

swampy, salty spot, with a little long, unwholesome grass; and the water, which rose in springs, being useful only to wet the mouth, but entirely too salt to drink. All around were sand and rocks, and skeletons of horses which had not been able to find support for their lives. As we were about to start we found, at the distance of a few hundred yards, among the hills to the southward, a spring of tolerably good water, which was a relief to ourselves; but the place was too poor to remain long, and therefore we continued on this morning. On the creek were thickets of *Spirolobium odoratum* (acacia) in bloom, and very fragrant.

Passing through the cañon, we entered another sandy basin, through which the dry stream-bed continued its northwesterly course, in which direction appeared a high snowy mountain.

We travelled through a barren district, where a heavy gale was blowing about the loose sand, and, after a ride of eight miles, reached a large creek of salt and bitter water, running in a westerly direction, to meet the stream-bed we had left. It is called by the Spaniards *Amargosa*—the bitter water of the desert. Where we struck it the stream bends; and we continued in a northerly course up the ravine of its valley, passing on the way a fork from the right, near which occurred a bed of plants, consisting of a remarkable new genus of *cruciferae*.

Gradually ascending, the ravine opened into a green valley, where, at the foot of the mountain, were springs of excellent water. We encamped among groves of the new *acacia*, and there was an abundance of good grass for the animals.

This was the best camping-ground we had seen since we struck the Spanish trail. The day's journey was about twelve miles.

*April 29th.*—To-day we had to reach the *Archilette*, distant seven miles, where the Mexican party had been attacked; and, leaving our encampment early, we traversed a part of the desert, the most sterile and repulsive that we had yet seen. Its prominent features were dark *sierras*, naked and dry; on the plains a few straggling shrubs—among them, cactus of several varieties. Fuentes pointed out one, called by the Spaniards *bisnada*, which has a juicy pulp, slightly acid, and is eaten by the traveller to allay thirst.

Our course was generally north; and, after crossing an intervening ridge, we descended into a sandy plain or basin, in the middle of which was the grassy spot, with its springs and willow-bushes, which constitutes a camping-place in the desert, and is called the *Archilette*. The dead silence of the place was ominous; and, galloping rapidly up, we found only the corpses of the two men: everything else was gone. They were naked, mutilated, and pierced with arrows. Hernandez had evidently fought, and with desperation. He lay in advance of the willow, half-faced tent, which



sheltered his family, as if he had come out to meet danger, and to repulse it from that asylum. One of his hands and both his legs had been cut off. Giacomo, who was a large and strong-looking man, was lying in one of the willow-shelters, pierced with arrows. Of the women no trace could be found, and it was evident they had been carried off captive. A little lap-dog, which had belonged to Pablo's mother, remained with the dead bodies, and was frantic with joy at seeing Pablo; he, poor child, was frantic with grief, and filled the air with lamentations for his father and mother. *Mi padre!—mi madre!*—was his incessant cry. When we beheld this pitiable sight, and pictured to ourselves the fate of the two women, carried off by savages so brutal and so loathsome, all compunction for the scalped-alive Indian ceased; and we rejoiced that Carson and Godey had been alive to give so useful a lesson to these American Arabs, who lie in wait to murder and plunder the innocent traveller.

We were all too much affected by the sad feelings which the place inspired to remain an unnecessary moment. The night we were obliged to pass there. Early in the morning we left it, having first written a brief account of what had happened, and put it in the cleft of a pole planted at the spring, that the approaching caravan might learn the fate of their friends. In commemoration of the event we called the place *Agua de Hernandez*—Hernandez' Spring. By observation its latitude was  $35^{\circ} 51' 21''$ .

*April 30th.*—We continued our journey over a district similar to that of the day before. From the sandy basin in which was the spring we entered another basin of the same character, surrounded everywhere by mountains. Before us stretched a high range, rising still higher to the left, and terminating in a snowy mountain.

After a day's march of twenty-four miles we reached at evening the bed of a stream from which the water had disappeared; a little only remained in holes, which we increased by digging; and about a mile above, the stream, not yet entirely sunk, was spread out over the sands, affording a little water for the animals. The stream came out of the mountains on the left, very slightly wooded with cotton-wood, willow, and acacia, and a few dwarf oaks; and grass was nearly as scarce as water. A plant with showy yellow flowers (*Stanleya integrifolia*) occurred abundantly at intervals for the last two days, and *Eriogonum inflatum* was among the characteristic plants.

*May 1st.*—The air is rough, and overcoats pleasant. The sky is blue, and the day bright. Our road was over a plain, toward the foot of the mountain; *Zygophyllum Californicum*, now in bloom with a small yellow flower, is characteristic of the country; and *cacti* were very abundant, and in rich fresh bloom, which wonderfully ornaments this poor country.

We encamped at a spring in the pass which had been the site of an old





FOREST CAMP. SHASTA PEAK.

village; here we found excellent grass, but very little water. We dug out the old spring, and watered some of our animals. The mountain here was wooded very slightly with the nut-pine, cedars, and a dwarf species of oak; and among the shrubs were *Purshia tridentata*, *Artemisia*, and *Ephedra occidentalis*. The numerous shrubs which constitute the vegetation of the plains are now in bloom, with flowers of white, yellow, red, and purple. The continual rocks, and want of water and grass, begin to be very hard on our mules and horses; but the principal loss is occasioned by their crippled feet, the greater part of those left being in excellent order, and scarcely a day passes without some loss; and, one by one, Fuentes horses are constantly dropping behind. Whenever they give out he dismounts, and cuts off their tails and manes to make saddle girths; the last advantage one can gain from them.

The next day, in a short but rough ride of twelve miles, we crossed the mountain; and, descending to a small valley-plain, encamped at the foot of the ridge, on the bed of a creek, where we found good grass in sufficient quantity, and abundance of water in holes. The ridge is extremely rugged and broken, presenting on this side a continued precipice, and probably affords very few passes. Many *Digger* tracks are seen around us, but no Indians were visible.

May 3d.—After a day's journey of eighteen miles, in a northeasterly direction, we encamped in the midst of another very large basin, at a camping-ground called *Las Vegas*—a term which the Spaniards use to signify fertile or marshy plains, in contradistinction to *llanos*, which they apply to dry and sterile plains. Two narrow streams of clear water, four or five feet deep, gush suddenly, with a quick current, from two singularly large springs; these, and other waters of the basin, pass out in a gap to the eastward. The taste of the water is good, but rather too warm to be agreeable; the temperature being  $71^{\circ}$  in the one and  $73^{\circ}$  in the other. They, however, afforded a delightful bathing-place.

May 4th.—We started this morning earlier than usual, travelling in a northeasterly direction across the plain. The new acacia (*Spirolobium odoratum*) has now become the characteristic tree of the country; it is in bloom, and its blossoms are very fragrant. The day was still, and the heat, which soon became very oppressive, appeared to bring out strongly the refreshing scent of the zygophyllaceous shrubs and the sweet perfume of the acacia. The snowy ridge we had just crossed looked out conspicuously in the northwest. In about five hours' ride we crossed a gap in the surrounding ridge, and the appearance of skeletons of horses very soon warned us that we were engaged in another dry *jornada*, which proved the longest we had made in all our journey—between fifty and sixty miles without a drop of water.