THE CALIFORNIA INDIANS*

No. VIII. The Modocs

Men best acquainted with this tribe, say that their true name is Modoc -- a word which originated with the Shasteecas, who applied it indefinitely to all wild Indians or enemies. Subsequently it was abridged to its present form, and narrowed in its use to the tribe now bearing it.

Their proper habitat is on the southern shore of Lower Klamath Lake, on Hot Creek, around Clear Lake, and along Lost River, in Oregon. They sometimes came out as far west as Butte Creek, in summer, to dig roots, and occasionally, though seldom, made an incursion into the unoccupied and disputed territory west and south of Goose Lake. Since the almost total destruction of the Shasteecas, the Hot Creek Modocs have been in the habit of coming down to the Shasta River every summer, to fish for salmon, which are not obtainable in their own waters. They generally arrive down about the 4th of July, so as to be in Yreka on that great occasion of gunpowder, cakes, and beer; and when that little city was so disastrously burned on the national anniversary of 1871, the Modocs were present, and several of them did yeoman's service in manning the engines.

The great plains around Goose Lake were densely inhabited of old, as is demonstrated by the number of stone mortars--fashioned with sharp point, to be inserted into the ground--which have been plowed up on Davis Creek and elsewhere; but within the historical period they have been deserted. The Indians assert, that, long ago, the Modocs, Piutes, and Pit River Indians contended for their possession many bloody battles, but none of them ever gained a permanent advantage, and at last they abandoned the ferocious and wasting struggle from sheer exhaustion, leaving nothing settled concerning the title to the land. Always afterward, even when the all-equalizing Americans had arrived, none of them ever ventured thither, except now and then a band of warriors, armed to the teeth, on a hunting or fishing excursion of a few days, slipping through with haste and with stealth. It had become a savage Golgotha, a place of skulls, through which they passed with shuddering and with bated breath. (43)

In physiognomy, the Modocs present more rugged and stolid strength of feature than the Shasteecas, or than the California Indians proper. Their cheekbones are rather large; hair remarkably thick and coarse; faces heavy and drowsy, much like the faces in Sacramento Valley, but not wrinkling so excessively in old age; eyes dullish, and frequently yellow where they should be white. Though living at a higher altitude than the Sahsteecas about Yreka, they are darker colored, probably because of their proximity to large bodies of water. Unlike all other tribes in the State, the men as well as the women paint themselves with various pigments formed from rotten wood, different kinds of earth, etc., making smears and blotches of color in most grotesque fashion.

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* Overland Monthly, Vol. 10, pp. 535-545, 1873.

Taken altogether, they are rather a cloddish, indolent, ordinarily good-natured race, but treacherous at bottom, sullen when angered, and notorious for keeping Punic faith. Their bravery nobody can dispute. They are churlishly exclusive, having no reciprocity or cartel with other tribes, like the blithe-hearted, joyous Wintoons; inviting none to their dances, and receiving no invitations in return. In fact, they have hardly any merry-makings, like the unnumbered acorn, clover, pine-nut, and salmon dances of the southern tribes; but chiefly the gloomy and truculent orgies of war, of the scalp, and of death. They attained of old to a great infamy as slave-dealers, their principal victims being the timid, simple, joyous races of California, and especially those of Pit River, though now the latter have forgiven the ancient crime, and heartily wish them well in their fight with the American. They have a toughness of vitality which corresponds with their character. In 1847, the small-pox destroyed about 150 of the tribe; they were forever at war with the Shasteecas until the Whites intervened; they have run many a foolhardy tilt against the Americans; and yet, as a nation, they are probably increasing slowly today! In 1851, they were less numerous than the Shasteecas; now they number about 250, and the latter thirty-five or forty.

The squaw Matilda, often mentioned in the dispatches as one of the chief mediators, is a woman of no mean capacity. Living with an American, she keeps his house tight and snug as any White woman could, and whenever not occupied with her housefold cares, she is busy over her pencil and paper. She has a voluminous roll of sketches, partly copies, but principally original drawings. With a stump of a pencil and any casual scrap of paper, shw will strike off at sight an American, an Englishman, a German, a Chinaman, a Modoc, or any eccentric character she may chance to see; and her heads are wonderfully correct and graphic. If she had received an education, or enjoyed any privileges except those afforded by the rudest backwoods, she would have been heard of in the art world. Matilda is a woman of a strong, dark face, glittering eyes, slow and deliberate in speech, and of an iron will--a good type of her race.

For a foundation to his wigwam, the Modoc excavates a circular space from two to four feet deep, then makes over it a concial structure of puncheons, which is strongly braced up with timbers, frequently hewn and a foot square. The whole is warmly covered with earth, and an aperture left atop, to which the inhabitants ascend by a centre-pole. Both sexes dressed themselves in skins and furs, like the Oregon Indians, before they ever saw an American. For fala-dresses, they tanned large-sized skins, and inlaid them with brilliant-colored duck-scalps, sewed on in various figures, making very handsome, if rather evil-smelling, robes.

Fish are caught with gigs, pointed with horn or bone, and with various kinds of seines. They formerly had dug-outs, generally made from the fir, quite rude and unshapely concerns, compared with those of the lower Klamath, but substantial, and sometimes large enough to carry 1,800 pounds of merchandise. Across the bow of one of these canoes the seine was stretched, bellying back as the craft was propelled through the water, until the catch was sufficiently large, when it was lifted up, emptied, and then replaced for another draught.

In these canoes they also gather the wocus. This is an aquatic plant, with (44) a floating leaf very much like that of a pond-lily, in the centre of which is a pod resembling a poppy-head, full of farinaceous seeds. These are pulled in great quantities, and the seed thrashed out on shore, forming an excellent material for bread or panada. Americans sometimes gather and parch them, then eat them in a bowl of milk with a spoon--a dish which is very relishable. The Klamath lakes are the only waters, I believe, on which this singular plant is known to exist, and it has been well suggested, that, if transplanted to other swamps and lagoons of California, it might become a cereal almost as productive and nutritious as rice. It constitutes a large source of winter supply for the Modocs. Another vegetable product they depend on largely is the kice, or kace--a root about an inch long and as large as one's little finger, of a bitter-sweetish and pungent taste, something like ginseng. Early in June, they quit their warm winter-lodges, and scatter about in small parties and families, encamping in brushwood booths, for the purpose of gathering this root. They find it in moist, rich places, near the edge of swamps; and, with a little fire-hardened stick in her hand, and a basket, a squaw can root it out fast. It is washed and eaten raw (the children and men are munching it all day), or dried and sacked up for winter. An industrious woman will put away many bushels of it in the attic of the lodge. They also set much store by cammas, which is gathered and preserved in the same manner. Thus it will be seen that the Modocs are more properly "Diggers," though not generally classed as such, than the California Indians thus called.

In Lost River, desert stream though it is, the Modocs find a remarkable supply and variety of fish. There are black, silver-sided, and speckled trout, of which first two species specimens are taken weighing twenty-five pounds; buffalo fish, from five to twelve pounds; and very large, fine suckers--such only in name and appearance, for they are not bonier than common fishes. In spawning-time, the fish school up from Clear Lake in extraordinary numbers, so that the Indians have only to put a slight obstruction in the river, when they can literally shovel them out. But the salmon, king of the finny tribes, they have not. That royal fish ascends the Klamath only to the first rapids below the lake, for above there is no gravel suitable to spawn in. The Modocs smoke up small stores of fish for winter consumption, and that principally from the little, white lake-fish; for they return from their summer pilgramage to the Shasta empty-handed. From these facts may be learned the secret of the Modocs' strong attachment to the banks of Lost River.

The Modoc squaws make a beautiful fashion of baby-basket. It is of fine willow-work, a little longer than a baby, shaped like a cylinder with half of it cut away, and the ends rounded. It is intended to be set up against the wall or carried on the back; hence the infant is lashed perpendicularly in it, with his feet standing on one end, and the other arching over his head for a canopy. In one which I saw this canopy was supported by standards, spirally wrapped with gay-colored calico, with looped and scalloped hangings between; and the body of it being woven of the finest willows in variegated colors, and the little cub pinioned in it, neat, clean, with his nose wiped, and standing straight up as an arrow--it was quite a fashionable turnout. Let a squaw black her whole face below the eyes, including the nose, shining black; thrust a goose-quill three inches long through the septum of her nose, don her

close-fitting skull-cap, and start for town with her baby-basket lashed to her back; then she feels the pride of maternity strong within her. The little fellow is swaddled all around like a mummy, with nothing visible but his head, so that he can sleep standing. From the manner in which the tender skull is thus bandaged back, it often results that it grows backward and upward at an angle of forty-five degrees, as if it had been compressed between two boards. Among the Muckalucs, a closely related tribe, I have seen a man of fifty years whose forehead was all gone, the head sloping right back on a line with the nose. Yet his faculties seemed nowise impaired. Again, the basket is so shaped that the baby, when riding on his mother's back, seems to be inserted into a tiny pulpit. All this conspicuous pains-taking which the Modoc squaws expend on their baby-baskets is good; it is a hopeful thing. Not unfrequently a Digger woman will set her baby carelessly in the top of a conical basket--the same in which she carries her household effects--leaving it loose and liable to fall out. When she has a baby-basket, it is not ornamented; and one tribe contemptuously call it "the dog's nest."

The Modocs have a hereditary chieftainship, and they are something less democratic and independent than the California Indians proper. But their surly and intractable character reveals itself occasionally. Sconchin, the lineal and rightful Chief of the whole tribe, and perhaps the most conscientious and honest Modoc the Americans ever knew, together with the famous Laylake (after whom a branch of the nation is called), made a treaty of peace with Captain Jesse Walker in 1854, and again with the Government in 1864, and both of them he kept religously. He remained on the
(45) Klamath Reservation, as he had promised, and it was partly his fidelity to his pledges which finally brought about Captain Jack's secession and all the subsequent troubles of this year. In 1870, Captain Jack, a coward and a braggart, set up the standard of insurrection, and led away from the reservation all but a hundred of the Modocs, who remained and still remain loyal to their legitimate Chief. He had given no pledges for himself, and he declared that Sconchin had no authority to bind him.

It is sometimes asserted that the Modocs have improved in disposition since the American conquest. B. F. Dowell, for instance, states that, twenty years ago, they were all roving, hostile, barbarous savages; while now more than half of them are loyal, very kind, and many of them speak good English. This is a rank delusion, common to American egotism. Their "loyalty," as with a great majority of Indians, is simply fear; they are neither more nor less kind than they were as savages--if anything, less generous to each other; and experience gives painful proof of the fact that the younger and English-speaking generation are less truthful, less honest, and less virtuous than the old, simon-pure savages.

I will give an instance of conspicuous shabbiness in their modern treatment of one another. When Captain Jack revolted and left the reservation, he and his band went down to Lost River and engaged in gambling with Captain George and his Muckalucs (Klamath Lake Indians). The latter were successful, and eventually won twenty-odd ponies, besides other articles. When the time of reckoning came, Captain Jack flatly refused to give up the ponies, and proposed that they should try a shooting-match for them. Captain George had fewer followers than he, and they were not armed; so,

after much fierce jangling, he was forced to consent. Then Captain Jack turned bully, began to bluster like a pirate, openly threatened Captain George's life, and finally drove the ponies coolly off!

On the other hand, how admirable was the conduct of Sconchin, in contrast. He and his faithful hundred were afterward removed to the Yainax Reservation, and, in the spring of 1872, they departed on a two -months' leave of absence, to gather roots and fish. The day before I reached the reservation, Sconchin's furlough expired, and the old Chief mounted his horse and rode forty miles through the desert to get it renewed, though he knew well there was not a bayonet on the reservation, and that the whole matter was an unmitigated farce.

When going into battle, the Modocs generally strip themselves naked, and hideously besmear the front of their bodies with blood-colored streaks and splashes of paint. Every frontiersman knows and dreads the terrible significance of red paint when employed by an Indian; it is the black flag of savage warfare. Their women often go forth to battle with them. Alvy Boles relates the following story, which may possibly be a little apocryphal, though the accounts received from the front during the present was go to confirm it: In 1854, when Captain Judy was campaigning against the united (46) bands of the Modocs and Shasteecas, on the Klamath, north of Yreka, women were frequently seen among the Indians, fighting, and sometimes found among the dead. One day, the enemy came suddenly upon him, advancing rapdily over the brow of a hill, and filling the air with a perfect shower of arrows. But not a male barbarian was in sight. Before them, in solid line of battle, their women were moving to the charge, while the warriors slunk along behind them, discharging their arrows between. For a moment, the Americans were taken aback. Their traditional gallantry, not a whit diminished by residence on thr frontier, forbade them from firing on the tender sex. But what could be done? They could not shoot a bullet at a right angle over the women's heads, though they would doubtless have done that if they could. Then the gallant Captain gave the order, "Break down the breastworks!" It was done. In his report of the battle, Captain Judy mentioned that "a few squaws were killed by accident!"

One custom the Modocs have which is peculiar. In the morning, at day-break, before any one has issued from his wigwam, they all arise in their rude couches and join in an orison, a kind of chant intoned with that haunting and mournful cadence--that hoarse, long, wailing sound--which is so infinitely saddening in all the music of the American Indians. It would seem to be a kind of invocation to that Great Being (Komoose) whom the Modocs vaguely recognize as the Creator. This was related to me by N. B. Ball, a soldier under Captain Jesse Walker, who listened to it one morning with a strange feeling while he lay close along the brow of a hill before the battle, glancing down his gun-barrel and waiting for the daybreak to show the nick in the sights.

All the Modocs were absent from the reservation and widely scattered over the country, at their summer labors; hence, I ssw none of the chie fs, and did not get a perfectly satisfactory account of the tribe. But the Muckalucs, known to the

Americans as the Klamath Lake Indians, have the same language and the same customs, and their history will supplement the other. They divide themselves into two main bodies, the Eocskinnes and Blykinnes, which names mean respectively "lowlanders" and "uplanders." The Eocskinnes dwell around Klamath Lake, the Blykinnes on Sprague River. Though they have intermarried a good deal with the Modocs, giving rise to a border race called Combatwash, they have warred on them even more, and beaten them time out of mind. They are deadly hereditary enemies.

We have come, now, into the real Oregon races, who have produced great chiefs, mighty warriors, organizers of government, men of old renown. Perhaps the most celebrated of these was Cumtucne, who died about 1866. He was rather a peace-chief--that is, a great orator, prophet, and rain-maker. Not only among the Muckalucs and Modocs, but through all the surrounding tribes, he was known and dreaded, and Indians traveled two hundred miles to consult him. It was believed that he could poison water or food by his simple volition, and many other wonderful things could he perform. At the present time, Captain George is Chief of the Muckalucs, without a rival, and he can muster 250 warriors. He wields over his subjects an authority such as few, if any, Calfornia chieftains dare attempt. One one occasion, not long ago, two of them were somewhat the worse for fire-water; in consequence of which they were whooping and running riot, and not only refused obedience to Captain George, but insulted him. Thereupon, the despotic old savage coolly drew his bow and shot them both unto death, where they stood; and none of their relatives ever dared bring him to judgment. Among these, the Chief also assesses, arbitrarily, the number of ponies, or the amount of shells, which must be paid as blood-money, in case of murder.

There is a war-chief, and a peace-chief or medicine-man, besides a great number of petty local head-men, whom the two leaders keep well in hand. One of the principal functions of the medicine-man is to "give the people a good heart," which he does through the instumentality of a speech, sometimes protracted to a length of three hours. He has a repeater, who repeats every sentence after him, though he himself speaks with sufficient loudness to be heard.

As these Indians are braver and more despotic than their southern neighbors, so they are more virtuous--or were, in their native state. It was a primitive custom among them, to destroy any woman who had commerce with a foreigner; which can be affirmed of only two or three tribes in California. Polygamy is tolerated, and the women have not so much influence as among the Shasteecas, though they possess considerable. They participate freely in all the war-dances, and other Spartan exercises; they have most of the medical practice; and they conduct, in person, nearly all the quarrels or fights which arise out of jealousy or polygamic discord. In all that relates to medicine, midwifery, bathing, etc., they are notably modest. A whole family sometimes enjoy a sweat-bath together, in their small ovens, heated with hot stones, but it is conducted with perfect propriety. The Modocs enjoy a privilege which must render them the envy of civilized men; and that is, the privilege of killing their mothers-in-law. To prevent misapprehension, it is necessary to say, that this is not a common practice; but if an Indian resort to it, his liberty is nowise curtailed, nor his character sullied. A widow inherits no property from her deceased husband, merely retaining the baskets and personal

ornaments which she has herself made; and if any of his property is left unburned, it is divided among his relatives. So religiously do they destroy the possessions of the dead, that, some years ago, when an American named More, who had consorted with a Muckaluc woman, died, they burned up a large quantity of fence-rails he had lately split. To the backwoodsmen this seemed gratuitous, as rails cost a good deal of hard work. The dead are buried in a recumbent posture, and the relatives dance, in a wailing circle, around the open grave. A pile of stones, or a tent, is erected over it, to prevent wild animals from exhuming the body. When one dies at a distance, he is burned, for convenience of transportation, and his ashes are sacredly carried home, and scattered on the graves of his ancestors;for there is nothing for which the dying savage so earnestly pleads with his companions, as their promise to carryo him home (47) to rest; and nothing from which he so piteously adjures them to deliver him, as the dishonor of being buried in alien soil.

This nation were even worse than the Modocs in the rapacity and cruelty with which they prosecuted the slave-trade. To secure a supply of slaves, they generally made war on the timid and peaceful Indians of Pit River. Of the captives taken, they retained as many as they wished for their own service, and sold the remainder to the tribes about The Dalles and Des Chutes. It was by means of this barter that they first obtained a stock of ponies, which their northern neighbors had learned to use before themselves. These slaves, like all other property, were sacrificed upon the death of the owner, though the practice is now discontinued. The last instance when they attempted it was at the death of Captain George's daughter, from the effects of a burn, when they wished to immolate all her slaves; but the White intervened, and prevented it.

When a maiden arrives at womanhood, her father makes a kind of party in her honor. Her young companions assemble, and together they dance and sing wild, dithyrambic roundelays; improvised songs of the woods and the waters--as thus:

"Jumping echoes of the rock;
Squirrels turning somersaults;
Green leaves, dancing in the air;
Fishes, white as money-shells,
Running in the water, green, and deep, and still.
Hi-ho, hi-ho, hi-hay!
Hi-ho, hi-ho, hi-hay!"

This is the substance of one of the songs, as translated for me, and I have imitated the rhythmical movement as nearly as possible. For five consecutive nights, the maiden and her chosen companions, locked arm in arm, with wristlets and ankets of the chanize-bush, walk to and fro, on the same line, all night, rattling amulets of deers' toes, chanting and singing, continually. The Indians, occasionally, stand decorously by and look on; but, unlike the California Indians, they take no part in the exercises, and profane them by no obscene remarks. When the ceremony is ended, the father makes liberal presents to the maiden's friends who have attended her; sometimes, even, being obliged to sell a horse to enable him to carry out his generous impulses.

From various paragraphs before written, it will readily appear that these Indians are more attached to their children than most tribes in California. So poignant and so overwhelming is the grief of a father on losing his son, that he sometimes rushes away in midwinter, ascends the highest mountain, plunges himself in the snow, and fasts--weeping, and beating his breast. It would seem that, if his friends did not follow him and bring him back, he would perish.

They hold, that fire was once lost throughout all the world; but that the coyote and the wolf stole it, from some quarter, and restored it. The coyote had the secret principle of fire in his toenails, and he imparted it to the turtle, then carried him up into the mountains, where the turtle communicated it to the flints and trees; so that an Indian can now extract it by percussing the one or drilling the other. Blydel-knelokke (the Chief above) gave them, as they believe, all things that they possess, and taught them their uses and names. He showed their ancestors how to make elk-skin hats, and boots or leggings, and that they should pluck out their beards; and he instructed the squaws in the art of weaving skull-caps, etc. When an Indian walks on the high hills or mountains, he carefully refrains from displacing or rolling down any stones, because Blydelknelokke walks on the mountains, stepping from stone to stone, and he would be offended at the absence of a single one.

THE WOMAN OF STONE.

Before the Muckalucs fell from their first estate, they were a happy people. Blydelknelokke gave them freely all things to enjoy, without the toil of woman's hands. Pleasant roots had they, and all manner of flesh--of elk, of deer, of antelope, of fish--with many green and goodly herbs which the earth abundantly produces. All these things did they eat, without sweat, or toil, or chase. Their days were full of songs, and their nights of sweet love, and laughter, and the dance. Their medicines talked with the Chief on high, and their words were wise. No pestilence, no black death, nor blight, nor deadly pains, ever passed among their villages. Bur a maiden of the Muckalucs wrought an odious thing in the sight of men. In wrath and vengenace, Blydelknelokke slew her with his hammer, wherewith he created and fashioned the world. He smote her unto death, on the spot; but her guilty lover escaped. She was turned into stone, on the mountain-side, and the great hammer likewise, beside her. There they have lain through many, many, many snows, plainly visible on the mountain--an everlasting reminder to the unhappy Muckalucs of the folly and weakness of woman, and of the once happy estate which they lost forever through her wickedness. On the mountain, towering high, which they call "Naylix," just at the edge of the chafing and leaping waves of Upper Klamath Lake, is seen the gigantic form of the Woman of Stone, extending far up the slpe, and beside her head, the Hammer of Creation. And ever since that fatal day, the hapless Muckalucs have been condemned to labor and to pain--all because of the primal sin of woman.

There are some people whose egotism of race, or bigotry of religion, will never let them rest until they have demonstrated, to their own satisfaction, that all such legends as that above rehearsed are exotic, imported, conveyed to the Indians by some early missionary, or caught up by them from some recited Bible lesson, or

kitchen story. They will not accord to the Indian any inventive power whatever. Out upon such miserable cant! A man who will thus endeavor to filch away from the savage whatever he has that is characteristic, is more to be despised than the lowest barbarian. If anybody possesses the requisite ingenuity to hunt this story back into a distorted version of the tale of Eden, he is welcome to it. I envy him not the talent. Why not allow that the Indian sages also, in their meditations, may have grounded hard and fast on that old, old rock of shipwreck--"Whence came disease and death into the world?" And surely the Muckaluc legend is no more discreditable than the Hebrew, for both shoulder all the blame upon the woman--the one, upon her curiosity; the other, upon her frailty. The inventors of either attributed to her whatever they considered her besetting sin.

Concerning the reservation, the secession therefrom, and the subsequent and present troubles with the Modocs, a very brief and simple statement will suffice. In 1854, they ceded all their lands, by treaty, to the United States Government, and agreed to go upon the Klamath Reservation. In 1864, the substance of that treaty was renewed. This reservation is fifty by forty miles in extent, lying east of Upper Klamath Lake, and including the fertile and magnificent valley of Sprague River. It is only justice to the Modocs to say, that they never were permitted to live happily on this reservation. The Klamath Lake Indians--their bitter and hereditary enemies, and greatly outnumbering them--were placed on it with them, together with several hundred Piutes. The Klamath Lake Indians were still on their own ancestral soil, while the Modocs were not; and the former continually taunted them with that fact, flung at them as interlopers and beggars, hectored and bullied them, obstructed their fishing operations, insulted and beat their women whenever they could do it safely, and, in short, did everything that savages are so ingenious in doing to make another tribe miserable. Brave and honest old Sconchin bore it all like a Spartan, having regard to his promises, though the clamors and laments of his people dinned day and night in his ear, as the cries of Israel came up to Moses and Aaron in the desert. Only the presence of the troops prevented bloody outbreaks from occurring continually. But at last, as before stated, in 1870, Captain Jack--although a man of mean quality, a coward, and a thorough-paced rascal--won the majority of the people from old Sconchin by siding with them against the treaty; and, finally, presuming upon the imbecile rule of the reservation, boldly marched away from it, and returned to the Modocs' ancient home on Lost River. Some weak attempts were made to induce him to return; but, presently, the whole matter was dropped, and he and his followers were allowed to roam whither they would. To remedy the ineradicable hostility between the Modocs and the Klamath Lake Indians, a new set of reservation buildings was established on the eastern end of the reserve, in Sprague River Valley, and called "Yainax Reservation; to which the remaining 100 Modocs, still loyal to Sconchin, were removed. But, with fatuousness worthy of the Indian Bureau, 700 Klamath Lake Indians were also brought with them; and thus the old elements of discord were perpetuated.

There was a third band of the Modocs split off, numbering only about forty, called the "Hot Creek Modocs," who acknowledged neither the authority of Sconchin nor of Captain Jack. Ranging on Hot Creek, Lower Klamath Lake, and Butte Creek, under the quasi protectorate of Messrs. Fairchild and Dorris, they deported themselves with comparative propriety, and were quite inoffensive.

Meantime, for two or three years, Captain Jack and his renegades roamed, without let or hindrance, throughout the whole region along Lost River, Clear Lake, and the adjoining waters, and even penetrated, sometimes, as far east as Goose Lake, slaughtering certain cattle strayed away from the herds owned by settlers on the eastern shore of the lake. They drove with them everywhere their immense bands of ponies--over Government lands, over reservation lands, over claims of settlers--contemptuously indifferent to all complaints and remonstrances, and depasturing vast bodies of grass to no good purpose. Many of the residents of these claims were bachelors, necessarily absent a good part of the day herding their cattle; and into their cabins the Modocs would force their way, and commit petty depredations, or perpetrate unmentionable indecencies. If the settler left a wife behind him, they would compel her to serve them, fling water about the house, whoop, yell, bang the doors, snatch articles out of the cupboard, and behave generally with outrageous and abominable indecency. For several months, every summer, Sconchin's Indians would be furloughed from the reservation, and come down on Lost River and the lakes. They would also bring hundreds upon hundreds of ponies along, to graze, though leaving many behind upon the reservation; but, aside from this offense, they behaved well enough generally. It was the universal sentiment of the settlers, that they would make very little complaint over the loss of the pasturage; for that country is large enough, and rich enough in grass, heaven wot, to maintain all that will ever get into it for the next twenty years. But what they did vigorously protest against was, the promiscuous running to and fro of the impudent savages, and the intolerable pother they made in their families. As early as the summer of 1872, there was a fierce and menacing undercurrent of talk running among all the settlers of that region, especially on the Oregon side. It was evident, that there was needed only a slight occasion of mischief-doing to bring forth a bloody outbreak, or massacre.

On the part of the reservation, what were the manifestations? It was and is argued, that the altitude of the whole Klamath Reservation is so considerable as to preclude any useful cultivation of the cereals, and hence, notwithstanding the enormous dimensions of the reserve, it was necessary to furlough the Indians a good while every summer, to gather roots and fish outside of it. But no excuse was made, or could be made, for not bringing back Captain Jack--at least, during the winter. As things were managed in that latitude, the Indians were not at all to be blamed for wanting their annual furlough; for it was with them absolutely one of two things--dig roots, or starve. If they had had sense enough to keep cattle instead of ponies, they might have subsisted fatly on their flesh; but they had not, and there was no one to advise them. Yainax may be too frosty for the successful production of wheat, and require to import 40,000 pounds of flour a year; but it exhibits a fine, spacious filed of that cereal in an advanced stage of growth, and a new thrashing-machine. It is a good latitude for hotel-keeping, and Government rations are cheap to the traveler at fifty cents a meal, when there is no other stopping-place for sixty miles on one side, and twenty on the other. The Indian, with his one annual shirt and his stomach half-full of roots, on a frosty and nipping morning looks into the cozy dining-room and sees a pampered Chinaman serving a reservation family and guests (the travelers) with hot, greased cakes of Government flour. It would not answer to have an Indian in there cooking, for he might surreptitiously hand victuals out of the window to his countrymen, and the hotel larder be bankrupted.

But every intelligent reader knows, too well, the sickening story of the average Indian reservation. Who blames Captain Jack for not wanting to go back to it, if he could help himself--back to this accursed pest-house? It was a miracle of savage fidelity, that Sconchin voluntarily rode forty miles to get his furlough renewed. The Modocs were a chained tiger, tampered with by fools. They let him play to the end of his chain; they pulled it, they coaxed him, they threatened, they threw him crumbs, they let him go again. He snarled, and they coddled him. They begged him to come back; they advised him to come back; they sent agents to urge him to come back. From first to last, there has been brought to bear on the solution of this question a mixture of shilly-shally imbecility and paltering. The Modocs know a man's metal when they see him; they have done nothing, all their lives, but read faces. They know George Crook from another man. They are no dotards; they are no whiners. They judged the Great Father, in Washington, by his sons whom he sent; and the latter they caught, and cast them out of the vineyard, and slew them. I once overheard a poor, simple-witted Digger Indian telling his comrade about some terrible invention of the White man--evidently a repeating rifle. He wound up by saying, "When he shoot a man, he hit him same time before, behind." But the Modocs know which end of a Henry rifle the lead comes out of. I glory in that supreme audacity which armors its breast only with a little red paint against a sixteen-shooter. If men will fool with a chained tiger, and let him at large certain days, let them not squeal if they are bitten. The pity of it is--the grievous pity--that it was the settlers who were bitten, and not the reservation people. No doubt the Modocs are a cruel, revengeful, and implacable race; but they know the master, when they see him. Ah, for one day, for one hour, of George Crook! The blood of those poor murdered women and children lies not more upon the bloody-minded Modocs than it does upon the wretched, slabbering, paltering policy which let them loose. What the Modocs need, more than anything else, is that tremendous thrashing which one brave man gives another, and which they can understand; after that, impartial justice--no swindling, no foolery, no generosity.