

NOTES BY THE WAY.

MEMORANDA

OF A

JOURNEY ACROSS THE PLAINS,

FROM

DUNDEE, ILL., TO OLYMPIA, W. T.

May 7, to November 3, 1862.

By R. H. HEWITT.

OLYMPIA:

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Notes By the Way.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7:—Bid friends good by at Dundee, Ill., and started for St. Joseph, Mo., distant about five hundred miles by R. R. The weather for several days had been chilly and unpleasant, and vegetation had scarcely shown signs of life. The jaunt across the State was attended by no peculiar circumstance, other than what usually occurs to every traveler. The line of the road is through a beautiful prairie country, of which the State is largely composed. Nothing can now be said recommending the State of Illinois.—The fertility of its soil, the natural advantages it possesses, which enable the farmer to lead a life of perfect independence, if not opulence, are too well understood to require it. To the eye of one seeking merely for a variety of scenery, it presents, after a time, but one appearance; too much of a sameness to be altogether attractive, and they very naturally relapse back to their own thoughts, or seek amusement from the contents of book or paper.—As we advanced, verdure seemed rap-

idly developing; trees were putting forth their brightest foliage, and the flowers are in full bloom. Reached Quincy at 11 P. M.

MAY 8.—Obtained our first view this morning of the "Father of waters," the Mississippi river. At this point it is about one mile wide in the channel, but owing to the unusual rise of the water, it is in reality about twelve miles in width from its overflow. Took steamer for Hannibal, Mo., twenty miles down the river. Many dwellings on the shores were deserted because of the water, and in several instances removed from their foundations. Reached Hannibal at 10 A. M. Here our feet for the first time trod on soil tilled by slaves. At the breaking out of the present rebellion the place was at one time nearly overcome by it. It has suffered much from incendiaries for a year and a half past, which the inhabitants credit to those whose sympathies are secesh. Same evening reached Palmyra, a place fifteen miles west. It seemed quite

a town, but much given to secession, especially the female portion of the inhabitants. Here a delay occurred to purchase mules for our journey.

MAY 10:—Placed animals on the cars and started for St. Jo. Arrived at Brookfield at 12 p. m., the intermediate station of the H. & St. Jo. R. R. Here the train laid by until Monday morning. We have seldom if ever passed a more disagreeable or lonesome day than was Sunday the 11th day of May.—This is a small place consisting only of a locomotive house, a R. R. Hotel, and a few dwellings mostly deserted by their owners. The land along the line of the road is very productive when cultivated; but from the blighting influence of slavery, it is not. Were it not for this, Missouri would become as populous as any State of which our country can boast. The entire State gives evidence of desolation and ruin; R. R. bridges burned; dwelling-houses deserted, torn to pieces, or consigned to the flames. A spirit of vandalism seems to pervade all who are tinctured with this monstrous doctrine of "State Rights," as well as this *infernal, black-hearted rebellion*. The footprints of rebellion are everywhere visible, and at the present writing the iron rule of Martial Law is thought to be the only means that will save the State from ruin. She danced to the tune of secession, and now she is fearfully paying the cost. Through treacherous demagogues was her best interests betrayed, Judas like, and for less than thirty pieces of silver. The blood of murdered thousands calls loudly for redress. The responsibility for the wrongs done the living and the insults to the tombs of the dead rests heavily on those who plunged her into the whirling vortex of secession. Shameless scoundrels ruled and brought her to the verge of ruin. Through this section, as well as in the more remote South, a large portion of the female population have interest-

ed themselves deeply in the political and warlike affairs of the country, and to their lasting disgrace be it said, many of the most barbarous acts were committed by their instigation, as the sickening details of the Big Bethel and Bull Run disasters fully corroborate as reported by Congress.

Left Brookfield, 12 p. m., arrived in St. Jo., 10 a. m., next morning. Day spent in viewing the city, which bore the appearance of having once been a place of considerable importance. But now how changed. Through the agency of this causeless rebellion it was suddenly transformed from a place following the peaceful pursuits of life, to a military position. Secession having been so outspoken and overpowering at one time, that Illinois troops were stationed here to keep the inhabitants in check. Entrenchments were thrown up on an eminence commanding the town; "peace messengers" prepared, and every arrangement made for a bombardment. This contingency was barely avoided by the more furious ones vacating and the remaining ones wisely keeping quiet. At present about 1000 troops are encamped here, which has a very soothing effect on the wounded sensibilities of its "oppressed" population. The city is situated on bluffs, from which a fine view of the surrounding country can be obtained, also a number of miles of the Missouri river, and a considerable tract of the not very congenial sister State of Kansas. This city also bears abundant evidence of the ruthless spirit of war. The incendiaries torch has been busily applied, as indicated by the heaps of blackened ruins throughout the city. Many places which once transacted a large business, and paid high rents, were used as barracks and stables, and a general appearance of ruin and desolation is presented. Apparently but little attention is given to purifying the city, and in

many parts of it the filth that exists is really nauseating; a foul vapor arises, which is certain to carry disease and death in its course. Some considerable public spirit has manifested itself, and several large public buildings have been erected. Indeed the place has overdone itself, and now the consequent re-action is taking place. Business prostrated or depressed; enormous taxation; and a seizure of property to pay its expenses, and a sacrifice of possessions at hardly an approximation to its actual cost.

A Roman Catholic Convent has also been built, which with other institutions of a like character, does a good business. What their particular object is we are not informed. In fact this is the most unfavorable time St. Jo. could receive visitors, and we forbear criticising too heavily, and predict that the child is now living that will see St. Jo. a beautiful and thriving city.

CAMP 1, MAY 15:—First experience in camp life to-day. The greatest part of the day was very warm, not to say sultry. In the afternoon a heavy storm arose which came upon us wholly unprepared. As everything is very much in need of rain we concluded to forbear remarks, retain our tempers, and make the best of it. There is an attraction in camp life which has the charm of novelty. So here we are,—six of us,—in our very snug little tent, but our enjoyment is marred by the sickness of one of the party. This morning Uncle was obliged to return to Dundee, on account of the sickness of one of his daughters. Until his return there is no possibility of knowing how long we will be obliged to remain here. It is said the fun of camp life consists in the fun you make of it. So if we extract no pleasantries from this tour the fault is our own. Judging from the beginning we shall have no lack of amusement. We shall see.

MAY 6:—The usual amount of prep-

aration and arranging preparatory to a long and wearisome pilgrimage. Sun hot and scorching but do not know the degree of temperature. Uncle received telegram announcing the death of Carrie, a daughter about ten years of age. Thus has the rude hand of death entered our little band. The thought is saddening and has cast a gloom over the entire company. Which of us will next be called upon to yield up our life is a matter of which we know nothing, but we hope and trust that we shall be spared the painful necessity of laying another of our company 'neath the sod. Towards evening another storm arose, and gave every indication of being a severe one. Our animals were taken in and safely picketed at an early hour,—which precaution becomes necessary, because of the horse and mule stealing,—and every convenience within our limited means, arranged for protection from the approaching storm. Near midnight the rain was heralded by constant, vivid flashes of lightning, and increasing thunder. About 12 o'clock it burst upon us with fury. The whole Heavens seemed one continued flame, and flashes of chain-lightning chased each other with malignant venom. The thunder crashed and rolled with terrible earnestness, 'till it seemed that the whole artillery of Heaven was brought into action. This lasted about one hour, when it settled into a steady, chilly rain.

MAY 17:—Morning dawned rainy and cold. Nothing transpired of especial interest. Drank coffee this morning for the first time in my life.

SUNDAY, MAY 18:—Each one amusing themselves as best they may. The atmosphere still cloudy and uncomfortable.

MAY 19 to 22:—No circumstance has taken place during a few days past of peculiar interest worthy of record, and camp-life drags wearily. Weather

quite cold. To-day two mules broke from their fastenings and strayed off. Found them about 5 miles north, about 9 o'clock, P. M. A kind-hearted old gentleman took them up and put them in his stable. An act of such disinterested kindness cannot pass unmentioned, especially in this country, where "Jayhawkers," "Bushwhackers" and horse-thieves abound, and we regret that we did not learn his name. From the several disappointments we have met with while here, such as delay and death, and other causes, we have named this, our first encampment, "Camp Disappointment."

MAY 23:—No intelligence from Uncle. Feel quite uneasy and discontented in consequence. This evening Father arrived, which proved a panacea indeed. Uncle will not be able to start before next week, because of the sickness of his daughter.

MAY 24:—A slight activity characterized the events of the day.

SUNDAY, MAY 25:—Quiet and orderly to-day. In the morning appearances indicated a storm, which, however, passed over, leaving a beautiful Sabbath.

MAY 26:—Weather warm, oppressively so. Nothing unusual or alarming to-day. In the evening indications of rain.

JUNE.

JUNE 3:—The preceeding days from last date, have hung heavily about our camp. Uncle has directed us to move on to Omaha, Nebraska, 150 miles up the river, where he hopes to meet us, as soon as the recovery of Lucy will permit. An Emigrant Escort starts from that point, and he wishes us to go with it. To-day the camp presented a business-like activity. Wagons were packed and fitted, and all arrangements made for a march. Having lain in

"Camp Disappointment" so long, order "forward," has a peculiarly cheerful, musical sound. We shall take leave of our old camp-ground, around which every object has become familiar, with no regret whatever. Since we have been here, three of our little party have been afflicted severely with the measles, but have nearly recovered, and a fourth, Ella, is now coming down with them. Should she be able to move, the morning is fixed upon for our cavalcade to start. Whatever the events of the day, will be developed on the morrow.

JUNE 4:—Unable to start. The day spent in preparation.

CAMP 2. JUNE 5:—Broke up camp and left St. Jo. behind, at 11 A. M., with buoyant spirits in one respect, from satisfaction of moving, and with heavy depressed spirits in another,—because of the sickness of three of our company. Our carriage we have converted into an hospital, and have spared no effort within our power to administer to the comfort of the invalids, thus thrown upon our care. Thus far it would seem as though some obstacle has been thrown in our way, or some circumstances continually arising beyond our ability to control, to prevent our progress or allow us to move on. But we still have hope that what now appears to us almost incomprehensible, will soon be clear and bright, and that the dark cloud which hangs so gloomily over our prospects will soon recede and reveal its silver lining.

The country through which we passed is not what would be termed beautiful. What should be its attractive feature is decidedly not very charming, but appears dull and forbidding. Judging from appearances but a small portion of it is worked, and that, but indifferently. Towards evening passed through a place called Savannah; a place of not very large dimensions, but

of large pretensions. Here, also, troops are quartered to prevent an uprising of the "over-burdened," "down-trodden," sympathisers with secession, and to rid the country of horse-thieves and murderers. We are told that soldiers are stationed in nearly every town in the State for the same purpose. Towards evening four Indians passed our train. They were well mounted and armed, and evidently bound out on a hunting or some other excursion, which only concerned themselves. Our "dusky friends" appeared to take no notice of us, but to our party they were quite a novelty—being the first we had ever seen in their native country. Pitched our tent at 6 P. M., as near as we could judge, in a very pleasant place, and set our house in order to enjoy camp No. 2 as best we might. Traveled about 17 miles.

CAMP 3. JUNE 5:—Left camp 2 at 7½ o'clock A. M. The country through which the day's journey was performed, was similar to yesterday's record, in many respects. We found some heavy hills and dense underbrush. In the forenoon lost our road going out of the way about 2 miles, and were obliged to retrace our steps. It is not a hard matter to find the wrong way, in a region poorly supplied with guide-boards and fences, but having numerous branch roads. The village of Fillmore is effected much by old age, being in a wretched state of dilapidation and decay. Our camp this evening is situated on the line between the rough country, and a broad beautiful prairie which stretches far off in the distance before us. A perceptible change and for the better, is noticed among the invalids this evening. Sky clear and moon shining brilliantly.

We know not how far we advanced to-day. Having no means of computing distances, and as the information obtained from the inhabitants vary so much in their estimate, that nothing

can be accepted as reliable. Knowing our destination and the distance, we hope to reach it in due time.

CAMP 4 JUNE 6:—Our course to-day lay through a large rolling prairie, then into a hilly, heavily timbered section, again into a prairie along side of which our camp is fixed. We saw many uncultivated fields over-grown with wild grass and weeds, and on inquiry learned that nearly all the male population had gone to war. Many dwellings also, were deserted; a reason for this we are unable to give. A mule of the female persuasion slipped her fastenings this evening, and retired from camp-life. She retreated in "good order" about one mile, when she was overtaken and returned. Crossed Terkio river by bridge, and passed through "Mound City." We were obliged to look twice before we could really make out what it was. This also, in common with many other such "cities," have their existence only on paper, or in the imitable imagination of land speculators, or their dupes whose names are legion, and who seem willing to be "taken in."

The invalids suffered much from the heat to-day, but they are gradually gaining.

CAMP 5 JUNE 7:—The country we passed through to-day was beautiful, and compared well with that mentioned yesterday. On the margin of the prairie we are camped. The weather oppressively hot, which depresses the spirits of the invalids. Received a call from some of our new neighbors. Found many of a genuine, high-toned hospitality. The villages of Rockport and Linden, which we passed, leave impress of the ruin that pervades the other places mentioned. For the most part, the country is in the state which nature left it, and man found it. When emigration does set this way, and settle-

ments are formed here, then we may expect Missouri will make a populous State.*

CAMP 6, SUNDAY, JUNE 8:—Our time being limited, and a lengthy journey to perform, rendered it necessary for us to continue our march over to-day, which under other circumstances would not have been done. Our route has laid along a prairie, or what is known here as "river bottoms," which consists of an immense tract of level country, on both sides of the Missouri river. On the east side of the road is a line of high, steep bluffs; on the west, the broad expanse of prairie, extending as far as the eye can reach. Crossed the Nishnabottana river, and soon passed the narrows, a neck of land but a few rods in width, which separate that river from the Missouri. The bed of the former, is lower than that of the latter; the streams run parallel to each other nearly fifty miles. This year is the period for the scourge of Egypt, the locust, to appear, and myriads of this destructive little insect swarm among the trees and shrubbery along the road, and their humming can be heard a long distance, as they ply their task. They are said to be plentiful also, back in the country.

Camp 6 is situated in a beautiful spot, at the foot of the bluffs. In the west in the dim distance, is the river,

* We have been enlightened in regard to the deserted dwellings, mills and farms we have noted so much since we started. It seems their owners or occupants were secessionists, whose howling about their "rights," fancying themselves deprived of them, and ranting about their "oppressions," feeling much aggrieved, had rendered them obnoxious to the better portion of society, and they were invited to vacate, to seek a more congenial clime. They had the impudent assurance to take their families and movable property to free Iowa, uncontaminated by rebellion, for safety, and the ineffable meanness to return and make war on the country which was protecting their families under the false plea of Unionists. Comment is unnecessary. "The dog shall return to his vomit, and the hog that is washed to his wallowing in the mire."

along which a steamboat is plowing its way. In the rear is a singular formation of nature; a semi-circular hollow in the hills, around which they are thrown up like the walls of a fort. Two peaks at either point, stand like grim sentinels, frowning defiance on a foe. The sick ones are slowly on the gain, and we hope soon to have their company in their natural capacity. Crossed the dividing line between the States of Missouri and Iowa this morning, and were pleased once more to set foot on free soil, and breathe an atmosphere untainted by slavery. There is much in Missouri to admire, as well as much to condemn. She is fast shaking off the yoke which binds her, and we look forward for the time to come when she will also assert her majesty as a free and enlightened common-wealth, and give no place to bigotry and intolerance, so much of which is now enclosed within her borders.

CAMP 7, JUNE 9:—To-night we locate in "Pacific city," and an exceeding small specimen of a city, truly. On inspection it seems to have been built during the excitement of railroad times, when "corner lots" were at a premium. With nothing to sustain it, it went down. The country as previously described, answers to-day's requirements. The only thing of note transpiring—took the road opposite the right one, and it led us into a very bad slough, which, however we got through by some trouble, but no accident. Several laughable circumstances occurred to-day, but they will not bear recording. The weather was sultry and the dust uncomfortable; this evening the moon is shining brilliantly, and the very quietness gives a charm to the situation.

CAMP 8, JUNE 10:—The "bottoms" being overflowed by the rising of the river, we were again turned out of our course across the bluffs four miles, over

heavy hills through the little village of Glenwood, which is by far the neatest place we have passed. It agrees perfectly with its name, snugly seated between the hills. It is in good repair, contains several churches, and a large public school. A few miles farther and Bellview and Omaha appeared in sight. Here the road veered round a low marshy section, and on once more clearing a point in the hills, Council Bluffs came in view. Remained here but a short time, and passed on to the river, over which we ferried at an expense of \$3.50. Located camp north of the city of Omaha, near the river.

Throughout this trip we found the best of water in fountains along the road, also grass and fuel.

JUNE 11:—Went out prospecting around the city. The city is well laid out, well built, and pleasantly situated on high land. It is quite an important place, also, being an outfitting depot for emigrants for the plains. It contains several large public buildings and churches, and is very active, for a place seemingly so far from anywhere else. It is the Capitol of Nebraska Territory, and has a spacious Legislative Hall erected on an eminence overlooking a vast tract of country. Standing on "Capitol Hill," numerous encampments are in view, of pilgrims bound for the New Eldorado, while trains can be seen wending their way over the hills towards that point and the Mormon haven.

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CAMP 9, JUNE 17:—Left Omaha this morning with heavy hearts and downcast feelings. Remained in camp there seven days, anxiously watching and waiting for the party who are to make up our company. Every day but increased our anxiety, still not a word to inform us of their movements. On consultation, we resolved on moving

forward. Without a guide, inexperienced and a long, wearisome journey before us, we can but use our best endeavors, and hope for a safe transit, until overtaken, if at all, by those who can better direct us. Our course to-day lay through a prairie country somewhat broken by hills, but without timber.—Roads good and weather suitable for traveling. Camped by Elkhorn river; the current rapid, and of a dark muddy color. The country in this part of the world is not very inviting. Passed eight emigrant wagons on the way, and overtook the Escort. Some Pawnee Indians who recently reached this station, report fighting between them and their neighbors, the Sioux. Good camp-ground. Wood water and grass. Traveled 23 miles.

CAMP 10, JUNE 18:—Started out this morning in the rear of the "Escort," and dragged along after them until an accident to one of their wagons enabled us to take the lead. 'Twas a low bleak prairie over which we traveled to-day; many slues were in it, and the roads cut up badly in the wet season. A cold north wind blew all day, making it very uncomfortable. Camped this evening along the Platte river, at the first point where that and the road touch, at a distance of 52 miles from Omaha. This river is a wide shallow stream, very muddy. It is in fact a waste of waters, being of no benefit to humanity, but a drain to the upper country. Good place to camp; water and grass plenty; wood obtained at the "River View" house.

CAMP 11, JUNE 19:—Continued on the same prairie mentioned yesterday, but with better roads. Laying aside all feelings to the contrary, one would almost imagine, even in this distant region, that they were in a land advanced in the arts of civilization. Our route follows the line of the great Pacific Telegraph, and with farm-houses and

ranches scattered here and there by the way, the journey will be for some distance ahead by no means a lonesome one. Our camp this evening is on the prairie, which looses itself on every side. Camped early, after lessening the distance 20 miles. Here we found wood, water, grass and—mosquitoes.

CAMP 12, JUNE 20:—Again have we camped along the Platte. The road in the forenoon was not one of the best, being very sandy in places. Crossed Loupe Fork river by ferry. It was an exceeding crazy, shammy concern, hardly fit to be dignified by the name of ferry; but what there was we were obliged to accept, and as the opposite shore was reached in safety, we pronounced it good enough, and pass it by. The boat crossed nearly half way over the river. It seemed like paying \$3.50 for fording, the ferrying thrown in. Good roads on the west side of the river. This evening used river water for the first time. Water a little stained. Good camp-ground.—Plenty cooking materials, and feed for animals. Advanced 24 miles.

CAMP 13, JUNE 21:—No change in the scenery to-day. For a time in the morning found good roads. The Platte at this season of the year overflows its banks, and in so doing softened the road to such an extent that for a short distance they cut up badly. Our mules dragged us through, and it was a relief to reach hard land again.—Camped by the river, and amused ourselves by shooting at birds. Passable stopping place. Water plenty, grass meagre, wood scarce. 21 miles.

CAMP 14, SUNDAY, JUNE 22:—As we were unable to find a fitting place at which to stop over to-day, it became necessary to continue our march over another Sabbath. It was a matter of necessity, not of choice, and we trust that not often will such alternatives occur. At the present writing a high

wind is blowing, and appearances indicate a severe storm during the night, so every thing is secured and fitted up in expectation of it. Good camp-ground with all things necessary. 23 miles.

CAMP 15, JUNE 23:—A decided improvement in the appearance of the country. As we leave the river and ascend higher land, it assumes a better aspect. Everything needs rain badly; crops are poor for the want of it, and grass is withered for the lack of proper sustenance. During the forenoon the sun shone intensely hot; but in the afternoon clouded up with a pleasant wind. Camped to-night on a broad level plain, somewhat remote from the river, at which we are well pleased, as the myriads of mosquitoes have been an excessive annoyance while we have camped along its borders. Road very good. Forded Wood river, but a small shallow stream. Good place to camp. 25 miles.

CAMP 16, JUNE 24:—Camped about one mile from the river, opposite Ft. Kearney, distant $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Roads good, with an occasional slue. The weather intensely hot. We have now reached the second haven of our hopes, and whether they will be realized or no, remains to be seen. Camped in a very good situation, in company with several trains bound on the same mission with ourselves. Found water and grass, but was obliged to purchase fuel at one dime per stick of cord-wood length. Traveled 25 miles.

JUNE 25:—The river being very high, fording or ferrying is very difficult at this season of the year. It is about 3 miles wide, runs in several channels, with a rapid current. Hired conveyance to cross at the moderate charge of \$3.00, to go to the Post Office at the Fort, in hopes that we should hear something from home, also from him who, above all others, we desire

to see. The difficulties attending the voyage, with its results, are deemed a more fitting subject for a note, which will be found appended below.*

CAMP 17, JUNE 26:—Started in good season this morning, sad from our yesterday's disappointment. Here we have a long and wearisome journey of about 335 miles before us, through a piece of country containing not a human habitation, and which is sparsely timbered. The weather again to-day was excessively hot, and I was confined to the "hospital," (which is still kept up,) because of my exertions of yesterday. Camped this evening along with a number of trains. Here, as in Missouri, we have no means of computing distances, but we hope to reach Fort Laramie in good season. Saw a number

* STARTED on an expedition across the river to Fort Kearney, with eager expectation of receiving letters from home and Uncle. Reached the ranch on the river at 12 M., and was obliged to await the arrival of the stage, which did not appear until 3 o'clock P. M. The crossing we found to be 4 miles above. Here the river is nearly three miles wide, and runs in three channels, two of which we forded by stage. The third, nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide, is shallow, with an occasional deep channel, and a very rapid current. This we crossed in a miserable combination of sticks and lumber, mis-called a boat—a rickety, leaky thing at that, which we were obliged to bail continually in order to keep it afloat, and out of which we had occasionally to get, to drag it over sand bars, with a scorching sun overhead. This was not to be understood as a pleasure excursion, as we learned to our cost before we again reached camp. On the south side we procured passage down to the Fort, four miles, in the mail wagon. On reaching the post office, with feelings running high with anticipation, we found nothing to repay us for our PAINS, and the exertion we had undergone. This was a severe blow and a bitter disappointment. We had traveled 12 weary miles, crossed in fact 3 rivers, tramped through a jungle—a fit home for snakes, lizards and all manner of reptiles; nothing could now be done but to retrace our steps as quickly as our physical condition would allow. Down-heartedness made up no small share of our feelings on our return trip. Another turn of bailing, dragging, &c., brought us on the other shore; another tramp through the jungle, and wading the other two branches—the water up to our armpits—found us clear from the river. Reached home at 11 P. M., wet, tired and exhausted from our exertions.

of villages of what are known as "prairie dogs." Several were shot at but missed. We saw also the skeletons of some buffalos by the way. Several times has it clouded up, with heavy thunder and lightning, and seemingly made desperate efforts to rain; so far it has failed. At the present time a heavy shower is moving to the north. Should it reach us, it would indeed be a favor.

CAMP 18, JUNE 27:—After passing rather an uncomfortable night on account of mosquitoes, we again take up our line of march, which lays through the same apparently interminable prairie. At noon we found what here we call very good water, and plenty of grass for our animals; but as night approached and no sign of water, we were compelled to continue our march till near midnight, when we were brought to a sudden stop by breaking one of the carriage wheels. During the afternoon, a sudden gale arose, which continued until after nightfall, when it increased in severity, accompanied by a slight fall of rain, when it ceased, and all was again quiet. To-night our meal consisted of what was left through the day, it being so late, and all being too tired to go through the process of cooking. Being fortunate enough to break down by a dry slough, water was obtained by digging a shallow well, for our own use and also for the animals.

This is our experience crossing Platte river; the meanest of rivers—broad, shallow, fishless, snakeful, quicksand bars and muddy water—the stage rumbles over the bottom like on a bed of rock; yet haste must be made to effect a crossing, else you disappear beneath its turbid waters, and your doom is certain, horses, wagons, passengers and all. Kearney city, two miles above the Fort, a place of about a dozen houses, is familiarly called "dobey town," being almost entirely constructed of adobes, or sun-dried bricks. The Fort is a wooden structure; that and the buildings attached are of considerable extent. A number of soldiers were walking around, with apparently but little to do; a number of cannon stood in the enclosure rusty from disuse. It is the Western Stage Co's station; here also congregate the worshippers of Bacchus, and "dealers" of cards.

The distance traveled to-day was necessarily great; we had no wish to extend it, and the like of which we hope not soon to repeat.

CAMP 19, JUNE 28:—As morning dawned we found the damage done to our carriage not so serious as we at first supposed, and preparations were immediately made for mending the broken wheel. Among the company we found oak lumber enough to repair it, which we paid for only by thanks. The injury was repaired and we on the way by 11 o'clock A. M. Camp 19 was located along side the river, and we were obliged to wade a channel to an island to obtain wood.

SUNDAY, JUNE 29:—The Sabbath is especially denominated a day of rest. With us it was far otherwise. We tried hard but in vain to reach this point in season to do our work yesterday. To-day we were obliged to wash, and set three tires on our heavy wagon. This evening a heavy storm arose, and the rain fell in copious quantities. It continued with little interruption during the night.

CAMP 20, JUNE 30:—Started early in hopes of making a good day's travel. Morning lowery, and during the day we had a heavy fall of rain. The road was very sandy, and intersected by many sloughs. Reached "Pawnee Springs," where we camped for the night. Sky clear, and every appearance of a pleasant day to-morrow.

Another month has passed.

CAMP 21, JULY 1:—The morning heavy and cloudy, but the clouds soon disappeared, and the day closed beautifully. The roads bad from yesterday's storm, but grew better as night approached. Refreshed ourselves at a large cold spring on the north side of the road. Last night formed a junction with several other companies, and our little army now numbers about 25

effective men. Met two trains of Mormons, one of 40 and the other of 55 wagons, with an average of five yoke of cattle to each wagon, bound to the border for a large number of their poor deluded dupes. We are again camped along side of the river, but our water for cooking purposes we bring along with us. No wood but what we carry along, and we are informed that for over 225 miles we will not be troubled with any unnecessary amount of timber. We are now following up a road which is nearly level, with a few low sand-hill exceptions, of nearly 500 miles in extent. After that hills and mountains.

CAMP 22, JULY 2:—Roads not exceedingly good to-day. Crossed two creeks near each other in the morning, and two teams got stuck in the mud. It was nothing serious, and we soon righted and moved on. At noon camped near a large spring of cold water. This afternoon our road was long and circuitous, through heavy sand and some hills. Separated from part of the company at noon, and it is a matter of doubt whether we are overtaken by them this evening. Good grass, poor water, and no wood.

Up to this time a mirage has occasionally appeared, in the form of water in the distance, with islands. Several times has it been seen, but it excited no unusual curiosity.

CAMP 23, JULY 3:—Here we find ourselves, on the eve of the 87th anniversary of our national independence, 500 miles from anywhere else, in the dreary, lonesome, desert wilds of Nebraska. Met with another slight accident to-day, in the breaking of the evener attached to our leading team. Roads very sandy and heavy. Passed over two long but not steep hills, on which the sand was very deep. Camped this evening near a sulphur spring, near the river. No wood.

CAMP 24, JULY 4:—Struck our camp this morning at a rather later hour than usual, and proceeded but a few miles, merely to change our location for a better, if possible, and to better enjoy our lonely holiday. "Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," troubled but few of us during last night. Myriads of mosquitoes fed on our blood, and made the night hideous by their ceaseless hum. We again encountered heavy roads to-day, and met another train of the apostles of Joe Smith, bound on the same errand as their more advanced comrades, after a cargo of their devoted brethren. Nothing has taken place to-day to remind us that this is the 87th year of our national existence; that nearly a century has passed since that boldest stroke of all human policy was attempted, declaring ourselves free and independent, and taking our place by the side of the other nations of the globe. Yet such is the case. But now, alas! how changed the scene. From the most prosperous and happy people on earth, we have descended into, or been plunged into a frightful, remorseless civil war. We have been suddenly hurled down from our proud pre-eminence, and are again struggling for that very existence which cost us so dear in blood and treasure. Our rejoicing has been turned into mourning. Our celebrating "with bonfires, the ringing of bells, and the booming of cannons," has been changed to the camp-fires of our armies, and the sound of cannons as they plow the ranks of our foes in the fierce combat, and the tolling of bells as they ring out the sad dirge for the noble dead.

We have beaten "our pruning hooks into spears, our plow shares into swords;" the mighty men are awake.

We passed several graves by the wayside, of pilgrims who have lost their lives in this desert waste.

CAMP 25, JULY 5:—Started on our

way at an early hour. Roads quite smooth where there was no sand. A stiff north wind in the morning. Crossed several small creeks, and forded a few larger ones. Gathered flood-wood from the river. Regaled ourselves from a cold spring of water which issues from the rock by the road-side. Saw rocky bluffs for the first time since leaving Elkhorn river; they seem to be of a sandy nature—indeed we know not how they could be otherwise, when we consider the condition of the soil. Camped this evening by Wolf creek, at the foot of a considerable sand hill. A turtle was secured this evening, and by a cook of the company converted into a pleasant dish of soup, of which we partook to a sufficiency. The odor was good and the taste delicious.

CAMP 26, SUNDAY, JULY 6:—Crossed the bluff spoken of yesterday, about 1 mile in extent, which was by far the most serious one we have yet seen. An hour and a half was consumed in the crossing. Roads very good. Forded several streams to-day. Stopped at noon opposite a spot known as "Ash Hollow." It being at a distance from us, we could observe no distinguishing feature that gives it this name, unless its being the first valley of any extent we have been favored with a view of. Camped this evening at a distance from a ledge known as "Castle Rock," which is also on the opposite side of the river. We know nothing of their appearance and cannot describe them. A slight shower this evening.

CAMP 27, JULY 7:—Struck our camp at an early hour, and started on a long day's drive, through a space of country where grass and water are scarce. Roads good, but the sun shone very hot, with scarcely a breeze stirring. Shot a prairie dog, which somewhat resembled a woodchuck, also a squirrel, in appearance. Of the peculiarities, manner of living, &c., of prairie dogs, we are ig-

norant. They are said to have owls and rattlesnakes as companions in their holes.

CAMP 28, JULY 8:—Roads good, with an occasional low, sandy bluff. Weather cool and pleasant. In the evening a slight shower, with high wind. Our camp this evening is located by the river side, across which is a singular formation known as "Court House Rock," which derives its name from its appearance. It stands isolated from the bluffs, and can be seen at a great distance. The bluffs we passed to-day, on the north side of the river, assume various shapes, a faint description of which will be found below.*

CAMP 29, JULY 9:—Weather beautiful for traveling. Roads during the forenoon were very good, but in the afternoon we found them somewhat rough. At noon passed Chimney Rock, which stands on the south side of the river. From the view we had of it, it seems to be a rough specimen of the monumental art, hewn out by nature. The obelisk or column stands on a pedestal which is very broad at the base, and which tapers to the centre. The whole appears to be about 60 feet high. It is near the river, and from its position can be seen many miles. To the west a short distance stands several piles of rock, each having some distinctive feature, representing buildings, forts and towers, as well as round-

* STARTED out this morning for a trip among the bluffs and rocks, sight-seeing, and in quest of anything that could afford amusement. For some time wandered among the various hollows and steep rocks, until tired with the exercise. An adequate description we cannot give; indeed in any other land than this there is but little that would attract more than ordinary attention. One mound, with forms of rock on the top, which, at a distance, looks like a dog, formed one item of interest, and what is called "Ancient Bluff Ruins," another. They represent castles, fortifications, &c., and we suppose that in resemblance the fact ceases. What traditions exist in relation to them, if any, we are not aware of. Picked up a few pebbles and flowers as a memento of the place.

houses with dome roofs. The main one, on the fore ground, with its perpendicular walls and round centre, seems to form a Capitol. Received in the evening a visit from a few friendly Sioux Indians. Another storm arose, which, like many of its predecessors, contained more wind than water.

CAMP 30, JULY 10:—Good road all day. Passed Scott's Bluffs, a ledge of rock worthy of mention. They stand near the river, also on the south side; they are in places perpendicular, but for the most part are steep but ragged. They stand alone, although they are of themselves of considerable extent, and in common with other prominent points, can be seen from afar. We started in the morning with the intention of making a short day's drive, and camping near a stream where we were told there were many trout. We reached the creek, but found that neither trout, nor fish of any kind had been known to exist there. Moved beyond a few miles, through an Indian village, and located where the grass was of a medium quality. Water unfit to drink within a mile and a half of us. A number of Indians paid us a visit. The weather this evening is unexceptionable, with the moon shining brilliantly. With the gnats during the day, and the mosquitoes at night, ease and comfort are beyond our reach. Purchased a piece of antelope from the Indians, which was eaten with great relish. Met two more Mormon trains, the first containing 49 wagons, the last 33.

CAMP 31, JULY 11:—The weather for a time after starting was cool and pleasant; the sun, however, soon changed it, and the air became hot and oppressive. Roads passably good, with prickly pear and wild sage in abundance. Found timber north side of the river, the first we have seen for many days. All day has Laramie Peak, among the

Black Hills, been in view. This evening another slight shower, heavy wind and thunder. Camp on a sand bank—a most disagreeable situation. Plenty of wood and water, and a moderate, though sufficient amount of grass.

CAMP 32, JULY 12:—Roads in the morning were good, but in the afternoon were sandy, which caused heavy drawing. Heat intense, and dust almost intolerable. Reached Fort Laramie early in the evening, and here we found the absent ones awaiting our arrival. The re-union was a most joyous one. After many weeks separation, with sickness and death, and traveling through a wild and desert waste, the meeting with those who had caused us so much anxiety was most satisfactory. Fort Laramie is situated on the south side of the Platte river, and over the soldiers' barracks the flag of our country floats. Camped about one mile above on the river, with wood and water in abundance, but feed scarce and dry. The soil for the most of the way here is arid and barren, back from the river bottoms.

SUNDAY, JULY 13:—Again was Sunday a day of labor. Overhauling and re-packing loads, washing and cooking. The Sunday with us has been similar in experience to all who cross the plains. The labors of the day closed at a late hour.

CAMP 33, JULY 14:—Remained in camp until after dinner, repairing and re-arranging. Traveled but a few miles in the afternoon; left the main road and camped by the river. Feed excellent when compared to that of yesterday. Wood in abundance, and good spring water for cooking, which is quite a treat, being used to river water so long. A heavy shower passed to the south, giving us but a slight touch. Roads somewhat hilly, but

hard. Weather hot in the morning, and cool in the after part of the day.

CAMP 34, JULY 15:—The road to-day was hilly and rather mountainous. In many places the ascent and descent was steep and very rocky. This continued through the forenoon, and is said to be the worst part of the road through the "Black Hills." They are of different ranges, cut up into separate peaks, and are of a dark appearance. Cedar and pine grows in abundance along their sides, and in the hollows. In the afternoon the road was more in the form of a rolling prairie. From one point an extended view was had, which, in a land of civilization, would have been grandly beautiful. Ranges of hills stretching away to the north and east, and the Platte river coursing along at the foot. To the south also, as far as could be seen, Laramie Peak looms up loftily above all its mates. Snow is still visible on its sides. While camped for dinner a storm arose which poured out rain in copious quantities. A heavy fall of hail, with thunder and lightning accompanying it. Water and grass being scarce articles, our journey was necessarily continued again until late in the evening. We found a good spring of water, but feed nothing extra. Midnight settled down upon us ere the camp became settled and quiet.

CAMP 35, JULY 16:—Roads similar to yesterday afternoon, with hills of gradual slope. Weather hot and uncomfortable. No water for 12 miles this afternoon. Camped by the river. Wood, but feed poor.

CAMP 36, JULY 17:—No essential difference in the forenoon from the roads of yesterday. In the afternoon, by way of variety, we had a few hills and some sand. The weather in the morning was very chilly, and so continued all day. Feed along the road dried up or eaten off; to-night it is

very good, but not extra. Wood plenty and Platte water for cooking. A light, drizzly shower in the early part of the evening.

CAMP 37, JULY 18:—Again was our road a long and circuitous one, to avoid steep hills and deep hollows. Roads tolerably good, slightly mixed with rough places. Passed some iron ore, and one ledge where it lay in immense quantities. Our march continued until near sunset, and even then a very indifferent camp ground was obtained.

CAMP 38, JULY 19:—Started on the road at an early hour. A short stretch of hard road, but for the most part sandy and heavy. Followed the river valley through the day. Grass sparse and withered. Passed through a section of low, swampy land, on which grass grew in abundance, but it was a place to be avoided as a camp ground, as the grass was poisoned by alkali. Our camp is not in a very prepossessing locality; grass scant, wood minus. Acres of brush called grease-wood surround us on all sides. Camped quite early; evening pleasant.

CAMP 39, SUNDAY, JULY 20:—Moved forward to-day in the vain endeavor to obtain a suitable camp ground to enable us to enjoy the "rest" of former Sundays. We did not succeed in gaining one until near night, when we stopped near the Platte Bridge, amid hard grass and alkali. The bridge, which is nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile in length, is the first evidence of civilization we have seen in many days. Here the Telegraph crosses to the north side of the river.

CAMP 40, JULY 21:—Laid by until noon to recruit stock, and to perform such other duties as were deemed necessary. Near by stood a deserted residence, in which were a fire-place and other conveniences which we had not. Possession was immediately taken, and operations at once com-

menced. With kettle hanging in the fire-place, the oven standing in front, New England's historic reminiscences were vividly called to mind. The roads this afternoon were in places very sandy, and a few hills. Traveled for some time by the river, where the bluffs came near the margin on either side, and the channel of the stream runs narrow and deep. The hills are quite lofty, and in places composed of a red rock. Through this section clouds of mosquitoes tormented the teams, and rendered traveling very irksome and disagreeable; in the evening the same. Left the Platte behind, and are now following the course of the Sweet Water river. Poor feed, but has been better.

CAMP 41, JULY 22:—Roads to-day unexceptionable—smooth and hard.—Weather cool, with a slight fall of rain in the afternoon. Passed between two ledges of rock this morning, of some extent. On the north side of the road they appeared like a stone wall, in an advanced state of ruin, or decay; on the south rocky bluffs of gradual slope. Camped this evening by Grease-wood creek, where feed is quite good; water passable, and fuel grease-wood and sage brush. At this camp the mosquitoes have relieved us of their presence—we do not regret their absence.

CAMP 42, JULY 23:—Our caravan started on the way at the usual time, over roads similar in all respects to those of yesterday, which continued until nearly noon, when it descended somewhat to a lower level, and was very sandy. In the midst of this plain were several alkali springs and lakes; some salaratus we gathered as a remembrance of the spot. On leaving this we entered a defile of the Sweet Water mountains, a range composed chiefly of grey granite. Stopped at noon by a bridge crossing the river near Independence Rock. This is a

pile of rock, oval shaped and regular. It is 600 yards in length, and 120 wide; the exact elevation we do not know.—Some of the party ascended the highest point and unfurled the old flag to the breeze. From here we trailed between two ranges of these "rocky mountains," of which the river is the divide, and camped between them this evening. Five miles from the river crossing, is the cut in the mountains, bearing the euphonic title of "Devil's Gate." We obtained but a passing glance, and are enabled to record but the extent of our view. The river rushes through this cut in a narrow channel. The sides are of perpendicular rock, 400 feet in height. The appearance from the road was grand beyond description, and it is a curiosity well worthy of notice. Persons from the party that climbed the range looked like mere pigmies, so far above us and so distant were they. Camped by the river, with good feed, but no wood.

CAMP 43, JULY 24:—An occasional sandy plain or hill, a few sections of rocky road, and some smooth places, made up the country over which we traveled to-day. In places we traveled near the mountains, and several times a glance across the country to the north, revealed snow in view on the more lofty peaks. The weather in the morning was warm and sultry; at noon a storm arose, which chilled the air so that an extra amount of clothing was not uncomfortable. Camped in quite a romantic spot; the different forms of the mountains however, are about all that make it so.

CAMP 44, JULY 25:—Left camp after the appointed time, and moved out into a broad level valley or plain, barren it was too, which we traversed for six miles, away from the river. Here the river and the road passes through a Canyon in the mountains; the river having washed out the road in several

places in this pass, we were obliged to ascend a hill deep with sand—pass round the mountains and regain the main road. We ascended one of the loftiest peaks to make an observation. The rocky sides of the mountain were steep and ragged, and with great difficulty was the top gained. From this elevated position, an immense tract of country was brought plainly in sight, diversified by mountains and plains; many miles of the river in its winding, snake-like course could be traced, and the snow capped peaks of the Wind River range seemed near by. The descent was even more difficult than the ascent, lowering ourself from crag to crag and rock to rock, sometimes suspended over a deep gulf by the hands. It is presumable that the feet of humanity seldom tread on this isolated spot, and that the human voice seldom disturb its elevated solitude. We regained our company tired but satisfied.

Yesterday passed the grave of a man murdered on the 6th inst., by a person who up to that time was his traveling companion. To-day we passed the tomb of his murderer. He was caught, tried and shot the next day. Retribution was in this case speedy and summary. The tedious, tardy, and too often doubtful manner of administering what is termed "justice" in the States, has but few admirers or advocates on the plains.

The road this afternoon was very good. A high wind blew up the dust in a manner that did not contribute to our comfort. Camped this evening on a low, wet, swampy piece of ground, which emitted a strong, disagreeable odor, flavored also by the perfume arising from the carcasses of animals within a few rods of us. The water was sulphury and bad; the feed, where we are, scant and poor; while within a quarter of a mile below feed is good. Take it altogether, this is the most miserable location we have had the

misfortune to be placed in; a dirty, sandy, pestilential hole, a repetition of which we trust we shall not be called upon to endure.

Such we found the place known in guide books as "Ice Spring." On digging as directed, no ice was found.—Perhaps it thawed before we reach it.

CAMP 45, JULY 26:—Started on our march at 4 o'clock A. M., without our breakfast, and traveled ten miles to the river, which we forded, and then halted until noon. Left the mountains behind us this morning, and traveled through a country intersected by low sandy or gravel hills. We followed nearly a straight course until towards evening, when we crossed a high stony bluff, and in so doing traced a crooked, serpentine track, for a long distance. On this bluff and the flats to which we descended, a high wind prevailed, directly in front, loading the atmosphere with sand and dust, covering everything, and filling our eyes, to a painful extent. Here is a good place for goggles to be used. Camped this evening in a hollow, between two ranges of hills named Rocky Ridge. It was near this spot that a mail station was interfered with in the early part of the season, some men in the employ of the Telegraph and Mail Co. murdered by the Indians, and their stock and cattle stolen. From present appearances we have bettered ourselves but little in regard to feed for animals. Whether we remain here over Sunday or no, remains a matter of doubt, at present. Several other emigrant trains are with us. We were obliged to ford the river with our animals this evening, as we have done on former occasions, to obtain forage.

CAMP 46, SUNDAY, JULY 27:—Decided to move forward to seek better accommodations; in fact it was our only choice. Stopped at Strawberry Creek, 10 miles distant; feed nothing above the extra. The first three miles of our

journey was a succession of hills and hollows; there was but little sand among them, which was in our favor. During the afternoon there sprung up a severe gale of wind, rendering it almost impossible to travel, because of the intensity of the flying dust. A cold but slight rain was a fitting accompaniment. While this gale was existing, we forded a branch of the river. Its channel lay between the hills; by its side were several immense snow banks. With our knife we carved out a piece and carried it to camp as a curiosity. The curiosity, or singularity, consists of our finding snow and eating it in mid-summer. Two miles from this ford we crossed Willow Creek; turned from the road and followed it up two miles, and were enabled to obtain good feed and water.

JULY 28:—Being where there was an abundance of grass for the teams, we concluded to remain in camp. During the afternoon we were visited by our accustomed gale of wind. Nothing happened of note save the appearance of two antelope, and all writing letters "home to our friends," which we were so fortunate as to be able to send by way of Salt Lake.

CAMP 47, JULY 29:—Two miles from camp we came to the river again. Here 70 soldiers were stationed for the protection of emigrants from the encroachments of Indians. Here also the roads diverge, leading off in different directions, but both arriving at the same point. One is familiarly known as "Lander's cut-off," to which preference is given as being the shortest and best road to Ft. Hall; the other the old route, very rough and mountainous, and difficult to travel. Without hesitation it was decided to take the "cut-off." We turned to the right, parted company with some who had traveled with us, and moved out into a strange, and to our party, unknown country. The roads were a mixture of level

plains and hills—some of them very steep and rough—hollows and sloughs. At noon some of the party prospected for gold, but found only mica as a result of their investigation. Crossed some immense beds of quartz rock and gray granite. Huge piles or boulders of the latter reared their heads in many places in the crest and sides of the hills, which gave the scenery a more picturesque appearance. On descending a steep hill, we came upon the river, which here rushes along with fearful velocity through a cut in the mountains, and assumes a closer proximity to our idea of a mountain torrent, than we have before been enabled to record.—Crossed the same on an old partly broken down bridge, and camped by a small creek one half a mile beyond, where we found good feed, and what is more singular still, abundance of wood. The weather to-day as has been for many days past, cool, and woolen clothing by no means the most uncomfortable thing to endure. The gale this P. M. not so severe as usual, with a slight fall of rain.

CAMP 48, JULY 30:—To-day we crossed the summit of the Rocky Mountains, the back-bone of our country, the dividing ridge between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific. We paused not to consider as did Cæsar of old; nor await the casting of the die; but moved on with that ease and dignity becoming persons in our condition. We now find ourselves on the Western slope of the mountains, in Washington Territory; Nebraska we have left behind; the kingdom of the "Latter day Saints"—or sinners—lies to the left or south of us.

The roads were for the most part but a repetition of those of days past, until towards evening, when we entered a section of country coming nearer to our estimate of what the plains were before we attempted their crossing. Ere we reached this level, we had to descend

several long, winding hills. Crossed two rushing streams, one of which was bridged, the other we forded. Having no chart to guide us, and for want of accurate information concerning them, we supposed them to be the Little and Big Sandy. Camped by the latter. The weather to-day was cold, and the wind piercing. We are now at an altitude of 7,085 feet above the level of the sea.

CAMP 49, JULY 31:—Supposing ourselves, and rightly too, to be on the wide extensive desert, spoken of yesterday, we prepared to move out at an early hour, and endeavor to clear it if possible, before dark. At noon found good grass and water. In the afternoon made a long drive, over a comparatively level section, on which sage brush grew in immense quantities, and grass in places, until at camping time we arrived at Green River, a wide deep and rapid stream. Here we found several large trains encamped waiting to effect a crossing. A temporary ferry had been established, and all possible expedition was being used to urge a speedy passage. The roads to-day were very unexceptionable. Soil composed of gravel and coarse sand, mixed with particles of quartz, that glistened in the sun-light. The weather of last night and to-day was to us a singular phenomenon. Last night water froze in pails so hard that on turning it bottom upwards it would not run out. This morning the air was pure and rare, but cold and biting. Indeed, how could it be otherwise, while being surrounded by mountains covered with snow. This afternoon the sun in front, was scalding hot, while on the opposite side near the freezing point was attained; the wind was light and suffocating. We are now among the Green River Mts. Prospects ahead of another cold night. What the morrow will bring forth is for the morrow to demonstrate. No feed but sage-brush.