

GEN. COOKE'S MARCH

A Military Achievement, With Scores a Parallel.

HIS LEADERSHIP OF THE MORMON BATTALION IS FAIR.

Making a Warm Road from Santa Fe to the Pacific.

There did in Detroit recently a man who was concerned in one of the most unique achievements recorded by the military annals of the United States.

This achievement belongs to the privilege performed by the forces of the west and thereby, doubtless, long the explanation of why it has not taken its proper place in history.

It is that, the passing of General P. G. Cooke, though noted through the press associations wherever newspapers are published in this country, was attended by an outburst in his leadership of the Mormon Battalion in its arduous march from Santa Fe to the Pacific coast, across the unknown deserts of the southwest.

The general's brilliant was reared in the battle fought with Mexico and the southern states, and after his career in honorable retirement will see the end of which he was proud, and which enables him to separate and special distinction.

This mission is less unique when you come to realize that the achievement in question differed from all consideration of the commander—plays a prominent and remarkable part in the history of the western states, and is yet less known to even the student of history than are the most tried traditions of the Plymouth pilgrims.

Lack of information respecting the battalion is nevertheless in line with that system of eastern education which has the schoolboy's imagination with the least effort of fiction. Albeit and fact and legend pass over with a paragraph the adventures of such captains as Sam Houston and the Spanish explorers of the southwest, which makes the step down which Pecos rode his horse, names the villages around by foot, the overland that, extending to the Whitman across an unpopulated continent, which saved Oregon to the Union.

Even the encyclopedias are silent on the subject of the Mormon march under Cooke's command, save a list of names and a few lines of text. It is in fact a lost page in the great romance of the Pacific conquest. Yet one must think patiently the history of the world to find a parallel.

Is there anything in the analysis of invading armies which outstretches it as an object lesson of humanity and endurance? Xenophobia—that was the chief incident in the history of the march, and the story of the march of the Mormon Battalion is a strange kind of romance. But this was an undisturbed march of much less than the distance accomplished by the Mormons in their voluntary migration. And what was the result? The wilderness of the mountains, the highlands of Armenia and Georgia, were more fascinating than the wastes of New Mexico and the barrier of the Rockies that the wild men of Pecos were more warlike than the Apaches.

Napoleon's retreat from Moscow forced by Russian forces from Finland and the Danube, were more a tremendous disaster. Yet this had succeeded from the spirit of the conquerors, who perished by the way between October 18 and December 25, and forget the glories of the emperor's campaigns as we view the bloody retreat which hastened to Vienna.

Sherman's march to the sea need not be seriously considered in this connection. Whatever may be thought of it as a strategic movement, as a march it was all his misdeeds, and there goes miles in twenty days, but there were no miles of plain, through the heart of Georgia.

Cooke's march, long before Sherman in this matter of marching, may be said to have been the most successful of the march of the Mormon Battalion, at least in mind when we find that January morning the gate burst in view from the green hills of San Luis Rey, and with pardonable pride he writes:

My dear General, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

Very respectfully,  
P. G. Cooke

General Cooke's march was a military achievement of the highest order, and one that has been largely forgotten in the annals of our country's history.

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determined, but California seemed a land of promise, and thither went of these weary souls to make their way from New York by land. Nevertheless, President Polk was trying plans for the acquisition of California, and this was the Mormon opportunity.

The subject of the Mormon Battalion is a subject of the highest interest, and one that has been largely forgotten in the annals of our country's history. It is a pity that the general's name is not more widely known, for his march was a true feat of arms, and one that has been largely forgotten in the annals of our country's history.

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