a house, and to live in it. He replied, "A house will be of no use to me. I cannot live in it. I must follow my flocks and herds, where I can find grass and water." He was then asked where he slept. He replied, "Just like a dog—on the grass or chips."

The Navajoes are ranked as a wild tribe, and do not profess the Christian religion. Although it is said that missionaries were established among them, prior to 1680, yet a want of success has left these people in a hopeless state of paganism.

Like all nomadic and unchristianized tribes, the Navajoes are imbued with superstitions, which influence them in all their social and domestic relations. I will state a few facts by way of illustration.

In a deep and secluded cañon of the mountains, near Fort Defiance, is a spring which the natives approach with much reverence, and for the purpose of performing certain mystical ceremonies. This spring, they say, was once a boiling spring; but at present, it only boils when approached by bad men, or when the appropriate ceremonies are neglected. They also say the water will sometimes leap twenty feet from its bed, to catch and overwhelm a bad Indian; but as bad Indians dare not approach it, its powers of locomotion are seldom put to the test. I once visited it with three other persons, and an Indian doctor; who carried with him five small bags, each containing some vegetable or mineral substance, all differing in color. At the spring, each bag was opened, and a small quantity of its contents was put into the right hand of each person present. Each visitor, in succession, was then required to kneel down by the spring-side, to place his closed hand in the water, up to his elbow; and, after a brief interval, to open his hand, and let fall its contents into the spring. The hand was then slowly withdrawn, and each one was then permitted to drink, and retire.

No Navajo will ever occupy a lodge in which a person has died. The lodge is

HP6400

our country have sprung from such causes, and it is difficult to say that the other half had not a similar origin.

The feeling of hostility, which I have said exists between Navajoes and Mexicans, is thus explained by Gregg, in his Commerce of the Prairies. He says: "After the establishment of the national independence, the government of New Mexico greatly embittered the disposition of the Navajoes, by repeated acts of cruelty and ill-faith, well calculated to provoke hostilities." And he cites many instances of cruelty in support of his remark. Gregg was unquestionably correct, and similar outrages, repeated at intervals, have tended to foster the same bitter feeling, up to the present day. The Navajoes have not always been the aggressors, but they have so signally redressed the wrongs inflicted upon them, that their name has become a terror to their pusillanimous and effeminate enemies. Gregg says again (in 1844) about fifteen years ago, the Navajoes were subjected by the energies of Col. Vizcarra, who succeeded in keeping them in submission for some time; but since that officer's departure from New Mexico, no man has been found of sufficient capacity to inspire this daring tribe with respect and fear; so that, for the last ten years, they have ravaged the country with impunity, murdering and destroying, just as the humor happened to prompt them. This was unquestionably true in reference to Mexican troops, who were intimidated at the sight of a Navajo. But the American troops had no difficulty, except in bringing them to action. After the cessation of hostilities in October, 1851, the Navajoes approached us with much caution, and seemed to apprehend some act of treachery from us. This feeling must have arisen from their former treatment by the Mexicans. It required months of uniform kindness to efface these early and well-grounded prejudices.

A partial vocabulary of the Navajo language having been prepared by Dr. Ten Broeck, I have refrained from saying any thing upon that subject. Fort Defiance, (See Plate 79,) is nearly in the centre of this nation; and for all practical purposes, is now the head-quarters of the Navajoes. The establishment of this post has exercised a good influence over them, and in all their troubles and difficulties they habitually go to this place for advice and protection. They have recently shown a strong disposition to cultivate the soil, and take every occasion to supply themselves with hoes, spades, axes, &c.

Their country is, generally, too poor to excite the cupidity of the whites; yet it is well suited to their own wants, and it is to be hoped that the Government which has subdued them will protect them, hereafter, from the incursions of that reckless portion of our citizens, which is but too frequently found hovering upon our remote frontiers.

HP6401