

some cotton-wood is found on this creek ten miles above. Each has a "bottom" or intervalle of perhaps four rods in average width, in which a little grass is found, but next to none on the high-sandy plains that separate them. Drouth and sterility reign here without rival.

FORT BRIDGER, Utah, *July 8, 1859.*

We crossed Big Sandy twice before quitting it—once just at the station where the above was written, and again eighteen miles further on. Twelve miles more brought us to Green River—a stream here perhaps as large as the Mohawk at Schenectady or the Hudson at Waterford. It winds with a rapid, muddy current through a deep, narrow valley, much of it sandy and barren, but the residue producing some grass with a few large cotton-woods at intervals, and some worthless bushes. There are three rope ferries within a short distance, and two or three trading-posts, somewhat frequented by Indians of the Snake tribe. Eighteen miles more of perfect desolation brought us to the next mail company's station on Black's Fork, at the junction of Ham's Fork, two-large mill-streams that rise in the mountains south and west of this point, and run together into Green River. They have scarcely any timber on their banks, but a sufficiency of bushes—bitter cotton-wood, willow, choke-cherry, and some others new to me—with more grass than I have found this side of the South Pass. On these streams live several old mountaineers, who have large herds of cattle which they are rapidly increasing by a lucrative traffic with the emigrants, who are compelled to exchange their tired, gaunt

oxen and steers for fresh ones on almost any terms. R. D., whose tent we passed last evening, is said to have six or eight hundred head; and, knowing the country perfectly, finds no difficulty in keeping them through summer and winter by frequently shifting them from place to place over a circuit of thirty or forty miles. J. R., who has been here some twenty-odd years, began with little or nothing, and has quietly accumulated some fifty horses, three or four hundred head of neat cattle, three squaws, and any number of half-breed children. He is said to be worth seventy-five thousand dollars, though he has not even a garden, has probably not tasted an apple nor a peach these ten years, and lives in a tent which would be dear at fifty dollars. I instance this gentleman's way of life not by any means to commend it, but to illustrate the habits of a class. White men with two or three squaws each are quite common throughout this region, and young and relatively comely Indian girls are bought from their fathers by white men as regularly and openly as Circassians at Constantinople. The usual range of prices is from forty to eighty dollars—about that of Indian horses. I hear it stated that, though all other trade may be dull, that in young squaws is always brisk on Green River and the North Platte. That women so purchased should be discarded or traded off, as satiety or avarice may suggest, and that they should desert or deceive their purchasers on the slightest temptation, can surprise no one. I met an Irishman on Big Sandy whose squaw had recently gone off with an Indian admirer, leaving him two clever, bright, half-breed children of seven and five

years. I trust that plank in the republican national platform, which affirms the right and duty of Congressional prohibition, not only of slavery in the territories but of polygamy also, is destined to be speedily embodied in a law.

We passed yesterday the two places at which a body of Mormons late in 1857, surprised and burned the supply-trains following in the rear of the federal troops sent against them. The wagons were burned in corral, and the place where each stood is still distinctly marked on the ground. It seems incredible, yet I am assured it is undoubtedly true, that none of the military officers who were severally dispatched from Kansas, late that season on the road to Salt Lake without a commander and with no definite instructions, was directed to afford any protection or give any feed to these important towns. It is lamentable that presidents and secretaries of war are not subject to court-martials.

We have for the last two days been passing scores of good log or ox-chains—in one instance, a hundred feet together—which, having been thrown away by California emigrants to lighten the loads of their famished, failing cattle, have lain in the road for months, if not years, passed and noted by thousands, but by none thought worth picking up. One would suppose that the traders, the herdsmen, the Indians, or some other of the residents of this region, would deem these chains worth having, but they do not. I had already become accustomed to the sight of wagon-tire, wagon-boxes, etc., rejected and spurned in this way; but good, new chains thus begging for owners, I have only noted this side of

the South Pass. They are said to be still more abundant further on.

This morning, I was agreeably surprised by a greeting from three acquaintances I made in Denver, who invited me to share their outfit and journey to California, who left Denver the morning before I did, and beside whom I camped my first night on the road to Laramie. They are just through the Cherokee Trail, entering the mountains at Cache-la-Poudre and crossing Green River by a ferry some thirty miles below the point at which I did. They were detained one day making a raft on which to ferry their wagon over the North Platte, and found some rough places in the mountains; at one of which they were obliged to unhitch their horses and let their wagon down a steep pitch by ropes. They found the water of Bitter Creek—along which lies their road for a hundred miles or so—bitter indeed; and in some places grass was deficient; but their horses look nearly as well as when they left Denver. Their route has of course been some two hundred and fifty miles shorter than mine, and they will reach Salt Lake scarcely a day behind me. I wish I had been able to accompany them on their rugged and little-traveled route.

On the other side of the Pass, we had mainly clear, hot days; on this side, they are cloudy and cool. We had a little shower of rain with abundance of wind night before last, another shower last night, and more rain is now threatened. Yet all old residents assure me that rain in Summer is very rare throughout this region.

We stop to-night at a point only one hundred miles from Salt Lake, with two rugged mountains to cross, so that we are not to reach that stopping-place till Monday.