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## TRAVELING THROUGH SOUTHERN UTAH INTO ARIZONA.

### [SECOND LETTER.]

Leaving Paragonah we came to Cedar City, thence westward across the valley about ten miles and through a hilly country about fifteen miles further to Pinto in Washington county. We were now on the old California freight road that was traveled so much twenty-five years ago before the advent of railroads. It is now little used except for local travel. We were now rapidly approaching the hot desert country about which we had heard so many startling stories and it was with a feeling akin to dread that we entered it.

Way up in Sevier valley we met a man with a covered wagon and driving a span of jaded horses. The yellow dust on his wagon cover and the huge water barrel at the side told us he was from Arizona. When we told him we were bound for the same country he put on one of those knowing, self-confident looks that characterize men of superior ability and judgment in the hour of great trial, and after sizing up our outfit he sat there in deep thought for several minutes. He then proceeded to make us acquainted with the horrors of the country through which we would have to pass, and warned us solemnly not to drive fast and never to be caught in the desert without water in the barrel, and he ran his tongue out and with an impressive gesture indicated what the result would be. At Cove Fort we met three men just returned from Arizona. One of them told us he crossed the desert with an empty wagon; that his team gave out and he had to unhitch and leave the wagon on the desert, determining to ride the horses as far as he could and when they failed entirely to try and reach water on foot. Luckily water was nearer than he had thought and he got through safely, but had to sell his team twice and buy fresh horses to go on with. Another told us of the dreaded quicksands of the Rio Virgin, and how horses and wagon would be buried in their lasting embrace. All of them told us of the awful heat, and swore solemnly that when they left the thermometer stood at 125 degrees in the shade and the hot season had not fairly commenced. The keeper of the Fort also warned us of the poisonous grasses

that we would find on the desert and told us that they would look tempting to the hungry horses, but we must not let them eat, or death sudden and awful would be the result. At Pinto we met a man in the street. When we told him where we were going, he put on one of those mysterious looks and said solemnly: "Gentlemen, stay away from there, you don't want none of it; I have been there; take my advice—you don't want none of it." Then he proceeded to tell us about the awful heat, the flies, and the bleak barren deserts to be crossed—till my heart almost failed me and I was half minded to turn back and go home. No wonder that we had feelings of dread and strange misgivings as we approached the fatal region.

The night we stayed at Pinto was cool and pleasant, and when we arose at 5 a.m. to resume our journey it was so cold that we found our coats and a robe over our laps hardly sufficed to keep us warm. Our course now was along the old California road through the hilly country. About ten miles west of Pinto we passed a little valley skirted by hills of considerable elevation. There is a spring in the valley and a field of alfalfa on which a number of horses and cattle were grazing. This is the Mountain Meadows where the massacre took place thirty-six years ago and where John D. Lee was executed. Formerly there was a monument or stone mound erected to mark the spot where the dreadful deed was enacted, but we were told that it had fallen down until now there was hardly anything left of it.

Soon after leaving Mountain Meadows we crossed a ridge of considerable elevation and commenced to descend towards the tributaries of the Colorado. We had passed the rim of the basin. The aspect of the country was now changed. A new variety of trees lined the creek banks. A number of species of cactus, different from anything we had before seen, covered the barren hill sides. Quail of a variety different from those we had been familiar with in the states, flittered about among the bushes. The atmosphere, which before had been pleasant, commenced to get warmer; and as we descended towards the Santa Clara it became hot.

Our road, after crossing the rim, took a southwesterly direction. Our descent was quite rapid. The hills grew

to be mountains. On our left was Pine valley, and beyond it the mountains of the same name. On the right was the deep gorge of the Santa Clara and beyond the Beaver Dam mountains. Pine valley creek has cut its way through a deep box canyon for several miles and falls into the Clara. On the left of the Pine creek we noticed a truncated cone cast several hundred feet high that appeared to us to be an extinct crater. This we learned to be a fact, proven by the great lava cliffs that line the east bank of the Clara for a considerable distance.

After traveling along a lava mesa for several miles we descended a steep dugway and reached the Clara at its junction with Pine creek. Pine creek is a large stream, much larger than the Clara at this season, and its waters are good and cool while those of the Clara are warm and strongly pregnant with alkali. About three miles below the junction of the Clara and Pine creek we came to a small village of about twenty houses called Gunlock. The inhabitants make a living by cultivating the narrow strip of land along the river bottom and by raising sheep and cattle which they pasture in the adjoining mountains. Excellent fruits are grown here, wheat was ripe and cut, while at Pinto, 25 miles back, it was but a few inches high. I know of no other place in Utah where there is so great a change of climate in so short a distance. The weather was warm in the daytime but at night it was pleasant and agreeable. We saw more house flies at Gunlock than at any other place on the entire trip.

From Gunlock our road ran along the bed of the Clara for ten miles or so to Jackson's old copper smelter, there we left the Clara and crossed the Beaver Dam mountains to the valley of the Virgin. It was on the Clara that we first encountered the "good roads" that you hear so much of in this country; they alternate with sand and gravel and rocks. However we got over them and had some parts of the wagon left.

Descending from the Beaver Dam mountains you witness another of those great changes that we mentioned on descending to the Clara: "There is not a single thing in sight that is familiar to the eye of a northerner. All is changed. The mountains are entirely barren, not a tree, or brush, or shrub,