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EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF WILLIAM C. LOBENSTINE



WILLIAM C. LOBENSTINE

Extracts from the Diary of

William C. Lobenstine

December 31, 1851-1858

Biographical Sketch by
Belle W. Lobenstine

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BELLE W. LOBENSTINE

In Loving Memory of
My Father
WILLIAM C. LOBENSTINE

That those of us who follow after
may honor and love his memory and
live worthy of his name

FOREWORD

This book does not in any sense purport to be a biography. Often during Father's lifetime, on our long walks together or during long quiet evenings at home, he would tell of his early life, repeating over and over certain incidents which had impressed him deeply and so—when after he had gone we found among his papers two closely written diaries bound in calf, telling of his trip to California and the return from there—it seemed most natural to work over these diaries, to try to make out their closely penciled pages and, when that was done, with as few changes as possible, to publish these, together with a brief sketch of his early life and a few explanatory notes, for his family, friends, and any others who may be interested in these early experiences of one who came seeking the best in this country.

The construction has been left unchanged and is very suggestive of the German, while the use of words, if at times inaccurate and somewhat flowery, is remarkable when one considers that but three years before he had come to this country an immigrant boy, knowing no English whatever. He was constantly reading, both books and the daily papers (has spoken often of how, later on, he took the *New York Tribune* to study the editorials by Horace Greeley), and then trying to use the new words which he found—doubtless keeping his diary partly for that purpose. On the whole it would seem that he has succeeded in making his thoughts remarkably clear. Some of these are very characteristic of him as we knew him in later years—but in religious matters he had reacted from the despotism of a strong established church and of a narrow-minded bigotry without as yet knowing the deep personal religious experience which was afterwards his. As to his political views—it is hard to believe that they were written in 1852 when they might equally well have been expressed at any time since 1914.

BELLE WILLSON LOBENSTINE

INTRODUCTION

Christian Lobenstine or William C. Lobenstine, as he called himself later on in this country, was born in Eisfeld, Dukedom of Meiningen, on November eighth, eighteen hundred and thirty-one. He was the youngest in his family. The others were Theodore, Caroline, Frederic, Bernard, Dorothea, Georgia, and Henry. They were the children of Johanne Andreas and of Elizabeth Lobenstein.

His father and older brothers were tanners and also farmers. Of the brothers, Theodore, the eldest, seems to have been the most lovable, always kind to his younger brothers and sisters. Father always spoke very affectionately of him. Frederic, on the other hand, the first of the boys to come to this country, was stern and rather arbitrary to the other members of the family. These, and Henry who also came to this country, together with his father and his mother, whose gentleness and care he never forgot, were the only ones of whom he ever spoke.

The earliest known incident of his life, and one to which he often referred, came when he was about seven years old. He, with other children, was playing by a stream near the tannery, and he fell in. It was early spring and the waters were swollen by melting snows so that he was carried down stream very rapidly. His friends ran along the banks with grappling hooks trying in vain to reach him. Finally, however, the stream ran under a bridge and here Theodore ran out and with one of the great hooks used in handling hides in the tanyard, caught him by the buttonhole of his vest. He was unconscious but they were able to bring him to and carried him to an uncle who had an inn near by. After a night's rest, they took him home, none the worse for his adventure.

As he grew older he became ambitious for a good education and one day while working in the fields with his father, mustered up courage to ask him to send him away to school, and won his consent. He studied three years and a half at the Real Gymnasium in Meiningen. His life was one of the simplest and hardest. He had an attic room with some townspeople and ate his midday meal with them. His breakfasts and suppers consisted of a jug of water and a big piece of the rye bread of the country with butter. Once in a while, his family would send him down a ham. He kept his cot at the window so that he might be awakened by the first rays of the rising sun and begin to study, for he always worked hard for what he got and was an earnest, faithful student rather than a brilliant one. He kept, however, on the highest bench all the way through common school and also ranked well in the gymnasium.

After leaving school, he studied for nearly a year with a country doctor, a relative of his, going about with him and assisting in many ways, but developed no liking for the profession and so gave it up and, together with his brother Henry, decided to come to America whither Frederic had already gone. This was in eighteen hundred and forty-nine, when a new spirit was abroad in Germany and when people looked to this country both as a land of freedom and also as a place where one could almost literally pick up gold and silver on the streets. At that time it was the rule in Meiningen that upon emigrating, you forfeited all rights and claims upon that Government and before leaving he went to the Castle and signed papers giving up all rights of German citizenship. He left Germany with the definite idea of settling in the United States, making it his permanent home and becoming a part of this new country. From the first, therefore, he chose to associate with Americans and to use the English language rather than keep up his German associations.

Coming to this country from Havre to New York on a sailing ship was a long and hard journey of fifty-three days and by the end of that time, what with the hardships and poor fare, many of the passengers were down with cholera. Father, among others, was taken to quarantine, which was a very different place from what it is now. While many were dying in the hospital—and he was taken to the ward where all the very worst cases were—he did not believe that he was very ill or going to die. Watching what was going on he saw them take one patient after another and dump them into a bath without changing the water and finally they started for him. This was too much, and he jumped up and ran back into another ward where the less serious cases were. Here they let him stay until he was able to leave the hospital. He had expected to find the people of this country living in great ignorance, and came expecting to teach, but he was adaptable and finding that such services were not required from him, a young immigrant lad, he quickly turned to other things.

He went first to Wheeling, where his brother Frederic was in the leather business, and worked for him about a year. Then he took to steamboating on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. During the next two years he was first cabin boy and later steward and had many stories to tell of his various experiences. Once the steamer upon which he was steward—through a mistake in signals—struck another amidships and cut her in two. Fortunately, the few passengers on board were saved, before she sank. Another time, as he went into the kitchen to give an order to the cook, that individual, more drunk than sober, proceeded to grab up a carving knife and run Father out of the kitchen. There was much gambling at poker on these river steamers which Father saw constantly. Also much crooked work. One day a man left the table and asked another to take his hand for a few moments. This fellow lost some money and wished to repay it, but was not allowed to. So the others gradually drew him into the game and cleaned him out. Another time a man gambled his all (he had come on board with a good pile of money) and when he lost he grabbed up his money bag, ran to the deck of the steamer, and before any one could stop him—jumped overboard. Whether he reached the shore no one knew. Probably, however, he was drowned in the turbid waters of the Mississippi. These incidents, together with what he saw while in California, always gave Father a strong prejudice against cards, which he associated almost inevitably with gambling and all its evils.

After two years of this life, he decided to seek his fortune in the Far West, and his diary tells much of these days. A few other details of which he spoke may however be of interest.

The emigrant party as it started from Pittsburgh consisted of about forty men and ten wagons. They shipped their wagons down the Mississippi and up the Missouri to St. Joseph where they bought forty oxen. In Father's wagon was Captain Speers, a river pilot with whom Father had worked while steamboating. He was a farmer's son who knew about cattle. There was also a business man named Logan from Allegheny City. He was a strong Christian man, the only one in the party who carried a Bible and his life and death (for it was he whose death is mentioned in the diary) made a profound impression on Father. One evening as they sat at supper, Logan put down his cup saying, "I don't feel well," and went into his tent to lie down. There was a doctor in the party who did what he could, but the next morning at four Logan was dead—of cholera. They buried him there on the prairie, wrapped in a buffalo robe with a mound of stones over the grave and sent the little Bible back to his wife. On this whole trip Father was the cook for his mess and he has

always claimed that he made a splendid one. The men of each wagon seem to have camped together and had their own mess. When night came the ten wagons were arranged in a circle—the tongue of one against the back of the next—and after the cattle had been allowed to graze till midnight, they were corralled within this circle.

Father's mates while mining were Captain Speers, McElrey, and Evans. Their camp was back in the mountains quite close to the border of Nevada, with Sacramento as their nearest city, where they went for supplies. Their claim was located several hundred feet above the level of the creek, so in order to get water they had to go back into the mountains fifteen miles. They had a surveyor survey the line and then these four men, not one of whom was a mechanic and all but one town bred, went to work to bring down water. In the first place they built a dam. Then they brought the water down hill and in one place bridged a valley two hundred feet wide. Their form of mining was called gulch mining. They built flumes or long boxes with enough fall for the water to run slowly and into these they dumped the pay dirt. The water would wash away the earth while they stood and tossed out stones, etc. Finally, after running through several boxes, the earth was all washed away, leaving only the heavy gold, which was collected by quicksilver.

The men worked in this way for three years, making no strikes and averaging about five dollars a day. Then Father and Speers sold out their claim and went to a large camp, Camp Secco, Dry Creek, it was called, and went to merchandising. They bought mules and a wagon and brought in from Sacramento the usual goods necessary to miners. After two years, the captain went home to his family. Father hired a man and kept on for another year, after which he sold out and came away, having accumulated six thousand five hundred dollars, the beginning of his fortune. He was in California from eighteen fifty-two to eighteen fifty-eight. His mates were sober, hard-working men. They made no wonderful strikes and what they got was by hard work and perseverance.

There were many robbers and desperadoes about, and Father made one dangerous trip. He had left the few schoolbooks that he had carried even out to California miles away with some people he knew, and one day when it was raining so that he could not work his claim decided to go after them. He took a mule and on several occasions had to swim swollen creeks. Finally, night came on, and he was caught in the hills alone where many a man had disappeared never to be seen again. However, after wandering about for hours in the darkness and in growing terror, he reached his destination at two o'clock in the morning.

Before leaving California in eighteen fifty-eight he was naturalized in the San Francisco court and ever held his naturalization papers as one of his most prized possessions.

His diary tells of his return to the East and his choice of Leavenworth for a home. Here he went into the leather business as the one of which he knew most and with his later life and business success, we are all familiar.

BELLE WILLSON LOBENSTINE

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY

Among the great many opinions expressed regarding usurpation of the government or despotism, one attracted my attention and agreed so much with my own sentiment that I could not but pay due merit to the moral truth of it. Despotism is despicable in its perpetrator and at all times a disgrace to human beings, depriving them perforce of their inalienable rights and their moral esteem for themselves and bringing them down on common ground with slaves. Although as just mentioned, despotism is at all times disgraceful to both sides we ought to pity those beings more who got their power as an inheritance than hate them. Who would and can deny that the early trainings of men lay the foundations to their further field of action? Therefore, when princes become the heirs of absolute governments, who can expect them to act differently than the Southern man does to his slaves? The latter, who was brought up among the family of mankind, and has accepted principles common to them, is much more to blame for his tyranny than a sovereign who was raised alone isolated from his fellowmen by a belief in his divine origin and who never [Pg 4]ined, therefore, nor ever dreamed of the least equality with mankind. If Napoleon was great as conqueror, he was equally despicable for the misuse he made of the confidence entrusted in him by the people, and instead of perfecting the rights and liberties of the nation, he cheated them of these very objects given to his care and usurped the government. Napoleon knew how to play the deceiver well enough to keep the people in their happy dreams. He knew how to flatter them by giving them all visible power, but he showed by his future way of action that he only played the hypocrite and that his outward course only served him to attain his inward higher object which was nothing short of grasping the nation and enslaving his own countrymen, as all other nations, which were possible for him, he conquered. Looking back from the point we started and considering once more both hereditary despots and usurped despots, so will we certainly not think so hard of one who has got that power by inheritance, or who was raised from infancy to this sole object of keeping the people down, in poverty, and slavery, as of a usurpator, who has imbibed principles of liberty and equality, sympathises with his brothers, and becomes then their flatterer, and by abuse of his mental faculties and moral sentiments, with a happy change of circumstances, their master and commander.

It is the great political question at present, if America is bound by the treaties with the foreign sovereigns [Pg 5]stain from helping the poor, downtrodden and oppressed people of those countries to their attainments of their inalienable rights. It is true that at the time when our constitution was made, our forefathers or rather their representatives in Congress, made a contract with the European princes to observe neutrality in their affairs, and declared therefore it to be the duty of this government for its own dignity as well as for the honor of the nation not to send any help to Europe, but to be free from doing such an illegal act. America being, however, the most liberal, and by that the most powerful government in the world, if it is her duty to stick to the act which our forefathers have made, there is still the other side of the argument to consider, to arrive to a proper result. Justice is the first law of nature and as all of us expect to get justice done from our neighbors, and especially the government we have chosen out of our minds, so humanity demands to see our brothers, however distant, equalized in the same way. The consistent law or the laws on which societies are framed, and reared up to developed bodies, are of various kinds, devised principally by our philanthropists and philosophers and legislators, for the best of the parties concerned. Their origin, however, being of human intellect and moral sentiment, can be only as following out very narrow sources, limited in their consistency with human [Pg 6]ness. Laws which are the most beneficial influence upon a society under certain circumstances and times, may be quite the opposite, with another united body, under different physical and moral conditions. Times and circumstances, therefore, cannot be suited to laws, but the latter need to be in a harmonizing cooperation with the former. If, therefore, our forefathers made laws or what is the same, the Constitution, they could not at that time, establish or devise such as should stand for all times but only for themselves and for their own generation. If Washington, John Adams or Jefferson, made treaties with foreign despots, it was for various causes arising out of their own at that time yet feebly maintained independence. But times have changed, out of that spark of freedom which fell among the population of this continent has come a powerful government, illuminating, with its might, the whole world, and whose physical powers are sufficient to crush all enemies to dust and raise downtrodden, oppressed and dishumanized mankind and brothers up to their by nature determined position of equality and fraternity. As maintained before, the exhausted position of America, which only could follow so great and sacrificing a struggle as that of the war of independence, obliged our forefathers to make friendly treaties with the foreign powers, to avoid if possible another blow upon their rights and [Pg 7]erties maintained so gloriously with England. But what is our strength at this moment? Are we still so feeble? Still so dependent on beings who are the scourge of mankind and deface the earth with cruelty and tyranny? We all certainly will say no. All will say America is no more dependent on anybody but themselves and nature's laws. Politics and love to live forced legislators to treat friendly with despots and now this voice of justice and humanity calls them to throw off this so long maintained mask of amity to tyrannical systems and to declare themselves at once for mankind and fellowmen. The voice of nature is mighty and omnipotent. She calls us up out of our dreamlike indifference to honorable participation in the fate of our fellowmen and makes it our duty to stand in defense of her laws on this planet and home of intellectual creatures. Let us throw off then our fastidious way of action and exert one and all of us the strength both physical and moral, for universal happiness and so lay by this the road to world's perfection.

VOYAGE TO CALIFORNIA

December thirty-first, eighteen hundred and fifty-one.

Left Wheeling on Steamer *Messenger* for Pittsburgh, April twentieth. Exodus to California.

The tide of emigration for California swept me along in its progress for the same reason as thousands of others—to appropriate money enough by a few years' hard toil, to secure a future independency. When first the idea of a movement to the West took possession of me, I was wavering in the choice between California and Oregon and gave finally preference to Oregon on account of securing a homestead at the arrival there and to judge from the last news of the diggings better wages than in the latter. From an inability to make up a certain complement of immigrants I had to give up the project and go to California. I left subsequently Pittsburgh on the Steamer *Paris*, passing Wheeling without seeing my brother, and arrived after a week's journey down to the mouth of the Ohio River and from Cairo up the Mississippi to St. Louis.

The Ohio River is formed by the confluence of the Monongahela and the Allegheny at Pittsburgh, the fo^[Pg 12]on of which place is alluvial bottom carried down from the mountains in previous ages. It has along its shores some of the finest agricultural country as well as numberless cities and towns, among which we count the following as the largest and where the most business is carried on: Wheeling, Virginia, Marietta, Ohio, Cincinnati, Louisville, Evansville, etc. Besides these, being all places where manufacture of all kinds is carried on, I mention from its great obstruction to navigation, rather than its cosmogenic character, the Falls of Louisville, with the nature of which I am, however, too little acquainted to give particulars. A canal, which was built years ago, to overcome this obstacle, is of so little dimensions that the larger boats can not pass through and therefore this has always been a drawback to Ohio navigation and a hindrance to more progress for the City of Louisville. Several requests have lately been made from several states to Congress for the construction of a new canal large enough to let boats of large dimensions pass at any time conveniently. The hills running alongside the river beginning at its source generally slope down to its shores, having in many places very fertile tracts for agriculture. This mountain chain proceeds most of the time in a parallel direction with the river down to about one hundred and fifty to two hundred miles below the falls where they gradually descend to a level covered with luxurious vegetation in some places while marshes extend over a considerable^[Pg 13] of it. The confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi is at Cairo, built on a vast swampy and unhealthy desert which, but for its low level, would be the central place of the United States, for merchants, around which they would gather and from whose midst the greatest movements would emerge and be controlled. This being, however, a natural difficulty, which no human skill can ameliorate, that centralizing point has to move higher up the river to St. Louis. This latter place has within the last twenty years increased remarkably and is at present the metropolis of the West and will undoubtedly increase in importance in a ratio parallel with the civilization of California and Oregon. By the present tide of emigration to the latter countries the amount of business is very much increased. In consequence of this a great many improvements have been made, consisting in building a large number of new expensive houses for merchants and manufacturers which betray to every stranger at the first look the impression of a great and industrial city.

Leaving St. Louis on the Steamer *El Paso*, we proceeded up the Mississippi twenty miles where we left this river to follow the course of another great river, the Missouri. This has in its main features a great resemblance to the Mississippi, having a chain of mountains parallel to both its shores and being sown with numberless islan^[Pg 14]e the former, the most of them nothing but sand carried down from the Rocky Mountains. The hills, however, instead of breaking off abruptly as on the Mississippi are generally sloping gradually at a height of sixty or seventy feet, toward the river bed. The country along the shores is comparatively little cultivated, the constantly washing power of the water keeping back any active efforts for agricultural improvements. A great number of quite respectable towns are met with along the river, as Alton, Washington, Jefferson, Booneville, Lexington, Independence (starting point for California, Oregon and Texas) then, Kansas and last St. Joseph. The Kansas River coming from the West, separates Missouri from the Indian Territory, the latter still peopled by the Indians as their last and only resting place in this country. The history of this great family of the human race teaches us the constant progress and retreat in the pursuit of nature's laws, the eternal relation of all things existing. This once so numerous family of red men were the sole possessors of America, over which they had extended in all directions, and several tribes had reached a high state of civilization when the country first was discovered, but as other families analogous to their own (Hindus and Malays), they retrograded by some aberration of the laws of nature and fell back into moral darkness and gradual disappearance from the^[Pg 15] of the earth. The red men, once the masters of this vast land, had to give up their homes to give room to its present inhabitants and who knows how soon an inevitable Nemesis will strike out their existence from the Book of Nations?

This territory consists of mostly fertile prairie land, of an undulating appearance offering most beautiful fields to the observer of nature's beauties. After six days' journey we arrived at St. Joseph, Missouri. After our landing was made, a most active business took place at the wharf for a few hours arising from the delivery of freight to its respective owners. Having received our little property we put it in our wagons and camped out about a half mile above the town in a valley surrounded by hills and corn fields and except for a few cold rainy days we had a good encampment and passed the time we were there in making preparation for our long journey.

We left camp the third day of May to proceed on our journey further West, and after a few hours traveling not obstructed by difficulties with our teams nor bad roads, we arrived at Duncan's Ferry where emigrants for the West leave the United States and cross over to the Indian Territory. The ferry being badly attended to by its owners travelers were obliged to stop here rather longer than would be necessary if things were put in better condition with ^[Pg 16] men there to take care of it. We got across the river, however, after a thirty-six hour detention and put our foot on Indian ground the morning of the fifth, went on five miles, where, meeting good wood and water, we struck our camp and stopped until the next morning.

May sixth. The quiet of the night from the fifth to the sixth was interrupted by the heavy rolling of thunder, and its darkness by flashes of lightning. Towards morning we had a very heavy rain, which, although it put the roads in a rather bad condition, helped the vegetation considerably, and therefore, was of some advantage to our procedure. On

the morning of the sixth we started on our journey, and after passing a river which is difficult to cross we ascended for the first time the plateau this side of the Missouri. After having got up to a height of about fifty feet above the level of the Missouri River, a magnificent scene was displayed to our view, resembling very much my native country—Germany. The whole ground is prairie land, running off in slight undulations to the horizon and bounded in its Eastern progress by the bed of the Missouri and the mountain chains on the left.

Nature is in this territory following its gradual progress and offers a vast land for cultivation to the natives of this and other continents. The civilization of this territory and Oregon will raise America to its pinnacle of perfection with wealth and moral efficiency. California and the Western shore of Oregon will become a centralizing place for business progress from which knowledge will spread out a beacon light to all nations.

We traveled this day about ten miles North-westward from our last encampment and about fifteen miles from St. Joseph. Our team got along very well and could have traveled several miles more but for driving our cattle as little as possible the first few days, to let them gather all the strength possible. We encamped at the left of the road where we met with plenty of wood and water and off to the right with pasture for our cattle.

On the morning of the seventh after having fed our oxen and taken some refreshment ourselves we started for our further journey. About one-half mile from Camp we passed the Creek, on its upward ascent; passing on about a mile further we arrived at Wolf Creek, across which the Indians have struck a bridge, for the crossing of which they charge the emigrants a high price. It is, however, a great convenience to the latter, the creek being about thirty feet wide and from three to four feet deep. The Indians, who built the bridge, have put up their camp there. This side of the creek I ascended several hills, and after traveling about five miles arrived at the Mission. This is an Indian settlement where the Indians are taught the principles of Christianity. It consists of a few log huts, one of which contains stores where several of our traveling companions stopped and bought articles necessary on our journey.

After leaving the Mission we went on about thirteen miles further, meeting within this distance with several springs and after passing another creek we went up to the next hill and put up quarters for the night. This evening we bought a pony from some of the emigrants, which, although not of immediate necessity for the journey, is a very convenient thing to its owners.

On the morning of the eighth I mounted the pony and rode ahead for a few miles. I mention this as being rather something great, being the first riding ever I did. Crossed about three miles from our last encampment—Buffalo Creek—where the Indians again charge toll for crossing and drove on this side the creek about twelve miles, meeting the grave of a deceased emigrant, on which lay a live dog, probably the only faithful servant to his master, howling away and paying the last tokens of sympathy to him who was resting there in a lonely grave. We stopped at the left of the road till morning, where we calculated to lay over Sunday. However, not finding good pasture for our cattle, we left there about eleven o'clock and proceeded forwards about eight miles where we unyoked our teams and put them to rest for the night.

May the tenth. We started early in the morning, proceeding Southwest on our road. Although the sky was clear at daylight, it clouded over toward noon and we had one of the hard storms frequent on the plains and exposing the emigrants to discomfort and contagious diseases. Having driven off from the road expecting to find water and wood in a Southwesterly direction, about two miles off, we finally met, after having been wet all through, a creek bordered by plenty of timber, where we put up our encampment. These were some of the most discouraging moments we had since our start—arising from the wet and cold of the weather, and only moral courage can at this moment prevent moral depression. A man that had come around with us from Pittsburgh and displayed to us the most gentlemanly behaviour, having started with a sick family of eight little children from St. Joseph, and kept with us up to this night, keeping up under all difficulties, was obliged, on account of his wife getting sick, a woman of the greatest energy ever met with, to turn back to the States. After having dried ourselves, we took a good night's rest and started with new vigor the next morning on our journey. We had no difficulty getting along until about three o'clock P.M.

About this time we arrived at a creek called Mehemahah. The descent to the water is very steep and muddy, never of no great difficulty, compared to what is on the other side. Here, after passing the rapid stream, the water up to the wagon beds, we had to wade through some of the greatest mud holes ever met with before. Several of the teams got stuck on the other side. By increasing, however, the force, they finally got out and cleared the road for us to pass. After having proceeded about three miles on this side of the Mehemahah we stopped for the night.

It is Wednesday to-day, the twelfth day of May, and we have safely arrived at this side of the Big Blue River. This is a very nice stream and bordered with willow, elm and walnut and some of the oak found on the hills. We crossed the river the next day having but little difficulty, the river being low and the roads good. A starting house is to be found at the ferry this side of the river where emigrants can get what is most necessary on the journey. The country Westward of the Blue becomes very hilly, which with the rivulets and streams between presents a beautiful scene. The Blue River is about one hundred fifty miles from St. Joseph and supposed to be about one-half the distance to Fort Kearney. We have traveled since our fording of that stream about thirty-five miles and are at the present encamped somewhere in the neighborhood of Little Blue. The weather set in extremely cold and stormy about midnight and not having sufficient bed clothing nearly froze me to death. After having got up and taken our morning refreshments, we went on to our present place of encampment. The just mentioned stormy and extremely cold weather continued throughout the day, which, with the dust raised off the roads, made traveling very disagreeable and difficult.

On Sunday last we got in sight of the Little Blue in a Southerly direction from our present route. We did not, however, come to its banks before Tuesday the eighteenth day, and passed up an extremely hilly country for about twenty-five miles and left this river for the Platte.

We didn't leave the banks of Little Blue until this afternoon, Tuesday, the twentieth, the misstatement previously mentioned arising from the unauthenticity of the guide we took the respective distances from. The parallel distance we made along the shores of this river must have been about fifty to sixty miles. It is a very beautiful stream, much more elevated in its beauty by the barrenness of the surrounding country. Its water is, when at a medium stage, very clear and of very good taste. On our passage up the river we got in view of several prairie inhabitants as wolves, chickens and

several miles off the river, antelopes and single specimens of buffalo.

The weather of to-day, although it was very pleasant and favorable to our journey, caused by its continued ^[Pg 22] less a dearth of grass and by this, loss in the strength of our cattle. While I am writing these remarks a change of weather has taken place, which likely will make an improvement in the growth of the vegetation. The health of our company has been, since our start, in a good condition and although a number of deaths, partly of cholera morbus and smallpox happened among the emigrants, all of us are still enjoying our vigorous health and in general are in a good spirited mood. The frequent change, however, from hot days to damp cold nights is sufficient to undermine the stoutest constitution. How, therefore, we will in future this great gift of nature—health—preserve, is not to be fixed as a definite fact. Be it, however, understood, that a careful observance of physiological laws can abate diseases to a considerable extent.

May the twenty-first. We are now encamped about six miles Northwards of the Little Blue, and although late in the day we have on account of the rainy and stormy weather, not as yet decamped.

May the twenty-third. It is Sunday to-day and the great bright luminary of the day is peeping over the horizon in its full splendor, and eternal youthfulness animating the whole creation and endowing it with new strength and vigor. The remark so frequently referred to by Christians that the sublime beauty displayed by the sun proved the exist^[Pg 23] of a God, was made to me last night by a Universalist. True, the beauty is grand and sublime, but it is so without divinity connected with it. It is not something beyond nature but a planetary phenomenon following the great arrangements, the great and eternal laws of Mother Nature. No reasonable man will doubt the existence of a great incomprehensible principle which pervades throughout all nature, but this principle is nothing separated from the universe but is the great whole itself which can exist only all in all and not other ways which always was, always is and always will be, although things may be subjected to great changes.

We stopped in our camp a considerable part of the day, Orthodox Christians objecting to our movement. Calling, however, a meeting, and taking every single vote, the majority carried the motion for moving onwards. Having arrived last night within three miles to Fort Kearney, we made this distance in about an hour's time. The resemblance of this place to the civilized world awakened in us a great feeling of happiness thinking that although far, far off from home, out in a great desert, still enjoyment was offered to the onward moving emigrant. The fort consists of five frame houses, two for the use of the commanding officers, the rest for the soldiers, all built in good style well answering their respective purposes. Besides these buildings is a church for the service of the Lord which is frequented b^[Pg 24] diers, civilized Indians and passing emigrants. About three miles above the fort, we lost, by the carelessness of one of the men, our pony. By the hardest kind of running, we recovered it again. Nothing of weight happened the next day. Having proceeded about twenty miles further up the river we stopped for the night.

Twenty-sixth. We are now about three hundred and fifty miles off St. Joseph, encamped along the bank of the Platte here of about one and one-half miles width and very shallow. The river is sown with small islands all of very modern formation. They are generally over-grown with cottonwoods, and some of the oak kind, frequented more or less by wild geese, crows and numerous birds of smaller kind. Just as I am writing these lines my attention is attracted by the sublimity of the scenery around us. The whole Western border of the horizon is grandly beautified by the setting sun which, although out of sight, still leaves traces of its grand and sublime beauty behind, painting the horizon with the most various colours. It is getting darker and the far off peaks of a mountain chain which appears to follow a parallel course with the edges of the horizon gradually disappear. Quiet and peace is spread all over nature's garden. Many a turbulent mind is silenced by this beautiful phenomenon, and while yet gazing at it, is sunk in the arms of ^[Pg 25] God of Sleep, Morpheus.



BIRTHPLACE OF WILLIAM C. LOBENSTINE

May the twenty-ninth, morning at five o'clock. We have traveled since my last notes were put down forty miles through a very barren mountainous country, grass being very scarce and water of inferior character, having in it dissolved some alkali substances. The second day or May twenty-eighth, inserting first that the day before we passed several creeks, meeting a most splendid spring at the last, we struck the bluffs near about the forks of the river. The bluffs which I visited this day are mainly composed of sand, likely deposited there by the wind in latter times. The whole bottom along the Platte is mostly sand which in dry season on account of the violent winds which prevail here, nothing being here to break its force, is a great inconvenience to travelers. The Platte river bottom below and above Fort Kearney up to where the road meets with the bluffs, is very little above the level of its waters, varying from five to

fifteen feet above that, however, till when you strike the above mentioned point, its altitude is about twenty-five feet.

We met on the latter part of our journey numerous graves of emigrants who had finished their course in nature's garden to adopt new form and shape suiting a different object in nature. The deceased died mostly of cholera and smallpox, more or less originating from an unhealthy diet, bad water and exposure. Good care and observance of physiological laws, however, as I previously mentioned, can considerably alleviate the diseases, if not keep them off altogether, from which cause then, I principally account for the good state of our health.

We are now about crossing the river (the South fork of it) the forks of which we struck a day before this. The river runs in a Southwest direction and is about half a mile wide and very shallow, with quicksand in the bottom. The fordage was of no difficulty to us, the river as first mentioned being very low, and having arrived on its opposite side we pursued our journey in a West-Northwesterly direction toward the Cedar Bluffs. After having the day before stopped about five o'clock at the right of the road, where we met with fairly good grass and water, we traveled the next day, Sunday, the thirtieth, till we reached the point where the road strikes the Bluffs which latter point is about twenty or twenty-five miles from where we crossed the river. Stopped about ten o'clock and encamped to rest ourselves and our cattle for the remainder of the day, which by the hard road and great heat of the past week was very much required to invigorate us for the future. I read several chapters of Byron, but my mind being nearly down to zero on account of the excessive heat, I could not concentrate my spirits enough to follow his violent imagination. Next morning we started early for the Bluffs. The passage of them was very hard on our teams, the weather being very hot and the road being all sand, our wagons cut in very deep and therefore required the hardest pulling to get along. We descended down the other side—a terrible steep road—having traveled about ten miles over the hills and after proceeding ten miles further we encamped nigh the river whirl-pool. Here was a good camping ground, dry and pleasant.

Tuesday we started for Ashes Hollow, being about eighteen miles from our starting place. The road led like the previous days through very sandy regions, the parallel running bluffs offering from the sameness of appearance in stratifications and composition very little attraction to the passing travelers. Two miles this side Ashes Hollow, the road ascends a very steep hill, about sixty feet above the level of the sea, being undoubtedly the hardest hill to pass over we have met up to this on our journey. After having got up to its highest point, the road gradually descends into the hollow which builds with the former a square angle. This valley is about two hundred feet wide, bordered with rocks and fine gravel in its hollow and timbered with ash trees and some wild roses and grapes. A cool spring, unsurpassed in its water by any we have met yet in this territory, is to be found to the right of the creek about a mile from where we first strike it. There we met a kind of trading post where several articles for the remainder of the journey for a reasonable price can be got. We passed on about two miles further from where we left the latter and encamped for the night (June second).

Monday, June 7th. Last week I neglected, not being at leisure in mornings or evenings and too much downspirited at noon, to keep up my journal with the events as I met them, but I shall try to recall in my memory the main objects met with. For two days after we left Ashes Hollow the roads were bad, being very hard on our cattle as well as ourselves. We got along, however, as well as circumstances did permit and after passing several creeks, hove on Friday last towards noon, in sight of Courthouse Rocks, called so by emigrants from a supposed resemblance with the building of that name, but appearing to me, however, more like some ancient castle than the object it is compared with. The rock is about eight miles off the road, a very deceiving distance to the traveler who thinks it only two or three miles off.

Proceeding further, having the Courthouse to our left, and the Platte at our right, the pinnacle of another rock got within the reach of our eye. This is what is called a chimney rock from its great resemblance to some factory chimneys. Although nearly twenty miles away it could distinctly be seen. We traveled on to within about eight miles and encamped to the right of the road, nigh the river bank. The next morning we started early. Some of our company went on ahead to ascend the rock. I stayed with the wagon, being not very well on foot, and proceeded slowly on our journey. Chimney rock is about, from its base to its apex, four hundred feet high, consisting of a low and second platform. Upon the latter is the chimney or shaft of the rock nearly one hundred feet high. This rock is principally composed of marl and clay, intermixed with several strata of white cement. Joining the chimney rock, right above it, I beheld a most beautiful sight, being a section of rock of singular construction resembling in its appearance very much some of the scenery along the Rhine. The whole consisted of five rocks, one approaching the form of another smaller chimney and giving with the rest a most grand view, just like an ancient fort of the feudal barons on an average steep ascending hill, with cupola on the top assuming the forms of ruins. Had I the talent of a Byron or the skilled hand of a Raphael I might give an adequate idea of the landscape, but as I am, even common language is wanting to give an appropriate description. I thought it, however, romantic, and truly felt more than my tongue may express. O what a pity it is to be deficient of *Brain!*

Towards evening we arrived at a trading post, about eight miles before the pass of Scotch Bluffs, and encamped here for the night.

Sunday, set out with a cloudy sky and rain. It soon, however, cleared up and turned into a sunny day. We approached the Scotch Bluffs, which we saw the evening before golden in the light of the setting sun, and our whole attention was attracted by the grandeur of the former, still more beautified by the surrounding country. The appearance of these sand hills, although from far off like solid rock, has a very accurate resemblance to a fortification or stronghold of the feudal barons of the middle age, of which many a reminder is yet to be met with along the bank of the Rhine. The rock itself is separated nearly at its middle, having a pass here about fifty to sixty feet wide, ascending at both sides perpendicular to a height of three hundred to four hundred feet. The passage through here was only made possible in 1851 and is now preferred by nearly all the emigrants, cutting off a piece of eight miles from the old road. We passed through without any difficulty and after having passed another blacksmith shop and trading post, which are very numerous, protection being secured to them by the military down at Fort Laramie, we encamped for the night.

We arrived at Laramie on Tuesday evening, a day sooner than we calculated to get there. The Fort is situated on the Laramie River, which joins with the Platte about two miles below the Fort and about one hundred yards from the bridge for crossing of which we were charged two hundred dollars. The country around the fort is of a pleasing aspect. The bluffs which surround it slope off gradually down into the valley, through which the river of the same name winds in the most lovely curves, whose margins are timbered with a scattered growth of cottonwood and brush of various

kinds. The Fort consists of several caserns for the subordinate soldiers, a better building for the captain, a powder and provision magazine, a hospital open to the broken-down travelers who wish to stop there, a good store where all articles a man wants in civilized countries or on the plains can be bought. The garrison disposed here is of a small number—from fifty to one hundred and fifty, which number although small, is sufficient to keep down any unruly spirit among the inhabitants of the soil. After getting a few requisite articles, we started from our encampment near the Fort for the black hills, along which the road runs on towards the Rocky Mountains.

The scenery, after passing the Fort and proceeding a few miles up the river, assumes quite a different aspect from that which we have passed before the Fort. The monotony of the prairie land disappears, and a varied highland scenery is offered to the traveler. The road leads generally over the bluffs at an average height of about seventy to or [\[Pg 32\]](#) hundred feet above the bed of the Platte and in advancing approaches sometimes towards the Southwestern mountain chain with the Laramie Peak, whose summit is six thousand feet above the sea and covered with snow throughout the greater part of the year. This mountain can be seen at a distance of one hundred miles. We have first sight of it at the Scotch Bluff, distant about that far from it. Cones or little craters form the bulk of the mountain and give it a romantic appearance. The Platte River above the Fort Laramie takes a different appearance from its lower course. The low fertile land through which it runs for nearly seven hundred to eight hundred miles to its mouth, is changed into a highland scene. Its course is rapid and cut through the solid granite rocks which must have taken many a century to open such passes and to such an extent as we met in this part of our journey. The beauty of the mountain chain is greatly increased by the scattered trees of cedar and pine and by the interruption of numerous streams which are bordered with a most beautiful growth of cottonwoods and other trees.

June twelfth. We left the river about noon and ascended for the whole afternoon up the highest bluffs on our advance. We got considerably molested by the wind which blew right in our faces and darkened them with sand. [\[Pg 33\]](#)ing a spring up near the highest point of ascent we stopped for the night. Next morning started for the descent. The Blackhill road comes in from where the road commences taking down to the bottom. We passed the LePonds River, at the foot of the bluffs, a very nice stream, beautifully treed with cottonwood. About four miles forwards on the road we passed another creek called by its red bank, Red Bank. The whole country around is a red stratified rock of the same kind—being iron ore.

June fourteenth. We drove about ten miles to-day, passed several new graves, and crossed three small creeks. Toward evening we encamped two miles up the Little Deer Creek to rest our cattle, as well as ourselves, and prepare for ascending the Rocky Mountains. I read several pages of geology treating of the different classes of rocks, their respective composition, position and the circumstances under which the process of protrusion and stratification took place.

The fifteenth. Some of our men killed various kinds of game on the bluffs with which we quite prepared us a feast adequate to all luxuries we ever had at home.

June the sixteenth. We took a new start this morning for the future of our journey. Leaving Little Deer Creek, we struck, after having met with the main road, the river, along the banks of which we passed all day and toward [\[Pg 34\]](#) evening encamped within reach of it. We passed Big Deer Creek about noon; the country around, although the stream is of quiet romantic beauty, is very barren, offering but little pasture to the emigrants' teams.

June the seventeenth. This morning we started for the ferry, twenty-seven miles above Big Deer Creek. We arrived at the river about noon and got across again three or four o'clock in the afternoon, where we left the other side for the bluffs and encamped about four miles onwards on the road from the Platte. The ferry at this place is carried on with flat boats which are fastened to ropes spread across the river. The current carries them from one shore to the other. The following day we started very early in the morning, ascended Rattlesnake Hills, very rocky, and pursued our journey this day through an extremely barren section of country, the soil being mainly sand without any good water and grass. At Willow Springs twenty-six miles above the Platte ferry we arrived towards evening and put up for the night.

Not having any grass at all we started very early next morning intending to stop wherever any pasture could be found. Meeting the object of our wishes, we grazed the cattle for several hours. Ponds with alkali water being about, several of our cattle got to drink, and shortly after our start, several got to be very sick, the alkali beginning to operate. We gave some of them fat bacon and some vinegar to neutralize the alkali, which had the best wished effects. [\[Pg 35\]](#)

The country passed over to-day is very sandy and dry, offering nothing hardly to the passing emigrants. The hills which range along this part are called Blue Hills, probably from the growth of pines with which they are planted.

Sunday, June the twentieth. Proceeding onwards, we came to the Indian Dance Rock, called so by Colonel Fremont in 1847. This rock is a huge pile of granite about half a mile in circumference and one hundred-fifty feet high. Its sides are decorated with numerous names of emigrants who passed them since '49. The road leads to the left of the rock along the river and crosses it about one and one-half miles from the said rock. Five miles onwards, passing over a very sandy road, we arrived at Devil's Gate, a precipice between the perpendicular walls of which the Sweetwater passed. This is undoubtedly the most interesting sight to the attentive traveler, made so by the profound deepness of the pass and the stratae of ancient rocks laid open to the view of the naturalist. The rocks here are piled up in a strange chaos, consisting of primary (hypogene) rocks turned up on their edges in a nearly perpendicular position, intermixed with others in a horizontal and vertical position. The descent of this rock is, on account of its steepness, very difficult and connected with considerable danger. Too great precaution can't be taken by explorers. The river undergoes a fall of ne [\[Pg 36\]](#) ten or twelve feet, the water running very rapidly in its onward bound course. The road from here leads more or less along the river for twenty-five miles, where it separates in two, one crossing the river and the other takes over the bluffs. This latter road is extremely sandy and as heavy a pull for cattle as any part of the road we have passed. Teams that have not been taken proper care of, generally are lessened here by several of them breaking down by fatigue and feebleness.

Traveling onwards we struck the river and passed along it for two miles where we ascended the bluffs again. Viewing the surrounding country, we discovered on the edges of the horizon a very large snow clad mountain, its summit nearly hid in the clouds, and its sides shining in a bedazzling luster.

June the twenty-third. Rain setting in through the night, we were obliged to take a very early start. The alkali, with

which the ground was covered, being dissolved by the water, might, if drunk by the cattle, have some very serious effect. Passing the bluffs, nothing of note happened, and after fourteen miles traveling, we arrived at the river banks, where we stopped to feed our cattle and took our own repast. Pasture being very gloomy here, we left for our afternoon's journey. After crossing the river we ascended a very steep hill, very stony and barren ground^[Pg 37] road leading down towards the river, where it turns at nearly a square angle, and ascends another very steep hill. The descent here is very rapid and slopes off into the Sweetwater Valley. Pursuing our course upwards, we met with some good pasture where we stopped and encamped for the night.

June the twenty-fifth. Having enjoyed a good night's rest and taken a good repast, we started with our cattle pretty well filled for the bluffs. This mountain, or rather tableland, about three to four hundred feet above the level of the river or six to seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, is principally composed of aqueous rocks of tertiary formation, sand and gravel, which are turned up here in vertical position, the upturned edges giving evidence of volcanic action. The road over this rock, of course, is very stony and hard, difficult to pass over for the cattle. We struck a branch of the Sweetwater this side the bluffs, about fifteen miles from where we ascended them. The weather to-day is very unpleasant, heavy and cold showers drenching us several times. Meeting with no grass up to our usual stopping time, we drove on till late trying to make the river, where we expected to meet with some good pasture. At our arrival there we found the prospects as poor as previously met with. Stopped, however, and the next morning crossed for the last time the Sweetwater.

The weather to-day, although the road led us through hills covered with snow, was fair and warm, and the^[Pg 38] rest or change it was from yesterday, made the travelers the more sensitive to it. We arrived at the South pass about noon and stopped to take dinner at the Pacific Springs. The pass goes through the mountain gradually so that when the traveler arrives at this point he hardly feels satisfied with the reality. The country along here is extremely poor. No grass, and even good water is scarce. The road ascends again this side the springs, and continues hilly for about eighteen miles, when it separates in two branches, the Mormon road going off in a South, Southwest, the California road in a nearly due West direction. Our wagons arriving at the fork, struck without any previous consultation with the company, the Mormon road. Proceeding onwards we forded the Little Sandy, nine miles off the fork and eight and one-half miles further onwards the Big Sandy—both pleasant streams with a lovely growth of willows and cottonwood. We encamped this side the bank of the latter stream where there was good pasture for our cattle and all necessaries for our own comfort.

June twenty-sixth. This day being Sunday and one man in our company being sick and in rather poor condition to travel, we stayed all day and recruited ourselves and our oxen. Nothing happened throughout the day except that several of the Snake Indians caught squirrels about our neighborhood and paid us a short visit. Towards eve^[Pg 39] read several passages out of the Bible and argued about the vulgar sentiment and language used in many places.

Monday morning, started stout and hearty on our journey and have just arrived again after passing over about eighteen miles of highland to the Big Sandy. There we strike this stream for the last time and are making now for Green River, ten miles further onwards. About five miles from our starting point the road forks. The upper road is called Kinney's cut off and joins with Sapplett's cut off. The lower branch strikes the Green River, which is on account of its extreme swiftness very hard to cross. The fording of this river is, by a good ferry carried on by Mormons, very much facilitated. Emigrants crossing here at the beginning of the California emigration had a great deal of trouble to get their stock across—numbers of them lost their lives and stock both.

Green River leads into the Rocky Mountains and numerous tributaries are flowing into it on its Southwesterly course where it pours its waters into the Colorado. The river is about one hundred and fifty yards wide and considerably deep; its water is very cold from its snowy origin and runs at the rate of five to eight miles an hour. We forded the river on the morning of the twenty-ninth and followed down along its banks for eight miles in a Southeastern direction.^[Pg 40] then the bluffs and traveled on Southwards for about five miles where we encamped near a branch of the river with plenty of grass. Although snow clad mountains bordered the horizon in the South the weather was extremely warm and what made it still more burdensome were the myriads of mosquitoes which molested us very much, yes extremely so.

Next morning we traveled onwards five miles from our last camping ground and crossed a branch of the Green River, on the other side of which we took the bluffs, descending several times into valleys where the river pursued his ocean-bound course. After striking the river the last time about ten miles from where we passed the branch we ascended again and traveled on in a Southwest direction. Meeting a small stream of water here about five miles distant from where we left the river, we encamped for the night.

July first. Left this encampment after having put in a horrible night with mosquitoes, bound for Fort Bridger, twenty miles from this spot. The road along this distance is hilly and stony, pasture and water scarce, scenery poor up to where we have sight of the Fort which is located in a beautiful valley and named for this reason the Garden of the Mountains. From here the road gradually ascends a ridge and on the latter, about five miles this side the Fort, we encamp^[Pg 41] for the night. Cedar trees growing spontaneously here, we had plenty wood for cooking use and good pasture for the cattle.

The road from now covers very hilly country over high ridges and deep valleys with very steep ascents and descents, therefore very hard for our teams. Proceeding onwards we met some most lovely and beautiful sights of natural beauty and but the hum of rural life would be necessary to make it a second Eden. To give an adequate idea of the beauty of this country none but a Byron or some other passionate writer can do. I, however, add that the high going sea appears to have the most resemblance to this interrupted bottom. The soil which covers the most of these mountains is very spontaneous (fertile), the most so in the bottoms. The mountains themselves are a deposit of water, the greatest number of them lately by their abrupt form and to my view are gravity rocks, cemented together by some binding matter. The formations of many of these rocks offer quite a picturesque view as we pass by. Caves and tunnels of all shapes are carved into them by the dissolving power of water. Towards noon to-day after having passed many ups and downs, we arrived at the highest point between the States and Salt Lake. The height of this ridge is seven thousand, seven hundred feet above the level of the sea and is the dividing ridge between the Colorado and the water^[Pg 42] great basin. From this point on we descended more or less and having arrived in the valley we traveled on about sixteen miles to the Sulphur Springs where we encamped for the night.

Next day our road continued over the same interrupted ground. About two miles from our last camp forwards on the road we arrived at Bear River which we crossed with some difficulty and went on to Echo Creek meeting on our road some Indians who traded us venison for powder and beads. Here we stopped for the night and after we got our breakfast next morning, July the fourth, we followed the river down twenty miles, crossing it seventeen times in this distance. This valley along which the road leads is very narrow bordered on both sides with high mountains of gravelly composition closely cemented together. The valley runs in a nearly Southern direction and runs on to where Echo Creek joins the Webber River, a stream about the size of Bear River. We crossed the river Sunday towards evening and went onwards several miles of nearly steady descent from the top of a hill which we had previously ascended to a creek along which we traveled about twelve miles crossing it thirteen times—crossings very bad. After we had the last crossing we commenced to climb a very difficult ascent. At the top of the latter, four miles from the base to the high point, the road leads down hill again. Echo Creek which heads on this side of the mountains runs on to the city. The [Pg 43] leads alongside of it, crossing it some twenty times. We traveled on till three o'clock when we struck the foot of a mountain three miles this side of town and encamped for the night.

The Salt Lake Valley is built by high mountains whose summits reach into the clouds, forming with its craggy sides a picturesque and, joined with the beauty of the valley, a lovely scene. The valley is thirty miles wide and some seventy-five to one hundred miles long. Within its mountainous enclosure it contains some of the most fertile and beautiful country ever looked on by men. The Salt Lake which stretches along the Valley on the North side helps to beautify the scene. Beside this is the town itself which is laid out in practical lots consisting in a house and garden lot, the latter for agricultural purposes. The houses, about one thousand in number, are built of mud, dried in the sun and are in every way like the houses in the States. The people to the number of about six thousand living in the city and about four thousand in different counties of the valley are Mormons. Although their creed contains a great many foolish things, they have in some of their social arrangements the advantage over us and the traveler passing through Salt Lake Valley and seeing everything working harmoniously together as nature itself cannot help but think them, more so, [Pg 44] looks upon the crops which nature spontaneously produces here, a happy and nearly independent people. One of the precepts of their faith, Polygamy, although generally used as a reproach to them, I personally admit as a true natural one, being consistent with nature. Having supplied ourselves with a few more necessaries for the remainder of the trip and some little repairing done to our teams, we left the city intending to stop at some good pasture place in the valley. On the road which runs on along through town towards the North we met with the Hot Spring at the left of the road. This Spring comes out of the surrounding mountains, being of nearly boiling heat and containing in it diluted a high percentage of sulphur.

The weather to-day is very hot and oppressive, being the more burdensome on account of my not being well, having previously been weakened by sickness. Eight miles from here, to the left we espied good grass and a stream of water, where we encamped and stopped there for the next two days. While lying here I took sick again, being a relapse of my former illness of dysentery. In applying though some of Dr. Dickson's pills and some other strong mixture besides this, I stopped it and I am fully convinced to-day that by paying a little precaution to diet I shall get well and strong again.

We left our camp on Saturday, the tenth day of July, traveling along a high mountain range through the [Pg 45] for about sixteen miles, crossing in this distance several small creeks bordered with willows and aspens. A great part of the country is well cultivated and loaded with a heavy crop of wheat, some corn and luxurious meadows, the latter rivalling any I ever saw before in any country. This evening we encamped at a small streamlet about twenty-five miles from the city. Grass very scarce, all other things however easy to be got. From houses being about here, we had plenty of milk and butter.

Sunday the eleventh. Started late, many of the company having not got used to our former speedy proceeding yet. Drove over some sandy roads through desert country to the Webber river, which we had crossed just a week ago in its upper course. The river being in a low state, we forded it ourselves without any difficulty and stopped three miles on the other side of it, where we caught up with a wagon of our company that had left us at the city.

Monday, July the twelfth. This morning the road led through brush and high grass onto a second bank along which we travelled the whole day, passing numerous farms on the lower side of the road and crossing several creeks in the latter part of the day. To the right of the road runs a mountain chain about one thousand to one thousand five hundred feet above the level of the lake, its sides as well as summit ornamented with a lovely growth of cedars and [Pg 46] of its crevices filled with snow. This evening we struck camp three miles this side of Grazing Creek where we laid till next morning to proceed no further on our journey.

This day, the road crossed several creeks, the first, Grazing, and five miles onward from this, Box Elder—further on, several small creeks and springs so that we had abundance of water all day. At Box Elder, we left the settlement, and pursued our course again on the Desert where our former contest with hardships and privations began from now on for the remaining journey. We traveled to-day twenty miles from Willow Creek and encamped at a Spring five miles this side of Bear River. This stream we crossed next day early in the morning paying four hundred dollars ferriage and proceeded onwards. From here we had as hard times as we ever saw on the plains arising from our want of good water for thirty-six miles which latter circumstance with the extreme heat was very hard on us and the cattle. We arrived at the end of the above mentioned distance about noon the next day at Hensols Spring where we stopped and refreshed ourselves with some good cold water. The road along this distance leads over a very hilly and dry country which on this latter account disappoints the choking emigrant extremely, expecting at every roll to have in sight some [Pg 47] in to revive the exhausted energies.

Six miles further we struck Deep Creek, running on the North side of the valley until where the road strikes the valley, where it turns toward the South and about six miles downward it sinks in the ground. At this place, called Deep Creek Sink we arrived next day and our cattle being worked down and their feet being sore, the company again decided to stay here and rest them as well as recruit ourselves somewhat.

July sixteenth. We left our last encampment at the sink and proceeded downwards for the Pilot Springs where we intended to water the cattle. The country begins here to get poorer, pasture becoming extremely scarce now, hardly to be found on creeks and around slews and then only a good way up or down stream.

Seventeen miles from Deep Creek Sink at some Springs in the side of a hill we met with good pasture and although still early in the day, we stopped there and lay till morning. Cedar trees and sage bushes are all the vegetation to be seen in this region and the journey on this account is monotonous and tiresome. The road from here takes over a hill from which can be seen for the last time the Salt Lake with its blue waters and its mountain high islands which with the surrounding hills offers quite a picturesque view to the observer.

About eight miles from Mountain Springs onwards we came to Stony Creek, a mountain stream whose water^[Pg 48] more or less made up of melted snow and ice and is very cold, therefore very much relished by travelers. From Stony Creek to the Casus Creek, distant about eight miles, the country continues very poor having nothing but wild sage and cedars on the bluffs. Casus Creek is a small stream bordered like all the creeks in this country with willows, the latter from the thick bunches in which they stand, a hiding place to the Indians. Pasture along this Creek is plenty, therefore good camping here. The road follows up the Creek about eight miles and crosses it in this distance three times, the middle ford being considerable miry when we passed.

Leaving Casus Creek the road ascends gradually towards a high situated point about five miles, where it joins with the cut off roads, three hundred and seventy miles West from the forks of the main road.

Coming up towards the summit of the hill we have in sight of the City Rocks, being numerous rocks of all sizes and shapes piled up so on the slope of a mountain towards North West which resembled in appearance a city at a distance built on the side of a hill. From here the road descends down into a valley about five or six miles long with several small creeks which were, however, dry when we passed them. Ascending the hills on the West side of the valley w^[Pg 49] with some water to the left, running down parallel with the road, and traveling on a mile further struck its head, consisting of several good cold springs. Next morning we started on our road which on account of many sliding rocks was very difficult and extremely hard on cattle. These hills are called Gooth Creek Mountains, running along a stream called the same name. Their forms and shapes are very various and mostly composed of aqueous rocks in parallel stratas. Five miles traveling over this interrupted ground brought us into the Gooth Creek Valley which we followed up eighteen miles—the roads good and grass plenty. The valley along the upper course of the Gooth Creek narrows; the mountains forming the valley are steep and composed of some granular gravel. Small sharp edged rocks are scattered all along the road and are very hard on cattles' feet.

At the head of Gooth Creek we met a good spring coming out from under the rocks. The water is cold and the weather being very hot we relished it very much. From here the road leaves the Gooth Creek Valley and continues over a mountainous, rocky and very barren country to the Rock Spring Valley. At the head of it to the right are several cold springs coming like the one spring at the head of Gooth Creek from under a rocky ledge. Grass around thi^[Pg 50]ng is little or none. Following the road, however, for about four miles further, grass became plentiful and more so toward the head of the valley. Crossing several ridges, we descended into Thousand Spring Valley, so called in consequence of the numerous Springs some of very high temperature; others are mere cold wells of considerable depth. The road leads here along the valley ten miles and pasture was real good.

July the twenty-fourth. Friend and companion Logan died this morning at five o'clock. Logan, a partner in our team, took sick very suddenly about noon this day about two miles this side Hot Springs. Driving on some few miles after noon, the disease came on in a very serious manner so that we were obliged to stop and camp. His strength failed rapidly and cramps in all his parts caused him very aggravating pains. Getting worse and worse and medical help having no effect on him we finally concluded that although unsuspected and however sudden he would go home to his Father. Living on till sunrise next day, he died about five o'clock in the morning after a sickness of seventeen hours. This then is human life—to live, to eat, to propagate and die. We, from this eventful place which we left after interring the deceased, proceeded over a long ridge which, sloping upon the other side and ascending again, gradually descended, taking us a stretch of twenty miles into the Humbolt Valley, the mountains of the same name be^[Pg 51] view covered with the everlasting snows. We followed down the valley about eighteen miles and camped on the North Branch of Mary's River about three miles from where we forded it.

July twenty-sixth. The road from the ford of the North Branch runs along a beautiful valley to where it joins the South Fork of Mary's River, twenty miles below the above mentioned point. Grass along this valley is more plentiful than any other place we found along the whole route. The water, although not very cool, is good. From the junction of the two forks, another valley commences, the river following it down for twenty-eight miles. At this point the road leaves the river for the bluffs after having previously come to the forks of the road, crossed the river four times within six miles and followed it down about ten miles further to a small tributary of Mary's River.

From here when we started early next morning, we had to travel over a section of mountains pretty steep and stony. Descending on the other side of these hills we met with several good springs on the road side and finally after a tedious forenoon's drive we struck the river again twenty miles from where we left it last. The roads along here being very sandy and so many teams passing ours it raises any amount of dust which is very disagreeable to emigrants a^[Pg 52]rd on cattle. We followed the river for four miles when, finding good grass, we camped for the night. Twenty miles further down stream the main road takes to the right over the bluffs, another road crosses the river and follows down on the South side. The latter road is preferred in low water, being the best and shortest as well as having most grass on this side of Humbolt. About forty miles onwards where we forded the stream it—the road—takes up over a rough hill leaving the river at the ascent and coming to it again at the descent, about two miles distant.

August the second. From this point the road takes over a hill about five miles long when it descends into the valley again. Pasture along here is poor, the bottom being mostly over-grown with sage. Although grass is scarce, for the whole journey the careful emigrants can always find sufficient feed for their cattle.

The road follows down the valley in a parallel direction with the river for about twenty miles where it turns on an obtuse angle and runs off in a Southwest direction. Here the road takes over low sandy hills and along the banks of the river alternately. Twenty miles from our starting point, we encamped on the river banks.

August the fifth. Ascended a hill about one-half mile on from our camp, pretty steep and sandy. The road^[Pg 53]inues this way all along for about twenty miles more where it takes the bluffs for eighteen miles through a sandy desert about

three or four miles parallel with the river. In the evening after a hard day's drive, we struck the river but did not meet with any grass which our starved animals badly needed. The following day we ascended the bluffs again for another eighteen miles desert having no grass nor water for the teams. Leaving, however, the main road and taking towards the river we got near enough to water our cattle, after which we drove on about four miles further and struck the river again finding tolerable good grass. Next day we started for the meadows and sink of Humbolt River. The distance to the former being about fifteen miles, roads bad, both sandy and hilly, no grass between, river handy enough in some places to water the stock.

Saturday evening we arrived at the meadows, our teams weakened from want of grass and several days' hard pulling. From here to the edge of the desert it is about twenty-five miles which we made in three days, recruiting our stock, making grass and taking on water.

Thursday afternoon, about three o'clock, we started with seven head of cattle and one horse, all of them in fair condition, for the desert—a distance of forty miles without water and grass, hilly and sandy roads. Thousands of dead cattle were lying along this road which had gone out at the previous emigration. One of our oxen gave out, d[[Pg 54](#)]ng us for several hours. Slaying the latter however, we arrived safe although a very close call at Carson River. Here people from California have put up their shops, having liquor and fixtures for sale for the emigrants at high prices. Grass being scarce here we started up the river about five miles. Being about camping time and our cattle very tired we stopped for the night.

From here we started the next morning having about five miles ahead a desert of thirteen miles. Before we started into the latter, we stopped and fed the teams for a few hours, then started on the said desert and the footers, among which I was, traveled up along the river, being higher and more pleasant than the main road. At the point where the latter strikes the river again we found good company which induced us to stop for the night, grass for our stock being plenty. From here the road takes over the bluffs, being sandy again as the day before and the country as poor as the deserts. Twelve miles' traveling took us to the river where we stopped and nooned. From here the road gets to be stony and sidling, hard on wagons and teams, leading over undulating ground all along. About twenty-five miles further ahead the road takes over a hill, a perfect desert. To the left of this is mining carried on in a Canyon. Although it d[[Pg 55](#)]t pay as well as some mines in California, still it allows fair wages to the diggers. Some of us, among them myself, would have stopped and dug here but for certain bondages which we could not get rid of without injuring our pecuniary interest.

The distance here from the river to it again is thirteen miles, roads tolerably good. In the afternoon of this day (Sunday) we traveled over another sandy plain to the river, eight miles, where we camped over night and started Monday morning all hearty and well. During the day's travel we passed a good many trading posts, crossing numerous mountain streams with good cold water. Grass along here is plenty so that stock as well as men do well in this valley. Another day's travel will take us to the foot of the Canyon which we ascend to take us to Hope Valley. To-day at noon we arrived within a few miles of the Canyon where we stopped for noon. Leaving this place we intend to ascend the ravine in the afternoon.

We took into the Canyon on the morning of the eighteenth and ascending it we met the worst road on the whole route being both rocky and steep and extremely hard on cattle and wagons. The whole Canyon is sown with rocks (metamorphic species) thrown there in chaos by volcanic eruption and offers to the travelers with its steep pine clad mountains one of those grand scenes of nature which are only met with in mountainous or volcanic countri[[Pg 56](#)]ve or eight miles of the hardest traveling brought us into Hope Valley at the other side of the Canyon which we followed up to where the road takes the hills again and finding at this point some excellent pasture we encamped.

We left our last night's camp where we suffered considerably by the cold and started to ascend the first of the mountains of the Nevada. The ascent is gradual for several miles till the road comes to red rock where it takes a sudden ascent for about one-half mile being very steep and rocky and undoubtedly constitutes with the yesterday's passed Canyon the greater part of the elephant which will be finished tomorrow by the steepest and highest ascent of the Sierra Nevada. Up this mountain we doubled teams and our wagons being light we arrived safely at the summit about seven thousand feet above the level of the sea. Grass being scarce here we descended about four miles on the other side of the mountain into a valley where we found some good feed along the lake shore.

August twentieth. Started for the ascent of the last and highest mountain of the Sierra Nevada, taking first over a mountain of five hundred to one thousand feet in height which brought us to the foot of the last mountain, we began our ascent, but though it was very stony and high, we had less difficulty in passing over it than the one we ascend[[Pg 57](#)]e day before. I myself arrived at the summit about ten o'clock where I disposed of our horse which had caused me a good deal of trouble. This done I took a view of the country around me. I always fancied to myself that the beauties of the mountainous countries were grand and sublime but never could I fully imagine such a vast and chaotic beautiful scene as I found here. The whole mountains are made up of metamorphic rocks, thrown here by volcanic causes. The mountains which extend around you, standing at the summit to the edge of the horizon are interrupted by alpine valleys filled with beautiful meadows and lakes of cold mountain water which help to make the grand scene of the mountains lovely and rural to the observer.

We passed over the summit and drove on this day over mountain ridges and encamped at night at about the same level as we traveled over in the afternoon, finding some grass and water on the mountain side.

The following day took up the fork of the road, the one to the right taking to Hangtown, the left hand one to Volcano. The distance from the fork to the latter place is about thirty-five miles, very hilly and extremely dusty, grass and water scarce—from ten to twenty miles apart in the valleys.

We arrived at Volcano August twenty-third and sold our stock the next day for the sum of three hundr[[Pg 58](#)]llars, making my share with our previous receipt for horse and one yoke of cattle, eighty-seven dollars and subtracting this from the whole of my expense leaves me ninety dollars debit to the journey.

At Volcano is the first mining district met this side the Nevada and provisions being tolerable cheap and some of the digging middling favourable some five of us concluded to stay here a while and try our luck.

Sunday, August twenty-ninth. We went to work the second day from our arrival and sunk a shaft from ten to twelve feet deep at which depth we struck a lead paying us about eight to ten cents to the ton. Water which we happened to strike got to be very troublesome, keeping us back considerably in our proceeding to get out the pay dirt for washing. All we earned up to the present is about four dollars. We calculate however to make more next week if we keep on at work steady and keep our health. [1]

Evidently a journal was kept during eighteen hundred and fifty-three which has been lost.

III

LAST YEARS IN CALIFORNIA—RETURN TO THE EAST

April twenty-ninth, eighteen hundred and fifty-four.

Several weeks have elapsed since closing my last journal to the present date of this entry, and longer still this interval might have been but for sickness, which keeps me from my daily task and compels me to pass the hours of ennui and solitude by such means as circumstances afford. Among these means, reading is my favorite occupation if the subject of it is attractive and pleasing and one main reason that my diary is not more regularly kept is because it is easier to read the productions of others' minds than to make efforts for a similar purpose ourselves. The efforts I am going to make are not to be compared to the writing of fictitious works, nor still less scientific essays but are simply to note down the most important occurrences of my career—a few abrupt ideas of my own and other men and some remarks upon the political and moral affairs of the world.

Well then, to begin. I am at present as already stated, compelled by sickness to stop in the house for an uncertain period of time which, however, I ardently hope may not fetter me like the criminal to his cell longer than r[[Pg 62](#)] may possibly require to heal the diseased part of my body. This is a sore ankle, caused by the rubbing of the seams of a boot, which, as undoubtedly a muscle or nerve was hurt, affects the whole system and gives me a good deal of pain. These things will, however, always happen and always by our own fault or carelessness—at least this is my case. Having this conviction one must try to take it as patiently as possible.

Although rain in April is rather a rarity, still, we had several showers within the last week or so and a very wet night and forenoon to-day. This is a great benefit to the country, both to the vegetable and auriferous world. The former it animates while the water channels which it swells assist the miner in procuring the latter—ore. I have been tolerable successful for the last three months, averaging about five dollars per day with prospects of continuing so as long as may be water for our supply. The troubled state of our company has temporarily subsided. Which fact is more to be ascribed to the just mentioned success than to an alleviation of the antagonistic elements prevailing among us. This however is not looked for by myself, nor does it matter any in this case what the cause is, as long as the effect is good.

Monday morning, May first, eighteen fifty-four. The merry blooming month of May has arrived and nature, shaking off the drowsiness of Winter appears in all its beauty and splendor. A carpet of verdure variegated by the in[[Pg 63](#)]rable hues and shades of myriads of flowers, shrubs and trees, spreads over the crust of reanimated Mother Earth—which scenery, combined with the beautiful sky of a California heaven, grants a sublime sight to the beholder and admirer of the garden of nature. In gazing upon these fields, hills and dales, all in their bloom and vernal beauty; upon the pure sky that overspreads and adds to their grandeur—the mind gradually loses itself in meditation and deep thought. Minor objects lose their hold upon us and higher, nobler sentiments take their place. In such sacred moments the empire of the mind reigns and we truly live. The grand and wonderful effect of a great unknown first cause meets us at every side—and while admiring the former we wonder at the magnitude and goodness of the latter. We try to penetrate the darkness which veils that unknown from our sight and behold the *prima facie*—till now only known by its reflections. Besides this desire to find and look upon the omnipotent, other thoughts and images rise before our mind's eye. While looking at some green and blooming spot, moments of the past or rather, recollections associated with those gone-by hours, those blooming fields, crowd in. We think of the innocent joys of those playfellows that loved us, of a ki[[Pg 64](#)]other that received us when we, flushed and exhausted arrived home to refresh and rest ourselves, who would lay her hand upon our forehead to dry the perspiration and brush aside our hair to restore our infant beauty, and, with those benign eyes looking upon us, would with her lips which always were so fond of kissing—express her fears that we would over-heat ourselves and take sick. I would begin to cry and promise to be more careful in the future. Yes, these are recollections which will cheer the darkest and increase the fullness of the happiest moments of our life.

May nineteenth, eighteen fifty-four. I am well once more, enjoying the blessedness derived from such a state. I have just returned after a day's work and having an hour to spare from this to dark I thought to dedicate the same to scrawl down a few lines in these memoirs.

April 29, 54.
Since at work I have elapsed since
closing my last journal to the present
date of this entry. I longer think
this interval might have been but
for sickness, which keeps me from
my daily task. & Compels me to
pass the hours of ennui & solitude
by such means as the air currents
and effect. Among these means
reading is my favorite occupation
of the subject of it is attracting
pleasing - & our main reason
that my diary is not more regu-
larly kept - because it is sad-
der to read the productions
of other men's minds - than to
make efforts for a similar
purpose ourselves. - Hence the
effort I am gone to make - is not
to be considered as a parallel

FACSIMILE OF PAGE FROM DIARY

Although this is early May—the middle of Spring, we have already the warmer days of August and the ground which had hardly got a good soaking during Winter is dry now as ever it gets in our Northern States. So with the vegetables. The flora and fauna of the country, which have already seen their infancy—although now everything is verdant and budding—in but a short month more will pass away and the green will change to yellow, the bud to the ripened fruit and all nature put on the attire of mellow Fall, and be finally resuscitated by deluges of rain which pour down in [\[Pg 65\]](#)er in this country. If ever by some natural change this country shall be blessed by seasonable rains through the Summer, it will undoubtedly exert a most beneficial influence upon the soil of the land and make agricultural business more permanent and profitable and vastly benefit the mining community and make living itself more pleasant and comfortable on the shores of the Pacific. There is a certain fact which manifests itself in new settled countries—namely, that the amount of rain which falls every year increases in proportion to the cultivation and irrigation of the soil. At Salt Lake, and so here, when settlers first arrived rain was hardly known to fall but has increased in amount every year since that period. This is a fact experience has taught us to hold true although its cause is hardly known.

The merry month of May has passed away; June holds reign over prairie, hills and dales. The weather in general is just warm enough to make it pleasant to work—which in itself is pain enough without having it doubled by exposure to a scorching sun. A pleasant breeze being wafted up from the smooth waters of the Pacific moderates the climate to a genial warmth which only for want of sufficient rain would be as beautiful as any person could wish for. But from a want of this infinitely useful element at the proper season of the year, the soil, otherwise fertile produces [\[Pg 66\]](#) little vegetation. July generally sees this dying off for want of moisture. Still there are many fertile spots in the valleys watered by mountain streams which intersect the country—heading in the snow clad mountains and pouring their icy waters like veins into the heart of the country to give vigor and health to the country in their proximity. A traveler therefore can see in one day's journey and less both the budding and refreshing Spring and the yellow Autumn, the former in the valleys, the latter in the higher parts of the land. It is on highlands that these lines are written—with a valley spread at the foot of it, which extends to the Coast Range of mountains whose outlines I can plainly trace on the horizon and this minute its highest peaks stand out in bold relief, illuminated by the setting sun close upon their brow. Ten minutes more—they will hide it from view where, in the pacific waters of the broad Ocean it will seek a resting place after its daily journey through the heavens, to rise with new splendor and magnificence in the morning. To many thousands who gaze upon the rising and setting of the sun its movement from East to West is still a great mystery.

September twelfth, eighteen fifty-four. Over three months have passed since I made my last entry in this journal and not only have I changed my residence but my profession. I have exchanged the miner for the confinements o [\[Pg 67\]](#)Store Room to which I intend to adhere in the future.

July and August passed in indolence and mental indifference. It is but a few days back that I left off mining and find myself now comfortably seated in my store writing these notes. This place—French Hill—is within one-half mile of Camp Secco which was destroyed by fire about three weeks ago, which however by the enterprise of its inhabitants is rapidly building up and this time is an improved place. The place of present residence is rapidly springing up into a little village as yet nameless from its recent date and gives fair promise towards a prosperous business. That this may be the case is my earnest wish, as I hope to realize if no unforeseen mishaps befall me—enough to leave California for a better home far to the East.

February, eighteen fifty-five. Four months have passed away since I made the last notes but although the above dates

indicate the Winter season when in the Eastern States snow and frost are plenty, we still enjoy as beautiful warm and dry weather as one can wish for—no snow, nor cold chilly days but pleasant weather in their place. As miners mainly depend upon the rain to wash their dirt, hove up throughout a period of nine months, a failure of it in Winter when it is *anxiously* looked for is a great disappointment to the miners all over the country. When mining is stopped, [Pg 68] thing else is dull and depressed. We may have some rain yet for California presents such a strange instance of change that it is hard to tell when it will come. It is this morning cloudy and has every indication of rain. Three or four weeks of even moderate rain would furnish a great deal of water—the great commodity for the miner.

There appears to be at present a general depression in business all over the country, money tight and provisions dear and labor scarce. Heavy failures happen almost daily in the Atlantic Cities. Houses which enjoyed the greatest public confidence and patronage are suspending payment, not being able to pay their liabilities by a fearful amount. Even Page and Bacon, one of the best and wealthiest banking houses in the Union, has suspended payment which, however, is more ascribed to the detention of gold shipments from California than to deficiency of funds. The main cause for all this embarrassment in the money market appears to lie in the heavy export of gold to England in exchange for English manufactures and in the extravagance of our bankers, brokers and merchant princes in the last ten years. Nothing but a stoppage in the import of foreign manufacture and a more industrious sort of living will save this country from bankruptcy. Even here, the great source of wealth for the last six years, the pressure is felt. Gold diggings [Pg 69] getting scarcer all the time and as living is almost as dear as in forty-nine and fifty when it was easier to make an ounce than it is at the present day to make a dollar—it is easy to imagine how oppressive the hard times must be. The business I am engaged in at the present yields but a very small profit for everything in the mercantile line is high in the market and as miners reap but a very scant harvest for their labor one has to sell just as low as admissible. Profits therefore are but small. Still, making a little is better than making nothing at all and as long as this can be done I intend to stop here.

March second. Again I pick up the pen to make a few notes in this diary to keep the links in the chain of events which happen in this dull life of mine. While writing these lines the cool breezes wafted from the broad Pacific stir the warm air which was throughout the day oppressive and in the hours of twilight grant comfort and ease to the inhabitants of hot climates. The weather now is already as hot as it ever gets in the middle of the Summer at home. Yes—I believe that the mercury is higher now than it ever gets there. This being only March, when they at home have still snow storms and frost, we have beautiful Spring and nature is already attired in her sprightly dress of green variegated with [Pg 70] ers of all hues and shapes. Trees assume their verdant garments and alongside of streamlets adorn the garden of nature. Oh! nature, grand and beautiful art thou! Beautiful in every scene that meets our eye—the streamlet which meanders through pleasant valleys by picturesque hills ornamented by vines, with the contented peasant gathering the grapes. Mountains with their highest peaks covered with everlasting snows meet our looks in the far off horizon and crown with sublimity the rural beauties of the hills and vales at their foot. Man himself feels stronger and of higher spirits in the Spring of the year, the purity of the air and the balmy smell which emanates from flowers, shrubs and trees exhilarate the soul and body of every animated organic being. In time all this changes to yellow as their life runs out and their vitality, their sweet smell are dried up by the tropical heat of the South to rest and gather life and nutriment anew from Mother Earth.

Man, too, undergoes this change that everything in nature is subjected to. His life compares favourably with the changes in the vegetable world. First, tender and weak he gains care and attention, strength of body and mind. In the Springtime of life, his beauty is of the noblest kind and life is constant happiness. As time rolls on his body and mind mature, he becomes wiser and abler and in this estate of manhood acts and operates for himself and fellow [Pg 71] his is the most useful part of man's career and as he grows older he loses the vigour he formerly possessed and at the end—in the Winter of his life droops down, grows weaker and weaker until finally his career is run and he has to join Mother Earth again to serve some new purpose in the organization of nature.

There is one great invention which will ever illumine the time between the Dark Ages and the present epoch. An invention which is as remarkable for its intensity of light as the Middle Ages for their impenetrable darkness and consequent superstition. This is the invention of printing by John Gutenberg of Metz in Germany in fourteen hundred and forty. By one sublime thought which struck the mind of a single man or more properly, by the divine inspiration of a single human being, benefits as great and incalculable were bestowed upon mankind as universal space itself is infinite and beyond human calculation. Before that time all learning was limited to one class—the Clergy of all countries, who had it in their power to devote time which was at their own disposal to literary pursuits, in which they had great assistance in the manuscripts of former ages, therefore enjoyed already although to a limited extent the blessings which the art of printing afterwards bestowed more universally upon the mass of mankind.

We all know now that as much as man is superior and master of all other animals, so is the intelligent [Pg 72] well informed, master of the ignorant and superstitious. The priests therefore of former ages—since they possessed knowledge above the rest of mankind were to a great extent the masters and in consequence ruled with a stronger rod than ever any monarch ruled his subject since printing and consequent knowledge became more diffused among the masses of mankind. When books, in consequence of their cheapness became plentier and the masses became possessed of the same—light began to penetrate the utter darkness which formerly reigned supreme in the mind of man and in a comparatively short period of time since the death of this inventor, the human family has made a more rapid and greater progress in science and useful knowledge than was made in all time before that great event.

March twenty-eighth, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight. Left this day Camp Secco—where I had been stopping for three years doing business, such as groceries and miners' implements. My success has been pretty good—might however have been better. Still I don't complain. Although I have not made as much as many a one has done in the same length of time, still I am satisfied.

The time while there passed dully enough with me, arising from the want of desirable company and the no [Pg 73] ence of any places of amusement. I had lots of time to myself and had I been so disposed, had I possessed different mental stamina, force, energy and perseverance, I might easily have acquired a store of useful knowledge. But it is of no use a-croaking now. The time has fled and in place of enjoying at present a cultivated mind I hardly realize ideas enough to make me sensible that I am an intelligent, animated being. And it always will be so with me. I think nature is more to blame for it than I myself. Had I been endowed with Genius great, with even the present balance of mind I think I

should have made a great man. I tried once, years ago, to obtain a lofty position in science, labored hard and long and what was the result? A machine capable of a certain amount of labor laid out for it. Nothing else. I had no thought nor ideas of my own of the least practical use. I had better then be satisfied. Although I might possess a great deal more, still I don't think that it would materially benefit my happiness here.

April twentieth, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight. This day at ten o'clock, I left the wharf of San Francisco on the steamboat *Golden Age* for the Atlantic States—for my home in old Virginia and my friends.

I came to this country on the twentieth day of August eighteen hundred and fifty-two—making the time [Pg 74] have been here, five years and eight months to a day. My success here, if not what it might have been, still yielded me a small capital—enough to start me in business most anywhere and consequently by proper management, diligence and industry, I shall be enabled to get along in this world comfortably. Had I mentally as well improved as I did my pecuniary circumstances, I should be well enough satisfied. This, however, is not the case and for this reason and this reason alone am I sorry that I ever came to California. Had I remained at home, associated as I was with men of intelligence and in a pursuit where mental effort was required I would now unquestionably be a smarter if not equally as rich a man. My mind, although naturally sterile, by proper care and pains would have been cultivated; my taste beautified; my feelings and sentiments ennobled. In short, I believe that I would have been a wiser, better, and in consequence a happier man than I am now. Still, courage, "faint heart," the future may even yet bestow on you content and happiness.

I am tracing these lines in the steerage on board the steamer, looking through a port hole onto the wide dark blue ocean of the Pacific, which is laid before my eyes in every direction to the far off horizon. How monotonous it seems to me. There are no hills nor mountains in the background of the vast rolling Pacific before me. No trees, bushes [Pg 75] of any kind; nor is there an animated being to be seen—unless once in a while a shark or whale will show themselves to our greedy eyes which long for something else than boundless waters.

There is something fearful in the fact that there is nothing between destruction and the ocean tossed mariner but some frail planks which half a dozen accidents may dislodge and send him to the deep bottom of the pitiless sea. Such is man in his wild career in pursuit of wealth and power that he will entrust his life, his all, to a frail bark which the winds may toss on rocks and breakers from which there is no salvation. These things are painfully clear to me now that there is no escape from them and though I am not absolutely afraid, still I know that there are many chances which may destroy us. Who knows—many a stout vessel with passengers ever as sanguine of a safe voyage left a safe haven never to reach the place of their destination. This may be our—yes, my—fate. Still I will hope for the best. Hope that our voyage across the treacherous ocean may be a safe one and carry us to a safe Port at Panama. We have thus far enjoyed fine weather, a calm sea, and I have enjoyed thus far tolerable good health.

Distance from San Francisco to Panama, three thousand, two hundred and sixty-two miles.

Saturday, April twenty-fifth. The coast was out of sight since the second morning and reappeared this [Pg 76] morning, running for miles almost level then suddenly turning abruptly into craggy headlands, standing out grotesque in the background of the otherwise monotonous ocean. And this is certainly a great relief after gazing day after day upon the same far extending, swaying, rippling ocean, with nothing for the eye after exhausting the utmost power of vision to rest on, but a hazy horizon touching the blue expanse of waters.

The weather has been, up to this, clear and pleasant, perhaps a little cold at first but now really very charming. The sea has been tolerably quiet and smooth so we have had but little sickness on board—less than I expected to see. How old I am getting though. While writing this, my feet pain me which has been the case for the last four months. Also my teeth which are mostly decayed and even my energies are dormant. I, who once set myself the great task of studying a profession—now can hardly even concentrate enough thought to note down a few sensible ideas. Yes, I am surely grown old very fast in the last three years. I can feel both in mind and body. The latter is invariably inclined to indolence. The former to downright dormancy. Oh, could I regain the play of my imagination, the buoyancy of thought which I once possessed; could I possess myself of ambition, pride, to stimulate me, all yet might be right and it is to have [Pg 77] former forced upon me by circumstances more or less that I reseek the scenes of my former home, hoping that in the wild and exciting race there for wealth and position I too may be roused enough to take a share.

April twenty-sixth. We passed Cape St. Lucas on the night of the twenty-fourth and ran yesterday across the mouth of the Gulf of California which I believe is here one hundred and sixty miles wide. While doing so we lost sight of the coast which, however, reappeared this morning at daylight. The coast here presents a succession of ridges rising higher back towards the land—the whole, however, broken up into abrupt peaks rising from four to five hundred feet above the sea level. Occasionally a high cliff stands boldly out into the sea—its foot washed by the eternal breakers. The whole of them are covered with a short low shrubbery which is now colored in a reddish dress being in blossom at present.

After running down the coast about fifty miles, we doubled a headland and turned into a short bay at the East side of which is the village of Mansenilla inhabited by Mexicans who under supervision of Government officers carry on silver mining here. The appearance of everything here, the woods, houses and men would indicate that we are in a warmer climate, if the weather did not. The people themselves wear clothing, as may be judged by its scantiness, to [Pg 78] their nakedness rather than for protection against the climate. Their color is slightly coppery, almost as much so as our California Indians. Their houses too are more built as a shelter from the tropical sun than against the rigours of a cold country, they being the roughest, simplest kind of huts built out of timber and brush. We lay here about an hour during which time we sent two passengers ashore in one of our boats, while a number of natives in dugouts swarmed around the vessel, called out, I presume, more on account of the novelty of our presence than any other notion.

We are now on our onward voyage, standing out to sea while the coast range of mountains is still at our left. Yesterday being Sunday and having several soul savers on board we had of course preaching—and enough of it—as much as three times. I think were we all put through the same task every day for the next three months it would either make us the most orthodox Christians or else disgusted with Christianity. The whole of them, the sermons, amounted to the same old rigmarole,—believe and be saved—disbelieve and you are doomed to hell and everlasting punishment.

We arrived at Acapulco this day, the twenty-eighth of April. This is a Spanish town, situated on one of the best

harbors on the Pacific Coast. It forms a perfect elbow in shape and is therefore perfectly water locked a [Pg 79] that account offers safe mooring to vessels. How strange the contrast between a Spanish and an American town—the latter enjoying all the health and vigor and activity of youth, progress. In the former it is an eternal stand still, no activity of any kind, no display of the least spirit or energy is to be met with here. Action, perpetual action, is the characteristic of the American. The want of all life, of the least healthy action so necessary to the existence of a people is to be found in Mexico. They, the people, are lazy, indolent by nature. All they ever strive for is to acquire enough of the simplest necessities of life and they are satisfied if not happy. Toil is unknown to them and leisure is their *status quo*. They show this fact in everything—in the way they dress, wearing nothing but just enough to cover their nakedness. Their homes are builded of mud, covered with old fashioned tiles or with straw, and present more the appearance of fortified places than of dwellings. They (the houses) most all have piazzas where the greater portion of the inhabitants pass—in smoking and talking and sleeping—their days, yes, the greater portion of their life. The streets are made of sandstone slabs or else hewn in the same as it lies. As there is never hardly any rain here, and the town being bui [Pg 80] solid sandstone foundations, they are of course perfectly clean which, as already intimated, is owing more to the nature of the site than to the cleanliness and industry of the people.

The town is situated on the North West side of the Bay and consists of several streets filled up by mud houses as already stated. North from the town, about one-half mile distant, lies the fort on a slight elevation sloping on the East toward the sea. The site is a very favourable one as it can command the harbor with its guns, having enough of the latter to sink any vessel which may try to force its entrance in time of war. The fort itself is builded in the shape of a square, with several embattlements. Its walls rise about thirty feet from the bottom of the trench which is of a depth of about ten feet and surrounds the whole. The entrance is afforded by a drawbridge through a door fronting the town. The soldiers are but a sorry set and I doubt, very little calculated to do war time service. I judge their bravery by the general character of the Mexican people—which I know in the main to be cowardly. I presume the soldiers—which are by the by, the most ragged set I have ever seen, having neither uniform nor even shoes, marching and countermarching like a lot of beggars on the street with no military rearing whatever—will be the same. If I am allowed to judge Mexico by this town of Acapulco—which has all the advantage of a most favoured situation as seaport and in cons [Pg 81] ice is well fitted for commerce, it is certainly a most neglected country and with the resources it possesses both in mineral and agricultural wealth it cannot be doubted but what it would soon in the hands of our people be one of the richest as well as loveliest countries in the world. This, however, seems to be its ultimate fate. Years may intervene but it must most surely eventually give way to the rapid strides of an onward moving civilization. When that day will come—that Mexico shall add another star to our illustrious country—is not for me to say. I hope, however, for the sake of the Mexican people themselves and for the sake of the numerous resources the country offers that it may soon come.

We left Acapulco Bay about five o'clock this afternoon and stood out to sea. We are now within three days of Panama, in fact nearer, but it will take three days to make it.

This is the first day of May. Lovely May has come around once more and Spring with its fine bracing breezes has set in. We are even now within ten degrees of the Equator, enjoying the benefit of it in the Trades which blow from the South East. The next morning after we left Acapulco, I believe, we found ourselves in the Gulf of Tehuantepeck which was tolerable rough. I was taken sea-sick, that most terrible of all sicknesses. After three days' suffering, I h [Pg 82] otten better. Still, even now I feel the sensation of it in my throat. Still, I think that I have seen the worst of it. If so, I shall not lament it, as I think it will secure me good health for a while.

Although in the tropics, we have enjoyed till now cool and extremely pleasant weather with beautiful star and moonlight nights and the bright expanse of ocean round us, with our vessel like a thing of life moving along upon its bosom, and in the dark, at twilight before the moon is up, what splendid sight is revealed to the traveller of the sea. I mean the bright brilliant sparks and flashes which emit from the spraying sheets which our cutwater sends off at both sides of our vessel—caused by friction upon the phosphorescent matter contained in the water of the ocean.

May second. This morning the land, consisting of detached ranges of mountains, again came in sight, and now, five o'clock P.M. we are abreast of an island to the left. This isle is very heavily timbered; the whole of it is a mountain of about one hundred and fifty feet high with a small point of level country at the Eastern end of it.

May third. We came up to another island this morning, thickly covered with timber and vegetation of tropical growth. We kept now in sight of land all the time, numbers of islands being to our left and towards evening the Bay [Pg 83] hama came in sight. This Bay is of large dimensions and very secure, being well sheltered by islands and the main coast. We passed Tobanga Island where the W. S. M. Company has a station where they repair and clean their vessels when at Panama. We entered the Bay and dropped anchor twenty minutes past seven o'clock A.M. The next morning at four we took the ferry boat for the wharfs, arrived there, took the cars across the Isthmus of Darien to Aspinwall on the Gulf of Mexico. All the section of country we crossed over on the cars offered a most beautiful sight. It is more or less mountainous and covered with one emerald sheet of thick and almost impenetrable highly perfumed tropical vegetation. I could not discover any trees nor plants of the moderate zones—all being the products of the tropics. This country, but for the extreme heat and the malaria it must necessarily create from its numerous swamps, would be almost a Paradise to live in. If Americans should ever possess it and be able to live there, they in truth will make it indeed what it seems intended for by nature—one of the loveliest spots the world knows. Aspinwall is a new place and traces its origin to the discovery of the gold mines in California and the subsequent travel across the Isthmus. It is principally inhabited by natives of Central America, some French and some Americans. The latter, however, [Pg 84] the only influential portion of the community. They have made it and named it what it is this day. They own the railroad and a large depot three hundred by one hundred feet, fire proof, and a very commodious dock for the handling of the mail steamers and offices to carry on their business.

We left the docks of Aspinwall about four o'clock. The trip across the Isthmus occupied about five hours, so that we got to Aspinwall about twelve and had from then till four at the latter place.

May fifth. *The Star of the West*, the boat I am now on, is not near as large nor as good a boat as the steamer on the other side. Still, if she only brings us safe to New York I shall be satisfied well enough. I perceive by the latest New York news that yellow fever broke out on the U. S. S. frigate *Susquehanna* and at the Central American Port of St. James. If I dread anything, I dread that and I hope to God it will not appear on board of this bark. If it should be doomed to that,

God only knows what its effect might be. I must hope for the best. We are only about a week's sail from New York. Still, how uncertain is our arrival there considering the numerous accidents which we are apt to encounter, which may finish our existence before we once more set our feet on blessed Mother Earth.

Distance across the Isthmus from Panama to Aspinwall on Navy Bay (Colon) forty-five miles. Distance to [\[Pg 85\]](#) York one thousand one hundred miles.

Another bright day has risen over the water and a slight breeze stiffens our sails, carrying us homewards. I am still in bad health, my stomach being completely deranged and in consequence can't enjoy the trip as well as I otherwise might were I in good health.

The steamboat *New Grenada* which started one hour before us from Aspinwall has been more or less in sight since we left that Port and now is about ten miles astern of us. Last evening about five o'clock P.M. we passed the island of Providence to our right. This Island like all the rest I have seen on this trip is mountainous and thickly timbered. As there were fires on the coast I presume it must be inhabited and there are undoubtedly spots on it under cultivation. All the country in these lower latitudes is very fertile, producing luxurious growths of most all the tropical fruits.

Providence is about two hundred and forty miles North East of North from Aspinwall. This being the course we have steered since we left there. Now we are steering due North.

May ninth. In the evening of the seventh we came in sight of the lighthouse of Saint Antoine—the S. W. Cape of Cuba. This night and the next day, the eighth, we cruised along side of Cuba for some three hundred miles. We can [\[Pg 86\]](#) oseite to Havana about five o'clock on the eighth. Havana is builded close to the shore, seemingly resting upon the water. The ground back of it is higher and portions of the town are builded there. The main city, however, is at the water's edge. Morro Castle, the fort at the Harbor, is at the North East part of the City. We sailed within about five miles of the City. The above were all the points I could scan at this distance. Having struck the Gulf Stream, the sea became rougher and I, in consequence, sick again and feel miserable while scribbling this. I have the more reason to wish myself safe on shore at New York, having ascertained to-day the fact of the unseaworthiness of our boat. The Florida reefs—keys—came in sight this forenoon and are still in sight. They are low lands, or rather are elevated reefs, thinly timbered and dreaded, on account of the reefs and rocks in the neighborhood, by the mariner.

We arrived on the night of Wednesday, May twelfth, in sight of the Long Island and Sandy Hook Lights and after having taken on a Pilot we entered Sandy Hook and passing into New York Harbor arrived at the city about five o'clock in the morning of the thirteenth of May.

Here then I am in New York—the Empire City of America—the greatest commercial port in the American Continent and the World. Its tonnage is larger than that of any other Port city I believe in the World. While it is connect [\[Pg 87\]](#) y the Ocean with all Foreign Countries, it is likewise so with all the important cities of the United States by railroads and steamboat conveyance.

I remained at New York till the twenty-first instant. During my stay here I visited the different theaters. The Laura Keene on Broadway was the handsomest I had ever seen in America, and what was still better, the acting was equally good and, as the building, the best I had ever the pleasure to see in this country. The Crystal Palace I saw from the outside only. The whole is built of iron. Its model is chaste and displays a good deal of art and beauty. The Palace is surrounded by an iron railing and between it and the building intervenes a beautiful green sward. East from the Palace is the reservoir of the great Croton water works which supply the whole of New York with water which is brought some twenty-five or thirty miles to this grand reservoir, built of solid masonry and occupying a large area of ground. From here the water is distributed over the whole city for drinking, culinary and manufacturing purposes. Another place of great celebrity, Barnum's Museum, of American wide fame, was also visited by me. Here are stored in rich profusion treasures of the animal world both of land and sea. Also a good gathering of antiquities of almost all port [\[Pg 88\]](#) f the world, and several statues of fame and renown. Among them are the wax models of the Emperor of Russia, Joseph of Austria, Napoleon III and Queen Victoria of England, and last but not least Kossuth and Napoleon Bonaparte and the notorious Mrs. Cunningham in whose eyes passion and crime but great beauty is also written. Among the persons of higher renown is Mary the Mother of Jesus. Animals of all kinds and species are amassed here in great variety too numerous to mention. They are mostly stuffed except numerous fresh and salt water fishes which are kept alive here enjoying their native element in large tanks. The large boa constrictor and another large snake are also kept living here by means of artificial heat supplied them. Among the antiques are coins of centuries long since passed. American state documents of the last century, flags and arms of the Revolutionary and Indian wars. Among the latter a number of tomahawks, spears, battleaxes, etc. Curiosities from China and Japan are also here in this great *multum in parvo*. Also a large metallurgical collection with minerals of all kinds. A Panorama with representation of many beautiful scenes from Italy, France and Austria is found here. The pictures of the celebrated Generals and Statesmen of American History as those of celebrated men and women of the present day adorn its walls. The exposition in this Museum is so [\[Pg 89\]](#) l and my survey of its treasures was so short and superficial that I am not able to relate and specify them any plainer or with greater accuracy. I was, however, well pleased the few hours I remained there and considered that time spent to exceeding great purpose.

New York has many beautiful buildings and the Fifth Avenue is a street of palaces and in my opinion compares favourably with any street of any city in the World. Here reside the richest people in the city. None but nabobs being able to exist in the air of this moneyed American aristocracy. If the insides of these dwellings enjoy corresponding happiness with all these luxurious surroundings is not for the people to know. Still, as nothing in this world is all blessedness and sunshine, one may well suppose that too, in these grand dwellings wretchedness and heartburnings may be met. The great enterprise of New York at present upon which succeeding ages will bestow all gratitude is the building of a grand Park where the thousands of this city—the rich, the poor, the highly born and lowly may pass moments of pleasure and rest from the noise and turmoil of the city and acquire strength and cheerfulness for the hard tasks of every day life.

I left New York City on the twenty-first instant for Philadelphia—the Quaker City—where I arrived at four o'clock P.M. This, which I always supposed to be the handsomest city in America, I am sorry that I am compelled [\[Pg 90\]](#) state,

disappointed all my bright anticipation of its beauties. It is true, being considerably exhausted by much traveling and having my thirst for sight-seeing considerably abated at New York, I was not exactly in a condition to receive grand and stunning impressions. Had I arrived here first, fresh from the mountains of California instead of New York, Philadelphia might have impressed me with feelings of admiration and satiated my desire to view architectural and artistic beauties to its full. As it is—New York had the precedence in my visit and with the remembrance of its grandeur fresh upon my mind, I am obliged to admit that the City of Penn fell short in its treasures of beauty of what I hoped and wished to find. Here, however, as is universally the case, are exceptions to be met. Only had I hoped the inverted to be the case—namely that beauties might be the rule and common appearance the exception. I refer to the Institution which will for a far off future immortalize the name it bears—I mean Girard College. This is as far as I have knowledge, the handsomest and grace-fullest edifice in America. At the time of day I went to visit it, I could not get admittance and my view of it was in consequence indistinct from the walls and distance that intervened. Still, I saw enough fully to sustain the above opinion. The edifice is large in size, surrounded by a portico ornamented by Corinthian Columns of the [\[Pg 91\]](#)stest workmanship. The material which composes its grand walls is I believe, fine marble. This, the main edifice, has two additional buildings on each side—two for the male and two for the female pupils. Beautiful grounds, planted with handsome trees and flower beds intersected by gravel walks surround the buildings. The whole again is enclosed by a big wall to keep the outer world from intruding and marring the quiet and beauty within. Girard, the founder, once poor but rich in thought, energy, and perseverance, accumulated by well applied industry and diligence a princely fortune of which he the greater portion, \$800,000, bestowed upon the orphans of Philadelphia in the most generous and useful way in this, the greatest American Orphan College. He, in his will forbade the introduction of any religion for educational purposes and also, the entrance of any of its apostles within the walls. And who will blame him for this sweeping and, by many condemned as sinful, prescription? It was not the want of faith of the man in an all ruling Deity. No, but quite otherwise, his high regard for the same, which guided him in this action. Knowing as we all know of the great variety of religious communities, all differing with one another, yes, in many cases condemning one another, he thought well and justly so to keep the infant mind free of the different feuds and enmities of the different [\[Pg 92\]](#). His purpose was to give them an enlightened education, to acquaint their mind with facts, with events and their causes and effects—so that when ripened and matured into men and women free from all prejudices, they might themselves be enabled by pure and cultivated thought to form a just and enlightened opinion of their own about religion and its principles and aim and purpose. Is it not better so to have the mind of the to-man-grown boy and the mind of the girl who has reached womanhood unfettered by stubborn prejudices, perhaps with hatred against its fellow creatures, than to have it in its infancy so directed as to make it almost impossible to allow them different views and opinions from those early implanted upon the infant mind? I approve the motive and can appreciate the intelligence and foresight of the mind of its originator. Honor and blessing be to him—Girard—one of the great benefactors of the poor.

From here I continued my journey by the P. C. R. R. via Harrisburg over the Alleghenys to Pittsburg, and from there took the steamer to Wheeling the home of my brother Frederic and his family. I parted from them, New Year eighteen fifty-one and as I, in the Spring of the same year, left for California from which I have only now returned, I had not seen them since. My arrival seemed to give them great pleasure and all subsequent appearances seemed to witness [\[Pg 93\]](#) the genuineness of their display of affectionate feelings. I trust this may really be the case. That sincerity and not an un-nobler motive was at the bottom of the lavished kindness. I know the value of a *true, sincere, noble affection* and *love* so that I am always prone to suspect its genuineness when too freely and plentifully offered. I still trust it may have been real in this case. Brother Henry who resides at Sunfish, Munro Co., Ohio, I also visited for five or six days and passed the time right cheerfully whilst there. Henry is an honest soul, true and sincere, incapable of deception. Both brothers wished me to remain with them and join them in business. Their wishes, however, I saw best to decline. I am certain that by separation we can harbor more and better affection between us. Then the place and its environs did not suit my taste for a life long *Home*. Yesterday, Tuesday, the eighth of June, I bade them again farewell and took on the steamer *Courier*, my departure for Cincinnati to go from there further West in search of a home. Ho, for the West! Kind God, may ye will that I meet my anticipations and wishes. All I wish is a pleasant, yes a beautiful and healthy nook to live in, with a kind and loving wife to cheer me in the battle of life and loving children to surround and ease when once I journey the down hill of life towards ???—the grave—dissolution—the end of man? In short, I want *Love in a C* [\[Pg 94\]](#)e.

I arrived at Cincinnati on the morning of the tenth instant and took up lodgings at the Spencer House, one of the best and of course, dearest hotels in the city. This place surpassed my expectations which I had formed in regard to its industry, activity and wealth. Since my last visit here in eighteen fifty-two, the town has been greatly embellished by many beautiful buildings, both private and public. Among the latter those which deserve mention are the Custom House, and Post Office, the Court House and many beautiful churches, amongst which the Catholic Cathedral is the handsomest. Besides this, many new hotels—all of them fine houses, as also many imposing business houses have been erected of late years. The streets, at least in the main part of the town which I only ambulated, are laid out at right angles. Among those which run from the river, forming a right angle with the same, I noticed Broadway, Main, Sycamore, Walnut. These are intersected by the streets running parallel with the river numbered One, Two, Three, Four, etc. In short Cincinnati, with a population of 200,000 and still increasing, has all the appearance of a thriving, wealthy, industrial and commercial city, and fills the position of such in the United States. It is especially famous for the millions of hogs killed and packed here annually. From here, in the shape of shoulders, bacon and ham they [\[Pg 95\]](#)nt all over the United States and a large portion shipped via New Orleans to England. Opposite to Cincinnati, is New Port, Kentucky—also a thriving town. I stopped here over night and left the eleventh at twelve o'clock on the steamer *Jacob Stratton*, the first and only low pressure boat I ever saw on the Ohio, for Louisville, Kentucky. During last night it set in again raining and continued so all day—so that I had but little desire of being outside the cabin and consequently observed but little of the scenery along the river to Louisville. There are a number of thriving towns along the river—the principal of which is Madison, Indiana. The Big Miami river divides Ohio from Indiana. We lay over night at Louisville. The next morning I and my recently made acquaintance Mr. Charles N. Scram, went over the greater part of the city. Louisville belongs to Kentucky, situated on the Ohio river at the head of the celebrated falls of the Ohio. The latter are, except at high water, an obstruction to navigation to overcome which the two-mile long canal was built at enormous cost and boats go through it around the falls and strike again the Ohio below. Louisville counts a population of sixty thousand inhabitants and is of both commercial and industrial importance. It has several fine public buildings and the richness and beauty and chastity of its many private buildings bespeak at once the wealth and taste of its occ [\[Pg 96\]](#)s. Its streets are wide and it rejoices with Cincinnati in Avenues of trees now covered with the richest of foliage.

We delayed here till noon of the twelfth, when we again took the steamer *Moses McLellan* for St. Louis, Missouri. The rain still continued to fall and the Ohio river, as all the rivers throughout the country, continues to rise. They promise to cause by their overflow an incalculable amount of damage to the crops in the bottoms through which they now roll their courses with the wildest of turbulence. Last night, or rather, this morning, the rain has abated and thank God the sun once more radiates its genial beams. May it continue and its blessed warmth may yet reclaim many otherwise lost acres of grain.

It is now Sunday, twelve o'clock and we have arrived three hundred and three miles from Louisville, having still three hundred and sixteen miles to St. Louis. We shall probably get there tomorrow night. Thanks to my cursed mind, I have this last two days again been oppressed with the blues, what it will ever end in I don't know, possibly in suicide. Why was I ever made or why was I not endowed with a mind to make life desirable, pleasing and cheerful instead of the one I possess, which is incapable to create a world for itself and too dull and selfish to enjoy that of others? However [Pg 97] there is no help except—what can't be cured must be endured.

Cairo, at the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, we reached Sunday evening. The flood has desolated much of this lower country, destroying crops and homes and in fact all kinds of property it encountered in its sweeping course. Here it broke through the levee which had been builded at a cost of twelve millions of dollars and overran the whole town except a portion on the highest part of the Ohio levee. The damage is immense and general. All being sufferers by it, it is chance now whether it will ever be rebuilt. Its locality is such that it must always be at the mercy of the high floods which occur in these upper rivers periodically. They may fail some years, but will only when they do come be so much more terrible in their destruction. We doubled the point and with a strong current against us, ran up stream. All the bottom along the river was covered with water, water, presenting one bright broad sheet of water variegated with forests of trees, in many places the roofs of homes being apparent only and many being entirely under water.

We reached St. Louis Tuesday morning, the fifteenth instant. St. Louis is a stirring place, made so by its favourable location on the Mississippi river. This river connects it with the State of Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and [Pg 98]ansas, and with all the country on the lower Mississippi—principally New Orleans. This place will in a short time rival any inland town in the Union and eventually become the next largest city to New York. I stopped here almost two days, left it on the seventeenth of June for the Northern part of Missouri and Kansas. The trip up the Missouri is very tedious, the scenery being all the same all the way. Bluffs of little beauty and bottom lands covered with cottonwood. The river is very crooked and very rapid in its course. On both these accounts we made slow headway up narrow chutes, around innumerable bends, past ever so many towns and villages.

Sunday evening we got to Kansas City, Missouri. I laid over here the next day Monday, in order to see the place and find out something about its resources and prospects. While here I visited Wyandot on the North side of Kansas River, the same side as Kansas City on the Missouri. This is a very new free state settlement and although but of recent origin has many fine houses, stores and hotels. Possessing a very good site for a city with a good landing, it will be in time, when the resources of Kansas are developed, a thriving place. Kansas City is built on a bluff rising from the river bank and expensive grading was necessary to secure an area for houses. From here streets are made by excavating [Pg 99]ough the bluffs to the best part of the city which lies back of the bluffs. This addition is quite new but springing up now very fast and will become in time a large city.

I left Kansas City on Monday afternoon for Leavenworth and St. Joseph and reached the latter place on the twenty-fourth instant. I had been here in eighteen fifty-two, on my way to California. I remembered well enough its site but the town has changed very much since that time, having at least four times increased in its size and population. It is laid out in rectangular streets having on Second street an open place for the market house. There are already many fine buildings here and many more going up. Property has greatly enhanced in value on account of its unrivalled location. I stayed here several days making enquiry and gaining information as to the resources of the place and its adaptability to my business. The prospects held out to me were fair enough and I partly decided if I could not find a place suiting still better to return here and establish myself in business.

I left this town for Leavenworth, seventy miles South of St. Joseph on the Missouri River. This is in Kansas and although only three years old has already attained a size and enjoys a large and growing commerce which rivals many a town of ten times its age. It is at present the key port to Kansas Territory. Most of the business for the [Pg 100]ry is transacted here. Its location on the Missouri River secures it the connection with St. Louis and through it by the Grand Central Web of Railroads with all parts of the United States. The site for the town is good and back some distance from the river and right above the business part of the town, up the River, beautiful.

This town holds out the same inducements to me to start business here as St. Joseph. It does now and I think always will lead St. Joseph in commercial importance and the fact of being in a free State will probably turn the scale in its favor in my decision between the two places. Leavenworth City at present is yet only three years old and grown as sudden as it has, everyone putting up buildings only studying to make the least outlay practicable for present purposes, the sanitary arrangements have of consequence been neglected and this I am satisfied in my mind will be the cause of severe sickness during this and the still coming scorching heat of Summer. This fact will probably keep me off till Fall, when colder winds will purify the air from putrid exhalations.

I started on a short trip inland, to see somewhat more of the Territory than its outskirts, on the last day of June. This is certainly a lovely country to survey, bound to attract the admiration of any one in whose heart the love [Pg 101]op of human kindness is not forever dried up. A living sea is the truest picture I can give of its appearance, the whole is a vast expanse of land, undulating, shifting, like the eternal throwings of the Ocean. Here and there streams meandering along through some of its shallow curves, fringed with trees, add to the sublimity of the scene. But for me to portray this part of nature's face is a useless task. I can feel the grandeurs of it easier than to describe them.

After passing through the reservation of the Delaware, we crossed the Kansas River and arrived at Lawrence, the first town this side of Leavenworth. I arrived just in time to hear of the acquittal of Jim Lane for the murder of Jennings. After a stay of an hour during which I promenaded once or twice through the only street which makes the present town, I took the stage for Topeka, twenty-five miles distance. I had the pleasure of enjoying a right good thorough jolting, making the trip one of punishment instead of pleasure. After a long and tedious ride of nine hours, passing through

Tecompton and Tecomseh, we arrived at two o'clock in the morning of the first of July in Topeka. I came here principally to buy hides, but could not find any here. This, like all the places here is quiet and at present very dull, being in fact at the lowest stage of commercial stagnation. I shall take the stage tomorrow at two A.M. for Leavenworth City.

Transcriber's Note:

- Minor typographical errors have been corrected without note.
- Punctuation and spelling were made consistent when a predominant form was found in this book; otherwise they were not changed.
- Ambiguous hyphens at the ends of lines were retained.
- Other notes:
 - John Guttenburg changed to John Gutenberg (p. 71).
 - Fort Kerney changed to Fort Kearney (pp. 20, 23, 25).
 - Fort Bredger changed to Fort Bridger (p. 40).
 - Saint Antoin changed to Saint Antoine (p. 85).

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF WILLIAM C. LOBENSTINE,
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