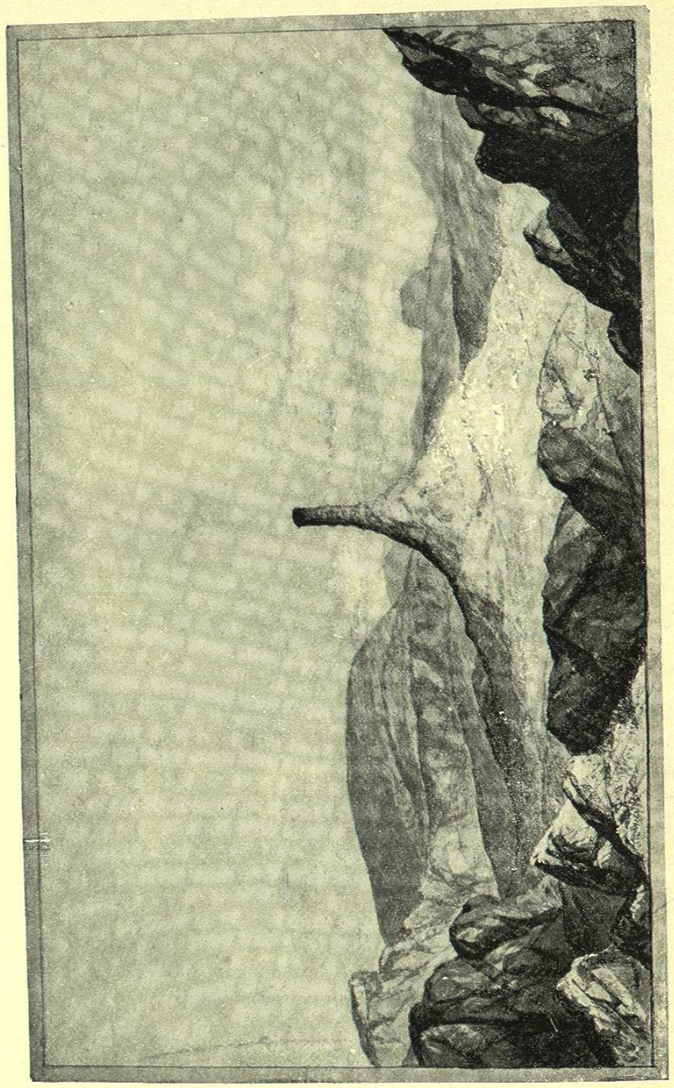
Valley. Availing himself of his intimate knowledge of the country, he had reached Laramie by an unusual route through the Black Hills, and avoided coming into contact with any of the scattered parties.

"This gentleman offered his services to accompany us so far as the head of the Sweet Water; but the absence of our leader, which was deeply regretted by us all, rendered it impossible for us to enter upon such arrangement. In a camp consisting of men whose lives had been spent in this country, I expected to find every one prepared for occurrences of this nature; but, to my great surprise, I found, on the contrary, that this news had thrown them all into the greatest consternation, and on every side I heard only one exclamation, '*Il n'y aura pas de vie pour nous.*' All the night scattered groups were assembled around the fires, smoking their pipes, and listening with the greatest eagerness to exaggerated details of Indian hostilities; and in the morning I found the camp dispirited, and agitated by a variety of conflicting opinions. A majority of the people were strongly disposed to return; but Clément Lambert, with some five or six others, professed their determination to follow Mr. Frémont to the uttermost limit of his journey. The others yielded to their remonstrances, and, somewhat ashamed of their cowardice, concluded to advance at least so far as Laramie Fork, eastward of which they were aware no danger was to be apprehended.

"Notwithstanding the confusion and excitement, we were very early on the road, as the days were extremely hot, and we were anxious to profit by the freshness of the morning. The soft marly formation, over which we were now journeying, frequently offers to the traveller views of remarkable and picturesque beauty. To several of these localities, where the winds and the rain have worked the bluffs into curious shapes, the voyageurs have given names according to some fancied resemblance. One of these, called the *Court-house*, we passed about six miles from our encampment of last night, and toward noon came in sight of the celebrated *Chimney Rock*. It looks, at this distance of about thirty miles, like what it is called—the long chimney of a steam-factory establishment, or a shot-tower in Baltimore. Nothing occurred to interrupt the quiet of the day, and we encamped on the river after a march of twenty-four miles. Buffalo had become very scarce, and but one cow had been killed, of which the meat had been cut into thin slices and hung around the carts to dry.

"*July* 10*th*.—We continued along the same fine plainly beaten road, which the smooth surface of the country afforded us for a distance of six hundred and thirty miles, from the frontiers of Missouri to the Laramie Fork. In the course of the day we met some whites, who were following along in the train of Mr. Bridger; and, after a day's journey of twenty-four miles, encamped about sunset at the Chimney Rock, of which



CHIMNEY ROCK.

the accompanying sketch will render any description unnecessary. It consists of marl and earthy limestone, and the weather is rapidly diminishing its height, which is now not more than two hundred feet above the river. Travellers who visited it some years since placed its height at upward of five hundred feet.

"*July 11th.*—The valley of the North Fork is of a variable breadth, from one to four, and sometimes six miles. Fifteen miles from the Chimney Rock we reached one of those places where the river strikes the bluffs, and forces the road to make a considerable circuit over the uplands. This presented an escarpment on the river of about nine hundred yards in length, and is familiarly known as Scott's Bluffs. We had made a journey of thirty miles before we again struck the river, at a place where some scanty grass afforded an insufficient pasturage to our animals. About twenty miles from the Chimney Rock we had found a very beautiful spring of excellent and cold water; but it was in such a deep ravine, and so small, that the animals could not profit by it, and we therefore halted only a few minutes, and found a resting-place ten miles farther on. The plain between Scott's Bluffs and Chimney Rock was almost entirely covered with drift-wood, consisting principally of cedar, which, we were informed, had been supplied from the Black Hills, in a flood five or six years since.

"*July 12th.*—Nine miles from our encampment of yesterday we crossed Horse Creek, a shallow stream of clear water, about seventy yards wide, falling into the Platte on the right bank. It was lightly timbered, and great quantities of drift-wood were piled up on the banks, appearing to be supplied by the creek from above. After a journey of twenty-six miles, we encamped on a rich bottom which afforded fine grass to our animals. Buffalo have entirely disappeared and we live now upon the dried meat, which is exceedingly poor food. The marl and earthy limestone which constituted the formation for several days past had changed during the day into a compact white or grayish-white limestone, sometimes containing hornstone; and at the place of our encampment this evening some strata in the river-hills cropped out to the height of thirty or forty feet, consisting of a fine-grained granitic sandstone, one of the strata closely resembling gneiss.

"*July 13th.*—To-day, about four o'clock, we reached Fort Laramie, where we were cordially received; we pitched our camp a little above the fort, on the bank of Laramie River, in which the pure and clear water of the mountain-stream looked refreshingly cool, and made a pleasant contrast to the muddy, yellow waters of the Platte."

I walked up to visit our friends at the fort, which is a quadrangular structure, built of clay, after the fashion of the Mexicans, who are gener-

ally employed in building them. The walls are about fifteen feet high, surmounted with a wooden palisade, and form a portion of ranges of houses which entirely surround a yard of about one hundred and thirty feet square. Every apartment has its door and window—all, of course, opening on the inside. There are two entrances, opposite each other and midway the wall, one of which is a large and public entrance, the other smaller and more private—a sort of postern gate. Over the great entrance is a square tower with loop-holes, and, like the rest of the work, built of earth. At two of the angles, and diagonally opposite each other, are large square bastions, so arranged as to sweep the four faces of the walls.

This post belongs to the American Fur Company, and, at the time of our visit, was in charge of Mr. Boudeau. Two of the company's clerks, Messrs. Galpin and Kellogg, were with him, and he had in the fort about sixteen men. As usual, these had found wives among the Indian squaws; and, with the usual accompaniment of children, the place had quite a populous appearance. It is hardly necessary to say that the object of the establishment is trade with the neighboring tribes, who, in the course of the year, generally make two or three visits to the fort. In addition to this, traders, with a small outfit, are constantly kept among them. The articles of trade consist, on the one side, almost entirely of buffalo-robes; and, on the other, of blankets, calicoes, guns, powder, and lead, with such cheap ornaments as glass-beads, looking-glasses, rings, vermilion for painting, tobacco, and principally, and in spite of the prohibition, of spirits, brought into the country in the form of alcohol and diluted with water before sold.

While mentioning this fact, it is but justice to the American Fur Company to state that, throughout the country, I have always found them strenuously opposed to the introduction of spirituous liquors. But, in the present state of things, when the country is supplied with alcohol, when a keg of it will purchase from an Indian everything he possesses—his furs, his lodge, his horses, and even his wife and children—and when any vagabond who has money enough to purchase a mule can go into a village and trade against them successfully, without withdrawing entirely from the trade it is impossible for them to discontinue its use. In their opposition to this practice the company is sustained, not only by their obligation to the laws of the country and the welfare of the Indians, but clearly, also, on grounds of policy; for, with heavy and expensive outfits, they contend at manifestly great disadvantage against the numerous independent and unlicensed traders who enter the country from various avenues, from the United States and from Mexico, having no other stock in trade than some kegs of liquor, which they sell at the modest price of thirty-six dollars the gallon. The difference between the regular trader and the *coureur des bois* (as the French call the itinerant or peddling traders), with respect to

the sale of spirits, is here, as it always has been, fixed and permanent, and growing out of the nature of their trade. The regular trader looks ahead, and has an interest in the preservation of the Indians and in the regular pursuit of their business, and the preservation of their arms, horses, and everything necessary to their future and permanent success in hunting; the *coureur des bois* has no permanent interest, and gets what he can and for what he can, from every Indian he meets even at the risk of disabling him from doing anything more at hunting.

The fort had a very cool and clean appearance. The great entrance in which I found the gentlemen assembled, and which was floored, and about fifteen feet long, made a pleasant, shaded seat, through which the breeze swept constantly; for this country is famous for high winds. In the course of conversation I learned the following particulars, which will explain the condition of the country.

For several years the Cheyennes and Sioux had gradually become more and more hostile to the whites, and in the latter part of August, 1841, had had a rather severe engagement with a party of sixty men under the command of Mr. Frapp, of St. Louis. The Indians lost eight or ten warriors, and the whites had their leader and four men killed. This fight took place on the waters of Snake River; and it was this party, on their return under Mr. Bridger, which had spread so much alarm among my people. In the course of the spring, two other small parties had been cut off by the Sioux —one on their return from the Crow nation, and the other among the Black Hills. The emigrants to Oregon and Mr. Bridger's party met here, a few days before our arrival. Division and misunderstandings had grown up among the emigrants; they were already somewhat disheartened by the fatigue of their long and wearisome journey, and the feet of their cattle had become so much worn as to be scarcely able to travel. In this situation they were not likely to find encouragement in the hostile attitude of the Indians, and the new and unexpected difficulties which sprang up before them. They were told that the country was entirely swept of grass, and that few or no buffalo were to be found on their line of route; and, with their weakened animals, it would be impossible for them to transport their heavy wagons over the mountain.

Under these circumstances, they disposed of their wagons and cattle at the forts; selling them at the prices they had paid in the States, and taking in exchange coffee and sugar at one dollar a pound and miserable worn-out horses which died before they reached the mountains. Mr. Boudeau informed me that he had purchased thirty, and the lower fort eighty, head of fine cattle, some of them of the Durham breed.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, whose name and high reputation are familiarto all who interest themselves in the history of this country, had reached Laramie in

company with Mr. Bridger; and the emigrants were fortunate enough to obtain his services to guide them as far as the British post of Fort Hall, about two hundred and fifty miles beyond the South Pass of the mountains. They had started for this post on July 4th, and, immediately after their departure, a war party of three hundred and fifty braves set out upon their trail. As their principal chief or partisan had lost some relations in the recent fight, and had sworn to kill the first whites on his path, it was supposed that their intention was to attack the party should a favorable opportunity offer; or, if they were foiled in their principal object by the vigilance of Mr. Fitzpatrick, content themselves with stealing horses and cutting off stragglers.

These had been gone but a few days previous to our arrival.

The effect of the engagement with Mr. Frapp had been greatly to irritate the hostile spirit of the savages; and immediately subsequent to that event the Gros Ventre Indians had united with the Oglallahs and Cheyennes, and taken the field in great force—so far as I could ascertain, to the amount of eight hundred lodges. Their object was to make an attack on a camp of Snake and Crow Indians and a body of about one hundred whites, who had made a rendezvous somewhere in the Green River Valley or on the Sweet Water. After spending some time in buffalo-hunting in the neighborhood of the Medicine Bow Mountain, they were to cross over to the Green River waters, and return to Laramie by way of the South Pass and the Sweet Water Valley. According to the calculation of the Indians, Mr. Boudeau informed me they were somewhere near the head of the Sweet Water.

I subsequently learned that the party led by Mr. Fitzpatrick were overtaken by their pursuers near Rock Independence, in the valley of the Sweet Water; but his skill and resolution saved them from surprise, and, small as his force was, they did not venture to attack him openly. Here they lost one of their party by an accident, and, continuing up the valley, they came suddenly upon the large village. From these they met with a doubtful reception. Long residence and familiar acquaintance had given to Mr. Fitzpatrick great personal influence among them, and a portion of them were disposed to let him pass quietly; but by far the greater number were inclined to hostile measures, and the chiefs spent the whole of one night, during which they kept the little party in the midst of them, in council, debating the question of attacking them the next day; but the influence of "The Broken Hand," as they called Mr. Fitzpatrick (one of his hands having been shattered by the bursting of a gun), at length prevailed, and obtained for them an unmolested passage; but they sternly assured him that this path was no longer open, and that any party of whites which should hereafter be found upon it would meet with certain destruction.

From all that I have been able to learn, I have no doubt that the emigrants owe their lives to Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Thus it would appear that the country was swarming with scattered war parties; and when I heard, during the day, the various contradictory and exaggerated rumors which were incessantly repeated to them, I was not surprised that so much alarm prevailed among my men. Carson, one of the best and most experienced mountaineers, fully supported the opinion given by Bridger of the dangerous state of the country, and openly expressed his conviction that we could not escape without some sharp encounters with the Indians. In addition to this, he made his will; and among the circumstances which were constantly occurring to increase their alarm, this was the most unfortunate; and I found that a number of my party had become so much intimidated that they had requested to be discharged at this place. I dined to-day at Fort Platte, which has been mentioned as situated at the junction of Laramie River with the Nebraska. Here I heard a confirmation of the statements given above. The party of warriors which had started a few days since on the trail of the emigrants was expected back in fourteen days, to join the village with which their families and the old men had remained. The arrival of the latter was hourly expected; and some Indians have just come in who had left them on the Laramie Fork, about twenty miles above. Mr. Bissonette, one of the traders belonging to Fort Platte, urged the propriety of taking with me an interpreter and two or three old men of the village, in which case he thought there would be little or no hazard in encountering any of the war parties. The principal danger was in being attacked before they should know who we were.

These Indians had a confused idea of the numbers and power of our people, and dreaded to bring upon themselves the military force of the United States. Mr. Bissonette who spoke the language fluently, offered his services to accompany me so far as the Red Buttes. He was desirous to join the large party on its return, for purposes of trade, and it would suit his views, as well as my own, to go with us to the Buttes; beyond which point it would be impossible to prevail on a Sioux to venture, on account of their fear of the Crows. From Fort Laramie to the Red Buttes, by the ordinary road, is one hundred and thirty-five miles; and, though only on the threshold of danger, it seemed better to secure the services of an interpreter for the partial distance than to have none at all.

So far as frequent interruption from the Indians would allow, we occupied ourselves in making some astronomical calculations and bringing up the general map to this stage of our journey; but the tent was generally occupied by a succession of our ceremonious visitors. Some came for presents, and others for information of our object in coming to the country;

now and then one would dart up to the tent on horseback, jerk the trappings from his horse, and stand silently at the door, holding him by the halter, signifying his desire to trade him. Occasionally a savage would stalk in with an invitation to a feast of honor—a dog-feast—and deliberately sit down and wait quietly until I was ready to accompany him. I went to one; the women and children were sitting outside the lodge, and we took our seats on buffalo-robes spread around. The dog was in a large pot over the fire, in the middle of the lodge, and immediately on our arrival was dished up in large wooden bowls, one of which was handed to each. The flesh appeared very glutinous, with something of the flavor and appearance of mutton. Feeling something move behind me, I looked round and found that I had taken my seat among a litter of fat young puppies. Had I been nice in such matters the prejudices of civilization might have interfered with my tranquillity; but, fortunately, I am not of delicate nerves, and continued quietly to empty my platter.

The weather was cloudy at evening, with a moderate south wind, and the thermometer, at six o'clock, 85°. I was disappointed in my hope of obtaining an observation of an occultation which took place about midnight. The moon brought with her heavy banks of clouds, through which she scarcely made her appearance during the night.

The morning of the 18th was cloudy and calm, the thermometer at six o'clock at 64°. About nine, with a moderate wind from the west, a storm of rain came on, accompanied by sharp thunder and lightning, which lasted about an hour. During the day the expected village arrived, consisting principally of old men, women, and children. They had a considerable number of horses, and large troops of dogs. Their lodges were pitched near the fort, and our camp was constantly crowded with Indians, of all sizes, from morning until night, at which time some of the soldiers generally came to drive them all off to the village. My tent was the only place which they respected. Here only came the chiefs and men of distinction, and generally one of them remained to drive away the women and children. The numerous strange instruments, applied to still stranger uses, excited awe and admiration among them, and those which I used in talking with the sun and stars they looked upon with especial reverence as mysterious things of "great medicine." Of the three barometers which I had brought with me thus far successfully, I found that two were out of order, and spent the greater part of the 19th in repairing them—an operation of no small difficulty in the midst of the incessant interruptions to which I was subjected. We had the misfortune to break here a large thermometer, graduated to show fifths of a degree, which I used to ascertain the temperature of boiling water, and with which I had promised myself some interesting experiments in the mountains. We had but one

remaining on which the graduation extended sufficiently high; and this was too small for exact observations. During our stay here the men had been engaged in making numerous repairs, arranging pack-saddles, and otherwise preparing for the chances of a rough road and mountain travel. All things of this nature being ready, I gathered them around me in the evening, and told them that "I had determined to proceed the next day. They were all well armed. I had engaged the services of Mr. Bissonette as interpreter, and had taken, in the circumstances, every possible means to insure our safety. In the rumors we had heard I believed there was much exaggeration, and then they were men accustomed to this kind of life and to the country; and that these were the dangers of every-day occurrence, and to be expected in the ordinary course of their service. They had heard of the unsettled condition of the country before leaving St. Louis, and therefore could not make it a reason for breaking their engagements. Still, I was unwilling to take with me, on a service of some certain danger, men on whom I could not rely; and as I had understood that there were among them some who were disposed to cowardice, and anxious to return, they had but to come forward at once, and state their desire, and they would be discharged with the amount due to them for the time they had served." To their honor be it said, there was but one among them who had the face to come forward and avail himself of the permission. I asked him some few questions, in order to expose him to the ridicule of the men, and let him go. The day after our departure he engaged himself to one of the forts, and set off with a party for the Upper Missouri. I did not think that the situation of the country justified me in taking our young companions, Messrs. Brant and Benton, along with us. In case of misfortune it would have been thought, at the least, an act of great imprudence, and therefore, though reluctantly, I determined to leave them. Randolph had been the life of the camp, and the *petit garçon* was much regretted by the men, to whom his buoyant spirits had afforded great amusement. They all, however, agreed in the propriety of leaving him at the fort, because, as they said, he might cost the lives of some of the men in a fight with the Indians.

July 21st.—A portion of our baggage, with our field-notes and observations, and several instruments, were left at the fort. One of the gentlemen, Mr. Galpin, took charge of a barometer, which he engaged to observe during my absence; and I intrusted to Randolph, by way of occupation, the regular winding up of two of my chronometers, which were among the instruments left. Our observations showed that the chronometer which I retained for the continuation of our voyage had preserved its rate in a most satisfactory manner. As deduced from it, the longitude of Fort Laramie is $7^h.\ 01'\ 21''$, and from lunar distance $7^h.\ 01'\ 29''$; giving for the