

Our Notes of Travel Continued—A visit
to the Mountain Meadows.

By easy and pleasant stages we passed over the main highway from Salt Lake to Dixie, as far as Cedar City: 258 miles, tarrying briefly at Provo, Springville, Payson, Salt Creek, Fillmore (the old Capital of the Territory,) Beaver and Palowan. These latter constituting the main cities of the south, are of considerable size and all bear unmistakable evidences of thrift and prosperity. Interspersed between these are numerous other settlements of less note, in point of numbers, but any and all furnishing agreeable stopping places for the weary emigrant. At Cedar our course left the main Territorial road to the cotton country and we bore off to the south west along the highway to San Bernardino, California, via the noted Mountain Meadows. At Cedar we ascertained that there were two roads about equally lengthy, either of which, would bear us safely to our destination, viz: Meadow Valley. One of these roads bore west from Cedar, via Iron and Antelope Springs, uniting with the other at the mouth of Shoal Creek. The other traverses the mountains, and passing Little and Big "Painter" Creek settlements, passes through Mountain Meadows. Being desirous of visiting the spot of the terrible massacre in September, 1857, we chose the latter.

The "Meadows" is a most charming series of little valleys, located among the mountains. Their verdure presents an agreeable contrast to the rocky and barren scenes by which they are on all sides surrounded. As we attained the summit between Painter (more properly Panther) Creek and the Meadow Springs, the scene presented to view, was charming indeed. Around lay the high peaks of snowing mountains which had looked down, seven years ago, upon the horrid butchery which there took place, as imperturbably as the wretches who then and there bathed their hands in the innocent blood of *one hundred and eighteen* helpless emigrants. Before us lay the spot where the butchery was consummated; calmly, as a dream of childhood, slept in beauty in its robes of living green, the lovely vale. The Sun was just passing behind the western verge of the mountain, as we reined up to contemplate the scene, and while we paused upon the mountain height, bathed in the sunlight, a thunder shower passed over the lower end of the valley, and a glorious rainbow mounted up to Heaven, one point apparently resting on the apex of the rude monument piously erected a few days before, above the gathered bones of the hapless victims, while the other was lost among the clouds. That silent yet gorgeous bow, emblem of promise and future hope, seemed thus appealing to the angels above for vengeance, while the weeping cloud dropped gently down on the green graves the very tear-drops of Heaven itself. It was a sublime sight, and we paused stricken with awe at the solemn view, and breathed a prayer for the slaughtered innocents. Passing down into the meadows, we found them to be about five miles in length—northerly and southerly—by from one to two miles in breadth; the whole valley covered with Springtime verdure. The California road enters near the northern end, where are found several large springs of pure wholesome water, which runs through the canon to the north ward. At the lower end of the valley is another large spring, near which the emigrants were camped on the ill-fated day of the massacre. Between the two, perhaps half way, a gentle elevation marks the rim of the Great Basin, from either side of which the waters flow to the north or the south—the one emptying eventually into the Great Salt Lake, or sinking in the arid deserts; the other coursing on to the Colorado, and thence to the Pacific Ocean. At the lower spring, about 500 yards from the canon, the party of emigrants—numbering at least 118 souls, men, women and suckling babes—camped on the 4th of September, 1857. On the 5th they were attacked by Indians and murderous whites, and manfully withstood every assault for five days. At the end of this time, by heartless treachery,

the men were induced to lay down their arms and march out of their improvised fort, under promise of protection. They had proceeded about a mile and a half, when they were again set upon by their miscreant foes and ruthlessly slaughtered. Seventeen children, between the ages of two months and seven years, were spared, and eventually recovered by the officers of the government one year later. Thus was swept from earth, by heartless massacre, one of the richest and most numerous parties of emigrants, which ever passed through Utah.

We visited the spot of the massacre. A few days previously Capt. Price with Co M, 2d Cav. C. V., had passed through, and finding the monument erected by Gen. Johnston's command in 1858, had been torn down and strewed about far and near, the command paused two days, gathered up the scattered bones for reinterment, and erected a handsome and durable monument of cobble stones on the spot where the emigrants had been encamped and were first attacked. A description of this monument has already been published in the VEBETTE, and we trust that no ruthless vandal hand will again be permitted to disturb the sacred resting place of those who sleep beneath the rude, but appropriate sepulchre. On the eastern face of the cross which crowns the apex are inscribed these words "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay." On the reverse, "Erected by the officers and men of Co. M, 2d Cav. C. V., May 24th and 25th 1864." Throughout the southern settlements we heard much of the complicity of certain parties in this awful massacre, but we will not advert to these reports which have a general credence among the Mormon settlers themselves, who freely point out by name the guilty actors. We leave them to their own consciences, trusting that the scriptural motto emblazoned on the monumental cross, will find ample and full vindication hereafter.