

The Sahara Desert extends in reality from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea (to which I am now going), if we except the valley of the Nile, which above the Delta averages three miles or less in breadth. However, that region which I am now in—a barren, forbidding, desolate waste of sand, rocks, grotesque and shagged cliffs and distressing heat—is often called the Arabian Desert (not desert of Arabia). The fare for a five days' trip is one dollar; food for five days, fifty cents, to include good drinking water on the whole trip, and every other day a pound (so they reckon here) of camel's milk. The second day we reached an oasis—one of those "verdant isles of the blessed," "one of those emeralds in the burning sands." It was such—with a sneer. The emerald and verdant things connected with this spot were six palm trees, of the most sapless and dyspeptic sort I have ever seen, and one of the most peculiar, crabby, cranky, curly thorn bushes on earth, bitter as gall, but very green. The shanties (not houses) numbered seven, the people ten, the goats four, and three dogs. The water here was not bad, but when carried two days in our goat-skin bottles, in the heat of the desert, it fairly stunk. Our caravan consisted of three score of camels. The drivers were not sons of the Desert, acquainted with the pole star, but fellahin or tillers of the soil. One moonless night they lost their way, and only after I had argued one half hour with them uselessly, and ultimately called them "Moslem swine," a term they hate, they said among themselves: "Brethren, we are not swine, but compared to that learned scribe (*me*); we are but bahaim (dumb cattle); we have wandered around over an hour, and he can read the stars; let him guide us until daybreak." In ten minutes we had turned around and soon found the road. The other incidents of the trip are merely heat, dust, sore eyes, "rotten" water, and miserable bread without yeast, baked in embers of camel's dung.

The morrow of the night we wandered like lost sheep. I was as much disgusted as surprised to see a beautiful lake of water to my right, upon whose placid bosom tall, slender green trees (not unlike poplars) were distinctly reflected, besides being right in sight at the edge of the water. I was disgusted for two reasons. One was that I did not want any lake here; I wanted to be in a dreary, wild, waterless desert; secondly, it displeased me that my fine map should be so incorrect as to overlook such a feature as a lake in a desert. As it was soon camping time, I consoled myself with the prospect of a bath in the tepid waters of a desert lake, and if the water was sweet, we would of course camp all night there, and I would bathe in the morning. It was all a mirage. The blue waters and occasional ripples in the lake I imagined I could account for—but the green trees! Perhaps after all it was a gigantic or strongly distorted refraction through the overheated and tremulous atmosphere

of a few colocynethi vines (a bitter *cucurbitacea*) and withered but evergreen thorn shrubs—the only two plants I discovered in this region.

I was very much pleased at another time to see from a high place the Red Sea before us in much splendor, and in its bosom some of the inlands inhabited a few years ago only by Arabian and Sinai pirates. From the elevation at which we were I could see faintly above the heat which flickered over the bosom of the sea some crests of land or promontories, bluffs, etc. I had many thoughts rushing through my mind, and came to that point when Pharaoh and his family perished; and the Red Sea began to perish and melt away as we descended a steep hill—another mirage.

The cliffs of Arabia were a distant range of hills, the islands were mere hillocks in the valley half a day ahead of us, and the real sea I did not perceive until two days later when I reached

KOSSEIR,

the most insignificant, barren, hungry and dry seaport or haven perhaps on earth. There is not a green tree, flower nor blade of grass in this town; not a well. There is not found within eight miles a drop of water which can be drunk, and that is bitter. Good water from the mountain rains, stored in cisterns and full of the larvæ of mosquitoes (wigglers) is twenty miles off, and costs in Kossier half a cent a glassful. An inhabitant of Kossier knows as much about a potato (and no more) than the average Salt Laker knows about the Sahara Desert. Not five bushels of greens are raised within one hundred miles of this place! All edibles—corn, barley, wheat, lentiles, lima beans—come from Egypt, *id est*, from the Nile Valley, lumber from Suez and Port Said, tobacco, pipes, shoes, fire wood, fodder for goats (numerous here), dippers, ladles and etceteras from Arabia. Skeleton-like, famished Arab families—a score or two lay around the streets starving. The town has no commerce, no industry no agriculture. What do the people live upon, you will ask. During two months caravans of pilgrims pass through here to Mecca. Secondly, since the days of the Greeks unto this day the inhabitants of this coast have been called *ichteophagi* Arabs, or fish-eating Arabs.

THE RED SEA

contains a variety of highly colored and beautiful shells. Besides edible fish, it is rich in countless monstrously ugly, hideous and often dangerous fish. One I saw here, whose name I neither know nor ever heard, ugly and thorny like a horned toad, has ten prehensile abdominal fins, besides the usual caudal and lateral ones. These ten fins are each three-fourths as long as the fish itself, elastic as India rubber, transparent blue with white spots, while the body is striped red and white—a sort of American flag. On its back are a score of long spines or needles. A prick of these, the natives say, kills a man. Some-

thing shaped like a perch is striped perfectly black and red. The climbing fish jumps about on the rocks. The coral is full of corals, corallines, madrepores, millepores, sertularias, cellularias, alcyoniums, sponges and gorgonia or sea-fans. Cefalifinous animals (polypes) also abound. C. U. L.

KENEH, April 15, 1890.

EMERY STAKE CONFERENCE.

The quarterly conference of this Stake was held at Price, on Sunday and Monday, May 11th and 12th. On the stand were Apostle Heber J. Grant, C. G. Larsen and Orange Judd, of the Stake Presidency, representatives of the Bishopric from each ward and from the different organizations in the Stake.

After the usual opening exercises President Larsen expressed his pleasure in meeting with the Saints at Price under such favorable circumstances. In connection with his counselors he had visited the different wards of the Stake and found the people willing to serve God and respect His laws. The health of the people generally is good and the present prospect for grain and fruit promising.

Apostle Grant occupied the remainder of the forenoon. The Latter-day Saints, he said, are accomplishing the work of our Heavenly Father, although they are passing through much trial and tribulation. The prophecies of Joseph Smith are being fulfilled daily, and our present peculiar position to the American nation and the whole world today are indisputable proofs thereof. But we should bear with patience the indignities heaped upon us and learn to "suffer and be strong."

The afternoon meeting was also occupied by Apostle Grant, who read from the Doctrine and Covenants—that intelligence obtained in this world will continue in the world or life to come.

The blessings of God cannot be measured by dollars and cents. If such were the case we would find that men who acknowledge not God and regard not His divine laws are accumulating wealth by the million, while the humble, God-fearing and prayerful man is poor and sometimes destitute. The greatest riches that mortals can accumulate is knowledge of life eternal, which is the knowledge of God, and for this we as a people should strive.

On Sunday evening there was a general Priesthood meeting. The following brethren were presented: Arly Day as Counselor to Bishop Calvin W. Moore of Lawrence, Hans C. Wickman as Counselor to Bishop W. G. Petty of Emery, Albert E. McMullen as Bishop of Wellington Ward (lately organized) and Soren Frederiksen of Ferran to be ordained a High Priest, all of whom were unanimously sustained.

Monday morning conference was resumed. The statistical report was read and showed a total number as follows: Patriarch, 1; Seventies, 145; High Priests, 106; Elders, 207;