ACROSS

THE

ROCKY MOUNTAINS,

FROM

NEW YORK TO CALIFORNIA:

WITH

A VISIT TO THE CELEBRATED MORMON COLONY,
AT THE GREAT SALT LAKE.

BY WILLIAM KELLY, ESQ.

LONDON:
SIMMS AND M'INTYRE,
PATERNOSTER ROW; AND DONEGALL STREET, BELFAST.

1852.
thought of camping, some smoke was observed ahead, which we concluded issued from an Indian encampment; but on coming up we found it was caused by a party of Mormons engaged in burning lime: a scarce and dear article it seems, in their city.

CHAPTER XIII.


I shall not soon forget the emotions which possessed me on seeing, so unexpectedly, the faces of strange white men, and they also seemed overcome by feelings of agreeable astonishment as we hastened towards each other with outstretched hands, greeting one another like old acquaintances. They were habited in buckskin suits, and had a weather-beaten look, that showed they were familiar with exposure. It was a long time before we could convince them we came from the States that year; they thought we must have wintered at Laramie, and come on in the spring; but, amongst other means of assurance, an Independence paper, dated April 7th, removed their scepticism, while it augmented their surprise at our having accomplished so long and arduous a journey so early in the season. We gave them all the late news, and, what was still more acceptable, a bowl of good coffee, which was then not to be had at Salt Lake; for which we got in return good news as to the wealth of California, and most agreeable intelligence touching the abundance of vegetables, butter, cheese, meat, &c. in the settlement. We spent a right jolly night
round the fire of the kiln, having, in honour of the occasion, the first jorum of regular brandy-punch we had tasted since our start. The Mormons were in great spirits, and gave us lines and tokens of introduction to their friends and families in the city, which they said would insure us attention and hospitality.

We were still twelve miles from the mouth of the canon, as they call it; but the road was considerably better than that we had already passed, as the Mormons come thus far for their timber and lime, and for their own convenience made it more travelable. Our reception was the more cordial from our being mostly all foreigners, and not obnoxious to the prejudice they naturally entertain against Americans, who destroyed their first city, and banished them to this remote location. They expected to have many of their little wants supplied from our waggons, for which they were prepared either to give a liberal trade in any article they possessed, or a high price in gold dust, with which they were all well supplied.

After starting next morning we met five ox-waggons and a party of Mormons coming from the city for timber, who were likewise astonished at our expedition, and evinced great anxiety to learn what we carried, as they conceived we came solely on a trading speculati... was so much out of the direct line to California. We gave them some tobacco, of which they said they were in great need: a civility they reciprocated by giving us an introduction to some relatives of theirs who had just returned from California by the north end of Salt Lake, and would give us all particulars about the mines, and the nature of the new route first discovered by them from Salt Lake Valley to that country, which alone was practicable for waggons. The drive through the remainder of the canon was, as I have said, comparatively easy and smooth, but far from agreeable. Within about a mile of the mouth it opened into a bosom, and then again contracted into a gullet, narrow, steep, and impending, through which we emerged again into the world of clear daylight and fresh air: the Valley of the Great Salt Lake opening out before us as if we came through the portals of a gate.

Here again I was doomed to great disappointment; for, instead of a charming valley, beautifully diversified with wood and water, there was a bald, level plain, extending
over to the base of the Utah range on the other side, without bush or bramble to cast a shade from the scorching rays of a flaming sun that blazed with twofold intensity, reflected by the lofty ranges by which the plain is bounded. Some miles to the north lay the Great Salt Lake, glistening in radiance like a sheet of crystals, in strange contrast with the dark and sombre Utah range that stretches along its western shores. At first the city was not visible, but on passing over a piece of table-land, the new capital of the Mormons became revealed: not, I must admit, with any very striking effect, for it was too young as yet to boast the stately ornaments of spire and dome which first attract the eye of the anxious traveller. We saw from here, with great distinctness, the plan of the place, which had nothing novel or peculiar about it; being laid out in very wide regular streets, radiating from a large space in the centre, where there appeared the basement and tall scaffolding-poles of an immense building in progress of erection. The houses were far apart, each being allotted an area for garden and enclosure, which caused it to cover a very large space of ground.

We were soon discovered coming down the slope, and as we entered the precincts of the town the inhabitants came to the front of their houses, but showed no disposition to open an acquaintance account, apparently believing us to be an exclusively American caravan. So soon, however, as they were undeceived, they came about us in great numbers, inquiring what we had to dispose of. They were neatly and well clad, their children tidy, the rosy glow of health and robustness mantling on the cheeks of all, while the softer tints of female loveliness prevailed to a degree that goes far to prove those “Latter-Day Saints” have very correct notions of angelic perfectability. We politely declined several courteous offers of gratuitous lodging, selecting our quarters in a luxuriant meadow at the north end of the city. Before we had our tents well pitched we had loads of presents: butter, milk, small cheeses, eggs, and vegetables, which we received reluctantly, not having any equivalent returns to make, except in money, which they altogether declined; in fact, the only things we had in superabundance were preserved apples and peaches, a portion of which we presented to one of the elders, who gave a delightful party in the evening, at which all our folk were
present. We found a very large and joyous throng assembled; the house turned inside out to make more room on the occasion, with gaiety, unembarrassed by ceremony, animating the whole; making me almost fancy I was spending the evening amongst the crowded haunts of the old world, instead of a sequestered valley lying between the Utah and Timpanago mountains. After tea was served—

There were the sounds of dancing feet
Mingling with tones of music sweet;

or, as Dermot MacFig would say—

We shook a loose toe,
While he honoured the bow;

keeping it up to a late hour, perfectly enraptured with the Mormon ladies and Mormon hospitality.

I was not aware, before, that polygamy was sanctioned by their creed, beyond a species of ethereal Platonism which accords to its especial saints chosen partners, called "spiritual wives;" but I now found that these, contrary to one's ordinary notions of spiritualism, give birth to cherubs and unfledged angels. When our party arrived we were introduced to a staid, matronly-looking lady as Mrs. ——; and as we proceeded up the room, to a blooming young creature, a fitting mother for a celestial progeny, as the other Mrs. ——, without any worldly or spiritual distinction whatsoever. At first, I thought it a misconception, but inquiry confirmed the fact of there being two mistresses in the same establishment, both with terrestrial habits and duties to perform, which I found afterwards to be the case in other instances, where the parties could lay no claim to any particular saintliness.

On Saturday morning we had a very early levee at our tents, with fresh milk, butter, fowls, and eggs, and a light waggon in attendance, with a side of beef, a carcase of mutton and one of veal, all of superior quality; the latter articles for sale commercially, but certainly on most moderate terms, the prime joints not averaging over one penny per pound. The other matters we were forced to accept, and gave to the donors what we could afford of coffee, sugar, and tobacco, which were not to be had in the city for the last two months. In addition to those timely presents, we got all our washing done in the very best style of art. After breakfast we went out returning visits,
and were most graciously received in every quarter. The houses are small, principally of brick, built up only as temporary abodes, until the more urgent and important matters of enclosure and cultivation are attended to; but I never saw anything to surpass the ingenuity of arrange- ment with which they are fitted up, and the scrupulous cleanliness with which they are kept. There were trades- men and artizans of all descriptions, but no regular stores, or workshops, except forgies. Still, from the tireing of a waggon to the mending of a watch, there was no difficulty experienced in getting it done as cheaply and as well put out of hand as in any other city in America. Notwithstanding the oppressive temperature, they were all hard at work at their trades, and abroad in the fields weeding, moulding, and irrigating; and it certainly speaks volumes for their energy and industry to see the quantity of land they have fenced in, and the breadth under cultivation, considering the very short time since they have founded the settlement in 1847. There was ample promise of an abundant harvest, in magnificent crops of wheat, maize, potatoes, and every description of garden vegetable, all of which require irrigation, as there is little or no rain in this region; a Salt Lake shower being estimated at a drop to each inha- bitant. They have numerous herds of the finest cattle, droves of excellent sheep, with horses and mules enough and to spare, but very few pigs; persons having them being obliged to keep them chained, as the fences are not close enough to prevent their damaging the crops. How- ever, they have legions of superior poultry, so that they live in the most plentiful manner possible. We exchanged and purchased some mules and horses on very favourable terms, knowing we would stand in need of strong teams in cross- ing the Sierra Nevada.

On Sunday morning early we went to the hot springs, a mile beyond the town, where the authorities were erecting a handsome and commodious building, and had a glorious bath, in sulphur water, at a temperature just as high as could be comfortably endured; drinking, too, of the stream as it gushed from the hill-side in a thick volume, being told it possessed certain medicinal properties of which we all stood in need. The Mormons make a boast of their good health, and attribute it to bathing in those springs: many that I met declaring they came to the valley perfect crip-
pleas, and were restored to their health and agility by frequenting them.

After bathing, we dressed in our best attire, and prepared to attend the Mormon service, held for the present in the large space adjoining the intended temple, which is only just above the foundations, but will be a structure of stupendous proportions, and if finished according to the plan, of surpassing elegance. I went early, and found a rostrum, in front of which there were rows of stools and chairs for the townsfolk; those from the country, who arrived in great numbers in light wagons, sitting on chairs, took up their stations in their vehicles in the background, after unhar-nessing their horses. There was a very large and most respectable congregation; the ladies were attired in rich and becoming costume, each with a parasol; and I hope I may say, without any imputation of profanity, a more be-witching assemblage of the sex it has rarely been my lot to look upon. Before the religious ceremony commenced, five men mounted the rostrum, who were, as I learned, the weekly committee of inspection. The chairman read his general report of the prospects and proceedings of the colony, and then read a list of those deserving of particular commendation for their superior husbandry, the extent of their fencing, and other improvements, which was followed by the black list, enumerating the idle, slothful, and unim-proving portion of the community, who were held up to reprobation, and threatened, in default of certain tasks allotted them being finished at the next visit, to be de-prived of their lots, and expelled the community.

The reading of these lists produced an evident sensation, and, I am satisfied, stimulates the industrious to extra exer-tion, and goads the lazy to work in self-defence. This over, another, "the gentleman in black," got up, and without any form of service or prefatory prayer, read aloud a text from the Book of Mormon, and commenced a sermon, or discourse, "de multis rebus et quibusdam aliis;" taking a fling at the various other religions, showing them up by in-vidious comparison with the creed of the valley. He then pointed out the way to arrive at Mormon sanctity, in which there was nothing objectionable as laid down, and exhorted the congregation, not only as they valued their salvation, but their crops, so to demean themselves, and endeavour to propitiate the favour and indulgence of the Supreme
Being; calling to mind that, in the year of righteousness (last year), he sent sea-gulls, a bird never known to visit the valley, to devour the crickets, which would otherwise, from their numbers, have annihilated all vegetation.* He then adverted to the barbarous treatment they received at the hands of the Americans, forgetting to avow his charitable forgiveness; and expressed a belief that their avarice would yet induce them to covet their possessions at Salt Lake; but he entertained a hope that the Mormons by that time would be strong enough to guard and maintain their rights and independence. He talked of the gold of California, which he said was discovered by Mormon energy; but they freely abandoned it to American cupidity, as they (the Mormons) did not desire such worldly aggrandisement.

With this ended the entire ceremony; and then began a simultaneous series of greetings and salutations amongst town and country folk, which led to luncheons, and dinners, and all manner of civilities, and tender tête-a-têtes, until evening, when another sermon was delivered, which ended the religious duties of the day. I can't say I was much impressed with the sanctity or sincerity of the preachers; nor did it appear to me, from the deportment of the congregation, that any very devotional feeling pervaded them; for, with all their affected contempt for worldly wealth and pleasure, they appear to me to pursue the one with as active a zeal, and enjoy the other with as little restraint, as any other sect of professing religionists I have ever become acquainted with. The affairs of church and state here go strictly hand-in-hand; the elders of the church being the magistrates and functionaries in all civil and criminal matters, the framers of the law, and chancellors of the exchequer, with whom it is expected that every member of the community will lodge whatever wealth he may acquire beyond his immediate wants, taking treasury notes of acknowledgment. This the law strictly requires, on pain of expulsion and forfeiture; but I have heard several grumble at it; and I understand it has led to numerous secessions, if not from the Mormon faith, at least from the Mormon

* It is surprising that the Mormons, who are, as a class, a most astute and reasoning people, can be gullied and gammoned after this fashion; for sea-gulls are met all across the plains, and were seen in the valley the first time Colonel Fremont visited it, in 1845, two years before the Mormons thought of settling there.
valley, to get beyond Mormon authority. A Scotchman, fresh from the old country, who with his sister lately joined the sect, complained to me of the grievance, stating that on his arrival he lodged a considerable sum with the treasurer, part of which he lately required to try his fortune in California, but was peremptorily refused, with a rebuke for his lust of gain. "He didna see whar this wad lead to, or how it wad end," but notwithstanding his strong dialect, I question if he is clean-bred Scotch, after so simple an act as he avowed himself guilty of.

There were no written laws amongst them; but trespasses, outrages, and such matters, are taken cognizance of by the elders, and adjudicated on summarily, according to conscience; fines and public flogging being the punishments most in vogue. The authorities have a mint, from which they issue gold coin only: it is plain, but massive, without any alloy. I only saw two issues, five and ten dollar pieces, with the amount on one side and the date of issue on the other, without any emblem or device whatso- ever. I got every information I believe they possessed relative to the new route to California; but, to make assurance doubly sure, I was anxious to procure a guide who had travelled over the line, and engaged a man, with the consent and approval of my party. However, when it came to the ears of the rulers, they forbade his leaving; for I believe they are apprehensive that the golden inducements of that rich country might empty the valley of its population if they came to be particularly disseminated: a reason, too, why they deprecate the travelling of emigrants by their city, which they say (and, I believe, with truth) is two hundred miles of a round.

There are, as far as I could learn or judge, about a thousand inhabitants in the town, and seven thousand more in the settlements, which extend forty miles each way: north to the Weber, and south towards Utah Lake. The valley, at its greatest width, is not over fifteen miles, and I think seven would be a fair average: its soil is a rich black loam, and is irrigated by innumerable springs of good water, and streamlets flowing from the snowy mountains, besides the Jordan, which flows through its centre from Utah to Salt Lake; but it has a naked, bleak look, for want of timber, which renders the effects of the sun next thing to intolerable. The city is situated on the south-east end
of the lake, about nine miles from its shores; but I think a much more eligible site might have been chosen, where the land would have been equally fertile, the climate fully as salubrious, and timber, which they exclusively burn, much more convenient, for at present they have to bring it from twelve to fifteen miles over a bad road. The whole neighbourhood swarms with crickets of an enormous size, having a body as large as a mouse, and extraordinarily long legs, which enable them to leap inconceivable distances. They do not, however, relish jumping over water; so that, by making a small cut round the tillage fields, and letting water into it, those destructive insects are prevented marring industry: a precaution that leaves the husbandman independent of the sea-gulls.

The evening of Sunday was glorious, after the broad red disc of the sun sunk behind the Utah range. A gentle breeze, wafted off the sparkling surface of the Great Salt Lake, came down the valley with a deliciously refreshing effect, inviting abroad the inhabitants, who promenaded about our camp, and came into our tents to pay their farewell visits, as we intended starting in the morning. There was a large proportion of ladies amongst them, who appeared to reciprocate the admiration conceived for them by several members of our company; remaining till an advanced hour, reiterating their last fond words, the golden treasures of California being forgotten for the time in the lures of "metal more attractive;" and it even looked as if the charms of Mormonism, through the spells of its female votaries, were about to thin our ranks: bearing out the dramatist's remark, that, not as other emotions which require time to germinate and mature, "love, like a mushroom, springs up in a night."
CHAPTER XIV.


Though early astir next morning, there were those in the city whose wakeful eyelids anticipated the sun; and lest there should be a repetition of the melodramatic performances of yesterday evening, I got the waggons into motion at once, and moved off from the isolated metropolis of the Latter-Day Saints, deeply impressed with gratitude for their kindness and hospitality, with admiration for their energy and industry, with no very elevated respect for their creed or the ethical discipline of their social institutions. Our road passed along by the hot springs, where we had a regimental lavabo, performed in double-quick time. About four miles beyond these there are boiling springs with the same mineral properties, but at a temperature that would answer for culinary purposes: a fact tested by one of our men, that he might be able to indulge in the boast hereafter, by putting in two eggs, which were cooked to a nicety in the usual time, three minutes by the sandglass. There is a small river flowing from them, over which there is a bridge; for though it is shallow enough to drive through with ease, it would scald the animals if they went into it. Some of the loose ones that ran precipitately in turned quickly back, rushing with frightened
haste over the bridge, lest it should fall and let them into it again.

Here, with some others, I turned down to visit the lake, but could not well get as far as its waters, from the combined incrustations of muriate and carbonate of soda that covered the flat shores for a great distance from the edge, through which the horses sunk nearly knee-deep, and could not be induced to proceed. As the wind came off the lake it carried with it a mineral stench arising from the stagnant water close along the brink, which was offensive to the utmost degree; and although the breeze was a brisk one, it scarcely ruffled the surface of the sluggish lake; the water, from its great specific gravity, being difficult to disturb; for, carrying in solution its full complement of salt, it requires a storm to set it in anything like commotion. Colonel Fremont, who analysed it, gives the following description and result:—

"The Great Salt Lake has a very irregular outline, greatly extended at times of melting snows. It is about seventy miles in length, ranging nearly north and south, in conformity to the range of mountains, and is remarkable for its predominance of salt. The whole lake waters seem thoroughly saturated with it, and every evaporation of water leaves salt behind. The rocky shores of the islands are whitened with spray, which leaves salt on everything it touches; and a covering like ice forms over the water, which the waves throw among the rocks. The shores of the lake in the dry season, when the waters recede, and especially on the south side, are whitened with incrustations of fine white salt; the shallow arms of the lake, at the same time, under a slight covering of shining water, present beds of salt for miles, resembling softened ice, into which horses' feet sink above the fetlocks. Plants and bushes, blown by the wind upon those fields, are entirely incrusted with crystallized salt more than an inch in thickness; upon this lake of salt the fresh water received, though great in quantity, has no perceptible effect. No fish nor animal life of any kind is to be found in it; the larvae on the shore being found to belong to winged insects. A geological examination of the bed and shores of this lake would be of the highest interest. Five gallons of water taken from it, in the month of September, and roughly evaporated, gave fourteen pints of salt; a part
of which being subjected to analysis, gave the following proportions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>Parts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chloride of sodium (common salt)</td>
<td>97.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloride of calcium</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloride of magnesium</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulphate of soda</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulphate of lime</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has not been ever regularly explored or surveyed, and is variously stated to be from seventy to one hundred miles in length; but as far as I could judge, by the time it took me to round its northern extremity, I should be inclined to set it down at eighty, without a tree or shrub to adorn its bleak shores for the entire length. There are several fertile islands on it, and one very large one, on which the Mormons told me they had as many as seven thousand head of oxen. Bear River and the Weber, which previously receives the waters of the Ogden, empty themselves into it; and although both at that point are large rivers, they produce scarcely any freshening effects, save at the point of embouchure.

The range of mountains to the eastward of the valley inclined to eastward as we proceeded up it; the land to their base being of the most fertile character, settled by Mormons, who have fine herds, extensive tillage tracts, and comfortable homesteads. I called at many of them, and found them neat and commodious, well but plainly furnished, and the inhabitants civil, communicative, and obliging. The crickets are a serious nuisance, for the ground is alive with them; and they are not only destructive where they have their way, but the effluvium they emit is about as disgusting a sample of scent as any to be met with. Though they burrow in the earth, they spend almost all their time on the surface, and delight in climbing up tall grass and weeds, uttering a grinding chirp that sets one's teeth on edge. They constitute the principal food of the Utah Indian, who eats them raw and roasted, and also make a sort of paste or jam, by broiling them to a cinder, then pounding them very fine, and mixing them with a wild fruit called service berries. A good many of the young Indians are domesticated as herds amongst the Mormons; but the wild ones are kept at arm's length, for
they are great thieves, and not otherwise to be depended on. When the settlement was first founded they were excessively troublesome and dangerous, but the Mormons gave them a few grave lessons that improved their behaviour very much.

Our camp this evening was eighteen miles from the city, on the grounds of a man whom I recognised as a visitor when encamped there. He was particularly attentive, placing everything on his premises at our disposal. He had a snug and well-furnished cottage, and seemed to enjoy the greatest domestic beatitude in the society of his wives, spiritual and temporal; never, as he told me, coming in for any squalls, as the ladies expended all their foul words on each other. He had most thriving crops, which he and all the settlers up the valley manage to irrigate, without any trouble, by leading little ducts into their lands from the numerous rivulets that issue from the mountains. They enjoy the advantage of having fine timber close at hand, and the bushes scattered about suffice as a shade for the cattle.

The heat of the weather now became so intense, I was forced to alter the routine of our daily movements by breakfasting before the dawn, starting at the first light, and nooning from eleven till two o'clock, when those who felt so disposed might take a nap, allowing the animals to lie by during the noonday glare, and travelling again till an advanced hour in the evening, by which we made as long distances with infinitely less distress to both men and mules. Next morning we commenced our new system, though some, who eagerly acquiesced in it the evening before, turned out with a reluctant growl at the early summons. The country, in the early part of the day, was elevated and sandy, with a stock of crickets that made the animals stare with bewilderment, as if they were afraid to go amongst them. We happened to light on a very inviting spot at the nooning hour; and notwithstanding our abhorrence of the crickets, were all very soon, with the exception of the day-guard, stretched in unconscious slumbers amongst them. In our evening's drive the country again resumed its fertile aspect, and was enlivened by the habitations of the scattered settlers. Our trail then took a decided bend towards the mountain, in the direction of a belt of timber, which we conjectured skirted the Weber, which river we
reached in good time, but were taken aback by seeing, from the lofty overhanging bank, that it was both deep and rapid. There was, however, in one place, a low gravelly island that we were enabled to get to without much trouble, and from thence to the other bank it was narrow enough to admit of having a permanent rope passed over and made fast at both sides, by which means we pulled across in a direct line, nearly without the delay or trouble of paddling. My waggon was again dismounted, and we were not more than two hours getting everything over except the other waggons, which, when empty, we hauled across with ropes. It was near eleven o'clock when we sat down to supper, as fagged a lot of gentlemen as there could well be.

We formed our camp at the end of a large marsh, close to the residence of Mr. Goodyear: a wealthy Mormon, who has an extensive breeding station there for stock of every description, amongst which he had the largest flock of goats I ever saw. His house, offices, stables, &c. formed a large square of handsome and substantial log buildings, and had every requisite and convenience for such an establishment, which is the last in the line of the northern settlement. He was preparing to drive a large caballada of horses and mules to the Californian market, with which he intended travelling in ten or twelve days. Could he have started at an earlier period I would have been disposed to await his company, but we expected by that time to be at the source of Humboldt River.

We got a fresh supply of cheese and butter here, and a good carcase of mutton for every two waggons; but I rather-suspect, when Mr. Goodyear arose the next morning, he was surprised to find we had already started. Though early at work we did not advance much for some hours; the ground over which the trail lay being soft and swampy, with banks of thick jungle that had never before been penetrated, through which we had to force a passage. About eight miles from Mr. Goodyear's we crossed the Ogden, a nice clear stream, which takes its name from the supposed murder of a celebrated trapper, who was said to have been murdered by the Indians, and thrown into a hole in the mountain where it has its source. The trail now turned eastward, as if we had to cross the mountains: a supposition we the more readily entertained, as there appeared to be a canon directly in front of us; but as we got up a pretty
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elevated slope, it turned again to the north-west; the cause of the sharp turn being, as we could now see, a tule marsh, that would not admit of crossing.

There was a splendid view here of the Great Salt Lake, and of the plain, back towards the city, and away to the north-west in the course we were to follow. There was nothing picturesque in the plain itself: but the lofty mountains, with their hoary glistening peaks, piercing the soft blue azure vault of the heavens; the canopy of which, unobserved by speck, or cloud, or film, had a soul-elevating effect on us poor pigmies, who crept along the mighty base of the hills, like ants beneath the side-wall of a stately edifice. The sun, so early as ten o'clock, was so fearfully hot that I could not bear my hand upon the rifle that was slung from the peak of the saddle; and soon after it became so intense that two men were suddenly taken ill, and had to be placed in the waggons: suffering, I suppose, from what are called the effects of a sun-stroke. This was by far the most sultry day we had yet experienced; and it happened, unfortunately, that at the nooning hour we were miles remote from shade or water, struggling on in a gasping state for nearly two hours, until we came to a river made up of mountain torrents that descended directly from the snowy ridges, preserving its cooling properties in a deep grove of oak and sycamore. Oh! it was a glad sight to see; more welcome at the moment by a million degrees than the richest mine in California. The eager mules could scarcely be restrained from drawing the waggons into it, and those that had their freedom drove down their heads as far as the eyes in the limpid current in their anxiety to swallow it. I admonished my companions as to the bad effects of drinking too freely at first; but they were deaf to advice, insensible to every fear or feeling but that of parching thirst: drinking as long as the restrained breath would permit, and drinking again and again till they could hold no more. I was somewhat more peremptory with the sick men, to whom I doled it out in small quantities, and with a happy effect. In the morning we expected to make Bear River at the crossing point; but the fatigues of yesterday evening, and the prostrating lassitude brought on by the morning's exposure, induced us to stop where we were.

There was here a genus of gigantic fly, which attacked the horses with a degree of ferocity that I did not conceive
could belong to the insect race. It darted at them with a humming whizz, perforating the skin the moment it came in contact with it, as if its lance was inserted by the impetus, in some places letting out a perfect jet of blood. The poor brutes were driven off the feed in amongst the scrub, and some of them, in their pain and terror, ran furiously back along the trail, giving us a long walk to recover them, which we would have gladly avoided if possible; but as the cool air of the evening set in, those insect-monsters disappeared, and in their stead came the infernal musquito, "to make night horrible." We had, to be sure, discovered a sort of remedy against their attacks, but it was one that, like nauseous medicine, was resorted to with reluctance, and in this instance was peculiarly irksome; for, having expended all the antelope grease, we were forced to have recourse to our nice Mormon butter, spreading it over our warm faces instead of our hot rolls, which, fresh though it undoubtedly was, created, when reeking in combination with the animal exhalations within the tents, an oleaginous atmosphere that was not at all savoury, and thick enough to be cut with a blunt knife.

The watch throughout the night saw several fires at high elevations on the shelves of the mountains a'ong which we were travelling, and also on the Utah range opposite, which we knew proceeded from Indians, and looked like signal-fires betokening a gathering; but having heard nothing very unfavourable of the Utah tribe from the Mormons, I felt disposed to place them to the account of ordinary camping fires. Not so, however. The majority of the company insisted they were regular signal-tokens answered all around, that showed preparations were making in concert to intercept and attack us. In consequence of my mistake about the Crows I did not combat the opinion, but took such steps as if the danger really impended, more particularly as it did not impede us an iota. We still continued our course along the base of the mountains, but got into a flat broken country, cut up with sloughs and half-dry channels, caused by the inundations of the season, most of which were soft and sludgy, and rendered our path so tortuous, that for two hours we had not advanced over a mile. When we did get on higher ground we could see the line indicating the course of Bear River, which we reached by noon;
and on arriving at the edge of the high banks which look down upon the tule marshes that run along it, were astonished at seeing below a waggon with four yokes of oxen, and some white men in the act of returning from the other side in a boat. At first it puzzled us to think who they were, or where they could be from; but as I rode down to make inquiries I had a most familiar salutation from one of them, who said, "I did not expect you before to-morrow evening." I now saw they were from Salt Lake city, about to establish a ferry, in expectation that other sections of the emigration would follow our track; but their boat was a very small and frail one for that purpose. "How on earth will you be able to live here during the summer months?" I observed, seeing them tearing the musquitoes from their cheeks with both hands. "Well," said the captain of the party, "they are purty damn bad here I admit, but when you get over yonder they'll give you particular h—ll." Poor comfort, thought I, as they arose in shoals from the rushes, literally blinding us. I had not before seen them appear in such formidable force of a morning, and I would gladly have submitted to a round of fifty miles rather than undergo the infliction we were doomed to endure, while employed in the tedious task of transporting our waggons and luggage, if there had been any assurance we would thereby escape. We, however, went at it with that "do or die" determination with which fellows mount the ladders of a forlorn hope, and as at the Weber we got a fixed line across, though it was double the breadth; but as the Mormon wherry was small, I had again to dismount my waggon to expedite the operation. The river was two hundred and fifty yards wide at the crossing, and both deep and swift; so much so that in hauling on the rope it required great caution and management, lest the surging current should roll over and swamp us. We had the misfortune of losing a horse and a mule, by drowning in the current, which delayed us three mortal hours before all was over; and I would venture to affirm, that if the Great Bear himself, from whom the river derives its patronymic, had been of our party, he would by that time have been scratching a sore head. For my part, I would run the risk of another bridge of Lodi, and face the thunders of artillery, sooner than again force the passage of Bear River before those infernal flying Cossacks. It turned out, too,
precisely as the Mormons said: for they were even worse when we got over; giving us, while reloading and hitching up for a fresh start, an inkling of a certain tropical place
of fashionable resort.

We met, at about five miles from the river, a narrow, deep stream, where we fixed our quarters, and were consoled for the want of food by the absence of our enemy, there being no reedy margin for them to breed in. In the morning we fancied we had nothing to do but cross straight over: a very illusory idea, as it turned out to be seven feet deep; nor could we find a practicable spot, insignificant as it appeared, until after a detour of four miles. We here took a more westerly course, receding from the mountains, and entering a country of gloomy grandeur, that looked as if its bleak solitudes had never before been invaded by man. We continued rising over hills and sinking into hollows, like a small fleet riding over the swells of the boundless ocean, without any landmark in the horizon; crossing numerous river-beds, the streams of which had been drunk up by the insatiable sun; and when at length, in the evening, after a long and weary day's journey, without our accustomed noon-day rest, we came to water, it was so brackish it only served to aggravate thirst. There were two streams within a few yards of each other, running parallel: one of which was nearly at a boiling temperature, while the other was merely softened from the effects of the sun, though, strange to say, they both issued from the same hill-side. In the latter we all bathed, and derived some relief; but the animals were so overcome with thirst they would not feed, and seemed greatly inclined to wander, keeping us in a state of fret and fidget all night. We rather foolishly tried to make coffee, thinking it would disguise the saltish taste, though we should have known that evaporation in boiling would have made it all the stronger and more concentrated; but people when suffering not unfrequently seek a temporary relief in a remedy which they know is sure to increase and prolong their misery. We all drank freely of this unpalatable beverage, and all, without an exception, suffered sadly throughout the night in consequence.

Shortly after midnight, there being tolerably good light, we set forward, hoping to find fresh water for breakfast. The trail was easy, but at daylight we were no better off
than at our start. The men got very much disheartened, and I, also, felt uneasy and distressed, and sent out every horseman in quest of the simple but indispensable necessary, determined, no matter how remote from our route it might be discovered, to go to it. Eight o'clock came, and no horseman returned; ten o'clock came, yet none was in view, and even the burning meridian arrived without a prospect of relief. My eyeballs got sore from strain ing, for I never before watched with such nervous anxiety: they were moments of fearful suspense. At length a gleam of hope arose as I saw two horsemen on the western heights. They must, I thought, surely have found water; but then their slow, dejected gait did not portend glad tidings. I raised my hat, and hailed them aloud. They saw and heard me, yet they neither made a motion nor quickened their pace. The truth was sadly apparent: it was now approaching the limits of endurance. The teamsters sank listlessly in their saddles, whilst the fierce sun almost crackled in intensity, producing a reeling sensation and a dimness of vision, as if dissolution were impending; when, like a noise in a dream, I thought I heard the sound of horses approaching at speed; and making an effort to resume my consciousness, saw Mr. H——v at hand to announce our merciful deliverance. He told us the water was yet four miles off; but the knowledge that it was certainly there, and the slight relief we got from his canteen, revived and strengthened us.

It was past three o'clock when the waggons got up: rather a fashionable hour for breakfast; and although the water was cool and clear, it was not wholly free from a saline flavour; but from the fatigues and privations of the morning, and those of the previous night, it was arranged not to go any farther for the day. About a mile below the camp, where the stream meandered through a level patch of land, we found excellent feed; a little inconvenient, it is true, for the guard, but the grass was too tempting to let that consideration weigh. Shortly after our meal was over we were waited upon by ten visitors of the Utah tribe, dressed in buckskin suits, and well mounted. They had only a few skins for barter, and some of that compound I described before, made of powdered crickets and service berries, in small cakes baked in the sun. There were a couple of the horses I would have dealt for, but
they were not disposed to part with them at all. One of them spoke and understood a little English, from the frequency of his visits to the Mormon city, and from him I sought some information as to the route to Humboldt River, of which he was entirely ignorant, as he said, “Him lib here;” pointing away to the south-west.

As our animals were at such a distance from the camp, and those gentlemen in the neighbourhood, it occurred to me it would be a prudent arrangement to strengthen our guard; so at the next change I got my own tent carried down, adding two men to each watch till morning. Towards the termination of the first one the report of two shots announced that there were strangers about; and on going out I saw, in the moonlight, the men gathered round an object that proved to be one of our afternoon visitors, who, with others, in attempting to steal a horse, received a rifle-ball in the knee-joint, which shattered and dislocated it in a shocking manner, the wound bleeding profusely. I made an effort to stop it, by applying a silk handkerchief as a tourniquet; but it produced little or no effect, though we twisted it with all our might with an iron ramrod: the poor Utah bearing it without a move or moan. I then sent up to the camp for some brandy, which I gave him diluted with water; but he sunk rapidly, and in an hour afterwards yielded up the ghost without a murmur. We all took a great interest in him, seeing him bear his misfortune so heroically. There was not one amongst us who would not have gladly given up the horse to ensure his recovery; but it is absolutely necessary to guard your animals with the greatest rigour, else you will in the end be deprived of the means of prosecuting your journey, and left to perish miserably in the wilderness.

Next morning we launched out once more upon a desert of sage and sand, through which we travelled all the day: the bushes being so close and strong in many places as to call our axes into requisition. It was very severe work on the mules, for their legs and bellies got scratched and torn by the stumps, which also arrested the wheels every moment. About five o'clock in the evening a sheet of water appeared to the south that was at first mistaken for mirage, but I found it by the glass to be the northernmost extremity of the Great Salt Lake, now seen for the last time. We were well off for water all day, and camped in a flat,
where we got a drink of the purest distillation. Here, together with bunch grass, there was a shrub like the savine plant mixed up with the artemesia, on which the horses browsed freely, which I afterwards learned is called greasewood. I kept the guard at its additional strength to-night, lest the Utahs should come to avenge the death of their fallen comrade, but the stillness of night did not suffer the slightest interruption.

The next day the scene of dreary desolation was broken by a chain of hills running in detached and irregular lines from north-east to south-west; which were well timbered with cedar, aspen, and a large bushy shrub, bearing a red berry, the name of which I could not ascertain. We endeavoured to force our way through a valley that lay directly in the line we wanted to go, and again called out the broad-axe guard; however, after cutting a path for upwards of two miles, we met sage of such prodigious growth, and in such close contact, that we were compelled to desist, and retrace our steps to where we diverged from the trail, which led us in an oblique line up the side of the hills, crossing a grassy dell, where we halted till noon. In getting round to the other side, several short broken ranges of distant mountains came within view: all tending north and south, in conformity with the system of the great interior basin. I did not before see so appalling a picture of awful desolation and utter solitude as that presented by the barren waste intervening betwixt the hills on which we were and the mountains to the west. It had a scorched and withered aspect that repulsed the eye and sickened the spirit: looking like a territory exclusively created for the reptiles of animated nature, and forbidden to the footsteps of man. We descended alongside a small turbid stream, and followed its course till the hour of rest arrived. The surface of the arid plain along our track was encrusted with white saline efflorescence, and yet the water, as far as we could judge, was wholly free from any impregnation of it.