

EDITORIALS.

THE ROSS ABDUCTION CASE.

THE interest in this extraordinary case, which had subsided in a great degree, until very recently, has now been revived by reason of some derogatory statements concerning the Ross family, and the denial of the same under oath by Mr. Ross. The dispatches in the NEWS yesterday stated that the twenty thousand dollars reward for the discovery of the Ross child and its abductors was still in force.

A Germantown correspondent of the Reading *Eagle*, professing to be a neighbor of Christian K. Ross, the father of the child, wrote to that paper, Sept. 14, that Ross was a debauchee and a bankrupt, that his wife had left him and had the child in her custody, and that another woman took her place in the family and still kept it. The correspondent continued thus—

"The following is the theory of those who know the family, who are acquainted with Ross personally.

"Some months before the kidnapping, Mr. Ross received letters from the first and only wife, asking and demanding the children. It will be recollected that even up to this time he had refused to show any of the letters he received, and it will also be borne in mind that the attempt was made to steal both the children. It was not until three days after the kidnapping that the fact was made public, and at that time the child was safely in the hands of its mother or its friends in the West. We think Mr. Ross knows now, and always did know, where his child is, but refrained from making it public for many reasons. As regards the advertisement, the blackmailing note, etc., we think they are all forgeries, written either by Ross himself or his friends, intended to divert attention from the facts."

This communication was extensively copied in the public papers. The Germantown *Telegraph* of Sept. 16 had the following—

"In the Ross abduction case, which for months has excited this community so much and occupied so wide a space in the newspapers, it is now generally believed—and was by many at the beginning—that no thieves or sharpers, for the sake of ransom, had any hand in it at all; in a word, that no crime was committed, and that the boy is not harmed or likely to be. If such is the fact then somebody has incurred a responsibility to the community which will not be easily got rid of."

The next week's issue of the *Telegraph* contained the following correction—

"The truth of the Ross case. We are assured on the very best authority that any inferences that might be drawn from the paragraph which inadvertently crept into our 'Brevities' last week, are wholly unwarranted by the facts; and the facts are those originally published upon the abduction of the child. Nothing more nor less. The wicked calumnies that have gained circulation, and in some instances credence, even in this community, and have found publicity, no doubt thoughtlessly and without a grain of malice, in some quarters, have not the remotest foundation, and are as agonizing to those most deeply concerned, as their origin is outrageous and shameless."

In the Washington *Star* of Sept. 24, is the following—

"As heretofore mentioned by telegraph, Mr. Christian K. Ross, of Germantown, Pa., has instituted suit against the Reading *Eagle* newspaper for publishing a letter from a Germantown correspondent, alleging that the abduction of Charlie Ross is 'all a humbug,' that Ross is living with a woman not his wife, and that his real wife, the mother of Charlie, is living in the West, having left her husband some years ago on account of his bad habits, and that it is she who has the child, and Mr. Ross knows it. Ross, in his affidavit on which the warrant was issued against the

publishers of the *Eagle*, after reciting the above alleged libel, says:

"At the age of thirty-eight years, having been theretofore unmarried, on the 24th day of July, 1882, I was married to Sarah Ann Lewis, of Brookfield, Mass. Of this marriage there have been born to me eight children, to wit: William Lewis Ross, Augustus Stoughton Ross, Henry Augustus Ross, Sophia Lewis Ross, Walter Lewis Ross, Charles Brewster Ross, Marion Kimball Ross, and Annie Christine Ross, in the order here stated, all of whom are living, except William Lewis Ross, who died in 1863. My said wife has lived with me without interruption from the date of my said marriage, and continues so to live, no difficulty of any kind having ever arisen between us. I have never had any other wife, nor my wife any other husband. It is true that in April last my firm was compelled to suspend payment of its debts, but this was wholly due to causes of a purely business nature."

"On the 1st day of July last my sons, the said Walter Lewis Ross and Charles Brewster Ross, were abducted from my residence on Washington lane, in the twenty-second ward of said Philadelphia, by two unknown men. Walter was left at the corner of Palmer and Richmond streets, in said city, but of Charles no clew nor trace has since been found, nor have I nor any of my family any knowledge of his whereabouts since the said 1st day of July, 1874."

"I do solemnly swear that all the statements, insinuations and theories in the said printing contained concerning my character and conduct, and concerning any letters alleged to have been by me received prior to the said abduction, and as to any difficulty in my family or domestic relations, are absolutely untrue in every particular."

The mystery of the abduction, therefore, still continues, and it is to be hoped that the villainous perpetrators will soon meet their deserts.

UP IN THE CANYONS.

Now is a very pleasant time in the canyons. These hot and exhausting days in the lower valleys, the air up there is comparatively cool, refreshing, and invigorating, though keen at nights. The roads are dry, the earth is warm, the streams are low and nearly everywhere fordable if desired, the atmosphere much of the time is mildly sharp and healthfully bracing, and altogether it is perhaps as good a time as any to actively clamber the mountain sides or placidly pursue piscatorial pleasures in the rushing mountain streams, in search of relaxation and recreation and that frequently subtle fugitive, perfect health.

One of the most attractive canyons near this city is that of American Fork. The Wasatch range is steep, high, and rocky, and especially is this the case in the neighborhood of Pleasant Grove and American Fork. It is easy now to reach this celebrated canyon and enjoy its manifold attractions. Suppose we have determined to make a brief trip to this famous break in the mountain range. We take the cars at the depot in this city at 7 a.m., a good early hour, and arrive at American Fork City, a pretty, lively, and flourishing settlement, some thirty-five miles distant, at about a quarter past nine. There is the junction of the narrow-gauge American Fork Canyon R. R. with the broader gauge Utah Southern, which continues on to Pleasant Grove and Provo.

About ten o'clock, having taken passage on this narrow gauge, we leave the settlement and find ourselves speeding on, up the wide wash, worn in ages past by the creek in the thousands of annual repetitions of the mad turbulence of its Spring and Summer freshets, towards the mouth of the canyon, to which a five mile ride rapidly brings us. We plunge into the canyon and open our wondering eyes to take in all they can of the strange, delightful scenery. From the very entrance the canyon is a sight to see, to us lower valleyans, accustomed only to the smoother and tamer scenery of these more

extended depressions in the Rocky Mountain system. Why is the canyon a sight to see? Wherein consists its surpassing attraction? What are its peculiar characteristics? What do we see there? This is it. The canyon for ten miles up is a narrow, rocky gorge, partly worn by the wild waters, and without any large open space or valley to speak of all that distance. Towering hundreds, perhaps thousands, of feet above us, on either side of the wild defile are the precipitous, beetling, mountainous crags, worn by time and the fierce battling elements into ten thousand times ten thousand rugged and fantastic shapes, innumerable salient prominences and boldly jutting protuberances of rough and rude design. Here is rock enough to build a million cities, piled up on every hand. Alps above Alps arise. Here is the testimony of the rocks beyond previous conception. Rocks to the right of us, rocks to the left of us, rocks to the front of us, rocks to the rear of us, while we sit wonder struck. Here are sharp and ragged edges enough for forty million Beechers to sit writhingly upon, painfully pondering, on hypochondriacal thoughts intent, if the sitters are not of a more cheerful temperament.

The powerful little engine, with a giant's strength, runs us up the canyon at a good, round, rattling pace, the only unpleasant thing about it being the continual, thick, sulphurous, cindery coal smoke from the chimney of the locomotive. By the by, is there not wood enough in the canyon to make it an object to have a wood-burning engine? Or is coal-fuel a necessity on a narrow track with a steep grade? The road is in good order, as how could it be otherwise in the Fall of the year with nothing but rocks and gravel of which to construct your road bed? So on we speed, winding our serpentine way rapidly upwards, with the rushing, foaming creek now on one side of us and then on the other, and a new and striking panoramic change of scene before us all the time, in kaleidoscopic variety. The list of adjectives fails to convey a competent idea of the ever varying grandeur, and sometimes sublimity, of the scenery for the whole of the up hill trip. If the five miles of the railroad outside of the canyon is characteristically monotonous the ten miles continuation in the canyon is exactly the reverse, for it reveals in a characteristic opulence of variety, rugged and grand. Yet it has one feature of similitude all the way—it is one ever broken, roughly broken, continuous wildness. Jagged, overtopping peaks and spires, pinnacles and towers abound. The "grand old mountains" are endlessly split up into rugged clefts and impregnable fastnesses. The inaccessible, the inapproachable is all around us. We cannot get away from it, we cannot reach it. We can see it and admire. The rocks of ages are all around us, venerable with the grey of ages, scarred, seamed, furrowed, niched, recessed, spired, pinnacled, caverned, porticoed, terraced, balconied, half-wayed, buttressed, pedestaled, parapeted, turretted, battlemented, castellated, by the storms and convulsions, the elemental wars of ages.

Now we drive closely past jutting mural rocks, threateningly perpendicular to the track, portions of them apparently more than half loosened and almost ready to fall with catapultian force and doggedly dispute our further advance. But we rush safely by, and the rocky walls retreat and leave us breathing room again.

Ever and anon we pass detached fragments of the mountains which have been loosened by the elements and hurled by the terrific force of gravitation into the bouldery bed of the creek or some other of the lower portion of the gorge, rocky fragments of all shapes and sizes, from pebbles and cobbles to unwieldy chunks as big as a house. In places the channel of the stream is half filled and the waters are diverted by these spent munitions of rocks, and well it is that the likelihood was small that human life was in the way of their headlong precipitation. Now that human energy has made an iron highway up the gorge, and travel is more frequent, the probability of these falling rocks occasionally making a sudden descent infuses into the voyage just a little of the spiceful element of real danger, of a frightful kind, though let us hope the adventures will not prove accidents, but at the worst will be

of the nature of hairbreadth 'scapes in th' imminent, deadly breach.

Several miles up the canyon we come to an opening on the southern or right hand side, where the South Fork of the creek comes in, but we will continue our journey up what we will call the main stream. As we advance we pass the great natural curiosity of the "Hanging Rock." This is a continuation of the mountain in the shape of a large piece of rock jutting out from a wall of rock close to the northern or left hand side of the track and horizontally overhanging the same a little above the top of the chimney of the engine. There the semi-portal stands, like a clumsy reversed T built into the mountain face, or the remains of a great doorway, with one jamb and its adjoining wall clean gone, leaving the other jamb, with its huge connecting wall, and the lintel with its ponderous superincumbent wall, the latter thus only half supported, and inspiring a dread suspicion that it may, some evil day, without warning, suddenly strike loose from its one-sided support, and precipitate itself with crushing force upon the passing train below.

The old saw-mill, lower down if we recollect rightly, incites at once both utilitarian and poetical ideas. The saw is there, but the steep log and slab approach, and other portions of the building, look somewhat dilapidated. The old wagon road, the remains of it, is seen here and there all the way up. There is no continuous road now, and small chance for one in places, except the railroad, so far as it reaches. The occasional stretches of the old road, with the stripped, fallen, broken, and variously despoiled and dilapidated old rustic bridges, tell their own tale of the labors and adventures, enterprises and industries, hopes and fears, disappointments and successes of former times, and the more primitive methods of canyon travel and traffic.

Although the canyon revels in grandeur and rejoices in much sublimity, yet the picturesque is also abundant. If there is no grass to speak of, there is no end to the brushwood. If there is neither rankly luxuriant meadow nor closely shaven, emerald, velvety lawn, there is no lack of shrubbery, with here and there patches of forest, the latter being mostly in the ravines and on the distant and often apparently inaccessible mountain sides and tops. From the mouth of the canyon to the end of the railroad, all along the ten devious but not tedious miles of the route, from the canyon bed up the mountain sides to their very summits, on either hand, the brushwood, as a rule, is thickly and interestingly interspersed with the ever abounding rocks. Shrubs and herbs frequently cling, with the tenacious affection of the ivy to the old world mural ruins of abbey or castle, to the canyon rocks, wherever a handful of earth, or a friendly ledge, crack, or crevice, furnishes the scanty opportunity for foothold and sustenance. This picturesque abundance of shrubbery is a most welcome relief to what otherwise would be the bare, bleak desolateness of the rugged rocks, and the sober sadness, the solemn sombreness, and the gloomy grandeur of the rudely forbidding mountain sides.

Among the brushwood bloom divers beautiful flowers in their seasons, and grow several species of small fruit, which serve also to impart to the landscape softening, humanizing, kindly, hospitable appearance. Of elderberries there are plenty, also red raspberries, service-berries, and a species of wild grape, with blue-black, acid, astringent berries, of the size of common currants. The grapes may be good enough for wine, or for pies, puddings, and preserves, but they are unacceptable, yea uneatable for dessert.

The timber proper is very sparse at the lower end of the canyon, and for several miles up from the mouth there is not much more. As we advance, a tall, solitary pine, or a few pines, or a clump or two chiefly of pines and firs come into view here and there, varied by fewer box elders, some smaller but aspiring maples and cottonwoods, and occasionally a specimen of the latter tree of higher and stouter proportions. These become more frequent as we approach the end of our ride. The timber, as if less suspicious of us, and even desirous to cultivate our acquaintance, gets nearer to us and the patches of it become more frequent and more accessible. We see the scenes of

old logging and wooding labors—there are the marks of the woodman's unsparing axe, there are the old, sometimes partial, clearings of years ago, the stumps of trees, the trunks long since cut and appropriated, rising two, three, or four feet above the surface of the soil in many places. Driftwood in the stream, on its banks, and in its whilom channels, is plentiful, and of dry and decaying firewood there is much, while ever and anon, at the foot of some ravine or steep stone-slide, we come upon a heap of ancient storm-washed chips, carried down by the fury of the cloud-burst torrent or the precipitated rock splittings, from the wooded heights above.

In the upper portions of our ride, too, the growing trees, becoming more and more familiar, sometimes condescend to skirt and overhang our track, and then we pass pleasantly along occasionally through the grateful shadows of embowering branches and friendly foliage. In fact the scenery becomes more familiarly and truly rural, and one begins to be sensible of a more homely feeling.

One of the most noticeable beauties of the canyon at the present time is that of color. The various hues which present themselves to the eye are exceedingly attractive to the lover of nature. There are the different shades of green, in the leaves yet ungnipped by frost, varying from the lighter green of the younger cottonwoods, box elders, etc., to the darker bottle green of some of the elder firs and pines. But that which arrests the attention most of all is the color of the fading foliage. This is almost a marvel as to the sight of it. All over the canyon bed, and especially all over the mountain sides, the dying leaves are mournfully and almost brilliantly gay. The dying swan is poetically represented as singing its own requiem, and with more evident truth may it be asserted that the maples and some other varieties of deciduous trees assume their robes of brightest and most beautiful adornment just previous to the time of their autumnal disrobing, and in this regard nothing becomes them so much as the manner of their taking off, the taking off of their apparel.

This brightness and beauty, as we before said, are not of a small, single patch here and there, but of a universal liberal, all pervading interspersed throughout the canyon, redeeming the rocky heights in the Fall, as the fresher foliage in the Spring and Summer redeems them, from their gloomy grandeur, and changing it to vivid and most charming picturesqueness. It is a scene over which one may well love to linger. It is the happy relieving light, as the frowning cliffs and crags of the mountains are the shade, of the wondrous and fascinating picture.

It is not all the sere and yellow leaf. There are not only different shades of yellow, but also of brown and crimson, though the yellow predominates, and the golden shades contrast pleasingly with the remaining verdure. Green and gold always go well together, while the contrast is softened by the general grey of the rocks, which harmonizes agreeably with the party-colored foliage.

Nor is the canyon scenery destitute of the romantic element. Among all the curious and sometimes quaint formations are some which call to mind ideas of the steep, irregular, semi-embowered, winding, near approaches to some ancient feudal castle, whose pride and glory were long anterior to the era of Macadam, or even of regular carriage roads, and we almost wait to hear the warder's horn, announcing the approach of some strange cavalcade, or to see the gallant knights and ladies fair sally forth, with their attendants, on falconry or other sportive pleasures bent.

Then again, the everywhere audaciously aggressive herbage and shrubbery, pertinaciously pushing themselves, here and there, among, upon, and all over the broken and crumbling rocks, and retaining their foothold amid multitudes and great disadvantages and apparently rude inhospitalities, remind one of the world-famed, ivy-grown ruins of famous buildings of classic lands and climes.

There are many semi-detached towers or look-out points. More than once, but once especially, looms up before us the singular spectacle of an isolated tower of rock, segregated from its neighboring mountain, and left as a distant outpost, with a single pine tree