TRIALS TO EDEN.

Desert, Cactus and Sand, Dead Cattle and Coyotes.

THE SICK HOUSE PLAYS A PART

Arizona's Deserted Capital and Mining Towns.—Ruins on Mountain Peaks.—Arrival in the Land of Fruit, Milk and Honey.

Correspondence Deseret News.

[FOURTH LETTER.]

From Hackberry we followed the line of the Atlantic and Pacific railway eastward for a distance of fifty miles to Aubrey valley. There we left the railroad and followed the valley of the upper Verde southward towards Prescott. Our route most of the way was through a hilly country covered with cedar and pinon pine. We were now fairly in the stock-growing districts of Arizona. The country was covered with stock but barren of feed; the long-continued drouth had dried up the pasturage and as a result the whole country was covered with the dried-up carcasses of the cattle. Water was scarce in this region, attracted by the dead cattle. At night they would crowd around our wagon and leave their footprints in the sand. Sometimes when they would approach too near us, or their howling would become almost unbearable, we would take down the rifle carefully and pointing it out through the cover at some object moving about in the darkness would pull the trigger. For an instant there would be a flash of fire, then a report, and we could see stacks of dust in every direction, and hear the sound of howling feet; then all would be still again.

I think there is some of the most beautiful country between Aubrey valley and Prescott that I ever saw. The mountains sink to low hills; the higher knobs are covered with cedar and pine, and the lower hills are valleys with grass. The soil is of the richest. O, what a country this would be if there were only rains in the proper seasons. And yet there are times certainly enough to insure good crops if their waters were only stored and held in reserve until the dry season, and not allowed to run off into the rivers and on to the good. The country is so situated that reservoirs could be constructed almost anywhere. All that is necessary is a union of labor on the part of the people, and that with the present inhabitants is an impossibility.

Prescott was formerly a mining camp and is still kept up largely by the wealth it receives from that source. It is situated in a narrow valley high up among granite hills. The climate is pleasant and agreeable. It was for many years the capital of Arizona but the development of the southern valleys removed the center of population there and the capital was changed to Phoenix. Formerly this was the headquarters of a large military district and a large number of troops were kept there; but since the Indians in Mexico and the Apaches have ceased to be troublesome, Uncle Sam has taken his troops away to Denver. Prescott has some new nice buildings. The court house is certainly a credit to the town. The old state house, and the district school buildings are conspicuous objects among the wooden shacks that usually constitute the main element of a mining town, though there are a number of fine trees and shade structures. To our inquiry as to what kept the town up, a gentleman replied: "Her gambling dens and prostitutes;" and after walking over the town we came to the conclusion he did not take it much.

From Prescott we took the road for Phoenix that runs through the Agua Fria valley and down through the Black canyon. The distance is about 120 miles, and there is plenty of water to wash at distances from ten to fifteen miles all along the road, except between New river and Phoenix, where there is a desert of twenty-six miles to cross. There is no feed anywhere along the road except the hay kept at the stage stations, and that is usually sold at a very handsome figure. Grain can also be bought at the stations. Do not expect to buy oats—there are none in this country. I went into a store at Prescott and asked for oats. The clerk said they had some. I told him to put me up about 100 pounds and I would call and get it. He seemed thunder-struck. "Man," said he, "what are you going to with so much?" "Feed it to my horses," I replied. "Why, it will kill them; horses can't eat oats." I remarked, that they could in the country where I come from. "Well no one here ever heard of such a thing as that," I even had to show me the oats, and when he pointed to a few pounds in a shell marked, "Quaker Oats," I wilted. Barley is the grain fed in this country. If you want anything else you must bring it with you from Utah.

The country between the Agua Fria valley and New river is one of the roughest I ever saw. We were told that it would shake the foot off our wagon, and it did. Up long steep hills, and down longer and steeper ones. The road through what they call the Black canyon, though I didn't see much of a canyon, is the roughest we saw on the entire trip. It is a puzzle to me to know how the stage, a heavily loaded wagon ever got over it. And yet it would not be a difficult matter to make a good road. It would cost some money, and Arizona don't seem to have much money to spend in that direction just now. But it does seem as though they would keep up some semblance of a road between the capital and one of the other towns when there is no other mode of communication between them.

Deserted mining camps are quite numerous in this part of Arizona. We saw one on the mountain above Humboldt, and another just back of Big Bug. There were the mills, the mills, housing houses, and houses of the miners, all deserted. No smoke curled upwards from the many chimneys, no hammer from was heard in the streets, no sound broke the stillness of the summer afternoon—all was as quiet as the surrounding desert.

On the evening of the 17th of July we camped on a hill about six miles south of Big Bug. We were now rapidly approaching the Sal region again. Way off to the east we could see the Apache mountain peaks which we saw yesterday the last mines valleys. We could see the Jemez range of blue mountains, which lay in the direction of Santa Fe, and the mountains to the north.

Another phase of Arizona civilization is found in this vicinity. Up the side of the hill overlooking Prescott are rows of houses that seem to have been erected as watch towers, and a small guard seems to have been kept in them. Of what purpose, Old prospectors told us that they had seen them on all the hills in Southern Arizona, that the Indians were long since removed to Dakota, but that they could yet see traces of the places where the signal fires were lighted. It seems probable that the adobe houses were formed here as were prepared by the Indians west of Fort Yuma. In the country which towers were erected and guards maintained on the prominent points along the routes from which invasion was expected. The guard was first caught sight of the traveller long ago, would light his signal fire so that it could be seen by the guard on the next post, and he in turn would warn his neighbor, until the signal was seen by the people in the valley. Thus they would receive information of the coming of a few several days before they could arrive, and would have time to collect their families and be prepared to receive them.

The night of the 17th was cold and chilly. We arose early, and gleaned out across a field of potatoes and several bucket of the cool water out of the burial-ground our company, that of the horses was carried through by the cool water that blew over the mountains and the water we gave him almost finished him up. He tried to lie down while we were harnessing him, but we managed to keep him up and got started. For the last ten miles we had to use the whip constantly to keep him on his feet. When we reached a stage station at noon we unharnessed our pals to dropped in his tracks. We managed to live him from the harness but for two hours he was the picture of misery. Every minute we expected would be his last. After awhile he got up and commenced to eat, and when a horse eats they say he is all right. We were very anxious of reaching New river as from the next day on that we might feed there until evening and cross the desert in the night. Too delay caused by our horse we feared would compel us to lay over another day at New river or to go on in the daytime which would be difficult and exceedingly unpleasant at the best. By 9 p.m. the horse was so much better that we were enabled to go on slowly. By 10 p.m. we had made fifteen miles. We camped again on top of a high hill. The night was warm. We were out early. The little the light horse had caught in into he regret of the fun in the sector. They came around to catch other little grim giants and had to reserve until the dry season, and not allowed to run off into the rivers and on to good. The country is so situated that reservoirs could be constructed almost anywhere. All that is necessary is a union of labor on the part of the people, and that with the present inhabitants is an impossibility.

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