

STEVENSON'S TRAVELS.

COLONIA JUAREZ, Old Mexico,
Dec. 17, 1895.

After we left that beautiful Round valley spoken of in my last communication, and our ride of ten miles through the tall pines, we passed a saw mill where Warner Porter was cutting the pine logs into lumber and loads of which was today on its way down to the low lands, to our meetings and administrations. At Cave valley we met with the United Order brethren who have a shingle mill and small farming lands, and have had a hard struggle to maintain themselves in this too much cramped-up place. But with all their trials, none were so great as the loss of one of their leading men, Elmer Christopher B. Heaton, who was murdered while away making molasses at Dublin. For Mexico has been convicted for the crime, one sentenced to be shot, the other three hung. Ellen S. Norwood, a niece of mine, is left a widow with five daughters. This occurrence cast a sadness over the peace of this quiet place.

The roadway from Pacheco to Cave valley, eight miles, is the roughest I ever traveled. The caves found in this valley up in the cliffs are most remarkable. One of them which we visited contains twenty rooms, the partitions made of cement with small entrances from one to the other. The entrance to the main cave is about 60 feet wide and 12 feet high, and runs back, varying from 90 feet to 125 feet in depth. Many hieroglyphics are on the plastered walls. In the mouth of the cave is an over about 12 feet high, and in the center one about 12 feet smaller at the base and forms a cone at the top. An opening at the top is sufficiently large to draw water from. It is water tight and doubtless was to hold a water supply. It is made of grass and cement—the body being eight or ten inches thick and very ingeniously made. How many hundreds of years old it is no one can tell.

There are several caves of security in those wonderful cliffs, reminding one of the Gaditanon robbers' stronghold of Book of Mormon times. We took a picture of one prominent cave before we bade adieu to the mountain country after visiting the Pioneer tree; eight being in the party, one of whom being one of the ten pioneers who camped on the elevated spot, on the 24th of July, 1885—this being the day when the stars and stripes were at half mast throughout the United States, mourning the death of President Grant, also being the day when in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1847, the Stars and Stripes waved over Mexican soil in Utah. These few pioneers hung the Stars and Stripes, the good old American flag, in memory of President Grant, at half mast, to a prominent pine tree at their 24th of July camping ground, where now is situated the Mormon colony at Pacheco, Mexico.

Our camp rested here, as F. M. Lyman had killed his first deer near at hand, and the company recruited their supplies by jerking some of the deer meat. In memory of this singular instance of doing honor to General Grant and to the Pioneer Day of Utah our little party, Edward Stevenson, George

W. Hardy, A. L. Farnsworth, Peter C. Wood and others, blessed the flag tree and marked the date, 24 July, 1885, with some names on it and the present date, 14 Dec., 1895.

The names of these ten pioneers in Mexico are F. M. Lyman, George Teasdale, Alexander F. McDonald, Jesse N. Smith, George C. Williams, Alzo L. Farnsworth, Isaac Turley, Israel Call, Martin M. Sanders and Edwin Richardson. The company outfitted at Corralitos, and organized at Turley's camp. The first night's camp was at the point where Juarez now is. The company traveled up the Piedras Verde from Juarez to Corralitos basin, camping on the point where the flag tree now remains, on the 24th of July.

Our party gathered around the flag tree, and dedicated this campground and tree—that from this campground Mormonism may spread over the republic of Mexico, producing light concerning their progenitors who crossed the ocean from Jerusalem to the land of America 800 years before Christ was born.

After prayer on this memorable camping ground I bade adieu to the party and continued my journey to Juarez, thirty-five miles, a description of which I gave in my last communication; thus having retraced my steps over a rough but picturesque journey to the mountains, amidst the pines, deer and turkeys, and some very choice Mormons, in Pacheco, Cave valley, Round valley, and Chuchupa. In footing up our journey, arduous but pleasant, I found it consisted of 120 miles, round trip, closing Saturday evening, Dec. 14, 1895.

O, what a sorrowful day for one who is bereft of a loving wife, a mother, not only of her own children but of her sister's children, who preceded her, leaving them to her dear Sister Teasdale leave both families, her youngest child is only a nursing babe, thus making the scene doubly sorrowful. But I must say for Elder Teasdale he endured the shock with godly fortitude.

Sunday, the fifteenth of December, 1895, the last rites were performed over the remains of Sister Teasdale. The young ladies and primary associations formed at the home of the bereaved marching in the funeral cortege to the meeting house. The house was packed with sympathizing friends. Comforting words were spoken by Elders M. P. Romney, Edward Stevenson and others.

Sister Teasdale had the love and esteem of all who knew her, and many were the tears of love shed for her.

In all my travels never have I found a ward who kept the word of wisdom so well, and dwell together in such love as this ward of Juarez. This is largely due to the faithful labors of Sister Teasdale and her husband.

Before leaving Juarez a lecture was delivered in the meeting house; subject, "The Life and Mission of Joseph Smith the Prophet." Two Seventies meetings were held and largely attended, and a profitable time enjoyed.

On Wednesday, the 18th inst., we visit and hold meetings at Dublin, eighteen miles north, and then return to Diaz, fifty-five miles, where we expect to meet the outfit from Sonora, and hold conference, and then off 100 miles to Deming.

EDWARD STEVENSON.

IN BINGHAM STAKE.

BLACKFOOT, Dec. 30, 1895.

In September, 1894, a few of our brethren conceived the project of taking out a canal on the west side of Snake river, opposite the town of Blackfoot, and on the 20th of September the idea took tangible shape. The work moved but slowly for the first six months, for want of numerical strength and means to overcome difficulties; but by patient and united effort all obstacles were mastered and the People's canal became an assured fact. It is 60 feet wide on the bottom and will carry four feet of water. The first two miles of canal has a fall of blue feet and the balance an average of about two and a half feet to the mile.

The canal follows close to the lava bed that stretches back for miles to the north and west, leaving a broad strip of land between it and the river. This land is mostly a sandy loam, thickly covered with sagebrush soil that will be very prolific when brought under cultivation. There are thousands of acres of ground that this canal project will bring the water on. The canal is owned by the people who have taken land, and there is yet excellent opportunity for the right kind of people to get good homes with excellent water privileges. It is expected that the water will be in the first twenty miles of the canal by April, in time to begin irrigation.

The work has been progressing favorably for some time, and to encourage the workers—a feast and entertainment was got up for them on the afternoon and evening of the 28th of December. In the afternoon an interesting program was rendered, consisting of encouraging speeches, reports of those in charge of construction, songs and recitations; after which over 200 partook of the feast of good things that had been prepared. The evening was spent in the social dance. It was a time of rejoicing and one to be long remembered by all who participated.

The Saints of this region rejoice at the increase in their numbers. On the townsites that has been laid out—there has been erected about sixteen houses and they have just completed the erection of a neat log meeting house, where the feasting and dancing was conducted. It is only a few years since the first Latter-day Saint settled in this region; and that under great difficulties. But by their energy and perseverance they have changed the sagebrush plains to fruitful fields, and for nearly forty miles southwest of Blackfoot can be found the hardy pioneer's cabin and land claims.

The People's Canal is projected to extend about forty miles—twenty miles of which is now nearly completed, and the other extension will be pushed in the early spring. This is a splendid chance for good, industrious frugal Latter-day Saints who have no homes of their own, to obtain homes and independence. But they must not come out to this country expecting to find cultivated farms awaiting them. On the contrary they must be prepared to squat down on a sage brush plain, grub the brush, dig the ditcher, make the levees, construct canals, level the land—build from the ground up.