The flimsiness of this excuse for breaking up the expedition after it had been planned and ordered and in movement, was so apparent to Mrs. Frémont, as also was the true reason for it, that she did not hesitate to suppress the order, and write me the letter which caused me to make an immediate start. She did not communicate this proceeding to Colonel Abert until I was far beyond the reach of recall. Mr. Benton was not in St. Louis, and she took council with no one. She acted entirely on her own knowledge, which was full, concerning the expedition, and existing reasons for opposing it.

I never knew where the order originated. It came through Colonel Abert. He was a quiet man, not likely to disturb an expedition gotten up, apparently, under his own direction and, so far as he knew, originating with himself. It was not probable that I would have been recalled from the Missouri frontier to Washington, fifteen hundred miles of water and stage-coach travelling, to explain why I had taken an arm that simply served to increase the means of defence for a small party very certain to encounter Indian hostility, and which involved very trifling expense.

On his return to St. Louis Mr. Benton approved Mrs. Frémont's action, and so wrote to Washington, at the same time asking an explanation, but there the subject rested.

I mention it here to show the compliance of the administration with the English situation in Oregon.

CHAPTER VI.

My Second Expedition—Personnel of Party—Osages make a Charge—Ceremonious Arapahoes—Prairie-dog Village—Kit joins us again—Godey Engaged—Yampah River—An Attack by Arapahoes—Preuss objects to Kooyah—Our Rubber Boat.

My party consisted principally of Creole and Canadian French, and Americans, amounting in all to thirty-nine men; among whom will be recognized several of those who were with me in my first expedition, and who have been favorably brought to notice. Mr. Thomas Fitzpatrick, whom many years of hardship and exposure in the Western territories had rendered familiar with a portion of the country it was designed to explore, had been selected as our guide; and Mr. Charles Preuss, who had been my assistant in the previous journey, was again associated with me in the same capacity on the present expedition. Mr. Theodore Talbot, of Washington City, had been attached to the party, with a view to advancement in his profession; and at St. Louis I had been joined by Mr. Frederick Dwight, a gentleman of Springfield, Mass., who availed himself of our overland journey to visit the Sandwich Islands and China, by way of Fort Vancouver.

The men engaged for the service were: Alexis Ayot, François Badeau, Oliver Beaulieu, Baptiste Bernier, John A. Campbell, John G. Campbell, Manuel Chapman, Ransom Clark, Philibert Courteau, Michel Crélis, William Creuss, Clinton Deforest, Baptiste Derosier, Basil Lajeunesse, François Lajeunesse, Henry Lee, Louis Ménard, Louis Montreuil, Samuel Neil, Alexis Pera, François Pera, James Power, Raphael Proue, Oscar Sarpy, Baptiste Tabeau, Charles Taplin, Baptiste Tesson, Auguste Vasquez, Joseph Verrot, Patrick White, Tiery Wright, and Louis Zindel. Two Delaware Indians—a fine-looking old man and his son—were engaged to accompany the expedition as hunters, through the kindness of Major Cummins, the excellent Indian Agent.

The party was armed generally with Hall's carbines, which, with a brass twelve-pound howitzer, had been furnished to me by Colonel Kearny. Three men were specially detailed for the management of this piece, under

the charge of Zindel, who had been nineteen years a non-commissioned officer of artillery in the Prussian army, and regularly instructed in the duties of his profession. The camp-equipage and provisions were transported in twelve carts, drawn each by two mules; and a light covered wagon, mounted on good springs, had been provided for the safer carriage of the instruments. These were: One refracting telescope, by Frauenhofer; one reflecting circle, by Gambey; two sextants, by Troughton; one pocket chronometer, No. 837, by Goffe, Falmouth; one pocket chronometer, No. 739, by Brockbank; one syphon barometer, by Bunten, Paris; one cistern barometer, by Frye & Shaw, New York; six thermometers, and a number of small compasses.

To make the exploration as useful as possible, I determined, in conformity to my general instructions, to vary the route to the Rocky Mountains from that followed in the year 1842. The route then was up the Valley of the Great Platte River to the South Pass, in north latitude 42°; the route now determined on was up the Valley of the Kansas River and to the head of the Arkansas, and to some pass in the mountains, if any could be found, at the sources of that river.

By making this deviation from the former route, the problem of a new road to Oregon and California, in a climate more genial, might be solved; and a better knowledge obtained of an important river, and the country it drained; while the great object of the expedition would find its point of commencement at the termination of the former, which was at that great gate in the ridge of the Rocky Mountains called the South Pass.

Resuming our journey on the 31st, after the delay of a day to complete our equipment and furnish ourselves with some of the comforts of civilized life, we encamped in the evening at Elm Grove, in company with several emigrant wagons, constituting a party which was proceeding to Upper California under the direction of Mr. J. B. Childs, of Missouri. The wagons were variously freighted with goods, furniture, and farming utensils, containing among other things an entire set of machinery for a mill which Mr. Childs designed erecting on the waters of the Sacramento River, emptying into the Bay of San Francisco.

We were joined here by Mr. William Gilpin, of Missouri, who, intending this year to visit the settlements in Oregon, had been invited to accompany us, and proved a useful and agreeable addition to the party. From this encampment, our route until June 3d was nearly the same as that described to you in 1842. Trains of wagons were almost constantly in sight, giving to the road a populous and animated appearance, although the greater portion of the emigrants were collected at the crossing, or already on their march beyond the Kansas River.

Leaving at the ford the usual emigrant road to the mountains, we continued our route along the southern side of the Kansas, where we found the country much more broken than on the northern side of the river, and where our progress was much delayed by the numerous small streams, which obliged us to make frequent bridges. On the morning of the 4th we crossed a handsome stream, called by the Indians Otter Creek, about one hundred and thirty feet wide, where a flat stratum of limestone, which forms the bed, made an excellent ford. We met here a small party of Kansas and Delaware Indians, the latter returning from a hunting and trapping expedition on the upper waters of the river; and on the heights above were five or six Kansas women, engaged in digging prairie potatoes (*Psoralea esculenta*). On the afternoon of the 6th, while busily engaged in crossing a wooded stream, we were thrown into a little confusion by the sudden arrival of Maxwell, who entered the camp at full speed at the head of a war party of Osage Indians, with gay red blankets, and heads shaved to the scalp-lock. They had run him a distance of about nine miles, from a creek on which we had encamped the day previous, and to which he had returned in search of a runaway horse belonging to Mr. Dwight, which had taken the homeward road, carrying with him saddle, bridle, and holster-pistols. The Osages were probably ignorant of our strength, and, when they charged into the camp, drove off a number of our best horses; but we were fortunately well-mounted, and after a hard chase of seven or eight miles succeeded in recovering them all.

This accident, which occasioned delay and trouble, and threatened danger and loss, and broke down some good horses at the start, and actually endangered the expedition, was a first-fruit of having gentlemen in company—very estimable, to be sure, but who are not trained to the care and vigilance and self-dependence which such an expedition required, and who are not subject to the orders which enforce attention and exertion.

We arrived on the 8th at the mouth of the Smoky-hill Fork, which is the principal southern branch of the Kansas; forming here, by its junction with the Republican, or northern branch, the main Kansas River. Neither stream was fordable, and the necessity of making a raft, together with bad weather, detained us here until the morning of the 11th, when we resumed our journey along the Republican Fork. By our observations the junction of the streams is in latitude 39° 03′ 38″, longitude 96° 24′ 56″, and at an elevation of nine hundred and twenty-six feet above the Gulf of Mexico. For several days we continued to travel along the Republican, through a country beautifully watered with numerous streams, handsomely timbered; and rarely an incident occurred to vary the general resemblance which one day on the prairies here bears to another, and which scarcely require a particular description. Now and then we caught a glimpse of a small herd of elk; and occasionally a band of antelopes, whose curiosity some-

times brought them within rifle range, would circle round us, and then scour off into the prairies. As we advanced on our road these became more frequent; but as we journeyed on the line usually followed by the trapping and hunting parties of the Kansas and Delaware Indians, game of every kind continued very shy and wild. The bottoms which form the immediate valley of the main river were generally about three miles wide; having a rich soil of black vegetable mould, and, for a prairie country, well interspersed with wood. The country was everywhere covered with a considerable variety of grasses—occasionally poor and thin, but far more frequently luxuriant and rich. We had been gradually and regularly ascending in our progress westward, and on the evening of the 14th, when we encamped on a little creek in the valley of the Republican, two hundred and sixty-five miles by our travelling road from the mouth of the Kansas, we were at an elevation of one thousand five hundred and twenty feet. That part of the river where we were now encamped is called by the Indians the *Big Timber*. Hitherto our route had been laborious and extremely slow, the unusually wet spring and constant rain having so saturated the whole country that it was necessary to bridge every water-course, and, for days together, our usual march averaged only five or six miles. Finding that at such a rate of travel it would be impossible to comply with my instructions, I determined at this place to divide the party, and, leaving Mr. Fitzpatrick with twenty-five men in charge of the provisions and heavier baggage of the camp, to proceed myself in advance, with a light party of fifteen men, taking with me the howitzer and the light wagon which carried the instruments.

Accordingly, on the morning of the 16th the parties separated; and, bearing a little out from the river, with a view of heading some of the numerous affluents, after a few hours' travel over somewhat broken ground we entered upon an extensive and high level prairie, on which we encamped toward evening at a little stream where a single dry cotton-wood afforded the necessary fuel for preparing supper. Among a variety of grasses which to-day made their first appearance, I noticed bunch grass (*festuca*) and buffalo grass (*Sesleria dactyloides*). Amorpha canescens (*lead plant*) continued the characteristic plant of the country, and a narrow-leaved *lathyrus* occurred during the morning in beautiful patches. *Sida coccinea* occurred frequently, with a *psoralea*, near *Psoralea floribunda*, and a number of plants not hitherto met, just verging into bloom. The water on which we had encamped belonged to Solomon's Fork of the Smoky-hill River, along whose tributaries we continued to travel for several days.

The country afforded us an excellent road, the route being generally over high and very level prairies; and we met with no other delay than being frequently obliged to bridge one of the numerous streams, which

were well timbered with ash, elm, cotton-wood, and a very large oak—the latter being, occasionally, five or six feet in diameter, with a spreading summit. *Sida coccinea* is very frequent in vermilion-colored patches on the high and low prairie; and I remarked that it has a very pleasant perfume.

The wild sensitive plant (*Schrankia angustata*) occurs frequently, generally on the dry prairies, in valleys of streams, and frequently on the broken prairie bank. I remark that the leaflets close instantly to a very light touch. *Amorpha*, with the same *psoralea*, and a dwarf species of *lupinus*, are the characteristic plants.

On the 19th, in the afternoon, we crossed the Pawnee road to the Arkansas, and, travelling a few miles onward, the prevailing quiet of the prairies was suddenly broken by the appearence of five or six buffalo bulls, forming a vanguard of immense herds, among which we were travelling a few days afterward. Prairie dogs were seen for the first time during the day; and we had the good fortune to obtain an antelope for supper. Our elevation had now increased to one thousand nine hundred feet. *Sida coccinea* was a characteristic on the creek bottoms, and buffalo grass is becoming abundant on the higher parts of the ridges.

June 21st.—During the forenoon we travelled up a branch of the creek on which we had encamped, in a broken country, where, however, the dividing ridges always afforded a good road. Plants were few; and with the short sward of the buffalo grass, which now prevailed everywhere, giving to the prairies a smooth and mossy appearance, were mingled frequent patches of a beautiful red grass (*Aristida pallens*), which had made its appearance only within the last few days.

We halted to noon at a solitary cotton-wood in a hollow, near which was killed the first buffalo, a large old bull.

Antelope appeared in bands during the day. Crossing here to the affluents of the Republican, we encamped on a fork about forty feet wide and one foot deep, flowing with a swift current over a sandy bed, and well wooded with ash-leaved maple (*Negundo fraxinifolium*), elm, cotton-wood, and a few white oaks. We were visited in the evening by a very violent storm, accompanied by wind, lightning, and thunder; a cold rain falling in torrents. According to the barometer our elevation was two thousand one hundred and thirty feet above the Gulf.

At noon on the 23d we descended into the valley of a principal fork of the Republican, a beautiful stream forty feet wide and four feet deep, with a dense border of wood, consisting principally of varieties of ash. It was musical with the notes of many birds, which, from the vast expanse of silent prairie around, seemed all to have collected here. We continued during the afternoon our route along the river, which was populous with prairie

dogs (the bottoms being entirely occupied with their villages), and late in the evening encamped on its banks.

The prevailing timber is a blue-foliaged ash (*fraxinus*, near *F. Americana*) and ash-leaved maple. With these were *Fraxinus Americana*, cotton-wood, and long-leaved willow. We gave to this stream the name of Prairie Dog River. Elevation two thousand three hundred and fifty feet. Our road on the 25th lay over high smooth ridges, three thousand one hundred feet above the sea; buffalo in great numbers, absolutely covering the face of the country. At evening we encamped within a few miles of the main Republican, on a little creek where the air was fragrant with the perfume of *Artemisia filifolia*, which we here saw for the first time, and which was now in bloom. Shortly after leaving our encampment on the 26th, we found suddenly that the nature of the country had entirely changed. Bare sand-hills everywhere surrounded us in the undulating ground along which we were moving; and the plants peculiar to a sandy soil made their appearance in abundance. A few miles farther we entered the valley of a large stream, afterward known to be the Republican Fork of the Kansas, whose shallow waters, with a depth of only a few inches, were spread out over a bed of yellowish-white sand six hundred yards wide.

With the exception of one or two distant and detached groves, no timber of any kind was to be seen; and the features of the country assumed a desert character, with which the broad river, struggling for existence among quicksands along the treeless banks, was strikingly in keeping. On the opposite side the broken ridges assumed almost a mountainous appearance; and, fording the stream, we continued on our course among these ridges, and encamped late in the evening at a little pond of very bad water, from which we drove away a herd of buffalo that were standing in and about it.

Our encampment this evening was three thousand five hundred feet above the sea. We travelled now for several days through a broken and dry sandy region, about four thousand feet above the sea, where there were no running streams; and some anxiety was constantly felt on account of the uncertainty of water, which was only to be found in small lakes that occurred occasionally among the hills. The discovery of these always brought pleasure to the camp, as around them were generally green flats, which afforded abundant pasturage for our animals; and here were usually collected herds of the buffalo, which now were scattered over all the country in countless numbers.

The soil of bare and hot sands supported a varied and exuberant growth of plants, which were much further advanced than we had previously found them, and whose showy bloom somewhat relieved the appearance of general sterility. Crossing the summit of an elevated and continuous range of rolling hills, on the afternoon of June 30th we found ourselves overlooking a broad and misty valley where, about ten miles distant, and one thousand feet below us, the South Fork of the Platte was rolling magnificently along, swollen with the waters of the melting snows. It was in strong and refreshing contrast with the parched country from which we had just issued; and when at night the broad expanse of water grew indistinct, it almost seemed that we had pitched our tents on the shore of the sea.

Travelling along up the valley of the river, here four thousand feet above the sea, in the afternoon of July 1st we caught a far and uncertain view of a faint blue mass in the west, as the sun sank behind it; and from our camp in the morning, at the mouth of Bijou, Long's Peak and the neighboring mountains stood out into the sky, grand and luminously white, covered to their bases with glittering snow.

On the evening of the 3d, as we were journeying along the partially overflowed bottoms of the Platte, where our passage stirred up swarms of mosquitoes, we came unexpectedly upon an Indian, who was perched on a bluff, curiously watching the movements of our caravan. He belonged to a village of Oglallah Sioux, who had lost all their animals in the severity of the preceding winter, and were now on their way up the Bijou Fork to beg horses from the Arapahoes, who were hunting buffalo at the head of that river. Several came into our camp at noon; and as they were hungry, as usual, they were provided with buffalo meat, of which the hunters had brought in an abundant supply.

About noon on July 4th we arrived at the fort, where Mr. St. Vrain received us with his customary kindness and invited us to join him in a feast which had been prepared in honor of the day.

Our animals were very much worn out, and our stock of provisions entirely exhausted when we arrived at the fort; but I was disappointed in my hope of obtaining relief, as I found it in a very impoverished condition; and we were able to procure only a little unbolted Mexican flour and some salt, with a few pounds of powder and lead.

As regarded provisions, it did not much matter in a country where rarely the day passed without seeing some kind of game, and where it was frequently abundant. It was a rare thing to lie down hungry, and we had already learned to think bread a luxury; but we could not proceed without animals, and our own were not capable of prosecuting the journey beyond the mountains without relief.

I had been informed that a large number of mules had recently arrived at Taos from Upper California; and as our friend Maxwell was about to continue his journey to that place, where a portion of his family resided, I engaged him to purchase for me ten or twelve mules, with the under-

standing that he should pack them with provisions and other necessaries, and meet me at the mouth of the *Fontaine qui bouit*, on the Arkansas River, to which point I would be led in the course of the survey.

Agreeably to his own request, and in the conviction that his habits of life and education had not qualified him to endure the hard life of a voyageur, I discharged here one of my party, Oscar Sarpy, having furnished him with arms and means of transportation to Fort Laramie, where he would be in the line of caravans returning to the States.

At daybreak on July 6th Maxwell was on his way to Taos; and a few hours after we also had recommenced our journey up the Platte, which was continuously timbered with cotton-wood and willow, on a generally sandy soil. Passing on the way the remains of two abandoned forts (one of which, however, was still in good condition), we reached, in ten miles, Fort Lancaster, the trading establishment of Mr. Lupton. His post was beginning to assume the appearance of a comfortable farm: stock, hogs, and cattle, were ranging about on the prairie; there were different kinds of poultry; and there was the wreck of a promising garden in which a considerable variety of vegetables had been in a flourishing condition, but it had been almost entirely ruined by the recent high waters. I remained to spend with him an agreeable hour, and set off in a cold storm of rain, which was accompanied with violent thunder and lightning. We encamped immediately on the river, sixteen miles from St. Vrain's. Several Arapahoes, on their way to the village which was encamped a few miles above us, passed by the camp in the course of the afternoon. Night set in stormy and cold, with heavy and continuous rain which lasted until morning.

July 7th.—We made this morning an early start, continuing to travel up the Platte; and in a few miles frequent bands of horses and mules, scattered for several miles round about, indicated our approach to the Arapaho village, which we found encamped in a beautiful bottom, and consisting of about one hundred and sixty lodges. It appeared extremely populous, with a great number of children; a circumstance which indicated a regular supply of the means of subsistence. The chiefs, who were gathered together at the farther end of the village, received us (as probably strangers are always received to whom they desire to show respect or regard) by throwing their arms around our necks and embracing us.

It required some skill in horsemanship to keep the saddle during the performance of this ceremony, as our American horses exhibited for them the same fear they have for a bear or any other wild animal. Having very few goods with me, I was only able to make them a meagre present, accounting for the poverty of the gift by explaining that my goods had been left with the wagons in charge of Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was well known to them as the White-Head, or the Broken Hand. I saw here, as

I had remarked in an Arapaho village the preceding year, near the lodges of the chiefs, tall tripods of white poles supporting their spears and shields, which showed it to be a regular custom.

Though disappointed in obtaining the presents which had been evidently expected, they behaved very courteously, and after a little conversation I left them, and, continuing on up the river, halted to noon on the bluff, as the bottoms were almost inundated; continuing in the afternoon our route along the mountains, which were dark, misty, and shrouded—threatening a storm; the snow-peaks sometimes glittering through the clouds beyond the first ridge.

We surprised a grizzly bear sauntering along the river; which, raising himself upon his hind legs, took a deliberate survey of us that did not appear very satisfactory to him, and he scrambled into the river and swam to the opposite side. We halted for the night a little above Cherry Creek; the evening cloudy, with many mosquitoes.

Some indifferent observations placed the camp in latitude 39° 43′ 53″, and chronometric longitude 105° 24′ 34″.

July 8th.—We continued to-day to travel up the Platte; the morning pleasant, with a prospect of fairer weather. During the forenoon our way lay over a more broken country, with a gravelly and sandy surface; although the immediate bottom of the river was a good soil, of a dark sandy mould, resting upon a stratum of large pebbles, or rolled stones, as at Laramie Fork. On our right, and apparently very near, but probably eight or ten miles distant, and two or three thousand feet above us, ran the first range of the mountains, like a dark corniced line, in clear contrast with the great snowy chain which, immediately beyond, rose glittering five thousand feet above them.

We caught this morning a view of Pike's Peak; but it appeared for a moment only, as clouds rose early over the mountains, and shrouded them in mist and rain all the day. In the first range were visible, as at the Red Buttes on the North Fork, very lofty escarpments of red rock. While travelling through this region, I remarked that always in the morning the lofty peaks were visible and bright, but very soon small white clouds began to settle around them—brewing thicker and darker as the day advanced, until the afternoon, when the thunder began to roll; and invariably at evening we had more or less of a thunder-storm.

At eleven o'clock, and twenty-one miles from St. Vrain's Fort, we reached a point in this Southern Fork of the Platte where the stream is divided into three forks; two of these (one of them being much the largest) issuing directly from the mountains on the west, and forming, with the easternmost branch, a river of the plains. The elevation of this point is about five thousand five hundred feet above the sea; this river falling two