

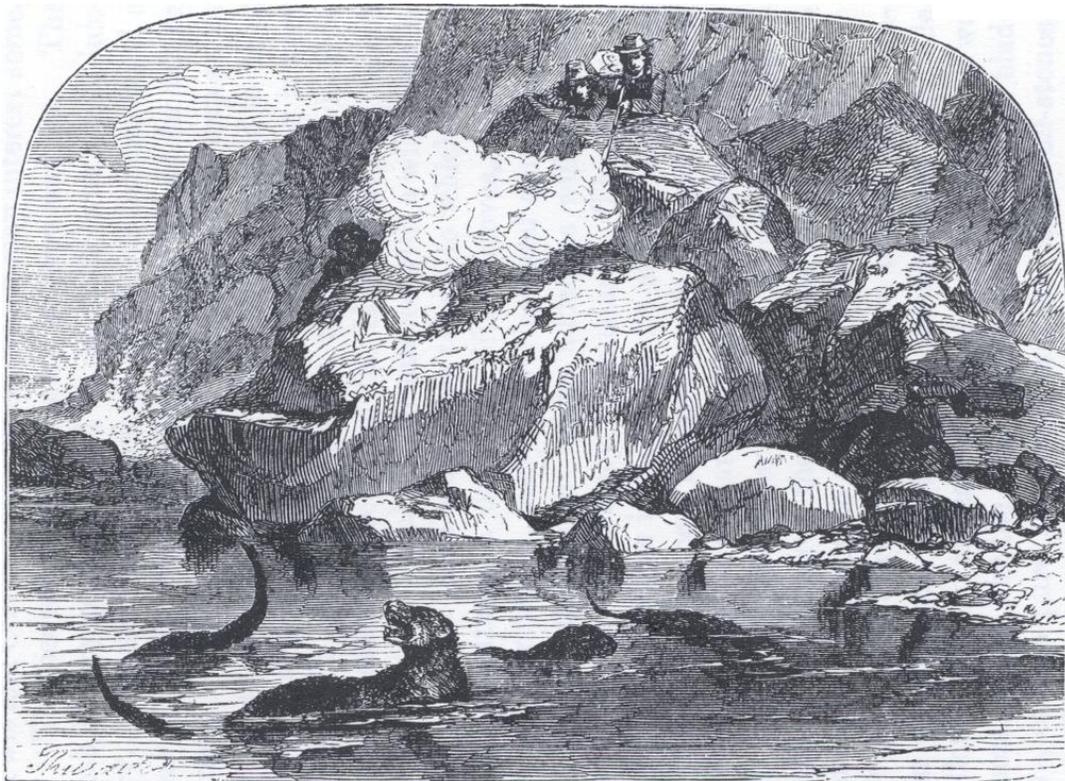
## James G. Swan (1818-1900)

**J**ames G. Swan arrived in Shoalwater (Willapa) Bay in 1852, initially to make his fortune (or at least a living) in the oyster trade servicing gold rush San Francisco. His fascination with the people and territory soon derailed that notion and he became one of the best early chroniclers of our region. *The Northwest Coast, or, Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory* (1857), was selected to *Literary Oregon, One Hundred Books, 1800-2000*.

### “To Catch a Fish”

I had some of the nicest sort of flies, of various patterns and styles, and I anticipated rare sport, but after trying half an hour without the least semblance of a bite, I returned to the canoe, from whence I had strolled a short distance, and there found the two Indians who were with me very leisurely and lazily engaged in pulling in the trout as fast as they saw fit to throw their hooks overboard. I call it lazy kind of trout fishing to be engaged as they were, for one lay flat on his back in the bow of the canoe, with a line in his hand about three fathoms long, having a hook attached to it baited with a roe of the salmon. No sooner would this touch the water than the trout would dart at it from all quarters, and the Indian, with a sleight-of-hand jerk, would send the captive fish spinning up in the air, from whence he was sure to fall into the canoe. The other Indian was half reclining across the stern, with one foot in the canoe and the other in the water, amusing himself by dividing his time between baiting his hook and starting off on voyages of discovery.

*The Northwest Coast, or, Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory,*  
James G. Swan, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1857, pg 139



“Otter Hunt,” James G. Swan in *The Northwest Coast*, pg 93